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**DOUBLE TAKE: THE SHOCK OF URBANIZATION AND THE DOPPELGÄNGER IN
NINETEENTH CENTURY EURO-AMERICAN GOTHIC LITERATURE**

by

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**SUBMITTED TO SCRIPPS COLLEGE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS**

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Abstract

In the midst of the infrastructural and cultural transformations of nineteenth century Euro-American urbanization, the literary world gained a new gothic motif. The doppelgänger, a ghostly, malicious double, began to haunt the pages of stories written across Europe and the United States. In such tales, these doppelgängers contended with and navigated a world rocked by the same revolutions that urbanization had brought to the real world in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This paper surveys several of these doppelgänger tales in order to explore a connection between the physical and psychological impacts of urbanization in nineteenth century Europe and America and the contemporary literary trend of incorporating doppelgängers as a gothic motif.

Introduction

Far from home, a learned man travels to a great city in the warm climates. The sun is so intense that the man must hide in his apartment lest the sunshine burn away his shadow. Only in the evenings is he able to take pleasure in the sights and sounds of the city, with his shadow stretched out full behind him. One thing bothers him though. While all the other houses in the city are lively and bustling, the house across from his seems almost vacant — quiet, still, and untouched besides the carefully tended flowers on the balcony. At times, he hears strange music coming from the house but as much as he strains his eyes, or asks the locals about it, he cannot figure out who the resident of this house could be. One evening, he sits on his balcony with a candle burning behind him, his shadow cast so long in front of him that it seems to be sitting on the opposite balcony. He takes delight in this, imagining that his shadow has finally learned the secret of the mysterious house. After blowing out the candle and going to bed, the man learns the next morning that his shadow is gone. Years later, when he is back in his home country, the man encounters his shadow again. He does not see it at his feet trailing him, but standing upright before him, dressed in fine clothes and appearing much like any other man. It is not long before this shadow uses his power and influence to force the man to act as his shadow, bribing him with money to publicly renounce his status as a human and take on that of a shadow. The short tale ends with the learned man sentenced to death by the shadow who once served him.

Hans Christian Andersen wrote this story, titled “The Shadow” in 1847, just a year after Fyodor Dostoyevsky published his novella, *The Double*. Instead of a shadow, the villain of the story is an exact copy of the protagonist, come to undermine the latter’s authority, take his job, and eventually send him to an insane asylum. Two decades before Dostoyevsky penned this tale, James Hogg wrote his novel, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, a story

about a young man enchanted by and then led to moral ruin by a shapeshifting creature who bears a striking resemblance to him. There are countless other stories published around this time period that follow many of the same beats as these narratives. An entity appears, which seems, in one way or another, to be an incarnation of the protagonist, and proceeds to torment the hero until one or both of them are destroyed. This entity can take on several different forms, but in all these narratives, is a replicant of someone else. This can be seen in Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and in E.T.A. Hoffman's *The Devil's Elixirs*.

Protagonists throughout nineteenth century literature seemed to be beset with a scourge of doppelgängers.

Stories where one character resembles another has played a role in literature for centuries, appearing long before the nineteenth century. Tales of a god taking on the appearance of a mortal, twins pulling off feats that no ordinary pair of people could do, or sorcerers using a potion to transform into someone else. The nineteenth century saw the phenomenon of doubles become a sort of gothic motif, appearing in literature across Europe and the United States, each seeming to bear a resemblance — in tone, plot or otherwise — to other doppelgänger narratives of the time.

The first mention of the term doppelgänger appears in the 1797 novel, *Siebenkäs*, by Jean Paul Richter. The story follows the titular character, Siebenkäs, which can roughly be translated to mean seven cheeses, in his unhappy marriage. Luckily for him, he is friends with someone who looks and acts exactly the same as he does. With the help of this friend, Siebenkäs fabricates his own death and takes on his friend's identity in order to escape his wife and pursue the woman he truly loves. For the most part, this story is light with moments of comedy stemming from the uncanny resemblance between the friends. The doppelgänger in this story is primarily a

benevolent entity, not one that hunts down and brings ruin upon its twin. Jean Paul Richter gave the term *doppelgänger* two quite dissimilar meanings, one being “two courses,” as in two courses of a meal, and the other being a duplicate of an individual, or, as Richter puts it, “the name for people who see themselves.”¹

It isn't until E.T.A. Hoffmann published his 1816 novel, *The Devil's Elixirs*, that the *doppelgänger* began to take on a more sinister and gothic tone. In it, Hoffmann tells the story of a Capuchin monk named Medardus who becomes corrupted by a mysterious potion called the Devil's Elixir. Now with the influence of the devil inside him, he leaves the monastery and commits a string of crimes as he journeys from place to place. Over the course of his travels, a man with an uncanny resemblance to him begins to follow and torment Medardus about his crimes. Medardus slips further and further into sin and delusion until he is forced to repent.

As mentioned above, the century following *The Devil's Elixirs* was rich with harrowing tales of individuals being pursued by their malicious *doppelgängers*, such as Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Grey*, Maupassant's “The Horla,” Edgar Allan Poe's “William Wilson,” and many others. It is plausible that Hoffmann's novel directly or indirectly sparked a trend in the Euro-American literary world, but it remains unclear why this trend resonated so powerfully with writers and readers in the nineteenth century.

The *doppelgänger* motif and the questions it raises about the duality of human nature actually have a complex cultural history, which can be traced back through centuries in literature, poetry, and psychological theories of selfhood. Since the beginning of recorded history, people have wondered about human nature and its ability to change, to alternate between seemingly unconnected personalities, and about the human tendency of seeking stability through

¹ Paul Flemming, *The Pleasures of Abandonment: Jean Paul and the Life of Humor* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2006).

multiplication. Doubles, copies, and duplication pervade the collective human psyche more than most realize it. Scholars of literature, psychology, sociology, history, and many other fields have addressed the presence of doubling in culture, pulling together vast collections of works of art and literature that feature this motif. Doubling is such a varied concept, one that can be spotted in most every work of human creativity if one makes a concerted effort, that it is difficult to know how to construct a cohesive study of it.

Ralph Tymms, who specialized in German Romantic literature, was one such scholar that attempted to decipher the double in his book, *Doubles in Literary Psychology*. As its title indicates, this study attempts to draw out the psychological and philosophical theories that underlie the many double narratives created in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The main method that Tymms used to answer the question of doubles pull together literature, poetry, and plays that feature the double motif into one comprehensive study. Scouring the works of German Romantic, and then global post-Romantic, literature for any variation of the double motif, Tymms is able to identify through lines that connect all these works and construct a sort of web of intertextuality.²

Tymms asserts two main ideas that most powerfully shape the presence of the double in modern history. One is the allegorical treatment of the double, which involves using the double as an embodiment of good or evil, to contrast the hero and teach them a lesson. The allegorical double appears most often in pre- and early Romantic literature but influences works up through the post-Romantic period. The second idea that Tymms synthesizes is the conception of the double as a way to psycho-realistically represent the dualism in the human mind. Together these

² Ralph Tymms, *Doubles in Literary Psychology* (Cambridge: Bowes & Bowes, 1949).

two conceptions of the double have combined and clashed in different ways in each narrative that features the double motif and have directed the path doubles have made through modern culture.³

Otto Rank, an Austrian psychoanalyst, attempted to sort out the intricacies of the double in a different way. In *The Double: A Psychoanalytic Study*, Rank focused on the possible psychological significance of the double, citing some of the double narratives that Tymm featured, but mostly drawing on anthropology and philosophy to construct his argument. Where Tymm treats psychology as of secondary importance, using literary history as his main evidence, Rank reverses this structure, regarding the psychological interpretation as the key to unlocking the hidden meaning of the double in cultures past and present.⁴

Rank structures his study as a succession of psychoanalytic interpretations that progressively stray further and further away from the literary examples of the double motif which originally sparked his interest in this field. First taking time to analyze the psyches of some of the authors of these doppelganger narratives, Rank then considers the much more abstract religious and mythic beliefs that might have given rise to the general idea of the double. He cites anthropological studies of less economically developed societies and their beliefs about the soul. Over the course of his study, one of the main conclusions he draws is that doubles make their appearance in culture as a manifestation of the duality of the soul that humanity as a whole grapples with in its subconscious.⁵

In contrast to both Tymm and Rank is Hillel Schwartz's *Culture of the Copy*, a book analyzing the modern fascination with duplication. As a cultural and intellectual historian writing at the end of the twentieth century, Schwartz takes a broad view of the concept of doubling, exploring manufacturing, advertising, warfare, portraiture, recreation, and technology from the

³ Ibid.

⁴ Otto Rank, *The Double: A Psychoanalytic Study* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Univ. North Carolina Press, 1971).

⁵ Ibid.

nineteenth century up until the twenty-first. From these sources, he analyzes the place that doubling has in culture more broadly, how it shapes modern conceptions of identity and uniqueness. Where Tymms viewed doubling as a product of literary innovation and influence, and Rank viewed it as the manifestation of the universal psychic struggle people have with the bifurcated soul and its impermanence, Schwartz expands the concept of the double and finds its origins in all aspects of modern society.⁶

These studies approach the doppelgänger in a relatively expansive way, analyzing the motif by expanding its definition and finding through-lines that lead back to it. Ralph Tymms, for example, cites narratives that feature shape-shifters that take on the appearance of another for a short time. Otto Rank calls upon folk beliefs from across Europe, Asia, and Africa about the dangers of letting one's shadow disappear, catching sight of oneself in a mirror at night, or even uttering the name of a deceased person. Schwartz makes a further departure from doppelgängers, choosing to focus on instances of duplication in modern life, such as in the case of interchangeable parts and mass production. By doing so, these authors could draw conclusions about these more abstract instances of doppelgängers and slowly trace their way back to their original inquiry.

Given its limited nature, this study will narrow instead of expand the definition of doppelgänger in order to study it. To find a definition, we will look back to Jean Paul Richter's *Siebenkäs*, where he defines the phenomenon of doppelgängers as an instance of a person seeing themselves. From here, this definition must be narrowed further, lest all instances of someone looking into a mirror be included. For the purposes of this study, a doppelgänger will be defined as a ghostly or supernatural being which bears an uncanny resemblance to the protagonist of a narrative and which causes this protagonist harm. In Hans Christian Andersen's "The Shadow,"

⁶ Hillel Schwartz, *Culture of the Copy* (New York: Zone Books, 2014).

for example, the learned man's shadow acts as the doppelgänger because it is a ghostly duplicate of the hero and brings ruin upon him. Other doppelgängers, like the one in Dostoyevsky's *The Double* may appear to be more obviously a doppelgänger but it still abides by the basics of the definition.

In addition, because of the nature of the inquiry, this study will survey a handful of narratives written in nineteenth century Europe and the United States. Not only will this streamline the exploration of doppelgängers, but it will also lead to the historical question this study seeks to answer: what is the relationship between the material and cultural upheaval of modern urbanization and the literary interest in doppelgänger stories? The prevalence of doppelgängers in literature could certainly be tied to many aspects of the nineteenth century — on many levels, this was a time of transformation as the world shifted into the modern era. In the case of this paper, urbanization, in both the physical and cultural sense, will take center stage. In the first section, the origins and physical presence of the doppelgängers in the narratives will be situated within the context of the structural and social transformations that occurred as a result of urbanization. The doppelgänger will be shown to embody the cramped conditions, rapidly changing infrastructure, and new patterns of social interaction within the world of these narratives and the modern era more generally. In the second section, the discourse surrounding urbanization — including scholarly interpretations of the negative effects of city living, popular paranoia about urban crime, and pseudo-scientific methods of avoiding such crimes — will find literary expression in the doppelgänger and its transgressive ways of navigating the modern world.

Doppelgängers as the Menace of Urban Transformation

The learned man in Hans Christian Andersen's tale loses his shadow only when he ventures from his homeland to an unknown city in the south. Although not much is said about his home country, the "great city" to the south receives much attention. The learned man describes going out onto his balcony as the sun sets, watching the citydwellers bring out tables and chairs for dining, light candles "by the hundreds," converse with one another, and even sing together. He sees all kinds of people — from shoemakers to church-goers and tailors to mule-drivers. Although this place is so radically different from the colder and darker regions to the north where he is from, the learned man is delighted by all the hustle and bustle of the city. He does, however, run into one problem in this city: "One house only, which was just opposite the one in which the foreign learned man lived, formed a contrast to all this, for it was quite still; and yet somebody dwelt there."⁷ This peaceful house, from which strange music can sometimes be heard, entrances the learned man. He wonders about the identity of this house's owner, asks the landlord if he knows anything about the house, and spends hours staring into its darkened windows from his balcony, hoping to catch a glimpse of the mysterious neighbor. He even has a dream about discovering his neighbor's identity, finally getting to gaze upon their strange and impossible beauty. It is because of this fascination with the quiet house, his desire to know the secrets of his neighbor, that the learned man loses his shadow, and ultimately meets his demise. Although it seems impossible, the learned man sends, in the form of his shadow, a duplicate of himself into the strange house in order to discover what is kept hidden from all others.

This duplicate, or *doppelgänger*, appears to emerge from the bustling southern city, but more specifically, the duplicate is born from the urban phenomenon of living amongst strangers. When the learned man ventures to the southern city, he encounters a world unlike any he has

⁷ Hans Christian Andersen, "The Shadow" (Gilead, 2007), <http://hca.gilead.org.il/shadow.html>.

known before. Not only is he in a place where he knows no one, he is living in a place where it is impossible to know everyone. In this city, he lives among thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of people whom he can only know as far as he can identify them with his eyes. He observes people and identifies them based on their apparent professions — cobblers and tailors and mule-drivers — or their location and actions — the church-goers, for example, are those he sees going in and out of the church. Even though he has the ability to identify and classify his fellow city dwellers in this way, the neighbor across the street cannot be seen or classified and therefore reminds him of the limits of his knowledge.

The resident of this quiet house gives no visual information that the learned man can use to classify or at least attempt to understand their identity. The neighbor is out of sight no matter how hard the man looks. The neighbor, however, does give evidence a small amount of visible information. There are well cared for flowers on their balcony, the door is sometimes left ajar, and as mentioned above, strange music can be heard occasionally coming from the house. But this is only enough to know that there is indeed someone living in the quiet house. The learned man would have no problem with the house if it seemed it were empty. The fact that there is clearly someone living just across from him yet that he has no way of understanding the nature of this person is what preoccupies the learned man.

To modern readers, this situation might appear quite ordinary, and for some, even preferable. What could be so concerning about a neighbor who keeps to themselves and gives no reason to be noticed? After all, the neighbor causes no disturbances and brings no harm to the community. But to readers in the nineteenth century when “The Shadow” was written, the inability to know one’s neighbor would certainly be unsettling.

For much of human history, the majority of people lived in relatively small settlements. They lived in towns and hamlets and villages where, for the most part, residents would reside for their entire lives.⁸ Of course, cities have dotted the earth for centuries. The urban centers of classical Rome and China, the polises of ancient Greece, and the trading centers along the silk road are perhaps the easiest to call to mind. Many of the large cities in Europe today were established before the middle ages.⁹ Despite this, living in cities was more of an exception than the norm. It is estimated that even as late as the high middle ages, about ninety percent of Europe's population lived in small "peasant settlements."¹⁰ Because of this, all the aspects of modern urban living that we have become so familiar with would seem abnormal and uncomfortable to the vast majority of people who lived prior to the nineteenth century. One aspect in particular, the phenomenon of strangers as commonplace, is what adds tension and conflict to "The Shadow."

In small settlements, people are able to grow acquainted with, either directly or indirectly, each member of the community. Whether by meeting and interacting with community members or learning about others by way of town gossip, a person in a small settlement eventually is able to accumulate enough knowledge to know the character and reputation of each person living around them.¹¹ For this reason, interpersonal contact was relatively straightforward: an individual associates and does business with those members of the community whom they had learned were trustworthy. An individual, on the other hand, avoids the members of the community whom they have learned, through gossip or experience, were of poor character. As a result, the degree of trust and distrust between people in a small settlement is based on first-hand or second-hand

⁸ Lyn Lofland, *A World of Strangers: Order and Action in Urban Public Space* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), 4.

⁹ Paul Hohenberg and Lynn Lees, *The Making of Urban Europe, 1000-1994* (Harvard University Press, 1995), 1.

¹⁰ Frances Gies and Joseph Gies, *Life in a Medieval Village* (New York: Harper & Row, 1990), 1.

¹¹ Lofland, *World of Strangers*, 4-8.

knowledge about the character of another person. In this sort of settlement, an individual might go their entire life without ever having to interact with someone they don't have any insight or knowledge about.¹²

Of course, pre-industrial towns and hamlets were not completely cut off from the world. Travelers or missionaries or merchants or pilgrims would inevitably pass through small settlements every once in a while. The arrival of a stranger was such a rare occurrence though, that folklore and legends developed to explain the strange and often frightening phenomenon of strangers. In some especially isolated communities, strangers were regarded as inhuman — either as a different species, a demon, or a god.¹³ No matter the specifics of their understanding of strangers, the community would often isolate the stranger or at least remain wary of them until they determined the nature of the newcomer.¹⁴ Not all communities were equally isolated though, so while some might experience the arrival of a stranger once per generation, other communities might see strangers pass through every year or even month. Even in the case of the less isolated settlements, strangers would cause a disruption in the regular rhythm of town society.¹⁵ Because strangers presumably bore no relation to anyone in the community, there would be no previously obtained knowledge about them to form a foundation of trust. Without this essential level of trust, interaction with the stranger would be limited or at least approached with much caution. Community members would have to keep a close watch on the stranger in order to determine their character over time.¹⁶ Until they determined this though, interacting with the stranger would be a risk. Without any real knowledge of the stranger, the community had no way of knowing if this stranger, for example, was a frequent liar, had malevolent intentions, or were unreliable. So

¹² Ibid. 4-8.

¹³ Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *Primitive Mentality* (1923), 355.

¹⁴ Lofland, *World of Strangers*, 7.

¹⁵ Ibid. 6.

¹⁶ Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle Class Culture in America, 1830-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 34.

if a stranger came to a community offering a service or a product, the townspeople would have more than enough incentive to stay away. The arrival of a stranger in a small settlement brought on a sort of collective paranoia as the community grappled with someone who had no social standing in their social network and resisted such classification.¹⁷

Of course, the same cannot be said for the arrival of strangers in a large city. After all, the sort of small settlements discussed above are defined by the familiarity shared between each of its citizens. In large cities, interacting with someone who is deeply familiar is somewhat exceptional, while interacting with strangers is the norm. Although it varies from person to person, there is a limit to how many people an individual can know in a meaningful way. As far as mere recognition goes, some have estimated that an individual can recognize around three to four thousand people.¹⁸ Perhaps more importantly though, the number of people one can maintain a coherent relationship with is much lower, around 150 people.¹⁹ This number is reflected in the number of people in most pre-industrial settlements.²⁰ Because of the limits of human cognition, people naturally grouped together in a way that allowed for each person to know each other person and therefore feel relatively secure in their community. By most any standard, the number of people living in cities far exceeds 150. Because of this, interacting with a large amount of strangers is inevitable. In fact, given that city populations were rising into the hundreds of thousands and even into the millions by the nineteenth century, the vast majority of one's interpersonal interactions would be with strangers.²¹ Taking the time to talk with each

¹⁷ Roderick Kramer, "Collective Paranoia: Distrust Between Social Groups," in *Distrust*, ed. Russell Hardin (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2004), 146.

¹⁸ Lofland, *World of Strangers*, 10.

¹⁹ Robin Dunbar, *How Many Friends Does One Person Need?: Dunbar's Number and Other Evolutionary Quirks* (Harvard University Press, 2010), 24.

²⁰ Dunbar, *Dunbar's Number*, 27.

²¹ Hohenberg and Lees, *Making of Urban Europe*, 11; Gilbert Rozman, "Comparative Approaches to Urbanization," in *The City in Russian History*, ed. Michael F. Hamm (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1976), 78; "A Population History of London," Old Bailey Online, last modified March, 2018, <https://www.oldbaileyonline.org/static/Population-history-of-london.jsp>.

person on the street and memorize at least some of the details of their lives would be an unreasonable expectation and impossible for most people.

As we have seen, small communities that were less isolated from others usually dealt more moderately with strangers, especially compared to the communities that were effectively cut off from the rest of the world. Since cities by nature are extremely integrated into the politics, culture, and economy of the region, it would be reasonable to assume that the presence of strangers in cities would cause little or no disturbance in the community. Cities, after all, remain functioning and productive despite their large populations and abundance of strangers. On an individual level though, the prevalence of strangers impacts people on a psychological level, altering the way they conduct themselves in cities and giving rise to social strategies designed to minimize the anxiety caused by interacting with so many unknown people. It is this psychological impact that can be seen in Hans Christian Andersen's tale and the perilous curiosity of the learned man.

To return to Andersen's "The Shadow," the learned man is so preoccupied by his inability to determine the nature of his neighbor that he begins speculating about the supernatural significance of the situation. He studies the house daily: "The door stood ajar, and from an inner room sounded music so sweet and lovely, that it produced the most enchanting thought, and acted on the senses with magic power. Who could live there? Where was the real entrance?"²² Despite all the sights and sounds of the city, the learned man finds himself trapped in a pattern of speculating about the identity of his neighbor. He analyzes each subtle change in the home's exterior and begins to imagine the sounds coming from it possess "magic power." Not only does this thought foreshadow the magical dislocation of his shadow, but it also vastly differs from his thought patterns surrounding all other aspects of the city.

²² Andersen, "The Shadow."

The reason why the neighbor is able to elicit such extreme speculation from the learned man is because the neighbor's resistance to categorization. In the case of all the other people the man sees in the city, he is able to analyze their behaviors and appearances, and therefore understand them, not as fully developed people, but as categories. His description of the city streets is filled with categorical language: "Here were shoemakers, and tailors, and all sorts of people sitting. In the street beneath, they brought out tables and chairs, lighted candles by hundreds, talked and sang, and were very merry. There were people walking, carriages driving, and mules trotting along."²³ Although he has had no chance to talk with them or observe them for a significant amount of time, the learned man is able to draw conclusions about the people in the street based on just a glance. This method certainly cannot be applied to all citydwellers and is no way to know each individual personally, but this surface-level knowledge is enough to provide the learned man a measure of stability. He does not, for instance, have to expend any extra thought attempting to decipher the intentions of each person around him. He can assume — not without risk of course — that the shoemakers spend their days making shoes and have intentions generally related to their occupation, that the tailors make clothing and intend to fulfill their duties as tailors. He cannot be certain that they are not thieves or criminals but this superficial understanding of their role in the social network of the city is enough to prevent him from engaging in the same speculation that he does with his neighbor.

The level of familiarity the learned man has with the people on his street is called categorical knowing. It is a sort of superficial knowledge about the roles and statuses of other people that can be gained through visual information alone. These categories can be centered around anything from age to sex to occupation to ethnicity.²⁴ Although this depth of knowing is

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Lofland, *World of Strangers*, 15.

shallow, it helps to organize the multitude of individuals one encounters in a city. Having no way of understanding others on at least a rudimentary level would put such a strain on the individual that there would be no end to their speculation about the nature of others and worries about their insignificance within a sea of equally complex individuals.²⁵ So rather than think of himself as living among thousands of other complicated multi-faceted people who remain unknown unless he takes time to talk to each one, the learned man thinks of himself as living among shoemakers, tailors, carriage-drivers, and so forth. By fitting them into a category, even one as vague as male or female, young or old, the learned man's mind is not burdened with the ambiguity of a completely unknowable individual.

The learned man is, however, burdened by his neighbor because of the lack of visual information and the consequent impossibility of gaining categorical knowledge. As mentioned above, the root of the conflict with the neighbor stems from the fact that the man knows a someone resides in the opposite house but, because they never show themselves, can determine nothing about their age, gender, occupation, or general character. The learned man attempts each day to discover the secrets of his neighbor but makes no progress. As a result, the learned man is forced into a state of limbo and uncertainty akin to the uncertainty faced by a small community encountering a stranger. Because his default mode of understanding the people around him is through visuals and categories, the learned man must devise new methods, such as separating his shadow from his body, to put his mind at ease.

The relationship between the learned man and his neighbor is not unique in this southern city though. There are thousands of other people in the city, even in his vicinity, that the man will never get a chance to see, and therefore, to categorize. Whether it is because these people might

²⁵ George Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," in *The Blackwell City Reader*, ed. Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (Oxford and Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2002), 15.

stay inside and avoid his notice, like the neighbor, or because they live in a different region of the city and never will pass the learned man, the mysterious neighbor is certainly not the only person the man cannot come to know. The neighbor is merely the most glaring example of the vast multitudes of people that he knows reside with him in the community but that he can never know even on the most basic level. The learned man surely knows that there are other people besides those he sees from his balcony, that there are people spread across the city carrying on with their lives much like the tailors and cobblers and church-goers on his street. Yet, the neighbor is the only one of these people that receives such extreme scrutiny and speculation. In the mind of the learned man, the neighbor can be understood as a representation of his inability to know the vast majority of the city's population. All the uncertainty and worrying that he might direct toward the city as a whole is concentrated in the mystery surrounding his neighbor. The neighbor is not just an unknown individual, the neighbor is the shock of living in a big city, the risk of living amongst those who might never reveal their true nature, and the inability of an individual to master the urban environment. Even though the city is far from small pre-industrial cities in terms of size and culture, the urban world of the nineteenth century still bears much in common with these small communities when it comes to strangers. Although the learned man is surrounded by strangers, he is still subject to the anxiety caused by not being able to personally know those around him.

The inability to know his neighbor is just one part of Andersen's tale though. This conflict is resolved relatively quickly, only to give rise to another conflict — the shadow. Unlike anyone else who might find themselves in this sort of situation, the learned man is able to know his unknowable neighbor through the fantastical bifurcation of himself into man and shadow. By casting his shadow across the street onto the balcony of the house opposite, he achieves what no

other city dweller could — the dissolution of the inherent anonymity of city life. But in doing so, the learned man unleashes a force that will ultimately lead to his downfall. When he sees the shadow projected across the street, he muses that “The shadow ought to be clever enough to step in and look around him, and then to come back and tell me what he has seen.”²⁶ The shadow succeeds in discovering who is inside the opposite house but fails to return to the man until years later, when the shadow has grown powerful and wise from the time it spent in the mysterious house. When the shadow returns to the learned man, it has gained a body and resembles a real human. The learned man asks what gave rise to this transformation and what he found in the neighboring house. The shadow responds by saying: ““Do you know,’ said the shadow, ‘that in the house opposite to you lived the most glorious creature in the world?... I remained there three weeks, and it was more like three thousand years, for I read all that has ever been written in poetry or prose; and I may say, in truth, that I saw and learnt everything.’”²⁷ It is not long after this exchange that the shadow is able to trick the learned man into acting as his shadow, and then later, to sentence the learned man to prison and execution. Up until the shadow separated from the man, neither of them posed any harm to the other. This symbiosis is destroyed when the man rips away his shadow, all in an attempt to learn and see all the secrets that his neighbor holds.

The primary antagonist of the short story is thus birthed from the man’s desire to know that which cannot be known — the neighbor, the entirety of the urban multitude. This antagonist, the shadow, plays a strange role in relation to this desire. As we have already discussed, knowing on a personal level all the seen and unseen strangers that roam the city streets is impossible, yet this shadow is able to defy the cognitive boundaries and discover this unknowable part of city life. In doing so, the shadow gains knowledge and information that no one else has had the time

²⁶ Andersen, “The Shadow.”

²⁷ Ibid.

to accumulate. By interacting with the neighbor, who can be seen as a representation of the unknowable multitudes, the shadow attains a superior level of knowledge and awareness of the world around him. As the story progresses, the shadow uses this awareness to gain power and prestige. The same could be said for someone who miraculously had the power to know each person in a large city. They would know who to avoid, who was kind, who had political power, and who might have great wealth. This person would be able to use this multitude of connections and knowledge to gain power in the metropolis and even expand their power beyond the city limits. The true menace of the shadow, the reason he is able to bring ruin upon the protagonist of the tale, comes from the shadow's ability to defy the laws that govern urban sociology and escape the inherent risks of living among strangers.

The city can be seen as the most powerful entity in Andersen's story. Although the shadow emerges triumphant at the end, the city is what enables this triumph. Not only is it the setting in which the shadow springs to life, it is also the keeper of the knowledge that so empowers the shadow. Even though the shadow is not exactly a doppelgänger as it is described in the introduction, it is a ghostly, supernatural duplication of the hero who comes to bring harm to the latter. In addition, it is useful to think of "The Shadow" as a doppelgänger narrative because it follows many of the same patterns as the other doppelgänger stories that will be mentioned in this study. Of special significance is its focus on the city as a source of menace and power.

Before turning to another doppelgänger narrative, it is useful to acknowledge the presence of the city in other genres of nineteenth century literature. Often even more realistic literature would capture the intimidation and fear that was sometimes entailed in moving from a rural into an urban environment. Elizabeth Gaskell's 1854 novel *North and South* tells the story

of a young woman moving from the idyllic countryside to a cramped, industrialized northern city. When the heroine makes her journey to the city for the first time, she is disoriented by all the new sights and sounds. She even mistakes the smog hovering over the city for “a deep lead-colored” rain cloud. And so used to gazing out at rolling pastures and wide open spaces, she is saddened and disconcerted to look out her bedroom window and only find “the black wall” of a neighboring house “not above ten feet distant.”²⁸ The woman’s reactions to the living conditions and appearance of the city shed light on the shock of industrialization in the personal and general sense. Not only does the heroine have to acquaint herself with a new culture and new neighbors, she also has to learn the strange new laws of nature that seem to govern the city. The clouds in the sky have a different appearance and do not signal the coming of rain, but rather hang forever in the air and cast a dingy haze over everything. Vision seems to perform a different function as well. When she gazes outside, she finds nothing of interest or use. She sees only what is directly in front of her, not the land surrounding her, not any indication about the position of the sun in the sky, not even a neighbor, just a dark unchanging wall. This story describes a unique and fictional experience, but this description of the city shows how menacing and unsettling the urban environment could be to people during the nineteenth century.

Literature that is more fantastical in nature also sheds light on the peculiarities of the nineteenth century urban experience. Edgar Allan Poe’s short story, “The Man of the Crowd,” follows an unnamed narrator in an unnamed city who becomes obsessed with identifying and learning about a man he spots on a crowded street. After following this man aimlessly through the city streets, discovering nothing about where he lives or works or who he knows, the narrator gives up and realizes that this man is a “man of the crowd,” and thus cannot be known.²⁹ The

²⁸ Elizabeth Gaskell, *North and South* (Chapman & Hall, 1854).

²⁹ Edgar Allan Poe, “The Man of the Crowd,” in *Complete Stories and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1966), 215-221.

narrator's fascination with the man of the crowd closely resembles the learned man's preoccupation with his mysterious neighbor. Poe's story does not feature any overtly supernatural elements but it does delve into the overwhelming and almost maddening nature of living in a city. One evening, the narrator watches crowds of people walking down a busy avenue: "As the darkness came on, the throng momentarily increased; and by the time the lamps were well lighted, two dense and continuous tides of population were rushing past...I looked at the passengers in masses, and thought of them in their aggregate relations. Soon, however, I descended to details, and regarded with minute interest the innumerable varieties of figure, dress, air, gait, visage, and expression of countenance."³⁰ Just like the learned man, when confronted with the overwhelming numbers of the city, the narrator begins understanding people based on what categories they fit in. He focuses on what the people wear, how they walk, what expression they currently have on their face. Rather than concerning himself with the complex and fully developed personalities that each person has, the narrator finds stability in gaining a categorical knowledge of the people he can see. This strategy proves insufficient when he encounters the man of the crowd. In this story, the narrator has no trouble seeing the man, rather, he is unable to categorize what he sees in the man's expression:

"Any thing even remotely resembling that expression I had never seen before... As I endeavored, during the brief minute of my original survey, to form some analysis of the meaning conveyed, there arose confusedly and paradoxically within my mind, the ideas of vast mental power, of caution, of penuriousness, of avarice, of coolness, of malice, of blood-thirstiness, of triumph, of merriment, of excessive terror, of intense --of supreme despair."³¹

³⁰ Ibid. 216.

³¹ Ibid. 217.

The narrator is confronted with a new kind of ambiguity, one that is just as frustrating as Andersen's mysterious neighbor. Rather than a lack of information, the narrator encounters what he believes to be an impossible overflow of information. Because the man seems to fit into so many contradictory categories all at once, the narrator is effectively left in the same confused state as the learned man. And in an attempt to dispel this ambiguity, the narrator becomes fixated on determining the nature of this man. No matter the scope of an individual's vision and presence throughout the city, ambiguity and uncertainty is inevitable in the urban environment.

Although these examples do not claim to tell true stories, they nonetheless connect with specific aspects of nineteenth century urbanization and suggest potential psychological impacts of these conditions. For example, the way the crowd in Poe's tale "increased" when evening fell illustrates the modern phenomenon of commuting to and from work. One of the markers of industrialization in cities was the growing separation between the realms of work and home life. The impact this had on cities was that housing districts and less dense suburbs developed in order to accommodate the large numbers of workers.³² This process of dispersing the urban population was slow and unequal, leading to extremely dense neighborhoods in the inner city, like the one that the heroine in *North and South* moved into, and more open and affluent suburbs on the edges of the city. While this configuration might have proven more efficient for mass production, the seas of people commuting each day could be overwhelming to the senses as each city dweller passes, bumps into, glances at hundreds of other people without ever getting the chance to know them.

This fascination with the city as a place of both opportunity and danger is understandable considering the massive changes that were taking place around the time these stories were

³² Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton University Press, 2014), 307.

written. As previously mentioned, cities have been part of human civilization for millenia and the rates of urbanization in different areas varied depending on natural resources, political organization, and economic structure. Even when the long history of the urban space is taken into account, the nineteenth century stands out as a period of unprecedented growth for nations in Europe and around the world.³³ In previous centuries, the percentage of people living in rural settings dwarfed the percentage of those living in cities, but the nineteenth century saw this proportion flip in many regions.³⁴ This great shift in living patterns and culture found expression in nonfiction and fiction narratives during this time period.

Urbanization in the late eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth centuries is often tied to industrialization, but urbanization can be thought of as a process deeply tied to many forces. In many cases, industrialization was not the primary force driving the expansion of cities.³⁵ Germany, for example, was populated with many urban centers that developed because of smaller scale trade. When mass industry began to take root there, it only expanded pre-existing cities.³⁶ The quintessential urban center of the nineteenth century, London, accumulated a high population and an important position in the nation primarily because of its political importance as the center of power for Britain and its growing colonial empire.³⁷ Manchester, on the other hand, thrived and grew mainly because of large scale industry. In fact, the establishment of large factories in the late eighteenth and early twentieth centuries brought people to the city at a rate faster than politics and infrastructure could keep up with.³⁸ Although industrialization can be seen in the developments of many urban centers in the nineteenth century, it was not the only

³³ Osterhammel, *Transformation of the World*, 245.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid. 249.

³⁶ Wolfgang Kollmann, "The Process of Urbanization in Germany at the Height of the Industrialization Period," *Journal of Contemporary History* 4, no. 3 (July 1969): 59.

³⁷ Osterhammel, *Transformation of the World*, 268, 272, 295.

³⁸ Ibid. 273.

force that powered the process of urbanization. Rather, there were a variety of forces, such as changing political and economic organization that contributed to the rise of cities and the transformation of culture more broadly.

When it comes to understanding the extent of urbanization in the nineteenth century, population growth in cities and percent of national population residing in cities is perhaps the most straightforward metric. This, of course, cannot be relied on in all situations because access to statistical information varies by region and because different areas had different standards about who exactly could be considered a member of the population. Information about the growth of cities in Russia, for example, is much more difficult to find than information about London or Berlin, due in part to the lack of official census taking throughout almost the entire nineteenth century.³⁹ In addition, accessing archives that might contain more information about the population is often restricted to non-Russian scholars.⁴⁰ Among Russian scholars, it is generally claimed that urban growth rates were generally very slow and only really took off with late nineteenth century municipal reform, industrialization, and the emancipation of the serfs in 1861.⁴¹ This resulted in the population residing in Russian urban centers tripling in just forty years, going from around 600,000 in 1859 to 1.85 million in 1897.⁴² Although some scholars argue that the urban presence was larger at the end of the eighteenth century than is generally agreed upon, it is clear that the nineteenth century saw an unprecedented population growth in cities across Russia. As we shall see, even considering the rapid expansion of the urban population, Russia is one of the less extreme examples of how drastically national demographics transformed during this time period.

³⁹ Richard Rowland, "Urban In-migration in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia," in *The City in Russian History*, ed. Michael Hamm (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1976), 115.

⁴⁰ Rozman, "Comparative Approaches to Urbanization: Russia," 74.

⁴¹ Michael Hamm, *The City in Russian History* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1976), 89.

⁴² Roger L. Thiede, "Industry and Urbanization in New Russia From 1860 to 1910," in *The City in Russian History*, ed. Michael Hamm (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1976), 133.

If Russia's cities lie at one end of the spectrum of urban population growth, London lies at the other. The British Isles as a whole experienced an acceleration of urbanization rates earlier than any other region in Europe, aided in part by large-scale industry that turned small towns into crowded cities.⁴³ As mentioned above, London developed industry but not to the same extent as northern cities like Manchester and Birmingham.⁴⁴ Its status as the capital of Britain and the British empire, and as hub of medium-scale industry resulted in steady growth in the last half of the eighteenth century and exponential growth in the nineteenth. In preceding centuries, London was one of the biggest cities in the world, but experienced very slow growth from the seventeenth century into the eighteenth, going from about a 25% growth rate between 1670 and 1715 to about a 17% growth rate between 1715 and 1760. After the mid eighteenth century, large industry attracted large numbers of people from the countryside as they migrated in search of work. This resulted in London's 1800 population doubling by around 1850 and then more than doubling by around 1900.⁴⁵ The impact of urbanization can perhaps most palpably be felt in the case of London and Britain more broadly. Changing political structure saw the unprecedented expansion of pre-existing cities and the transformation of small towns into dense industrial centers.

Other cities throughout Europe and North America experienced rapid urbanization throughout this time period as well. Berlin saw its population expand at a rate faster than that of London, though it only began accelerating by the mid-nineteenth century and did not ever surpass London's size.⁴⁶ The newly formed United States, whose cities were hundreds of years younger than their European counterparts, expanded at rates faster than had ever been seen in the

⁴³ Hohenberg and Lees, *Making of Urban Europe*, 220.

⁴⁴ Osterhammel, *Transformation of the World*, 272.

⁴⁵ Old Bailey Online, "A Population History of London."

⁴⁶ Hohenberg and Lees, *Making of Urban Europe*, 215.

Old World.⁴⁷ In the space of just three years, from 1783 to 1786, New York City's population doubled, and then in the next decade it doubled again.⁴⁸ Certainly, the population of New York City in the late eighteenth century was dwarfed by London and even Moscow's populations. Nevertheless, the rate at which cities in the United States expanded was unprecedented. Even more remarkable is the fact that the cities that grew the fastest, such as New York City and Chicago, were virtually nonexistent two centuries earlier.⁴⁹ As opposed to European cities, which were settled and were consistently populated starting from the middle ages to even further back, the biggest American cities were founded just a couple generations before they reached a massive scale. Much like European cities, business and market forces led to an increased demand for labor, which attracted people from the rural countryside to the city with the hope of ascending the socioeconomic ladder.⁵⁰ Transportation systems such as the canal and railroad networks allowed cities to expand in geographic size, and thus, accommodate larger populations. Over the course of the nineteenth century, New York City's population expanded not just because of the stream of immigrants and young job-seekers into Manhattan, but also because the boundaries of the city widened to include surrounding regions like Brooklyn and Queens.⁵¹ Although urbanization appeared in varying ways and because of varying forces, the landscape of Europe and the United States transformed in ways never seen before.

Population growth rates cannot fully illustrate the urban transformation throughout the nineteenth century. Not only did cities expand during this time period, they also became more specialized and varied in their functions. New types of cities based on new technology and cultural trends appeared in the form of resort cities, railroad junction cities, and newly expanded

⁴⁷ Osterhammel, *Transformation of the World*, 258.

⁴⁸ Ira Rosenwaike, *Population History of New York City* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1972), 16.

⁴⁹ Osterhammel, *Transformation of the World*, 258.

⁵⁰ Rosenwaike, *Population History of New York City*, 33.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* 49.

port cities.⁵² Port cities that may have already been established thrived on the larger quantities of trade goods that were being shipped around the world. Mining towns expanded into urban centers as the increased demand for raw materials encouraged deeper and more extensive mine systems.⁵³ So even if an individual became acquainted with the rhythm and oddities of their own city, there would be no guarantee that they would have a leg-up in another city. Because of the increasing specialization and variation between cities, becoming familiar and comfortable with all urban spaces would be impossible. Someone who grew up in a large-scale industrial city would be just as lost as a rural farmer stepping into the city for the first time. Not only were cities in isolation incomprehensible in their complexity, but cities on a global scale were growing more complex in their relations to each other.

Advances in transportation also contributed to the development of these specialized relationships between cities. Transportation and communication technology resulted in the linking up of major cities across Europe, Asia, and colonial cities in far flung regions into a larger network.⁵⁴ Because of this, the contractions and fluctuations in one part of the urban world would be felt in other parts, even if separated by thousands of miles. The slowing of industry in Britain would thus impact the productivity and wellbeing of any cities that relied on British industry. City dwellers, more than ever before, were impacted by forces much larger than themselves. Although each citizen would appear to have a distinct role and place within the city, their roles cannot be understood within the confines of a single city.⁵⁵ These citydwellers are participating in and are driven by a network of economic and political forces which the average person did not fully understand.

⁵² Osterhammel, *Transformation of the World*, 246.

⁵³ *Ibid.* 267, 275.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* 263.

⁵⁵ Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *The American Journal of Sociology* 44, no. 1 (July 1938): 23.

In addition, these advancements facilitated the urbanization of the rural world. As cities grew larger, increasing in political and economic significance while attracting people from all regions, the influence of the urban world began to spill past the boundaries of the city. More and more people became connected to the city, enchanted by its “spell,” whether or not they lived there or in the countryside.⁵⁶ People might be connected to the urban world through their family or social relations if someone in their life lives in or moves between cities. They also might be connected economically if the raw materials they produce or the food they grow is bought and sold in cities. Increasingly, urbanization could not be understood as the size of cities, but as the extent of the city’s influence over individuals within and around it.⁵⁷

To move away from these more abstract changes, the physical appearance of the urban landscape was transforming as well. Streets broadened into avenues, roads were paved with brick and stone, public transportation infrastructure cut through neighborhoods, and walls that had previously served as fortifications were torn down to make room for building projects.⁵⁸ The layout of cities changes as well. The flood of people from the countryside and immigrants from other nations resulted in the central regions of the city becoming denser and denser. Houses and apartments were pushed closer together so while some streets widened, the amount of usable space between housing became smaller and more cramped.⁵⁹ The number of people residing in each residence rose so even inside one’s property, personal space diminished (Hamm 196).⁶⁰ And in order to accommodate the large number of people living in such a small space, apartment buildings were reconfigured to maximize each square inch.⁶¹ Like a living creature, as the city

⁵⁶ Ibid. 5.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 6.

⁵⁸ Osterhammel, *Transformation of the World*, 246, 297, 300.

⁵⁹ Hohenberg and Lees, *Making of Urban Europe*, 295.

⁶⁰ Michael Hamm, “The Breakdown of Urban Modernization: A Prelude to the Revolutions of 1917,” in *The City in Russian History* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1976), 196.

⁶¹ Hohenberg and Lees, *Making of Urban Europe*, 309.

grew, it developed new shapes and strategies for living in the most productive way possible. As the nineteenth century progressed, city dwellers saw their communities expand and the material make-up of their world — from the stones beneath their feet to the layout of their homes — transform.

These are just a few ways that urbanization during this time period can be understood. The rate of population increase in cities and the specialization and interconnection of urban centers illustrate, to some degree, the large presence the city had in the nineteenth century. Just as many new ideologies and industrial models were taking shape, the urban environment was growing and developing in a similar way. In order to get insight into the impact these urban structural changes had on city dwellers and, more broadly, those influenced by the city, we can now turn back to the doppelgänger narrative.

The city makes a powerful appearance in Robert Louis Stevenson's 1886 novella, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. In it, Stevenson tells the story of Mr. Utterson, a well-adjusted citizen of London who gets caught up in figuring out what is plaguing his friend, Dr. Jekyll. Although Jekyll seems like a regular man, Mr. Utterson discovers that Jekyll has split his consciousness into two people — Jekyll, his moral, behaved self, and Hyde, his crazed, sinister self. Jekyll had managed to keep these two parts of himself separate for a time, but before long, Hyde begins to take over and torment Jekyll. The city becomes a central focus of the narrative early on, when Mr. Utterson is walking through “a busy quarter of London” and observes that:

“The shop fronts stood along that thoroughfare with an air of invitation, like rows of smiling saleswomen. Even on Sunday, when it veiled its more florid charms and lay comparatively empty of passage, the street shone out in contrast to its dingy neighborhood, like a fire in a forest.”⁶²

⁶² Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (New York: Dover Publications, 1991), 2.

The street appears here as a sort of sentient character. It takes on the form of humans when it seems to smile out at Mr. Utterson, like “saleswomen.” In addition, it seems to act of its own volition by veiling its “more florid charms” on Sundays and revealing them throughout the rest of the week. And because of the streets position next to a more “dingy” area, it seems to shine with as much force and independent movement as a “fire in a forest.” Just as Mr. Utterson identifies the behaviors and sentiments of this section of the city, he encounters another area which deepens the complexity of this portrait of the city:

“Two doors from one corner, on the left hand going east, the line was broken by the entry of a court; and just at that point, a certain sinister block of building thrust forward its gable on the street. It was two storeys high; showed no window, nothing but a door on the lower storey and a blind forehead of discolored wall on the upper; and bore in every feature the marks of prolonged and sordid negligence.”⁶³

The city street is illustrated with an attention to its complexity and multifaceted nature. It contains vivacity enough to resemble actual human beings not just in their appearance, but also in their contradictions. In one moment a section of the city can be inviting and “smiling,” and at another, at an arbitrary “point,” it becomes “sinister” and “sordid.” The description of this street illustrates a stark duality that will come to characterize the premise of this narrative. It is this duality between pleasant gentility and depraved hostility that so plagues Dr. Jekyll. Before the reader knows the premise of the narrative, and before the narrator comes to realize the dark secret of Dr. Jekyll, the setting imitates these two fundamental aspects of this story. The city acts as an extension of the narrative’s themes while also taking on its own independent form. Just like any human characters one might encounter in a story, the city seems to develop and transform on its own, animated by a force larger than any one individual can understand. Here we can see

⁶³ Ibid. 2.

some aspects of the unsettling rapidity at which landscapes and cultures changed around city dwellers during this time period. The city, like Dr. Jekyll, might appear orderly and understandable, but could transform into something frightening without any notice.

As we have seen, the rapid rate at which urbanization was taking place during the nineteenth century would understandably create a level of disorientation for its occupants. With the advent of large cities, people were faced with living in a community so sprawling, diverse, and complex that a full understanding of each part of it could never be achieved.⁶⁴ Nineteenth century city dwellers had to cope with the idea that the place they called home, no matter how much they investigated its secrets and memorized its peculiarities, would always remain unknown to them in some capacity. Stevenson illustrates this sensation by juxtaposing vastly different descriptions of the city within the space of just a few paragraphs. On one street in a “busy quarter of London,” the city appears quaint and pleasant, bustling with people and filled with “shop fronts [that] stood along that thoroughfare with an air of invitation, like rows of smiling saleswomen.”⁶⁵ On that same street though, lurks “a certain sinister block of building” that “bore in every feature, the marks of prolonged and sordid negligence.”⁶⁶ Rather than simply state that the street was crowded or busy, Stevenson incorporates descriptors like “smiling” and “sinister.” In the same way he asserts the city is inviting, he also claims that one of the buildings has a “blind forehead.” The fact that all of these descriptors are typically associated with characterizing people lends a human-like quality to the city. Instead of just being a collection of buildings and streets, the language in this passage suggests that the city occupied a much more personified presence in the lives of its inhabitants. Exploring the city therefore could be likened

⁶⁴ Judith Flanders, *Inside the Victorian Home: a Portrait of Domestic Life in Victorian England* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2004), 390.

⁶⁵ Stevenson, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, 2.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* 2.

to exploring the personality of an actual human being. Stevenson illustrates how urban spaces now seemed to have a life of their own, with secrets and memories and infinitely many complexities. In late nineteenth century London, when a series of murders by Jack the Ripper took place, people began to speculate that the gruesome crimes were an outgrowth of the neighborhood in which they took place.⁶⁷ It was no longer just people who characterized the community in which they lived, but now the city was thought to influence its inhabitants. Stevenson's portrayal of the city as a human-like individual illustrates the shifting way people thought about community. A community was not any longer solely defined by the people who populated it, but had become a place with an identity of its own, capable of evolving independently of the people within it.

The city's presence extends even further to act as a connection point between the supernatural and the more realistic aspects of the story. One night, Mr. Hyde murders an innocent person who happens to pass him by in the street. When Mr. Utterson gets word of this, he goes to confront Hyde, observing the city on the his carriage ride to the perpetrator's house:

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

⁶⁷ Judith Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 193.

and slatternly passengers, and its lamps, which had never been extinguished or had been kindled afresh to combat the mournful reinvasion of darkness, seemed in [Mr. Utterson's] eyes, like a district of some city in a nightmare."⁶⁸

At a moment of such high stakes, Stevenson draws attention not to Mr. Utterson's anxiety of anticipation, but to the appearance of the city as a way to embody the harrowing situation and emotions of the moment. Perhaps the most salient feature of his description of the city is the thick layer of fog that covers it. This fog is not beautiful like the mist that might envelope a forest in the early morning. It is polluted and colored brown from smoke. Nor is this fog peaceful. Rather, it is "embattled," whipped about by the wind so much that it obscures Mr. Utterson's view of the city and disorients him. As he rides through the city, he catches sight of the streets where the fog has lifted, creating a sort of strobe effect that gives him short, scattered, and wholly disconnected glimpses of the city. Even though this takes place during the morning, he sees darkness as if night were falling over the city, only broken by occasional "haggard" shafts of daylight and the pockets of hazy light that seem to emanate from some "strange conflagration." Because of this heavy yet inconsistent fog that fills the streets, Mr. Utterson is unable to track his progress through the city. There are no sustained points of reference that he can use, no sun to use for orientation, and, since he is riding in a carriage, he can't use the movements of his body, the stepping of one foot in front of the other, to determine if he is really moving or not. It is as if he were watching some "nightmare" as it plays out before him. Later, when he learns the true identity of Mr. Hyde and discovers the hidden cruel nature of his friend Jekyll, Mr. Utterson's life will seem to transform into a sort of nightmare. Just like the "city in a nightmare" he sees around him, Mr. Utterson's relationship with Jekyll shifts and transforms without notice. Although the physical make-up of London has not changed, and Jekyll is still the

⁶⁸ Stevenson, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, 15.

same person, they both seem to take on wholly different characters from one moment to the next. Even though Mr. Utterson has known both London and his friend for years, it takes just a small shift for both to become alien and unknowable to him. In this description, the city acts as a sort of bridge between the stable, understandable world that Mr. Utterson has been living in, and the horrifying, supernatural world of Jekyll and Hyde. In addition, the city reflects the unsettling experience of discovering Jekyll's doppelgänger and amplifies the sense of uncertainty Mr. Utterson faces.

Like in Andersen's short story, when the doppelgänger first appears in the narrative, it appears to be an outgrowth of the urban environment and an embodiment of the threatening nature of the increasingly complex city. Mr. Utterson's friend, Mr. Enfield, describes the first time he, and the audience, interacts with this doppelgänger:

"I was coming home from some place at the end of the world, about three o'clock of a black winter morning, and my way lay through a part of town where there was literally nothing to be seen but lamps. Street after street, and all the folks asleep — street after street, all lighted up as if for a procession, and all as empty as a church — till at last I got into that state of mind when a man listens and listens and begins to long for the sight of a policeman. All at once, I saw two figures: one a little man who was stumping along eastward at a good walk, and the other a girl of maybe eight or ten who was running as hard as she was able down a cross street, Well, sir, the two ran into one another naturally enough at the corner; and then came the horrible part of the thing; for the man trampled calmly over the child's body and left her screaming on the ground."⁶⁹

An essential part of this introduction to Hyde's character is the description of the physical environment. Unlike the previous examples, this description of the city depicts a landscape

⁶⁹ Ibid. 2-3.

devoid of hustle and bustle. Rather than being incomprehensible because of its unpredictability and surplus of information, the city here is incomprehensible because of its barrenness and its haunting repetition. In this moment of being alone, Mr. Enfield confronts the expanse of the city, no longer obscured by masses of people roaming its streets. He focuses on the lamps, how they are lined up on all the streets, “as if for a procession,” but with no one around to participate in it. In addition, the narrator repeatedly states “street after street” as if entranced by the geographic expanse of London. The unease felt here can be interpreted as a discomfort with the existence of the city as an independent, animate force. When the streets are crowded with people, it is easy to see the purpose of the urban landscape. The city exists for the people that inhabit it. Street lamps burn to light the way for people in the early morning or late at night. Each street is meant to transport people from one place to another, and even if they do seem to repeat one after the other without much variation, they are all made distinct by the people that roam them and the shops that take up residence along them. But in this scene, the city exists apart from humanity. Its streets expand as if into infinity not for any people, but simply because that is the shape of the city. The lamps go on burning through the night even if no one happens to use their light. The city in this scene exists as an independent entity, with its own form and life even when there is no one around to justify its existence. Out of this gloomy landscape emerges Mr. Hyde, the “little man who was stumping along” one of the barren streets. At first, this seems like a good thing; the narrator was just hoping to spot a policeman. Any person he might come across would remedy the unease caused by the emptiness of the city. Rather than abating the menace of the city, Mr. Hyde only augments it. Just as the lamps and streets marched on into the distance, Mr. Hyde literally marches forward, heeding no obstacles that might disrupt him. And when he meets the young girl at a street corner, he keeps marching, as if a machine, animate but with no regard for

human life. In this way, Mr. Hyde is an extension of the urban environment Mr. Enfield describes in this scene. Hyde personifies the threat that the narrator feels when faced with the empty streets of London. Rather than disperse the fear of the city into several criminals throughout the narrative, Stevenson coalesces into one mysterious character the danger the city potentially poses to individual inhabitants. The doppelgänger in this narrative functions to augment and personify the anxiety evoked by the urban landscape.

The doppelgänger in Dostoyevsky's, *The Double*, performs a similar function and, like Mr. Hyde, is first encountered on the barren streets of St. Petersburg. *The Double* follows a rather unremarkable man named Mr. Golyadkin as he works to increase his standing at work and win the heart of an aristocrat. This all changes when he meets a man who looks exactly like him. In short order, his double ruins Mr. Golyadkin's relations at work, spends his money, humiliates him, and eventually gets him sent to an insane asylum. The night that Mr. Golyadkin meets his double, he attends a party with his socioeconomic superiors in an attempt to ingratiate himself with them. However, he only ends up embarrassing himself in front of them and rushes out into the night to walk home alone:

“It was a dreadful night, a real November night, dank, misty, rainy and snowy, a night pregnant with colds, agues, quinsies, gumboils, and fevers of every conceivable shape and size — put in a nutshell, a night bestowing all the bounties of a St. Petersburg November. The wind howled through the streets, lashing the black waters of the Fontanka [river] high above the mooring rings, and vigorously rattling the feeble lanterns along the embankment, which responded with those thin, ear-piercing squeaks, that compose the unceasing concert of jarring sound so familiar to every inhabitant of St. Petersburg...

There was not a soul anywhere, nor could there be it seemed at such an hour in such weather.”⁷⁰

This description of the city is strikingly similar to the description of London on the night of Mr. Utterson’s encounter with Mr. Hyde. In both cases the narrator walks through a city darkened by night and devoid of any passersby. And in both, the city is animate, despite there being no one around to give it life. London appeared animate due to its stubborn persistence to maintain its own light, its own expansive form without the help of its inhabitants. In this scene, St. Petersburg is alive in a much more overt way, given a dynamic and terrifying form by the storm. The river that runs through the city rises and bursts over the edge of its banks, the lanterns swing wildly and send out “ear-piercing squeaks” as the wind rushes around them. The violent storm transforms the city into a sort of monster, capable of moving, growing, creating sound and light. In addition, this storm results in the urban landscape becoming more difficult to comprehend: “[The storm was] giving no quarter or respite, gumming up his eyes, cutting into him from all sides, chilling him to the bone, and driving him off his path and out of his mind.”⁷¹ In Stevenson’s London, the city remains unknowable because of the fog that obscures it, the light that creates illusions, and the darkness that falls over it each night. So it is with Mr. Golyadkin and St. Petersburg, but to a more extreme extent. The weather plaguing the city erases Mr. Golyadkin’s ability to perceive the world around him. His eyes are clouded by the rain, his sense of touch is numbed by the intense chill, and his sense of orientation becomes so distorted that he can’t keep on his path toward home. Like Mr. Utterson’s observance of the city passing by on his way to confront Hyde, Mr. Golyadkin is powerless over the environment, unable to even keep track of his place within the urban landscape. He is at the mercy of the city and the storm. He

⁷⁰ Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Double* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958), 72.

⁷¹ *Ibid.* 72.

remarks that it seemed like this barrage of his senses “had fallen upon him at once as if by express agreement with his enemies.”⁷² His surroundings seem to act against him as an extension of the will of his enemies, carrying out the threat he felt earlier that evening at the party. Rather than being in control of his environment, Mr. Golyadkin is depicted here as powerless within a chaotic urban landscape.

The relationship between Mr. Golyadkin and the city finds deeper meaning in the context of nineteenth century urbanization patterns of St. Petersburg. Beginning at about the mid-century, Russia’s urban population began growing rapidly. Mostly due to the establishment of industry in cities like Moscow and St. Petersburg, rural migrants began flooding the cities.⁷³ The results of this were social, in the birth of new social classes, and physical, in the intense crowding within cities.⁷⁴ In the case of St. Petersburg, the city government did not invest in enough building projects to accommodate the higher population, so as people continued to migrate to it, living space was divided again and again.⁷⁵ With not enough housing to go around and continually increasing demand for rooms, the price of even the smallest apartments rocketed up, forcing people to live together in rooms too small to accommodate them. On average, of the city’s one- or two-room apartments, four people lived in each room designed only to accommodate one person.⁷⁶ To an inhabitant of St. Petersburg, the city might have seemed to be closing in around them, growing smaller and smaller as more people filled its streets and homes. Aspects of life that might have been taken for granted in the countryside, like privacy, access to light and fresh air, space to move around, became commodified and portioned out depending on socioeconomic

⁷² Ibid. 72.

⁷³ Robert Gohstand, “The Shaping of Moscow by Nineteenth-Century Trade,” in *The City in Russian History*, ed. Michael Hamm (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1976), 160.

⁷⁴ Thiede, “Industry and Urbanization in New Russia,” 125; Hamm, “The Breakdown of Urban Modernization,” 182.

⁷⁵ Hamm, “The Breakdown of Urban Modernization,” 183.

⁷⁶ Ibid. 196.

status.⁷⁷ In this time period, the city, supposedly a marker of humanity's dominance over nature, did not do anything to put the individual in charge of their environment. Except for the very wealthy, individuals were at the mercy of the changing environment around them. With each new wave of migrants into the city, inhabitants watched their privacy, living space, and ability to influence their surroundings slowly wane. This is what we see in Mr. Golyadkin's experience walking through the city. He is assaulted by the driving rain, howling winds, flashing lantern light, and surging river. His senses are overwhelmed and he is physically shifted from his desired path. In his walk that night, we see a distillation of the threatening and overpowering nature the city took on as urbanization accelerated in the nineteenth century.

The first time Mr. Golyadkin catches a glimpse of his doppegänger, it embodies a distinctly social anxiety that the protagonist and the contemporary St. Petersburg citizen face. On his walk through the storming city, Mr. Golyadkin comes across his doppelgänger without fully realizing it, first on a bridge having lost all sense of his surroundings:

“Mr. Golyadkin had then reached such depths of despair, had been so wearied, tormented and dispirited, that he had forgotten everything—the Izmaylovsky Bridge, Shetilavochnaya Street, and the position he was in. What did it matter? He didn't care... Why should he worry? Suddenly he shuddered all over and instinctively leapt sideways a couple of yards. Filled with unspeakable uneasiness, he peered about him. But there was no one... And yet he thought someone had just been standing right there beside him, also with elbows on the railings, and, strange to relate, had even spoken to him—had spoken quickly, jerkily and not altogether intelligibly.”⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Hohenberg and Lees, *Making of Urban Europe*, 295.

⁷⁸ Dostoyevsky, *The Double*, 74.

Up until this point, Mr. Golyadkin had been besieged by the storming night and fretting about his public humiliation at the party. Right at the moment when he seems to let go of his fear of the storm and his social faux pas, a new source of anxiety materializes beside him, in the form of his doppelgänger. The doppelgänger, though, does not act as an antidote to the stupor Mr. Golyadkin has fallen into. Just as his “position” in the city fades from his consciousness, his doppelgänger hovers just beyond the edge of his comprehension, as obscure to him as the darkened streets around him. Only in his instinctive reaction is he able to piece together what he saw. Rather than being a bit of human connection to pull Mr. Golyadkin out of his despair, the doppelgänger only increases his disorientation, acting as an extension of the environment that put him in that state in the first place. The doppelgänger is effectively a part of the city, but simply bears a human form instead of a concrete or brick one. This doppelgänger’s human appearance must not be overlooked though. Lost within an overwhelming, incomprehensible city, Mr. Golyadkin finally finds another person along his walk but is incapable of communicating with them. He can’t even remember what this person might have looked like. The doppelgänger acts as an extension of the incomprehensibility of the city but brings this incomprehension into the realm of human relationships. In a way, this interaction mirrors his interactions with the people at the party earlier that night. Even though he was in their presence and could physically communicate with them, he was unable to form a successful connection with them. The same can be said for the relationships in a broader urban context. Although the city streets are flooded with people, forming sustained relationships with each individual is impossible, making the risk of being misunderstood or cheated or done wrong ever present. Mr. Golyadkin’s ghostly first encounter with his doppelgänger embodies an inability to form connections in an urban context, and the intense uneasiness that comes along with this.

As Mr. Golyadkin comes to interact and grow familiar with his doppelgänger, the doppelgängers antagonism embodies different aspects of urban anxiety. One such urban anxiety that connects rather neatly to the infrastructural changes of the time period is the double's embodiment of the overwhelming and frightening nature of the high population density in cities. Once Mr. Golyadkin meets him, the doppelgänger begins tormenting Mr. Golyadkin by taking his identity, ruining his relationships, and humiliating him in the workplace by outperforming him. Slowly driven to despair by his double's constant hounding, Mr. Golyadkin slips into a nightmare where his double torments him yet again:

“Out of his mind with shame and despair, the ruined but rightful Mr. Golyadkin fled blindly wherever fate might lead. But as often as his footfalls rang upon the granite pavement, an exact image of Golyadkin the depraved and abominable, would spring up out of the ground. And each of these exact images would come waddling along behind the next, in a long procession like a gaggle of geese, after Golyadkin senior. Escape was impossible. The pitiable Golyadkin grew breathless with terror. In the end there sprang up so fearful a multitude of exact images that the whole capital was blocked with them.”⁷⁹

In this nightmare, in this space where all of his fears are free to take form, Mr. Golyadkin finds himself in the streets of St. Petersburg, surrounded by endless multiplications of his double. On one level, these multiplications are the product of the physical material of the city around him. The “granite” that he walks on gives rise to each new copy of his doppelgänger. On another level, his own actions, “his footfalls,” give rise to these “abominable” copies of himself. Just like when he wandered through the stormy city streets, and just like when he attempted to navigate the complex social hierarchy of St. Petersburg's aristocracy, Mr. Golyadkin is powerless to his surroundings. Although he might have a semblance of control in the way he is able to change his

⁷⁹ Ibid. 171.

location in this dream city by walking, each step he takes results in the multiplication of what he wants most to escape. This powerlessness also expresses itself in the sheer multitude of individual doubles that surround him. All the antagonistic and threatening characteristics that have been associated with Mr. Golyadkin's double are now multiplied and dispersed to all members of the St. Petersburg population. The multitude of the doubles, the way they clog the streets and crowd around him no matter where he goes, generates a "breathless" anxiety in Mr. Golyadkin. In this scene, the doppelganger expresses the more general fear of the individual being powerless over his surroundings and the more specific anxiety of the sheer number of people crowding the city hindering the individual's ability to fully understand, and therefore control their environment and their place within it. The doppelganger conveys a heightened sense of terror about these aspects of urbanization because of its antagonistic role in the larger narrative. As the main enemy of the narrator, the doppelganger serves to transfer the threat associated with it to all the different forms it takes on. In this case, because it takes on the role of St. Petersburg populace, its threatening nature is now associated with the St. Petersburg populace. Mr. Golyadkin's double performs a role similar to Mr. Hyde in the way he embodies and augments the incomprehensibility of the urban landscape. This dream sequence suggests that this double also serves to express a supernatural sense of fear generated by the increasingly cramped living conditions in nineteenth century St. Petersburg.

Doppelgängers as the Objects of Urban Paranoia

The powerful presence of the city in these novels can rather simply be connected to the infrastructural and demographic upheaval of the nineteenth century. The supernatural spin put on these stories is a bit more difficult to pin down as far as historical records go. Why would the city be the site of so much mythologizing, fantasizing, and anthropomorphizing? The wilderness seems a much more ripe place to spawn haunting tales and ghostly speculations about the forces that dwell there. The frontier is naturally a place of vulnerability, a place where the unknown seems most dangerous, a place where there is no infrastructure, no human companionship, no culture to protect individuals from harm. Think of the gothic tropes of the cabin in the woods, the witch in the forest, the evil villain who resides in a castle far away. It seems that everything that makes the wilderness so haunting — the isolation, the unknown, the primordial nature of the landscape — is not present in cities. The very nature of cities is to be inhabited, integrated into a regional or global network, and intentionally constructed.⁸⁰ But, as the passages above illustrate, the city has a foreboding and powerful presence in culture. It seems to have its own personality, its own body that functions, at least partly, autonomously. And within the vast built, seemingly known environment, supernatural beings can materialize and bring the haunting nature of the urban landscape into focus.

As many scholars have observed before, the city is not just a collection of people, a political unit, and an ordering of buildings. Something is created when all these tangible features come together. As Robert Park, a sociologist who wrote in the early twentieth century, described the city: “We may think of it as a mechanism — a psychophysical mechanism — in and through

⁸⁰ Edward Krupat, *People in Cities: The Urban Environment and its Effects* (Cambridgeshire: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 14.

which private and political interests find corporate expression.”⁸¹ The organization of the city, the close proximity and the high density of people hoping to live peacefully alongside each other, creates a unique “mechanism” by which the values, cultures, and interests of all individuals flow and interact. Something new is created by the city’s physical features, which Park and other urban sociologists, historians, and psychologists have sought to understand. Park summed it up best when he asserted that a city is not merely an “artificial construction,” rather, it is “a state of mind.”⁸²

This state of mind seems to exist not only within the individual inhabitants of the city, but also in the intangible atmosphere of the city, inhabiting the streets of the city like a ghost. Steve Pile describes the personality that resides in each city as a phantasmagoria.⁸³ Phantasmagoria was a form of theater in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that used hidden lanterns to project moving shapes onto a wall or surface that the audience would watch. Pile draws attention to the fact that these performances were characterized by ephemerality, visuals, and an attempt to conceal the means of producing such shadowy images. He asserts that the natures of cities, the mood and patterns of emotion that structure the city, are like these phantasmagoric performances.⁸⁴ The city’s distinct personality is real, it influences and evokes reactions from all those who bear witness to it, but it also cannot be touched or captured or studied because of its transitory nature. It also remains obscure because the means by which this personality is produced are hidden.

⁸¹ Robert Park, “The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the City Environment,” *The American Journal of Sociology* 20, no. 5 (March 1915): 578.

⁸² Robert Park, “The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the Urban Environment,” in *The City*, ed. Robert Park, Ernest Burgess, and Roderick McKenzie (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1925), 1.

⁸³ Steve Pile, *Real Cities: Modernity, Space, and the Phantasmagorias of City Life* (SAGE Publications Ltd. 2005), Introduction, <https://sk-sagepub-com.ccl.idm.oclc.org/books/real-cities>.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

This adds another layer of unknowability to the metropolis. As we have already seen, the vastness of the city and the magnitude of the population makes it impossible for a city dweller to be truly familiar with their surroundings. No matter how much they might attempt to acquaint themselves with each person, each corner, each bit of trash in their city, there would always be more to know. This is not only the result of the limits of human cognition but also the transitional nature of the city's population.⁸⁵ On top of this unknowability rests the prospect of the phantasmagoric personality of the city. Even if someone was able to memorize each concrete feature of their urban surroundings, recognize each face and know each physical characteristic of each street, the personality of the city would still elude them. Despite its influence on the people and lifestyle of the city, this integral part of the metropolis is always changing, shifting with each moment, and impossible to capture, like shadows on a wall.

The layers of unknowability that characterize the city produce a profound anxiety in the minds of the inhabitants. Although this fear cannot be precisely identified in each city dweller at all times, the collective uncertainty about the urban environment finds expression in a variety of superstitions that pervade modern cities. In the chaos of metropolis, in the procession of sights and sounds and symbols, supernatural menaces are given ample room to take root and grow. Ghosts, for example, are common residents in some cities, walking the streets beside the living and reminding them of the terror and injustice and tragedy that gave birth to their spectral forms. Since ghosts are often tied to a location, such as the place of their death, they act as residents of the city more permanent than any others, able to shape the atmosphere of the city over the span of generations.⁸⁶ Vampires also have found a home in the modern city. In a world of strangers, where there is no easy way of keeping track of everyone, the mythical vampire is free to roam

⁸⁵ Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," 17.

⁸⁶ Pile, *Real Cities*, chap. 4.

and suck the life from anyone it pleases. In a more abstract way, the vampire behaves much like the modern industrial city works, gaining sustenance by feeding off of the lifeblood and labor of people.⁸⁷ And if it is to be believed that the lack of personal connection between city dwellers produces an atmosphere of competition and exploitation,⁸⁸ vampires embody the predatory relationship that exists within the urban population.

While the city appears to be a place of rationality and calculation, a place where magic and myth would find their demise,⁸⁹ the city is actually a place where supernatural ideas and fears find form. Pile suggests that all elements of the city, even the intangible fears and cultures that make up its personality, hold a deep meaning. This is because the city is a dream. It is fleeting, overflowing with confusing visuals and contrasting sounds, each containing a link to the unconscious of the city and its inhabitants. Pile follows Freud's understanding of dreams, interpreting everything as a means of revealing the repressed desires and fears of the dreamer. Ghosts therefore become symbols of the guilt that haunts the living residents of the city, the fear that the same fate might befall them. And Vampires become the embodiment of a deep unsettlement about the modes of urban living, the fear of anonymity and interchangeability, the desire to transcend the limitations of mortality.⁹⁰

As the previously mentioned doppelgänger narratives illustrate, the doppelgänger is very much a part of the sights and symbols of nineteenth century cities. Although they only exist in stories and legends, they illustrate the fears and desires — repressed or otherwise — of the people who lived in this urban context. So far, we have seen that doppelgängers can embody the unknowability of the city, the fear of the multitude, and the aversion to anonymity. They are

⁸⁷ Ibid. chap. 3.

⁸⁸ Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," 15.

⁸⁹ Robert Park, "Magic, Mentality, and City Life," in *The City*, ed. Robert Park, Ernest Burgess, and Roderick McKenzie (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1925), 131.

⁹⁰ Pile, *Real Cities*, introduction.

much more than this of course — we have not even explored the phenomenon of their replicated appearance — but before we move on, we must take a look at the specific features of the city that give rise to such intense fears, and their supernatural manifestations.

To some extent, civilization itself can be viewed as the reason for such fears and supernatural speculation. Freud theorized that civilization, and the demand to settle in communities, pitted two powerful forces against each other: the individual desire to gain satisfaction to the fullest degree and the needs of the collective. Because of this constant conflict, people are driven into a state of guilt and anxiety as they contend with their innate urges and the restrictions placed upon those urges by community and culture.⁹¹ With this tension raging at all times, people develop a sort of deeply seated stress that finds expression in a variety of ways. In the city, where the sensation of living amongst others is at its most profound, the struggle in the unconscious only intensifies. On one hand, the city dweller is dependent on all his neighbors to survive — they need other people to do almost anything, to procure food, to find shelter, to keep themselves warm.⁹² On the other hand, is distant from all these neighbors, knowing them only by their appearance or by the brief forgotten encounter that was necessary to perform a function of life. This is where the conflict between the individual's self interest and the community's demands is at its most intense, and consequently, where the psyche is at its most beleaguered.

Sociologists in the early twentieth centuries also worried about the effects of the urban lifestyle on the development of humanity as a whole. Some worried that city dwellers were so overwhelmed with all the demands of urban life that they were forced to dull all their sensations and face the world in an unfeeling and mechanical way.⁹³ As a result, relationships became more

⁹¹ Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010), 131-135.

⁹² Park, "Human Behavior in the Urban Environment," 15.

⁹³ Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," 14.

superficial, more calculating, and less compassionate.⁹⁴ Without emotion to deepen their relationships, city dwellers would be more inclined to make decisions that benefited themselves but harmed others. The breakdown of social order was thought to be the consequence of continued urbanization, a world where feeble laws and an undemocratic government would be the only thing to rein in the violent selfishness of the population.⁹⁵

Individual wellbeing and quality of life was also at stake in the urban environment. Although the individual was freed of the strict social mores and surveillance that accompany living in a small town, they were also more alone and less able to express themselves in a meaningful way.⁹⁶ With so many other people all free to uniquely define themselves and the scale of the city's size and goals far outstripping what one person can comprehend,⁹⁷ each individual is shrunken into an unremarkable cog in an infinitely complex machine. On top of the mental strain this put on city dwellers, some also worried that these circumstances produced more crime and perversion. In order to generate a sense of individualism, city dwellers are forced to intensify what they believe makes them unique, making their personal traits extreme to the point of dysfunction.⁹⁸ And in the city, where there are people of all types, those who express harmful forms of individualism would not be stopped by social convention, because there would surely be a group willing to accept those harmful behaviors and even make them more extreme.⁹⁹

Whether or not all these worries were warranted is not important to this study. What is important is that these worries existed and that they occupied such a powerful place in the minds of ordinary people that scholars felt the need to study and quantify them. Far from being a place

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Park, "Human Behavior in the Urban Environment," 24-34; Ernest Burgess, "The Growth of the City: An Introduction to a Research Project," in *The City*, ed. Robert Park, Ernest Burgess, and Roderick McKenzie (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1925), 59.

⁹⁶ Simmel, "Metropolis and Mental Life," 16-19.

⁹⁷ Wirth, *Urbanism as a Way of Life*, 23.

⁹⁸ Ibid. 19.

⁹⁹ Park, "Human Behavior in the Urban Environment," 45.

of structure and calculation even on the most concrete level, the city was (and continues to be) a place of intense anxiety and speculation. Because of all the new challenges and phenomena the city presented to the people of the nineteenth century, theories, speculations, and really anything that might help people navigate the urban environment were created. With such intense uncertainty about the risks of living in the urban world, people clung to philosophies and theories and rumors that gave them the illusion of understanding of the incomprehensible world around them.

Because of the prevalence of risk in modern city life, various fears and phantasms began to crop up as manifestations of this general anxiety about everyday life. One such phantasm was the Confidence Man. Youth advice books of the time spoke of them as a person that would prey on young men new to the city by winning their trust and then leading them into sin. The Confidence Man was said to use his charisma and friendliness to trick young men into thinking them a helpful guide in the big city. Having secured the youth's confidence, the trickster would then gain emotional and financial control over him. The Confidence Man loomed large in specifically the American apprehension about city life and modern modes of interpersonal interaction, but the general fear they embodied, the fear of imposters, was felt in urban contexts beyond the United States. This is because the conditions of urban living, not just American urban living, were thought to give rise to these sorts of imposters. In an environment where people must interact with and put a certain level of trust in strangers every day, the Confidence Man, who exploits others' freely given trust, is free to work. Especially at risk of being exploited by the Confidence Man was anyone who might be new to living in the city. Unaware of the norms and rules of city life, a Confidence Man could impress these people with their superior knowledge of the city and their uncommon friendliness. Soon though, these innocent newcomers

would be bankrupt and embedded in a lifestyle of sin.¹⁰⁰ Although it is difficult to determine how prevalent these Confidence Men were in nineteenth century cities, the fact that such an intense fear of them existed in popular media illustrates people's discomfort with the means of city living. In the fear of the Confidence Man lay the understanding that the average person was at risk every day in the city. Even though they might take precautions to do business and interact with only people they thought were trustworthy, the Confidence Man could easily undermine people's efforts by putting on a facade of amiability and reliability. And to make it even worse, these Confidence Men hid in plain sight — in the masses of strangers roaming the streets.¹⁰¹ The Confidence Man showed that even the most cautious city dweller was one wrong step away from moral and financial ruin. Hidden in plain sight, ready to attack anyone they please, holding only the most malicious intentions, it was as if a ghost or vampire or monster of some sort had taken human form in the shape of the Confidence Man.

One of the menaces of the Confidence Man was that he could appear in any context in any disguise. One such disguise mentioned in youth advice books was the "urban companion." This person would take advantage of the naivete of urban youth by acting like a companion and guide to them — teaching them tips and tricks to navigating the metropolis. Given the large amount of migration into the city, one could expect to find a large number of newcomers to the city at any given time. At the moment when young people entered the city for the first time, they were in a particularly vulnerable situation. For one thing, traditional modes of interacting with other people, especially strangers, were no longer useful in an urban context. In addition, the city and its anonymity offered newcomers an unprecedented opportunity to push moral boundaries without facing retaliation from the family or community that witnesses it. It is this vulnerability

¹⁰⁰ Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, 2-6.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.* 42.

that the urban companion was said to exploit. Under the guise of teaching the young newcomer about the city, the imposter would feed them false information that ultimately would result in their downfall.¹⁰² Upon entering the city, young people were advised to be suspicious of everyone, especially those who might offer them help or guidance. Like a shadow, the threat of the urban companion followed all young people, newcomers or not, as they navigated the urban world.

One of the earliest examples of doppelgänger narratives features a double that haunts the protagonist in much the same way as an urban companion might. In *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, Robert, the prideful son of a Calvinist preacher, comes to believe that he has been elected by God to enjoy a heavenly afterlife. Although he experiences moments of doubt in his elected status, Robert's certainty in his holiness is solidified by the arrival of his doppelgänger, who claims to be a disciple of his and a guide. Like most other doppelgänger stories, Robert's double leads him to ruin. Before this happens though, Robert is first attracted to the doppelgänger in much the same way that youth might feel attracted to the Confidence Man. While out walking one day, Robert sees someone who looks just like him and feels a mysterious draw toward him:

“I felt a sort of invisible power that drew me towards him, something like the force of enchantment, which I could not resist. As we approached each other, our eyes met, and I can never describe the strange sensations that thrilled through my whole frame at the impressive moment...What was my astonishment on perceiving that he was the same being as myself!...I conceived at first, that I saw a vision, and that my guardian angel had appeared to me at this important era of my life.”¹⁰³

¹⁰² Ibid. 11.

¹⁰³ James Hogg, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 116-117.

Although he didn't particularly plan on interacting with the person he saw approaching, Robert experienced an almost supernatural attraction toward his double. This could be chalked up as a purely magical ability of this doppelganger, but the draw Robert feels could just as easily be attributed to his double's charisma. The use of the word "enchantment" certainly implies that a form of sorcery is happening, but it also has a resonance in the context of interpersonal interaction. Confidence Men were said to be experts at psychology, and therefore capable of manipulating naive young people into trusting and following them.¹⁰⁴ This sort of charisma, which might include flattery, humor, or other strategies, was one of the main ways that Confidence Men operated. In the nineteenth century city, visual communication became more important. With so many people living in one condensed space, verbal communication was not a practical way of understanding the people who inhabited the space. In a world of busy streets and passersby, interaction between people was reduced to seconds. The only way to learn about other people was through visual means.¹⁰⁵ Purely visual communication was not always reliable. An imposter could simply dress in the clothing traditionally associated with the elites in order to be assumed as part of that class.¹⁰⁶ Robert's double appears to be practicing this sort of visual enchantment. Although Robert has only had the chance to look at the double as they pass by each other, he is deeply impressed by him and approaches him for reasons he does not consciously comprehend.

Positioned in a way similar to the young urban newcomer, Robert finds himself at a transitional and uncertain phase in life and, when encountered by his strange double, immediately assumes him to be a protecting figure. When he gets a fuller look at his

¹⁰⁴ Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, 5.

¹⁰⁵ Sharrona Pearl, *About Faces: Physiognomy in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 26.

¹⁰⁶ Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, 37.

doppelgänger, he thinks “that my guardian angel had appeared to me at this important era of my life.”¹⁰⁷ Robert is at a point of transition, in an “important era,” of his life, much like the youth first entering a city. Before meeting his doppelgänger in this passage, he had been told that he is one of the elect, and has been “welcomed” into “the community of the just upon earth.”¹⁰⁸ His whole worldview shifts from being uncertain about his eternal fate to being uncertain about how to conduct himself now as a part of this lauded community. In his mind, he has entered a community as distinct from his previous one as the city is the rural countryside. In this state of enlightenment and newness, Robert is first inclined to see his double as a manifestation of his new state and a guide to ensure his correct comportment in this new position. This is the same role that the “urban companion” would play in the life of a youth coming to a city. The city, to many people, offered a chance at upward social movement and the youth, energetic and employable, was poised to take full advantage of this opportunity.¹⁰⁹ Robert is in a similar position, except rather than in a state of upward social movement, he is apparently in a state of upward spiritual movement. And like the newly arrived youth, Robert makes the same mistake of trusting the apparent companion that the youth does.

Following in the footsteps of much dreaded imposter, Robert’s doppelgänger uses charm and persuasion to lead him to moral depravity. One of the supposed traits of the Confidence Man was being an expert in the field of human behavior and psychology, especially where the young person entering the city was concerned.¹¹⁰ By exploiting the vulnerabilities of the youth’s situation and mind, the Confidence Man could take them willingly under their wing as they led them down a road of sin. Robert’s doppelgänger practices this sort of manipulation that plays on

¹⁰⁷ Hogg, *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, 117.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 115.

¹⁰⁹ Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, 3.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* 5.

his weakness. Shortly after introducing himself, his double comments on his virtue: ““Your state is a state to be envied indeed; but I have been advised of it, and am come to be a humble disciple of yours; to be initiated into the true way of salvation by conversing with you, and perhaps by being assisted by your prayers.””¹¹¹ Although his doppelganger does not mimic the role of the urban companion at first, by offering his aid and guidance, he manipulates Robert expertly to gain his trust. At this moment in the narrative, Robert is elated to be one of the elect, to be recognized as a class of human fundamentally more virtuous than all other people. But he also has some remaining doubts about his own virtue. The doppelganger’s claim that he perceives Robert’s virtue and that he has even been told about it by other people boosts his confidence and assuages his doubts. He furthers this praise by claiming to seek guidance from Robert, placing him in a directly superior position to him.

Later on, the doppelganger uses his understanding of Robert’s psyche in order to hijack his identity and shift his own position from one of subordination to one of domination. A significant portion of Robert’s identity is based on his knowledge of scripture, so when he engages with his double about religion, he believes his “argumentative powers” will best those of his double’s. But this does not prove to be the case: “[Robert] said that ‘indubitably there were degrees of sinning which would induce the Almighty to throw off the very elect.’ But behold my hitherto humble and modest companion took up the argument with such warmth, that he put me not only to silence, but to absolute shame.”¹¹² In a show of his mastery over Robert’s psychology, the doppelganger targets his religious argumentation skills and shows him how weak they really are. Because Robert previously relied on this skill to form his identity, the doppelganger creates a void in his identity that he can then easily fill. This was one of the tactics that Confidence Men

¹¹¹ Hogg, *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, 117.

¹¹² *Ibid.* 126.

used to manipulate young people in the city. In the nineteenth century, the youth was considered void of any moral compass or core morals, which made them especially vulnerable to the influence of imposters. Without any firmly established morals, the youth could be convinced to engage in morally depraved activities with merely a suggestion by an imposter claiming to have a superior knowledge of morals.¹¹³ Robert's double, by demonstrating his more advanced argumentation skills, makes it seem like he is even more virtuous than Robert. With this appearance of superiority, the double is able to weaken the part of Robert's identity that is grounded in his knowledge of scripture. In this state of "silence" and "shame," the double can fill his mind with ideas that contradict his morals. As we shall see, the doppelganger leads Robert to commit crimes that are in direct violation to the religious tenets to which he previously held so firmly. Because the doppelganger exploits Robert's easily manipulable identity, he is able to lead Robert to willingly betray his own principles, without him even realizing that this is what he is doing. After listening to his doppelganger's rebuttal to his initial statement, Robert claims: "I could hardly believe that these sayings were genuine or orthodox; but I soon felt, that, instead of being a humble disciple of mine, this new acquaintance was to be my guide and director."¹¹⁴ Although Robert senses that the doppelganger's notions lie outside his understanding of his religion's doctrine, he nonetheless feels drawn to regard his double as a source of guidance and superior knowledge. The doppelganger in this narrative thus demonstrates the ability to manipulate other people's psychology that Confidence Men were also said to have.

Using the superior position he establishes over Robert, the doppelganger manipulates him into committing crimes that go against his own interest and morals. Having already secured Robert's loyalty as a student and follower, the doppelganger suggests they murder the local

¹¹³ Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, 4.

¹¹⁴ Hogg, *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, 126.

minister in the name of doing away with those of lesser morals. Although Robert is “shocked” at the proposition, his double argues “with such powerful eloquence” that he is soon “convinced that it was [his] bounden duty to slay [the minister].”¹¹⁵ Robert later explains why he was so easily convinced to do something that was so obviously against his morals: “His eloquence was of that overpowering nature, that the subtlety of other men sunk before it; and there is also little doubt that the assurance I had that these words were spoken by a great potentate, who could raise me to the highest eminence, (provided that I entered into his extensive and decisive measures,) assisted mightily in dispelling my youthful scruples and qualms of conscience.”¹¹⁶ This passage illustrates three of the potential methods Confidence Men used to secure the loyalty of unsuspecting youth. One is through language, having an “eloquence” in constructing sentences and arguments, which, aside from visual displays, was one of the primary veils the Confidence Man would throw up around themselves to trick the youth.¹¹⁷ In addition to a claim of superiority, which is outlined in the previous paragraph, the double suggests that he can “raise” Robert “to the highest eminence” if he follows all the double’s orders. This promise would have been an especially useful tactic to use on young people entering the city. Poised to begin their upward trajectory through society, the offer of social ascendancy with no real work involved would have been especially tempting. In a similar way, Robert’s double offers him a chance at a guaranteed ascendancy to the “highest” level of virtue just by following his rules. Robert, just like the urban youth struggling to secure employment or connections that will lead them to higher status in the city, questions whether virtuous actions are enough to secure salvation, the ultimate recognition of spiritual ascendancy. Grappling with fears about the possibility of losing his elected status or never actually deserving the elect status in the first place, the doppelganger steps into his life

¹¹⁵ Ibid. 133.

¹¹⁶ Ibid. 134.

¹¹⁷ Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, 42.

offering reassurance and a guaranteed way to secure his salvation. The combination of these methods results in Robert letting go of “scruples” and “conscience” that he previously held to be virtuous, in order to embrace the practices that the doppelganger insists are virtuous. Through a combination of elegant comportment, claims to superiority, and promises of success—all of these methods that the historical Confidence Man used—Robert’s doppelganger leads him to abandon his own principles and corrupt himself.

Robert’s doppelganger plays the role of the False Aristocrat, another category of Confidence Men, in his conquest of Robert’s life and soul. One of the challenges of living in a world of strangers was the simultaneous overload of visual information and lack of personal information.¹¹⁸ Living in the nineteenth century city allowed individuals to interact with many more people than in premodern towns and in a way that was more surface-level than before. City-dwellers had the opportunity to pass by hundreds of people in the space of one day, but pass by is the only thing that they could do. As we have seen, Robert first encountered his double on a walk and immediately assessed him based on the visual impression he gave off.¹¹⁹ Information gleaned from a quick visual impression of someone is hardly reliable though, and Confidence Men learned to take advantage of the city’s reliance on visual communication. Simply by dressing in the clothing typically associated with the elite class, and perhaps imitating some of their etiquette, the Confidence Man could gain access to social circles much higher in status than the imposter would typically have access to.¹²⁰ Robert’s double uses the methods practiced by the False Aristocrat in order to further secure Robert’s loyalty. After inquiring about his double’s name and receiving only a pseudonym and a vague explanation about deciding to come to this city despite being of high status, Robert immediately suspects that he is secretly royalty:

¹¹⁸ Pearl, *About Faces*, 10.

¹¹⁹ Hogg, *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, 116.

¹²⁰ Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, 37.

“It instantly struck me that this was no other than the Czar Peter of Russia, having heard that he had been travelling through Europe in disguise, and I cannot say that I had not thenceforward great and mighty hopes of high preferment, as a defender and avenger of the oppressed Christian Church, under the influence of this great potentate... I thought myself quite justified in supposing that he intended me for some great employment, that he had thus selected me for his companion out of all the rest of Scotland... From that time I felt disposed to yield to such a great prince’s suggestions without hesitation.”¹²¹

The anonymity provided by the city’s large population allowed people to assume another identity without anyone realizing their trickery. With so many strangers filling the streets, there was no way to keep track of each new face that showed up and investigate their background, which would have happened in premodern towns.¹²² The fact that Robert’s double claims to have only just recently “retired to this city” allows him the freedom enjoyed by strangers in the modern city.¹²³ Being new in the city gives the doppelgänger an excuse for not having any established relationships that Robert could presumably use to verify his supposed identity. He can claim to be anyone or anything simply by using the excuse that he is “in disguise.” All that Robert knows of this individual at this point is that he looks the same as him and admires his virtue. The doppelgänger has already worked to gain the trust of his companion, through flattery and eloquence, which results in Robert readily accepting his suggestion that he is royalty. To add to this, Robert would be more inclined to believe that the stranger is royalty because forming a relationship with him would thus have a greater potential to benefit Robert. If the doppelgänger did indeed prove to be royalty, Robert’s socioeconomic status would rocket upward. In addition, he would receive the ego boost of knowing that he was selected by this czar to be his

¹²¹ Hogg, *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, 130.

¹²² Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, 34.

¹²³ Hogg, *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, 130.

“companion out of all the rest of Scotland.” Robert is thus doubly incentivized to accept the vague implication this stranger gives off that he is royalty. In addition to the psychological manipulation that conditions Robert to be trusting of his new companion, the doppelgänger also takes advantage of the freedom provided by the anonymity of city life in order to masquerade as the False Aristocrat.

The character of the Confidence Man, and in this case, specifically the False Aristocrat, can be tracked across doppelgänger narratives. One such narrative is the 1815 novel, *The Devil's Elixirs*, written by E.T.A. Hoffmann, which follows the story of Medardus, a Capuchin monk who becomes possessed when he drinks the titular devil's elixirs. Once he is discovered by his fellow monks, he flees the monastery and heads south, stopping at manors and cities along the way. On his journey, he meets a man who looks just like him. After being haunted by and haunting this strange double, Medardus makes his way to a city, where he meets a prince and decides to work his way into his elite circle. In order to accomplish this, he changes his behavior and dress to appeal to the prince's sensibilities:

“My prolonged stay in the city had served to remove from my bearing all the stiffness and awkwardness left from my monastic life. My lithe, well-built body soon accustomed itself to the free, natural movement of the man of the world...I was in my prime, my cheeks flushed and my eyes shining, and my dark-brown hair covered all trace of the tonsure. Add to this my dark, well-cut clothes in the latest fashion...and I could not fail to make a favourable impression on the assembled company.”¹²⁴

The first action Medardus takes to assimilate into high society is erase all physical indications of his history. As already mentioned, visual communication was the primary means of attempting to learn any personal information about a stranger in a city. Medardus demonstrates an awareness

¹²⁴ E.T.A. Hoffmann, *The Devil's Elixirs*, trans. Ronald Taylor (Richmond: Oneworld Classics, 2011), 118.

of this and makes an effort to erase aspects of his appearance that would mark him as a monk, like his “tonsure” and dress. His decision to incorporate clothing of the “latest fashion” illustrates one of the new opportunities provided by clothing in the nineteenth century. With the mass production of textiles and increase in wealth in the middle class, clothing became more accessible and could thus be used to imitate the clothing traditionally worn by higher classes.¹²⁵ In addition, he alters his mannerisms and specific ways he carries himself, replacing “stiffness” and “awkwardness” for “free” and “natural movement.” By doing this, he effectively bars access to his history. Appearance, in the nineteenth century city, was considered a way to discern someone’s present character and entire background.¹²⁶ To all of the people around him, who only have the chance to glance at his “shining” eyes and “flushed” cheeks, he is nothing but a “man of the world.” Certainly, Medardus’s youth is part of why he is so successful in transforming himself. Indeed, he cites his being in his “prime” and his “lithe, well-built body” as aspects that contribute to his new disguise. But a youth is just what the Confidence Man, or False Aristocrat, is said to be. At their core, Confidence Men were just another version of the unsuspecting youth they preyed on.¹²⁷ Both sought social ascendancy and employed wit and hard work to accomplish this. The physical abilities and social mobility provided by youth was thus essential to the efforts of both the urban youth and the Confidence Man. Something that differentiates Medardus from the honest urban youth, and marks him as a sort of False Aristocrat, is the way he uses a constructed appearance to actively lie about his past and conceal his sinful nature.

Unlike in *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, the protagonist in this narrative acts as the deceptor. Medardus is more akin to Robert’s doppelgänger in that they both use tactics of suggestion and illusion to efface their sinful nature. Indeed, Medardus could

¹²⁵ Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, 37.

¹²⁶ Pearl, *About Faces*, 30.

¹²⁷ Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, 31.

very well be interpreted as the doppelgänger of this narrative. Although he seems at first to be a regular person, his origins are obscure and he learns that he bears the exact same resemblance as an enchanted portrait of a man from his past. To add to this, when Medardus comes across a man who looks just like him, he causes this man to fall off a cliff nearly to his death and later, Medardus frames this man for a murder he himself committed earlier in the novel. The way he brings ruin upon this man resembles the actions of the shadow in Andersen's tale and Mr. Golyadkin's doppelgänger in *The Double* much more than he resembles the protagonists of either of these two narratives. *The Devil's Elixirs* therefore allows us the rather unique opportunity of looking at a doppelgänger narrative from an inverted perspective.

To return to the story, Medardus exhibits the ability to not only manipulate his physical appearance, but also adopt the style of etiquette he observes in the prince's social circle in order to conceal his true nature and gain access to a higher social status. After appearance, etiquette was one of the primary ways of communicating one's character and social class to others.¹²⁸ One's etiquette could determine whether or not one was allowed to interact with certain high classes in society.¹²⁹ Medardus, although completely unfamiliar with any etiquette outside the monastic context, is able to identify the fundamental aspects of elite manner and adopt them:

“I soon succeeded in acquiring that remarkable accomplishment the world calls gallantry, which consists simply in transferring to one's conversation the physical attractiveness that is a sure passport to any society; it is the singular gift of talking in weighty words about nothing and thus arousing in women a certain satisfaction which even they cannot account for... In that fascinating chatter which sounds like a hymn of adoration lies the

¹²⁸ Pearl, *About Faces*, 9.

¹²⁹ Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, 111.

way to their hearts; their real being seems to become clear to them and they delight to see themselves in the reflection of what they regard as their true selves.”¹³⁰

Medardus exhibits the same mastery over his conduct as over his outward appearance, and even equates the two in this passage. To him, “physical attractiveness” in speech and conduct can be achieved just as easily as in appearance. And once this simple “transferring” of “attractiveness” is carried out, he effectively has guaranteed access to the elite circles that are designed to be out-of-reach to those of lower status. Part of the threat of the False Aristocrat lay in their ability to break down the barriers that kept segregated those of different classes. The convoluted etiquette of the upper class functioned in part to reveal any ill-bred people who perhaps managed to make their way into high society on false appearances. Even if dress could be imitated, high society presumed that the complex etiquette they established among themselves would be too difficult for outsiders to master.¹³¹ Medardus in this passage is demonstrating how penetrable the barriers between social circles are, if one simply uses wit and observation skills. By entering the Prince’s social circle, he is enacting precisely what etiquette was intended to prevent. Medardus, abandoned by his father at a young age and taken in by a monastery as an act of charity, is far from belonging in the upper reaches of society. In addition, he committed multiple crimes, including multiple murders and countless acts of deception. Simply by learning the pattern of speech the Prince’s associates use, Medardus, a destitute criminal, is able to gain admittance into what is supposed to be the most exclusive sector of society. And not only is he allowed into the Prince’s circle, he gains favor among them by flattering them. Medardus, in the short time he has been among royalty, has gained the skill of using flattery in a subtle enough way that those receiving it aren’t fully aware of the powerful effect it has on them. They can only process his

¹³⁰ Hoffmann, *The Devil’s Elixirs*, 132-133.

¹³¹ Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, 112.

eloquence, his “weighty words” that somehow sound to them like a “hymn of adoration” sung to them as if they were gods. And perhaps most powerful is the way his flattery gives them access to “what they regard as their true selves.” His flattery seems to paint a portrait of the person he is speaking to, a portrait that “they delight to see” because it confirms all of the grand suspicions they have of themselves. Medardus is able to use dialogue to, not only boost the egos of those he is talking to, but also give them the sense that he truly understands them and recognizes all the greatness they see in themselves. Overlaying this whole passage is an air of skepticism. He regards the acquisition of “gallantry,” the manipulation of aristocrats, and the infiltration into high society as a simple act. Medardus is thus a living representation of the False Aristocrat and the weakness they uncover in the elaborate measures established to keep the social order stable.

The authors of these doppelganger tales were not the only people in the nineteenth century who realized the risks of relying on initial impressions of other people to navigate the city. Physiognomy, the study of physical characteristics and their correlation to personal background and personality traits, was developed throughout the nineteenth century in an effort to combat these risks. The basis of physiognomy, judging others based on their appearance, was nothing new in the nineteenth century. What was different in this time period was the attempt to make the judgement of appearance into a science. The ultimate goal of physiognomy was to create a comprehensive list of physical characteristics, such as the shape of the nose—how pointed or rounded it was, or how crooked or straight it was—and then link each characteristic to a certain aspect of personality.¹³² By taking into account all the characteristics of an individual, a mosaic of personality traits could be constructed. In this way, physiognomists hoped to be able to discern the interiority of anyone simply by looking at them. This was especially important in an urban context, where the majority of people one might encounter in a day were unfamiliar and

¹³² Pearl, *About Faces*, 11.

unknowable except through prolonged conversation. Physiognomy promised the ability to peer into the inner character of anyone and everyone within sight and, if its tenets were memorized well enough, the ability to do this using only a passing glance. The problem of anonymity and visual overload in the city would have been solved by physiognomy.¹³³ Physiognomy offered a false sense of security for people navigating the nineteenth century city. Confronted with an environment of endless complexity that seemed to grow and change as if animate, physiognomy offered a way to gain mastery over the city, and thus, secure safety within it.¹³⁴ Despite the mutability of physical appearance and adaptability of conduct, one's facial and bodily traits were thought to be unchanging and eternally tied to one's internal character.¹³⁵ Presumably, if the people around Medardus used physiognomy, they would have been able to discern his depraved nature despite his skill at looking and behaving like an elite. But, as we shall see, doppelgängers would make clear the fundamentally misguided and fallible nature of physiognomy.

Physiognomy was far from a legitimate science and received a fair amount of criticism back in the nineteenth century. Coming off the tail of the scientific revolution, the nineteenth century was characterized by an effort to scientifically categorize and classify the world into parts that could be understood by individuals. Physiognomy was a manifestation of this tendency but it relied too heavily on subjective judgement to be taken seriously in other fields. In addition, physiognomic reports offered evaluations of individuals but did not offer a way to reproduce the exact methods of analysis and outcomes in other situations.¹³⁶ At its base, physiognomy was founded on the practice of regarding subjective interpretation as objective evidence. Whether someone found a particular feature in a person's appearance ugly or deviant would determine if

¹³³ Ibid. 10.

¹³⁴ Ibid. 38.

¹³⁵ Ibid. 36.

¹³⁶ Ibid. 12.

this person was deemed immoral or moral.¹³⁷ Most of the time, prominent physiognomic writers would not acknowledge the individuality of their assessments, how their culture and background impacted their decisions on how to judge each physical feature.¹³⁸ Although physiognomists ostensibly were working in the name of science, they disregarded many of the components of the scientific method. In addition to disregarding personal bias, physiognomist writers were sometimes known to discount scientific evidence and proofs altogether. Writers sought not to discover the underlying principle determining the link between appearance and character. Rather, they encouraged the use of individual observation and quick conclusions to discern internal character.¹³⁹ Some people recognized this as a flaw of physiognomy, arguing that instinctive reactions to separate body parts would do nothing more than fragment the object of study and obscure the personality that might otherwise be clear from studying the person as a whole.¹⁴⁰ Despite these criticisms, physiognomy remained popular throughout the nineteenth century and only began to lose favor at the beginning of the twentieth. Although physiognomy failed in its goal to act as a legitimate science, its accessibility and promise of providing insight into the lives of others ensured its success among nineteenth century city folk.

Although seldom explicitly referenced, physiognomy impacts the character descriptions and interactions in doppelgänger narratives. For example, physiognomy shapes how the narrators in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* perceive Mr. Hyde's appearance and its relation to his character. Mr. Utterson is first introduced to Mr. Hyde when his friend, Mr. Enfield, describes seeing him one night: "He is not easy to describe. There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something down-right detestable. I never saw a man I so

¹³⁷ Ibid. 28.

¹³⁸ Ibid. 27.

¹³⁹ Ibid. 49.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. 51.

disliked, and yet I scarce know why. He must be deformed somewhere; he gives a strong feeling of deformity.”¹⁴¹ Later, when Mr. Utterson finally meets Mr. Hyde, his reaction is similar to that of Mr. Enfield: “Mr. Hyde was pale and dwarfish, he gave an impression of deformity without any nameable malformation, he had a displeasing smile, he had borne himself to the lawyer with a sort of murderous mixture of timidity and boldness.”¹⁴² Upon first meeting a person, the visual impression they give off would be one of the first pieces of information communicated. In both of these cases, however, the observing characters process this information through a physiognomic lens. To them, Hyde’s physical features are inextricably linked to his moral character. In the first quote, Mr. Enfield, already acquainted with Hyde’s criminal activity, searches for “something wrong” in his appearance, and even though he could specify nothing, he insists that “he must be deformed.” The urge to find a physical marker that corresponds to Hyde’s moral depravity is a physiognomic impulse. If unpleasant features indicate an unpleasant personality, the existence of a detestable personality without corresponding physical attributes would threaten the validity of physiognomy. The second description is slightly more specific in naming physical features but again creates an arbitrary link between his “murderous” character and “displeasing” appearance. The fact that he is “pale” and of short stature has no real connection to his crimes; these features in no way led to or aided in his criminal activities. Yet, the way they are juxtaposed with judgements on his character illustrates the characters’ understanding of identity as directly tied to outward appearance.

The language these characters use to justify their aversion to Hyde also demonstrates physiognomy’s potential to target minorities and encourage stereotyping. Both characters focus their indictment against Hyde on the fact that he seems to have a “deformity.” The concept of

¹⁴¹ Stevenson, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, 5.

¹⁴² *Ibid.* 10.

deformity actually forms the basis of physiognomy. Although physiognomists drew different conclusions about the meanings of specific physical attributes, the binding principle of the study could be summed up in one phrase: “The morally best, the most beautiful. The morally worst, the most deformed.”¹⁴³ Deformity, of a physical feature that deviates from the societal norm, automatically denoted a morally questionable character. In a world filled with strangers, city-dwellers relied on their ability to spot deviance as a way to avoid dangerous individuals. This, of course, was not a reliable system. The reason that the two characters observing Mr. Hyde believed they saw a sort of “deformity” in him, albeit not in any specific feature, was only because they knew of his immoral character beforehand. This system of determining guilt based on preexisting judgements of others was, in the nineteenth century, used as a weapon against minorities. At the time of the Jack the Ripper cases, the Jewish community that lived in the neighborhood where the murders happened was unfairly targeted by investigators. Having just recently fled to London to escape Eastern European pogroms, Jewish immigrants were already facing antisemitism from local Londoners. They made a convenient scapegoat when investigators had no way of explaining the series of murders.¹⁴⁴ The physiognomic practice of arbitrarily connecting an individual's features to their moral uprightness can in this instance be seen influencing the course of London's history. Just as Stevenson's characters, already acquainted with Hyde's immorality, claim to find deformities in his appearance, Londoners, already conditioned by antisemitism, could justify their suspicion of the Jewish community by identifying supposedly abnormal physical traits that denoted moral corruption. At its core, physiognomy was designed to give its practitioners peace of mind while navigating a city filled

¹⁴³ Johann Caspar Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy*, trans. Thomas Holcroft (London: William Tegg & Co. 1878), 99.

¹⁴⁴ Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight*, 202.

with strangers. In practice, though, it provided no real information and only gave false justification for acting on prejudices.

Physiognomy is also featured in *The Private Memoirs of a Justified Sinner* and is portrayed as an effective indicator of inner character. Although never a very sympathetic character, Robert at first seems to have generally good morals, if not a very affable personality. When he meets his double, a character that plays the role of the evil Confidence Man that leads him into sin, Robert's appearance changes. Robert's mother and father note this change with horror and unease. His mother insists: "Robert, you are ill... You are quite changed; your very voice and manner are changed."¹⁴⁵ And his father reacts in a similar way: "He looked at me with a countenance of great alarm; mumbling some sentences to himself, and then taking me by the arm, as if to feel my pulse, he said, with a faltering voice, 'Something has indeed befallen you, either in body or mind, for you are transformed, since the morning, that I could not have known you for the same person.'"¹⁴⁶ After questioning his son, he draws a conclusion: "Satan, I fear, has been busy with you, tempting you in no ordinary degree."¹⁴⁷ In the same way that the characters in *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* used to judge Mr Hyde, Robert's parents use quick visual impressions to make conclusions about their son. Robert's mother notices his transformation as soon as she sees him, and calls in his father to assess him. She even makes judgements about his "voice and manner" when he has hardly had time to speak or act in her presence. Her immediate impression of his "changed" appearance is enough to convince her of a more widespread transformation in his behavior and voice. His father bases his assessment of Robert's soul and character on specifically visual information he receives immediately after seeing him. He even uses his appearance to make a guess about Robert's recent activities, how he

¹⁴⁵ Hogg, *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, 120.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 120.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 121.

has been interacting with the forces of “Satan.” This is precisely what physiognomy claimed to be able to do. With no more than a glance at a person, one could discern the whole character and personal history of an individual.¹⁴⁸ In this narrative, Robert’s parents use physiognomy effectively and accurately to discern the sinful path on which their son had, just moments before, embarked. Although they do not reference the specific principles of physiognomy, the specificity of the assumptions they make based on visual information indicates the presence of physiognomic thought in this narrative.

The influence of physiognomy can be found in many pieces of nineteenth century literature. Its presence specifically in nineteenth century doppelgänger narratives is significant because of the ways that doppelgänger characters interact with and subvert the promises of physiognomy. Physiognomy was created to provide a sense of security to a society scrambling to figure out how to navigate changed modes of settlement and interpersonal relationships. As we have seen, rates of urbanization in this time period were unprecedented and resulted in a large number of people quite suddenly finding themselves inhabiting a space unlike any other they had occupied just years before. Not only did this result in changes in the way the physical environment was depicted in literature, it also led to the creation of pseudosciences like physiognomy, which attempted to augment people’s control over their environment at a time when they seemed to rapidly be losing this control. At a time when going out into public involved entering a world of strangers and sensory overload, physiognomy provided individuals a way of organizing and understanding the chaotic urban landscape. Faced with uncertainty and ambiguous information, people could turn to the guidelines of physiognomy and instantly have a way of interpreting visual information and dispelling uncertainty. It allowed them to feel sure of themselves when making judgements about the character and trustworthiness of other people.

¹⁴⁸ Pearl, *About Faces*, 4.

Although it was not scientific in nature or method, physiognomy claimed legitimacy through the backing of writers of intellectual authority and through consensus.¹⁴⁹ This way, people believed themselves secure in their decision to trust one person over another person.¹⁵⁰ This security of course was completely unfounded and offered no real support for people overwhelmed by the urban multitude. Although some scholars and writers openly criticized physiognomy, a deeper level of uncertainty about the pseudo-science can be found in more subtle aspects of nineteenth century culture — whether that be in youth advice manuals instructing young people to trust no one in the city, even if they appear kind, or in fictional stories of phantoms tricking people with their shape-shifting and disguises.

Doubles posed a threat to the apparent security provided by physiognomy by putting pressure on two aspects of urban interpersonal relationships that physiognomy was designed to address. The first aspect is anonymity. As we have seen, surging populations and increasing density led to the ubiquity of strangers and possibility of escaping identification by blending in with the masses. By simply obscuring or excising any distinguishing or extraordinary features, individuals could use anonymity to avoid catching the notice or suspicion of anyone in the city.¹⁵¹ Physiognomy was designed to eliminate the possibility of a criminal finding refuge in anonymity by assigning meaning to physical appearance—whether the most minute facial feature or most unfamiliar mannerism. Each stranger making their way along a crowded city street or down a lonely alley would, simply by showing their face, reveal crucial identifying factors about themselves, including personal history and character. With these unique pieces of their personality revealed, a stranger would no longer be able to claim anonymity. Even if only seen for a moment, even if they said not a word about themselves, the individual would forever be

¹⁴⁹ Ibid. 5.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. 27.

¹⁵¹ Ibid. 32.

identifiable by their unique characteristics revealed through the physiognomic analysis. Doppelgangers subverted this function of physiognomy by taking on the exact appearance of another. In doing so, the doppelganger proved that the unique combination of facial features that physiognomy relied on to identify people was not necessarily unique. Although physiognomy was supposed to destroy anonymity by discerning unique traits in every individual, doppelgangers present a situation where it is possible for someone to not be unique. This aspect of physiognomy and urban interaction is put under more stress by doppelgangers' ability to exhibit a wholly different personality and behavior from the person to whom they bear an exact resemblance.

This subversive quality of doppelgangers can be seen most clearly in Dostoyevsky's *The Double*, where the main character, a generally honest and moral person, Mr. Golyadkin, consistently faces the negative consequences of his doppelganger's mischief. The day after meeting his doppelgänger, Mr. Golyadkin is harassed more and more intensely by his phantasmic companion. First his double takes the credit for a report Mr. Golyadkin put together for work, then runs up a bill at a restaurant under his name, and gives him a bad reputation among his colleagues. Mr. Golyadkin tries to think of a way to rid himself of this harassment and thinks that perhaps he can distinguish himself from his enemy by telling people:

“That Golyadkin [the doppelgänger] is a blackguard. Don't you take any notice of him, and don't mix him up with the other one [the original Golyadkin] who's honest, virtuous, gentle and forgiving, who's very reliable at work and deserves a promotion'... But what if they do get us mixed? He's capable of anything. Oh God! He's the sort of blackguard who'll deliberately take your place as though you were dirt.”¹⁵²

¹⁵² Dostoyevsky, *The Double*, 142.

Mr. Golyadkin's doppelgänger is subverting physiognomy by demonstrating how, even if all of the rules of the pseudo-science are followed, wrong-doing people can still remain unrecognized. Mr. Golyadkin's double performs immoral act after immoral act and the only consequences he faces is gaining a better standing in the eyes of his colleagues. Despite his moral depravity, no one recognizes anything in his physical appearance that might indicate his character. In fact, he is able to transfer the blame onto Mr. Golyadkin through wit and clever timing. The main conflict created by this situation is not just that the double gets away with evil actions, but that Mr. Golyadkin, the "honest, virtuous, gentle and forgiving" person will inevitably get confused with the criminal actions of his double. The relationship between Mr. Golyadkin and his double acts as a sort of model to demonstrate how easily blame can be shifted in a world of strangers. Both Mr. Golyadkin's colleagues and the residents of nineteenth century cities under the influence of physiognomy rely on visual recognition to judge the characters of others. Although this story takes things to extremes, it introduces the idea that physiognomy can break down with the simple occurrence of people resembling one another. Two people can look similar, even exactly the same, and still lead two entirely different lives with separate sets of morals and principles. Because of this, the tenets of physiognomy are actually more likely to lead to misrecognition and the pinning of blame on those who are blameless.

The evil protagonist of *The Devil's Elixirs* is similarly able to evade punishment because of the arrival of a man who closely resembles him and shares even the features thought to be most unique to a person. Before Medardus traveled to the city where he managed to gain a foothold in its aristocracy, he murdered two people who were close to an Italian princess. He was able to leave this all behind by taking on new mannerisms and hiding within the anonymity of the city. When this Italian princess and her lady-in-waiting come to visit the city, they recognize

Medardus as the murderer and he is imprisoned. At his trial, he is recognized by other witnesses and his identity is confirmed when Medardus is forced to reveal the strange cross shaped birthmark on his neck. Sentenced to death and chained up in a lonely prison cell, Medardus is suddenly informed by the judge: ““You have been mistaken for somebody else, and the reason for the error is your astonishing resemblance to this other person. Your innocence has been clearly established.””¹⁵³ Medardus later learns that this person bore the same strange birthmark in the same spot on his neck. This situation mirrors Mr. Golyadkin’s predicament except in the way that Medardus passively comes upon this chance to escape punishment. While Mr. Golyadkin’s double made a concerted effort to frame Mr. Goladkin for his misdeeds, Medardus was fully preparing to face death when the people around him suddenly discovered his lookalike and decided Medardus was innocent after all. The passing of guilt from one person to another therefore does not have to be orchestrated by some evil mastermind. In the multitudes that inhabit the city, there is bound to be someone who bears the same facial feature or marking that, in the rules of physiognomy, condemned someone else as liar, thief, or murderer. Although this tale exaggerates the amount of resemblance two people can have, it demonstrates how passively physiognomy, in all its supposed detail and precision, can be undermined by chance resemblance.

In addition to dispelling anonymity in the urban setting, physiognomy also claimed to be able to see through any disguise a criminal might put on in their attempt to conceal their sinful nature. In its supposed ability to read the faces and gaits and physical forms as biographies of the individuals, physiognomy sought to make it impossible for Confidence Men and charlatans and imposters of any sort to conceal their sins, no matter how cleverly they acted. Physiognomists even attempted to find a method of identifying criminals and deviants of any sort before any

¹⁵³ Hoffmann, *The Devil’s Elixirs*, 165.

divergent symptoms could even be detected. In 1855, a wax museum in London featured an exhibit called the “Chamber of Comparative Physiology,” which displayed the models of various well-known criminals of the day.¹⁵⁴ The purpose of this exhibit, according to one contemporary magazine, was to study “the lineaments of those villains, with a view to proper precaution against gentlemen of similar aspect.”¹⁵⁵ This museum was set up not just for people to gape at the faces of those who had done horrible things, but also for those same people to memorize the facial features of the archetypal criminal. This way, when they left the museum and went back to their lives, they would be able to recognize criminal facial features in strangers, even if they weren’t acting suspiciously or doing anything wrong. This thought pattern spread beyond the wax museum though. Some people advocated for using physiognomy to determine which immigrants could enter the country, so that those with criminal or deviant facial features could be excluded.¹⁵⁶ Physiognomy thus promised a risk-free experience for the individual city dweller and a well-behaved society for the collective. With the help of physiognomy, no criminal could disguise their true nature beneath a veneer of confidence and nice clothing.

In contrast to the lofty promises of physiognomy, doppelgängers promised to undermine physiognomic analysis and reveal how feeble the pseudo-science proved against the overwhelming presence of the city. As we have seen, physiognomy seems to function accurately in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. When characters saw Mr. Hyde, they were immediately repulsed, sure that he was a depraved wrongdoer just by seeing his grotesque appearance. And in this judgement, the characters were correct. Their physiognomic analysis accurately reflects Mr. Hyde’s true personality. Despite this insight, physiognomy does not help the characters track down Hyde and bring him to justice. This is because Hyde is able to

¹⁵⁴ Pearl, *About Faces*, 38.

¹⁵⁵ “Progress in Waxworks,” *Punch* 28, no. 710 (1855): 67.

¹⁵⁶ Pearl, *About Faces*, 41.

shapeshift into Dr. Jekyll, and therefore to undermine physiognomy's supposed ability to see through disguise. When Dr. Jekyll finally divulges his secret, that he has been using a potion to shapeshift into Mr. Hyde so that he could indulge his darker impulses without facing consequences, he says this:

“Men have before hired bravos to transact their crimes, while their own person and reputation sat under shelter... I was the first that could thus plod in the public eye with a load of genial respectability, and in a moment, like a schoolboy, strip off these lendings and spring headlong into the sea of liberty. But for me, in my impenetrable mantle, the safety was complete.”¹⁵⁷

In the fantastical world of this novella, the villain has found a way to avoid punishment, not by finding a secret hiding place or fleeing the city, but by changing his appearance. In doing so, Dr. Jekyll is able to carry on his existence without facing any legal or, perhaps more important in this situation, social consequences. Although all the physiognomic signs indicate the depravity of Mr. Hyde, all of this becomes inconsequential when he transforms back into the “genial” and respected body of Dr. Jekyll. This is why Mr. Hyde was able to avoid those attempting to find him. Physiognomy might have proven accurate in the short term, but it failed in discerning the evil impulses in Dr. Jekyll. As he explained, he was able to “strip off” the physical features that marked him as either Jekyll or Hyde as if they were mere articles of clothing. Appearance, the entire basis of physiognomy, is thus shown to be as shifting and mutable as behavior or attitude.

Dr. Jekyll suggests that physiognomy does not just break down in his case, but in the cases of all people, magical or not. In the research that led him to finding the potion to shapeshift into Hyde, Jekyll reflects: “I began to perceive more deeply than it has ever been stated, the trembling immateriality, the mistlike transience, of this seemingly so solid body in which we

¹⁵⁷ Stevenson, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, 46.

walk attired.”¹⁵⁸ The ability to topple the foundations of physiognomy is thus not limited to those with the magical ability to shapeshift, but is instead said to exist in the very nature of human beings. Jekyll claims that people’s appearances, their very bodies, are not so immutable as they might seem. Rather, they are immaterial, “mistlike,” and able to be shaped and manipulated to fit the needs of the individual. Although liberating for Jekyll, this ability reveals the false security of physiognomy. If appearance is as mutable as mist, city dwellers could no longer rely on the physiognomic guides they believed would keep them away from malevolent people. The world of strangers would transform from an orderly array of facial features and codes to a horde of constantly changing, incomprehensible faces and bodies. It is no wonder that the possibility of this happening is embodied in the menacing figure of the *doppelgänger*. With its shapeshifting ability and evil intentions, the *doppelgänger* affirmed that there was no way of parsing the urban landscape and its inhabitants, that no one could be safe from Confidence Men or thieves or murderers. The *doppelgänger* acts as a villain in itself but also, by uprooting all the ways people tried to keep themselves safe in the city, as a harbinger of all the sordid characters bound to haunt the inhabitants of the modern metropolis.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. 43.

Conclusion

The doppelgänger is not a feature of literature unique to the nineteenth century. Lookalikes and shapeshifters have shaped folktales and stories of all sorts long before the arrival of modernity. And after the nineteenth century, doppelgänger tales became even more popular as film and television took advantage of the plot point which just so happened to allow for one actor to do the work of two. But the doppelgänger of the nineteenth century was uniquely tied to the material and cultural changes in that point in history. In the stories of Dostoevsky, Stevenson, Hoffmann, Hogg, and Andersen, the doppelgänger took on the shape of the urban metropolis, emerging from its streets and embodying the methodical disarray of living in one of these quickly changing cities. In addition to the reflecting and augmenting the physical presence of the city, doppelgängers also came to embody the discourse about urban living. Perhaps more important than the actual conditions of living in the nineteenth century city is the way people thought about living in the nineteenth century city. In densely populated metropolises, people saw not just strangers, but Confidence Men, disguised murderers, False Aristocrats, and hidden maniacs. Whether true or not, to them, crime was inherent to urban life, only escapeable through the strict following of youth advice manuals and diligent memorization of physiognomic meanings. Lurking behind this culture of paranoia was the doppelgänger, a creature that seemed to undermine such youth advice manuals and physiognomic strategies. Their mere existence in the world of a fictional narrative revealed how truly vulnerable city dwellers were to their worst fears.

Of course, this is not the only way doppelgängers in nineteenth century literature connected to the real world context in which they were created. No one can know the minds of the authors or the infinite number of interpretations of their work. To some, it might seem that

doppelgängers are so separated from reality, merely a dream or hallucination, that there is no real use in trying to speculate about such a connection. But just as Teresa Goddu argued and as this paper has sought to argue, “instead of being getaways to the other, distant worlds of fantasy,” these tales of monsters and horror “are intimately connected to the culture that produces them.”¹⁵⁹ Unlike Goddu, this paper has only addressed one gothic motif and its ties to a handful of elements of nineteenth century European culture. The doppelgänger in the stories referenced here and in countless other stories are connected to much more than urbanization and its socio-cultural ramifications. A further investigation of nineteenth century doppelgänger narratives might investigate the way they embody fears of a slave revolt, the cruelty of early industrialized capitalism, a collective unconscious rejection of mortality. This paper should be regarded as a cursory look at the spoken and unspoken history doppelgängers represent.

¹⁵⁹ Teresa Goddu, *Gothic America: Narrative, History, and Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 2.

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