

Woe to Them That Have a Nose: A Diachronic Comparative Analysis of *The Phantom of the Opera* 1910 - 2004

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Introduction

The aim of the following paper is to compare the novel *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* (1910) by Gaston Leroux and six film versions that have been made between 1925 and 2004. This is an interesting thing to do, since there have been many adaptations of this novel. In my private possession, I have eight DVDs with different film adaptations, four novels that were based on Leroux's original, several non-fiction works studying the story, six CDs with music related to the Phantom, three books with sheet music and a computer game. Of course this is only a very small part of what is available. Anne Myers, a music student who has an "ongoing attempt to read, view, listen to, or otherwise experience every version of the classic Gothic serial novel *The Phantom of the Opera* by Gaston Leroux, and then review it in lurid detail for her own enjoyment" (Myers) lists 370 books, films, computer games, comic books, stage shows and other Phantom-related material that she has already seen, read or played or is still planning to. Because there are so many adaptations, a sensible question to ask is what is so interesting about *The Phantom of the Opera* that adaptations keep being made? Of course it is very difficult to answer this question fully, but this paper will attempt to do so by analysing just six of these adaptations in comparison with the novel and with each other in order to find out the continuities and the changes in the development of the adaptations. I have chosen analyse the six films that are included in this paper in order to be able to provide an answer to this question. The answer probably lies mostly in the continuities: what stays the same throughout the adaptations?

In this paper, I will do two things to try to reach this conclusion. First I have analysed the changes and continuities that have taken place between the novel and the films. This paper will be mostly a diachronic comparison, which means that I will analyse all the films in their

chronological order, which will enable me to compare the changes and see what changes happened at what time. This will enable me to analyse the changes at a more abstract level.

Secondly, I will attempt to provide an explanation for the changes and continuities. In this explanatory process, the paper will look at cultural backgrounds, as Pierre Sorlin explains: “que le film soit intimement pénétré par les préoccupations, les tendances, les aspirations de l'époque dans laquelle il est produit, personne ne songe sans doute à le nier” (49). What he means with this is that a film is always influenced by the way of thinking of its time and the current trends in the culture. Magistrate and Morrison add to this that in horror films, as *The Phantom of the Opera* is very often promoted, “the monster both embodies and manifests the fears and anxieties of its age” (4), so what they are saying is that the ruling fears of a society are usually reflected in the monster of a horror film, and in this case, the Phantom. Something else I will also take into account is the way Hollywood narrates its stories and makes its films, as explained by David Bordwell, Janet Staiger and Kristin Thompson in their book *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960*. Also important is the influence of the transposition from one medium to another – i.e. from a novel to a film.

There is a large difference between their approach and mine, however. Sorlin, for instance, is a sociologist and throughout his books, he compares different European films based on themes like urbanisation, immigration, sex and gender. I will approach my own comparative analysis from another direction and first look at the films and then at their links with culture. Rather than being based on cultural themes for its framework, this paper will be structured along themes that I found in the different versions of *The Phantom of the Opera*. David Bordwell, on the other hand, looks at film and explains how the production context explains how the films became what they are. Together with Janet Staiger and Kristin Thompson, he looks at how “Hollywood cinema as distinct artistic and economic phenomenon” (xvi) influences the final product of film. I will combine these two approaches. I believe that this combination will result into more complete explanations than if only one of them would be used. So a combination of these two models will hopefully give me a firmer framework for the explanations of the changes and continuities across these films. These may perhaps be fuelled by changes in society, such as the opinion on gender, or by national traumas such as war. There are also, however, more prosaic influences on the films, such as the production context. This includes the choices of the director, the casting process and the principles of Hollywood filmmaking. Therefore, the main question of this paper will be: what changes and continuities can we detect in film adaptations from Leroux's novel *The Phantom*

of the Opera (1910) between 1925 and 2004 and might we explain those changes by the (film) historical context of the films?

Further on in this introduction, there will be information on the novel itself and its author, I will explain what films are going to be analysed and why. Finally, I will outline the structure of the paper and explain how I will do all of this.

The Novel and its Author

First, we need to look at the novel and its author, since without those, there would not have been these numerous film adaptations of the story. Since this paper occupies itself with finding links between the real world and the world of fiction, several of these links will also be pointed out in this section. *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* was first published in 1910 in France, after having been serialised in *Le Gaulois* in 1909 and 1910. Its author, Gaston Leroux, was born on 6 May 1868. A month later, his parents got married in Rouen, which is the place where in the novel the Phantom was born. Leroux's father was, like Erik's father, a mason (Hogle 61). Leroux grew up in Normandy in the coastal village St. Valéry-en-Caux and loved sailing and swimming. He was a good student and when he finished grammar school, he was sent to Paris to study law (Perry 22). Another thing he did when he lived in Paris was find the house where he was born and discovered that there was now an undertaker's business on the ground floor (Perry 22). He obtained his law degree, but was not especially interested. In 1889, his father died and left him a million francs, which he spent within six months on drink, gambling and unwise speculations (Perry 22).

When he came in need of money, he found himself a job at *L'Echo de Paris* and worked for several newspapers between that time and 1907. He married Marie Lefranc, but it was not a happy marriage, and he had a live-in mistress Jeanne Cayatte (Hall 8).

During this time he already started writing some fiction and poetry, but also covered cases such as the Dreyfus affair (Hall 8) and travelled across Europe, into Russia, where he covered the Russian revolution of 1905, he went to Africa and to Asia, "frequently adopting incognitos and disguises to infiltrate his presence into the heart of what would turn out to be a good story" (Perry 24), which always resulted in "colourful, dramatic and entertaining copy, and his articles enhanced the circulation of the newspaper to such an extent that Leroux himself became a celebrity" (Perry 25).

In 1907, however, he decided to give up journalism and become a full-time novelist. This decision was caused mostly by the publication of his novel *The Mystery of the Yellow*

Room, about his own eighteen-year-old brilliant detective Rouletabille, who was based on Sherlock Holmes and Edgar Allan Poe's Dupin, two of his favourite detectives (Valentine vii). The novel was a great success and was published in England in the same year. He wrote numerous adventures for Rouletabille, which often reflected his own adventures (see for instance *Rouletabille chez le Tsar*). Then, in 1910, he published his novel *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*, allegedly inspired by a visit to the Opéra Garnier where he saw the lower cellars and discovered traces of the Franco-Prussian war and the commune (Perry 28). He also remembered an accident that had happened in the Opera in 1896 when one of the counterweights of the chandelier dropped into the audience and killed a woman ("Un Accident Terrible"). In the writing of the novel, he used his skills as a journalist to construct it. The novel is introduced by an anonymous narrator who relates how he found a skeleton in the depths of the Opera and started to investigate to find out about this skeleton and thus stumbled across the truth about the Opera Ghost and about the strange abduction of Christine Daaé and the death of Comte Philippe de Chagny. The novel consists of different documents, including the memoirs of the managers, letters written by Christine, newspaper articles and the diary of the Persian.

The Films

It is perfectly possible that the novel would have been forgotten if Leroux had not met Carl Laemmle in Paris. This story is told in many sources (Hall 39 and Perry 46) and it says that Laemmle, after seeing the Paris Opera House, told a total stranger that he was so impressed by the building. The stranger turned out to be Gaston Leroux, who handed him a copy of his novel. Laemmle stayed up all night reading it and decided it could make a good movie.

This film is the first of a long tradition of Phantom adaptations: the 1925 with Lon Chaney as the Phantom, the 1943 with Claude Rains, the 1962 with Herbert Lom, the 1983 with Maximilian Schell, the 1990 with Charles Dance and the 2004 film with Gerard Butler are among the major film adaptations of the novel and these are the films that will be analysed in this paper. There are many more film adaptations of the story, including three Chinese ones: *Song at Midnight* (1937), *The Midnight Nightmare – Part I* (1962) and *Part II* (1963) and *The Phantom Lover* (1995). These will not be taken into account for this paper, however, because the paper relies on the cultural and historical backgrounds of the film to analyse them, and to add eastern film versions as well as western ones would make the paper more

complicated and it would make it much more time-consuming and research intense. Due to time constraints, then, these films will be left out, as well as some adaptations that are more loosely based on the novel, like *Phantom of the Paradise* (1974), a rock musical directed by Brian de Palma which is about the modern disco music industry where the Phantom is a young musician who gets his head stuck in a record press and his teeth are replaced with metal ones in prison. It is a combined adaptation of *Faust*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *The Phantom of the Opera*. Another film that will be ignored is the 1987 animated children's adaptation, the 1989 slasher version with Robert Englund, and the 1998 Dario Argento film which involves a non-disfigured Phantom who is raised by rats in a sewer. These films are ignored for several reasons: the animated one because animated film needs to be analysed in different ways than live action and also because there is extremely little information available on it. The other versions are all much looser adaptations of the story than the ones that are taken into consideration and studying them would take another paper that would probably become twice the size of this one because it would involve more aspects of culture and history to explain the varying, usually very large, changes.

Of course there are also other adaptations available. There have been several stage adaptations of the story, most notably *Phantom of the Opera*, a musical by Ken Hill, the 1991 musical *Phantom* by Arthur Kopit and Maury Yeston and, naturally, Andrew Lloyd Webber's 1986 musical *The Phantom of the Opera* and its sequel *Love Never Dies*. The Andrew Lloyd Webber and the Kopit versions will be mentioned on several occasions, however, as they are the underlying basis of two of the films. Then there is also the literature that is based on the original *Phantom of the Opera* such as Susan Kay's bibliography of Erik *Phantom* (1990), Frederick Forsythe's sequel *The Phantom of Manhattan* (1999) and several very interesting cross-over novels between *The Phantom of the Opera* and the Sherlock Holmes stories such as Nicholas Meyer's *The Canary Trainer* (1993) and Sam Siciliano's *The Angel of the Opera* (1994) and many more works. Again, a whole paper could be written on these adaptations, sequels and fan fictions novels, but this paper will focus only Leroux's original novel and the closest, most well-known, Western film adaptations.

There have been other studies which have looked at the different adaptations of *the Phantom of the Opera*, such as Ann C. Hall's *Phantom Variations: The Adaptations of Gaston Leroux's Phantom of the Opera from 1925 to the Present* (2009), Jerrold E. Hogle's *The Undergrounds of The Phantom of the Opera: Sublimation and the Gothic in Leroux's Novel and its Progeny* (2002) and George Perry's *The Complete Phantom of the Opera* (1987). This paper will differ from these three studies in that it will not just contain

descriptions of the different adaptations such as Hall's and Perry's books, and it will take into account not only history and culture, but also film history, the production context of the films and other production values. In this paper, each film and the novel will be given equal attention, rather than what Perry does in giving the 1925 film a whole chapter and the 1983 version two paragraphs, or like Hogle who devotes half of the book (that is four chapters) to the novel, then a chapter to the 1925 film, a chapter to the 1943 film and then a chapter to the adaptations that preceded the Andrew Lloyd Webber show and then a chapter on the versions that came after Andrew Lloyd Webber. My approach is also much more systematic and methodical than Hogle's work, for instance, which reads like mainly a lot of free association and is therefore at points very difficult to understand. What this paper also does uniquely is that it uses a diachronic approach to analyse the films, whereas the other studies all looked at the different adaptations in isolation. The approach of this paper is also different than the other scholars' approaches in that it is diachronic as well. Instead of looking at separate explanations for each film, I will try to apply the same explanations for more than one film and also in different chapters of this paper. The Hays Code, for example, will be a frequently recurring theme in the explanations.

The Structure of this Paper

The paper will be structured along three themes rather than per film, because in this way, the relationships between the films will be clearer and it will be easier to generalise the changes just enough to provide a structured basis for the analysis. In this paper, I will do two things to try to reach this conclusion. First I have analysed the changes that have taken place between the novel and the films. For this, I used the model proposed by Desmond and Hawkes (51). They outline a model for analysing film adaptations that involves making lists of kept, changed, lost and added elements in the plot, characters, setting, point of view and themes. I applied this model and based this paper on the information these analyses rendered. However, in the process of applying the model, I discovered that the changes in the plot or the narrative and the characters were the largest. Therefore the descriptions of the different movies will be concerned mostly with these two aspects of the novel and the adaptations.

Second, I will look for explanations for the changes and continuities that I find using this model in the way I explained, i.e. by looking at the cultural/historical context and at the production context.

This paper is divided into three chapters. The first chapter will concern the depiction of Erik/the Phantom in the novel and in the films. For the description of the Phantom, I will look at his actions and the way he behaves towards other characters. There will also be independent sections on the Phantom's appearance, since the fact that he is disfigured is such a major part of the story. After these descriptions, I will try to distil the main changes and continuities from the descriptions. Based on these, I will give the explanations as I found them and most of them are based on literature about the historical, cultural and production contexts. The second chapter will concern the relationships between the Phantom, Christine and Raoul. Christine and Raoul will be described in much the same way as the Phantom is in chapter 1, except that their appearance is of less importance, so there will not be a separate section on that. After the descriptions of Christine and Raoul I will describe their relationship with each other, Christine's relationship with the Phantom and the relationship between the Phantom and the Raoul character. Then, again, the main changes and continuities will be given and the probably or possible explanations from the production context and the cultural context will be given. The third chapter will analyse the ending. First, the way it is depicted in the novel and in the films will be described to give a basis for the analysis. This will include a description of the actions and events as they take place in the narrative and also an analysis of what this means for the different characters. After the description, the main changes and continuities will be given and I will present the main explanations that I found.

This three-theme structure of things was devised because, as most manuals insist, any kind of writing should contain a beginning, a middle and an end, and in my view, these three chapters are a reflection of how the novel is structured. Although the plot of the novel does not start with the Phantom, the story does begin with him: it starts with his birth in Rouen, his travels and the way he finally ends up at the Opera. By the time the plot of the novel begins, Erik is already around fifty years old and he is the character who starts the plot: if he had not fallen in love with Christine, nothing would have happened. Therefore, the main body of the plot is the 'middle' section of this chapter. Leroux's novel is many things, and one of those things is the story of two men, both of whom have some severe errors and faults and who both love the same woman. The final chapter, about the ending, obviously represents the end of this paper and concerns the way the Phantom dies and how Raoul and Christine end up. This chapter will also analyse what goals are achieved for which character(s) and which are not, so here it becomes visible what actions are rewarded and which are punished. This gives some insight into what the filmmakers thought the audience would approve of at the different time periods because the films are commercial products made in a commercial system.

Within these three chapters, the novel and the films will be dealt with chronologically, so that means that each chapter will begin with the novel, then the 1925 film, then the 1943 and so on. Hopefully, this diachronic approach will help me to see the trends in the changes that occur in the films as well as the continuities. Being able to compare them across time will help me to raise the final analysis where the three chapters are brought together to a more abstract meta-level.

In the appendices of this paper, the plot outlines of the films and the novel will be included. Reading these before reading the rest of this paper is advisable because the events will not be outlined again in the descriptions and analyses that are provided in the three chapters of this paper. Or you could, of course, read the novel and watch all the films.

A note on the citations from the novel needs to be made here as well. The citations will be in French, from the 2007 Livre de Poche copy. There are several translations of the novel, the first by Alexander Teixeira de Mattos, which is the first English translation from 1911 and is still the most widespread; the second translation was published in 1990 by Lowell Blair, then there was the annotated translation by Leonard Wolff from 1996 and finally one by Jean-Marc and his wife Randy Lofficier in 2004. The problem with the English editions was that, comparing it to the original French text, I discovered that large portions, even whole pages at times, are missing from the translation. Because of this, and also because the citations will be used for close analysis, the original was deemed more trustworthy than the translation and the citations have been left untranslated.

Another note on the language is that I will use the personal pronoun I to be able to distinguish between the theories that are put forward by other scholars. Also note that the pictures that I used in this paper are all screenshots I made myself of the DVDs in my private possession.

Chapter 1: The Characterisation and Depiction of the Phantom

Introduction

This first chapter will be a deeper look into the first of the three main characters, i.e. Erik. In a sense, the entire novel is his story: the novel's title is a reference to him, the first line describes him ("Le fantôme de l'Opéra a existé" (Leroux 7) and so does the final line: "Moi, je dis: la place du squelette du fantôme de l'Opéra est aux archives de l'Académie nationale de musique; ce n'est pas un squelette ordinaire" (Leroux 343). The reason why it

starts with this chapter is that the Phantom is a very complex and multi-faceted character and needs to be looked at in detail in order to understand him fully. On top of this, the Phantom's story is much longer than is represented in the plot of the novel; when the main action begins, he is already in his fifties and has already had a very long and eventful life which determines who he is when the readers finally meet him and is ultimately very relevant to the events as they are represented in the plot.

The characterisation of the Phantom changes much with each film adaptation that was made. These changes range from the Phantom being an arthritic, impoverished violinist in the Opera orchestra to him being a gentle creature with loving parents. This chapter seeks to describe and analyse all the aspects of the seven different Phantoms and then to try and find explanations for these changes in his character.

First, the character will be examined. I will do this by analysing his role in the story and in the plot, the way the point of view influences his characterisation and what this means for his character. Finally, since the main point in the novel is Erik's horrible deformation, a separate section for the novel and each film will be dedicated to his appearance. I will follow this structure for the novel and all six films, so that there is a firm descriptive framework to base the final analysis on. In this analysis, I will try to find out what different factors may explain the changes that occurred between the novel and the films. First of all, the production context of the films will be relevant. This means that I will investigate the choices of the filmmakers and the way the film was made. The influence of the main production codes of the time when the films were made will also be taken into account, since the translation of a story from one medium to inherently causes changes of its own. According to Karen Elliott it is necessary to understand "how a work adapts to a new social context or audience, especially when an adaptation entails intercultural, international, or transhistorical shifts" (Herman, Jahn and Ryan 4). This means looking at how a Hollywood film has different production values than a French novel from the beginning of the 20th century. Finally, as Pierre Sorlin states, the cultural and historical context is of enormous impact on the films as they are. For this reason, the cultural and historical context in which the films appeared will be examined in the final discussion of this chapter to see if they can explain why certain changes occurred.

The Novel

The Characterisation and Depiction of the Phantom

The story and the plot of the novel *The Phantom of the Opera* do not coincide. The story, as Bordwell puts it, is “the action as a chronological cause-and-effect chain of events occurring within a given duration and a spatial field” (49). The plot is “the actual arrangement and presentation of the [story] in the film” (50). This means that the plot can include flashbacks, flash-forwards and can leave out parts of the story to present it in a different way to the reader or viewer. The story, therefore, needs to be constructed by the reader/viewer through assumptions and inferences that can be made on basis of the plot. This chapter will focus on the Phantom’s story rather than on how it is emplotted and a note will be made when the plot differs significantly from the plot. This choice was made because the story will give a clearer overview of the Phantom’s history than the plot, certainly in the case of the novel. For the purpose of the analysis of the changes between the novel and the film, it is best to have as clear an overview of the Phantom’s character as possible, without having to piece together his story based on the plot.

The novel *The Phantom of the Opera* heavily emplots the Phantom’s story. Instead of recounting his story chronologically, the readers start with knowing almost nothing about him and throughout the narrative, we discover more and more about this character along with Christine and Raoul. First we believe that the Phantom actually is a ghost, but later we learn that he is also Christine’s teacher and that he has a heavenly voice. Later, it is revealed that he is a human being with a horrible face and that he is capable of horrible deeds but that on the other hand, he loves Christine. Through the Persian, the readers discover some of his past in Persia and it is not after he dies, in the “Epilogue” that the readers learn more about his past before Persia as recounted by the narrator.

Erik’s story starts when he is born in a small place near Rouen. His father is a stonemason, but he has not seen him. His mother gives him a mask, but it is not entirely clear why. He leaves and earns his living by performing on fairs with gypsies, posing as the living corpse. Later, he travels the world, through Russia, India (where he acquires his skills with the Punjab lasso), Africa and Persia. In Persia, his job is to entertain the Shah-in-Shah by killing large amounts of people. He also builds the Shah a palace with many secret passages and tricks. The Shah, however, does not wish anybody to know the secrets of his palace and orders Erik be executed. The Persian rescues Erik from this and helps him to flee to Paris where Erik becomes subcontractor under Charles Garnier and designs, plans and builds the

Paris Opera House, creating himself a house on the underground lake where he can retire. At this point, he starts working on his own opera *Don Juan Triumphant*. He blackmails the managers Poligny and Débienne and, due to Poligny's superstition, he gets everything he wants from them: exclusive use of box five and 20.000 francs a month. He continues this way when the new managers arrive, although they are less superstitious and do not want to give in to his demands. So Erik devices new ways of obtaining what he wants, using his skills as a magician and the secrets and tricks he built into the Opera to obtain the money. He also uses his ventriloquism to scare away any occupants of his box five. Over the course of the story, he murders three people: the first, Joseph Buquet, is hanged, the second, the concierge, is crushed by the falling chandelier, and the third, le Comte Philippe de Chagny, is found dead on the bank of the underground lake. When the Persian confronts him with these murders, however, Erik denies committing them. The Persian assumes that Bouquet hanged himself in the torture chamber, which was the actual purpose of that device (Leroux 298). Erik tells the Persian that the chandelier fell because it was "très usé, le lustre... Il est tombé tout seul" (Leroux 266), and there are no witnesses to confirm that Erik was actually there when the chandelier fell. Finally, the death of Philippe is most mysterious. Erik blames the Siren, a mysterious creature that he places in the lake in front of his house to protect his privacy. There are reasons to assume that Erik himself is the Siren (see in particular Leroux 264-5, when the Persian encounters the Siren and it actually turns out to be Erik breathing through a long reed), but in the case of Philippe's death, this does not seem to be the case, as Erik says later that Philippe "était mort déjà quand je suis sorti de ma maison. Il était mort déjà quand la sirène a chanté. C'est un accident. Un triste, un lamentablement triste accident. Il était tombé bien maladroitement et simplement et naturellement dans la lac!" (Leroux 325). When the Persian then says that he is lying, he does not respond. The problem here is that it is impossible to find out what has happened exactly and it also poses the problem that the readers do not find out if Erik is actually a liar, because there are no clear indications of it and therefore it is also impossible to find out if Erik can be trusted or not. This also creates a tension within the character: his actions and his words do not match and this creates an interesting depth to the character and might make him very interesting for the readers.

One assumption that can be made on the fact that Erik denies committing crimes is that he does not believe them to be crimes, saying at some point: "J'ai commit des crimes?" (Leroux 265), and when the Persian reminds him of the Rosy Hours of Mazenderan, he says "J'aime mieux les avoir oubliées" (Leroux 265), which leads to another explanation for his crimes, which is that he wants to break with his past and wants to become a regular person

who does not murder or use his strange abilities to trick other people. This same idea can be seen in the Phantom's motives for loving Christine. He is fed up with living such a strange life filled with illusions, mirrors and trickery (Leroux 292) and now "je veux vivre comme tout le monde. Je veux avoir une femme comme tout le monde et nous irons nous promener le dimanche" (Leroux 281). Christine is his hope to attain this goal, she is the regular wife who he can take for walks on Sunday and the only one who can redeem him and end his strange life. This becomes clear when taking into account what Erik says to the Persian: "rien ne peut retenir Erik, pas meme Erik lui-même" (Leroux 264), but at the climax, Christine stops him from killing Raoul and the Persian and also from blowing up the Opera House. This shows another contradiction in the Phantom's character: the cruelty towards most of the human race and his kindness towards Christine. He behaves like a gentleman. He takes care of her when she is his 'guest' in his house, gives her food, dresses, anything a woman may need. In the end, his cruelty is forgotten and he cries almost like a baby when Christine kisses him. The narrator acknowledges the contradiction in Erik's behaviour, saying in the epilogue where he describes how he finds Erik's body: "Pauvre malheureux Erik! Faut-il le plaindre? Faut-il le maudire? Il ne demandait qu'à être quelqu'un, comme tout le monde! Mais il était trop laid! Et il dut cacher son génie ou *faire des tours avec*, quand, avec un visage ordinaire, il eût été l'un des plus nobles de la race humaine! Il avait un cœur à contenir l'empire du monde, et il dut, finalement, se contenter d'une cave" (342). The sadness of this character is also expressed through his opera, *Don Juan Triumphant*, which is presented as a parallel to his life, and is described by Erik as "mon *Don Juan*, à moi, brûle, Christine, et, cependant, il n'est point foudroyé par le feu du ciel!... Voyez-vous, Christine, il y a une musique si terrible qu'elle consume tous ceux qui l'approchent" (Leroux 170) and by Christine as "un long, affreux et magnifique sanglot où le pauvre Erik avait mis toute sa misère maudite" (Leroux 176). Interestingly here, there is a gap between Erik's perception of himself and Christine's view on him. Erik believes himself to be a terrible character, a burning presence, which destroys everything that is good, but Christine takes pity on him and sees him mostly as a very sad and hurt person, which is also expressed by her repeated utterance of "Pauvre Erik" (Leroux 177).

All in all, we can conclude that Erik is created as a very contradictory character. This can be seen very clearly when taking into account the point of view of the novel. The point of view is "the vantage point from which a narrative is presented" (Desmond and Hawkes 21). This means that the reader always sees the story through the eyes of either the narrator or a character. Because of this mediation, the reader's/viewer's opinion of the events and

characters in the narrative are filtered by the character from whose point of view the story is told. For the Phantom this means that we see him through the eyes of Christine, Raoul, the Persian and the narrator and the readers' opinions may be influenced by the opinions of these characters. Raoul, for instance, shows the Phantom as a rival, a dangerous threat to his and Christine's safety and as something that needs to be eliminated. Christine and the narrator, however, show us Erik as a human being who needs to be pitied because he suffered. In the Persian's narrative, Erik is presented as a murdering criminal who needs to be stopped by the hand of justice, since the Persian is the chief of the Persian police and his job in his life has been to stop the threat of Erik to the entire society. The managers of the Opera House and the other staff there experience Erik as a true ghost who can make items (including money) disappear without a clear cause and who can make his voice appear in places where he is absent. Interestingly, the novel never applies the point of view of the Phantom himself and the only way the readers can know what he is thinking and how he views the world through what he says to other characters. This allows the character to retain a sense of mystery: even though we know the facts of his history and we know some of his thoughts, most of his mind remains hidden from the readers.

What this discussion on point of view shows us mostly is the split in Erik's behaviour: he is cruel to the human race as we see through Raoul, the Persian and the Opera workers. On the other hand, he is gentle and kind to Christine. He has the appearance of a corpse and says "Apprends que je suis fait entièrement avec de la mort! De la tête aux pieds! Et que c'est un cadavre qui t'aime, qui t'adore et qui ne te quittera plus jamais!" (Leroux 174), but he is also a living, breathing character. He is an adult, but also a child, exemplified by his childlike handwriting that looks as if he has not learned to join his letters yet (Leroux 45) and the Persian describes him as a child as well (Leroux 264). He is carnivalesque in his performances in his earlier life, but operatic during the plot of the novel; he is a creator because he built the Opera House, wrote an opera himself and creates Christine's voice, but is also a destroyer of lives and he is even prepared to blow up his own creation. He is a lover and a monster, he is a father in playing Daddy Daaé's violin and in pretending to be the Angel of Music as sent by Christine's father, but he is also a son when he attempts to gain a woman's approval after his mother would not accept him (Hogle 7-11). He is an Angel and a demon (Leroux 79 and 150), he is a French character with a Germanic name which he took "par hasard" (Leroux 169) who has travelled a lot in the East. He is ugly on the outside, but inside there is some beauty and finally, he is depicted as a man and a woman, because he has the vocal range of both.

So all in all, Erik is a very contradictory character and these contradictions make him a character with a lot of internal tension, so inside the character, as well as external tension, which means that his relationship with other characters is a rather difficult one at times, i.e. he murders them.

Appearance

In the first chapter of the novel, the Phantom is described by Joseph Buquet as “Il est d’une prodigieuse maigreur et son habit noir flotte sur une charpente squelettique. Ses yeux sont si profonds qu’on ne distingue pas bien les prunelles immobiles. On ne voit, en somme, que deux grands trous noirs comme aux crânes des morts. Sa peau, qui est tendue sur l’ossature comme une peau de tambour, n’est point blanche, mais vilainement jaune ; son nez est si peu de chose qu’il est invisible de profil, et *l’absence* de ce nez est une horrible chose à voir. Trois ou quatre longues mèches brunes sur le front et derrière les oreilles font office de chevelure” (15-6). This is, interestingly, the only full description the readers are given of the Phantom and at the time when it is presented, there is much debate about whether it is true, because the ballet girls all claim to have seen the Phantom too with different heads. In the unmasking scene, Christine briefly describes him as having a death’s head, but seems to be more impressed by Erik’s furious anguished reaction than by his actual appearance (Leroux 172-3). Erik’s horrible appearance, however, is countered by the description of his voice, which is “de plus largement et héroïquement suave, de plus victorieusement insidieux, de plus fort dans la délicatesse, enfin de plus irrésistiblement triomphant” (Leroux 130). Covering his face is a black mask, which is mentioned twice, very briefly when Erik brings Christine down to his house (Leroux 159), and when Christine and Erik are singing a duet from *Othello* and Erik performs the part of the Moor and is still wearing the black mask, reminding Christine of the natural mask of the Moor (Leroux 171).

All in all, Erik has the appearance of a corpse and usually wears dress clothes. When he first abducts Christine he wears a black full mask which covers his entire face, to protect her from his ugliness and when she looks at him, she belongs to him forever, he says.

The 1925 Film

The Characterisation and Depiction of the Phantom

The story and the plot are similar to the way they are structured in the novel in that the viewers find out gradually who the Phantom is and how he became what he is. A very big

difference, however, is the Phantom's story. Most of Erik's original history has been deleted. Instead of having travelled the world, he has been imprisoned on Devil's Island and he was a prisoner in the Paris Opera during the Second Revolution and was tortured at that time in the torture chamber which has been there since the Middle Ages. Therefore, it is not even entirely clear whether the disfigurement of the Phantom's face is congenital or if it happened during those tortures.

As a result of the removal of the Phantom's background history, the Persian becomes obsolete. A character resembling him is still in the film, although this is a police inspector called Ledoux, who has been following the Phantom for a while and that is how he got all his information. Funnily, the Ledoux character still has an oriental appearance, with a dark skin, dark eyes with eyeliner and the astrakhan cap that the Persian wears in the novel. According to Scott MacQueen, a film preserver at Disney studios, but who has a particular interest in *The Phantom of the Opera*, there have been at least three scripts for the 1925 film, one of which included a long flashback scene set in Persia, where "Erik falls from favor with the Sultan and is sentenced to be eaten alive by ants. Under cover of night the daroga steals out to his friend and discovers Erik, still alive, manacled face down on the anthill. Freeing him, the daroga is seized with horror as he turns Erik over revealing the unhappy results of the insects' work" (MacQueen "1926 Phantom" 38). Finally, the scene was discarded altogether, because it saved a lot of money: no extra sets would have to be built, no extra actors had to be hired and the elephant that was to appear in the scene would not have to be paid for either. On top of this, the studio decided that the mystery and the macabre would have to be removed from the film, because films which focused on these aspects never did well at the box office (MacQueen "1926 Phantom" 35).

For all these reasons, the Phantom's history was cut back to what it is now. As for the Persian's appearance, this is caused by the fact that the film had to be remade many times as the production process was very bumpy and rough. The director was a difficult man to work with (Perry 49) and neither Lon Chaney nor Norman Kerry got on with him, and these turbulent relationships caused quite some problems on set (Koszarski 281). Chaney disagreed with Julian's directing on many points (Perry 49) and allegedly directed many scenes himself (Hogan 104), and according to Soister, Nicolella, Joyce and Long, at least half the footage was shot by Chaney (458). On top of this, the film was previewed several times and Carl Laemmle was repeatedly discontented (Mirsalis). A new director, Edward Sedgwick, was hired. He was known for his westerns, actions movies and comedies with Buster Keaton. McQueen says he re-shot approximately 60 per cent of the film. According to Jon Mirsalis he

added a romantic subplot, re-edited the whole movie, made new intertitles and created an alternative ending. The new cut was previewed again in April 1925, but Laemmle still was not happy. Finally, Lois Weber was hired (Birchard 111). She took all the footage that had been shot until then and re-edited it, inserted new intertitles and made the best what she could of it. This is the final version that premiered in September 1925 and was shown to the audiences. This production context clearly shows in the film; there are some glaring discontinuities in the narrative and at points it seems rather incoherent. As Mordaunt Hall puts it, “So far as the story is concerned, it looks as if too many cooks had rather spoiled the broth” and this leads to gaps in the Phantom’s character that were explained in the novel but are left out of the film, including his past and the many contradictions in his character from the novel.

The only contradiction that seems to be left mostly unaltered is the one between the cruelty to mankind and the gentleness towards Christine. The actual actions that show the more agreeable side to the Phantom are when he brings Christine down to his lair and handles her so tenderly. He seems confident when Christine is around him, sure of his actions and his movements, but when she unmasks him, the look on his face at first is one of utter horror and anguish. According to Blake, “all strength and self-confidence shatter when Christine rips away the mask and reveals his hideous face” (*A Thousand Faces* 162). And in the ending, a mob has chased him across Paris and corners him on the bank of the Seine. He holds up his hand and the mob shrink back. He makes some threatening moves with his hand, but then, with a smile, opens his hand and it turns out there is nothing there. Finally, when he dies, there is a look of peaceful resignation and he dies. Moments like these, when it becomes clear how devastated he is when he realises he has no chance with Christine and when he realises he must die are the moments where Chaney shows the human side of the Phantom and that is how the audience is given the opportunity to empathise with him. On top of this, there is still a note of sympathy attached to the Chaney Phantom. According to Perry “Chaney set himself a task that would have daunted most actors – and succeeded, for in spite of a macabre and repulsive appearance he was able to project so much compassion and sorrow that it was perfectly possible to feel sympathy for this misshapen creature” (50). Ann C. Hall remarks that “His is the role by which all others are measured, the standard for all Phantoms throughout the ages and throughout subsequent genres. His is the performance that rescues the film from the numerous problems that plagued the production both onscreen and off” (36). All in all, it seems to be Chaney’s performance rather than the script which creates the sympathy for the character: the sympathy is certainly not expressed by Christine, who spends most of her time in the underground house trying to keep as far away from Erik as physically

possible; nor can any sympathy be based on the background history and the long life of suffering that we know the Phantom had in the novel.

However, in this film, there is also a heavy emphasis on the dark side to the character. Erik torments the new managers of the opera by invisibly delivering messages that inform them of his demands and by punishing them if they disobey him. The ambiguity of his murders has become entirely clear in this film; he is actually shown dropping the chandelier and killing Philippe and Joseph Buquet. Because of this clearly malicious side to his character and also because of Christine's reaction to him, it becomes very hard for the audience to sympathise with this character. As the narrative in the scenes involving the Phantom are shown mostly through Christine's eyes, the audience's opinion of him is somewhat filtered by her views on him. In this film, she is not attracted by him, does not love him and faints very often when he is near. So the focus of this film on Erik is mostly of him as a monster. This is also illustrated by the fact that Chaney's contract did not allow any photographs to be published of his face ("Souvenir Program" 14) and, indeed, his face is blanked on a picture in that same souvenir program (5). This means that the aim of his face was to scare as many people as possible and using the element of surprise in doing so. The unmasking scene is staged very interestingly as well: Christine and the Phantom are both facing the camera, the Phantom is playing his organ and does not know that she is standing behind him. She removes the mask and he looks up in agony. The audience is the first to see his face. It is only after this shot, which stays for a few seconds, that he turns around, looks at Christine and she screams because she finally sees him. This shows that the goal of the Phantom's face was mostly to shock the audience as well as to serve the narrative purpose of the tension between Christine's relationship with an ugly man and a handsome one. If this is the approach to the entire character in the film, then the murders he commits must be clearly committed by Erik, because if they are not, there is a weakness to the character which does not fit horror.

Another omission are the Phantom's motives for loving Christine, which are not clear at all and this does not further his case as a well-rounded, sympathetic character. The only indications to his motives are that the Phantom wants to make Christine the greatest star of the Paris Opera. He also says "I love you. For long weary months I have awaited this hour. So that which is good within me, aroused by your purity, might plead for your love" (Julian), which implies that he needs her love to become a better man. This is underlined by something else that the Phantom says: "If I am the Phantom, it is because man's hatred has made me so" (Julian). This intertitle is combined with a close-up of the Phantom's face and thus may invite the audience to sympathise with him. The Phantom in this film seems to believe that his

cruelty and sin emerge from man's hatred towards him and that Christine's love can cure him of it and redeem him from his sins. However, because of Christine's behaviour towards him, this does not happen and he is hunted down and killed like a villain.

Another cause of the flatness of the character is that many contradictions within the character that have disappeared are the creator/destroyer distinction, because this Erik did not create the Opera House, nor the torture chamber, because in this version, it was a remnant of the Middle Ages. The carnivalesque/operatic distinction has disappeared, the male/female, oriental/occidental and the child/adult contradiction. The dead/alive aspect is still somewhat present because of Chaney's makeup and the coffin that he sleeps in, as he tells Christine. Many of these omissions are the result of the removal of the Phantom's history (with the carnival and his travels in the east) and of the Persian, who informs the readers of the novel of most of the Phantom's history and character.

Something that should also be taken into account is the point of view, which in the novel was a complicated assembly of different narrators and documents that are used to drive the story forward. Some of this journalistic feel has been retained in the 1925 film, for instance when Erik's notes appear on screen to be read by the viewers, or when Ledoux pulls out the file on Erik and shows it so that the audience can read it, telling us about the Phantom's history. Apart from this, however, a standard Hollywood style has been used for the point of view. This means that the film "represents story events through the vision of an invisible or imaginary witness" (Bordwell 9). Of course there are some point of view shots – shots that show what the character is looking at, creating a sense that the viewer is seeing through the character's eyes – but they are only there when they are necessary, for instance in a scene where Christine is in her dressing room and she hears the Voice. Her eyes shift to the right, followed by a shot of the mirror, showing that that is the object of her gaze. As well as showing events from Christine's point of view, the film also shows them from the Phantom's, where the novel avoided showing anything from his point of view. This may give the viewers the idea that they can actually put themselves in the Phantom's mind, especially for instance in the part after the unmasking, which includes a shot from the Phantom's point of view looking down on Christine. Telling the story partly from the Phantom's point of view is helpful on one hand, since literally putting yourself in somebody's mind can help you identify with the character and thus empathise with him, but it also opens the Phantom's mind to the viewers and thus he loses even more mystery because his mind is accessible to the viewers.

The result of all the above mentioned reasons is that the Phantom is a character who the audience is invited to sympathise with. This is mostly a result of Chaney's acting. The script emphasises his characterisation as a monstrous villain.

Appearance



Erik unmasked, 1925

Having removed Erik's history, the explanation for his malformation is also gone. One of the title cards that are in the final cut of the film says that Erik was imprisoned in the torture chambers underneath the Opera during the Second Revolution. This might imply that that is where his deformity comes from. The makeup was designed by Chaney himself, who was an expert on makeup (MacQueen "Phantom II" 35) The goal of the makeup was to make Chaney's head look like a skull, like Erik's face in the novel. Blake describes the process of how Chaney created the look in detail: Chaney used fish skin to pull up

the top of his nose, shading around the eyes, fake teeth, and a skull cap with a wig. He also used spirit gum to glue back his ears, to make his head flatter (*Lon Chaney* 133). Chaney was 41 years old at the time of filming, making him considerably older than Christine, but the age gap is smaller than in the novel.

As well as the face, Chaney also created the mask, which is a strange face with bulbous cheeks and a bit of cloth at the bottom to cover the mouth and chin. The mask gives the Phantom a very smooth-skinned, perfectly sculpted, almost beautiful face, which enhances the shock the viewers and Christine get when he is finally unmasked because the contrast is so large. The smoothness of the mask and the round cheeks also give the Phantom a very childlike appearance, echoing the references to his being a child in the novel and giving the viewers an opportunity to sympathise with the Phantom because the mask makes him look innocent like a child. Like it enhances the shock when seeing his face for the first time, it also helps to feel for him and the suffering that his disfigurement must have caused him.



Erik masked, 1925

The 1943 Film

The Characterisation and Depiction of the Phantom

The story and the plot are mostly convergent in this film, although the plot naturally starts at the point in the story that is relevant, i.e. the firing of Claudin when he is in his fifties, and it does not show all the events leading up to this, because they simply do not help to build the plot. The history of the Phantom as it is in the novel has completely been removed and a change occurred which will happen in two more film versions of *The Phantom*: the disfigurement is not congenital anymore: the Phantom has a regular life until one fateful day where he becomes disfigured by, in the case of the 1943 film, acid. Eriq Claudin is in this film a violinist at the Opera House. He is fired because his playing is deteriorating. He explains this is because of arthritis in his left hand. To earn some extra money to keep paying for Christine's singing lessons anonymously, he tries to sell his music. There is a misunderstanding, however, and Claudin believes the publishers are stealing his music. He attacks one of them and strangles him. An assistant then throws acid in his face and he flees back to the Opera House. The managers discuss him as having stolen items from the prop rooms and the master key as well. Since nobody ever sees him, the legend of the ghost is born. For the next third of the film, the Phantom is only seen as a shadow lurking about the Opera House. He tells Christine that he will make her a great singer and before an opera performance, a shadowy hand is seen tampering with a prop drink. Biancarolli, the leading soprano, is 'poisoned' and becomes indisposed so Christine takes her place and is a great success. Later, when Biancarolli accuses Christine of having poisoned her, the Phantom comes to her dressing room and tells her to leave. When she does not do so, he murders her and her maid. At the climax of the film, the Phantom disguised himself as one of the policemen and cuts down the chandelier because the managers did not obey his orders. He then grabs Christine and drags her down to his underground lair where he forces her to sing for him, but she is rescued and the Phantom is killed in a cave-in.

Like the novel, Claudin commits several murders fairly cruelly, but it is explained by him being mad. Anatole theorises that when Claudin loses his job, his music and his face, "something snaps" and he becomes "a homicidal maniac" (Lubin). The main expression of the Phantom's madness in this film is that he does not have a clear idea of right and wrong anymore. Near the climax of the film, he tells Christine that he has done everything to help her, saying "I warned them. I said there'd be death and destruction if they didn't let you sing" (Lubin). So as we saw as a possible explanation for Leroux's Erik's actions, this Phantom

does not realise that what he does is bad. The reason why he is so protective towards Christine, however, is not given. He says at the climax that he loves Christine, but there is no sexual attraction between the two characters, nor does he ever express any desire to marry Christine or love her in other ways. This hiatus is explained by Scott MacQueen, who discusses a deleted scene from an earlier version of the film where Raoul went to see Christine's aunt in his investigations and discovered that Claudin was in truth Christine's father, who had abandoned her and her mother to pursue his music. Christine's mother died soon after that and Christine was brought to her mother's sister to grow up ("New Formula" 80). The scene was deleted, however, without reshooting any of the existing footage, leaving Claudin's motives strangely unexplained.

On the other hand, however, Claudin is a very gentle, kind character. He is very polite to Christine when they first meet before he is fired and asks her about her health and wonders in a worried voice if she is in any trouble because she missed the curtain call. He never shouts at anybody, never becomes angry and never even raises his voice. Claude Rains's voice is described as "rich, polished and sensual" (Skal and Rains 161) and "low and husky" (Skal Rains 92) and he always uses his regular voice for the Phantom. This makes the Phantom a more palatable character, giving him an excuse for his cruelty, i.e. the trauma of being disfigured and giving a clear indication of how much of his actions are caused by his disfigurement by showing the viewers what the character was like before the disfigurement.

The same thing that happened in the 1925 film has happened again in this one: the multi-dimensional complex character of the Phantom has been brought down to several basic elements. Instead of being both a madman and a genius, the Phantom from the 1943 film is not an extraordinary genius – he plays the violin adequately, but his skills are deteriorating. He plays the piano and has already written several pieces of music that were denied by the publisher and then wrote a concerto based on an already existing lullaby from his childhood. Nor is the creator/destroyer contradiction present in the film; Claudin does not give Christine singing lessons because he himself is not a singer and he was not involved in the building of the Opera House either. The destroyer part is present in the murders he commits, and, like the 1925 film, he is given definite authority of the murders. The deathly aspects of the character are gone, since Claudin even after his disfigurement does not resemble a corpse and does not sleep in a coffin. The angel/demon distinction is removed as Christine and Claudin only interact for about ten minutes throughout the entire film. She hardly has the time to get to know him or to form an image of him as an Angel, a demon or a monster. The oriental aspects have disappeared together with his travels and even his name is Frenchified from Erik to

Erique. The point of view has also changed for this film: instead of the many different viewpoints and collage-like assembly in the novel, this film is told mostly in the Hollywood style, with a non-obtrusive camera that shows the relevant action that is going on. There are, of course, point of view shots when they are required for every character in the film, including the minor ones like Biancarolli and Villeneuve. Many scenes at the beginning and at the end are also shot from the point of view of Erique Claudin/the Phantom. The Phantom's point of view, as I said before, has been left out in the novel and including it in this film makes the Phantom a more accessible and clear character as opposed to a closed off mystery.

All in all, like the Erik from the 1925 film, this Phantom has been flattened into a much simpler character whose disfigurement is now given a reason. However, unlike Chaney's Erik, Claudin's character has been turned into a gentler one rather than a monstrous one. His murders are explained and the explanations allow the audience to sympathise with him more than if no explanation had been given.

Appearance



The Phantom masked, 1943

Claude Rains was 54 years old at the time that this film was made. This places him at about the same age as Leroux's Erik and making the age difference between him and Christine very much the same as in the novel.

Erique Claudin, before he becomes disfigured, looks the way a violinist should, wearing black dress clothes and with grey, neatly combed hair and sideburns. After the disfigurement, he still wears his dress clothes and starts wearing a cloak, a broad-brimmed hat and a grey mask. Erik in the novel wears a cloak too, and also wears a hat when he goes out to see the Persian. The mask that Claudin wears is a grey half mask, which leaves only his chin and mouth free. David J. Skal in corporation with Jessica Rains describes the mask as follows: "a pale blue, almost feline stylization of Rains's own face, allowing the actor to be perfectly recognizable even while disguised" (162). Another interpretation of this mask, with its almond-shaped eyes and its small mouth is that of an Asian face. Following this assumption, this mask would take on the role of the Othering through Asian links that was present in Leroux's Erik as well. So there may be a link between this Phantom's mask and the original phantom, but the design of the mask itself is very different from the black full mask from the novel, but the objections from an actor's point of view are clear: acting with a face that is

fully covered becomes very hard and most of the actor's expression may be lost, not to mention that it is very strange for the viewers to look at an immobile face the whole time.

Finally, the Phantom's face has changed dramatically. Instead of being a skull with parchment-like yellow skin and holes for the nose and mouths and burning yellow lights for eyes, this Phantom's face looks more like "nothing worse than an unpleasant skin ailment" (Perry 59): the right side of Claudin's face is reddened and a bit wrinkled and the skin around his eye is pulled down. There are several reasons why the distortion is not nearly as bad as in the original novel or even



The Phantom unmasked, 1943

in the 1925 film; one reason is Claude Rains himself. He accepted the role, but under only one condition: "that he makeup would not be too extreme" (Skal and Rains 121) and that he was probably afraid of being typecast in horror movies, unable to play leading roles anymore. Being cast in B-movies was not attractive to him at all because they would make less money. Rains was so particular about the face that makeup designer Jack Pierce went through many designs with Rains before he was finally satisfied (Skal and Rains 121). In fact, as Scott MacQueen recounts in the documentary "A Phantom Unmasked", Rains was so concerned about the face that he would not allow it to appear on screen apart from one shot near the climax. Lubin, however, knew that the studio wanted horror and he hid a second camera when the climax was filmed, which shot additional footage of Rains's face. This footage finally ended up in the film.

The 1962 Film

The Characterisation and Depiction of the Phantom

The plot of this film version of *The Phantom of the Opera* is different than the story. Like the novel, this film follows the story of Christine and, in this case, Harry Hunter. The plot follows mostly Hunter going from place to place and asking questions. By interviewing Christine's landlady, a policeman, a printer and some cleaning ladies, he discovers the history of the Phantom of the Opera. The Phantom's history is then recounted in a flashback near the climax of the film when Hunter comes to the Phantom's lair to save Christine. This flashback shows that this Phantom was in reality Professor Petrie. This character writes his own opera

based on the story of Joan of Arc. Trying to get it published, he takes it to Lord Ambrose D'Arcy, who buys it for fifty pounds and publishes it under his own name. Petrie is so upset by this that he goes to the printers' and burns most of the music. In the process, his face is set on fire and he flees, jumps into the Thames and washes up in the cellars of the Opera House where a dwarf finds him and takes care of him. This dwarf is mute, and therefore nobody knows his name. He is an untameable character and has very basic drives that are difficult to control, according to the Phantom. Following the story from the point where Petrie washes up underneath the Opera House, the Phantom finds that a young girl has come to the Opera House, Christine Charles, and he speaks to her in her dressing room, promising to make her a great singer. Later, the dwarf abducts her and brings her to his lair. The Phantom then trains her to sing the leading role in his opera and then lets her go to sing.

The most interesting thing about this Phantom is that he does not commit the crimes he does in the novel or the other films at all. Instead, two murders are committed by the dwarf, who also drops the chandelier. This time, the chandelier is hanging right over the stage and threatens to crush Christine. The Phantom jumps onto the stage from his box and saves her. The other evil character in this film is Lord Ambrose D'Arcy, the aristocratic, upper-class, suave, but dangerous character. He tries to seduce Christine and destroys everybody who gets in his way. The Phantom himself only commits some very petty crimes like tearing the sheet music of the conductor and the skins on the drums, so that his opera cannot be performed properly under D'Arcy's name. His behaviour towards Christine, however, is not as loving as in other versions. He slaps her when she gets too tired to sing and throws water in her face to wake her up after she faints of exhaustion. He wants her to sing only for him and for his music, but is focussed more on finding a fine voice to perform his music than to find himself a wife. He never expresses the wish for her to marry him and never even talks about love. Nor does he wish her to stay with him forever, because he agrees to let her go as soon as he trained her up enough to make her able to sing Joan. Therefore, his motivations are again very unclear. All he wants from Christine is that she sings in his opera. His *Joan of Arc* can be seen as a representation of his own tragic life, so he needs somebody who can sing it perfectly. If this makes Christine a popular and widely accepted singer, it is a nice side-effect, but it is not his main goal. Finally, when she sings the opera, he watches from box five and a tear appears in his eye. As his right eye is the only part of his face we can see, it is hard to figure out if he is sad or moved or just very happy and relieved that his opera is finally performed properly, or that he is happy to see Christine doing what he believes she was born to do. Then, when the chandelier falls, he jumps onto the stage to save Christine. He succeeds,

but again, his motives are slightly unclear. Does he do it because he loves her and does not want her die or because he is already dying, as he told Hunter before, and because he believes that since Christine still has a whole life before her it would be worse for her to die than for him? It is very hard to tell, especially since this Phantom does not give the audience any indication that he actually loves Christine. In short, since the Phantom at least does not love Christine for any physical or emotional reason and only for her voice, there are no motivations necessary and are also not given.

He is characterised as a very scatter-brained and he has a slightly disintegrated personality, which is shown by his constant muttering to himself, reliving the events of his failed attempt to publish and then to destroy his music. Sometimes he stops talking in the middle of a scene and repeats the things he said when confronting D'Arcy about his music, apparently not even noticing that he is in an entirely different place. Then, suddenly, he stops muttering and continues what he was doing before that. This shows that the things that have happened to him have gravely impacted his sanity of mind and have made him a different person. This makes the Phantom a human character and the scenes where he talks to himself make him sympathetic because they show his suffering and his pitiable state. However, this also reduces the Phantom to a simple human being who has been wronged.

The contradiction between the Phantom's kindness and cruelty has therefore disappeared and it turns him, again, into a flat character who is not extremely dangerous, but not extremely attractive either. The many sides to Leroux's Erik have interestingly been taken apart and given to different characters: Erik's pitiable suffering is given to the Phantom, his smooth, slick aristocratic sexual threat is given to D'Arcy, and his savage, beastly cruelty is given to the dwarf. However, there are still many things that the Erik in the novel is and that this Phantom is not, even with the dwarf and D'Arcy added: he is not an architect, has not built the Opera House, he has not travelled the world, he is not a ventriloquist, he is not a violin virtuoso, and does not have a long history of being rejected by society. Also like the other films, this film ignores the complex point of view in the novel and follows the regular Hollywood transparent camera style, so this film also includes the Phantom's point of view. However, the emplotment with Hunter discovering the Phantom's past, instead of following the Phantom chronologically through the events that lead up to his disfigurement, help this Phantom to retain some mystery.

Appearance



The Phantom masked, 1962

Herbert Lom, at the time when this film was made, was 45 years old, slightly younger than Leroux's Phantom. Like the Phantom in the novel, this one wears dress-clothes. However, whereas Erik always seemed to take care to keep his clothes in good shape, Petrie's clothes are dusty, stained, grubby and generally in need of replacement. He does not wear a cloak and his mask is a full face, brownish one with holes for the nostrils and one eyehole. Hall recounts that the making of the mask was a problem; a professional mask maker was hired and made beautiful sketches but the filmmakers felt they were not right (Hall 59). In the end, when the Phantom needed to be photographed and there was no mask, Tony Hinds, the producer and writer, "got an old piece of rag, tied it round his [Herbert Lom's] face, cut a hole in it, stuck a piece of mesh over one of the eyes, two bits of string around it, and tried it. "Great!" they cried out, "That's just what we want!" (Kinsey 237). So instead of being a polished, good-looking black mask, the mask from this film was made on a whim and, like the Phantom's clothes, looks a bit dirty and neglected.

The face and the hands of this Phantom are grey. It is not entirely clear whether this was caused by the fire or if there is something else going on, because the Phantom stares at his hands at some point and says to Hunter: "Look. I am already dying" (Fisher). Finally, when the Phantom un masks himself, he is seen for a split



The Phantom unmasked, 1962

second, then again for the same amount of time when he looks up at the chandelier which is coming at him. Both of these are frontal close ups, and finally there is a longer shot shown from the side – not a close up this time – which shows his face a little bit more clearly. There are bright red spots which is probably where the acid burned into his skin and the skin around his left eye looks like it melted and the eye does not open. It looks like he has not shaved for a while and his hair is a dry and wispy unkempt mess.

All in all, this Phantom makes a very neglected impression, like he has lost himself and has forgotten that he has to take care of himself after the accident with the fire, living only

off his music and by his hopes to have his opera performed well by a beautiful voice. His looks, then, are very much in line with the how the character acts and behaves.

The 1983 Film

The Characterisation and Depiction of the Phantom

Like the previous two versions, this film version does not give the Phantom a history outside the main narrative. Plotwise, it follows the example of the 1943 version, starting with the Phantom as the protagonist before he had his accident and following him through the events that lead to the climax. The narrative thus starts with Sandor Korvin, a conductor at the Budapest Opera House who is guiding his wife to become a great opera singer. However, when she makes her *début*, a very bad review is published by the evil baron Hunyadi and she commits suicide. Korvin himself hunts down everybody who had anything to do with his wife's downfall and murders several of them. In the process, however, a bottle of acid pours out into his face while the room is on fire. He is rescued by the rat catcher Lajos who takes him down to the cellars of the Opera House and gives him his mask. Four years later, another opera singer arrives, Maria Gianelli. She resembles Elena, Korvin's wife, exactly and he starts giving her singing lessons. When he finds out that she is seeing the producer, Hartnell, he threatens to kill him and also stops giving Maria the singing lessons. She writes him a note to come to the masquerade ball, which he does. He murders Hunyadi and takes Maria down to his lair, where she unmasks him and he tells her that she will have to stay with him forever. Hartnell rescues her, and the Phantom murders Lajos. Next he cuts down the chandelier during a performance and, discovering too late that Maria is sitting directly underneath it, tries to stop it from falling but crashes with it and dies in the fall.

One of the most interesting aspects of this Phantom is his cruelty. Where we saw a distinction in previous versions where the Phantom was cruel to the people who lived above the opera and kind and gentle to Christine, this Phantom is cruel to everybody, including Maria, this version's Christine. Although it is mentioned several times in the film that he loved his wife Elena very much, it does not show. He is mostly very stern to Elena and forces her to keep singing even if she does not want to. The only indication that he truly loves her is that he goes on his killing spree after she has been harmed. So interestingly, the Phantom's cruelty already starts before he actually becomes the Phantom and continues throughout the film, without a warmer, gentler side to him. In this sense, he is like Leroux's Erik, who has

been the way he is all his life. Interestingly, in both cases, it is not clear how much the disfigurement has influenced the Phantom's behaviour.

The way he treats Maria is not much better than the way he treats his wife. When he gives her singing lessons in the house, the interaction is shown very little, but it does effectively reveal that he takes care of Maria the way he did with Elena: by teaching her how to sing and building up her musical confidence. The second time that they are together is after the abduction, where the Phantom drugs her in order to get her to come with him. When she wakes up, he tells her that she can never leave. He also tells her that he brought her there to protect her from the world above, so that what happens to Elena can never happen to her. However, he does not treat her tenderly at all; his voice always has an angry note to it. Very soon, Maria unmasks him and the following sequence is copied almost literally from the book, where he takes her hands and makes her touch his face and tells her that now she cannot leave, because she would leave him forever. His angry outburst is so effective that Maria never gets over her fear for him and stays away from him as far as possible.

As well as the Phantom's cruelty, his jealousy and possessiveness have been included in this film, very similarly to the way it was depicted in the novel. The Phantom frequently keeps himself informed of the status of the relationship between Christine/Maria and Raoul/Hartnell. When he sees them together and notices Hartnell unbuttoning Maria's skirt, he goes to the Turkish bath where Hartnell is taking a bath and threatens to strangle him if he does not stop seeing Maria. Finally, when Christine has unmasked him, he says that when a woman has seen him, she belongs to him. The point of view in this film is treated mostly like that in the others, including the Phantom as a focal point. However, in this film it helps to establish the Phantom as a threat, especially in the part after he becomes disfigured and before he makes himself known to Christine. In these sequences, the Phantom follows Christine around, watching her. There are several shots where the camera looks down from the Phantom's position on Christine, who is unaware of his presence and keeps on doing what she is doing. These shots are usually accompanied by the Phantom's menacing theme and it helps to establish the Phantom as a threatening, dangerous and scary presence.

However, Korvin's danger, scariness, madness, cruelty and jealousy may have been taken a bit too far, since it is very hard to sympathise with this Phantom. He is very dark and imposing, usually accompanied by a dark, ominous musical score that is rather reminiscent of the main theme of *Jaws*. Maria does not love him because he scares her away with a cruelty and anger that overshadows any possible kindness. Along with the sympathy, other aspects of the character have been lost since the novel. He did not build the Opera House, is not a

ventriloquist, and, for the first time, has not even composed his own piece of music. He is not childish, does not appear very sophisticated and is not a versatile genius, but a man who used to be the conductor at the Prague Opera House.

What this does to the character is that it gives him back a lot of the effective scariness from the novel and it also gives him an impressive looming presence, but it ignores the other side of the character, the gentle, kind and sensitive side of the Phantom as a lover.

Appearance



The Phantom masked, 1983

Maximilian Schell was 53 years old at the time when this film was made, placing him in the same age range as Leroux's Phantom. Like most other Phantoms, this one wears black dress clothes, sometimes with a cloak and a broad-rimmed hat and white gloves to cover his hands, which are also distorted, and a white scarf that used to belong to Elena. The mask he wears is a grey one, which according to Hogle is even scarier than the face (195-7). The face, however, is actually

surprisingly close to the way it was described in the novel. His skin is yellow and tightly stretched across his bones, there are a few strands of dark hair, his eyes are deep and his sockets are black and his nose is diminished, even though this does not seem to agree at all with what can be seen of how the disfigurement started: an uncorked bottle of acid on a shelf over his head falls over and some of the liquid pours into his face, which he then covers with his hands and he rolls over to try and put out the fire on his clothes. His appearance reflects his behaviour. It is extremely gruesome and is emphasised so much that there is no room for mediation towards kindness or for a more logical account of how acid burns affect the face.



The Phantom unmasked, 1983

The 1990 Film

The Characterisation and Depiction of the Phantom

This film is not heavily emplotted, but there are two clear flashbacks that do interrupt the chronology of the story. These are when Philippe remembers his childhood with Christine and where Carrière tells Christine of how he met Erik's mother and how he raised Erik. This flashback and its contents are very interesting; it is fairly elaborate, but is nothing at all like the Phantom's history in the novel. In this version, the Phantom has two loving parents, although he is born out of wedlock in the cellars of the opera. It is implied that his facial distortion is caused by a botched abortion, but this is never explicitly mentioned. Erik grows up under the Opera House, raised by his father, Carrière. His father, however, never tells him that he is his father and assumes that "He thinks I'm some kind of an uncle" (Richardson). Carrière becomes manager of the Opera House and later tells Christine that in fact, it has been Erik who has been making all the decisions from the smallest prop to the opera season. The plot of the film begins when Carrière is fired and the opera is taken over by Choletti and his wife Carlotta. Erik does not like either of them and is worried about his own wellbeing without Carrière's protection, so he plays several pranks on Carlotta to make her stop singing. Another reason for this is that he has discovered Christine, who looks and sounds exactly like his mother and he falls in love with her. He gives her singing lessons and after her debut, which is ruined by Carlotta, he takes her down to his lair. She asks him to remove his mask, which he does. She faints, sending him into an uncontrolled rage. He starts tearing down his lair and when she regains consciousness, he locks her in a cage, telling her that "You've seen my face. No one who sees my face is allowed to leave here, I thought everybody knew that!" (Richardson). She escapes and he tries to follow, but gives up when she reaches the upper levels of the Opera House. With Christine gone, he starts to die. Carrière comes down to comfort him and finally tells him that he is his father. At the end, Christine comes back and sings Marguerite in *Faust*. Erik drags himself up to the auditorium and arrives just in time for the ending. The police notice him, however, and follow him up to the roof. Being surrounded by the police, he begs his father to kill him to avoid falling into their hands. He dies on the rooftop, after having been kissed one last time by Christine.

As we can already see, this Phantom is a much gentler and kinder character than Leroux's Erik, or Chaney's or Schell's Phantom. He plays several pranks and commits several murders, but those could in fact also be described as accidents. Those bad deeds are mostly caused by his main worries, which he discusses in detail with his father at several points. His

first main fear is that somebody comes down to where he lives and come after him. His other worst fear is that somebody sees his face. Joseph Buquet's death and the deaths of two policemen are all caused by Erik's precautions to stop anybody from coming down to the cellars of the opera and are not active, conscious acts of Erik's. Finally, he puts Christine in the cage because she has seen his face. His other main interest is that Christine is safe and protected from the unkindness of the upper world. He cuts down the chandelier and plays his pranks on Carlotta to protect Christine. Unlike previous versions of the Phantom, this Erik shows no hints of madness and the murders he causes to occur are mostly the result of the circumstances and they are mostly a reaction to an earlier wrong that the characters have done to Erik, so he ends up being more of a victim of other people's injustice than the cause of it.

Apart from these incidents, he is also a very human character with fears, doubts and desires. We already saw that he discusses his greatest fears with Carrière. He also discusses his doubts about what the purpose of his life is; he tells his father that as long as he has lived down in the cellars of the Opera, he has wondered if this life is what he was born for, because it seems very useless. Finally, in the scene where Carrière comes down to try and comfort his dying son, Erik apologises "for everything I've put you through" (Richardson).

As for his behaviour towards Christine, it is perfectly gallant, chivalrous, very polite and also very humorous. When Christine asks him if he heard from Carlotta's disastrous performance following the wig-incident, he says "Oh! That's too bad!" in a perfectly cheerful voice. He mostly treats Christine with a lot of respect, however, almost like he cannot believe that she likes him. In the beginning, he is very careful not to touch her, and when she hugs him, he seems scared at first, but then sighs and closes his eyes. During the singing lessons, he asks her politely about her life, about her dreams and concerns and later, after her disastrous debut, he sings her to sleep, and when she wakes up informs how she slept and then takes her to a picnic as a perfect gentleman. Another very telling incident is the unmasking scene; he refuses to take off his mask, but after Christine keeps begging him to do it and tells him that "love will let me look at your face" (Richardson), he voluntarily removes his own mask, something which does not happen in any of the other versions, which shows that he is a much more benevolent and less stubborn, easier to persuade and even more prepared to do everything for his Christine than any of the other Phantoms. This film also gives Erik a more earthly reason for loving Christine, since the novel's explanation is not tenable anymore with Erik not having had a very strange life to tire of. Instead, Christine is the spitting image of his mother, who dies when he is three years old. By loving Christine, he regains his mother's love which he lost so early on. As Maury Yeston says: "you didn't know why the Phantom was so

interested in Christine. He`s not a vampire or a ghoul or a womanizer” and “It seemed to me that it was her voice that attracted him. That led to the idea that she had a natural voice, like Edith Piaf. And then we investigate why he has fallen in love with her voice; it must have been because it reminded him of someone else`s. It wasn`t such a large step to conclude that maybe it was the voice of his mother. Maybe she was a singer. It all fell into place quite nicely” (Terry). As well as Christine as a replacement for his mother, Erik discusses another reason for loving her with Carrière, telling him that he has always wondered why he was born, because he has always felt this his life can hardly be called a life at all; finally, he realises that he was born so that he could be saved by her. Later, he tells Carrière that he feels very lucky to have been able to hear Christine, because “Surely, not many men are as fortunate as that” (Richardson) to hear such beauty, which ties in with the theme that the filmmakers intended to show, which is that somebody who is ugly on the outside may be very beautiful on the outside.

This film`s narrative is shown mostly from Christine`s perspective as it follows her relationship with Philippe and with the Phantom. However, like the 1983 film, this one includes some very interesting point of view shots from the Phantom`s perspective before he actually meets Christine. In these shots he looks down on her walking around on stage and in different places. The only thing the viewers know so far about the watching character is that he is the same who killed Joseph Buquet and who had a conversation with Carrière about how to get rid of Carlotta and Choletti. The point of view shots help form an image that is compatible with these events, i.e. an image of a creepy Phantom who is willing to murder if he does not get his way. However, as soon as he makes himself known to Christine, this image changes and we get to know Erik as a gentleman. This shows that the character still retains a bit of the danger of Leroux`s Erik. Since the meeting with Erik and Christine happens fairly early on in the film, however, the balance between his menacing side and his gentle side is resolved in favour of his kindness.

All in all, the Phantom in this film is ultimately an extremely gentle and sensitive creature, and this side of his character overshadows the darker qualities of Leroux`s Erik. The focus of this film has been moved from a horror story to a “Gothic romance” (O`Connor). Other sides to the character have disappeared as well. Unlike Leroux`s Erik, this Erik has not helped build the Opéra Garnier and is therefore probably not an architect or designer. He is also not a composer, but this film does emphasise that he is a very versatile character who is capable of running an entire Opera by taking over all the functions of others, from creative design to musical directions. It is also shown that he is musically very well educated; he is

seen playing both the piano and flute and he has a very good voice. So even though the many sides of Leroux's Erik are perhaps not present, some of them are hinted at and represented in a different way. Even though they may be diminished and sometimes left out, they are more present than in most other film versions.

Appearance



The Phantom, 1990

Charles Dance was 44 years old at the time of filming, making him slightly younger than Leroux's Phantom. Dance's Phantom, like most others, appears wearing mostly black clothes including a black cloak and, when he goes out, a broad-rimmed hat. These clothes have by now been established as standard to the Phantom image.

More interesting, however, is the Phantom's face. The first unmasking scene is staged very strangely: the Phantom has his back turned to the camera and all the audience sees is Christine's face which is contorted with fear and then she faints. He then runs off to his lair, still with his back to the camera and when next we see him, he wears another mask. The final unmasking, at the climax when he is dying is set similarly, with Christine's head blocking our view on his face. In fact, his face is never seen by the audience, only the reactions of Christine to it. The only thing Erik is willing to say about his face is that "I have no face. I have only the semblance of a face and no one should have to look at it" (Richardson). Interestingly, most reviewers do not seem to mind at all that his face is not shown. Joseph Walker calls it "a harsh reality viewers are thankfully spared" and John Leonard notes that "he can act better with just his eyes than can the rest of them with all their features hanging out" (72). Charles Dance, who plays the Phantom, says that it forces the viewers to listen more intensely to what the Phantom is saying, how he is saying it and to look at his body language (Mills). Another thing that covering the Phantom's face does is allow the viewers to focus more on the drama of the relationship between the Phantom and Christine. Had his face been visible at either the first or the second unmasking, the audience might have been shocked more by his face than struck by the disappointment that Erik must feel when Christine turns out to be unable to look at his face. At the end of the film, with the second unmasking, the audience might not feel the sadness and the empathy that Christine feels when she kisses his forehead, because the viewers would be distracted by the face.

With Erik's face covered at all times, the film has developed a different way of presenting that which is usually expressed by the face. Instead of being able to see his face, the viewers see different masks: Erik in this film usually wears a beige mask which fits around his face and often covers it with other masks for different moods. He wears a black mask when he is tearing down his lair, so that symbolises his anger; he wears a Pierrot mask when Christine has left and when he is sad; he has a death's head mask in his capacity of the ghost, which he uses to scare off Buquet. So lacking a face, Erik uses what he knows – theatricality – to express himself; after all, he haunts an Opera House, which does call for a theatrical ghost.

The 2004 Film

The Characterisation and Depiction of the Phantom

The story and the plot of this film are fairly straightforward. There are several flashbacks, one of Christine's father dying (this lasts about two seconds), one of Mme. Giry bringing Christine to the Opera, which takes up about the same amount of screen time, and finally a longer flashback where Mme. Giry tells Raoul of the Phantom's history. This Phantom's story starts in his childhood, although the viewers are given very little information about this. The only line referring to this time is "This face, which earned a mother's fear and loathing – a mask, my first unfeeling scrap of clothing" (Schumacher) which tells the viewers several things: the disfigurement of the Phantom's face dates from a very early age and his mother did not love him. The next indication to the Phantom's past is given in a flashback by Mme. Giry, who tells Raoul that she found the Phantom at a fair run by gypsies. She helps him escape the police after he murders one of the gypsies and brings him to the Opera House. There he grows up and becomes a magician, designer, composer, architect and musician. But most of all, he becomes the Phantom of the Opera, blackmailing the managers and demanding that box five is left empty for his use.

The Phantom meets Christine and presents himself to her from the one-way mirror in her dressing room. He introduces himself as the Angel of Music and teaches her. Later, he takes her down to his lair where he tries to seduce her in a very sexually loaded scene which includes lines like "Night-time sharpens, heightens each sensation... Darkness stirs and wakes imagination... Silently the senses abandon their defences" and "Floating, falling, sweet intoxication! Touch me, trust me, savour each sensation!" (Schumacher). He spends the rest of the film trying to get Christine to come to him instead of go with Raoul. In the near-climax

of the film, he tries to seduce her again with an aria from his own opera *Don Juan Triumphant* that they are performing together. The final duet, “The Past of No Return”, more sexually charged lyrics like “You have come here in pursuit of your deepest urge, in pursuit of that wish which till now has been silent” and “What raging fire shall flood the soul? What rich desire unlocks its doors? What sweet seduction lies before us?” (Schumacher). In the final scenes, he brings her down to his lair again. Raoul follows them and the Phantom forces Christine to choose between him and Raoul. She finally chooses the Phantom who then lets them both go. Christine gives him back the engagement ring he gave her earlier, crying as she leaves. Finally, he disappears.

This Phantom is again much more cruel than the previous one. Most obviously, he has no scruples whatsoever murdering Joseph Buquet and Ubaldo Piangi. Both these murders happen quite clearly and there is no doubt at all whether or not the Phantom is the one who commits them. He also makes Carlotta croak during the performance, which is the first time this happens since the novel and drops the chandelier at the end of the film.

His attitude towards Christine is entirely different, however. Instead of behaving gentle towards her, giving her everything she might need, he tries to seduce her on pure sexual appeal. His sexual attraction, however, is far larger than his gentle kindness. What this does is that it makes the Phantom an attractive character because of his charisma. Harold Prince, the producer of the show, says that this was a conscious approach to the character, as “I was watching a BBC programme called *The Skin Horse* about people who were physically incapacitated, or deformed, a series of interviews with quadriplegics, Thalidomide victims, talking about what it was like, and I sensed that the thing that united them all was a very normal, healthy sexuality” (Perry 74). Andrew Lloyd Webber agreed with this, saying that it should be clear “why Christine fancies him” because he is “on the right side of danger” (“Making of”) and Joel Schumacher agreed to direct the film on condition that the cast be relatively young, so that the audience would be able to relate to the romance (“Making of”).

On top of that, the Phantom is also given a very human side, showing his worries and his suffering. An example is some lines from *Down Once More*, where he sings: “Hounded out by everyone, met with hatred everywhere! No kind word from anyone, no compassion anywhere!” (Schumacher). Very telling is the song *I remember/Stranger than you Dreamt* which is the unmasking scene. He tells Christine of his longing for beauty, saying “Stranger than you dreamt it – can you even dare to look or bear to think of me: this loathsome gargoyle who burns in hell, but secretly yearns for heaven” and later he describes himself with loathing in his voice as a “monster: this repulsive carcass who seems a beast but secretly dreams of

beauty” (Schumacher) and later he sings “Why, you ask, was I bound and chained in this cold and dismal place? Not for any mortal sin, but the wickedness of my abhorrent face!”, and he also sees his face as the thing which “poisons our love” (Schumacher). So like Leroux’s Phantom, this one lives off his desire for beauty, especially as embodied by music and Christine, but he hates himself and he hates his ugliness. His hope for beauty is the one thing that keeps him going and gives him hope for a better life, where his own ugliness will matter less because he possesses beauty in an external source, i.e. Christine. As well as being characterised as a character with fears and doubts, his actions are also usually explained to the audience, e.g. the viewers see how the Phantom accomplishes all his tricks. In this way, it is shown that he is a very human being and accomplishes everything in a way that is not impossible for anybody who is smart and handy. By showing this, he becomes much less of a ghost and more of a human being.

There are also several moments where the viewers are invited to sympathise with this Phantom, for instance when he tells Christine about his life, saying: “Hounded out by everyone, met with hatred everywhere! No kind words from anyone, no compassion anywhere...” (Schumacher) and when, at the end when Christine leaves him, he cries. The intention of the filmmakers was probably to make this Phantom a very human and also a fairly sympathetic one. One indication for this is a removed song called “No one would listen” sung by the Phantom, where he muses on how he would like to be part of society, but he cannot because nobody can hear him. There is no clear reason why this scene was deleted.

The point of view in this film does not do much to establish the Phantom’s character. The camerawork is very unintrusive and there seem to be few point of view shots. One of the reasons why this might happen is because the film is a musical and the narrative is mostly told through the music. There is very little dialogue so that rules out the shot reverse shots and over the shoulder shots that usually occur here. There are no point of view shots from the Phantom watching Christine like in the 1983 and 1990 films, since the Phantom has already met Christine before the beginning of the plot. Of course, there are the regular point of view shots here which sometimes shows the viewers the world from the Phantom’s viewpoint. Again, like in the other films, this may enable the audience to sympathise with him.

What is interesting about this Phantom is that his cruelty and disfigurement are not explained, although most of his other actions are: Carlotta’s croaking is seen to be the result of the Phantom’s tampering with her throat spray. In the scenes where his disembodied voice is floating in the theatre, he is shown to actually be hiding and not using ventriloquism. All in all, this Phantom is much more cruel than several previous Phantoms. He still murders several

persons and is given definite authority of those murders. Interestingly, he is a much more sexually charged and actually physically attractive Phantom than the others. His motivations are his passion for beauty as embodied by Christine. This explains why he goes to such lengths to seduce her.



The Phantom masked, 2004

Appearance

Gerard Butler was 34 years old when production on this film started. This makes him considerably younger than Leroux's Phantom and any other film's Phantom. His Phantom dresses mostly in black, wearing a cloak but no hat, as a hat is something that is worn mostly outside and he never leaves the Opera in the film. His mask is a half mask. At first, the mask

was designed to cover the Phantom's entire face and that is the mask that appears on

advertisements for the show, but director Harold

Prince thought about it, and said: "The mask that you see in the ads would render [it] almost impossible for the actor to express himself except with his eyes and I thought, No. We really should have a mask for half of his face, always, to be expressive. That's why it is a half-mask" (Hetrick). So the problem that occurs in the 1990 film of an actor who is left without his face to express himself is circumvented here. The face of the Phantom in this film is rather a matter of dispute.

Thomson remarks: "And this phantom is something of

a stud with a teeny mask that hides little more than a mild skin problem." The face of this Phantom is indeed far less scary than Lon Chaney's or Maximilian Schell's faces. It is limited to the right side of his nose, his cheek, his eye/eyebrow and his right temple; his eye is pulled down, his eyebrow is missing and no hair grows on his temple and a part of his head, so he covers it with a wig in the film. His ear seems to be folded in a strange way and the overall skin is bumpy and red. On top of the sexual angle that was taken in the making of this film, it makes the Phantom more attractive than repulsive.



The Phantom unmasked, 2004

Discussion

Having analysed the Phantoms from the novel and looking at this character in comparison with the different Phantoms that have followed him in the films, there are several things that can be said about the continuities in these films, i.e. the factors that are always present:

1. The chandelier;
2. The Phantom music and his voice;
3. The unmasking.

Apart from these continuities, there are also quite a few changes that are visible in all or most film versions:

1. The disfigurement;
2. The balance between the Phantom's scariness and his gentleness;
3. The explanations for the Phantom's behaviour and his history.

All in all, what has happened to the Phantom is that he has become a flatter character than he is in the novel. His personality, history and actions become simplified and his disfigurement and actions are rationalised. What I will do now is analyse the film production context that may have influenced the differences between the novel and the films and in the second part of this discussion, I will examine the cultural and historical context of the films that may have played a role in the end product.

The production context

As was outlined in the introduction, part of the explanations for the continuities and the changes in the films will be found in the production context of the films. This means that I will try to establish the influence of the fact that they are under the influence of the Hollywood system, that there are choices that the filmmakers have to make to be able to make a visual representation of what happens in the novel and how trending genres determine what a film is going to be like.

The Chandelier

The first striking continuity in the different is that the chandelier that hangs over the auditorium is always dropped, in every single film version. Sometimes it happens in the middle of the film, i.e. in the 1925 and the 1990 film, but in all of the others it happens at the climax. In a way, the 1990 film also has the chandelier drop as the climax, since it is a TV-

miniseries and it consists of two 90-minute episodes. The chandelier crashes at the ending of the first episode, after which the viewers would have to wait a day to see what happens after.

The continuities that are outlined above are also interesting to look at. The chandelier, according to Scott MacQueen is one of the story aspects that filmmakers always feel need to be in the film (“Unmasking the Phantom”). In the 1943, the 1962, the 1983 and the 2004 films, the fall of the chandelier is moved to the end of the film to provide it with a climax, since the torture chamber and most of the novel’s climax is removed and, except for the 2004 film, there is no real journey down to the depths of the Opera for Raoul to rescue his abducted lover. The chandelier drop is also a very effective way to establish the Phantom as a dangerous character: if he sees no problem in dropping a seven-ton chandelier in a full auditorium, just because he was not pleased with the casting choices of the directors, what else might he do?

The Phantom’s Music

The second continuity is that the Phantom is always a musical character. In the 1925, 1962, 1983 and 2004 versions he plays the piano, in 1943 he plays the violin and the piano and also plays the piano in 1983 version, where he is also a conductor. In 1990 he plays both the piano and the flute, and sometimes, most notably the 1990 and the 2004 versions, he sings. The reason why the Phantom always occupies himself with music and why his voice is emphasised so much is that, since he cannot seduce Christine with his physical beauty, he needs something else. In the novel, it is heavily emphasised that Christine was already falling in love with the Phantom before she ever saw him, because of the divinity of his voice and his music. It is not until after Christine wants to know more about him than just these two things that their relationship turns around for the worse. The Phantom starts behaving less kindly towards her and Christine is always repulsed by him, sometimes permanently and sometimes she recovers from the shock.

The Unmasking

The next continuity, which is also mentioned in Scott MacQueen’s documentary is that there is, in each film, an unmasking scene. Like the chandelier crash, this unmasking in the novel occurs halfway through the plot, but is often moved to the ending of the films. The only film where the unmasking happens halfway is the 1925 one. It also happens at this point in the 1990 and the 2004 films, but the viewers do not get to see the face at these points. The

unmasking is repeated at the ending of the films, where in the 1990 film the audience still does not see the Phantom's face. In the 2004 film, the Phantom remains unmasked for the entire climax.

An interesting observation that can be made with regard to the unmasking scene is that the Phantom's behaviour towards Christine seems to change after the incident. Since it is almost always Christine who unmasks the Phantom (the only exception is the 1962 film), the Phantom usually becomes extremely angry with her directly after she pulls off the mask. This is also often the point when he tells her that he will never let her go now, the way he does in the novel. His initial anger usually cools down a little, but he remains more bitter and less gentle towards Christine than he was before. The change in the Phantom's behaviour after the unmasking scene seems to imply that an ugly face reflects an ugly personality, which, as Jonathan Cully explains, is a main element in folklore and fairy tales (62). Continuing with this theme, *The Phantom of the Opera* can certainly be seen as a fairy-tale. The fairy-tale that seems most obviously comparable to *The Phantom of the Opera* is "Beauty and the Beast", where a beautiful young girl falls in love with an ugly beast. However, as Michael Grover-Friedlander points out, Christine does not have the power to transform Erik into a beauty (190).

The Disfigurement

The topic of the Phantom's disfigurement is an interesting one since it can be seen as both a continuity and a change. The reason why it is a continuity is that the Phantom is always ugly. However, the nature of this ugliness changes quite a lot between the films. For this reason, I will first look at the continuous nature of the disfigurement of the Phantom and then I will move on to the changes that occur.

A possible reason why the distortion is always there is one concerning genre, in this case the genre of the grotesque, which "is often conceived of as an aesthetic dimension divided in two, one side gravitating towards the dark, terrifying, and macabre, the other towards the bright, jovial, and ridiculous (Weishaar 1). The Phantom usually encapsulates both of these sides: he is terrifying to those he does not like, but bright and jovial to Christine. The author of this book also mentions that "most grotesquery in art gravitates towards the one side or the other" (Weishaar 1), which explains why the Phantom is sometimes very cruel and sometimes very kind. If the Phantom's ugliness were taken away, the story would lose its horror aspect, which was heavily drawn upon in the 1925, 1943, 1962 and 1983 films, which

were all marketed as horror productions. The 1990 and 2004 films seem to be more interested in the dramatic implications of loving a man who lives below ground and who has a terrible face. On top of this, as I already pointed out, the story of *The Phantom of the Opera* bears a heavy resemblance to the fairy-tale “Beauty and the Beast”, in which the Phantom is the Beast, which he would not be if he were handsome. His ugliness also gives the triangle a more interesting dimension. This becomes very clear in the novel, when Christine is attracted to the Phantom for his music and his mystery, but she also loves Raoul. Raoul, however, points out very astutely ““Mais m’aimez-vous? Si Erik était beau, m’aimeriez-vous, Christine?” (Leroux 178). This suggests that if the Phantom was actually handsome, Christine might indeed be less interested in Raoul.

Having looked at the continuity of the Phantom’s disfigurement, it is now time to move on to the changes. In the novel, Erik’s appearance, i.e. that of a corpse, is one in a line of a tradition of corpses in art. As Hogle points out, there was a preoccupation with death (6-7) when several *Danses Macabres* were created in paintings, music and, as well as other art forms which dealt with death and skulls. Instances of this preoccupation are Vincent van Gogh’s “Head of a Skeleton with a Burning Cigarette” from 1886, *Danse Macabre* by Camille Saint-Saëns from 1874, “Skeleton Painter” by James Ensor from 1896 and, perhaps most notable, “The Scream” by Edvard Munch in 1893. All these expressions of the idea of death are echoed in Leroux’s Erik, who literally embodies this fascination with death: he is a literal living corpse with a death’s head. The 1925 film version, Lon Chaney designed the makeup especially to reflect the original Erik’s face, and in particular the skull-like aspects of it (MacQueen “Phantom II” 35).

The 1943 film, however, definitely breaks with the skull-type disfigurement of the skull. A reason for this were the demands of Claude Rains, who accepted the role under only one condition: “that he makeup would not be too extreme” (Skal and Rains 121) and that he was probably afraid of being typecast in horror movies, unable to play leading roles anymore. Being cast in B-movies was not attractive to him at all because they would make less money. Rains was so particular about the face that makeup designer Jack Pierce went through many designs with Rains before he was finally satisfied (Skal Rains 121). In fact, as Scott MacQueen recounts in the documentary, Rains was so concerned about the face that he would not allow it to appear on screen apart from one shot near the climax. Lubin, however, knew that the studio wanted horror and he hid a second camera when the climax was filmed, which shot additional footage of Rains’s face. This footage finally ended up in the film.

As for the 1962 film, this was heavily influenced by the Motion Picture Production Code of 1930, better known as the Hays Code. This code was issued by the Motion Picture Association of America when “Hollywood, plagued by drug and sex scandals, feared the possibility of government censorship... The code was an effort as self-censorship based on the broadly accepted notions that no motion picture should lower the moral standards of the public and that almost all films were made for a family audience” (Bresler 173). The code lists twelve topics, from “Murder” to “Repellent Subjects” (“Hays Code”) that each contain up to nine rules on the subject. According to Ann C. Hall, Hammer Film Productions, the studio that made this film, was extremely focused on receiving an A Rating, which would nowadays be a General Rating (60). This explains, among other things, why the Phantom’s face in this film is hardly disturbing, and also why it is only shown three times and at all points no more than one or two seconds.

As for the 1983 film, the Hays Code was lifted in 1968 and made place for a more flexible rating system. “While the Hays Code authorized a movie for distribution based on whether it was deemed “moral” according to an exhaustive list of rules, the current movie rating system was born out of the simple notion that the movie industry wouldn’t approve or disapprove what audiences should see, but instead would focus on “freeing the screen” and educating parents to help them make movie-going decisions for their family” (“History of Ratings”). This explains why the Phantom’s face could be as gruesome as it is. It looks surprisingly much like the novel’s description of Erik’s face.

Interestingly, the lifting of the Hays Code did nothing for the 1990 Phantom’s face, which is not shown altogether. One possible reason for the omission of Erik’s face is the reaction of the audience. Chaney’s face was considered to be too frightening and repelling (Mordaunt Hall); the 1943 face was “not horrible at all, just a scar on one cheek” (Rains qtd. in McQueen “New Formula” 82); Herbert Lom’s face was “blotched” and “acne-scarred” like in an adolescent (Hogle 185) and Maximilian Schell’s face was very ugly and certainly scary. However, Arthur Kopit managed to avoid these reviews of faces being too ugly or too tame by not showing it at all and leaving the disfigurement to the audience’s imagination. This way, it could be as horrible as any viewer wanted it to be and as frightening or as ugly as a viewer could imagine.

The face of the 2004 Phantom is slightly reminiscent of the 1943 face: it is deformed only down one side and looks somewhat like a burn. Several features, like the diminished hair growth on the right side of Butler’s Phantom, the deformed ear and the eye that is pulled down seem to point to the fact that the distortion is congenital rather than an accident,

however. The non-severity of this Phantom's face was a conscious choice of the designers, who say that "We didn't want his disfigurement to be horribly grotesque... It was about trying to find the real person behind the mask. We want the audience to see his attractiveness, his anger and his vulnerability." Shircore based her design for the Phantom's disfigurement on a medical condition, underscoring the character's background as a misunderstood former sideshow freak" ("Phantom of the Opera Goes Couture"). What this shows is that the Phantom's face underlines this film's depiction of the Phantom as a sexual being and as a character who needs to be seen as attractive by the audience. It also emphasises that this Phantom is very human and his deformation is something that could actually happen to real people and does not come forward from the mind of an author who, as Ann C Hall emphasises, was rather interested in gruesome and macabre elements (9-10).

Scary or Gentle

The next change that takes place concerns the balance between the Phantom's scariness and his gentleness. Basically, this comes down to whether the way he behaves to Christine – i.e. gentle – is the way he behaves to the rest of the world as well, or if the way he behaves to society, i.e. scary and cruel, is the way he behaves towards Christine as well. In the novel, this line between the Phantom's cruelty, madness, danger and his kindness, sensitivity and humanity is a very finely balanced one, but in most films, the Phantom is either very scary or very gentle. In some films the emphasis is mostly on the Phantom as a murdering, cruel, very scary, dangerous, lunatic, threatening and villainous character (mostly the 1925 and the 1983 version). Other versions, such as the 1943 and 1962 films characterise him as somebody who is very much shocked by what has happened to him and therefore his sense of judgment is somewhat impaired, but he is mostly not very dangerous and is hardly threatening. Then there is the strange 1990 version in which the Phantom is not dangerous at all and is mostly a very sensitive gentleman. The 2004 film hovers in between: the Phantom is a very sensitive and sexual being, with very human emotions, but he is also a threat to others and there is no doubt that there will be deaths at his hands if he is not obeyed. One reason why the Phantom is sometimes more sympathetic than in the novel is that "as an audience, we greet the horror monster with a mixture of repulsion and secret identification. While part of us is appalled by its excesses and outrages, another part gleefully identifies with its rebellion against social, sexual, and moral codes... The horror monster is seldom wholly unsympathetic; the reader is always aware of the Gothic villain's tortured mind and soul, and of the potential

that is thwarted in his or her loss of moral balance” (Magistrate and Morrison 4). So in order to identify with the Phantom, he cannot be too repulsive. This effect is also attained by including the point of view of the Phantom and showing the audience the “tortured mind and soul” (Magistrate and Morrison 4). In short, if the gap between the Phantom and a regular member of the audience is too large, this person cannot identify with him and may lose interest. This is an explanation that goes for the sympathetic aspects of all of the Phantoms, but there are also explanations that go for the specific ones.

In the 1925 film, for instance, the Phantom is mostly the scary one with some aspects of sympathy mixed in. A possible cause for this Phantom’s cruelty and scariness in 1925 film is that “the influence of German Expressionism on the Universal horror cycle cannot be understated. .. while early Gothic horror films lacked much horror, German Expressionism's innovation in using the entire mise en scène to evoke emotions from the audience provided the physiological jolt that American films desperately lacked” (Morgart 381). One example is the way the plot is built up and the way the Phantom is depicted as a haunting shadow throughout the first part of the film. Also the underground dwelling of the Phantom represents “a dark maze of pain, suffering and torture” (Morgart 381), one of the interests of German Expressionism. This explains why this is the only film version of *The Phantom of the Opera* that fully retains the torture chamber. But most notably, most German Expressionist films, like *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1919) and *Nosferatu* (1922) had very strange, twisted anti-heroic characters as the protagonist, like this Erik. Another reason why this Erik is so scary is the casting of Lon Chaney, for whom the film was made (Perry 46). Chaney came from the theatre and was a master in makeup, which earned him the name “The man of a thousand faces”. As Sarah Martin points out, “actors contribute to each role the sum total of all the other roles in their careers, and that the contrasts brought about by interaction between members of the cast carrying their own intertextual ‘baggage’ also affect the inner dynamics of adaptation” (64). The viewers already knew Lon Chaney as a horror star from *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, so his presence alone was meant to assure scares. Chaney’s parents were deaf-mutes, which is possibly why, as Jon Mirsalis remarks, his hands are so sensual and he was the only actor who would get away with playing a role which required him to perform with his face covered for the first half of the film and Ken Hanke even goes so far as to call Lon Chaney an “auteur” (3). It is because of Chaney’s quality as an actor that the Phantom can be both repulsive and sympathetic.

The 1943 Phantom is mostly gentle and this determines the whole feel of the film. One reason why the film is not scary at all is that Universal tried to merge horror with musical

and this mix turned out in favour of the musical, which was a large, ruling genre, while the horror film at that time was very small (Wexman 111). On top of this, Nelson Eddy, who was cast as Anatole in this film, was making very popular musical films at the time and therefore is “further proof of Universal’s desire to downplay the production’s horror angle” (Weaver, Brunas and Brunas 359). The mixing of musical with horror has come out more in favour of the musical than the horror in the case of this film. It is for this reason that the film results in “more opera than Phantom, more trills than thrills” (“Cinema: The New Pictures”). This film is, like the 1962 film, under the influence of the Hays Code. One of the rules as defined by this code, under the heading of “Murder” is that “Brutal killings are not to be presented in detail”. Another rule is that “Brutality and possible gruesomeness” should be treated with care, and, most interestingly, “the sympathy of the audience should never be thrown to the side of crime, wrong-doing, evil or sin” (“Hays Code”). These rules resulted in a taming down of the Phantom and, since the Hays Code defines that “We may feel sorry for the plight of the murderer or even understand the circumstances which led him to his crime: we may not feel sympathy with the wrong which he has done” these two Phantoms are represented as more to be pitied than anything else. The circumstances of the cause of their evil are also shown to this effect. In the 1943 film it “siphoned off a great deal of the story's horrific potential (Forshaw 130) and the 1962 film “which (as so often with Hammer films of this period) suffered from the dead hand of censorship, removing all but a few moments of the grotesque” (Forshaw 130). This goes for both the 1943 and the 1962 films. Since cruelty was definitely disapproved of, it was not shown in these films and that makes the Phantom less threatening and dangerous than Leroux’s original.

Another reason why the 1962 film is not scary also has to do with the casting process. The studio had observed that there were more films that had “ridden to glory on the back of a major Hollywood star” (Meikle 127) and saw that a similar opportunity was available for a remake of *The Phantom of the Opera* as Cary Grant, mostly known for comedy and drama films, had expressed an interest in starring in a Hammer horror picture (Leggett 129). According to Scott McQueen, the role of the Phantom was specially written for Cary Grant and remained the same when he pulled out of the production (“Unmasked”). Meikle notes that “a star like Grant would not have played the part unless an element of audience empathy existed” (129-30) and therefore, the character was rewritten to become a less violent, more lovable and sympathetic character, and a fairly one-dimensional one. However, since the film was now lacking a villain, Lord Ambrose D’Arcy was added. As Hutchings explains, the 1960s Hammer films had a middle-class bias, since the reigning fear of the day was of middle

class entrepreneurs to be subsumed by richer, larger companies (Frayn 331). In Hammer films, the “decent but fatally narrow-minded and weak inhabitants of the Hammer world are either won over to the side of the no-nonsense authority figure or violently destroyed” (Hutchings 63). This is what happens to Petrie: he is destroyed by Lord Ambrose D’Arcy, who is also a typical Hammer character: “the few members of the upper class... that do appear are invariably characterised ... as parasitic and corrupt” (Hutchings 67).

The lifting of the Hays Code in 1968 explains how the 1983 Phantom could be gruesome like the 1925 and Leroux’s Phantom. The 1990 Phantom is an exception to this trend, since he lacks most of the cruelty of the non-censored Phantoms but is not under the threat of a heavy censor. Also, unlike the 1962 and 1983 films, there are no other characters like the dwarf/Lajos and Lord Ambrose D’Arcy/Baron Hunyadi to be the villain. In fact, there seems to be no villain at all in this film, which is very unusual for a Hollywood production. However, it should be taken into account that this film is actually a television production. One characteristic of TV-productions is that there is “a proportionately greater emphasis on dialogue and on the slow development of characters and their interrelations” (Cardwell 184). For this reason, the actual personality and development of the Phantom as a human being is more relevant for a TV-production than portraying him as a villain to drive the plot forward. On top of this, even though this film was broadcast by NBC, an American television network, the production companies involved are not American, but French, German and Italian, so Hollywood ideals of storytelling may not be involved as much as in the other films, making the need for a villain and a clear narrative smaller. So in the end, all that is left is the British gentleman-type main character. This may also be a part of what Sarah Martin calls “the intertextual baggage” (64) of Charles Dance. The casting of this actor furthers the gentleness and politeness of the Phantom, as well as his overall attractiveness; one article describes him as “screen heart-throb” with “his smooth image” (“Dance of the Phantom”) and Andrea Lee describes him as “Elegantly muscled in a work shirt and faded jeans, his reddish blond hair no longer hidden by a wig, Dance has great looks and physical charisma -- but he's not just another dumb blond. Sex symbols of whatever variety tend to be a rather one-dimensional bunch, but Dance, unmasked after the day's shoot, displays an independent, complex personality.” Dance’s personality seems to have rubbed off on his Erik and made him a distinguished, aristocratic and gentle character.

The final character is in fact most like Leroux’s Erik, although his gentleness and kindness towards Christine has been turned into a rather more sexual approach. The sexuality of the final Phantom may partly be a result of this as well. Even though Gerard Butler was

relatively unknown at the time when this film was made, but after his breakthrough with *300* in 2007, he is considered to be a “hunky star” (“Gerard Butler Biography”). His every-day appearance certainly seems to explain how it is possible that a man who has not left the cellars of an Opera House for approximately twenty years can have such a tan, so maybe his normal appearance has influenced other aspects of the character as well.

Explanations

Finally, something that has happened in most films and that happened in a different way for each one of them, the Phantom has been given a history, which explains his motivations, his actions and usually gives him an excuse for his bad behaviour, e.g. the murders and the kidnapping of Christine. In the novel, there are very few explanations given. There are very few references to the Phantom’s past and many things are left unexplained, for instance whether or not he committed the murders of Joseph Buquet, the concierge and Philippe de Chagny. An effect of these explanations is that the character becomes much flatter than Leroux’s Erik, as can be expected.

One thing that may be useful in explaining why these explanations have been put into the films is to place the novel and the films in their context. The novel for instance, is written in the French romantic traditions, which occurred later in France than it did in England (Hale 64) and Gorarra names Gaston Leroux as one of the forerunners of the French Roman Noir (12), which is the French romantic movement. As the Encyclopaedia Britannica defines Romanticism, many of the characteristics are applicable to the Phantom. Examples are “a preoccupation with the genius... and the exceptional figure in general, and a focus on his passions and inner struggles; a new view of the artist as a supremely individual creator, whose creative spirit is more important than strict adherence to formal rules and traditional procedures; an emphasis upon imagination as a gateway to transcendent experience... an obsessive interest in... national and ethnic cultural origins... and a predilection for the exotic, the remote, the mysterious, the weird, the occult, the monstrous, the diseased and even the satanic” (“Romanticism”). All of these aspects are reflected in the Phantom’s contradictory character: his creativity in combination with his defiance of the rules; his mixed and mysterious origins (French, Germanic, Oriental) and the strange, unspeakable nature of his existence. Even if categorising novels in genre is a thing that is not always a wise thing to do, the novel *The Phantom of the Opera* shows many characteristics of Romanticism and I believe that it helps to understand some aspects of the novel, such as the strangeness of the

characterisation of the Phantom. As we will see, this changes a lot for the films, which are not from a Romantic tradition.

The context of the films, then, is something altogether different. Most of these films have been made in Hollywood. This explains mostly why the Phantom's actions are explained and why they are less ambiguous: Hollywood films have as their main goal that "a narrative should consist of a chain of causes and effects that is easy for the spectator to follow. This clarity of comprehension is basic to all our other responses to films, particularly emotional ones" (Thompson 10). One result of this is that most films focus on the main goal of the Phantom: getting Christine. This led to the elimination of other storylines, for instance the parts where the Phantom blackmails the managers of the Opera. Another feature of Hollywood storytelling is that "because entertainment is the principal priority, the operations and conventions of mainstream films are dictated by the need to arouse and sustain our interest. This has led to a particular stress ... on what may be termed 'benevolence' and 'transparency'" (Nelmes 84). In order for a film to be easy to understand, the narrative is usually structured along clear lines of cause and effect rather than romantic mystery. This means that the Phantom needs a cause for his cruelty and his disfigurement as well, since "The Phantom's congenital disfigurement in the story had almost always discomfited writers adapting the tale... Modern writers always seem to need an event to trigger the Phantom's tragedy" ("Phantom Unmasked"). As Stableford explains "The transfigurations that the Phantom's role underwent in the course of these adaptations were partly forced by the conventions of the new media. Whereas Leroux's Erik, deformed from birth, is frankly wicked, Hollywood preferred to represent the Phantom as a mild-mannered frustrated composer, who switches from Jekyll to Hyde after his disfigurement" (98), and this is basically what is already visible in the vague attempts at explanations of the Phantom's history in the 1925 film, and the elaborate background stories in the 1943, the 1962 and the 1983 versions. The 1990 version solves the problem by leaving out the madness and cruelty of the Phantom as well as his disfigurement. The 2004 film is the only version that does not include a switch from Jekyll to Hyde and does not attempt to give any explanation at all. A possible explanation for this might be that the film is based on the already existing show and it takes its screenplay almost literally from that show the way it was first written by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A British theatre show is a very different medium than a Hollywood cinematic film, which might have something to do with the fact that the Phantom is not given an explanation for his behaviour. This is the only aspect of his character that is not explained however; for the rest of the film, his actions lose all their ghostliness and are explained to a

point where he becomes completely human. An even larger influence on the way this Phantom is depicted, however, is that this film was aimed at a younger audience (“Making of”), so in order for this younger audience to be able to identify and sympathise with the Phantom, he needed to be more attractive.

The flattening of the Phantom’s character by limiting his abilities in most films, such as the fact that he has not built the Opéra Garnier in any of them and the loss of the ventriloquism, his abilities as a magician and thief, his composing skills and virtuosity on different musical instruments may be explained by the fact that “as soon as the characters appear, or even before we see them, they are assigned a set of clear traits” (Thompson 13) and that the complete, intricate, contradictory and multi-faceted traits that Leroux’s Erik had were too many and too complicated to render within one film.

The Cultural/Historical Context

The next set of explanations will be taken from the cultural context and the historical events that surrounded the films.

The Disfigurement

The 1925 film is said to be dominated by the influence of World War I, in which the Americans were part of the Allied Forces and sent large amounts of soldiers to Europe. On top of this, Köhler describes how many soldiers who fought in the war lost their face and had to undergo plastic surgery for reconstruction, but were never as satisfied as they had been with their own face. He says that thousands of Americans underwent this type of surgery. The 1925 film then envisages Erik as a product of the First World War. It is never mentioned in the film, as the narrative takes place before the Great War, but the allusion in one of title cards to the Second Revolution is telling, since there is no historical event that took place in Paris between 1860-1880, which would be the time period when Erik would be in Paris according to the chronology of the story. This mysterious reference may be an allusion to the First World War, possibly telling the audience that Erik went through something similar to themselves, and thus enhancing empathy for the character.

The second film, the 1943 one, was also made during a war, but this time it was World War II. This war influenced the decision to make Rains’s face as the Phantom appear much less horrible and terrible than Chaney’s: “Given that fighting had started again, it was imperative that such images not be recalled by a Hollywood studio now under heavy pressure

both to support and to sanitize the reality of World War II” (Hogle 157). McLelland adds to this that Susanna Foster told him in an interview that “because so many servicemen already had been maimed and disfigured by the war, the studio really feared that highly grotesque makeup for the phantom might prove not merely frightening, but in view of current conditions, offensive to the public (66). Hogle argues that in fact the entire film is a product of the negotiation between dealing with the problems that the war brought with it and sanitising and ignoring them, giving the audience a kind of escape from the horrible events that were going on outside the cinema and that this is another reason why the Phantom has been tamed down and why the overall film is so light-hearted.

The 1962 film was made during the Vietnam War, when chemicals such as napalm and Agent Orange were used in the warfare, which killed and injured many victims. The injuries caused by those chemicals burns, just like the disfigurement of the Phantom in this film. After this, no more wars were really taking place during adaptations of *The Phantom of the Opera*. In the 1990 and the 2004 films, the disfigurements are not scary at all, or at least, the 1990 Phantom’s disfigurement does not scare audiences since it is not shown. A possible conclusion might be that peacetime has taken away filmmakers’ inspiration to create grotesque makeup, although this assumption is not a very strong one. The 1943 film tried to stay away from scary disfigurement as far as possible and it does not seem to be related to any war-like disfigurements that would have been more common at that time than at the time of later films. On top of that, the 1983 film was also made during peacetime and it is one of the ugliest faces in all the films. So, in short, it is difficult to conclude anything definite on the influence of peacetime on the faces of the Phantoms.

Scary or Gentle

The next change, the balance between the Phantom’s scariness versus his gentleness seems to have something to do with the war as well. As Hogle points out, “these scenes and characters, we can now conclude, are anguished cultural reactions to World War I, partly to how that conflict produced half-dead and disfigured bodies, partly to how it led to extensive mental illness, and partly to how men had been turned into automatons” (138). Here he implies both that the Phantom’s disfigurement is linked to the soldiers who were returning from the front and also that the Phantom’s mental instability is directly linked to the sometimes insane war veterans.

The second film was released in the middle of the Second World War. According to Tom Waever and Michael and John Brunas, “The cold reality of a second World War had softened American tastes in escapist entertainment considerably. Leroux's ornate penny-dreadful ... seemed hopelessly artificial in those dark days of battling Adolf Hitler. ... Universal opted for a more up-to-date Hollywood costume-movie sensibility with just enough ersatz opera thrown in to lure the carriage trade” (347). What they are saying, and what Hogle underlines (166-7), is that the filmmakers of this film tried to provide the audiences with an escape from the wartime realities and horrors that were occurring right at that time. On top of this, as Imelda Whelehan points out, filmmakers in the forties assumed that the audience consisted mostly of women and pitched their films at a female audience (139). Even though the assumption was wrong, the films made at that time were more often drama and romantic films than horror (Whelehan 139). Since melodrama and romantic films were very popular in the early forties (Whelehan 139), this popularity may have rubbed off on this *Phantom of the Opera* and it could explain why the film is not scary and why the Phantom is not scary either.

As for the 1962 film, this was made at a time when the Vietnam War had just started. This may have had a possible influence on this Phantom's behaviour; Schnurr, Lunney and Sengupta note that Vietnam veterans have an increased chance to develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The soldiers who had been fighting in Vietnam would have started coming back in the 1960s and may already have been showing symptoms of this disorder. One defining characteristic of PTSD is “Persistent re-experiencing” which includes “flashback memories, recurring distressing dreams, subjective re-experiencing of the traumatic event(s), or intense negative psychological or physiological response to any objective or subjective reminder of the traumatic event(s)” (“PTSD”). This seems similar to the way Professor Petrie keeps re-experiencing the events leading up to and including his disfigurement and then behaves like he is actually in the middle of those events again. The fidgeting, absent-minded confused way in which this Phantom acts makes him a character who is far from scary and seems to be someone in need of help rather than somebody who has to be defeated.

The 1990 film is also made in peace-time, but seems to be influenced by different concerns altogether. According to Roman “over time, television has explored the configuration of the American family, attempting to imbue it with the sensibilities of a culture that evokes less cohesive stability in family life. Indeed, according to the 2001 US census, traditional families with married couples and children are no longer the predominant family structure, whereas single-parent households are” (118). This trend was already starting in the

late 1980s and early 1990s, as was the application of legal abortion (Hogle 210). Both trends are clearly visible in Richardson's *The Phantom of the Opera* and they are interestingly applied to the Phantom himself, who is given parents who love him, but his mother dies, leaving him with only his father. However, the father still has not been able to convince himself to accept the ugly child that he created and never told the son he was his father. The Phantom then spends his main adult life trying to recreate this broken family and one of the ways he does this is by trying to woo Christine, who looks like his mother. This, again, emphasises the idea that everything this Erik does is to re-build a family and to regain the love that he lost as a child.

Conclusion

At the end of this chapter, some of the questions that were posed in the Introduction and the beginning of the discussion can maybe be answered. The main findings of this chapter were that some aspects of the films such as the chandelier crash, the unmasking scene and the ugliness of the Phantom as well as his passion for music are mostly steady throughout most of the film versions. As Scott MacQueen notes, these are the factors that most filmmakers agree have to be in the film in order for it to truly be a *Phantom of the Opera* adaptation ("Unmasking the Phantom"). The changes that have been made mostly concern the fact that the disfigurement of the Phantom differs, the Phantom is usually either very scary or very gentle and not very often anywhere in between and that his actions are very often explained which results in a flattening of the character.

Some preliminary conclusions about the explanations of these factors can already be drawn. It is for instance quite clear that the Hollywood way of storytelling has heavily influenced the way the Phantom is characterised, i.e. as a flatter character than in the novel. It has also become clear that the casting process and the actors who finally did play the Phantom has had an impact on how the Phantom is characterised, e.g. Charles Dance as a British gentleman plays a much more gentle and sophisticated Phantom than for instance Maximilian Schell. I have also pointed out that the rating system was of some significant influence on the characterisation of the Phantom. Especially the 1943 and the 1962 Phantoms are determined by the Hays Code, in that they are less scary and monstrous than some of the other Phantoms. The 1983 Phantom, the first one after the lifting of the Hays Code is much scarier and more villainous than the previous two.

Next we saw that the historical context, and especially the two World Wars and the Vietnam War have influenced the face of the Phantom and his behaviour and attitude towards other characters. We also saw that, as Magistrate and Morrison say, the horror monster embodies the fears and anxieties of the society (4), so in a sense, the Phantom's repulsiveness as a continuity is a result of the fears of a society, and the way that it is manifested in the different versions is a reflection of the current anxieties of the society that the film was made in.

Chapter 2: The Love Triangle

Introduction

The second chapter of this paper will deal with the main conflict of the plot of the story: the love triangle between Christine, the Phantom and Raoul. Like the previous chapter did for the Phantom, the depiction of Christine and Raoul will be analysed and the relationships between the three parties will be described. Finally, in the discussion, the depiction of the characters will be analysed in more detail with regard to the way they function in the narrative. Then the depiction of these characters will be analysed in the context of their gender roles and in the discussion, I will try to link the characterisation to roles of men and women at the times when the respective films were made in order to find possible explanations for the changes and continuities. Historical accounts concerning gender will also be taken into account as well as some characteristics of the film industry which determined the depiction of the characters as it occurs in the films.

The Novel

The Characterisation and Depiction of Christine

Scott MacQueen describes Christine in his documentary "A Phantom Unmasked" as "The Beauty to the Phantom's Beast". The narrator describes her as having blond hair and blue eyes (Leroux 69). Her age is not given in the novel, but if she is the same age as Raoul, she must be around twenty years old. Her father used to tell stories about her as Little Lotte, where he describes her as loving her mother, being loyal to her doll, and, above all, loved hearing the Angel of Music who comes to her when she is lying in her bed (Leroux 69). The Angel of Music theme is repeated throughout the novel: when Erik comes to her to give her singing lessons, she asks him if he is the Angel of Music and he agrees. This shows another side to Christine, mostly described by Raoul, who remembers her from the past and who

meets her again in the plot of this novel. She is often with her head in the clouds. When she and Raoul were children, they would go to the field and see if the Korrigans would arrive, mythical creatures that do not exist. Christine, who is short-sighted and could not possibly have seen them, always claimed that she did (Leroux 78-9). When Erik tells her that he is the Angel of Music then, whom her father promised her he would send to her when he was dead, she believes him. She is often described by the narrator as being innocent and she still has a childlike mind, thinking that she and Raoul can escape the Phantom by pretending to be engaged and “Ce fut le jeu le plus joli du monde” (Leroux 140), so she is still playing games.

However, Christine is not stupid at all. When Raoul tells her that he overheard the Voice and Christine talking in her dressing room, she realises very soon that the Voice cannot be her Angel of Music, since she is the only one who is supposed to be able to hear him. She also knows she is in danger, because she is afraid when the Voice in her dressing room starts teaching her because her voice starts to change and she does not recognise herself anymore and she is terrified of Erik at several points in the novel.

Christine also has a great capacity for love. There is not a single character in the novel who she hates, she does not even speak unkindly to or about Carlotta. She is sweet and kind to everybody as exemplified in the part when she shows Raoul the entire opera, moving through her own empire as if she were “une reine populaire” (Leroux 145) and speaks kind words to everybody they meet. She loves her father, she loves Mamma Valérius, she loves professor Valérius and above all, she loves Erik. All in all, Christine has a great capacity for love and kindness even if she has a mind that is very young and slightly gullible.

The Characterisation and Depiction of Raoul

Raoul is in the novel represented as a fairly weak character. The narrator first describes him as effeminate, with a soft face that seems to belong to an eighteen-year-old rather than a twenty-one-year-old, with blond hair and an almost imperceptible blond moustache and the complexion of a girl (Leroux 29). He is described as shy, almost innocent, and “Il semblait être sorti la veille de la main des femmes” (Leroux 29). The fact that he was raised by his sisters and his aunt also contributed to his femininity, according to the narrator. Later on, when Raoul listens in to the conversation that Christine has with the Voice in her dressing room, “A la meme heure il venait d’apprendre d’amour et la haine” (Leroux 36), which shows that he knew nothing of either love or hate before that moment. He is a bit clumsy and does not have much confidence. He is often the last to find out what has happened: when Christine has disappeared in the middle of a performance near the end of the

novel, he appears twenty pages later asking “Pardon messieurs, pourriez-vous me dire où est Christine Daaé?” (Leroux 199), and when Christine tells him what happened when Erik first took her down to his house on the lake, it takes him a very long time to understand what is going on. Even at the climax of the novel, Raoul very bravely decides to go and rescue Christine, but fails miserably, instead almost going insane in the torture chamber, then almost drowning and having to be saved by his nemesis and, by the grace of this same creature, finally wins his love, Christine. So in short, Raoul is an enormous anti-hero.

The Relationship between Christine and Raoul

Towards Raoul, Christine usually acts very patiently. She explains everything to him that he does not understand concerning Erik. She is stern to him if he accuses her of betraying him, for instance when he accuses her of being alone in a room with another man, she says: “Je ne vous reconnais plus. Mais que croyez-vous donc? Je suis une honnête fille, moi, monsieur le vicomte de Chagny, et je ne m’enferme point avec des voix d’homme, dans ma loge. Si vous aviez ouvert la porte, vous auriez vu qu’il n’y avait personne!” (80-1), so she protects her own dignity towards Raoul and asserts several times throughout the novel that she loves him: she kisses him on the rooftop (Leroux 178) and she gives him her hands when they walk around the Opera together (Leroux 140). She characterises their love as “un bonheur qui ne fera de mal à personne” (Leroux 140), but also as “trop triste” (Leroux 144), because Christine knows that their love cannot be, since Erik forbids it.

All in all, she loves Raoul for the nostalgia he brings up in her. When they are together, their childhood is often mentioned as one of the things that bind them and that keep them together; their engagement is a fake one, like children who play that they are grown up and have a household to themselves. Raoul and she would go to people’s houses, ring their doorbells and beg them for a story and Daddy Daaé would tell them stories all the time. She also loves him because they are alike: “Ils avaient à peu près la même petite âme rêveuse et calme” (Leroux 69) and they are both describes several times as being innocent. Raoul’s love is a safe one, one that reminds her of the times they spent with her father and of her fantasies and stories.

Raoul’s behaviour towards Christine is, like most of his actions, is a bit clumsy. He does not manage to protect her or to save her from Erik and accuses her several times of being unfaithful to him and betraying him. He tries very hard to get her to love him, even though she assures him that she does. One of the ways to ensure that she loves him is by asking her several times, again and again and another way is by following her when he expects she is in

danger, to Mamma Valérius, to the graveyard and even to Erik's house. In that sense, he is very loyal to her.

His insecurity, however, makes him very blunt sometimes in Christine's presence, which is especially clear in the chapter "Le Violon Enchanté" where he laughs at her when she tells him of the Angel of Music and accuses her of treating him wrongly by meeting another man. Then "Le jeune homme est stupéfait lui-même de cette querelle subite, qu'il ose dans le moment même où il s'était promis de faire entendre à Christine des paroles de douceur, d'amour et de soumission" (Leroux 75). On the other hand, he can be very sweet to Christine. He agrees to pretend to be engaged even when he really wants to get married instead, he comes to her every performance at the Opera and always comes when Christine asks him to.

His reasons for loving Christine, however, are not very clear. Like her, he truly enjoyed the time he spent with her when they were children, but there is a strange gap between the two characters: Raoul is a viscount, so he is of nobility, but Christine is a peasant girl from Sweden and a chorus girl at the Opera. This explains why Raoul's brother Philippe is so upset about their relationship and tries to discourage Raoul from pursuing her.

The Relationship between Erik and Christine

As we saw in chapter 1, Erik treats Christine like a queen. He loves her, he adores her and he lays himself at her feet. He even loves her so much that he gives her up to Raoul so that she will be happy. His motivations are also quite clear: he wants to live a normal life and needs Christine to achieve this. He also loves her because he loves music and she embodies this, but having her as a wife seems to be his main reason for loving her.

Christine's love for Erik is an altogether different love than she feels for Raoul. At different times, she both admits and denies being afraid of him, but what she fears most is "de retourner habiter avec lui: dans la terre!" (Leroux 150). To her, living with Erik would be similar to dying. This idea is intensified by the description of when Erik first takes her down to his lair on the horse and across the lake in the boat. She describes the lake as the Styx and the shape who is guiding her as Caron (Leroux 161). When she tells Raoul of the time when she saw Erik, she says "J'ai cru qu'il allait mourir!" (Leroux 151). But what attracts him in her is his voice, his music and the darkness. Raoul says about her love for him "Votre peur, vos terreurs, tout cela c'est encore de l'amour et du plus délicieux! Celui qui l'on ne s'avoue pas... Celui qui vous donne, quand y on songe, le frisson" (Leroux 165).

As soon as she recovers from the shock of seeing Erik and her fear abates, she weeps for him, and calls him “Pauvre Erik” (Leroux 177). At the climax, however, she stands up to him because she deeply disapproves of his behaviour and she makes him free Raoul and the Persian, although Erik told the Persian once that “rien ne peut retenir, pas meme Erik lui-même” (Leroux 264). In the end, Christine does have the strength to stop Erik and he listens to her. She treats him the same way as she treats Raoul sometimes, telling them off sternly and making it very clear that she disagrees with them. When she takes his bag of life and death, for instance, which contains the key to the torture chamber, he becomes very angry with her, but she says simply: “Ecoutez-moi, Erik. Puisque désormais il est entendu que nous devons vivre ensemble... qu’est-ce que ça vous fait? Tout ce qui est à vous m’appartient” (Leroux 288).

In the end, however, Christine’s love wins over all the other emotions that she feels towards Erik. She agrees to marry him and then gives up all her defiance and does everything a wife should do. Finally, he kisses her on the forehead and she does the same to him. They cry together and then she leaves him to go off with Raoul. At the end of the novel, it turns out that she returns one more time to bury Erik when he is dead and she gives him back the ring that he has given her. It is also clear that she is prepared to give him everything: “Oh! Ce soir je vous ai donné mon âme et je suis morte” (Leroux 36).

All in all, Christine may be both afraid of Erik and love him, but finally, she is the only one who dares disagree with him and stand up to him. Her capability to love extends itself to include Erik, enabling her to kiss him. Finally, she remains loyal to him even in his death and fulfils the promise she made him that she would return one last time when he is dead.

The Relationship between Erik and Raoul

One very interesting aspect of the interaction between Raoul and Erik is that it is non-existent. They never speak to each other and see each other only a few times: once at the graveyard, once at the masked ball, once when Erik – or maybe it is not Erik at all, this is not entirely clear – comes to Raoul’s bedroom and Raoul shoots at him, but misses. Finally, Erik saves Raoul from the torture chamber and chains him up nicely (Leroux 327) and then, when Christine kisses him, he lets Raoul go together with Christine. However, these final events are not described directly as they happen, but Erik describes them in his final visit to the Persian before he dies.

However, even though they do not speak to each other, they do discuss each other. Raoul never gets beyond calling Erik a “monstre” (Leroux 200, 232, 242). Raoul is mostly very much disgusted by Erik’s actions and by what he is. The knowledge that Christine is being courted by Erik makes Raoul even less sure of himself, because even though he knows that Erik is extremely ugly, he is afraid of Christine’s love for him and also seems to be scared that he may not win it, asking Christine ““Mais m’aimez-vous? Si Erik était beau, m’aimeriez-vous, Christine?” (Leroux 178) and when Christine tells him that she sang for him that night, “Raoul se retenait pour ne point crier: Je suis jaloux! Je suis jaloux! Je suis jaloux!” (Leroux 143).

On the other hand, Erik does not seem to be as bothered by Raoul’s presence as Raoul is by his. He gives Christine a gold ring and tells her that she can never marry somebody else. He tells her once at the beginning of the novel that she must love him and not Raoul, but does nothing when Christine and Raoul play at being engaged, even though he does know what is going on. He calls Raoul “ton petit mari” (Leroux 290) mockingly, but does not seem to consider Raoul a serious threat.

The 1925 Film

The Characterisation and Depiction of Christine



Christine, 1925

In the 1925 film, Christine is played by Mary Philbin, who was twenty-three at the time of filming. She was cast by Carl Laemmle after having won a beauty contest (Slide 307). She had long, brown curly hair and a very young, innocent face. She was a very small woman; according to the cameraman Charles van Enger “Mary Philbin didn't weigh a hundred pounds soaking wet. She was the skinniest girl I ever saw” (281). A

reference to Christine as the Angel of Music is made in the very first scene she appears in, which is the final prison scene in the opera *Faust*. In this, Christine plays Marguerite, who begs the angels to help her, so they come down and bring her up to heaven. In this image, Marguerite wears a white dress and looks like an angel herself.

The Christine in this film is not as loving as Leroux’s Christine, however. Mamma and professor Valérius are removed from the film, as is the background story of Christine’s father, so they are not there to show that Christine is kind to everybody. The love for stories and the

innocence are mostly gone; she is just a girl singing in an opera, being taught by a mysterious voice and already being engaged to another man. In a sense, the removal of these aspects makes her a much flatter character than she is. Her acting also did not help, according to Mordaunt Hall: “Miss Philbin is only satisfactory in some of her scenes, and she ought to have been able to make many of them far more telling”. There is another indication of the flattening of Christine’s character. Her loss of strength is expressed through the amount of times she faints, which is in the movie significantly more often than in the novel.

The Characterisation and Depiction of Raoul



Raoul, 1925

Raoul in this film is played by 31-year-old Norman Kerry. He is a strapping young man, who is confident and self-assured. He hugs and kisses Christine like a lover should. Mordaunt Hall characterises him as “the hero” and that is how he acts. He wears a uniform, possibly from the navy but maybe from the army, so he looks like a hero too. On the rooftop, he comforts Christine after she tells him all that happened down in the Phantom’s lair. He is never clumsy in the things he says to her, never behaves like an idiot and always seems to know what is going on. He is also much more heroic at the climax. He does still need the Persian to get down to the Phantom’s lair, but this seems to be more to point him the way than to protect him from the dangers that Raoul is unfamiliar with, but the Persian knows how to withstand. Raoul is also much more resilient to the tortures in the torture chamber and works hard to try to escape instead of letting the Persian do this.

The Relationship between Christine and Raoul

In this film, Christine and Raoul are already in a relationship when the film starts and do not meet at the beginning, remembering that they used to know each other. In fact, the whole background and childhood of Christine and Raoul are left out.

There are not many scenes that only have Christine and Raoul in them, and most of them appear near the beginning of the film when Raoul visits her in her dressing room. She is usually very happy to see him, hugging him or kissing him. One of the scenes where they do appear together is one where Raoul asks her “When will we finally get married?” and she

replies that he will have to wait, because “I can never leave the Opera House. You must forget our love” (Julian). So she keeps him at bay to placate the Phantom, because he is the one who ordered her to stay away from Raoul. So in this version, Christine’s fear for Erik and her ambition for a good career are greater than her love for Raoul.

Raoul loves Christine, as becomes clear when he keeps asking her to marry him and when he follows her down to the Phantom’s lair in order to save her. When she jumps out of the carriage, he saves her from the angry mob that seems to be about to trample her in its rage. So all in all, Raoul is a good, manly, protective fiancé who saves Christine from the threats of the outsider. The final image is in the film of Christine and Raoul getting married in countryside church and both of them look very happy, so in the end, the audience can be sure that their relationship is a good one.

The Relationship between Christine and Erik

As we saw in the previous chapter, this Erik treats Christine much like Leroux’s Erik, although he starts to deviate from this near the end of the film, when he tries to abduct Christine another time instead of letting her go with Raoul. His motives have changed a bit as well. He does not need Christine to save him from his strange past, but only to make him a better man (see chapter 1). Although he is her vocal teacher, this Erik seems to be more interested in physically possessing Christine by marrying her and is less interested in her music.

As for Christine, she is fascinated by the Voice at the beginning of the film. She enjoys the successes that her teacher allows her to obtain in the opera. However, after he takes her down to his lair on the horse and in the boat, she shies away from him and stays away from him as far as she possibly can. Her one act of defiance of his rules is when she un.masks him, but after that, or perhaps because of that, she keeps trying to run away from him and trying to evade him. In the end, she never stands up to the Phantom and never defies him. She also does not kiss Erik and never gets to love him. Instead, she is represented as a victim of his cruelty and his madness, a weak and helpless damsel in distress who needs to be saved from the villain by prince Charming; this is expressed for instance in the rooftop scene, where Christine begs Raoul to save her from the monster, whereas in the novel, this was Raoul’s proposition and she is very reluctant to agree, because she does not want to disappoint or upset Erik.

The Relationship between Erik and Raoul

Near the beginning of the film, Philippe, Raoul's brother, teases Raoul a bit, talking about the rumour that Christine has another suitor, and unlike the novel, Raoul is not worried about this at all. Erik does not mention Raoul to Christine before she actually meets him in person, but when he lets her go after the first abduction, he does tell her that she can never see Raoul again and that if she does, he will kill him. At the climax, however, Erik is not too much perturbed by Raoul's presence in the torture chamber, but he does feel it is a nice extra incentive to get Christine to marry him, because he threatens to kill Raoul if she does not marry him.

The 1943 Film

The Characterisation and Depiction of Christine



Christine, 1943

Christine is played by 17-year-old Susanna Foster, a beautiful blond-haired, blue-eyed girl. “She had beauty and poise but was also blessed with a superb voice that might have led to a career in opera or musical theatre” (Dick 124). She also had a very good singing voice and could do all her own singing in the opera scenes and was even capable of hitting G6, which she does in the movie.

This represents the way she is represented in the movie: a capable young woman who could become great in

opera as long as she does not become distracted by things that the musical director Villeneuve calls “the normal life”. On top of being very professional, Christine is also presented as being very attractive. Instead of having two suitors as in the novel, she has three in this film: the Phantom, the baritone Anatole and the detective Raoul and they all desire her equally. She is very kind, often laughing with other characters, never being snappy or annoyed and even when Biancarolli, the leading soprano, is accusing her of poisoning her, Christine stays polite and calm.

The role Christine plays in this film and the main conflict that she has is different from the novel; instead of choosing between the Phantom and Raoul, the Phantom is not really an option. Instead of choosing between a world of darkness and a world of light, her choice is between Anatole and Raoul. Anatole promises her that he can give her a live at the opera, so she can become a great singer and be married as well. Raoul promises to give her a

comfortable life in a nice house and with children. Intrinsicly, the choice she is offered is the choice between a professional career and a family life. In the final scene of the film, Christine chooses neither of the men. Instead, she chooses to stay alone so she can focus on her singing career.

The Characterisation and Depiction of Raoul and Anatole



Raoul (left) and Anatole (right), 1943

Raoul has interestingly duplicated himself in this film into the operatic baritone Anatole Garron (Nelson Eddy, 42 when filming began) and the police inspector Raoul D'Aubert (Edgar Barrier, 36). It is a slightly obscure and mysterious digression from the novel, especially since Anatole and Raoul resemble each other fairly much: they

both have slicked back hair and a moustache and a similar posture; in fact, in wide shots, it is fairly hard to distinguish between the two men. One thing this bifurcation does is provide the film with comic moments to relieve the tension of the threatening presence of a ghost and it also gives Christine the opportunity to choose between two lovers, because, as the Phantom is not her lover anymore but more of a father-figure, the whole conflict from the novel of having to choose between two suitors would be lost. Therefore, a new suitor needed to be invented.

Anatole is played by forty-year-old Nelson Eddy and Raoul is 34-year-old Edgar Barrier. Anatole is a “musical, creative and unstable man” (Ann C. Hall 53) who is a good, competent opera singer and Raoul is a “steady, responsible man” (Ann C. Hall 53). He is an inspector in the *sureté* and is in charge of the investigation that is running concerning the murders of Biancarolli and he is the one who through his hard work and intelligence figures out that the Phantom must be Eriqre Claudin. One thing this change does for Raoul is giving him a proper job instead of him just being an aristocrat who is in the opera all the time for no clear reason at all and who does not seem to have to work for his living.

This very down-to-earth detective work and the offhand in which Raoul presents the information concerning the Phantom strips the Phantom of very much of his ghostliness and makes Raoul a competent character who is a match for the Phantom in intelligence. There is also a scene where Anatole and Raoul chase the Phantom through the opera house and it takes

the Phantom a long time to shake them off. This again shows that the Phantom in this film is neither a ghost nor any kind of extraordinary character.

The representation of Anatole as a musically sensitive character and Raoul as somebody who knows nothing of music at all is a kind of analogy for the representation of the Phantom, who is a musical genius, and Raoul, who just comes to the opera to see Christine and does not know much of music. In a way, the choice Christine makes between the Phantom and Raoul is shifted to Anatole and Raoul, where Anatole has the same function as the Phantom, but without the ugliness and the cruelty. Another similarity to Leroux Phantom and Raoul versus Anatole and Raoul is the jealousy. In one scene, Raoul enters a room where Anatole and Christine are singing together. He says that he knows nothing of music and if they are done already, with a jealous look at Anatole and Christine who are sitting close to each other on the piano bench. They also spend quite some time of the film insulting each other very politely. At the end of the film, however, when Christine rejects both of them, they look at each other, realising that they have been foolish, and take each other out for dinner.

The Relationship between Christine and Raoul and Anatole

Christine is very polite and nice towards both Raoul and Anatole and equally so to both men. She also acts as an independent woman however, frequently turning their invitations down and telling them that she cannot make it if she wants to perform in the opera, which she does. She seems to be unperturbed by the fact that she needs to choose between two men and also does not try to choose between the two in the film; instead, she just allows both of them to follow her around and to keep asking her out. At some point, when they both ask her out, she proposes that they go together, the three of them.

Raoul and Anatole are very gallant towards Christine. Anatole tries to get her on stage every chance he gets to further her career in music and Raoul tries to protect her. One telling scene is where Anatole and Raoul try to come up with a plan to capture the Phantom so he cannot do any more damage. Anatole wants Christine to sing to lure the Phantom up, because, since the Phantom wrote a note demanding that Christine sing, Anatole is convinced that the Phantom will come to listen. Raoul, however, is worried that the Phantom might harm Christine in the process and says that the Phantom will be much more likely to show his face if they defy his wishes and make somebody else sing.

The Relationship between Christine and the Phantom

This Phantom was in earlier versions of the script of this film supposed to be Christine's father (MacQueen "New Formula" 80). However, since this relationship was removed, a gap is left and it is not entirely clear what this Phantom wants of Christine other than to protect her and to grant her a great singing career. In this case, his love for her music is greater than his love for Christine herself.

There are only two scenes that contain both the Phantom and Christine; the first is when they meet in the hallway outside Villeneuve's office and the second is when the Phantom finally brings her down to his lair. In the first scene, Christine is very kind and polite to him and smiles for most of the conversation. She seems endeared by him. This establishes Claudin as a likeable and sympathetic character for the audience. In the second scene, however, she cowers from him, but that is also because he handles her fairly roughly, pulling her down to his lair by her arm. She is afraid of him initially, because she realises that he must be the murderer that Raoul has been hunting down for the past sixty minutes of screen time and the man who is pulling her down is telling her that he has been watching her all along and that he has longed for this moment. Her reaction is a logical one for a girl who is being taken somewhere by an older man she does not know, who is possibly a murderer and who drags her down to a deserted place where nobody will find her if anything happens. Because that is all there is to the Phantom in this version; he is not dangerously attractive because of his ugliness and the dark music that he writes.

When Christine recovers from her initial fears and the Phantom starts playing the song that she knows from her childhood, she becomes more confident again. She edges towards him and pulls off the mask. She is shocked a bit by his face, but after Raoul and Anatole rescue her and the Phantom is gone, she does not mention the face to them anymore. All she says is "He was almost a stranger to me, and yet... somehow I always felt drawn to him with a kind of pity... understanding" (Lubin). This pity and understanding are visible on her face after she pulls off the mask. In the end, her pity and her kindness are greater than her fear, but there is no mention of a deep love of the kind that nobody wants to admit, not even to themselves.

The Relationship between Raoul, Anatole and the Phantom

The interaction between Raoul, Anatole and the Phantom is even more non-existent than in the novel. Anatole and Raoul discuss the Phantom several times, but since he is not

relevant of a love interest, they are only interested in him as a dangerous lunatic murderer who needs to be caught but is no immediate danger to any of them. Neither does the Phantom tell Christine that she can never see Raoul or Anatole again and there is nothing of the jealousy or the rivalry between the Phantom on the one hand and Raoul and Anatole on the other that was evident in the novel and slightly less so in the 1925 film.

The 1962 Film

The Characterisation and Depiction of Christine



Christine, 1962

Christine Charles (Heather Sears, 27 when filming began) is not a very active character in this film. She has a good voice which earns her the role of Joan of Arc in the new opera which, everybody believes, is written by Lord Ambrose D'Arcy, but is actually a product of Professor Petrie, the Phantom in this film. The D'Arcy character takes Christine out to dinner where he offers to give her singing lessons in his apartment that same evening, which he strokes her shoulder and looks at her hungrily, calling her "delicious little thing" (Fisher). She manages to keep him at bay for away, but ultimately has to be saved from this situation by Harry Hunter, her main love interest in this film. She follows him around for most of the film and when she is abducted by the Phantom, she meekly does what he does without saying too much. She faints only twice in this movie: once when she is abducted by the Phantom's dwarf and once when she is singing for the Phantom, but this is from exhaustion and not from fear. All in all, Christine in this film is a rather flat character; she says many romantic cliché's when Hunter is involved and does not undertake a lot of action herself. There is very little development in her character aside from the discoveries she makes when other people tell her what has happened to the Phantom and there are also very few characters other than Hunter and the Phantom to show her kindness to. Basically, she is the same girl with a nice voice who loves Harry Hunter at the beginning and at the ending of the film. On top of all this, her history is left out, so there is very little background information on her to help the viewers create a sharp and rounded image of her.

The Characterisation and Depiction of Harry Hunter



Hunter, 1962

Hunter (Edward de Souza, 30 years old when filming began) is a producer of operas in this film, so he knows a lot about music and when he sees some of the sheet music written by Professor Petrie, he sits down at the piano and plays it perfectly without having read it before. He realises directly that it is good music, of course. In a way, the attraction to Hunter's character is now the same as that to Leroux's Phantom: music. It is also through the fact that they both work with music that Christine and Hunter meet and fall in love.

Apart from being musically educated, Hunter is also an intelligent, decisive and energetic. He spends a large part of his scenes running around London trying to find out what happened to Professor Petrie because he has a suspicion that he has something to do with the strange incidents that are taking place at the opera. He is also a brave and strong character. He stands up to Lord Ambrose D'Arcy, which no one else seems to dare and he is very humorous and does not worry when he is fired by D'Arcy. When he finds out where the Phantom must be, he goes into the river, which a policeman warned him, is unsurvivable, but Hunter manages to find the Phantom's lair through the river, fights off the dwarf who seems rather determined to kill him.

All in all, Hunter is a sensitive, musical, strong, brave, intelligent, funny and energetic character and all these traits make him into an attractive, interesting hero, unlike the Raoul from the novel.

The Relationship between Christine and Harry Hunter

Christine's and Harry Hunter's relationship is very sweet. They go out for dinner and subsequently they ride three rounds through the park in a coach. When she gets home after their romantic day out, she is extremely happy and falls on her bed with a broad smile on her face. In fact, their relationship is presented as a perfectly normal, sweet and untroubled one and it is also not disturbed at all by the presence of the Phantom.

Hunter behaves very gallantly and charmingly towards Christine. He treats her on meals and carriage rides several times and does not laugh at her when she says she has heard a voice in her dressing room, but takes her there to investigate. When she is scared, he stays

close to her to protect her. In the romantic scenes, he is characterised as funny, sweet and intelligent and not clumsy at all.

The Relationship between Christine and the Phantom

Like the 1943 Phantom, this one does not seek to marry Christine or have any other type of romantic involvement with her at all. He does not treat her tenderly or lovingly; he even slaps her and never speaks to her kindly. The reason why he wants her is because her voice perfectly suits his music and he wants her to star as Joan of Arc in his Opera.

For this reason, the Phantom, played by Herbert Lom, is not a love interest for Christine in this film at all. He speaks to her twice before she finally meets him, so she is already familiar with him and seems much more afraid of the dwarf than of the Phantom himself. When she arrives down in his lair, his only desire from her is that she sings for him and takes this so far that she becomes too exhausted to do anything, let alone fear him. She does not seem to be bothered by the mask, never asks him to remove it and never tries to remove it himself. Finally, when Hunter arrives in the Phantom's lair and tells them all of the Phantom's history, the Phantom begs them to allow him one week to train her to become the perfect Joan of Arc. She does not reply, "through long, meaningful looks, Christine agrees" (Ann C. Hall 63). Hunter is fine with this arrangement as well, so Christine gives her voice to the Phantom to train in a charitable gesture rather than out of love.

The Relationship between the Phantom and Hunter

When Hunter takes Christine back to her dressing room, they hear the Phantom's voice, who tells Hunter to mind his own business. He does not define his threat, however, saying only vague things such as "You do not know what may happen to you" and "There are forces of evil at large in the opera tonight" (Fisher). Hunter is not impressed and continues his investigations into the Phantom and nothing happens to him.

Seeing as the Phantom is not a love interest for Christine, there is no reason for Harry Hunter to be jealous of him. In fact, he allows him to keep Christine with him for a week to obtain his goal. The only reason why he investigates the story of Professor Petrie because he recognises the music by Professor Petrie as being by the same author as the music of *Joan of Arc*. Since he knows that D'Arcy cannot be trusted, he tries to find out why the music is published under his name and not under Petrie's.

In the final confrontation, Hunter tells the Phantom all that he discovered about him and seems to take pity on him, which is why he allows him to train Christine. All in all, they behave quite amicably and kindly towards each other.

The 1983 Film



Maria, 1983

The Characterisation and Depiction of Maria

The history of Maria Gianelli (Jane Seymour, 32 at the time of filming) has changed from the childhood in Sweden with a loving violin-playing father and meeting Raoul as a child to having Italian parents, but being American-born and coming to the opera in Budapest because she says it is impossible to make a name in opera if you have no experience in the continent.

She is a rather contradictory character in this film. On one hand, she is a very strong character: she disagrees with the men in her life, she uses her quick wit to defend her own dignity and stands up to Baron Hunyadi, the Phantom and the Raoul character, Michael Hartnell. When she first meets Hartnell, she tells him that she will not go to bed with a patron to further her career but that she wants to become a great opera singer because of her vocal talents. Later, however, she sleeps with Hartnell anyway and as a result of their relationship, he tries to help her to become famous. On top of this, Sandor Korvin's wife is also played by Jane Seymour and therefore, they look exactly alike. Korvin realises this too. At some points, the two women are portrayed as being mostly interchangeable, and this undermines Maria's status as a strong woman because her uniqueness and identity as her own, independent person are undermined by equating her with another woman.

The Characterisation and Depiction of Michael Hartnell

Hartnell is played by British actor Michael York who was 41 years old when the film was released. He is an opera director, almost like the Harry Hunter character from the 1962 version, and like Hunter, he is British in this film. He is musically well educated, then, and is also brave and intelligent: he starts his own investigations into the Phantom and discovers on his own that the Phantom was once the conductor Sandor Korvin who tragically lost his wife. When he knows all this, he figures out that he must have abducted Maria and that he must be



Hartnell, 1983

in the cellars of the Opera House, since he signs his notes with Orpheus, who went to the underworld. He then ventures down into these cellars and rescues Christine when the Phantom is out. He fights the Phantom's helper, the rat catcher Lajos, and wins by throwing him down the stairs. Finally, him being the expert on the Phantom now, he predicts what the Phantom will do; he says that he is finished with the underworld now and that they need to catch him

before it is too late. He plans to use Christine as bait to lure the Phantom to the opera and catch him there.

All in all, Hartnell is a brave, intelligent, musically sensitive character.

The Relationship between Christine and Hartnell

Maria is at first not attracted to Hartnell at all. She auditions to become the understudy to Bianchi, the leading soprano, and before she sings, she quarrels with Hartnell about whether or not *Faust* is a good opera and about how a woman can become an opera star. When she walks home that evening, he walks with her and again, they are very snappy towards each other: Maria shows off the fact that she has already learned the libretto of *Faust* by heart in English and in French and he retorts: "Aren't you cold with all that naked ambition showing?" At the end of this conversation, however, they start their conversation again in a more polite tone. Maria then tells him everything about her life, her dreams and her ambitions and very soon, they become very friendly and halfway through the film, they end up in bed together and Maria does not object. Other than the Christine in the novel, she seems to believe in free sex without being married, whereas Leroux's Christine had marriage in mind as a realisation of her relationship with either Raoul or the Phantom.

As for Hartnell, he is very rude to Maria at the beginning of the film, and treats her just like she treats him: grumpy and snappy. However, once they fall in love, he becomes much more tender. He protects her from evil influences by finding out everything he can about the Phantom and saving her from captivity. When Maria faints after this rescue mission, he catches her and carries her back up to the Opera house. However, he does not act only out of love for her. About halfway through the movie, the Phantom comes to Hartnell and threatens to kill him if he does not stop seeing Maria. Hartnell immediately fires Maria from

the production, telling her crudely that she simply is not ready and that he does not think she can do it. However, when he realises that she has been abducted by the Phantom, he starts to investigate the Phantom and comes down to rescue Maria.

The jealous aspect to Raoul's character in the book is somewhat retained. When Hartnell realises that Maria disappears during the day, he accuses her of sleeping with Hunyadi, because he thinks he must be her patron. She tells him it is not Hunyadi and when he asks her who it is, she remains silent.

All in all, Hartnell is protective towards Maria and is in many ways the perfect, kind, gentle lover once they start to like each other and becomes jealous when he suspects that she is seeing another man as well. After he is threatened by the Phantom, he seems fine with the prospect of never being able to see Maria again to protect himself; his anger with her and his disappointment at her performance seem very real and he does not seem to regret it at all. In fact, he is characterised as a very egoistical person here. However, he makes up for this in the end, however, by doing everything in his power to save Maria from the Phantom. This helps the narrative along by posing the question: What next? If Hartnell does not want to fight for his woman anymore, how is she going to escape the clutches of the Phantom?

The Relationship between Maria and the Phantom

As we already saw, this Phantom acts very cruelly towards Christine and hardly seems to love her. All he wants is for her to become a success where his wife has been a failure and he wants to achieve this through her voice. He does not seem to be attracted to her physically, but focuses more on her voice. This is mostly salient when considering the fact that he never tries to kiss her or touch her but does want to hear her sing at several points.

The first time that Maria is confronted with the Phantom, it is in her dressing room where his voice tells her that he will make her a great singer and that she has to come to a certain house where he will give her singing lessons. Other than being afraid of the disembodied voice that suddenly appears in her dressing room, Maria immediately starts to investigate and does not seem too disturbed when she cannot find the source of the voice. When she starts taking her lessons, she looks a bit puzzled by the fact that there are dresses in the house that are her size and photographs of a woman who looks exactly like her, but she does not look frightened. When the Phantom arrives and starts teaching her, she is shocked at first by his grim appearance, as described in chapter 1, but then politely thanks him for the lessons, the permission to use his house and his lessons. When he suddenly does not appear anymore for their lessons, she writes him a note asking him to meet her at the masked ball. It

is not until she meets him there and he threatens her that she becomes afraid of him and starts trying to run away from him. Until this point, she really does not seem to realise that she might be in danger.

At this point where her attitude towards him changed from gratitude to fear; she runs away from him twice until he drugs her and drags her down to his lair. When she wakes up, she becomes really afraid. However, she conquers her fear and tears off his mask. He becomes very angry, scaring her at first, but then she says: "I didn't want to hurt you!", however he cannot be appeased anymore, telling her to "Weep for yourself!" and that she can never leave him now that she has seen his face. She becomes terrified by his many threats at this point, but she gathers her courage and after a while throws his mask into the fire. For the rest of the time she spends with him, she stays away from him as far as she possibly can in his lair until she is saved by Hartnell and does not spend any more time with the Phantom.

The most striking aspect of the relationship between the Phantom and Maria in this film is that she never loves him but only fears him in the end. This changes the whole mood of the film from a tragic romantic story about a woman who has to make a choice between two lovers who are neither ideal romantic heroes to a woman who becomes the victim of a morbid, insane and ugly creature and has to be saved by the hero.

The Relationship between the Phantom and Hartnell

When he starts teaching her, he tells her that her days are his to teach her, but the nights are hers to do whatever she wants. However, he finds out very early that Maria is seeing Hartnell and that they are developing a romantic relationship and in the only scene when the Phantom and Hartnell meet and interact, he threatens to kill Hartnell if he does not stop seeing Maria. At the masked ball, he tells Maria the same thing: if she continues her relationship with Hartnell, he will kill him. He never threatens to do anything to Maria, but does frighten Hartnell enough to keep him away from Maria. All in all then, there is a difference between what he says and what he does. At first, Hartnell is afraid of the Phantom, but gradually, as he finds out more about him, he loses his fear because he gets to understand his motives, his drives and his history.

The 1990 Film

The Characterisation and Depiction of Christine

Christine is played by Teri Polo, who was by that time around twenty years old and like Leroux's Christine, blond. She is the daughter of a violinist and met Philippe (the Raoul character in this version) when she was a child and worked in his household. The three of them would travel around and perform on fairs, where her father would play the violin, Philippe the recorder and Christine sang. Philippe's nanny does not want him to play with Christine anymore and they lose sight of each other. One day, Philippe sees her on a fair again and tells her to go to the Paris Opera for lessons. Instead, she encounters Carlotta who tells her to work for her in the costume department. The porter of the building brings her to a large room where props are stored to sleep and Christine is entirely happy and pleased with these opportunities. Like Leroux's Christine, she is kind to everybody she meets, even to Carlotta, and hardly seems to notice that Carlotta is being unkind to her. She is fairly gullible as well, buying the Phantom's story that he wants to remain anonymous as a music teacher and that that is the reason why he wears the mask.



Christine, 1990

The Characterisation and Depiction of Philippe



Philippe, 1990

Philippe (Adam Storke, 28 years old at the time of filming) is in this film a very rich count who is also a patron of the Opera, which gives him a good reason for being there all the time. However, he poses an interesting problem in this film in the sense that he is nothing like the Raoul from Leroux's novel. Instead, he resembles very closely Raoul's brother, le Comte de Chagny, who is described as a great aristocrat, a womanizer, but with a kind heart. This seems to match the 1990 Philippe fairly closely. Mysteriously, however, Philippe does not have younger brother

Raoul, although like in Raoul's original case, the parents seem to be absent.

Philippe arrives at fifty minutes into the film, although he is mentioned several times before that. He is friendly to the porter and to Carrière as well. With women, he is a bit absent-minded however, not recognising Christine when he sees her at the fair and apparently having many fleeting relationships with various women.

The Relationship between Christine and Philippe

Christine, when she finds out that Philippe knows many girls and that all those girls are excited when they see him, is a bit annoyed when she sees him again. She ignores him for a few minutes, but when they meet at the bistro again, she seems perfectly happy to see him. After her success that night, he takes her out for a carriage ride and she tells him very patiently that they used to know each other and does not rebuke him for not recognising her at the fair earlier or at the bistro that evening. She loves him very much and tells him so on several occasions, but also uses him. When she wants to sing for Erik another time, for instance, so that he will know she still loves him, she uses Philippe's influence to arrange it. The phrase she uses to get him to do something she wants is "Please... If you love me at all..." At the end of the film, when Erik is dead, they leave together. So all in all, Christine is very loving towards Philippe, but she is also a bit manipulative.

As for Philippe, his relationship with Christine seems to be more serious than the ones he had with other women. When he first tells Carrière he has found another girl and says "She has the most beautiful voice I've ever heard", Carrière says "Oh, like all the girls you've sent to me?" to which Philippe replies: "No, this one is different" (Richardson), and Carrière laughs at him.

However, when Carrière tells him what is going on with Christine and Erik, Philippe says that he will change his life for her: "The Comte de Chagny that she knew does not exist anymore – he never has!" (Richardson). At that point, Christine comes running out of the secret passageway, having just escaped from Erik. Philippe takes good care of her, doing mostly what she asks him to do, taking her back to the Opera when she wants this and not telling anybody what has been happening and where she has been. He tries to protect her, following Erik and Christine up to the roof at the climax. He fights Erik – who is actually very weak and dying – but loses the fight and only survives because Christine begs Erik to let him go. He does not appear on screen anymore until the very end when Christine and he walk away over the rooftop, but it is very clear that he plays no part in the capturing of the Phantom, very much like Raoul in the novel.

Finally, when Erik is dead, he takes care of Christine, comforting her and comforting her.

The Relationship between Erik and Christine

Erik loves Christine very much, for herself as well as for her music. He acts like a gentleman towards her and seems determined to spend the rest of his life with her. He discusses the matters of their souls with her and takes her for picnics. The main reason why he falls in love with her is because she reminds him of his mother, which is an addition to the story; Christine looks exactly like her and also sounds like her. Christine, he believes, will give him the love that he missed when his mother died. As well as this, he believes that Christine can save him from his dark life in the undergrounds of the Opera. He loves her for her beauty of voice as well as the beauty of her soul.

Christine also loves Erik very much; she is very grateful to him when he gives her singing lessons. She tells him everything about her past, her father, and Philippe. After Philippe takes her out the night after the bistro, she tries to lie to Erik, saying that she did not turn up for lessons afterwards because Carlotta insisted they celebrate together. Almost immediately after this lie, however, she tells Erik that she lied and that she went out with Philippe instead. She then hugs him and tells him that she is very grateful because “none of this would have happened without you!” (Richardson).

When Carrière tells Christine Erik’s life story, she starts to pity him and love him even more. She is convinced that her love is large enough to let her look at his face, but when he finally shows it to her, she faints. Even after he becomes enraged with her and she escapes, she still loves him. When she realises that he is dying because she has left, she returns to him with the same loyalty that Leroux’s Christine has.

Towards Erik, however, she is fairly manipulative. When he refuses to show her his face, she does not relent until he does so and when he asks her to stop begging, she says “Only if you say you do not love me will I stop” (Richardson).

The Relationship between Philippe and Erik

Although Erik and Philippe only share one scene, they do discuss each other several times. When Christine mentions Philippe to Erik the first time, he remarks drily that he knows him and says that he is not worthy of her, because “He comes to the opera for the wrong reasons – he comes for the beauty of faces rather than for the beauty of music” (Richardson).

He never tells Christine that she can never see Philippe again, but it is clear that he disapproves of him and she does not mention him anymore to Erik after this first time. At the end, however, at the rooftop when Philippe follows them, Erik says: “She sang for me tonight, she is mine!” (Richardson), which is the only line Erik actually speaks to Philippe.

Philippe only discovers what is going on in the final thirty minutes of the film when Carrière explains everything to him. He informs carefully if Christine loves Erik, but both Christine and Carrière tell him that it is not the same kind of love she feels for Philippe at all. He also asks Carrière if Erik loves Christine and when Carrière says yes, Philippe looks very disgusted and shocked.

The 2004 Film

The Characterisation and Depiction of Christine

Christine in this film is played by 16-year-old Emmy Rossum who is very beautiful and does her own singing. The Little Lotte story is retained in this version, as well as her ideas that the Voice in her dressing room is the Angel of Music who was sent to her by her father, or maybe even the spirit of her father himself. When Meg Giry, who is her friend in this film, tells her that it cannot be true, but Christine smiles and tells her that her



Christine, 2004

father told her that he would send her the Angel, so therefore, it must be true. This sweet and innocent image is retained throughout the film; the secret engagement is still there and a graveyard scene where Christine sings of her longing to her father is also there. Near the end of the film, Raoul devises a plan to capture the Phantom and it involves Christine performing in the Phantom’s opera. She is very much afraid here, but does it anyway very courageously, because she is very much aware of the danger. Finally, she also stands up to the Phantom telling him that his true horror is not in his face but in his soul and also tells him that he betrayed her trust – “you deceived me! I gave my mind blindly” (Schumacher). She also tells him that “This haunted face holds no horror for me now. It’s in your soul that the true distortion lies” (Schumacher), thus taking away his excuse for his bad behaviour.

All in all, she embodies most of the aspects that Leroux's Christine had too, but her love for Raoul is much simpler. She never tells him off and does not reassure him time and time again that he loves her. In fact, this is turned around and Raoul is the more reassuring character.

The Characterisation and Depiction of Raoul



Raoul, 2004

Raoul (Patrick Wilson, 31 when filming began) in this film looks very smooth. For most of the film, he walks around with a shirt that is hanging open to his waist and there is very little chest hair. His chin is also very clean-shaven and all in all, he looks very well taken care of. He is a very boyish, swashbuckling character. He rides his own carriage, he has a major swordfight with the Phantom, he rides a horse without a saddle and generally does a lot of running around. On the other hand, when he is talking to other characters, he seems to make a very confident but calm impression. He is the patron of the opera in this film, just like Philippe in the 1990 film.

The Relationship between Christine and Raoul

Christine's behaviour towards Raoul is very sweet. When she first sees him again, she becomes radiant and seems very disappointed when he appears not to recognise her. However, as Meg points out, he didn't see her, and that night at the performance of *Hannibal* where Christine sings the leading part, he does recognise her and comes to her dressing room. Her face lights up when she sees him and breaks into a large smile. She tries to convince him that she has been visited by the Angel of Music, sharing her deepest secret with him, something that she has only told Meg, and when others ask her about her teacher she simply says: "I don't know his name" (Schumacher). When she returns from the Phantom's lair for the first time and Joseph Buquet gets murdered, she flees to the roof with Raoul, where she tells him everything that happened and asks Raoul to love and protect her, telling him that she wants him "always beside me, to hold me and to hide me" (Schumacher).

However, later on, when she and Raoul start their fake engagement, she does not explain to him at all what is going on and why they cannot be engaged in the open, saying:

“Please pretend, you will understand in time!” (Schumacher). Finally, when Raoul asks her to perform in the opera to catch the Phantom, she shares her doubts with him.

All in all, Christine shares all her thoughts and worries with Raoul; he is her safe person, whom she can tell everything, because they used to know each other when they were young. Raoul’s love is safe, warm and protective to her and that is his main attraction. This shows that at least in some parts of this film, there is equality between men and women. Raoul, as very emotionally involved with Christine is a step away from Leroux’s Raoul, who was mainly interested in his own goals. This Raoul is very sweet to Christine. Like her, he is very happy to see her again after all those years and then goes to her dressing room to give her a large bouquet of flowers and remembers the stories they used to tell each other in their youth. But when she tells him that she has been visited by the Angel of Music, he laughs at her and does not believe her. Later, when she tells him that “The Phantom of the opera is here, inside my mind” (Schumacher) and Raoul sings the same line, but pointing at her head, indicating that he believes that she imagined it. Not much later, though, he comforts her and tells her that he will protect her and love her for the rest of his life. He is a bit impatient with her when he does not get the point of their engagement being secret, but when the Phantom appears a moment later, he gets his sword to protect Christine from him, and later in the film protects her again in the graveyard. When Christine begs him not to make her sing in the Phantom’s opera as bait, he sings “Christine, Christine, don’t think that I don’t care, but every hope and every prayer rests on you now” (Schumacher) and he hugs her to comfort her. When she is abducted from the stage, he follows them to rescue her. All in all, his behaviour towards her is very sweet, very protective, but he does tell her to do what needs to be done. Unlike the novel’s Raoul, he is very sure of himself and does not beg Christine to love him, nor does he think there is a realistic chance that she will love anybody other than him.

The Relationship between Christine and the Phantom

The Phantom in this film tries to seduce Christine several times, using his sexual appeal to haul her in. He loves her for her music, because he needs her to make his “music of the night” (Schumacher) and her help in creating this makes him want to live. The Phantom has a rather strange effect on Christine and that is that she seems to be dreaming every time she mentions him (for instance to Meg) and when she is near him. During “The Phantom of the Opera” and “The Music of the Night”, both of which take place at the beginning of the first abduction, she stares at him with a fascinated look and looks almost like a somnambulist. This dreamlike state is reinforced when Meg finds the secret passageway behind the mirror

that the Phantom leads Christine through, and it has lost all its splendour and extravagance, which probably means that Christine has been at least partly dreaming at the time when the Phantom brought her down there. The same happens with the dummy that the Phantom uses to store the wedding dress he has for Christine: when she sees it for the first time, it is a lugubriously lifelike copy of herself, but later at the climax, it has turned into a regular shop window dummy which does not look particularly like Christine. This trance-like state continues until Christine unmasks the Phantom and he gets very angry with her. When she discusses the Phantom with Raoul later, she tells him that she is very much afraid of the Phantom and mostly of his face – “Can I ever forget that sight? Can I ever escape from that face, so distorted, deformed, it was hardly a face, in that darkness” – and almost immediately adds to this that “his voice filled my spirit with a strange sweet sound, in that night there was music in my mind... And through music, my soul began to soar” and also says about the Phantom: “Yet in his eyes, all the sadness of the world. Those pleading eyes, that both threaten and adore” (Schumacher). These lyrics, more clearly than Christine’s actual actions, show us that the duality between her fear of the Phantom and the strange, dangerous attraction and pity that she feels towards him are both retained. This attraction also remains there; at the graveyard, which is near the climax of the film, she sings “Angel of Music, I denied you, turning from true beauty!” (Schumacher), and later she tells Raoul: “Can I betray the man who once inspired my voice?”

In the end, however, when the Phantom gives Christine a choice between a life with him or a dead Raoul and Christine kisses him, it is not entirely clear whether she loves him or just does this to save Raoul. Looking only at her actions, it is difficult to decide if she does this because she actually loves the Phantom or just to save Raoul, but looking at Christine’s face at this point in the film reveals a look of pity and sympathy as well and finally she smiles at him. The kisses are telling too: both last around ten seconds and are very intense. This would argue for a Christine who loves the Phantom. Another indication is also the lines that she sings before she kisses him: “Pitiful creature of darkness, what kind of life have you known? God give me courage to show you you are not alone” (Schumacher).

All in all, Christine feels attracted to the danger in the Phantom, but feels repulsed by him as well. However, she does find the ability to look past the face and see his deeds and actions clearly. She realises that his life of rejection has made him what he is and pities him, and perhaps even loves him.

The Relationship between the Phantom and Raoul

Raoul and the Phantom meet twice in this film: once in the graveyard and once in the climax in the Phantom's lair. It is not until this first moment, when he first meets him, that Raoul starts believing in the Phantom and realises the danger Christine is in. Interestingly, Raoul wins the swordfight in the graveyard, which means that in a sense, he is a more competent hero than the Phantom. During the performance of the Phantom's *Don Juan Triumphant*, where the Phantom takes Piangi's place, Raoul watches the performance and the Phantom trying to seduce Christine with disgust on his face, so here he is very conscious of the competition. In the climax, Raoul does not manage to save Christine properly because the Phantom has him tied to a gate and he cannot move. Christine has to save herself.

The Phantom never literally tells Christine or Raoul that they cannot see each other, but he does say several times that Christine is his 'possession', for instance at the masked ball when he sings "Your chains are still mine, you belong to me!" (Schumacher) and he is very upset at the end of the rooftop scene when he sees Christine and Raoul declaring their love for each other, when he curses them both.

Another very interesting aspect of the Raoul/Phantom characters is in the music. The Phantom has several musical themes, including Angel of Music, the Phantom of the Opera, the Music of the Night and the Point of no Return and Raoul only has All I Ask of You, the major love duet in the film. The Phantom has already tried all of his songs to lure Christine in, but every time, something happens to remove her from his grasp. At the end of the whole Angel of Music/Phantom of the Opera/Music of the Night sequence it is the unmasking, which makes him shy away from her and bring her back to the upper world, and the second time at the graveyard it is Raoul who turns up and fights him. He tries one final time with the very sexually charged Point of no Return. When the song is over, he embraces Christine and sings a part of All I Ask of You to her, imitating Raoul. This implies that he cannot win Christine over using his own music and now tries it by impersonating Raoul. The attempt fails, because Christine then unmasks him in front of the entire audience, but the point that is made is very interesting, especially when looked at in combination with the swordfight in the graveyard that Raoul wins, and that is that Raoul is somehow a stronger character than the Phantom and is more successful at trying to pull Christine towards him.

Discussion

Now that the relationships between the different Christines, Raouls and Eriks have been discussed and described in detail, it is time to find out how we can explain the changes and continuities:

1. The characterisation of the main characters as the villain, the hero and the damsel in distress;
2. The love triangle.

In addition to these continuities, there are also several changes:

1. Love and music,
2. Raoul and the Phantom

I will consider all of these points and try to find explanations for them by looking first at the cultural/historical context in which the films were made. This will involve mostly the roles of men and women as they were around the time that the respective films were made. Then I will look at the influence of how Hollywood tells its stories and makes films.

The Production Context

The Villain, the Hero and the Damsel in Distress

The first continuity is that in almost every film, the Phantom is characterised as the villain, i.e. the evil presence who murders and deserves to be punished; Christine is his passive victim and therefore the damsel in distress and Raoul is the hero who gets to rescue her. In short, their relationships have turned from a multi-faceted relationship concerning three characters who are all very complex and whose goals are not always clear to an almost fairy-tale like set of relations. In fact, the functions of hero and the villain are those as defined as recurring in fairy-tales by Vladimir Propp in his *Morphology of the Folktale* (25-66). The damsel in distress is another frequently occurring character in folktales and fairy-tales.

According to Arthur Asa Berger, many modern stories are structured along these lines as well. These structures have also heavily influenced the Hollywood film-making industry. As Berger explains, the villain is often “alienated and unloved” (178), older, and directing “their repressed sexuality into a ‘lust’ for power and domination” (178), which seems to map well onto Leroux’s Erik, and therefore, since it is difficult to display all the character traits that he has in a film, the villainous aspects are kept. A notable exception is of course the 1990 Erik, who is not a villain at all, but is rather portrayed as one of two heroes, which also explains why this film seems so tame: there is no conflict, because there is not really a villain.

A possible explanation for this is that it is not an American Hollywood film. First of all, it is a television miniseries and as we already saw in chapter 1, television productions have different production codes than films that are released for cinema. Another possible explanation is that, even though this production aired on the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) in the United States, the production was funded by seven different production companies, of which two are German, one French, one Italian, one Dutch and the remaining two were American, but they were both very small and produced ten films combined. So in fact, this film is a true Europudding, internationally produced films or television programmes. This influence is clearly visible in the 1990 *Phantom of the Opera* as well, which contains three characters with heavy French accents (all of whom are also played by French actors), one with a thick Italian accent (played by British Ian Richardson), three Americans (Teri Polo, Adam Storke and Burt Lancaster) and a Brit (Charles Dance), who attempts at points to speak with an American accent, possibly because the production was made for an American audience. What this means is that the film was only very loosely governed by American/Hollywood ideals of filmmaking, and therefore, the classic Hollywood damsel/hero/villain distinction was not enforced.

Another aspect of stories is that “The heroes always defeat the villains... One of the traditional acts of the hero is to help “damsels in distress” or rescue them from villains (or both)” (Berger 177). He adds to this that “In modern stories, it is possible to have an assertive and strong heroine, but generally speaking, the heroes are strong and active and the heroines are weak and passive” (178), which is something we see in the 1983 and the 1990 versions. However, the damsel, who is in the case of *The Phantom of the Opera* also the sexual/love interest of the Phantom may “generally... fear the villain more than they love him, or are attracted by his wealth and power” (178). This is also seen in several versions: in the 1925, 1962, 1983 and possibly 2004 Christine’s fear of the Phantom is larger than their love for him. Because Hollywood film seeks to be “benevolent” and “transparent” (Nelmes 84), these functions are mapped onto the characters rather than depict them as the complicated characters that they are; contradictory or ambiguous actions may confuse the audience and defeat the purpose of being crystal clear.

The Love Triangle

The second continuity throughout the adaptations is the love triangle: Christine loves Raoul and Raoul loves Christine, but the Phantom also loves Christine and she sometimes

loves him back. These relationships are always there, although Christine sometimes loves the Phantom more than she loves Raoul or the other way around, or she does not know.

In a way, this love triangle aspect of the story goes back to the fairy-tales again. In the fairy-tale scenario, it makes sense that Raoul and Christine love each other since Raoul is the Prince Charming and Christine is the lady who needs to be saved, and in most stories, these two then fall in love. Christine's change in behaviour after the unmasking scene marks the point where the Phantom is converted from a love interest and intriguing character to a villain. As I said in the previous chapter, the visibility of his ugliness stands for the ugliness of his personality as well – a point mentioned explicitly by Christine in the 2004 film (“It’s in your soul that the true distortion lies” (Schumacher)).

On top of this, if the love triangle were dropped, one of the characters would have to be left out and the constellation of the relationships would be skewed. It would actually remove the main conflict of the story.

Another interesting point concerning the depiction of the relationships within the love triangle is the ages of the actors, which is usually similar across the films. Christine is almost always played by a very young actress (for instance Emmy Rossum, who was sixteen when filming began) and Raoul is very often older (for instance, Nelson Eddy, who was 41), so he has been aged up. This seems to suggest that the filmmakers deemed it to be alright if the main love interest was older than the female character. The Phantom, on the other hand, is usually depicted as about the same age as Leroux's Erik, or usually only about five years younger or older. A notable exception to this rule, however, is the 2004 Phantom, played by Gerard Butler, who was 34 when filming began. As we also saw, however, the 2004 Phantom was the one that was most seriously considered as a love interest for Christine. He was also the one who was very sexually attractive. It seems, then, that with making the Phantom younger, his chances of being Christine's love interest increase.

Another reason why the love triangle is retained is that it is a popular genre. Love triangles have been in existence since antiquity (for instance Oedipus, where both Oedipus's father and Oedipus himself are in a relationship with Jocasta, Oedipus's mother). Closer to the time when the novel was published, however, there were Alexandre Dumas's works, like *The Count of Monte Cristo* where the fight of the two men who love the same woman is the main drive for the plot, and it is known that Leroux was an admirer of Alexandre Dumas (Valentine x). In film, the theme is very popular as well. The Internet Movie Database lists an impressive 967 films that have a love triangle as their main plot premise (“Most Popular “Love Triangle” Romance Feature Films”). What this points out is that the love triangle has been a popular

theme throughout the history of literature and film. Therefore, the filmmakers may have expected the audience to appreciate and enjoy the use of this storyline as it appeared in the novel and left it there.

Love and Music

Now, having looked at the continuities, I will examine the changes that have occurred between the novel and the films. The first one is that the Phantom's love for Christine is sometimes heavily focused on the actual, physical attraction that he feels for her (e.g. 2004) and in other cases he loves her just because of her voice or her music (1962).

Again, a reason why this happens is possibly the Hays Code. It was replaced in 1968 with the more lenient current rating system, but two films that are of interest for this paper were made under the regime of this code, i.e. the 1943 film and the 1962 film. We have already concluded that these two are very tame, also in the relationships between Christine, Raoul and the Phantom. In both films the Phantom is not seen as a potential partner for Christine and only Raoul/Anatole and Hunter are seen as love interests for Christine. The reason why Christine cannot love two men at the same time is because the Hays Code defines that "Out of a regard for the sanctity of marriage and the home, the triangle, that is, the love of a third party for one already married, needs careful handling" and impure love, that is "the love which society has always regarded as wrong" which quite possibly includes the love of a woman for a mad, socially stigmatised, criminal character, "must not be presented as attractive and beautiful" and "must not be made to seem right and permissible". Under the Hays Code then, so in the 1943 and 1962 films, Christine could love Raoul safely, but not the Phantom, because is too close to becoming a pure love. The Hays Code also would not approve of Christine loving two men. For this reason, the Phantoms motivations for what he does are focused more on Christine's music than his love for her, because music is a much safer area to deal with since it has no sexual connotations that were forbidden by the Hays code.

Raoul and the Phantom

Finally, the relationship between Raoul and the Phantom changes a lot over the time of these different films. In the novel, the two characters do not speak to each other and are in the same room only once and that occasion is not actually recounted in the plot. However, their interaction has usually increased in the films and they meet more often than they do in the

book, which in the case of the 2004 film leads to two physical confrontations. Another difference is that sometimes the Phantom and Raoul really see each other as rivals in their fight over Christine (e.g. 1990) and sometimes they get fairly aggressive over this (1983), but sometimes they do not see each other as a threat in their romantic affairs at all (1962, 1943). Also of interest here is that both the Phantom and Raoul are usually made more attractive – or in the case of the Phantom, less repulsive – than they are in the novel.

The reason why the Phantom has become more attractive, or at least less repulsive and frightening, and Raoul has become more heroic, is because Christine must choose between them and her choice must be a hard one. So if the Phantom had been made attractive and Raoul had remained the whining, clumsy character that he was, the choice would too obviously lean towards the Phantom and interestingly, this does not happen in a single film. On the other hand, if the Phantom is depicted as only a cruel, insane, frightening, dangerous murderer and Raoul is a handsome hero, the choice leans too obviously towards Raoul. This is what seems to happen in the 1983 film and Goodman remarks in his review that “Mr. Schell, who has been giving overwrought performances for years, takes readily to positive craziness. At the depths of his lunacy, the script has him crying, “I want to have a woman and walk with her on Sunday.” One look at this character out strolling of a Sunday would send the population of Buda to Pest” which shows that this skewed relationship between Raoul and the Phantom in the 1983 film is not very effective, according to this reviewer. Instead, David Bordwell says “that the Hollywood film strives to be ‘realistic’...; that the Hollywood film strives to conceal its artifice through techniques of continuity and ‘invisible’ storytelling; that the film should be comprehensible and unambiguous” (Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson 2). This means that there can be nothing in the narrative that is jarring to the viewer. A girl who falls in love with an extremely ugly man who is only cruel would be so and it would spoil the unambiguity and comprehensibility of the film, for why would a beautiful girl love an ugly monster? David Bordwell also says that Hollywood film “possesses a fundamental emotional appeal that transcends class and nation” (Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson 2). This means that the audience must be able to feel with Christine and order for this to happen, the audience must feel that there is a true conflict in the choice between the Phantom and Raoul. They must both be attractive choices however, because the viewers must be invited to share Christine’s dilemma. This is also the reason why Raoul has become involved with music in the final four versions (being either an opera director, producer or a patron of the opera) so that musically he is a match for the Phantom character. For this reason, the confrontation between the Phantom and Raoul must be elaborated upon; if they never meet, the audience cannot

compare them and cannot see which one of them is the stronger, more charismatic choice for Christine.

Another reason why the Phantom is made more palatable is argued by Lennard J. Davis, who says that “In making a character attractive... it is not so much that we identify with a character, but that we desire that character in some non-specific but erotic way. In this sense, part of novel reading [or film watching] is the process of falling in love with characters or making friends with signs” (127). So even if Christine is not attracted to the Phantom, the audience does need to be so.

The Cultural/Historical Context

The Damsel in Distress

One thing that is really striking over the course of all the films is that Christine is usually much more passive and a much less strong character than she is in the novel. A possible explanation for the weakening of this character may be found in the development of women’s rights and women’s history in the United States, because, as we saw in the previous chapter, the historical context in which the films were made is often relevant to the way the characters are depicted in the films. On top of this, Misha Kavka says that ““in... *The Phantom of the Opera*, women see their own cultural position mirrored in the form and treatment of the monster” (212), which means that the cultural position of women must also be able to explain some of the form and treatment of the monster.

First of all, American women gained the right to vote in 1920 (Stetson and McBride 61), which, according to Paszyk has led to the following depiction of Christine: “Christine not only has her mind set on pursuing the career as an opera singer, but she is also able to bluntly tell Raoul that she doesn't care for him enough to resign her ambitions. Such behavior was much in concordance with the ideals of women’s suffrage movement (gaining popularity in the United States since 1920) and perhaps even modern feminists could be proud of Christine for being able to express her needs in such a self-assertive way” (14). This does show that Christine’s character is a progressive one in the film, also taking into account that by 1930, only 12% of the American women were employed (Kleinberg 196).

This reflection of the rise of women in the 1920s America is only a very small part of the Christine character, however, because in the time she spends with the Phantom, this image of an independent, career-focused woman is deconstructed and nothing is left of Christine but a scared, subservient and meek woman. The film also seems to point out that it is not a good

thing for women to pursue their careers, because she ends up in the hands of the Phantom as a result of her ambitions. Strength in women thus seems to be disapproved of. According to Stetson and McBride, women have remained fairly passive in politics for many years after 1920; they did vote, but very few were actually running for election. The explanation that is given is that “It has taken several generations for women to acquire the culture and resources” (61) to take on a more active role in society, which was mainly due to “women's family roles” which “continue to be a major barrier to their participation” (Stetson and McBride 61). This idea can explain why Christine is only partly a progressive character in this film. The protection that she gains from Raoul and the fact that they get married at the end of the film reflects another aspect of women’s economic status in the 1920s: “Most Americans believed that men should be paid a sufficiently large wage so that women and children did not have to work. However, few ordinary families could survive on one wage for very long. Unions such as the Federation of Labor opposed women's employment as an attack on the family circle (Kleinberg 196-7). So Christine, who sends Raoul away at the beginning of the film saying that she wants to focus on her career, marries him at the end of the film anyway. This seems contradictory, but in the light of Kleinberg’s explanation of women’s wages makes more sense. This is also an explanation for why Raoul is suddenly heroic: a young boy who looks and behaves like a woman is not convincing as the main wage-earner. Instead, Raoul is a very masculine character who can protect and take care of Christine. As for Christine’s fear of the Phantom, this seems to be a representation of the situation as it was before women’s positions started to improve; according to Bell Hooks “within the family structure, individuals learn to accept sexist oppression as natural and are primed to support other forms of oppression, including heterosexist domination” (40) and for this film, Williams adds that “Christine is both the object of desire and ultimate prize in a dangerous battle of suitors. Though operating from different agendas, Raoul wants Christine to marry him while Erik wishes her to continue singing, both are motivated by their desire to physically possess this woman” (91). As far as the Phantom is concerned, then, Christine has no sexual agency whatsoever. In the end, Erik gives her a choice between Raoul and himself, but interestingly, the plot has been changed in such a way that Christine does not get to choose at all, which silences her and her agency even further.

As for the 1943 film, Christine’s depiction seems to reflect the position of women as it was at that time. Ann C Hall characterises this Christine as extraordinarily independent and strong. She “happily gains her primary desire: a life in music” (56) and “the film does not merely give Christine permission to pursue her goals; the main female character makes and

meets her goals on her own terms, without much concern for her male counterparts” (56). This seems very congruous with the position of women around 1943. This was the middle of World War Two, when many men left to fight in Europe and the women were recruited to do their work (O’Brien and Parsons 3-4). Therefore it makes sense that Christine in this film is even more focused on her career than in the previous one. She also has the power to ignore her suitors, because women were at that time very much independent of men. Because of this independence, Christine actually has the opportunity to turn down Anatole, Raoul and the Phantom and refuse to conform to masculine ideas about women concerning child-bearing and housekeeping.

The 1962 film was made at the beginning of what is known as the Sexual Revolution, but is probably too early to be influenced by the shifting ideals of romantic relationships that came with that revolution. Instead, this film is probably still made with the idea of “traditional marriage - a pattern of male-provider, love-based marriage (Ogolsky, Lloyd and Cate 24), which explains the exceedingly tame and sweet relationship between Hunter and Christine, which seems absolutely untroubled by anything whatsoever.

The next film, however, is heavily influenced by the Sexual Revolution, when a shifting of the position of women occurs in the 1960s and the 1970s (Allyn x). This development has not influenced the 1962 film very much, but the 1983 film gives quite some expression to this phenomenon. First of all, the fact that Maria and Hartnell have sex together even though they are not married was considered normal by 75% of America in 1970 and by that same time, 35% thought that marriage was obsolete (Kahn 54-7). The behaviour between Hartnell and Maria can also be explained by this sexual revolution; seeing as it was unnecessary to get married and the woman did not need to depend on the man anymore, she could be bitchy and snappy towards him. The amount of divorces also doubled between the 1950s and the 1970s (Kleinberg 204) so women standing up to their husbands and not subserviently staying with him becomes more common. By this time the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) had been passed, which defines that “Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field” (UN). All in all, by this time, the position of women concerning love and sex has become much freer and more flexible and it shows in this film.

It continues in the 1990 film. The legalisation of abortion in 1973 which led to a peak in abortions in the 1990s (Elam-Evans), is clearly visible in the reworking of the Phantom's history in this film. The idea that a woman does not need to be attached to a man for the rest of her life until he or she dies is also clearly represented in the idea of different types of love in this film; Christine loves Erik and Philippe equally much, but, as she emphasises several times, it is not "the same kind of love at all" (Richardson).

The improved gender equality can also be seen in this film; women were given a more prominent role in romantic relationships. According to David Shunway, emotional closeness was more important than passion in a romantic relationship in the last third of the 20th century (26-7), which is what seems to be going on in this movie version of *The Phantom of the Opera*. Erik and Philippe are both kind to Christine and do everything in their power not to hurt her. Unlike some other versions (including the novel, the 1925 film and the 1983 film), this Erik does not seek to physically or mentally possess Christine. Instead, there is a close and very human relationship between Christine and Erik and also between Christine and Philippe. Rather than being very passionate, these relationships are mostly very tender. The emancipation of women continues and is shown in the way Christine seems to have the most power in the triangle: Erik and Philippe do whatever she asks of them and neither of the two men are suppressive towards Christine. Kopit confirms this. As the newspaper *The Tuscaloosa News* says: "his fundamental contribution to the basic narrative of "Phantom" was to depict events before the traditional starting point of the story in an effort to clarify the relationship between the Phantom and Christine" (9D). Kopit himself says that he "was out to get at the deeper relationships" (Dupont) and the way he did this was according to the times when the film was made.

The 2004 film is mysterious in its depiction of the three main characters. Whereas the position of women is by this time fairly comfortable, with the right of education and employment and with far smaller gaps in the equality with men than in for instance the early 1900s, this film's depiction of Christine is called sexist by Stacy Wolf: "Although the actor playing Christine is on stage for much of the musical and sings more than any other character... she is ultimately too passive for the character to emerge as anything other than a fetishized object of desire. Moreover, for each of her numbers, she is surrounded by such fantastical settings that the actor's physical power is diminished in relation to the huge, spectacular set" (154) and "while Christine is a key character - indeed, the linchpin of the plot - and while the actor who plays her sings frequently, the role is a stereotypical muse. Christine is the object of Raoul's and the Phantom's affections, triangulated between them as they duke

it out for control over her” (129). The argument Wolf makes is not necessarily very strong: Christine is indeed surrounded by fantastical settings, but the same goes for the Phantom and Raoul, and, in fact, all the characters in this film. The point still stands, however: Christine is not as strong a character as she has been in some previous versions: she allows Raoul to protect her and she has very little agency in the fight between the Phantom and Raoul over her, unlike the 1990 Christine. Suggestively, Patrick Wilson says in an interview that “Certainly in those times, you lived life very dramatically. A lot of love - love and death. You died young, so when you found someone you loved, you were after it and you got it” (“Making of”), which suggests that the relationships that are depicted in this film are actually meant to be closer to the historic depiction of masculinity and femininity than present-day ones.

The Hero

Over the course of the films, Raoul’s character has become much more heroic as well. Instead of being a whiny, insecure, effeminate character, he has grown up to be a strong character who actually has the ability to rescue Christine from the clutches of the villain. The fact that Raoul saves Christine also contributes to her transformation into a damsel in distress, since as she is saved by the male character, she does not have to save herself anymore, which is really what happens in the novel and does not happen in the films.

As Jill Nelmes points out, “The male hero in classical Hollywood cinema is usually recognised as powerful. He signifies omnipotence, mastering the narrative, being in control” (284). This means that the film versions of *The Phantom of the Opera* need to have a main hero who can do anything and who is strong enough to rescue his girl, unlike the novel’s Raoul who tries but fails to rescue her.

The characterisation of especially the 2004 Raoul is interesting as well since it is less flatly heroic than the other Raouls such as the 1925 one. I noted that there is an interesting emotional closeness between Christine and Raoul, and in the physical description of his character, I mentioned that he looks very smooth. This seems to reflect the early twenty-first century idea of the metrosexual man, who, as Mark Simpson outlines is a man who takes very good care of himself and is well-groomed, but not homosexual. The term really took off in 2002 (Simpson) and was mostly a reaction to the traditional ideals of manhood: “avoidance of femininity, restricted emotions, sex disconnected from intimacy, pursuit of achievement and status, self-reliance, strength and aggression (Levant and Kopecky 9). Indeed, this seems to be

exactly what Raoul is not. He does not rely on his strength or aggression unless he is forced to by the situation; he has very well-developed emotions, does not avoid femininity (with his long hair and beardlessness, he looks a bit feminine himself), he never touches Christine in a sexual way, nor does he ever imply anything that has to do with sex, never mentions his title and does therefore not seem to be very much concerned with his status. Nor does he rely fully on himself, because he allows Mme. Giry (a woman) to help him find the Phantom. All in all, this Raoul seems to be a metrosexual man in the sense that he seems to be in touch with his feminine side and is not afraid to break with standard ideals of manhood. In this way, he actually resembles Leroux's Raoul fairly much. However, this Raoul is also still under the influence of the Hollywood system which makes him a hero and is therefore a much more active character than Leroux's Raoul.

Conclusion

At the end of this chapter, some preliminary conclusions can be drawn on the role of the production and the historical/cultural context in the way Raoul, Christine are characterised and depicted and in how the relationships between the three main characters lie. We have seen that the position of women can be recognised in the way Christine is depicted and the way she behaves towards Raoul and the Phantom; contemporary and historical ideas on what film should do, how the characters should function and what must and must not appear in film has determined who the characters act towards each other and how they are depicted.

However, as I discovered in the writing of this chapter, it can be very hard to draw absolute parallels between the films and their historical and cultural context. It is never possible to say with absolute certainty that Christine in the 1925 film is a meek character because women were expected to be meek at that time, because there are many other factors that also come into play in making a movie and it is very hard to disentangle all the influences on a film. On top of this, once a relationship between a film and society is drawn, it cannot be determined with full precision whether this is a representation of society as it actually was or as the filmmakers would like to present it. All in all, finding cultural determinants of films is a slightly precarious business and it is impossible to be entirely sure of their validity. It is still a valuable thing to do, however, since it helps to see the films as products of the culture they come from and it makes some parts of the films actually more enjoyable. I will elaborate on this in the final conclusion.

Chapter 3: The Ending

Introduction

The final chapter will concern the ending of the novel and of the films. This chapter was put here because of the idea that a paper should have a beginning, a middle and an end, and that the ending of the novel seemed to be a logical place to use as the ending of the paper. Another reason why the ending is important is because it reveals what goals of which characters are attained and which are not. Since filmmakers have at least some idea of what their audiences approve of and disapprove of, my theory is that looking at which actions are punished and rewarded at the end reveals something about the filmmakers' ideas about society. Apart from this, what struck me is that the changes that have occurred in the endings of the film and the ending of the novel are truly intriguing because of the amount of variation. In this chapter, I will first describe the endings of the different versions of *The Phantom of the Opera*, explain what effect this has on the narrative and what it means and finally, I will propose some possible explanations for the changes that occurred.

The Novel

The ending of the novel really starts when Christine is abducted from the stage: all the gaslights go out and when they are lighted again, Christine is gone. Raoul and the Persian follow her down to the cellars of the Opera House to rescue her from the Phantom. The Persian brings two pistols. He gives one to Raoul and tells him to keep ready to fire, so he has to keep his hand at the level of his eyes to avert the threat of the Punjab lasso, which Erik is very skilled with. They descend into the cellars of the Opera, through the place where Joseph Buquet was found hanged as a warning for others not to go there. Next they find the people who work the lights of the Opera House, all drugged and fast asleep. Going down further, they first meet the rat catcher and the man with the black hat (Leroux 251). Finally they drop into the house of the Phantom.

At this point, the narrator leaves the narrative to the Persian and the next five chapters are 'copied' from the papers that the Persian gave to the narrator. First, the narrative is interrupted at the point when Raoul and the Persian drop into the Phantom's house and the Persian relates of the times when he spoke with Erik at the Opera. After that, the events in the torture chamber are described. Raoul and the Persian hear Christine and Erik in the next room, where Erik forces Christine to choose to marry him or, so he warns her, a terrible disaster will occur, which will leave "Tout le monde mort et enterré!" (Leroux 310). He gives Christine

until eleven o'clock tomorrow evening to make her choice, by turning either the scorpion (meaning yes) or the grasshopper (meaning no). After Erik returns, presumably having killed Philippe, he realises that Raoul and the Persian are in the torture chamber, he starts the tortures. They suffer greatly and slowly, they come to realise that it is almost eleven o'clock. Christine finally turns the scorpion and the powder underneath the torture chamber is drowned. However, the water does not stop rising and the Persian and Raoul lose consciousness, being sure that they are drowning.

These events mark the end of the Persian's narrative and here, the Leroux-narrator takes over again, telling us that the Persian wakes up in the bedroom that is furnished with Erik's mother's furniture. Christine is silent, reading a small book. Erik tells the Persian that Raoul is quite all right and that he will bring them both back to the surface of the earth "pour faire plaisir à ma femme" (Leroux 323). The Persian loses consciousness again and wakes up in his own house, attended by his own servant Darius. He sits down to write down his experiences and a visitor is announced. This turns out to be Erik, who comes to visit the Persian one last time to "te dire que je vais mourir" (Leroux 325) and that he is dying of love for Christine. He tells him that he kissed Christine on the forehead and she kissed him back on his forehead. Totally baffled, he says: "Et elle n'est pas morte!" (Leroux 327) and that until then, he had always seen his dead wife, because he was sure she would die as soon as he touched her. She cried with him, and he then let her go with Raoul, even giving her the ring that he had given her so long ago to make her his own. He also tells the Persian that Christine promised him to return one last time when he is dead and to bury him with that ring on his finger. Three weeks later, *the Epoque* publishes the advertisement "Erik est mort" (Leroux 331).

In the epilogue that follows, the narrator tells the readers everything he has been able to find out about the Phantom's past and explains how he achieved some of the more mysterious of his tricks. Finally, the narrator contemplates whether to pity or to curse the Phantom and decides that we must pity him.

In the end, then, nobody reaches their actual goals: Raoul wanted to be in a relationship with Christine and without the influence of the Phantom. However, Christine still expresses her loyalty to the Phantom by going back to him after his death. Christine was torn between her two lovers. She ends up with Raoul, but she still loves the Phantom. Erik himself wanted to lead a normal life with the woman he loved, but he dies alone instead. This shows that in the novel, none of the characters are satisfied. It is as unlike the happily ever after of a fairy-tale as it can be.

The 1925 Film

The ending of the 1925 film is in some aspects very true to the one in the novel: it contains a character like the Persian, the ‘hand at the level of your eyes’ motif, the rat-catcher, the torture chamber, torture chamber, the scorpion and the grasshopper, the murder of Philippe, and the almost drowning of Raoul and the Persian.

However, this is where the film starts to deviate from the novel in a very surprising way, since the rest of the film is fairly faithful to the novel. Christine begs the Phantom to let Raoul and the Persian go and in order to achieve this, she turns the scorpion. Erik pulls Raoul and the Persian out through a hole into the living room. But then, a mob comes down into the cellars of the opera, led by Simon Buquet, an added character, Joseph’s brother, who wants revenge for his brother’s death. Erik grabs Christine and runs away with her, out to the street. The mob follows and Erik steals a coach, throws Christine into it and starts driving it through the streets of Paris like a madman. Christine jumps out of the coach and is almost trampled by the mob, but Raoul catches her and hugs her close to him. The Phantom, realising that he mob is gaining, leaves the coach and runs to the bank of the Seine, where the mob corners him and clobbers him, probably, to death and then throw him into the river. The film ends with Christine and Raoul’s honeymoon at Viroflay. What this does for the story is that it turns the Phantom into a regular villain who needs to be punished for his crimes. Even if Chaney’s acting is amazing and he may inspire sympathy in the viewers, he does not get any opportunity to this effect in the ending of the film and is killed off as a threat that is eliminated. It is a rather flat ending in comparison with his peaceful death in the novel after he committed a good deed by letting Christine and Raoul go.

Interestingly, as Michael Blake explains, three alternative endings were created as well as the final one: “In one version, the Phantom and Christine escape the pursuing mob by commandeering a coach and driving wildly through the streets of Paris. When the coach crashes, the Phantom tries to escape by climbing a building but is shot by the leader of the mob. Another ending retained the coach chase, but when it crashes, Christine and the Phantom find refuge in her home where he dies, as Raoul, the Persian and the mob leader break in. A third ending had the Phantom freeing Christine and Raoul after she gently kisses him, and the mob finding him dead at his organ later. This was the original ending actually filmed by Julian” (*A Thousand Faces* 156). As we have seen in the first chapter, there have

been many versions and re-cuts of this film. Clearly, the ending of this film was one of the main points of dispute.

In the end, however, the villain is punished and the main heroes are rewarded. Christine and Raoul have their happily ever after and the film has a closed ending.

The 1943 Film

The 1943 ending is much shorter than that in the novel or in the 1925 film. The torture chamber, Christine's choice between the Phantom and her lover, the scorpion and the grasshopper, Philippe's death, the drowning, the final kiss on the forehead and Christine's return after Erik's death are all removed.

After Raoul's and Anatole's plans to catch the Phantom have gone wrong and the Phantom has dropped the chandelier into the audience, the Phantom drags Christine down to his lair. He tells her that he has always protected her and that she will now only sing for him. Having arrived in his lair, he makes her sing for him while he plays the piano. She un.masks him in a scene that looks very much like the 1925 film: Christine and the Phantom are both facing the camera and thus, the audience sees the Phantom's face before Christine does. His face is shown in a very short but very close close-up. Then, however, Raoul and Anatole, having followed the music down to his lair, arrive. Raoul draws his gun and the Phantom pulls a sword that was lying on the piano. Anatole, for no apparent reason, jogs Raoul's elbow and he shoots the ceiling, which then collapses and buries the Phantom. Christine, Anatole and Raoul get away in time and Christine seems a bit upset by the Phantom's death, and Anatole tries to comfort her with the words that his madness will be forgotten, but his music will live on. This whole climax takes up about ten minutes.

In the final scene, Christine arrives in her dressing room in a costume that is probably the one Marguerite wears in the final scene of *Faust*. Raoul and Anatole then come to ask her out, but she tells them that she would rather focus on her career and not marry either of them. Raoul and Anatole finally decide to take each other out for dinner, saying: "After all, who would pay any attention to a detective and a baritone?" (Lubin). Again, what this does for the film is that it makes the Phantom a villain, who, like most villains in Hollywood stories, has to be killed before the main characters can go on with their lives. The ending is a very simplified version of the novel's ending where the reader may feel bad for Erik because he died without his love and where we may marvel at Christine's loyalty at coming back to bury him and give him his ring back.

The ending is not as straightforward as the 1925 film, however. In this version, both Christine and the Phantom get – partly – what they wanted, i.e. that Christine becomes a great and famous singer. The only snag is that the Phantom dies. Raoul's and Anatole's goals are not attained, since Christine accepts neither of them for marriage and decides to focus only on her career.

The 1962 Film

The 1962 film ends with a performance of *Joan of Arc*, the opera written by the Phantom, starring Christine. A scene where Joan refuses to denounce the voice she hears is represented, as well as her condemnation to the pyre and an aria where she sings about how wonderful the voice is. The Phantom is listening in box five with tears in his eye. The dwarf is watching as well from above the stage. He is seen by a stagehand, and, of course, seeing as nobody but those stagehands is supposed to be there. So the stagehand tries to chase the dwarf away, but he in his panic jumps onto the chandelier which cannot support his weight and it starts to fall. The dwarf can jump off just in time, but the Phantom, seeing that the chandelier is hanging right over Christine, unmask himself and jumps onto the stage, pushing Christine away and is crushed by the chandelier. His face is shown one last time and then the camera moves to his mask which is lying on the floor next to the chandelier. This image is the background for the credits.

This climax with the chandelier takes up about a minute and a half of the film. It all goes very fast and is hard to follow, also because the motives of the dwarf and the Phantom are very obscure and difficult to understand. One of the reasons for this confusion is that it goes so fast and another is that it is not clear why the dwarf is there and why he causes the chandelier to fall – does he like watching opera? Does he like watching Christine? Does he do it on purpose to kill Christine because she gets more attention from the Phantom than he does? Or is it an accident? Neither are the Phantom's motives clear. The audience does not find out if he saves Christine out of love for her or because he wants to save her voice, or simply because he believes that he is already dying and sees less point to his continued existence than to Christine's. The difference between this ending and the previous ones is that in this version, the Phantom is not depicted as a villain as much and nobody actually plans to murder or punish him. As Scott MacQueen puts it, this Phantom becomes “a victim of his own story” (“Unmasking the Phantom”), explaining that the filmmakers agreed that there should be at least two points of the novel that should be retained: the unmasking and the

chandelier drop. Since this Phantom is not scary or murderous, they could not have him scare Christine with his face or make him rage against her after she unmasks him. Nor could they have him kill innocent people by letting him drop the chandelier. It seems that, lacking an explanation for either event, the filmmakers decided to put both events in the end and try to get away with it. Cotter blames the screenplay and notes that it deprives the film of several dramatic high points that the 1925 film did include (169). The only conclusion that can be drawn on the interpretation of the ending, then, is that as we already saw in chapter 1 and 2, this Phantom is not depicted as a villain but rather as a victim, that this film is certainly not scary, and that the motivations of the characters remain unclear throughout the movie.

One thing that is clear, however, is that most of the goals in this film are attained: Christine performs in *Joan of Arc* and the Phantom is watching. Judging by the tear that appears in his eye, it is hinted that he is moved and happy. Since he says that he is dying already, his death may not be as upsetting and unsatisfying as in the novel. Christine and Hunter are shown in the same frame together when the Phantom has died, suggesting that they do end up together.

The 1983 Film

If the 1962 ending is confusing, the 1983 is even more so. Hartnell is constructing a plan to catch the Phantom and the plan involves Maria attending the Opera, so the Phantom will come. Maria is watching from a box and the police inspector is sitting in the audience, directly beneath the chandelier. The phantom goes up to the room above the chandelier and climbs down. He dangles on the chandelier and saws away at the chain holding it up, over his head, like he is sawing off the branch of the tree he is sitting on. However, the policeman and Maria switch places and the Phantom notices his love sitting right under the chandelier. He tries to climb back up, but the damage has already been done. He screams, warning the audience, so Maria can get away in time. The chandelier crashes, killing only the Phantom. He loses his mask in the fall and the film ends with a shot very much reminiscent of the 1962 version, first of his face and then of his mask which is lying next to the chandelier. This ending is just as confusing as the 1962 ending since it is not explained what the Phantom tries to achieve by cutting down the chandelier. This ending invites the viewers to feel mostly relief about the Phantom's demise, because the villain has died. Interestingly, however, this film does not end with a scene or a shot of Maria and Hartnell together which happens in the 1925 and the 1943 versions, but it ends with only the Phantom with his face exposed. This

shot is accompanied by melancholy music and it seems like the audience is expected to feel bad for the Phantom and to sympathise with him now that he is dead, although strangely, the film does not build up any sense of sympathy for the Phantom. So, again, this Phantom is mostly depicted as a villain in the ending as well as in the rest of the film and the ending seems to incorporate some sort of sympathy, but since the Phantom's thoughts and motivations at this point are very unclear, it is difficult to interpret.

Unlike the 1962 version, this film is also not clear on what goals are attained. Clearly, the Phantom's are not, since Maria has escaped from him and is not singing, and therefore has not reached the success that he wanted her to have. A possible assumption is that his action of cutting down the chandelier is, in addition to creating a climax as I mentioned in chapter 2, is there because he is angry with all the people who helped Maria escape from him. The police inspector is sitting directly beneath the chandelier and it is possible that the Phantom holds him responsible for sharing his information on the Phantom with Hartnell. Another possibility is that he generalises his anger to the entire above-world society and he might see them as the ones who took his Elena away from him and now took Maria, since Hunter came down to the Phantom's lair and took Maria back up. Judging by his earlier actions in the film, it seems not unimaginable that he believes that everybody deserves to die for wronging him. Another possible explanation is that he has finally fully lost his mind at this point in the film. Although his state of mind is now very hard to divine, since he does not speak to anybody anymore at this point, the fact that he murders his rescuer, and possibly friend, Lajos may be an indication that he has gone mad. Another interpretation is that the Phantom has now become suicidal and actually plans to die with the crash of the chandelier, since the way he cuts it down is very much comparable to cutting the branch of a tree you are sitting on.

All in all, the only thing I can conclude on this Phantom's final actions is that his goals of making a new, better version of Elena out of Maria are not reached. Maria's and Hartnell's goal of being together is reached, however, and the threat to their relationship, i.e. the Phantom, is eliminated.

The 1990 Film

The 1990 film ends very differently from any of the other versions. After Christine runs away from the Phantom when she has seen his face, Erik falls ill and starts to die of very unclear causes, but it involves a lot of coughing.

Christine, in Philippe's mansion, is very upset for having hurt Erik. Philippe is upset as well because he has finally got Christine with him, but she cannot stop talking of Erik and when she claims that she has seen Erik dying in a dream – “only it wasn't a dream” (Richardson) – he takes her back to the opera, because she says she has a plan. They go to Choletti and Carlotta and ask if Christine is allowed to try and perform *Faust* one more time. Christine does this so Erik will know that she still loves him, but Choletti agrees because he sees this as another chance to catch the Phantom. When the performance starts, there are policeman everywhere.

Before the beginning of the performance, Carrière goes down to see Erik. Carrière tells Erik that he is his father and they talk about life and death. Erik asks Carrière to make sure that he is buried deep with no markings when he dies, because “it's my face I'm concerned about”. Carrière then promises him sincerely that he will make sure “You will not end up on display” (Richardson). Carrière leaves and Erik goes to sleep, but wakes up when he hears Christine's voice floating down through the Opera. He drags himself up to the auditorium and appears in his box at the end of the final act. He starts singing the part of Faust to Christine, making it a love duet between them. When the song is finished, the police start to move and shoot at him, but miss. In a jump that looks just like the 1962 Phantom, Erik jumps onto the stage and carries Christine away to the roof. Philippe follows them and tries to fight Erik. Erik almost throws him off the roof, but Christine begs him to spare Philippe, and Erik pulls him back up.

Finally, Erik finds himself surrounded by the police. Carrière is standing on a lower level of the roof and Erik looks at him and sighs. He brings his hands up to his face, as if he is about to unmask himself, but does not do it and shrugs, looking at his father for a solution. He raises his gun questioningly, and Erik nods fervently. Carrière then shoots him and he falls down. Carrière cradles him in his arms and begs the police to get back.

Christine comes running towards them. She removes his mask, although Erik, still alive, begs her not to. However, she smiles at his face, kisses his forehead and puts the mask back. He then dies with Christine's name on his lips. Carrière hugs him even closer and Christine goes away. Philippe is waiting for her and extends his hand. She takes it and together they walk away over the roof.

This makes it clear that Philippe's goal of wooing Christine is reached. Christine's goals, since they are confused between a relationship with Erik and a relationship with Philippe, are only partly attained since she loses the Phantom. Erik himself wanted to have Christine, but this part of his goals fail. Another part, however, i.e. not ending up on display,

is attained and he dies before his greatest fears of being discovered and by his face being seen in public, can come true.

The 2004 Film

The 2004 film again ignores the torture chamber, the scorpion and the grasshopper, the Persian, the rat catcher, the man with the black hat and the Phantom's final visit to the Persian are removed. Instead, the Phantom's opera *Don Juan Triumphant* is performed and the Phantom murders Piangi and takes his place, so Christine and he sing the final duet, with Raoul looking disgustedly and the police who Raoul and the managers put there wait for the right moment to move. At the end of the song, Christine unmask the Phantom. He then crashes the chandelier and escapes with Christine through a trapdoor. Raoul follows them down, with instructions of Mme. Giry and is almost drowned by a trap set by the Phantom. He escapes however, and finds the Phantom's lair. The Phantom threatens to strangle Raoul if Christine does not choose the Phantom. Christine tells him she feels betrayed by him, but in the end, she says "Pitiful creature of darkness – what kind of life have you known? God give me courage to show you you are not alone!" (Schumacher). She puts on the ring he put in her hand earlier – which was actually her engagement ring from Raoul – and kisses him twice full on the lips. He then starts crying and the sounds of an angry descending mob become clear. He lets Christine go and frees Raoul, saying "Take her - forget me - forget all of this... Leave me alone - forget all you've seen... Go now - don't let them find you! Take the boat - leave me now, swear never to tell, the secrets you know, of the angel in hell! GO NOW! GO NOW AND LEAVE ME!" (Schumacher).

After that, the Phantom is sitting in the bedroom where Christine slept earlier. He is singing to the musical of a monkey that plays the song *Masquerade* when Christine suddenly appears. She removes the ring from her finger and gives it back to him. He tells her he loves her, and she leaves.

Raoul and Christine leave in the Phantom's boat and stares at them as they go, singing "You alone can make my song take flight – it's over now, the music of the night!" (Schumacher). He takes a candlestick and starts smashing all the mirrors in his lair, aiming at his own face. The final one shatters completely and reveals a secret passageway that he goes through and he covers it up with a dark red curtain. The mob arrives and finds nothing. Meg is the first to arrive and finds the Phantom's mask.

The film returns to the beginning which showed a very old Raoul going to an auction at the Opera. This storyline is returned to frequently in the film and in the end as well. Raoul arrives at the graveyard and stands at Christine's grave. There he sees a red rose with a black ribbon, like the ones that the Phantom used to give to her at the Opera. Attached to it is the engagement ring.

Raoul's goals of rescuing Christine and marrying her are attained, although it becomes clear in the epilogue that Christine dies at a fairly young age. Christine's goals, like the 1990 Christine's, are confused: she is not sure whether she has to choose the Phantom or Raoul, but in the end, the choice is made for her and she marries Raoul. Whether this marriage turns out to be a happy one is not clear in this film. The Phantom, who, as signified by the rose on Christine's grave, never gave up loving her so in that sense, his goals are not reached because he does not have Christine. He does, however, manage to get away from the angry mob and stays alive for a very long time after that.

Discussion

Having described the endings of the different film versions of *The Phantom of the Opera*, we can see that there are several trends, that basically all concern the resolution of the love triangle:

1. Christine and Raoul end up together;
2. Christine is not given a choice between Raoul and the Phantom;
3. The Phantom dies.

There are also several changes in the films:

1. The death of the Phantom;
2. Removal of plot elements from the novel;
3. Redemption and sacrifice.

The Production Context

Christine and Raoul

One thing that happens in most films is that Christine and Raoul are together in the end and they are suggested to live happily ever after. This is in a way similar to the novel, where Christine and Raoul also get married to each other in the end, but they may not be entirely happy, since the goals of neither of them are fully achieved.

In the films, however, this is the case. As Nelmes says: “In most cases the story is ‘closed’; that is, the ending offers a complete conclusion to the character's goal... The narrative will end with the character's goal having been met, or the attempt having failed - although the industry's aim of giving pleasure has led to the predominance of the former outcome” (84). In the case of *The Phantom of the Opera*, there are two conflicting goals: the Phantom and Raoul both want Christine and they want to eliminate their competitor, but the goal that is obtained is in fact Raoul's. The fact that Raoul is the character who is supposed to win rather than the Phantom becomes clear in several ways throughout the different films: In the 1925, the 1943, the 1990 and the 2004 films, the last character on screen are Raoul and Christine, or, in the case of the 2004 film, Raoul alone in a frame with Christine's grave. In most films it is also clear in the whole film that Christine does in fact favour Raoul over the Phantom and would actually prefer the story to end with her running off with Raoul.

The Phantom Dies

The second continuity is, like the Phantom's disfigurement, both a continuity and a change. It is a continuity in the sense that the Phantom almost always dies at the end of the film, just like he does in the novel. The difference is that he dies in various ways in the films, none of which even resemble the way he dies in the novel. The reason why this topic is discussed as being a continuity is that I will focus mostly on the question why the Phantom has to die rather than what caused the different versions to devise his death the way they do.

Firstly, Jill Nelmes's remark that Hollywood films like their endings to be closed also has bearing on the Phantom's death. One very effective way of closing a story is by making one of the main characters die. In the case of *The Phantom of the Opera*, this is usually the Phantom, just like in the novel. Another relevant point is that, as Bruce Kawin says: “This familiar love triangle of the monster and the couple finds conventional resolution in the destruction of the monster, leaving Christine free for Raoul, her proper romantic partner” (157-8). Magistrate and Morrison add to this that “A distinguishing trait of horror art is the existence of a being that emerges to disrupt the personal and social relationships of the status quo” (4) and that this status quo must be restored in order to survive, and also for the ending to be satisfying for the audience (6). As MacQueen says about the ending Julian devised himself – the Phantom slowly expiring at his organ of a broken heart – “Commercial tastes demanded a dynamic finish” (“1926 Phantom 40).

The conventional ending in which the monster dies seems to have satisfied this need and the tradition of killing off the Phantom has continued up to and including the 1990 film. The 2004 film, however, seems to be the only exception. Nelmes mentions one reason why a Hollywood film may not have a closed ending and that is “where a film is part of a franchise, so that the ending sets up the scenario for a sequel” (84), which is more or less what is going on with this film. Although no cinematic sequel has ever been created, there is the stage sequel called *Love Never Dies*, which Andrew Lloyd Webber started working on in 1990 (“Lloyd Webber Launches Phantom 2”) in corporation with Frederick Forsyth. After many problems, including Forsyth pulling out, prostate cancer and Lloyd Webber’s cat removing the entire score from his digital piano, the show was finally produced in 2010.

Another reason why this film can have an open ending is that West End musical shows are not governed by Hollywood production codes and that explains why the ending is so radically different. Interestingly, this depiction of ‘good conquers evil’ and ‘they lived happily ever after’ also, again, is the way the conflicts are usually resolved in fairy-tales. The films all seem to follow this structure where everything is resolved and the hero is punished. It is interesting that the films all do this, since the novel does not.

All in all, the novel’s ending is very unspectacular and not compatible with Hollywood ideals. So possibly finding the original ending with a suffering Phantom and a woman who loves both men unsatisfactory, the creators of the adaptations need to come up with new, more satisfactory endings, which almost inevitably involve the Phantom dying as the villain of the story. This explains why the deaths of the Phantom vary so much.

Removal of Plot Elements

In almost all of the films, most of the plot elements from the climax of the novel have been removed. Raoul usually goes down alone through the cellars of the Opera, does not encounter a lot of dangerous threats and finds the Phantom, rescuing Christine and sometimes already killing the Phantom in the process.

The first removals are the torture chamber and the Persian, as well as Christine’s choice between the Phantom and Raoul. Notable exceptions to this are the 1925 film, which Elliott Clawson attempted to make as close to the novel as possible (MacQueen “1926 Phantom” 37). The cutting of these elements can be explained by the general laws of adaptations. Since a film only has around two hours of screen time and filming a book literally would lead to a much longer film, a lot has to be cut out (Desmond and Hawkes 85).

A possible reason why these particular elements are kept out of the 1943 and the 1962 versions is the Hays Code. It forbade most explicit violence and stated that “brutality and possible gruesomeness” must be treated with extreme carefulness. A torture chamber would probably not be acceptable to the Motion Picture Association of America and result in either a no-go or an unfavourable rating. The 1990 and 2004 films have de-ghosted and demystified the Phantom so much and created an attractive, interesting, not very threatening character instead of the cruel murdering psychopath of Leroux and a torture chamber would not fit the character. The only versions where a torture chamber is appropriate for the character of Erik are the 1925 film and the 1983 film. It actually does appear in the 1925 film, but not in the 1983. This is a logical result of the alterations that have been made to the story – and this goes for all the films made between 1943 and 2004 – and that is that the Phantom has not travelled, so never ended up in Persia where the Shah demanded he build a torture chamber for entertainment, and the Phantom is not an architect in any of these versions, so he would not have had the needed skills to create a torture chamber.

This leads us to the next omission: the Persian. It might be argued that he appears in the 1925 film, because there is a very sinister, Eastern-looking man wearing a fez wandering around who has the same function and even some lines of dialogue as Leroux’s Persian. Instead of being a Persian, however, this character is Inspector Ledoux of the Sureté, who has been following the Phantom for three months and knows where to find him for this reason. He helps Raoul to find Erik because of his function of a policeman, and criminals must be punished. The Phantom’s history was originally present in the film, including a long flashback about Persia (MacQueen “1926 Phantom” 38-9), but it was deemed too long and was removed, again a result of screen time versus novel time problems in adaptations. Carewe, who played the Phantom, had already filmed his scenes and only the intertitles were changed to alter the character, which explains why Ledoux still looks like a Persian. Another reason to leave out any allusions to Persia is that the twentieth century marks the decolonisation processes that are going on in the entire world and the exploration of it (for an elaborate account on this, see Chamberlain). So now that we know everything about the world, there is nothing mystical about Persia; it is not frightening and unknown to us anymore and therefore, the Phantom’s past as it was in the novel, does not help to “other” him anymore and modern viewers cannot be scared by a character simply because he is a Persian rather than a European character. Especially since 1978, when the Islamic Revolution began, the Shah fled and the country became a republic and several wars followed, it was not attractive anymore at all to have the Phantom travel through that area in his earlier life.

The rat catcher and the man in the black hat, as well as all the other characters that are encountered in the cellars of the Opera House are extremely mysterious in the novel. Their presence is not explained and neither is their mysterious appearance. Keeping into account the desire of Hollywood to keep everything “transparent” and “benevolent” (Nelmes 84), it is very hard to explain a character whom the narrator refuses to discuss and a character who seems to be only a head of fire. The rat catcher returns in several film versions, however, but in much more down-to-earth ways, such as the character who is a plot device to get Christine alone with the Phantom in the 1962 film and the rat catcher who rescues Sandor Korvin from the fire in the 1983 film. Technically, the character is made a regular human being instead of a badly defined shade wandering around the cellars of the opera and then used to cover up minor plot holes, and “plot holes are distracting and hence run counter to narrative linearity and unity” (Thompson 13).

All in all, however, the climax is deprived of most of what made the novel’s ending scary, dangerous, thrilling and mysterious. The 1943, the 1962 and the 1983 films all have a very similar solution for these gaps: they move the unmasking scene and the chandelier crash to the ending to provide the film with a satisfying climax anyway. These two events are thus taken away from the middle of the narrative and put at the end. The problem that there would then be a gap in the middle of the film is then solved as well by simplifying the narrative: instead of being abducted twice, Christine is abducted only once by the Phantom and that is at the climax. So instead of having to occur at the end of the first abduction, the unmasking scene is put at the end of the only abduction at the ending. The chandelier crash usually happens just before or just after the kidnapping. The beginning of the narrative is then filled up by the history of the Phantom.

The Cultural/Historical Context

Christine and Raoul

A remark that needs to be made here is that the filmmakers usually follow their ideas of what the audience probably approves or disapproves of. This becomes visible for instance in the way the ages of the actors who play Christine, Raoul and the Phantom. I already mentioned this in chapter 2, where I noted that, apparently, it is alright for a very young Christine to become romantically involved with a comparatively older Raoul. Therefore, it is a good ending for a Hollywood movie to make these two characters get together in the end. The Phantom is often depicted as middle-aged, and in combination with the fact that the

Phantom's behaviour is usually punished in the ending of the films, this seems to suggest that the films disapprove of a middle-aged man expressing his interests in a young girl. The exception is the 2004 film, where the Phantom and Raoul are only three years apart – Raoul is 31, the Phantom 34 – and it is also the only film where the Phantom does not die and is therefore not punished for his deeds. This leads to a probable conclusion that the idea of the 2004 Phantom was to present him as more sympathetic and a more eligible competitor for Christine's attentions. The song "No one would listen" that was deleted certainly underlines this idea and so does the fact that this Phantom does not die.

Removal of Plot Elements

The plot element that is removed in the films that will be discussed here is the fact that, whereas in the novel, the Phantom allowed Christine to choose between Raoul and himself, this choice is usually taken away from her in the films. This is usually a result of something I discussed in chapter 2, i.e. the fact that she is depicted as the damsel in most films and the Phantom as the villain and not a real love interest. Since he is not a love interest, it would be nonsensical to make Christine choose. The Phantom relies on force to keep her with him in most versions, as regular villains do. Giving Christine a choice would disagree with the villainous image of the Phantom and would make him more human. The alternative, forcing her to stay with him and ignoring the rival or threatening to kill him if she keeps seeing him, is much more villainous than the option of the choice. This explanation only really fits one film, however, and that is the 1983 film. In the 1943 and the 1962 films, Christine is not given a choice either, and this can still be explained with the fact that the Phantom is not a love interest. However, the reason for this is not that he is too villainous – in fact, the 1943 and the 1962 film depict the Phantom as very human – but because the Hays Code forbids love triangles (see chapter 2). As for the 1990 film, Christine does not need to choose. She loves both Erik and Philippe, but the ideal in this film is that there are different kinds of love; her love for Erik is not the same thing that she feels for Philippe. Seeing as the aim of the romantic relationships as displayed in the 1990 film is not marriage but an emotionally satisfying bond with the other character, Christine does not need to choose. This also reflects the idea that developed since the sexual revolution that it is possible for a person to love more than one other and the modern ideal that it is not unacceptable to be friendly with more than one man, as well as the idea that it is possible to be in a relationship with a man that is not marriage.

In the 1925 and the 2004 films, Christine is given a choice and in both cases, she chooses Erik. In the 1925 film, she does this with a terrified look at Erik and it is clear that she turns the scorpion because she does not want Raoul to die. In the 2004 film, Christine's motivation for her choice is unclear. It is most probably a mixture of her love for the Phantom and her fear for Raoul's death.

Redemption and Sacrifice

The final change needs some explanation. The novel's ending contains two themes, the first being redemption, which the Oxford English Dictionary defines as "Expiation or atonement for a crime, sin, or offence; release from punishment". This happens when Erik is kissed by Christine. He has reached his goal: he has a regular wife who can give him a regular life and free him of the sins, errors and evil that he committed in his earlier life, for instance the murders he committed in Persia, his blackmailing of the managers and the other crimes he commits in the plot. This redemption happens because Christine is the first woman who accepts him as a human being; his mother only gave him a mask (Leroux 174) and that Christine is the first woman he ever kissed (Leroux 325), because his mother would never let him kiss her (Leroux 327). Also the fact that he puts Christine in a room with his mother's furniture is an indication that he wants her to replace his mother. By kissing him, Christine has fulfilled one of Erik's oldest desires and also redeems him from his sins.

The theme sacrifice, which the Oxford English Dictionary defines as "the giving up of one's own interests, happiness, and desires, for the sake of duty or the welfare of others". This happens when Erik, after having been kissed by Christine and having been changed into a regular human being, gives up everything he holds most dear (that is Christine) and lets her go together with his rival, Raoul, and even gives them a wedding present, the ring.

Neither of these themes are present in the 1925, 1943, 1962, and the 1983 films. One thing that the omission of the redemption theme does is weaken Christine as an active character. In the novel, her redeeming power is the only thing that can make Erik break with his previous behaviour. She is the only character who has the ability to love and accept him and make him feel at peace with himself. This helps to characterise Christine as a strong, active character who has the power to change things in her world. Removing this theme in the films takes this power away and makes her a character whose actions are determined by the circumstances. She is acted upon rather than acting herself, since in most film versions she has to wait for Raoul to save her from the Phantom and she has no hand in this herself.

The omission of the sacrifice theme also again emphasises the Phantom's depiction as a villain throughout the entire story. Removing his good deed as his final one from the plot makes him somebody who is mostly capable of bad actions. Most importantly, it makes him die as a bad person, whose last acts were acts of evil (i.e. abducting Christine and forcing her to stay with him, murdering people by dropping a chandelier, etc.).

A possible reason for the omission is that redemption and sacrifice are usually associated with Christian beliefs and ideology: Jesus Christ sacrificed himself on the cross to redeem everybody from their sins. The Christianity of these concepts is signalled in the novel as well by the situation which sets it all off, i.e. the kiss on the forehead. As Hogle points out, in order for Christine to be able to reach Erik's forehead with her lips, they must be sitting in some sort of Pieta position, with Christine as the Madonna cradling her son, symbolised by Erik (9). Of course, there are many different ways for a woman to kiss the forehead of a man; Erik could be kneeling down and Christine could be standing up, facing him, since the novel tells the readers that Erik was very tall and Christine was rather short. But if Hogle's assumption is followed, it shows both Erik's deprivation of love by his mother and the Christian background of the novel. Another example of this is Christine's name, which could be taken as a direct reference to Christ.

None of the films mentioned above contain any references to the Christian faith. Officially, the United States of America is a secular state (Ledewitz xvii), although over 75% of its inhabitants are actually religious (Kosmin and Keysar 1). This number is based on a survey that had as a main question "What is your main religion, if any?" (Kosmin and Keysar 2). Hollywood, however, seems to be an exception to this rule. According to Lewerenz and Nicolosi, "Only about 2 percent of media professionals go to church or synagogue. Hollywood is an isolated society, ignorant of - and often hostile to - Christianity" (83) and they also describe how a group of people tried to make Christian movies and none of the movies that they made worked (173). Another trend that is visible in the religious landscape of the United States is that the population is becoming less religious. According to research company Gallup, the number of protestants (the largest religious group in the USA) has decreased from 69% in 1948 to 41% in 2013 ("Religion"). This shows that religion is becoming less popular and it always has been unpopular in Hollywood. It is probably for these reasons that the very Christian concepts of sacrifice and redemption are left out of four of the six films that are reviewed in this paper.

The two exceptions are the 1990 and the 2004 film. In the 1990 film, Christine acts as the Phantom's mother like in the novel, and, although he never committed any real sins,

she does rescue him from the darkness of his current life, as he tells Carrière: “Men are born for many things, Gérard. I was born to live – if one can call this living, down here. But until now, I have never known quite why. I was born so she could save me – and that’s what she’s done. She is the reason I was born. I love her, Gérard, and in time, with any luck, I believe she will learn to love me. It would be a cruel God indeed to have sent her otherwise”

(Richardson). During this conversation, Erik is distributing gun powder in the cellars of the Opera, as a defence if people should come down, a nice reference to the novel. The ending also looks like the novel in the way that Erik starts to die when Christine leaves him. The reason for his sudden illness is not given, but it can be taken as another reference to the novel where the Phantom dies of love as soon as he has to live without Christine. This Erik’s dying process is interrupted by Christine’s performance and the final rooftop scene. This scene is interesting in many respects; one of them being that Christine actually does kiss him on the forehead in this film (not in a pieta position), but also for the sacrifice and the redemption. The Phantom is the subject of neither of these themes, but instead the sacrifice is given to his father and the redemption refers to Philippe.

In this version, Carrière is the person who sacrifices his own “interests, happiness and desires” i.e. to spend more time with his son now that he has finally found the courage to tell him that he is his father, and maybe to comfort him after the loss of Christine and to nurse him back to health. Instead, he knows he promised his son to protect him and to make sure that he never ends up on display. He realises that Erik would suffer more if the police arrested him, because he has always been hiding in the cellars of the Opera all his life to avoid anybody seeing him. So in the end, Carrière sacrifices his own interests and shoots his own son. What he also does here is finally accept his role as a father, which he has been denying for all those years. This also points back to what I found in chapter 1, namely that the 1990s had a preoccupation with family and that this comes back in the 1990 version of *The Phantom of the Opera* in several ways.

Erik does not need to be redeemed from his sins, but there is another character who does, and that is Philippe. Throughout the film, he is shown to be a womanizer, a Casanova, and a ladies’ man, not recognising Christine at the fair, but sending her to the Opera like all the other pretty girls he comes across. All the girls who work at the Opera have a locket that has his picture in it and they all squeal and scream with excitement when he arrives at the Opera. However, through his behaviour near the end of the film, when he does everything to take care of Christine and to save her from the threat of the Phantom, he discovers that his love for her is like nothing he ever felt before, and he promises Carrière that he will change in

order to be able to take care of her, because the kind of love he had to offer at first is not sufficient. So in the end, when Christine voluntarily goes to him after Erik has died, Philippe is redeemed of his polygamous sins and the future of the two will probably be a long and happy life together.

What is interesting about this film is that it seems to be a very religious one, especially with regards to Erik, who mentions God and His angels reverently several times. We already saw one of those in the citation above. In most of the cases when Erik mentions God, it is when he contemplates the circumstances of his own birth and why God created him for no apparent reason. The questions and doubts this Erik has are very existential ones (i.e. What am I living for?). One explanation why this film seems to be so religious is that in 1990, the number of religious Americans peaked at 86% (Kosmin and Keysar 1). In fact, the whole Western world (Europe and North America) is grounded in religion. In Europe, it has been so ever since the Romans adopted it as the state religion of their empire (Freeman Reynolds 159) and since then, there have been many religious developments such as the crusades and the reformation. Later the British brought their churches to the Thirteen British Colonies that were the beginning of the United States of America. One reason why this particular film is may be influenced by this religious background of Europa and America is that, as I already noted in chapter 2, that this film is a production financed several European production companies, some of which are from very Catholic countries. This might explain some of the religious aspects of this film.

The second exception to the rule of the omission of the two themes is the 2004 film. The kiss that in the novel redeems Erik is present, although they (there are two now) are more sensual because they are long and full on the lips, but after that, the Phantom's cries prove that he still sees himself as a dark creature of hell and not as a redeemed human being. Although he does sacrifice himself in letting Christine and Raoul go, the redemption theme has disappeared.

Although this adaptation of *The Phantom of the Opera* is not as explicitly Christian as the 1990 version – especially not where the Phantom is concerned – there are several religious points, e.g. the Angel of Music, the belief of Christine's father that he will send her the Angel from heaven and Christine's plea "God give me courage to show you you are not alone" (Schumacher). Andrew Lloyd Webber, who supervised the production of the film, also wrote the musicals *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, so it may be assumed that he is familiar with Christian concepts and may have

picked up on the themes of sacrifice and redemption as presented in the novel and used them himself in this film.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that since the novel's ending is cinematically very unsatisfactory, which was already discovered in the 1925 film, the amount of variation in the endings of the story is actually just as large as the amount of versions that have been looked at. The Phantom dies in many different ways, or he does not die at all, and does or does not sacrifice himself for Christine's happiness and does or does not receive redemption by Christine's kiss on his forehead. A constant, however, is that usually, the Phantom does die. What his death and the lack of the redemption and sacrifice themes do for his character is to villainise him, since he dies having committed bad deeds as his final ones. For this reason, it becomes much harder for the viewers to feel for him and to sympathise with him. This chapter also argues that the concepts of sacrifice and redemption are basically Christian ideals and because of the Christian situation in Hollywood, they have been removed for most of the versions, except for the 1990 and the 2004 versions, which were less influenced by Hollywood and possibly more by European influences. Outside the impact of Hollywood, the films may link more to the actual situation in America and Europe, which is a much more religious one than in Hollywood itself. The ending is also heavily influenced by the Hollywood ideals that the status quo be restored and the monster who interrupted the existing love affair be vanquished.

The findings of this chapter can also be related to the previous one. As we saw in chapter 2, Christine is very often not given a choice and her agency is taken away from her. Where in the novel she is the only one who can retain Erik and stop him from committing his terrible deeds, she is the victim of his crimes. In chapter 3 here, we see that her agency is taken away from her even more when her role as a redeeming figure is taken away from her as well and she is, again, the damsel who needs to be saved instead of an interesting, developed character who has the power to redeem and to pacify a tortured soul. The exceptions where Christine does conquer her own fears are the 1990 and the 2004 films. We already noted that the 1990 Christine was a slightly more active one, since she tries to handle both her love interests by telling them that her love for them both is entirely different, and this chapter confirms this image since Christine looks at the Phantom's face and does not faint. This shows that this Christine is a stronger one than most others. Interestingly, whereas the

2004 Christine seemed to be a passive, acted-upon character throughout the plot, the ending does give her some power since she is the one who saves Raoul and herself by overcoming her fears and kissing the Phantom, prepared to spend her life with him if that means saving Raoul's.

What is also interesting about the findings in this chapter is that the themes of the novel – sacrifice and redemption – have, for at least the first four film versions, been turned around and twisted into themes of punishment and revenge. Instead of being redeemed and thus forgiven for his sins and allowed to die in peace, Erik is punished for his sins and dies without forgiveness or redemption. This suggests that the filmmakers assume that the audience disapproves of Erik's actions, i.e. the murders and his oppression towards Christine once she removes his mask. If this assumption is true, the filmmakers might have assumed that the viewers' disapproval of the Phantom's behaviour would demand an ending in which he is not rewarded, so he cannot be redeemed. Instead, he needs to be punished. Christine and Raoul, who do not commit any bad deeds and are usually characterised as good people, are rewarded for their actions and their suffering by being together at the end of the film.

Conclusion

As discussed in the introduction, the main question of this paper to find out what changes and continuities occurred in the film adaptations of *The Phantom of the Opera* and what explanations there can be found for these changes.

In short, the main continuities that I found were that the Phantom is very often given the function of the villain, Raoul becomes the hero and Christine the damsel in distress. This is a result of the way Hollywood tells its stories: unambiguous, comprehensible and clear. Because of these functional characterisations, the Phantom often dies as the threat that has to be eliminated and Raoul and Christine live happily ever after together, which is again a characteristic of Hollywood narrative. Other continuities were that the Phantom's history, his disfigurement and his actions are always explained far more than they are in the novel and that his disfigurement is always there. The themes of redemption and sacrifice are usually removed, but not always. This is probably due to the religious landscape of the country and the production companies who financed the film. Scenes that are always present in the films are the unmasking scene and the chandelier crash. These scenes seem to be the defining scenes of a *Phantom of the Opera* adaptation. Also the main plot premise of two men loving

the same woman is kept, explained by the fact that it is a very popular genre and that leaving out the love triangle would change the story so much that it might become unrecognisable.

Aspects of the story that varied throughout the adaptations are the nature of the Phantom's disfigurement, which, as we saw was caused both by the production context – for instance the fact that Lon Chaney got to design his own makeup or that the filmmakers of the 2004 film wanted the audience to be able to appreciate the Phantom more – and the way the Phantom dies. Another aspect concerning the Phantom that varies is whether he is very scary or absolutely not. As we saw, this was also again a result of the production context. The 1943 and 1962 films were under the influence of the Hays Code, which prevented the Phantom from being monstrous. The cultural and historical context was also relevant here, since we saw that, in trying to avoid the horrors of the war, the 1943 film toned the Phantom's behaviour down. The 1990 film focused very much on the Phantom trying to reconstruct his broken family, since broken families were becoming more and more common at that time. This Phantom therefore becomes a very human one with very human desires. Related to this change is the way he behaves towards Christine: whether he desires her body or her voice, so in short, whether he focuses on love or on music. After the sexual revolution, the Phantoms of especially the 1990 and the 2004 films are very much actually attracted to Christine herself, not just her voice, like the 1943 and the 1962 Phantoms were (again, this may have been caused by the influence of the Hays Code).

This way of comparing films and finding the changes and continuities has enabled me to compare the different films and see what has happened over the course of time. This has brought this paper to a meta-level where it becomes possible to look at all the findings in combination with each other and look at it on a more abstract level. In doing this, I also tried to see what elements have remained steady, since they could explain why there has always remained such a great interest in the story as an adaptable one. Based on this paper, I would say that the love triangle, which includes one seriously deformed man is one of the factors which caused the multiple adaptations. Also the musical theme has been constant throughout the films, which suggests that this is also interesting for the filmmakers and the viewers. Scenes like the unmasking and the chandelier are very evocative and are often provided at the high point of the film, so those are probably liked by the filmmakers as well and put in there.

The differences between the films show where the story can be altered to fit the time spirit when the film is made. Examples of this are the nature of the Phantom's disfigurement which seems to be determined by historical events like wars, his cruelty versus his kindness, which is possibly influenced by the Hays Code and again, the wars, his death and the

explanations that are given for his behaviour and his history which is a probable result of the way Hollywood tells its stories. The way the love triangle is depicted can also be seen as a result of its context; it is influenced for instance by the cultural time-determined ideas on gender roles, love, and also by more concrete incidents like the sexual revolution.

Evaluation

Of course there are many matters that are still left unresolved. There is for instance the question why the 1983 Phantom is so unabashedly cruel, mean and in no obvious way loving or gentle. I have not been able to find a filmic or cultural explanation for this Phantom. Nor have I been able to find out why the 1990 Raoul has suddenly turned into his older brother, Philippe, for which the explanation should maybe be sought in the narrative rather than the production and the cultural/historical context. Another problem, which lies at the core of this paper, is that it is impossible to find out for sure if a historical event like for instance the Great War actually did influence the 1925 film or whether this is just conjecture and the filmmakers did not have anything like that in mind. It may have been an unconscious choice to for instance make the 1943 Phantom less scary so that the audience would not be reminded of the war in cinema, but a claim like this is very difficult to prove. Of course, this goes for all historical explanations of anything. Therefore, I would like to say that the explanations that are provided in this paper are not necessarily the only or even the correct explanation. They are simply possibilities or theories that I posed because I found them probable and because I believed them to have considerable explanatory power. Therefore, my findings are not conclusive, but this does not mean that they are not useful at all. This work has helped to see the films as products of their own culture, so through these films, it is possible to look at the underlying culture and history. It also helps to explain why some films were enjoyable at the time when they were made and can be quite tedious when watching them now – for instance the relationship between Christine and Harry Hunter in 1962 seems very tame and even annoying to us now, but at the time when the film was made, it was closer to the way an ideal relationship was thought to be. Finding explanations for changes also makes the films more enjoyable to watch for even present-day audiences. The explanation, for instance, that the 1943 Phantom was originally supposed to be Christine's father is very enlightening and makes the film much easier to understand and appreciate.

My paper is a useful addition to the research that has already been done by Hogle, Perry and Hall because it includes thorough analyses, background information of the

production of the films, the film history and the cultural context and the world history that surround the films. My paper adds the diachronic approach to their works, which means that I have been able to compare the films to each other and to the novel as well as in their historical and production context. I have also found several concrete explanatory factors such as the Hays Code and gender roles to understand more than one change and I used several of those factors as a red thread throughout my paper, which is something none of the other scholars do. So where Hall's and Hogle's conclusions are mostly summaries of their findings as independent of each other for each film, my paper compiles the findings into the factors that are visible in all films and aspects that change for each films. I combine my findings, whereas Hogle and Hall just list them. Perry actually does not even seem to have a conclusion.

My paper also goes into much more depth for some films than the other works do – the 1983 film, for instance, is mostly ignored by all of them. Both Hogle and Perry focus a lot on Andrew Lloyd Webber's version. My paper is more rigorous and systematic than for instance Hogle's work and actually more readable, since Hogle has a tendency to write very long sentences that need to be analysed grammatically before they can be more or less understood.

All in all, I have been very satisfied with the approach as I outlined it in the introduction – the combination of Sorlin's sociological and Bordwell's formal approaches have helped me to reach more conclusions and find more possible explanations than if I had used only one of these approaches. The diachronic approach of analysing all the films consequently has also helped to be able to see what changes have been continuous throughout the films and what has been different for each one and therefore, I have been able to answer the question what is so interesting about the Phantom that makes it an attractive story for adaptation, for instance the scenes that are usually kept (i.e. the unmasking scene and the chandelier crash) and the themes that are retained (the music and the ugliness of the Phantom). I also found out what changes can be made to fit the spirit of the films' time, so for instance the way the Phantom's face and his behaviour change.

Further Research

For further research, I would like to look into the other film versions that were made but that I did not look at for this paper, such as Brian de Palma's *Phantom of the Paradise* or *The Phantom of the Opera* with Robert Englund. There are also many references to Leroux's novel in popular culture that are interesting to analyse and look into, such as for instance

Michael Jackson's video clip *Ghosts*. This research would of course also include the musical versions of the story that I discussed in the introduction and the Chinese film versions. Something else that could be an interesting part of a new study is to compare my findings to reviews that were written about the films when they were released and to find out if the reviewers noticed the same things that I did and if they explained or interpreted them in the same way.

Appendix A – Plot overviews

The Novel

1	The narrator tells the readers that the Phantom of the Opera really existed
2	The ballerinas discuss the Phantom in La Sorelli's dressing room: Joseph Buquet is the only one who has actually seen him and gives an accurate description; however, Buquet has just died a mysterious death.
3	The managers give a farewell party. Christine Daaé, a chorus girl, sings Marguerite like an angel, because the usual soprano, La Carlotta, is ill. She faints and is taken to her dressing room. Raoul follows her. She recognises him, but refuses to speak to him. He listens at her door and hears her speak with a man, but when he enters after Christine left, there is nobody there.
4	A sinister guest appears at the managers' celebration and says that Buquet's death was not natural. The old managers, Debienne and Poligny, take the new managers, Moncharmin and Richard to their office and tell them of the Ghost's demands: 20.000 francs a month and exclusive use of Box 5 on the grand tier. The new managers laugh at them.
5	Mme. Giry, the Ghost's box-keeper is sent for and she tells the new managers of the Phantom's wishes and says that he is very annoyed by their disobedience. Strange things have been happening ever since the new managers arrived. The managers think she is ridiculous and do not believe her story. They fire her.
6	Raoul follows Christine to an inn at Perros-Guirec where she tells him that she has been visited by the Angel of Music. That night, he follows her to the graveyard, where a mysterious person plays the Resurrection of Lazarus on her father's violin. Raoul sees a shape and tries to catch him. He sees his face – a death's head – and is found the next morning by the police, half-frozen on the steps of the church.
7	The managers go to box 5 to find out what all the fuss is about. They are both scared with

	frightful images, but since they both saw something different, they agree that they must have been mistaken.
8	The managers receive a note from the Phantom, saying that Christine Daaé must sing Marguerite in Faust, that Mme. Giry has to be reinstated in her functions, that they must leave box 5 to him and that they have to pay him his salary. If not, they will give Faust in a house with a curse upon it.
9	Carlotta, at her house, receives several notes telling her to be ill and not to sing Marguerite. She thinks it is a hoax set up by Christine Daaé's friends and decides to sing anyway.
10	Faust is performed with Carlotta as Marguerite. The managers watch from Box 5 and have not reinstated Mme. Giry or paid the Ghost his salary. During the performance, Carlotta's voice suddenly leaves her and she croaks like a toad. The chandelier falls, killing the concierge who had replaced Mme. Giry and who had come to the opera for the very first time in her life. After the performance, Christine disappears.
11	Raoul starts looking for Christine and goes to Mama Valérius, her guardian. She tells him that she is with her Angel and that he will not allow her to marry anybody.
12	Raoul receives a note from Christine telling him to meet her at the Masked Ball. However, the death's head of Perros is there as well, dressed as the Red Death.
13	Raoul hears that he has to go on an expedition to the North Pole and he and Christine decide to pretend that they are engaged. She shows him the entire Opera House, but stays away from any stairs or trapdoors that lead to the cellars. She takes him up to the roof and tells him what has happened to her, while a dark shape listens to them.
14	Christine's Angel took her through the mirror in her dressing room, down to the cellars of the Opera House, first putting her on a horse that was reported stolen earlier and then in a boat across a lake. She realises that her Angel and the Phantom are the same person. He tells her that he is Erik and he also says that she is safe as long as she does not touch his mask. However, Christine cannot bear it and takes it off. He gets mad at her, but lets her go if she promises to return.
15	Raoul is indignant and begs Christine to tell him that she hates the Phantom, but she does not; she pities him, and Raoul concludes that her fear is actually love. They arrange that he will take her away from the opera after the next performance and save her. They kiss and then go back into the Opera House again, where they are pointed in the right direction by a mysterious man known only as "The Persian".

16	Raoul at night sees two yellow lights. He thinks they are Erik's eyes and shoots at them, but he finds nothing.
17	Faust is performed. Raoul has made his preparations to rescue Christine, but she disappears in the middle of the final act. Raoul panics and wants to see the managers, but they will not see anybody, except if that person has a safety-pin.
18	Mme. Giry is sent for by the managers. She tells them that the Phantom promised to make her daughter Meg a great dancer if she did as he asked. In this case, she had to take the 20.000 francs from the pocket of the managers and replace them with fake money, which she did. The managers then arrest her so it cannot happen again, and pin the money to their pocket with a safety-pin that they get from somebody who is waiting in the corridor to speak to them. The money disappears again.
19	Neither the managers nor the police believe Raoul's story that Christine was abducted by the Opera Ghost. The police believe it was Philippe, Raoul's older brother who did it and they ignore him. Raoul leaves and meets the Persian in the corridor.
20	The Persian takes Raoul down through Christine's mirror to the cellars of the Opera House. The Persian gives Raoul a pistol, which he needs to keep ready to fire. They first find the technicians who are supposed to look after the light, drugged, and then walk into the rat-catcher and finally meet the man with the black hat. In the end, they find a trapdoor that leads into the Phantom's house and they drop down into the torture chamber.
21	The Persian, in his own narrative, tells the readers about the fact that he saved Erik's life in Persia and how he tried to penetrate his house under the Opera House. He recounts the conversations he had with Erik about Christine, asking him to let her go, but Erik insists that she loves him for himself and tells the Persian never to bother him again.
22	The torture chamber is right next door to the room where Erik and Christine are. A bell rings and Erik goes out to see who is ringing, saying it is the Siren. Christine is alone and Raoul calls out to her. The Persian asks her to locate the door that leads to the torture chamber and asks her to open it, which she cannot do, because she is bound. She tried to commit suicide to escape. Erik did not want her to hurt herself, so he restrained her.
23	Erik returns. He unties Christine. She takes his keys and he realises what is going on. He starts the tortures, making it extremely hot in the room and making it seem like a rain forest and next like a desert. The Persian tries to find a way out. He discovers a trapdoor that leads to a cellar filled with barrels containing gun powder.

24	Erik tells Christine that she must make her choice. She must either turn the scorpion in the casket, telling him that she will marry him, or she must turn the grasshopper and then the entire Opera House and a quarter of Paris will be blown up. Finally, she chooses the scorpion and the cellar with the barrels is drowned. However, the water does not stop there and the Persian and Raoul almost drown.
25	The Persian wakes up in a room in Erik's house. Raoul is asleep. Erik tells him that Christine persuaded him to save them. The Persian falls asleep again.
26	The Persian wakes up in his own house, where he is soon visited by Erik, who tells him that he let Christine go and allowed her to marry Raoul, because she kissed him on his forehead and did not shudder and now he is dying of love.
27	Three weeks later, Erik dies.
28	In an epilogue, Erik's backstory is given. The narrator contemplates whether or not to pity the Ghost and speaks about the skeleton he found when he was researching this history.

The 1925 Film

1	A man with a lantern is walking around the cellars of the Opera House. A shadow is also roaming around there.
2	Faust is performed. Through the intertitles and images, the viewers are introduced to Raoul, his brother Philippe and Christine, who has suddenly risen from the chorus because of a mysterious tutor. Christine sings and, when she is ready, faints and is brought to her dressing room.
3	The old managers are closing the deal selling the Opera to two new managers and warn them for the ghost. The new managers laugh at them.
4	The dancing girls go backstage and discuss the Phantom with the stagehand Papillon and different descriptions of the Ghost are mentioned. A mysterious man with an astrakhan cap comes down the stairs and the ballet girls turn to Joseph Buquet and his brother. Joseph is able to give them a more accurate description of the Phantom.
5	The managers are disturbed by La Carlotta, the leading soprano who is very indignant because she received a note from the Phantom telling her not to sing Marguerite in Faust.
6	Carlotta is ill and Christine sings Marguerite, while Raoul and Philippe watch. Philippe expresses his anxiety that Christine may have another suitor, but Raoul is not worried.

7	Raoul goes to Christine's dressing room again, hearing a mysterious voice talking to Christine. After Christine leaves, Raoul enters the room but finds it empty.
8	Raoul and Christine meet in the garden and she tells him to leave her alone, because she cannot see him anymore because of the Angel of Music, who was sent to her by her dead father.
9	Joseph Buquet is found hanged on the stage. His brother Simon is naturally upset and swears he will avenge him.
10	Carlotta again goes to the manager's office with another letter telling her to be ill, but she refuses to listen to the Phantom. A second note is thrown onto the managers' desk by a hand from behind a chamber screen, telling them that if they do not obey the Phantom's orders, they will be giving Faust in "a house with a curse upon it".
11	Carlotta sings, and the Phantom drops the chandelier into the audience.
12	Raoul goes to Christine's dressing room where he hides and watches Christine disappear through the mirror. He tries to follow, but cannot do it.
13	The Phantom takes Christine down to his house, first on a horse and then in a boat. Christine faints. Down in the Phantom's lair, he tells her that his actual name is Erik and that he hopes her love will redeem him. She tries to run and finds the coffin that he sleeps in. She then realises that her Angel of Music is the same man as the Phantom of the Opera and she faints again.
14	She wakes up in a beautiful bed in a room full of anything she may desire. She finds a note that tells her she need not be afraid of the Phantom as long as she does not touch the mask. She hears an organ play next door and enters. She sees Erik playing his own opera – <i>Don Juan Triumphant</i> – and she wants to see under the mask. He gets very angry at her and she begs him to let her go. He says that he will, if she promises him she will use her freedom to sing for him and never to see Raoul again, which she promises.
15	Raoul tries to find Christine and in his search goes to the police, where he meets Ledoux, the mysterious man that was seen coming up from the cellars of the opera earlier. Ledoux refuses to tell him anything, but it is clear that he knows more about the Phantom than he lets on.
16	Raoul receives a message from Christine that she will be at the Bal Masqué. They both arrive there, but so does Erik in his guise of the Red Death. He follows him up to the roof where Christine tells Raoul of Erik and begs him to save her from the monster. They hug and go back downstairs again, where Ledoux points them in the right

	direction.
17	At the police station, Ledoux gives his superior more information about Erik, telling him that he is an escapee from Devil's Island and that he is a musical genius learned in the black arts.
18	Raoul makes his preparations to save Christine and goes to the performance. Christine is Marguerite in Faust. Erik switches some bottles in the technicians' room and takes the souffleur's place. In the final scene of Faust, the lights start going on and off and Christine disappears from the stage.
19	Raoul goes to Christine's dressing room, where he meets Ledoux, who promises him he will help him get her back. Ledoux opens the mirror and they start their descent to the cellars where Erik lives. Ledoux tells Raoul that Erik was confined in the torture chambers of the Opera during the Second Revolution and warns him to keep his hand at the level of his eyes if he does not wish to die by the Punjab Lasso. In the lower cellars they meet a mysterious man with a lantern who warns them against the Phantom. Finally, find a trapdoor that leads into Erik's house. They drop into it and fall into the torture chamber. Christine and Erik are next door.
20	Philippe has made his own way down to the undergrounds and is trying to stop Raoul from doing something stupid. In Erik's house, an alarm goes off and he leaves with his straw to drown Philippe in the lake.
21	Raoul calls out to Christine and begs her to find the keys to save them. Erik returns. He realises what is happening and starts the tortures. He then threatens her to choose between two figures in a wooden casket: if she turns the scorpion, she will marry Erik and if she turns the grasshopper, the entire Opera House will be blown up.
22	Christine turns the scorpion and the gunpowder under the torture chamber is drowned, and Raoul and Ledoux almost undergo the same fate, but Christine begs for their lives and Erik drags them out of the torture chamber just in time.
23	Simon has mustered a whole mob of men to avenge Joseph. Slowly, they make their way down to Erik's house. They arrive just as Raoul and Ledoux come out of the torture chamber.
24	Erik grabs Christine and flees outside, where he takes a coach, puts her in it and starts driving away from the mob. Christine falls out of the carriage and is protected from the mob by Raoul.
25	Erik leaves the carriage and runs for it, but the mob gains on him and on the bank of the

	Seine they smash him to death, then throwing him into the water.
26	Raoul and Christine go on a honeymoon.

The 1943 Film

1	An opera, Martha, is being performed. Claudin, a violinist, is in the orchestra. Anatole, one of the main romantic leads, is singing in it. Raoul, a policeman is watching and Christine is in the chorus. Anatole and Raoul both try to woo Christine and as a result of this, she misses the curtain call.
2	Christine is called to the office of Villeneuve, the musical director who tells her that she must choose between a career at the opera or a normal life with a husband and she cannot have both. Outside his office, she meets Claudin who talks to her kindly and accidentally calls her Christine instead of Miss DuBois.
3	Claudin goes into Villeneuve's office, who asks him to play him something on the violin, concluding that his playing has deteriorated. Claudin confesses something happened to the fingers of his left hand and he is fired.
4	Claudin goes home. His landlady asks him to pay the rent because he should have saved plenty of money. Claudin confesses he does not have any, but he will be able to pay her soon.
5	Claudin goes to a singing-teacher and asks him to continue giving Christine singing lessons, even if Claudin is currently not able to pay for them. Claudin promises that he will get money soon.
6	Claudin goes to the publisher with his own concerto and tries to sell it. The first publisher refuses. Claudin hears his concerto being played in the next room by Franz Liszt and thinks that they stole his music. He attacks and kills the first publisher and the assistant throws acid into his face. Moaning, he flees through the sewers.
7	There are two managers who have just taken over the Opera. They complain that items have been stolen from the prop rooms and food as well. The stagehand, Verchères, says it must be the Ghost. A shadow is lurking around in the office and the master key disappears.
8	Christine is playing Claudin's tune on the piano and says she has always known it from the Provence, where she comes from. Anatole sings along with her and Raoul enters. He is investigating the murder of the publisher. He found a bust of Christine in Claudin's rooms.

9	Another opera is performed. A voice talks to Christine, saying that he will help her to become a great and famous singer. A shadow is seen tampering with a prop drink that Biancarolli, the leading soprano, then drinks and she becomes unwell. Christine is her understudy and finishes the opera. She is a sensation.
10	Biancarolli starts an investigation into her poisoning, suspecting that Anatole did it because he wanted Christine to sing. She threatens to accuse them of murder and cause a scandal for the Opera if they do not accept her demands, i.e. that Christine does not sing anymore and that nobody mentions the fact that it was Christine, and not Biancarolli, who sang that evening.
11	The shadow appears in Biancarolli's dressing room telling her to leave Christine alone and to leave Paris. She refuses and he strangles her and her maid. Anatole and Raoul chase the murderer through the Opera House but lose him.
12	The Opera is closed. A note has arrived saying that Christine must sing. Raoul wants to refuse to lure the murderer out and to protect Christine. Anatole disagrees and wants Christine to sing and then wants Liszt to play Claudin's concerto to lure him out.
13	A third Opera is performed. Madame Lorenzi sings instead of Christine, but Christine does attend. Raoul has his policemen in masks just like Claudin's backstage to keep an eye on the proceedings. Claudin appears, kills one of the policemen and disguises himself as one. Raoul discovers the body and tries to find the murderer. Claudin climbs up and saws through the chain of the chandelier which falls into the audience. Chaos ensues.
14	Claudin uses the chaos to take Christine down to his lair, an empty place underneath the Opera House where he can hear the music. He wants her to sing, telling her he will never harm her and that he has caused all the mayhem at the opera to help her.
15	Raoul and Anatole follows Claudin down to the cellars while above, Franz Liszt is playing Claudin's concerto. Claudin starts playing along and Anatole and Raoul follow the sound.
16	As he is playing, Claudin forces Christine to sing. She pulls off his mask. Raoul and Anatole arrive. Claudin draws a sword, but Raoul has a gun. Anatole jogs his elbow and the gun fires into the ceiling, making the entire cavern collapse, burying Claudin. They bring Christine to safety.
17	Christine enters her dressing room after just having performed Marguerite in Faust very successfully. Anatole and Raoul enter and both ask her out to dinner. Christine refuses

	and Raoul and Anatole go out together instead.
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The 1962 Film

1	A masked man and a dwarf are sitting in an underground cavern-like place. The masked man is playing the organ. His hands are grey.
2	The opening night of a new opera, Joan of Arc, by Lord Ambrose D'Arcy. The house is sold out, but the sheet music of the conductor has disappeared, drums have been torn up and the posters as well. Maria, the leading soprano, sees the Phantom (he is not shown to the audience) and refuses to sing. She sings anyway, but then a man is hanged on the stage during the performance.
3	Maria leaves. Harry Hunter, the producer, holds auditions for a new soprano and finds Christine Charles. D'Arcy invites her to dinner. When Christine goes to her dressing room, she hears a man's voice telling her that he will protect her and that she should beware of Lord D'Arcy.
4	Christine goes to dinner with D'Arcy and he invites her to come to his apartment for 'singing lessons', calling her "delicious little thing". Hunter turns up, however, and Christine asks him to accompany them, at which D'Arcy leaves alone.
5	Christine tells Hunter of the voice she heard and they go to her dressing room to investigate. The voice returns, telling Hunter not to interfere with his business. In the corridors of the Opera House, they run into the rat catcher, who is then murdered by the dwarf and the rats escape. Hunter leaves to chase after them and Christine is approached by the Phantom. She screams and Hunter comes back, chasing him away.
6	D'Arcy fires both Christine and Hunter and finds a new singer. Hunter goes to the boarding house where Christine lives and finds a scrap of sheet music that the landlady says is from Professor Petrie who lived there previously. He died tragically in a fire at a printer where he tried to get his music published.
7	Hunter takes Christine out. They go to the police because Hunter wants to know more about professor Petrie. He asks about the fire. The policeman who was on duty that night tells them that the man did not die but fled and jumped into the river. He could not have survived.
8	That night, Christine comes home and is abducted by the dwarf and brought to the Phantom's lair, who tells her that he will teach her how to sing so that all the world will be entranced, but also that she must sing only for him.

9	D'Arcy fires the conductor, the orchestra and the singers at a rehearsal because they do not do things his way. The manager of the Opera House, Lattimer, finally tells him it's enough and that he should hire Hunter back. D'Arcy disagrees, but Hunter returns anyway and promises Lattimer to help him restore order.
10	Christine is still with the Phantom. She is exhausted but he wants her to keep singing. Every now and then, he starts muttering to himself about things that seem to have happened in another time and at another place.
11	Hunter now realises that Christine is missing and goes looking for her. He hears her voice down by the river and gets into a boat. Then he swims down into the Opera House. The dwarf hears him and goes into the water with the straw and attacks him. Hunter wins the struggle and drags him down to the Phantom's lair, saying that he knows who the Phantom is.
12	The Phantom was Professor Petrie who wrote music and in trying to get it published, sold it to Ambrose D'Arcy, who put his own name on it and sent it to the printer without paying Petrie. Petrie finds out and goes to the printers' at night and burns all the music. However, in doing so, he sets the building on fire. He tries to put it out with water, but the water is really acid and he gets some in his face. He flees, jumps into the water and washes up in the cave underneath the Opera House where the dwarf finds him and takes care of him.
13	The Phantom begs Christine to stay so he can finish his work and teach her how to be the greatest opera singer ever and to sing Joan of Arc. She agrees.
14	D'Arcy returns to his office, but the Phantom is waiting for him there and scares him away by showing him his face.
15	Joan of Arc is performed again with Christine as Joan. The Phantom listens from a box that is supposed to be haunted and cries. Christine receives a standing ovation, but the dwarf, who was lurking around above the stage, is caught by a stagehand and runs. In fleeing, he jumps onto the chandelier, which cannot support his weight and he jumps off again. The Phantom tears off his mask, jumps down onto the stage, pushes Christine aside and is crushed by the chandelier.

The 1983 Film

1	A new production of Faust is announced with Elena Korvin as Marguerite. Her husband, the conductor Sandor Korvin is rehearsing with her. She is not doing too well and the
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	owner of the Opera House, baron Hunyadi, notices, but her husband ignores it.
2	Elena is invited by Hunyadi to come to his office. He makes sexual advances, but she refuses and he tells her that if she will not sleep with him, he will end her career.
3	Sandor Korvin goes to Panache, a clacqueur, and pays him a lot of money so he can make a success of Elena's debut.
4	At the opening night, Hunyadi nods to Panache and he starts jeering. Elena is upset and kills herself. Korvin takes revenge on Panache by chopping of his hand with an axe and goes to the reviewer who wrote a bad review on Elena's performance which was published only an hour after the opening night. He attacks him, but accidentally starts a fire. He kills the reviewer, but gets acid in his face and flees. He is found by the rat catcher of the Opera House who brings him to the cellars underneath. It is not clear why he does this.
5	The police and Hunyadi discuss the disappearing props and the stolen organ. The police inspector tells Hunyadi of the stories of the ghost.
6	Four years later, Faust is performed again. Auditions are held for the understudy of Marguerite and Maria Gianelli, who looks just like Elena Korvin, gets it.
7	Maria meets Hartnell, the producer, as she walks home and they have dinner together. Maria says she does not want to sleep around to advance her career.
8	Bianchi receives a threatening note signed Orpheus. She thinks Maria did it and threatens to leave if Maria is not fired. Nothing happens.
9	Maria hears the Phantom's voice in her dressing room. He promises her that he will make her a great singer and offers her singing lessons in a house near the Opera. She accepts and finds that he house is fully furnished for a woman. She also finds a photograph of Elena Korvin. Several tricks are played on Bianchi by the Phantom to scare her out of singing and she leaves.
10	Hartnell is attacked by the Phantom when he is in a Turkish bath. The Phantom threatens to strangle him unless he stops seeing Maria.
11	Maria goes to the Phantom's house again, but finds nobody there and the locks changed. She leaves a note telling the Phantom to meet her at the Masked Ball.
12	At the Masked Ball, Hunyadi tries to get Maria to come with him, but she refuses. She meets the Phantom, but runs away from him and ends up in a taxi with Hunyadi. His driver has disappeared, however, and is replaced with the rat catcher who takes them down to the Phantom's lair.

13	Hunyadi realises the Phantom is Korvin and offers him to make Maria the star that Elena should have been. The Phantom lets Hunyadi go, but he ends up hanging upside down from a set piece of Faust, pecked to death by a crow.
14	The police investigate Maria's disappearance, but they believe she is dead. Hartnell hears two cleaning ladies discussing the case of Sandor Korvin and realises that he must be the Phantom. He compares a sample of Korvin's handwriting to the note he sent to Bianchi and realises he is right. As the note was signed Orpheus, Hartnell thinks they have to look underground in a kind of hell to find the Phantom.
15	The Phantom explains to Maria that he wants to make her great like Elena should have been and says that he is not evil and just wants a normal life and wants to be loved. Maria pulls off his mask and he goes into a rage, telling her that she can never leave now.
16	Hartnell finds old maps of the Opera House in the national archives and realises that there are cellars underneath it where the Phantom could be hiding and goes down to find Maria.
17	Maria throws the Phantom's mask into the fire. He shows her he still has Elena's body and is planning to throw it into the river so the police will think it is her and will stop looking for her. He leaves to execute this plan and orders Maria to sing. The rat catcher is guarding her.
18	Hartnell arrives in the cellars. There is a short struggle with the rat catcher and Hartnell wins. He takes Maria and flees.
19	The Phantom murders the rat catcher. It is not clear why.
20	Maria and Hartnell go to the police and see the body that was thrown into the river. They tell the police where the Phantom is and plan to lure him out.
21	Faust is performed again with Bianchi as Marguerite. The police inspector is sitting directly beneath the chandelier. The Phantom climbs up to it and starts cutting it down, but then the police inspector and Maria switch places. The Phantom sees this too late. He tries to climb back up, but it is too late. Most of the audience gets away, but the chandelier falls and the Phantom falls along with it and dies.

The 1990 Film

1	The opening title. Christine is walking around the Opera House. She meets a couple of women and tells them that count Philippe de Chagny told her to come there for singing lessons. It seems the other women are all acquainted with him.
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2	Carrière, the manager of the opera, is fired and replaced by an Italian man Choletti and his wife Carlotta, who is a singer.
3	Carlotta tells Joseph Buquet to go down to the cellars of the Opera House to make an inventory of everything that is down there. He obeys and sees a dark shape with a skull-shaped mask. He is so scared that he trips and falls down to his death.
4	The new managers are presented to the Opera company. A note from the Phantom flutters down and Carrière asks Choletti for a private conversation, where he warns him for the ghost, telling him that everything will be fine as long as he does what the Phantom asks.
5	Carrière goes through a secret doorway and talks amicably and familiarly with the Phantom about the Phantom's worries concerning the future of the Opera House and of himself. He calls the Phantom Erik. Erik is not amused about the new directors.
6	Carlotta refuses to give Christine singing lessons, but hires her as her costume manager to replace Buquet. Christine walks around the opera and sings. The Phantom hears her and follows her around for a while before speaking to her from the orchestra pit, promising her singing lessons, but asking her not to tell anybody about him.
7	Norma is produced with Carlotta in it. Box five is sold, contrary to the Phantom's demands. The occupants of box five hear a voice telling them to leave. The Phantom puts something in Carlotta's wig so it itches terribly and Carlotta's performance is a disaster.
8	Another opera is performed and the Phantom plays another trick on Carlotta. After the performance, the police investigate. Choletti is scared by Buquet's body suddenly turning up in his office. When he returns to look at it with Ledoux, the police inspector, it is gone.
9	Philippe arrives. Christine is a bit annoyed when it turns out that he is a womanizer. He invites everybody to a party that night at the bistro and asks Christine to accompany him.
10	At the bistro, Philippe asks Carlotta to give singing lessons to his 'niece' and tells Carrière about Christine. In the meantime, Erik helps Christine prepare for that night, because, he says, it is an opportunity to audition for the company, as they are not holding regular auditions.
11	Christine sings at the bistro. Everybody loves her and Choletti signs her up for the company. That night, Christine leaves with Philippe and he finally remembers that they used to be friends when they were children, because her father and she used to be on the staff of the house where he grew up.

12	When Christine comes back, Carlotta finds her and asks her where she learned to sing like that, and Christine tells her that she does not know because her teacher wears a mask. Carlotta realises that it must be the Phantom. Then Choletti comes and asks Christine to sing Marguerite in Faust, defending his decision to his wife by saying that he has a plan.
13	Faust is performed with Christine as Marguerite. However, Carlotta comes to Christine's dressing room, giving her something to drink. Choletti's plan is to wait for the Phantom to come and then to have him arrested by the police. But the performance goes wrong because Carlotta's drink makes Christine's voice malfunction. Erik is upset. He makes the chandelier drop and runs down to the cellars with Christine. The police and Philippe try to follow, but they can't.
14	Erik sings Christine to sleep. The police follow the noise down to the cellars, but two of them die in Erik's traps and they give up.
15	Christine wakes up and starts walking around. She finds portraits of a woman who looks like her, a dress which she puts on, and a decapitated baby doll. The head is hanging next to one of the portraits and is mutilated.
16	Erik goes to Christine's dressing room to investigate and finds the cup that Carlotta gave her. He pours a suitcase full of rats out over Carlotta's head. She goes mad.
17	Carrière comes down and tries to persuade Erik to let Christine go, but he refuses and continues moving barrels with gunpowder around. Then Carrière goes to Christine and tries to persuade her to leave, but she won't do it. He tells her of Erik's past.
18	Erik's mother was a singer at the Opera House. Carrière was in love with her and got her pregnant, but he was married to somebody else, so he could not marry her. She leaves and some months later, he finds her again, trying to abort the child, but he stops her. She goes into labour and gives birth to Erik in the cellars of the Opera House and loves him very much. She dies when he is three and Carrière takes care of him after that. They run the Opera together.
19	After Carrière leaves, Christine and Erik go for a picnic together in a forest he built underneath the Opera House. Christine asks him to show her his face because she says she can look at it, just like his mother. Erik does not want to do it, but does it for her. She faints. He is upset and starts destroying his lair. Christine runs away from him and is cared for by Philippe and Carrière.
20	Erik starts dying of love. Christine wants to go back to the opera and sing one more time

	so he will know she still loves him. Choletti agrees and calls the police back so they can arrest the Phantom when he comes. Faust is performed. Erik comes and sings the final trio of Faust together with Christine. After the song, the police shoot at him, but he jumps down onto the stage and flees with Christine, up to the roof. Philippe follows them and fights Erik. Erik wins, but Christine begs him not to harm Philippe. The police and Carrière arrive. Erik is surrounded and nonverbally begs his father to shoot him. This happens and as Erik lies dying in Carrière's arms, Christine removes his mask and kisses him on the forehead.
21	Christine and Philippe leave together.

The 2004 Film

1	An auction is held at a demolished Opera House. Vicomte de Chagny and Mme. Giry attend. De Chagny buys a musical box of a monkey in Persian robes playing the cymbals and a crashed chandelier is also among the items on sale.
2	Back in 1870, the old manager of the Opera House retires, leaving it in the care of two new managers, Richard Firmin and Giles André. Raoul also appears as the patron of the Opera. Mme. Giry gives the new managers a note from the Phantom, telling them that he expects a salary of 20.000 francs a month and wants box five to be left empty for his use. A rehearsal of Hannibal is underway and as Carlotta sings her aria, a backdrop falls and nearly crushes her. She refuses to sing and Mme. Giry tells the managers that Christine Daaé can sing it, which she does to great success.
3	Meg Giry asks Christine who her mysterious teacher is and Christine tells her that her father, when he died, promised her to send her the Angel of Music and that after that, Mme. Giry found her and took her in.
4	Raoul, having recognised Christine during the performance, comes to her dressing room and asks her out for supper, but she refuses, saying that the Angel of Music is very strict. Raoul laughs and leaves to get changed.
5	The voice of the Angel of Music appears in Christine's dressing room, telling her that Raoul wants to take advantage of her. Finally, his face appears in the mirror and he brings her down to his lair, on a horse and in a boat. He seduces her, but she faints when she sees a mannequin that looks like her, wearing a wedding dress.
6	Meg goes looking for Christine and finds the secret passageway behind the mirror, but is found by her mother, Mme. Giry and brought back. In the dressing room of the ballet

	girls, Joseph Buquet is talking about the Phantom, giving a description and telling them about the magical lasso.
7	Christine wakes up. She unmasks the Phantom, he goes berserk and then says he'll bring her back to the Opera House, saying "Those to fools who run my theatre will be missing you" (Schumacher).
8	The managers have both received notes from the Phantom saying that his salary has not been paid and that he does not care much for Carlotta. He orders them to cast Christine in the leading role in the next opera that will be performed and to cast Carlotta in the silent role. Carlotta has also heard of this and is very angry, but the managers convince her to sing anyway.
9	Carlotta sings the leading role in the opera <i>Il Muto</i> and Christine is the silent page boy. The Phantom switches some bottles of throat spray and then his voice appears in the auditorium, asking why box five is not empty. Carlotta continues singing, but makes the sound of a toad instead and leaves the stage. Shortly after that, during the ballet of that performance, the Phantom strangles Joseph Buquet above the stage and leaves him to dangle over the stage.
10	Christine flees up to the roof with Raoul and tells him what she saw when she was in the Phantom's lair. They profess their undying love for each other but do not realise that the Phantom is listening. He is very upset and swears he will have his vengeance.
11	Six months later, nothing has been heard from the Phantom for a while and a masked ball is held in the opera. Raoul and Christine are secretly engaged. Suddenly, the Phantom appears, giving the managers his own opera, <i>Don Juan Triumphant</i> and instructions on how it should be performed. He snatches the engagement ring away from Christine's neck and escapes. Raoul follows him and lands in a room full of mirrors and a noose. Mme. Girya turns up, however, and takes him away and then tells him everything she knows about the Phantom.
12	As a child training to be a ballerina, Mme. Girya went to a gypsy fair once and there was a boy locked in a cage with a terrible face. As she is watching after the show, she sees him strangle a gypsy and she helps him escape, bringing him to the Opera House where he grew up to be a musician, architect, designer, composer and magician.
13	In the middle of the night, Christine goes to the cemetery. The Phantom disguises himself as a coachman and takes her there. She mourns her dead father and the Phantom appears at his tomb, where he entrances her again and tries to win her again. Raoul turns up just

	in time to stop Christine from being lured into her father's tomb by the Phantom. Raoul and the Phantom have a swordfight, which Raoul wins, but Christine begs him not to kill the Phantom.
14	Raoul has a plan: Christine must sing in the Phantom's opera, because he will surely come then and they will have police ready to capture him when he does.
15	During the performance, the Phantom murders Piangi, the leading tenor, and performs in his stead, together with Christine. At the end, however, she unmasks him for everybody to see. He crashes the chandelier, setting the Opera House on fire and escapes with Christine through a trapdoor, taking her down to his lair.
16	Mme. Giry tells Raoul how to get down to the Phantom and he follows him, almost drowning in the process.
17	The Phantom threatens to strangle Raoul if Christine does not marry him, giving her back the engagement ring. In the end, Christine agrees and kisses the Phantom on the lips. As a mob of angry people is coming down, he lets Christine and Raoul go. Christine gives him back the engagement ring. He escapes through a secret passageway concealed by a mirror and Meg, coming down with the mob, finds his mask.

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