



Master

2016

Open Access

This version of the publication is provided by the author(s) and made available in accordance with the copyright holder(s).

Phantoms of the Source Text : Retranslation and the English Translations of Gaston Leroux's Le Fantôme de l'Opéra

Hewitt, Rachel

How to cite

HEWITT, Rachel. Phantoms of the Source Text : Retranslation and the English Translations of Gaston Leroux's Le Fantôme de l'Opéra. Master, 2016.

This publication URL: <https://archive-ouverte.unige.ch/unige:92538>

Rachel Hewitt

Phantoms of the Source Text:
Retranslation and the English Translations of Gaston Leroux's
Le Fantôme de l'Opéra

Directrice : Ashley Riggs
Juré : James Tarpley

Mémoire présenté à la Faculté de traduction et d'interprétation pour l'obtention de la
Maîtrise universitaire en traduction, mention traduction spécialisée

Université de Genève
2016

Déclaration attestant le caractère original du travail effectué

J'affirme avoir pris connaissance des documents d'information et de prévention du plagiat émis par l'Université de Genève et la Faculté de traduction et d'interprétation (notamment la *Directive en matière de plagiat des étudiant-e-s*, le *Règlement d'études de la Faculté de traduction et d'interprétation* ainsi que l'*Aide-mémoire à l'intention des étudiants préparant un mémoire de Ma en traduction*).

J'atteste que ce travail est le fruit d'un travail personnel et a été rédigé de manière autonome. Je déclare que toutes les sources d'information utilisées sont citées de manière complète et précise, y compris les sources sur Internet.

Je suis conscient-e que le fait de ne pas citer une source ou de ne pas la citer correctement est constitutif de plagiat et que le plagiat est considéré comme une faute grave au sein de l'Université, passible de sanctions.

Au vu de ce qui précède, je déclare sur l'honneur que le présent travail est original.



Rachel Hewitt

Genève, le 30 août, 2016

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	4
1. Introduction	5
2. Berman, the Retranslation Hypothesis, and Critical Views	10
3. Deane-Cox and Case Studies of the Retranslation Hypothesis	22
4. A Framework for Translation Criticism	25
5. Paratext and Socio-Cultural Influences	31
6. The Strange Affair of <i>Le Fantôme de l'Opéra</i>	36
7. English Translations of <i>A Singulier Ouvrage</i>	46
7.1 The Audacity to Translate Titles and What Follows	47
7.2 The Scorpion or the Grasshopper?	54
7.3 A Peculiar Noise for a Toad	59
7.4 The Mysterious Voices of Joseph Buquet and Mme Giry	63
7.5 Drowning in Onomatopoeia	65
7.6 Stressing the Meaning	67
7.7 Above the Traps: Macro-Level Effects	70
8. Conclusion	74
8.1 Epilogue: Further Research	75
Works Cited	77

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank my advisor, Ashley Riggs, for pushing me to think critically and justify my perspective, as well as my second reader, James Tarpley, for his notes and insight.

I would also like to thank my family as well as Kristen, Kelly, Kate, Ian, and Tim for their love, encouragement, and support. Special thanks to Madeleine for always finding me a roof to sleep under in Geneva.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my Papa, for having read every book in the library and for reminding me that I love to laugh.

1. Introduction

This is the story of no ordinary skeleton. This skeleton first existed as a boy, in flesh and blood. Boismaison, they called him, and in 1786 he was just one of many students at the Paris Opera ballet school. This fresh-faced 18-year-old soon noticed another ballet student, the daughter of an usher who worked at the opera house. Nanine, she was called, and Boismaison would watch her and dream. They would share pleasantries, and he would imagine a future with her. But in all his fantasies, he never dreamed that she would love someone else. That someone was Mazurier, a sergeant major in charge of an infantry regiment of sixty French Guards.

Boismaison was inconsolable. He wallowed in sadness and thought only of vengeance against the moustachioed major. One night, on the corner of Rue Saint-Nicaise outside the hôtel de l'Académie, Boismaison caught up with Mazurier and grabbed him by the throat. The soldier thought to kill this brash man on the spot for his insolence, but upon seeing how young and slight he was, Mazurier couldn't help but laugh. Instead, he tied Boismaison to a column of the opera peristyle, and left him.

In the morning, the opera caretaker found Boismaison and untied him. Upon hearing the story of how the young man came to be there, the caretaker could not stop laughing, and made sure to share the hilarious story with everyone in the theatre. Boismaison's friends mocked him relentlessly for his foolishness, and when Nanine heard the tale, she too couldn't help but laugh. It is said that a man's greatest fear is that a woman will laugh at him, and though the connection can't be proven, Boismaison soon took ill with a fever and died. But this is not where the story ends. With his dying breath, Boismaison bequeathed his body to Mr. Lamairan, the opera doctor, whose office was located in the opera house. He begged the good doctor to keep his skeleton in the theatre, close to his love Nanine, forever.

This story, which I have summarized and retold here, was presented as fact by Nestor Roqueplan in his chronicle *Les Coulisses de l'Opéra* (1855), which he wrote about his time as manager of the Opéra de Paris from 1847 to 1854. The story was an explanation for the real skeleton that was said to have been used in a production of *Le Freischütz* at the Opéra de Paris in 1841 (Shah 20). Although Raj Shah believes this story to be apocryphal and provides compelling evidence to support this claim in his paper on the origins of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*, he also cites

it as a previously unexplored inspiration for the phantom's skeleton, a relic that plays a central role in Gaston Leroux's novel. In the prologue of the only manuscript of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* known to exist (which was donated to the Bibliothèque nationale de France by the Leroux estate in 2004), Leroux copied out Roqueplan's text about Boismaison and Nanine in his own hand. This draft of the prologue of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* cites the story as a text uncovered by the narrator to support his claim that the phantom was a real man (BnF, *Vue 42 - folio 11r.* n.p.). The version of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* published in 1910 does not contain the citation from Roqueplan. Leroux retains many elements of this story, from the love triangle and tale of unrequited love to the deceased's desire to never be parted from his love, even in death. Leroux also cleverly weaves the fictional elements of his plot together with truth, asserting that workers found the skeleton next to buried phonographic recordings of performers from the era. These phonographic recordings undeniably exist and can be heard today on the BnF's website.

This is the brilliance of Leroux's work: it is a cleverly written piece of fiction with just enough factual elements to keep readers in a state of uncertainty about whether or not the opera ghost really existed. This hesitation between reportage and fictional creation is what has kept the figure of the phantom alive in people's minds and why the story continues to permeate Anglo-Saxon culture today. Leroux's tale lives on, hovering somewhere between fact and fiction.

Translations of Leroux's best-known tale must have retained something of the original novel's intrigue, because the story of the opera ghost has been translated into numerous languages and has been adapted to both stage and screen. To date, there have been six English translations of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*. When a work is popular enough to be translated and then retranslated, it is natural to compare and contrast the versions to see which translation is the most effective. The definition of what makes a translation effective can vary widely, as can the reasons that texts get translated again and again. I have chosen to analyze the six English translations of Leroux's *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* because they constitute a manageable sample size for the purposes of this discussion. The opera ghost's tale is well known, but is not deemed a classic like a novel such as Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, and has therefore not been retranslated as many times. The story of the phantom of the opera is also a widely known cultural artefact thanks largely to the many adaptations of the work on stage and screen, but the original work is

less well known in the English-speaking world. My aim here is to shine a spotlight on the original work and on Leroux's writing style, as well as discussing why works get retranslated and how those retranslations function in a target culture and in relation to each other.

Antoine Berman's 1990 essay in *Palimpsestes* called "La Retraduction comme espace de la traduction" outlined his theory of why works get retranslated and how those retranslations relate to one another. This theory has come to be known as the retranslation hypothesis. Berman states that later translations of a particular text tend to be closer to the source text, both in terms of language and effect on the reader. What Berman wrote is often reduced and over-simplified in discussions of retranslation today. Although he believed that a great translation would always be closer to the source text, his discussion of retranslation is more flexible than the common understanding of the retranslation hypothesis would have us believe. It is not as straightforward as simply choosing the latest translation of any given work and deciding it must be the great translation that Berman's history-as-progress model might suggest. I will look closely at Berman's writing on retranslation in chapter 2 and discuss how it is viewed by other theorists and how it relates to the practice of retranslation today. I will also conduct my own analysis of the six English translations of Gaston Leroux's *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* in chapter 7 using Lance Hewson's method from *An Approach to Translation Criticism* to see if they conform to Berman's paradigm.

One theorist who has conducted a close analysis of Berman's retranslation hypothesis and applied it to two series of English retranslations is Sharon Deane-Cox, in her 2014 book *Retranslation: Translation, Literature and Reinterpretation*. In her book, Deane-Cox looks at how Berman's theory has been interpreted by translation theorists, and employs a complex methodology to study two series of retranslations—the English (re)translations¹ of Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and George Sand's *La Mare au diable*—to see if they fit Berman's model. I will rely more heavily on Deane-Cox's discussion in chapter 3 and in my discussion of

¹ The combined term (re)translation is taken from Sharon Deane-Cox's 2014 book, *Retranslation: Translation, Literature and Reinterpretation*. I use it throughout this paper to include both initial translations of a work and subsequent retranslations when speaking about the series of translations as a whole, such as the six English (re)translations of Leroux's *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*, which includes Alexander Teixeira De Mattos' initial translation of the novel.

paratextual material in chapter 5, and again in chapter 7 when analyzing the English translations of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* in detail.

Paratext is an interesting aspect of translation and literature in general. Some theorists, such as Gérard Genette in his book *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, have had difficulty categorizing translation as a paratextual element because while a translation has an undeniable relation to the source text, it also stands alone as a piece of literature, particularly for readers who have no access to the source material in its original language. I will look at Genette's 1997 discussion of paratext entitled *Paratext: Thresholds of Interpretation*, as well as Deane-Cox's 2014 analysis in *Retranslation: Translation, Literature and Reinterpretation* in chapter 5 and discuss how the peritext and epitext that make up the paratextual material surrounding the translation of Leroux's novel affect the reader's understanding of the story. I will also briefly discuss the musical *The Phantom of the Opera*, since it has been very successful and is likely a factor behind the publishing of some of the retranslations of the source text.

In order to analyze the six English (re)translations of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* in as objective a manner as possible, I decided to use Lance Hewson's translation criticism methodology (which I will outline in chapter 4) to systematically assess the translational choices I observed. While Hewson himself admits his approach is subjective, it is very clearly defined and logical and provided me with the terminology to describe the choices made by the translators and track how those choices accumulated throughout the text to affect my overall impression of the translation. It also provides a consistent framework that others readers can apply should they wish to analyze this series of translations, or simply choose a translation to read that corresponds to their own personal taste.

Before proceeding to my analysis of the English translations of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*, I will discuss the source text in chapter 6 and provide context about how and when it was written. Gaston Leroux worked for many years as an investigative journalist and this experience is evident in his works of fiction. I will also discuss the novel itself to highlight certain important passages and discuss markers of Leroux's writing style (such as his unusual use of italics) that I would expect a translator of his work to identify and make an effort to preserve in rendering the text in English. Leroux's original work defies categorization in any particular genre which is one

of the characteristics that makes the story resonate with so many people. To truly convey Leroux's tale that is at once gothic horror, mystery, romance, and *récit fantastique* (which I will define in chapter 6), the English translations need to dance back and forth just as deftly between genres.

Once I have contextualized the source text and discussed it from a literary perspective in chapter 6, I will proceed to a close analysis of the English translations in chapter 7. Throughout the six translations there are examples of all of the translational choices described in Hewson's approach, and I will discuss how these choices accumulate on the meso- and macro-level (which I will define in chapter 4) and how they are likely to affect a reader's interpretation of the novel. I have identified various key passages and studied them in detail to assess the translator's choices and discuss how they impact the overall understanding of characters in the novel. I also make some macro-level assessments of the translations as a whole. For example, De Mattos' 1911 translation is in fact an adaptation due to the extensive eliminations of parts of the source text, yet his translation on a micro-level is seems quite source-text oriented, which would fit Berman's model for a great translation.

Finally in chapter 8, I will return to Antoine Berman and the retranslation hypothesis to discuss how the translations of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* fit—or don't fit—into his history-as-progress model. To do so, I will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the translations on the macro-level, and whether or not those qualities dovetail with Berman's notion of what constitutes a great translation. I will also identify areas for future study, such as a closer analysis of J.M. and Randy Lofficier's translation—which I believe may be an example of what Hewson terms an ontological translation—and a broader analysis of how Leroux's eponymous phantom has jumped off the pages of his original work and grown into a larger figure that represents love and redemption and still resonates with people today.

2. Berman, the Retranslation Hypothesis, and Critical Views

Before discussing the retranslation hypothesis, I need to define exactly what I mean by retranslation. I am using the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*' definition of retranslation: "the act of translating a work that has previously been translated into the same language" as well as using the term to refer to the retranslated text itself (Tahir Gürçağlar 233). As Gambier notes in his essay on retranslation, "le *Grand Robert* (édition de 1985) préfère attribuer à ce terme le sens de « traduction d'un texte lui-même traduit d'une autre langue » : la retraduction serait donc l'étape ultime d'un travail réalisé grâce à un intermédiaire à un texte-pivot" (Gambier 413). I will not be discussing this second definition of retranslation in this paper, since the translations I am analyzing of Leroux's work have not been translated through a mediating language. Furthermore, it is important to note that Berman's theory focuses mainly on literary retranslation, which will also be the focus of this paper, but any type of text (scientific, religious, technical, etc.) can be retranslated and may not follow the same patterns as Berman describes in his essay.

In a 1990 edition of *Palimpsestes*, Antoine Berman published an essay entitled "La retraduction comme espace de la traduction," which built on the theory of retranslation he had previously written about in his 1984 work, *L'épreuve de l'étranger*. Berman's writing on this topic forms the basis for what we commonly refer to today as the retranslation hypothesis. The retranslation hypothesis states that subsequent translations of a given text usually have more in common with the original—both in terms of language and cultural impact—than the initial translation of that text.

The traditional views on retranslation put forward in the 1990s have since been challenged by a number of theorists through various case studies in the early 2000s (Tahir Gürçağlar 233). Berman's model is primarily focused on the source text and does not fully acknowledge the extent to which the context and conditions in the target culture motivate and influence retranslations. This chapter will analyze Berman's 1990 essay and discuss how the retranslation hypothesis is viewed today, as well as the many reasons that texts get retranslated. It will also discuss criticism of Berman's work by other translation theorists in order to better

understand the retranslation hypothesis and whether or not the English (re)translations of Gaston Leroux's *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* fit into this model.

Berman's main preoccupation in the essay is with what he calls "la grande traduction." While he states that all translations are in some way deficient as compared to the source text, he also describes a class of translations that (mostly) overcome these deficiencies: "l'histoire nous montre qu'il existe des traductions qui perdurent à l'égal des originaux et qui, parfois, garde plus d'éclat que ceux-ci. Ces traductions sont ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler des *grandes traductions*" (Berman, *Palimpsestes* 2). Berman does not elaborate in his essay on exactly what the deficiencies are that he believes all translations possess. He remains vague throughout the essay so although it is clear that he finds translations which are closer to the source text more effective, he does not write about any specific translational choices that might have this effect or outline any sort of approach for producing a "great" translation. Berman also lists six different traits that great translations possess, including "une extrême systématique," "une rencontre entre la langue de l'original et celle du traducteur," "un lien intense avec l'original, qui se mesure à l'impact que celui-ci a sur la culture réceptrice," and the fact that all these great translations are in fact retranslations (Berman, *Palimpsestes* 3). As we will see in my analysis of the English translations of Leroux's work, none of the translations are extremely systematic. For example, each translation has passages that have minimal effects on the reader's interpretation of the text, and each translation also contains passages where I observed a number of translational choices that led me to interpret the translation differently than I had the original text. This leads me to believe that translations can still be effective without being extremely systematic. As for the other criteria, it is clear that Berman prefers translations that remain closer to the source text, but he is vague what exactly he means by closeness. We will see in chapter 7 that a passage of J.M. and Randy Lofficier's 2004 translation of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* is lexically and grammatically quite different from Leroux's original text, but arguably the closest of all the translations in terms of the impact the passage has on the reader. Berman's criteria is not specific enough to be able to use it to label any particular translation a "great translation."

To explain why he believes all great translations are retranslations, Berman refers to Goethe's three modes of translation (Berman, *Palimpsestes* 4-5). Goethe proposed a sort of

history-as-progress model, and described three modes or epochs of translation in his 1819 work, *West-östlicher Divan* (translated by Robinson in 1997):

There are three kinds of translation. The first familiarises us with the foreign country on our own terms. For this, a simple prose translation is best [...] because it startles us with the wonder of the foreign right in the midst of our ordinary lives [...] This approach is followed by a second epoch in which one seeks to project oneself into the circumstances of the foreign country, but in fact only appropriates the foreign meaning and then replaces it with one's own. I want to call this kind of era the parodistic. [...] This second epoch brought us to a third, the last and highest of all. Here one seeks to make the translation identical with the original, so that the one would no longer be in the stead but in the place of the other. (Robinson, *Western Translation Theory* 222)

Goethe's aim to "make the translation identical with the original" is not further explained. I would argue that it is not possible (or perhaps even desirable) for a translation to be identical to the source text. From a purely temporal standpoint, (re)translations will always occur after the source text has been written, and can therefore not be identical since they are not created in the same time and place or (usually) by the same person. (Re)translations are also produced for a different purpose and with different constraints on the translator than on the author of the source text. One reason a translation is produced is to share information with a readership that has no access to that information in its source language. This is rarely a motive for creating an original literary text in a given language. Goethe does not address such differences between writing and translation in the objectives of his third phase of translation.

Berman describes these three phases as *traduction juxtalinéaire* (word for word), *traduction libre*, and *traduction littérale* (*Palimpsestes* 4). As Tahir Gürçağlar notes, "Berman argued that translation is an 'incomplete' act and that it can only strive for completion through retranslations (233). Berman sees retranslations as moving through these phases, and getting closer to the source text as they do. He sees the third phase of translation as the ideal because it reproduces the cultural and textual "particularities" of the original. Therefore, the retranslation hypothesis fits the view that "the newer the retranslation, the better equipped it will be to make its challenge" to surpass previous translations and become the great translation of a given work (Deane-Cox 43). For Berman, the great translation will always be closer to the source text.

Brownlie describes Berman's opinion as follows: "the improvement in retranslations is realized as the successive translations come closer to conveying the essence of the source text, to revealing the truth of the being of the source text" (Brownlie 148). As noted in Brownlie's description, Berman sees (re)translations as "improving" when they move closer to the source text, and believes this occurs in a linear fashion over time which, as we will see in my analysis of the translations of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* in chapter 7, is rarely the case. Furthermore, Berman fails to see the complete picture that may explain why some series of retranslations are initially more oriented towards the target culture, while later retranslations become more source-text oriented.

A later retranslation that is more source-text oriented may have a lot more to do with the target culture the retranslation is entering than it does with the translator's desire to remain closer to the source text. As Koskinen and Paloposki note in their essay "A thousand and one translations: revisiting retranslation," "it is normally not possible to be more foreignizing (or accurate in relation to the source text) in the translation than what will be understood in the target culture" (36). The target culture may have become more familiar with the customs and language of the source text's culture over time, opening up new possibilities for translators to foreignize a translation (Koskinen and Paloposki 36). For example, in *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*, Leroux describes one of the young ballet dancers, Jammes, as having "le nez cher à Grévin," invoking the 19th century caricaturist Alfred Grévin's style of drawing the features of upper class Parisian women (Leroux 13). Alexander Teixeira De Mattos, in his initial translation of Leroux in 1911, translates this phrase as a "tip-tilted nose" (De Mattos 5). The first retranslation done by Lowell Blair in 1990, foreignizes the image by translating it as "a nose of the kind dear to Grévin" (Blair 7). Looking at these two translations, it could be said that De Mattos domesticates the description of Jammes' nose while Blair foreignizes it. However, following these two translations, the four latest translations do not uniformly continue to remain closer to the source text. J.M. and Randy Lofficier and Mireille Ribière translate the phrase as "button nose" and "snub nose" in 2004 and 2009 respectively, and Leonard Wolf and David Coward describe it as "the snub nose dear to Grevin" and a "Grévin-style nose" in their respective 1996 and 2012 retranslations. Wolf explicitates by adding the descriptor "snub" to his text and domesticates Grévin's name by

removing the accent mark, while Coward compensates by adding an explanatory note at the end of the novel briefly describing Alfred Grévin and his characteristic style of drawing women's noses. As you can see from this example, while it could be said that the initial translation domesticates the image and the first retranslation foreignizes it, the following four translations do not continue to move closer to the source text in a linear fashion. The translators' personal preferences and background knowledge could also have had a role in the closeness of their translations to the source text. Berman's focus on the source text does not take into account the individual backgrounds of translators and the translational choices they make.

Berman does address the context of the target culture in his essay when he discusses the notion of what he calls *kairos*, the idea that “la grande retraduction ne surgit qu’au moment favorable” (Berman, *Palimpsestes* 6). When the time is favourable, a translator is able to overcome the deficiencies inherent in translations in order to produce a “great” translation (Berman, *Palimpsestes* 6). The great (re)translation emerges not only at a time that is linguistically opportune, but also when the society or culture as a whole is ready to embrace such a translation. However, here again Berman remains vague and does not describe what the conditions of that “moment favorable” might be. He does not address the sociocultural context that surrounds translation or how that context informs translational choices. For example, there is no mention of what economic conditions might lead a publisher to commission a translation, such as capitalizing on a popular cultural movement. In the last decade, English pop culture has been besotted with stories of vampires and of superheroes. A publisher or translator may look at this trend and decide it would be economically safe and likely lucrative to translate a novel about vampires or a comic series about a superhero into English. Berman remains focused on the translator's ability to overcome “deficiencies” in the original translation and fails to discuss any factors in the target culture that may have a stronger influence on the emergence of a retranslation.

Economic and cultural forces were factors in the retranslations of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* that emerged in 1990. Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical, *The Phantom of the Opera*, had debuted in the West End in London in 1986, and was followed by a Broadway debut in 1988. It has since become Broadway's longest running show and is one of the highest grossing musicals of all time

(“High Notes” n.p.). Given English society’s fascination with Leroux’s tale in the late 1980s, it is logical that people would be interested in learning more about the source text that provided the inspiration for such a successful and captivating musical. This cultural phenomenon and interest in the phantom’s story were surely driving factors behind the retranslations. It is likely not a coincidence that nearly eighty years after the initial translation was published in 1911, the first retranslation by Lowell Blair was published in 1990 when the English-speaking world was so enthralled with the tale of the phantom, after which four more retranslations appeared in a space of just over 20 years. These factors provide great economic incentives for retranslating Leroux’s work into English during this time period.

In his retranslation essay, Berman also states that for a great translation to appear, not only must the time be favourable, but a great translator must also be compelled to take on the task of producing the translation. Certain translators have what Berman calls a “*pulsion traduisante*,” which he describes as being much more than simply a desire to translate—something that all translators likely possess. And according to Berman, “great” translators only appear when “*le temps de la traduction d’une œuvre est venu, ou revenu. Ce temps (re)vient lorsque, pour une culture, la traduction d’une œuvre devient vitale pour son être et son histoire*” (Berman, *Palimpsestes* 6). It’s possible that in 1988 when Webber’s *Phantom of the Opera* was breaking box office records on Broadway and weaving itself into the cultural fabric, Lowell Blair (or more likely the publishing house he worked for)² was driven to seek out the original source text and make it accessible to an English-speaking public that was so fascinated with the story. And since the musical continues to be a relevant part of popular culture today—*The Phantom of the Opera* is still running on Broadway today, along with a sequel, *Love Never Dies*—it isn’t surprising that several English translations of Leroux’s work have been published within the past couple of decades.

Berman’s *pulsion traduisante* is too simplistic a reason for Blair to have retranslated *Le Fantôme de l’Opéra*—it ignores the practical and market-driven reasons for translation. Perhaps Blair saw an opportunity to gain some fame with a new translation of a story that was having a

² I contacted Bantam Dell (the publisher’s of Blair’s translation) to ask about the motives behind this first retranslation, but received no response.

cultural moment. Or perhaps he loved the musical or Leroux's original novel and wanted to share the source text with others who had no access to it in English. A new translation was also likely to make a substantial amount of money in that time period, and Blair or his publisher could have seen it as a great financial opportunity. Translators are paid to translate, and they are not always the ones who get to decide when and what they translate. Even in the case of literary translation, it is often the translator's client or a publisher who comes to the translator with a work to be translated, and that client is likely to be motivated by financial gain. As many theorists have noted, and as Deane-Cox discusses at length in her book, translations are often "driven and determined by economic forces" (Deane-Cox 32). Berman's theory seemingly leaves no room for the economics of translation or for other factors that influence translation. Rather, it focusses on the inner driving force that compels a virtuoso translator to create a great translation when the timing is culturally appropriate. And as we can see from the possible motives for retranslation discussed above, "retranslation is a function of the dynamics of the target context, rather than a response to any inherent properties of the source text" (Tahir Gürçağlar 236).

In his 2004 essay "Retranslations: The Creation of Value," Venuti also discusses the notion of copyright as a reason for retranslating a work. He states that publishers may choose to translate texts "that have fallen into the public domain simply because their canonicity ensures a market demand and they are cheaper to publish than copyrighted texts" (Venuti, "Retranslations" 30). U.S. copyright law states that works published before January 1, 1923, are in the public domain ("Duration of Copyright"). This may help explain Lowell Blair's initial retranslation in 1990. While Leroux's *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* may not have been considered part of the Western literary canon, renewed interest in the text thanks to the popularity of Webber's musical coupled with the fact that the work would be cheaper to publish since the source text was in the public domain seem like two good reasons for a publisher to seize on what was likely a lucrative opportunity. This also explains why De Mattos' translation is so ubiquitous and is republished more often than the other English translations—having been published in 1911 (just a year after Leroux's original text), De Mattos' translation is in the public domain. The reissuing of previous translations further complicates the retranslation hypothesis because "we now have a situation

where the initial translation reappears after the most recent translation” (Deane-Cox 41). Berman’s work on retranslation fails to take such economic considerations into account.

Berman’s theory that there is a single *grande traduction* reduces the original text to one definitive reading, and limits the potential interpretations of the work (Deane-Cox 191). If there can only be one great translation of a text, it would suggest that there is only one way to properly read and interpret the original. Hewson addresses this issue in his book, stating “the text, whether translation or original, will give rise to a *range* of interpretations, some of which may be highly plausible and others implausible or erroneous” (Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 20). Hewson’s discussion of interpretation also draws on Lecercle, who suggested four theses on interpretation:

1. All interpretations are possible.
2. No interpretation is true.
3. Some interpretations are just.
4. Some interpretations are false. (Lecercle 31)

Although Hewson’s methodology allows for a range of translations to be considered “just” or “false” on the macro level, on the meso-level the critic must make subjective decisions about the number of possible interpretations there are of a given sentence or passage in order to determine if there is an effect of contraction, expansion, or transformation. This means that when using Hewson’s critical framework, there are still certain points when the critic must decide which interpretations are possible and which are not, and the overall assessment of the translation is therefore subjective. Hewson justifies this subjective approach by stating that there is a hierarchy of effects, “beginning with the objective results of radical translational choices and ending with the interpretation of nuances of style and meaning, where subjectivity is at its highest” (Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 84). Berman’s theory of the great translation is also subjective—for Berman, a great translation will bear a close resemblance to the source text—and contradicts Lecercle’s second thesis, because the great translation would be viewed as the one ‘true’ interpretation of a given text.

One confounding element of Berman’s essay is the notion that while source texts “restent éternellement jeunes (quel que soit le degré d’intérêt que nous leur portons, leur proximité ou leur éloignement culturel), les traductions, elles, ‘vieillissent’” (Berman, *Palimpsestes* 1).

Berman argues that because translations age and become irrelevant or disconnected from modern society, retranslation is a necessary part of translation. While outdated language or syntax may indeed make an older translation less accessible for a modern audience reading the text, Berman does not explain why he does not believe this to be true for the original text. An older text may contain the same outdated language and syntax as an older translation, yet Berman does not see this as something that would alienate modern readers. Furthermore, translators who work with older texts often strive for historical accuracy in terms of vocabulary and usage in order to convey the time period of the original in the target language. They are not always trying to update and modernize the translation as Berman's theory would suggest. Indeed, in her translator's note at the beginning of her translation of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*, Mireille Ribière clearly states that her translation "seeks to convey the flavour of the original" (Ribière li).

While Berman's logic regarding the evergreen nature of original texts seems faulty, his statement that some translations stand the test of time appears to hold true. Berman cites St. Jérôme's Vulgate and Luther's Bible as examples of great translations that do not age. Although he concedes that Luther's translation of the Bible "doit être parfois 'modernisée,'" it still remains something of a gold standard and is widely used today (Berman, *Palimpsestes* 2). In some cases, translations that use antiquated language or syntax may even be viewed as more closely reflecting the source text than a translation that attempts to frame a text through a more modern lens. As Deane-Cox puts it, "instead of being condemned to obsolescence, it is precisely the caducity of the linguistic and cultural norms which endow the initial translation with its 'time-travelling' capabilities, allowing the reader to be projected backwards and thereby increasing the work's legitimacy as a vestige of the original setting" (42). A great translation for Berman will always adhere more closely to the source text, so a later translation that focuses on historical accuracy could be closest to the source text in terms of sentence structure and vocabulary, but so could an initial translation that was produced in the same time period as the source text (De Mattos' 1911 translation, for example).

I will investigate such claims through my own analysis, because unlike Berman's assertion that great retranslations are inevitably source-text oriented, theorists such as Venuti posit that retranslations are in fact more domesticated than initial translations: "Retranslations

constitute a special case because the values they create are likely to be doubly domestic, determined not only by the domestic values which the translator inscribes in the foreign text, but also by the values inscribed in a previous version” (Venuti, “Retranslations: The Creation of Value” 25). By domestic, Venuti means that the text is translated in a fluid manner that minimizes the strangeness and otherness of the text for the reader (Venuti, “Retranslations: The Creation of Value” 25-38). This domestication, as Pym notes in his critique entitled “Venuti’s Visibility,” depends on the language and the culture in which the translation is operating (Pym 169-170). Venuti argues that this preoccupation with fluency is a characteristic of the English-speaking world, although Pym cites a study by Maria Helena Luchesi de Mello which shows that fluency and readability are valued in Brazilian translations as well (Pym 170-171). Venuti’s argument also does not account for the translator’s agency in choosing to take a domesticating approach in a retranslation. It is also possible to foreignize a text when retranslating it. Here, Venuti seems to contradict Berman’s theory which would expect (re)translations to be closer to the source text—a foreignizing translation, to use Venuti’s terminology. Berman shares a similar sentiment about retranslation, but comes to a different conclusion than Venuti:

[La traduction] est déjà originairement une opération de redoublement, de duplication. La répétitivité première du traduire est comme redoublée dans la retraduction. C’est dans l’après-coup d’une première traduction aveugle et hésitante que surgit la possibilité d’une traduction accomplie. (Berman, *Palimpsestes* 4-5)

While Venuti sees retranslations as becoming more adapted to the values of the target language, Berman sees the repetition as a way to reduce “la défaillance originelle” of the first translation and bring it closer to the source text.

Like Venuti’s stance, Berman’s argument is also problematic. For Berman, the objective of a retranslation is to improve on previous translations of a given text. This view fails to take into account the wide range of other motives for retranslation, such as economic considerations, an individual translator’s love of a particular text, or retranslations that have a particular audience in mind. Şebnem Susam-Sarajeva puts forward a number of arguments challenging the

retranslation hypothesis, three of which are particularly relevant to my discussion of Leroux's *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*:

- Retranslations are not necessarily the consequence of “ageing” translations or “changing times,” since more than one translation of the same source text may come about within a very short span of time [...].
- Retranslations do not arise only when the existing translation(s) are deficient/assimilative/adaptive/literal, etc., or when the reader's attitudes, tastes and competence change. They may also emerge as a result of a struggle in the receiving system to create the local discourse into which these translations will be incorporated.
- Retranslations may have more to do with the needs and attitudes within the receiving system than any inherent characteristics of the source text which supposedly makes it “prone to” retranslations. (Susam-Sarajeva 138)

Five retranslations of Leroux's novel were produced within a span of 22 years between 1990 and 2012. With as little as three years between some of the translations, it's unlikely these retranslations were motivated by an attempt to modernize the ageing translation that came before, as Berman's essay suggests. Furthermore, while Lowell Blair's 1990 retranslation could be seen as attempting rectify De Mattos' heavily abridged 1911 translation of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* (meaning that some parts of Blair's text are in fact an initial translation rather than a retranslation), the four subsequent English translations of the work seem to have emerged as a result of a desire in the “receiving system” to provide alternate interpretations of Leroux's novel and give readers more historical and cultural context for the text rather than as a result of the deficiencies of the previous translations. Finally, the retranslations seems to have more to do with the English-speaking world's fascination with the opera ghost—thanks to the various stage and screen versions of the story—rather than any specific characteristics of Leroux's source text. These are all strong motives for retranslation which the retranslation hypothesis does not effectively address.

In chapter 3, I will discuss Sharon Deane-Cox's 2014 book in which she discusses the flaws in the retranslation hypothesis and conducts a detailed analysis of two series of retranslations to see if they match Berman's history-as-progress model. I have separated Deane-Cox's critique of the retranslation hypothesis from the other critiques discussed in the current chapter because I will also describe her methodology in greater detail and discuss how I will

apply certain aspects of it to my own analysis of the series of English translations of Leroux's novel.

3. Deane-Cox and Case Studies of the Retranslation Hypothesis

In her 2014 book *Retranslation: Translation, Literature, and Reinterpretation*, Sharon Deane-Cox methodically tests Berman's retranslation hypothesis by closely analyzing Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and George Sand's *La Mare au diable*. She concludes that the retranslation hypothesis as Berman described it does not hold true. As opposed to Berman's assertion that retranslations improve over time until the great translation is produced, Deane-Cox found that in her analysis the retranslations generally did not advance in a linear manner through time. She employs a complex methodology that includes aspects of Mona Baker's narrative theory from *Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account* (2006), narratology (voice and focalization), and Halliday's systemic functional grammar to analyze her chosen texts and their retranslations (Deane-Cox 20). She discusses at length the sociocultural context that surrounds translation and retranslation and how that context informs choices, something that Berman's theory does not address. Deane-Cox also analyzes the economic and cultural factors that affect how a translation gets commissioned and published, as well as looking at how the translations are received.

As mentioned above, Deane-Cox begins with a close analysis of how retranslated works may have been influenced by their "socio-cultural conditions of production" (Deane-Cox 18). As we will see with Hewson's approach in chapter 4, Deane-Cox recognizes that her method entails a degree of subjectivity: "the subjectivity of the researcher forms an unavoidable part of the analytical horizon here; there is no getting away from or around the fact that the positioning of the (re)translations in their target context and the measurement of the shifts between source and target texts are all a product of my [Deane-Cox's] interpretation of those observables" (Deane-Cox 19). After discussing the socio-cultural context of the (re)translations, Deane-Cox then turns to Mona Baker's narrative theory to highlight the specific features such as temporality, relationality, causal emplotment, and selective appropriation in *Madame Bovary* and *La Mare au diable* which can then be compared to the (re)translations to assess how "close" they remain to the source text (Deane-Cox 80). Deane-Cox's methodology further analyzes the use of voice, i.e., "who is narrating, when the narration occurs, and where it occurs" and focalization, i.e., who

sees events occurring in the narrative (Deane-Cox 89, 94). Finally, Deane-Cox employs Halliday's categories of systemic functional grammar to explore Flaubert's use of free indirect style in *Madame Bovary* and to see how the retranslations hold together as cohesive wholes.

Deane-Cox's methodology works very well for the complex structure and Free Indirect Style (FIS) that Flaubert employs in *Madame Bovary*, but it is rather unwieldy and doesn't map well onto Leroux's text, which only rarely uses FIS. While I will discuss one example involving Leroux's use of free indirect style in chapter 7, he does not use it extensively throughout the text so I have not studied this element of his style in detail. Deane-Cox designed her methodology with replicability in mind, citing the "definite need both for more empirical studies of retranslation and for a more unified approach to those studies" (114). However, her methodology is highly flexible and while that allows it to accommodate a wider range of texts, it seems difficult to apply the method systematically since Deane-Cox does not succinctly summarize her method so it can be easily referred back to and replicated. Deane-Cox admits there is a degree of subjectivity to her (and to any critic's) analysis, but still limits her analysis to specifically chosen passages which reinforce her personal interpretations of the text.

Although it has its downsides, Deane-Cox's methodology is successful in many respects. She highlights the complex nature of translation and includes a discussion of how an individual translator's agency can affect how a translation is created and received. She also draws on Pym's work to provide several reasons that works get retranslated, such as "to adapt the source text for a new readership, to correct a previous version [...] and to counteract limited access to the content of a given work" (Deane-Cox 26). These reasons can be identified in the translations of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*. For example, Blair's 1990 translation has been marketed by the publisher as a modern, "Americanized" version of Leroux's text. Deane-Cox also discusses rivalry and differentiation as motivating reasons for retranslation and analyzes how the retranslations of *Madame Bovary* and *La Mare au diable* interact with and affect one another. The publisher of Leonard Wolf's *The Essential Phantom of the Opera*, on the back cover of the novel, proclaims it to be the definitive translation of Leroux's work, and sets itself apart through extensive annotations, some of which provide biographical or historical background information, and some of which are simply Wolf's own opinions and interpretations of the text. Furthermore,

translators producing later retranslations may draw inspiration from the translations that preceded them and make some of the same lexical and syntactical choices if they believe those choices are effective or fit the style of their particular translation. As Deane-Cox explains, “not only does this particular haunting [earlier translations influencing later ones] subvert the Retranslation Hypothesis, it also attests to a coincidence with, rather than a distancing from, its antecedents” (17). We will see how the English translations of *Le Fantôme de l’Opéra* interact with each other and overlap in chapter 7.

I will use Deane-Cox’s methodology mainly to discuss how the English translations of Leroux’s novel fit (or don’t fit) into the retranslation hypothesis, but will rely on Lance Hewson’s critical framework for my close analysis of specific passages in the translations. Combining these two approaches will allow me to analyze the actual text of the translations in detail using Hewson’s framework, while still being able to contextualize the translations within the larger cultural sphere using Deane-Cox’s socio-cultural approach. Analyzing the broader cultural context of the translations of *Le Fantôme de l’Opéra* is necessary because Andrew Lloyd Webber’s musical has become more well known than Leroux’s original novel and affects how readers interpret the text. I will discuss and summarize Hewson’s framework in chapter 4. I will also refer back to Deane-Cox to discuss the paratextual and extratextual elements surrounding the translations of *Le Fantôme de l’Opéra* in chapter 5. Her analysis of reviews, cultural spinoffs, visual and textual elements surrounding the translations themselves, and the larger cultural context are worth looking at in more detail and are particularly relevant to Leroux’s work.

4. A Framework for Translation Criticism

Lance Hewson's 2010 book *An Approach to Translation Criticism* lays out a very useful framework for analyzing the effects that translational choices have on a literary text and how they impact the reader's understanding of the translated work. I will be using this methodology to describe and examine the English translations of Leroux's text, in order to determine "where the text stands in relation to its original by examining the interpretative potential that results from the translational choices that have been made" (Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 283). Employing Hewson's method of analysis will allow me to approach each of the six English translations in the same way and analyze their effects systematically. From there, I will look at how the translations have "progressed" chronologically and see how or if they fit into the linear constraints of the retranslation hypothesis.

Hewson breaks down translational choices into three different levels of analysis: the micro-, meso-, and macro-level. The micro-level examines choices made at the word or sentence level of a translation. These choices can be syntactical, lexical, grammatical, or stylistic, and generally carry the same weight in terms of how they affect the reading of a particular text. On the other hand, Hewson specifies that additions and eliminations are "overriding translational choices," meaning they have a more pronounced effect on the target text than the other micro-level choices (Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 81-82). Hewson's micro-level translational choices along with some examples are summarized in the table below.

Translational Choices	Examples/Definitions
Syntactic choices	Calque (syntactic or partial), fronting, juxtaposition, extraposition, recategorization, modulation
Lexical choices	Established equivalent, borrowing, explicitation, implicitation, hyperonymy, hyponymy, description, cultural adaptation, modification, creation
Grammatical choices	Tense, aspect, modality
Stylistic choices	Repetition, appellatives, anaphoric devices, cliché, trope, rhythm, alliteration, assonance, register, connotation
Additions	Words or phrases are added that were not present in the source text
Eliminations	Parts of the source text are not translated and are left out of the target text

(Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 53-82)

While these micro-level choices are often noteworthy, they may have a minimal effect unless they occur repeatedly throughout the text. As Hewson puts it, “it is only a pattern of *accumulated* effects that can be seen to influence the way the translated text is read and interpreted” (*Approach to Translation Criticism* 87). Micro-level effects accumulate and impact the text on a meso-level—that is, the paragraph or passage as a whole. Hewson divides the meso-level into voice effects and interpretational effects, as described in the table below.

	Types of Effects	Description
Voice Effects	Accretion	Voices in the target text are more pronounced than in the source text
	Reduction	Voices in the target text are more subdued than in the source text
	Deformation	Voices are changed in the target text (possibly leading the reader to understand a character differently)
Interpretational Effects	Contraction	There are fewer possible interpretations in the target text than in the source text
	Expansion	There are more possible interpretations in the target text than in the source text
	Transformation	New interpretation are possible in the target text that have no clear link to the source text

(Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 83-86)

The third, macro-level of analysis in Hewson's framework is a synthesis of the previous two levels that looks at how the micro- and meso-level translational choices build up throughout the work to create an overall impression of the text. Hewson emphasizes that this level of analysis is subjective, since the macro-level interpretation is based on the subjective interpretation of choices observed on the micro- and meso-level, and because an assessment of a limited number of passages in the text may not reflect the text as a whole (Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 74, 84). Nevertheless, the macro-level analysis is also extremely important because the micro- and meso-level effects are only meaningful "when the results from the different passages are collated in order to construct macro-level hypotheses about the ways in which the translational choices appear to be influencing the nature, and thus the potential readings, of the translated text" (Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 87). The two tables below summarize the meso-level voice and interpretational effects and their resulting macro-level effects.

Meso-Level Voice Effect	Macro-Level Voice Effect
Accretion	Markedness
Reduction	Conciseness
Deformation	Anamorphosis

(Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 166-168)

Meso-Level Interpretational Effect	Macro-Level Interpretational Effect
Contraction	Shrinkage
Expansion	Swelling
Transformation	Transmutation

(Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 173-175)

In addition to these effects, Hewson describes the way effects combine on the macrostructural level. A combination of voice effects could lead to either a hybrid translation or an ontological translation, while a combination of interpretational effects may lead to a metamorphosing translation or an ideological translation (Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 177). A hybrid translation is a patchwork of the voice effects described above that results in the voices lacking a clear identity. An ontological translation is an “exception rather than the rule” and occurs when the translator’s own voice encroaches on the text, generally through a combination of accretion and deformation (Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 172). A combination of interpretational effects can create a metamorphosing translation, resulting in a mix of interpretations that show no link with the source text. Finally, the combination of interpretational effects can lead to an ideological translation that promotes a specific interpretation of the text while excluding other interpretations (Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 177).

All of these macro-level effects are then reviewed and the translation is placed somewhere on a scale between a “just” interpretation and a “false” interpretation. As the table below demonstrates, Hewson has identified a continuum for the macro-level descriptions of translations:

Just Interpretation ←————→ False Interpretation			
Divergent similarity	Relative divergence	Radical divergence	Adaptation

(Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 182)

All translations are likely to display some of the macro-level effects Hewson describes, but as we move further along the scale towards a just interpretation of the source text, the effects become less significant and do not prevent the reader from reaching a just interpretation of the text, nor do they lead the reader to make false interpretations. On the other end of the spectrum, an adaptation lacks a number of objective elements of the source text (such as entire passages that have not been translated) so the reader is unable make a just interpretation of the target text.

The problem with placing translations onto a continuum that labels them “just” or “false” is that it assigns a value judgement to the translation, rather than objectively assessing the work. While Hewson’s framework is very useful for detailed analysis of translational choices and I will discuss how the translations of Leroux’s novel may fit into the categories of divergent similarity, relative divergence, radical divergence, and adaptation, I will refrain from labelling the translations as “just” or “false.” I want to analyze the translations and the effects they produce without going so far as to place them into two subjective, binary categories.

I will use Hewson’s critical framework to analyze the English translations of Leroux’s *Le Fantôme de l’Opéra* and assess how each translator’s choices effect the reader’s interpretation of the text. As we will see in chapter 7, Alexander Teixeira De Mattos’ 1911 English translation of *Le Fantôme de l’Opéra* fits the description of an adaptation due to the numerous paragraphs and passages that have been omitted from the target text, and therefore cannot be categorized as Berman’s *grande traduction* because it is the initial translation (not a retranslation), and the many passages left untranslated would be viewed by Berman as a deficiency. However, on a micro-level it may more closely fit Berman’s description of a *grande traduction* than some of the later translations because it remains closer to the source text on a syntactical and grammatical level. The remaining five retranslations in English do not contain any large-scale eliminations of the passages from the source text, but as we will see in chapter 7, there are still examples of eliminations and other translational choices throughout the texts. These choices, while accumulating in some cases to affect the text on a macro-level (as I will discuss in chapter 8),

vary on the micro- and meso-levels within the translations, resulting in some of the translations fitting Berman's descriptions of retranslations. However, the analysis of the six translations in relationship to one another show that the retranslation hypothesis does not take enough factors into account to accurately describe the arc of a series of translations. But before we look at the translations, I will discuss the paratextual elements surrounding the translations, and Leroux's original novel, *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*.

5. Paratext and Socio-Cultural Influences

Deane-Cox posits that paratextual elements are important because they “allow us to look in more detail at who was involved in the production of the (re)translations, what the finished products look like and how they were marketed and received” (24). Paratext such as prefaces, introductions, notes, images, and reviews all help the reader contextualize a given work and affect how that work is interpreted. As Deane-Cox notes, “paratext becomes a fundamental object of enquiry for the study of (re)translations as it will reveal the strategic (ideological, cultural, economic, etc.) manoeuvrings via which a given work presents itself to a given readership, while also offering insights into the dynamics of how (re)translations might interact with one another and how they are positioned in relation to constantly evolving socio-cultural contexts” (Deane-Cox 26). The paratextual elements of the (re)translations of *Le Fantôme de l’Opéra* play a large cultural role and in some cases surpass Leroux’s original work in terms of reach and impact.

Before exploring the paratext surrounding *Le Fantôme de l’Opéra*, a definition of paratext would be useful. Deane-Cox relies mainly on Genette’s definition of paratext in *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*. Genette describes paratext as all the productions that surround and extend a given text in order to present it to readers and to provide commentary on the work (Genette 3-15). He divides paratext into two categories: peritext and epitext. Peritext refers to all the material that physically surrounds a given text (forewords, cover art, annotations, etc.). Epitext, on the other hand, refers to other material linked to the text but not directly attached to the published work, such as reviews and interviews.

Although Genette’s exploration of paratext is extensive, he only acknowledges the practice of translation in his conclusion, and fails to explore the complications associated with labelling translation as paratext. As Deane-Cox states, building on Tahir-Gürçağlar’s criticism of Genette’s work, “given that all paratext is subordinate to its text in Genette’s model, accordingly all translation ‘will serve only its original’ [...]—a servitude which has long been rejected in translation scholarship” (Deane-Cox 28). Genette merely acknowledges translation as being paratextually relevant, but fails to award it appropriate space within his paradigm. Furthermore, if a translation is merely epitext of the source text, how does the paratext surrounding the

translation fit in? While Genette's model may not be particularly useful for discussing the relationship of a translation to its source text, I will use his notions of peritext and epitext to address certain paratextual elements that surround the translations and discuss how they interact with each other and the larger cultural understanding and interpretations of the phantom's tale.

First, I will discuss the peritext surrounding the English translations of Leroux's novel and how they affect the way the reader interprets the translated text. Both De Mattos' and Blair's translations have very few peritextual elements. After a title page and a table of contents, the edition of De Mattos' translation published by Mills & Boon leads directly into the translation without any contextualization, apart from a line noting the translator's name on the inside title page. At the end of De Mattos' translation, however, there is an excerpt from an article published in an 1879 edition of *Scribner's Magazine* that describes the Paris opera house, which was included as a supplement in the American edition for readers who were likely unfamiliar with the new Palais Garnier. Coward's translation in 2012 is the only other edition to include this article from *Scribner's Magazine*. Similar to De Mattos, Blair's translation contains hardly any peritextual elements apart from a one-paragraph biography of Leroux at the beginning of the book. In this way, these two translations are most similar to the source text in that they provide hardly any contextual information and present the story as a complete work, leaving its interpretation up to the reader. The description on the back cover of Blair's translation hails it as "the first completely modern and Americanized translation" which, as Deane-Cox discusses in her book, speaks to the economic forces driving translation where "new" is equated with "best" in marketing in an effort to sell copies (Deane-Cox 14-18). This idea that the newer the translation the "better" it is also fits with Berman's position that later (re)translations always surpass earlier ones, though this position is an oversimplification.

Wolf's 1996 translation, in comparison to the two English translations that preceded it, contains numerous peritextual elements that help situate the work within the broader culture. These peritextual elements, however, are also likely to effect the reader's impression of the text. Wolf's introduction provides a biography of Leroux's life and work as a journalist, giving readers an explanatory background for some of Leroux's chapters which read like investigative journalism. The introduction is far from neutral, however, and offers a lot of Wolf's own

musings, guesses, and strong opinions about Leroux's work. For example, Wolf writes "once [Leroux] was stuck with the incompetent Raoul as his book's romantic lead, [he] had to invent the Persian so that the plot could be moved forward with some semblance of intelligence" (Wolf 3). Reading the introduction before Wolf's translation causes deformation because the reader may understand some of the characters differently based on Wolf's personal interpretations of them. In Leroux's original work, Raoul is described as "timide," "innocent," and "choyé," but never as unintelligent or incompetent. Wolf's commentary on Leroux's work continues throughout the translation. It is littered with annotations which in some cases provide appropriate historical context or explications, but often contain lengthy descriptions of Wolf's personal interpretations of the source text. This leads to deformation and contraction in a number of places because Wolf limits the possible number of interpretations by putting his own conjectures forward as if they are the "correct" interpretations of the work. Wolf's notes also obscure the few notes left by Leroux's narrator in the original text, particularly in chapter 21. If the reader skips over these notes believing they are more of Wolf's interpretations, he or she will miss out on some of the source text. Similar to Blair's translation, the back cover of Wolf's *Essential Phantom of the Opera* proclaims the translation to be "the most comprehensive edition ever produced." This again suggests that Wolf's is the best translation of Leroux's novel as part of its marketing strategy.

J. M. and Randy Lofficier's translation includes 46 illustrations by various artists depicting the phantom. These various depictions interpret the phantom in a number of different ways, in line with the different ways he is described throughout the novel. For example, Joseph Buquet provides the most detailed description of the phantom in the text (though his reliability is questionable):

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 chose horrible à voir. Trois ou quatre longues mèches brunes sur le front et derrière les oreilles font office de chevelure. (Leroux 15-16)³

³ Leroux's original italics.

Shortly after this description, the lieutenant de pompiers describes seeing the phantom as “sans corps, une tête de feu” (Leroux 16). Again in chapter 3, the narrator describes the opera ghost as “cette étrange et blême et fantastique figure aux yeux caves” (Leroux 40). These wildly different descriptions are what help perpetuate the larger-than-life supernatural aspect of the phantom. While Joseph Buquet’s description is the most detailed, he is not a reliable narrator and at the time is telling a ghost story to the young girls in the corps de ballet, so he may very well be embellishing to frighten them.

The artists who depicted the phantom in J. M. and Randy Lofficier’s translation, however, were also clearly influenced by other cultural depictions of the phantom, and not just those in the book. A number of the illustrations are of Lon Chaney in his role as the phantom in the 1926 film, and in all of the illustrations that show the phantom wearing a mask, the mask is white, whereas Erik is described as wearing a black mask that covers his whole face in Leroux’s novel. The white half-mask in many of the illustrations is clearly inspired by the phantom in Andrew Lloyd Webber’s musical. These interpretations of the phantom reinforce the reader’s image of the phantom that is based on depictions in pop culture rather than in Leroux’s source text. This peritextual material has an effect of expansion on the reader because Erik’s physical attributes can be interpreted in more ways than in the source text. Finally, at the end of J. M. and Randy Lofficier’s translation, they include an original story written by the translators about Erik’s past. This bizarre story, entitled “His Father’s Eyes,” suggests that Erik is the son of a Scottish woman who was raped by Frankenstein’s monster. There is no explanation for the inclusion of this baffling fan fiction, and it can only be described as an addition and transformation as per Hewson’s terms, since it provides a new interpretation that has no clear link to the source text.

Rivière and Coward’s translations both provide introductions with useful biographical and historical information that contextualizes the phantom’s story within the period Leroux wrote it and traces its arc as a cultural phenomenon that has been reinterpreted numerous times on stage and screen. Both translators also include textual annotations that explain certain elements and terms that may not be immediately clear to a modern anglophone readership. These annotations are placed at the end of the book in both cases. This makes them less intrusive than Wolf’s

annotations, which in a number of places take up more space on the page than his translation of Leroux's work. Moreover, Ribière is the only translator to provide a "translator's note" in her book, and is therefore the only translator to provide specific details about her translational choices. She states that her priority was readability, although she also focused on historical accuracy in terms of usage and wanted to remain close to Leroux's prose in terms of style and "the use of distinctive phrases" (Ribière li). Ribière's note not only provides insight into how she chose to translate the work, it also seems to serve as a preemptive explanation in response to potential criticism about areas in the translation where she deviates more radically from the French text. In this way, Ribière becomes a more authoritative commentator on her own translation, if not on the original text (Genette 10).

While there are many examples of epitext related to Leroux's *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*, for the purposes of this analysis, I am only going to touch briefly on one of them: Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical, *The Phantom of the Opera*. As I have mentioned above, the musical, which first opened in London's West End in 1986, is arguably better known than Leroux's original novel, and this is probably the reason a lot of people seek out the original novel or a translation of it. As I have posited earlier, the success of the musical may also have been a driving factor behind Blair's initial retranslation in 1990. All of the translations address Webber's musical in some fashion, whether in an introduction or via illustration. Even the depictions of the phantom on the covers of Blair's and De Mattos' translations bear more resemblance to the musical version of the Angel of Music than to Leroux's original description of the character. This demonstrates how pervasive the musical has become in English-language culture; it must be addressed in one form or another by the translator and/or publisher of the translated work. The musical has become so successful and enduring that it is better known by English-speakers than Leroux's original novel. In the next chapter, however, I will focus on the original novel and the man who wrote it.

6. The Strange Affair of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*

Gaston Leroux was born in a house on Rue Faubourg Saint Martin in Paris on May 6, 1868, to a public works contractor and the daughter of a bailiff. As a child, Leroux was sent to boarding school in the French commune of Eu, Normandy. The school appears to have had a profound impact on him, and he later revisited this location in his novel *Le Parfum de la dame en noir*, which was first published in 1908 (Wolf 7). After boarding school, Leroux returned to Paris to study law. He earned his undergraduate degree in 1889 when he was just eighteen years old, and a couple of years later he graduated from law school. However, the profession never particularly appealed to him and after a few years as a probationer, he drifted towards journalism. In 1892 he met the editor of *L'Echo de Paris* and began submitting poems and short satirical articles to the paper (Wolf 8). Due to his legal background, he was eventually asked to cover the 1894 trial of Auguste Vaillant, an anarchist who had detonated a bomb in *la Chambre des députés*, the legislative assembly of the French parliament. His reporting caught the eye of the editor of *Le Matin*, who decided to hire him, and Leroux subsequently left the bar.

In 1899, Leroux married Marie Lefranc in Paris. The marriage, however, was short-lived. Though the pair soon separated, Lefranc refused to grant Leroux a divorce. This would affect Leroux a few years later when he met the love of his life, Jeanne Cayatte: he was unable to marry her until 1917 after reaching a settlement with his estranged wife. Leroux and Cayatte traveled for a time in Tsarist Russia before returning to France and eventually having two children, André-Gaston and Madeleine.

Leroux worked for *Le Matin* for nearly thirteen years. During that time, he covered numerous criminal trials and witnessed several executions, including that of anarchist Sante Geronimo Carerio. This likely influenced the articles he wrote against capital punishment that were published in *Le Matin* in later years. He abruptly quit his job with *Le Matin* in 1907 when he shouted “merde!” at Bunau-Varilla, the editor (Pessin and Terrone 239). A dispute had occurred between the two men after Bunau-Varilla ordered Leroux to head immediately out on another assignment when he had just returned from a long and tiring trip (Pessin and Terrone 239). Leroux then made the decision to begin writing fiction full time, where his experience as a crime reporter and war correspondent influenced his later fiction. He had already written a novel

in 1903, *La Double Vie de Théophraste Longuet*, which was published in instalments in *Le Matin*.

Leroux wrote numerous stories over the span of his life, and they often centred around physically disfigured protagonists that are rejected by society. Leroux was by all accounts a large, affable, friendly man. He was declared unfit for service during the First World War due to his weak heart. He died at age fifty-eight on April 27, 1927 from complications resulting from a urinary disorder. He is buried in the cemetery at the château de Nice.

Despite an untimely death, Leroux did live long enough to see his serialized novel, *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*, begin its rise to fame with the release of the silent film adaptation, *The Phantom of the Opera*, in 1925. Actor Lon Chaney's directions to his make-up artists to make his face look like a skull with piercing eyes were just the beginning of a multitude of depictions of the opera ghost, both on stage and on screen, that began to change and broaden the public's perception of Erik and his hideous face.

But let us return to the origins of the opera ghost. *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* was serialized in *Le Gaulois* from September 23, 1909, to January 8, 1910, then published in full in 1910 by Lafitte (Ribière ix). Like some of Leroux's other work, it explores the life of a talented, sensitive individual whose physical appearance makes him an outcast from society and drives him to a life of crime. The novel is artfully crafted as a *récit fantastique*. A *récit fantastique* is defined as "un récit [qui] raconte des événements inexplicables qui se passent dans notre monde habituel, familier. Ces événements surnaturels apportent l'angoisse ou l'inquiétude. Le lecteur cherche à comprendre et hésite entre plusieurs solutions." ("Récit fantastique" 1). These types of tales often include themes of fear, curses, ghosts, invisible presences, unexplained deaths, and disappearing objects—all of which are themes in *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* ("Récit fantastique" 1). The most important element of a *récit fantastique* is the reader's hesitation between a plausible, normal explanation for the mysterious events that occur, and a supernatural explanation. Leroux strikes a balance between his realistic depictions of late nineteenth century Paris society and accurate descriptions of the Palais Garnier's architecture, which he contrasts with a host of superstitious characters and an unreliable narrator whose authoritative voice is undermined by his retelling of

second- and third-hand gossip and his barely-plausible explanations for the ‘supernatural’ events that occur in the novel.

Though the novel has for decades sparked discussion and investigations by amateur sleuths looking to prove the phantom of the opera really existed, the story of the opera ghost is indeed a work of fiction. However, Leroux cleverly used his experience as an investigative reporter to craft a fictitious tale couched in truth. This may help explain the enduring nature of *Le Fantôme de l’Opéra*. Not only are characters in the story unsure of whether Erik really exists within the diegesis⁴ of the novel, but readers also remain uncertain as they chase down leads and follow factual clues Leroux inserts throughout the chapters, wondering whether the inspiration for the story was a real man who became the stuff of legend, or a fictional character woven so carefully into the fabric of truth that he cannot be neatly extracted.

This is “the fantastic” at its best. The story appears realistically grounded in the everyday minutia of the nineteenth century. And yet, despite the narrator’s assurances, the reader remains unsure whether the opera ghost can be ascribed to the world of the supernatural, or if he really exists “en chair et en os” as the narrator states on the first page of the prologue (Leroux 7). According to literary theorist Tzvetan Todorov, this hesitation between a grounded, rational explanation and a supernatural one is what defines the fantastic:

Dans un monde qui est bien le nôtre, celui que nous connaissons, sans diables, sylphides, ni vampires, se produit un événement qui ne peut s’expliquer par les lois de ce même monde familier. Celui qui perçoit l’événement doit opter pour l’une des deux solutions possibles : ou bien il s’agit d’une illusion des sens, d’un produit de l’imagination et les lois du monde restent alors ce qu’elles sont ; ou bien l’événement a véritablement eu lieu, il est partie intégrante de la réalité, mais alors cette réalité est régie par des lois inconnues de nous. Ou bien le diable est une illusion, un être imaginaire ; ou bien il existe réellement, tout comme les autres êtres vivants : avec cette réserve qu’on le rencontre rarement.

Le fantastique occupe le temps de cette incertitude ; dès qu’on choisit l’une ou l’autre réponse, on quitte le fantastique pour entrer dans un genre voisin, l’étrange ou le

⁴H. Porter Abbott defines diegesis as follows: “The term diegesis (which Plato originally used to refer to the telling, rather than the action, of stories) has been adapted to refer to the world of the story — that “reality” in which the events are presumed to take place” (Abbott 75). The narrative world that the characters inhabit and understand in the novel makes up the diegesis, whereas facts that the narrator discloses to the reader—that characters do not have access to or knowledge of—are extradiegetic. So while the narrator may insist to the reader that Erik really existed “en chair et en os,” the characters in the story have only gossip and unsubstantiated claims from other characters to base their opinion about the phantom’s existence upon (Leroux 7).

merveilleux. Le fantastique, c'est l'hésitation éprouvée par un être qui ne connaît que les lois naturelles, face à un événement en apparence surnaturel. (Todorov 29)

Although there is not one definitive explanation of *le fantastique* and many literary theorists have added their own, nuanced definitions to the body of literary criticism—Pierre-Georges Castex describes it as an “intrusion brutale du mystère dans le cadre de la vie réelle” (Castex 8)—Todorov’s description contains the generally agreed upon elements of the *récit fantastique* and his definition maps well onto *Le Fantôme de l’Opéra*. Many of the characters in Leroux’s work exhibit this *hésitation* between thinking the events that transpire at the opera house are merely a trick of the mind, and believing that the phantom is real. When MM. Moncharmin and Richard are first confronted with the phantom’s instructions that box five be left empty for him and that he be paid his salary of 240,000 francs a year, they laugh it off as a joke (Leroux 45). However, as bizarre and inexplicable events continue to unfold at the opera, the new directors begin to wonder if the opera ghost is really just a ghost story, or something more tangible and menacing after all. The rational explanations that Leroux offers for the seemingly supernatural events in the novel also cause the reader to hesitate between belief and disbelief. As Jann Matlock puts it in his introduction to Ribière’s translation, “Erik’s novelistic backstory is so outlandish as to invite us to suspend disbelief. We come to know his magic through his acts and his inventions, then get explanations that only barely make sense of what we have experienced as marvellous phenomena” (Ribière xxvii). Leroux carefully constructs the phantom’s ghostly identity before he begins to insert uncertainty into the reader’s mind with plausible explanations for the seemingly magical events of the novel.

Leroux further causes the reader to hesitate between a rational explanation and a supernatural one through his realistic depictions of nineteenth century Paris and the factual elements he incorporates into the story to balance the fictional ones. There are countless message boards online that delve into whether the events in the novel are based on events that really occurred. Like in any true crime wormhole, these dedicated keyboard detectives argue over evidence and details in an effort to answer the big question: did Erik really exist? This debate further complicates Leroux’s *récit fantastique*. Not only do readers hesitate between believing whether Erik exists as a human being or a supernatural being in the story world, but they also

must contend with whether or not the character was based on a real historical figure. In this way, Erik has jumped off the pages and occupies a real space in many people's imagination.

This debate continues in part because Leroux cleverly included elements in the novel that are based on true events. As Jann Matlock states in the introduction to Ribière's translation, "the first-person narrator's evocation of these events as remembered history thrusts us as readers headlong into his search for archival documentation and eyewitness testimony" (Ribière xv). Some readers have dug up such archival documentation. There is evidence that part of the chandelier at the Palais Garnier really did come crashing down. At the end of chapter eight of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*, the phantom causes the chandelier in the opera house to fall from the ceiling during Carlotta's performance of *Faust*. The phantom whispers in the director's ear that Carlotta "chante ce soir à décrocher le lustre!" (Leroux 108) which in another context would be a great compliment, but instead the prima donna's voice causes the chandelier to unhook from the ceiling and crash down into the audience below, killing a woman and wounding several others. Leroux writes "elle était morte sur le coup, et le lendemain, un journal paraissait avec cette manchette : deux cent mille kilos sur la tête d'une concierge !" (108).

This event was based on a real accident that occurred at the Palais Garnier in 1896, while Leroux still worked for *Le Matin*. The headline for the story on page one that day ran "Accident à l'opéra : cinq cents kilos sur la tête d'une concierge" (*Le Matin* 1). More accurate reporting later revealed that a counterweight weighing just under ten kilos had fallen from the ceiling and stuck and killed a woman who was attending the opera for the first time that night. This story was likely the inspiration for the events that unfolded in the novel, and is a great example of how Leroux skillfully blended truth and fiction to create plot elements that are grounded in reality.

Another detail in the novel that appears to be based in truth is the burial of phonographic recordings under the opera house. "On se rappelle que dernièrement, en creusant le sous-sol de l'Opéra, pour y enterrer les voix phonographiées des artistes, le pic des ouvriers a mis à nu un cadavre ; or, j'ai eu tout de suite la preuve que ce cadavre était celui du fantôme de l'Opéra," writes the narrator in the prologue (Leroux 11). In 1989, workers updating the opera house's ventilation system came upon a locked room deep under the Palais Garnier. Inside, they found four urns containing phonograph records made of various opera performers' voices in the early

1900s. The discs were given to the Bibliothèque nationale de France to be restored, and the opera singers' voices were heard again in 2008, a century after they had been buried (Juhel, "*Les Voix ensevelies*"). If tiny details such as these are true, is it such a big leap to believe that some of the characters may also be based on real people? Matlock poses a similar question in his introduction to Ribière's translation: "The spectral voices of modernity singing from these very real buried discs raised the question of what else might yet be learned about the underworld of the Opéra" (Ribière xxxii).

And then there is the opera house itself. The Palais Garnier was built between 1861 and 1875 and designed in a Neo-Baroque style by architect Charles Garnier. The building is stunning, and Garnier seems to have innately understood the nature of spectacle and the performances that would go on inside the building, both on and off the stage. The opera house is a place to see and be seen, and the ornate interiors and ample use of mirrors in the Palais Garnier reflect this. As Matlock observes, the "central staircase makes an actor of everyone who goes to see an opera there" (Ribière xxii). Leroux clearly had a good sense of the theatre and the people who frequent it, and his descriptions of the theatre are the perfect backdrop for a story of illusions and facades, where everything is not as it seems. Leroux's abilities as a reporter and a keen observer of people make everything that happens at the opera house in his novel seem very real. In particular, Leroux seems to have a firm grasp on the role superstition plays in the theatre, and uses it to great effect in his novel.

It will come as no surprise that the theatre world has a long and intimate history with superstition. Most people are familiar with at least a few of these traditions, such as telling actors to "break a leg" rather than saying "good luck," or never saying Macbeth in the theatre, lest the fearsome Scottish king curse your production. These superstitions can cause people to vacillate between an unlikely explanation and a practical one, just like a well-executed *récit fantastique*. For example, some thespians may believe that the ghost light—a single bulb always left on upstage centre—should be left on to ward off the ghost of Thespis, who is said to cause mishaps in theatres all over the world, while others may see the practicality of leaving on a light so that the first person to arrive can safely cross the stage to turn on the other lights in the building. And while some fans may know that it is bad luck to whistle in the theatre, they might not know of

the rational origin for this superstition. Early stage productions often employed sailors to work in the fly gallery because of their rigging skills and as they did on the ships, these sailors would often use a series of coded whistles to raise and lower sets onto the stage (Wright n.p.). Whistling onstage was therefore ill-advised since the whistler could unwittingly call a batten down upon his or her head.

Leroux understood these theatre traditions, and superstition is an important motif in *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*. Superstition is used to both undermine and emphasize the reliability of numerous characters throughout the novel. For example, the narrator's description of La Sorelli in the early chapters of the novel paint her as an actress so superstitious that she places a horseshoe by the player's entrance to the opera house that everyone must touch "avant de mettre le pied sur la première marche de l'escalier" (Leroux 17). Her superstition makes her no more reliable than the "petits rats" of the corps de ballet: flighty young girls who gossip and believe the stories Joseph Buquet tells them about the opera ghost. The narrator, on the other hand, is less closely tied to the theatre world and is skeptical of these superstitions, which he uses as proof to assert that his version of events is truthful. However, we will see that Leroux undermines the narrator's reliability in other ways.

A superstitious character does not always equal an unreliable character, however. In some cases, it is the ones who doubt the ghost stories who do not fully understand the situation. For example, MM. Moncharmin and Richard at first believe the phantom of the opera to be something of a practical joke, and the readers are led to trust the former directors of the opera, MM. Debienne and Poligny, who appear to have more experience in these matters. They warn the new directors not to anger the phantom by selling box 5 or refusing to pay his salary. Leroux does not disappoint, and the new directors are soon shown the error of their ways as the phantom disrupts performances, most notably of course by bringing the chandelier in the auditorium crashing to the ground.

Some critics describe *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* as falling within the genre of *étrange*, *merveilleux*, or European Gothic, but I believe it is an example of the *récit fantastique*. Individual chapters may conform to other genres and borrow certain tropes, but when assessed all together, the main tension in the novel comes from whether or not the phantom is/was a

human or supernatural being. This is a fundamental aspect of the *récit fantastique*. The overlap with other genres may be due to the serialized format in which the original text was published in *Le Gaulois*. In the introduction to his 2012 translation, David Coward astutely describes Leroux's freedom to move between literary genres:

All his novels first appeared in instalments often over a period of months before being published in volume form. This arrangement gave Leroux a freer hand than if he had been contracted to publishers with strict genre criteria for the sector of the market which bought the books they sold. It meant that as long as he provided fast-paced, exciting copy punctuated by cliffhanging climaxes, he could follow his storytelling instincts without being pigeonholed as a writer of crime fiction or romance or mystery or fantasy. (viii)

The original serialized format of the novel also explains the stand-alone nature of the chapters, as well as the strong presence of certain characters for a few chapters—such as La Sorelli in early chapters—who later disappear from the novel entirely and are replaced by other compelling figures such as Le Persan.

Sharon Deane-Cox, quoting Paloposki and Koskinen in her book *Retranslation: Translation, Literature, and Reinterpretation* (2014), describes at length how translational choices may be affected “by a multitude of factors relating to publishers, intended readers, accompanying illustrations, and—not least—the translators themselves” (Deane-Cox 34). These sociocultural aspects also affect original works. Without the freedom Leroux enjoyed in writing serialized fiction, *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* would surely have been an entirely different story and may not have persisted in the collective cultural memory as it does today. As Coward writes, Leroux “was, of course, working in a long-established tradition,” referring to Leroux's skill for borrowing from other literary genres while maintaining the framework of a *récit fantastique*. (Coward xiv). The novel has elements of romance, crime, mystery, and fantasy sprinkled throughout, woven together by the narrator's journalistic approach to storytelling. As mentioned previously, this approach was no doubt influenced by Leroux's past experience as a reporter, and it lends itself well to serialized storytelling.

In the novel, Leroux explores genres that interest him and experiments with various tropes and styles. His themes, motifs, and stylistic choices will be examined in greater detail later

in chapter 7 when I explore the English translations of the novel. One notable stylistic trait unique to Leroux is his use of italics throughout the novel. He uses italics in ways that were not common in the era. Often, he employs italicized words or phrases ironically to subvert the meaning of what a character is saying and create confusion or, as Coward asserts, they “serve as stage directions which allow us to visualize characters through their gestures and hear the fear or dread or suspicion in their voices” (xvii). These italics play an important role in conveying meaning and creating uncertainty in *Le Fantôme de l’Opéra*, and I will analyze and discuss how the English translators have dealt with Leroux’s italics in chapter 7.

Two other motifs that are important in the original text and have many reverberations in the larger cultural sphere that the phantom occupies are Erik’s disfigured face and the mask he wears to hide it. The disparate descriptions of the phantom in the source text make the reader uncertain of whether Erik is a human being with pale skin and sunken eyes, or rather a supernatural entity that appears to people in different forms, once seen by the fire chief as having “une tête de feu” (Leroux 16).

Leroux’s motifs, themes, and stylistic choices are crucial to understanding and appreciating Leroux’s *Le Fantôme de l’Opéra*. It is therefore important to examine the treatment of these elements in the English translations of *Le Fantôme de l’Opéra*. In chapter 7, I will discuss the choices each of the translators made when translating Leroux’s lengthy chapter titles. I will also discuss in detail how the English translators of Leroux’s work address his use of onomatopoeia in several pivotal scenes in the novel. Finally, I will analyze Leroux’s unusual use of italics and how it affects the interpretation of a number of words and phrases in the text.

As discussed previously in chapter 5, paratext is another important element that affects how the phantom is perceived by readers. The depictions of the phantom on the covers of the English translations do not all seem to be based on the descriptions of the phantom found in Leroux’s novel. Leonard Wolf’s 1996 version also has a number of posters and illustrations of Erik interspersed throughout the text itself. This leads to a larger discussion of how various translations and interpretations of the character over the years have influenced society’s vision of the phantom as compared to how he is described in the original French text. The following

chapter will discuss how the translators dealt with these elements in certain significant passages of Leroux's work.

7. English Translations of *A Singulier Ouvrage*

As Hewson points out in *An Approach to Translation Criticism*, all translational choices taken separately do not necessarily lead to what Lecercle terms a just or false interpretation of the work (Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 87). It is only when these choices accumulate throughout the text that they begin to influence the reader's understanding of the text. The six English (re)translations of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* I have analyzed all have various voice and interpretational effects that, when amassed, lead me to interpret the translation of Leroux's text in a way that either coincides with my interpretation of the source text, or differs from it. Some of the (re)translations, such as Ribière's, could be considered to show a relationship of divergent similarity with the original text, while others such as De Mattos' are more an adaptation of Leroux's text than a translation. Although in my opinion De Mattos' initial translation is the least effective and Ribière's 2009 retranslation is the most effective, the translations do not map neatly onto Berman's history-as-progress retranslation model. Between these two works, the translations do not necessarily become more source-text oriented in a linear manner over time. Furthermore, the effectiveness of each translation varies from chapter to chapter, depending on how the translator deals with various scenes. Even in Ribière's retranslation, which I believe is an example of divergent similarity, there are some passages that are not handled as skillfully as in the retranslations that came before it, such as his translation of the passage where a toad jumps out of an opera singer's mouth. Just as Deane-Cox's analysis of the retranslations of *Madame Bovary* and *La Mare au diable* concludes, retranslations and how they are created are much more complicated than Berman's assertion that they continually improve over time until *la grande traduction* is produced.

The 29 chapter titles in Leroux's work are an interesting place to start analyzing the English translations in detail. Since most of Leroux's chapter titles were rather lengthy (as was the style in the 19th century), they serve as good examples of how each translator dealt with Leroux's text. The chapter titles and their translations into English are summarized in the table below. All capitalizations in the table are the same as in the printed translations, with the exception that Leroux's and Blair's chapter titles were printed in all capital letters. Space and readability considerations led me to change these titles to sentence case in the table. Since the

choice of capitalization may have been one made by the publisher and not the author or translator themselves, the capitalization in this case is likely of little significance.

7.1 The Audacity to Translate Titles and What Follows

	Leroux (1910)	De Mattos (1911)	Blair (1990)	Wolf (1996)	Lofficier (2004)	Rivière (2009)	Coward (2012)
	Avant-propos où l'auteur de ce singulier ouvrage raconte au lecteur comment il fut conduit à acquérir la certitude que le fantôme de l'opéra a réellement existé	Prologue in which the author of this singular work informs the reader how he acquired the certainty that the opera ghost really existed	Foreword in which the author of this singular work tells the reader how he was led to become certain that the opera ghost really existed	Preface in which the author of this singular work tells the reader how it was that he became persuaded that the phantom of the opera really existed	Foreword in which the author of this peculiar work tells the reader how he acquired the certainty that the Phantom of the Opera really existed	Prologue in which the author of this singular account tells the reader how he came to ascertain that the Phantom of the Opera really existed	Forward in which the author of this strange tale tells the reader how he came to be absolutely convinced that there truly was a Phantom of the Opera
I	Est-ce le fantôme?	Is it the Ghost?	Was it the ghost?	Is it the Phantom?	Is it the phantom?	The ghost?	Was it the ghost?
II	La marguerite nouvelle	The New Margarita	The new Marguerite	The new Marguerite	The new Marguerite	The new Marguerite	The new Marguerite
III	Où, pour la première fois, Mm. Debiegne et Poligny donnent, en secret, aux nouveaux directeurs de l'opéra, Mm. Armand Moncharmin et Firmin Richard, la véritable et mystérieuse raison de leur départ de l'académie nationale de musique	The Mysterious Reason	In which, for the first time, Debiegne and Poligny secretly give the new managers of the opera, Armand Moncharmin and Firmin Richard, the real and mysterious reason for their departure from the national academy of music	In which, for the first time, Messrs. Debiegne and Poligny secretly tell the new directors of the opera, Messrs. Armand Moncharmin and Firmin Richard, the true and mysterious reason for their departure from the national academy of music.	In which Messrs. Debiegne and Poligny secretly inform the new Directors, Messrs. Moncharmin and Richard, of the true and mysterious reason for their resignation	In which, for the first time, Messrs Debiegne and Poligny disclose in confidence to the new directors of the Opera House, Messrs Armand Moncharmin and Firmin Richard, the true reason for their departure from the National Academy of Music	In which Messrs Debiegne and Poligny, for the first time, secretly make the Opera's new Directors, Messrs Armand Moncharmin and Firmin Richard, party to their real, hidden reason for resigning from the National Academy of Music

IV	La loge no. 5	Box Five	Box five	Box number five	Box No. 5	Box Five	Box 5
V	Suite de « la loge no. 5 »	X	Continuation of “Box five”	Continuation of “Box number five”	Box No. 5 (continued)	Continuation of ‘Box Five’	Box 5 (Continued)
VI	Le violon enchanté	The Enchanted Violin*	The enchanted violin	The enchanted violin	The magic violin	The Magic Fiddle	The magic violin
VII	Une visite à la loge no. 5	A Visit to Box Five	A visit to box five	A visit to box five	A visit to Box No. 5	A visit to box five	A visit to box 5
VII I	Où Mm. Firmin Richard et Armand Moncharmin ont l’audace de faire représenter « Faust » dans une salle « maudite » et de l’effroyable événement qui en résulta	Faust and What Followed	In which Firmin Richard and Armand Moncharmin dare to have Faust performed in a “cursed” opera house, and we see the frightful consequences	In which Messrs. Firmin Richard and Armand Moncharmin have the audacity to present <i>Faust</i> in an auditorium that has been cursed, and the frightful event that followed thereupon.	In which Messrs. Richard and Moncharmin dare stage <i>Faust</i> in a <i>cursed theater</i> and the terrible events which ensued	In which Firmin Richard and Armand Moncharmin have the audacity to allow Faust to be performed in a ‘cursed’ theatre and the terrible events that ensued	In which Messrs. Firmin Richard and Armand Moncharmin have the audacity to stage <i>Faust</i> in an ill-fated theatre with catastrophic results
IX	Le mystérieux coupé	The Mysterious Brougham	The mysterious brougham	The mysterious brougham	The mysterious carriage	The mysterious brougham	The Mysterious Carriage
X	Au bal masqué	At the Masked Ball	At the masked ball	At the masked ball	The masked ball	The masked ball	The Masked Ball
XI	Il faut oublier le nom de « la voix d’homme »	Forget the Name of the Man’s Voice	You must forget the name of “the man’s voice”	The name of the <i>Man’s Voice</i> must be forgotten	“You must forget the name of the voice!”	Forget the Voice and the Name	Forget the Name of the Man with the Voice
XII	Au-dessus des trappes	Above the Trap Doors	Above the trapdoors	Above the trapdoors	Above the trap-doors	Above the traps	Above the traps
XII I	La Lyre d’Apollon	Apollo’s Lyre	Apollo’s lyre	Apollo’s lyre	Apollo’s lyre	Apollo’s lyre	Apollo’s lyre
XI V	Un coup de maître de l’amateur de trappes	A Master-Stroke of the Trap-Door Lover	A masterstroke by the lover of trapdoors	A trapdoor lover’s masterstroke	The tricker’s master stroke	The master of the traps strikes	A masterstroke from the king of traps
XV	Singulière attitude d’une épingle de nourrice	The Singular Attitude of a Safety-Pin	The singular behavior of a safety pin	The remarkable behavior of a safety pin	The curious incident of the safety pin	The curious incident of the safety pin	A strange request for a safety pin

XV I	« Christine ! Christine! »	Christine! Christine!	“Christine! Christine!”	Christine! Christine!	“Christine! Christine!”	Christine! Christine!’	Christine! Christine!’
XV II	Révélation étonnantes de Mme. Giry, relatives à ses relations personnelles avec le fantôme de l’opéra	Mme. Giry’s Astounding Revelations as to Her Personal Relations with the Opera Ghost	Astonishing revelations made by Madame Giry, concerning her personal relations with the opera ghost	Astonishing revelations of Mme. Giry regarding personal relations with the phantom of the opera	The amazing revelations of Madame Giry about her personal relationship with the Phantom of the Opera	Mme Giry’s astonishing revelations as to her knowledge of the Phantom of the Opera	Mme Giry’s amazing revelations of her personal dealings with the Phantom of the Opera
XV III	Suite de la curieuse attitude d’une épingle de nourrice	The Safety-Pin Again	Continuation of "the singular behavior of a safety pin"	More about the remarkable behavior of a safety pin	The curious incident of the safety pin (continued)	Continuation of ‘The curious incident of the safety-pin’	More about the Strange request for a safety pin
XI X	Le commissaire de police, le vicomte et le persan	The Commissary , The Viscount, and the Persian	The policeman, the viscount, and the persian	The Superintendent of Police, the Viscount, and the Persian	The Police Commissioner, the Vicomte and the Persian	The Inspector, the Viscount and the Persian	The Police Inspector, the Viscount and the Persian
XX	Le vicomte et le persan	The Viscount and the Persian	The viscount and the persian	The Viscount and the Persian	The vicomte and the persian	The viscount and the persian	The viscount and the persian
XX I	Dans les dessous de l’opéra	In the Cellars of the Opera	In the cellars of the opera	In the opera’s cellars	In the vaults of the opera	Below the stage	In the belly of the opera
XX II	Intéressantes et instructives tribulations d’un persan dans les dessous de l’opéra	Interesting and Instructive Vicissitudes of a Persian in the Cellars of the Opera	Interesting and instructive tribulations of a persian in the cellars of the opera	Interesting and instructive tribulations of a persian in the opera’s cellars	Interesting and enlightening tribulations of a persian in the vaults of the opera	The interesting and instructive trials and tribulations of a persian below stage at the opera	Concerning the interesting and instructive ordeals undergone by the persian in the belly of the opera
XX III	Dans la chambre des supplices	In the Torture Chamber	In the torture chamber	In the torture chamber	Inside the torture-chamber	In the torture chamber	Inside the torture chamber
XX IV	Les supplices commencent	The Tortures Begin	The tortures begin	The tortures begin	The tortures begin	The torture begins	The torture begins

XX V	« Tonneaux! Tonneaux! Avez-vous des tonneaux à vendre? »	“Barrels! ... Barrels!... Any Barrels to Sell?”	“Barrels! Barrels! Any barrels to sell?”	“Barrels! Barrels! “Have you any barrels for sale?”	“Barrels! Barrels! Any barrels for sale?”	Barrels! Barrels! Any old barrels! Any old barrels to sell?”	Any old barrels!... Barrels!... Any old barrels for sale?”
XX VI	Faut-il tourner le scorpion? Faut-il tourner la sauterelle?	The Scorpion or the Grasshopper : Which?	The scorpion or the grasshopper ?	To turn the scorpion? Or to turn the grasshopper?	The scorpion or the frog?	The scorpion or the grasshopper?	Scorpion or Grasshopper ? Which is it to be?
XX VII	La fin des amours du fantôme	The End of the Ghost’s Love Story	End of the ghost’s love story	The phantom’s love story concluded	The end of the phantom’s love story	The end of the phantom’s love story	The end of the phantom’s love story
	Epilogue	Epilogue.	Epilogue	Epilogue	Epilogue	Epilogue	Epilogue

*Note that from chapter 4 onwards in the table, the chapter numbers for De Mattos’ translation are off by one since he chose to combine chapters 4 and 5. For the purposes of this paper, I have reassigned the chapter numbers to match those in the source text to avoid confusion when referring to these chapters by number.

The first and most obvious observation about the titles is De Mattos’ choice to significantly shorten some of them, particularly the titles for chapters 3 and 8. De Mattos eliminates a lot of information in Leroux’s long title for chapter 3, opting for “The Mysterious Reason,” just as he does again in the title for chapter 8, which in his translation becomes the much shorter “Faust and What Followed.” The reader of De Mattos’ translation does not have as much information about what the following chapter will address as a reader of Leroux’s source text does, since character names and other main points of the chapter are eliminated. This is indicative of De Mattos’ translation as a whole, which when analyzed at the macrostructural level, is clearly an adaptation of Leroux’s source text rather than a translation due to the large number of untranslated sentences and paragraphs from the source text. The significant number of eliminations of text accumulates throughout De Mattos’ text, for example where he combines chapters 4 and 5 and eliminates large passages from each to condense them into a single chapter. Sentences and large passages of text—in some cases over a page or more—are missing throughout the translation, which eliminates any possibility for the reader to be aware of or come

to their own conclusions about these passages, leaving him or her unable to arrive at a just interpretation of Leroux's work (Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 182).

De Mattos' translational choice to eliminate large parts of the titles also changes how his titles function throughout the translation as compared to the function of Leroux's titles in the source text. Leroux, likely influenced by his years as an investigative reporter, uses his titles as ledes to draw the reader in and compel him or her to continue reading. These titles would have been particularly important when *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* was first serialized in *Le Gaulois*, where the titles would have needed to fulfill the same role as a newspaper article's lede and attract readers who were scanning the page. It could be argued that once all the chapters were published together as a complete novel in 1910, it became less important for the chapter titles to pique a reader's interest in each chapter since that reader had already made the choice to purchase and read the book and the chapters were no longer competing with newspaper articles running alongside them. However, Leroux's original titles do a lot of work in the source text to pull the reader along and form the episodic chapters into a cohesive narrative by recalling previous characters and providing intrigue and the impetus to read on to solve the mystery. De Mattos' shortened titles, on the other hand, do not function as ledes and compel the reader as they do in the source text, leading to an effect of contraction.

De Mattos makes some further unusual translational choices that affect the interpretation of his translation. For example, De Mattos' translates the word "tribulations" in the title of chapter 22 as "vicissitudes." Vicissitudes is a rarer word in English than tribulations—the word chosen by nearly all the other English translators—and is a contraction because it has a narrower definition and allows for fewer possible interpretations in the target text than in the source text. According to the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, vicissitude can mean "a difficulty or hardship attendant on a way of life, a career, or a course of action and usually beyond one's control," which is roughly comparable to the *Trésor de la Langue Française Informatisé* definition of *tribulation* as an "adversité, épreuve physique ou morale" and "suite d'aventures plus ou moins désagréables." However, the English definition of vicissitude also includes the notion of a "change of circumstances or fortune, typically one that is unwelcome or unpleasant" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). De Mattos' translation of the title of chapter 22 adds a temporal aspect to

the events which does not exist in the French title and sets up the Persian's adventures beneath the opera in opposition to the previous times he had been in the underbelly of the Palais Garnier. This is disingenuous because through the Persian's advice to the vicomte de Chagny and his descriptions of the events that occurred below the opera, it is clear that the phantom acted as expected given his past behaviour—there is no indication of a change in the phantom's action. The events unfurled much as they had during the Persian's previous visits to the bowels of the opera house.

There are a few other translational choices that are worth noting in the various translations of Leroux's chapter titles. Like De Mattos' translation, J. M. and Randy Lofficier's translation also eliminates the information about "l'académie national de la musique" from their title for chapter 3. On its own, this translational choice may not make a huge difference to the reader's interpretation of the novel, but if similar effects accumulate throughout the text they can cause divergences between the translation and the source text. In J.M. and Randy Lofficier's translation I noted enough contractions on the meso-level to lead to an effect of shrinkage on the macro-level (Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 173-174). This effect alters the style of the narrative slightly and eliminates some of the comical word play present in the source text, as we will see in the discussion of the toad in Carlotta's throat.

Furthermore, in the title for chapter 11, all the translators dealt with "Il faut oublier le nom de 'la voix d'homme'" differently. Only Blair retained the original quotation marks around "la voix d'homme." This phrase is repeated twice at the end of the chapter by Christine as she pleads with Raoul to forget Erik's name, because she fears for Raoul's safety. In all the other translations, the lack of quotation marks around just these words (the Lofficiers put quotations around the entire title) is an expansion because it opens up the possibility that these words could be interpreted as being said by the narrator or perhaps another character. Wolf changes the quotation marks to italics, which as we will see in the discussion of italics below, makes it more clear that the man's voice is the phantom's. Both J.M. and Randy Lofficier and Ribière have additional expansions in their titles because they eliminate the description that it is a male voice, although this effect may be minimal because most readers would likely assume the title is

referring to the voice of the Angel of Music. However, it is also possible to interpret the title as referring to Christine's voice without the gender marker.

There are two translational choices worth noting in the translations of the title of chapter 17. First, Blair adds the verb "made," putting the first part of the title into an awkward passive form: "Astonishing revelations made by Mme Giry, concerning her personal relations with the opera ghost" (Blair 203). This leads to accretion because where the narrator's voice is normally fluid, it becomes awkward and more pronounced. Second, Wolf eliminates the pronoun "her" in his translation, creating an expansion because the personal relations could be with any character and the phantom, rather than specifically Mme Giry.

The translation of the word "dessous" in the title of chapter 21 has been translated by De Mattos, Blair, and Wolf as "cellars." This is an example of hyponymy, as "cellars" is a more specific word in English than "les dessous" is in French. Leroux uses the more specific word "caves" in French to describe the lowest level underneath the opera house, and the established equivalent would be "cellars" in English. Leroux employs the word "dessous" much more frequently to describe various levels under the Palais Garnier, and only uses "caves" to talk about the deepest level where the phantom lives. Ribière and Coward seem to have made this distinction and translated "Dans les dessous de l'opéra" as "Below the stage," and "In the belly of the opera," respectively. Ribière's translation here is closer to the source text because "below the stage" would seem to suggest only the first level directly below the stage, whereas Coward's translation suggests an area much deeper under the opera house. In the theatre domain, "dessous" in French is defined as "chacun des étages superposés sous la scène et destinés à entreposer les accessoires et à manœuvrer les décors" (Dendien, *TLFI* n.p.). Ribière's and Coward's translations indicate that the chapter will take place in the lower levels of the opera house, without specifying that they are in the lowest possible level where Erik lives, which Leroux describes in the source text as "les caves." Mireille Ribière, in her "translator's note," states, "Leroux referred to the mezzanine floors housing the scenery and complex theatre machinery underneath the stage as *les dessous*, a neutral term whose meaning can be expressed with 'down' or 'below'; he reserved the word *cave* (i.e. 'cellar') for the lowest area. Similarly I have used 'cellar' sparingly." (Ribière lii). J.M. and Randy Lofficier's translation of the chapter title as "In the vaults of the opera"

makes the same distinction, with vaults being used for “les dessous,” and cellars being used where Leroux uses “caves”; however, vaults and cellars in English are synonyms and so the distinction is less clear than in Ribière and Coward’s translations. Furthermore, while vaults and cellars are both defined in the *OED* as a room below ground level used for storage, vaults can additionally mean “a secure room [...] in which valuables are stored” and “a chamber beneath a church or in a graveyard used for burials” (*OED* n.p.). This means there is an expansion effect in J.M. and Randy Lofficier’s translation because there are more possible interpretations on “vaults” in English than there are of “les dessous” in French.

There is a marked difference in Ribière’s and Coward’s translations of the title of chapter 25, which in the source text is written as “Tonneaux ! Tonneaux ! Avez-vous des tonneaux à vendre ?” (Leroux 296). Both Ribière and Coward add the word “old” before the barrels. This addition is a contraction because it means there are fewer possible interpretations in the target text because the barrels are clearly not new. This addition is unexplained by either translator in the paratext surrounding their respective translations. It’s possible that Coward’s addition was a result of consulting Ribière’s translation. Or perhaps these two translators were working with a slightly different edition of the source text, although I found no other instances of such unexplained additions in either of their translations.

7.2 The Scorpion or the Grasshopper?

J.M. and Randy Lofficier also alter the title of chapter 26, “Faut-il tourner le scorpion? Faut-il tourner la sauterelle?” with their translation of “The scorpion or the frog?” The first element that stands out in this translation is the transformation of the noun “sauterelle” (the established English equivalent of which is grasshopper) to frog. I will analyze this translational choice in the following section, as it relates to an extended metaphor used in the chapter and needs to be explored in greater detail. J.M. and Randy Lofficier’s translation of the chapter title, like most of the other English translations, eliminates the verb “tourner.” Only Wolf retains the idea of “tourner” in his translation, “To turn the scorpion? Or to turn the grasshopper?” While this is perhaps not as elegant in English as some of the other translations, Wolf’s translation of this title retains the closest link with the original because in this chapter, Christine must turn the

scorpion and accept the phantom's marriage proposal, or turn the grasshopper and blow up the opera house (Leroux 309-320). The other translators likely chose to eliminate the verb in this context to avoid an effect of contraction. "Falloir" is an impersonal verb and Leroux was therefore able to use it in the title without specifying a subject. The title in French could therefore be a question posed to Christine by Erik, or that Christine is asking herself, or even a question that the narrator is mulling over and posing to the reader. Wolf also avoids the need for a subject by using the infinitive, to turn. To include the verb "falloir" in the English translation, the translator would have to add a subject (e.g., Should I/one/you/she turn the scorpion or the grasshopper?). Selecting a subject for the question would result in a contraction since the other possible interpretational paths would no longer be available to the reader. All the English translators chose an elimination over a contraction in this case, perhaps because they felt it would have less of an effect on the reader. As Hewson argues, "there is always an effect, even if the impact is a small one on the micro-level, and perhaps judged not to be important on the meso-level" (Hewson, *Approach to Translation Criticism* 66). In this case, the effect is the least significant of the possible alternative translations.

Furthermore, the French title is written as two separate questions rather than linking the two with the word "ou." All of the English translators chose to insert an "or" into their translations and clearly explicitate the binary choice Christine must make later in the chapter. While it makes sense to use "or" in the translation given that Christine has only these two choices, using the conjunction could be considered a contraction since it eliminates the possibility that there could be other choices of objects to turn, before the reader finds out Christine only has the choice between two undesirable options.

Let's return now to J.M. and Randy Lofficier's translation of "sauterelle" as frog. In this pivotal chapter, the phantom has given Christine a choice with two undesirable outcomes. She must either choose to wed Erik and live out the rest of her days with him, or refuse him, in which case he will blow up the opera house and the many people inside it during the show that evening. Christine must choose by turning either the bronze scorpion (thus choosing to marry Erik) or the bronze grasshopper (and blowing everyone up). In Leroux's original text, Erik not only plays tricks with the traps at the opera house, but plays tricks with words as well. In this chapter, Erik

says to Christine, “La sauterelle!...Prends garde à la sauterelle!...Ça ne tourne pas seulement une sauterelle, ça saute! ... ça saute!... ça saute joliment bien!...” (Leroux 314). Here Leroux is cleverly playing with the dual meanings of “sauter” to describe the way a grasshopper jumps, while also invoking the expression “faire sauter,” to explode. Since this play on words does not exist in English, the translators had to find a way to deal with Leroux’s word play, as illustrated in the table below.

Leroux (1910)	La sauterelle!...Prends garde à la sauterelle!...Ça ne tourne pas seulement une sauterelle, ça saute! ... ça saute!... <i>ça saute joliment bien!</i> ...
De Mattos (1911)	The grasshopper! Be careful of the grasshopper! A grasshopper does not only turn: it hops! It hops! And it hops jolly high!
Blair (1990)	The grasshopper! Be careful of the grasshopper! Grasshoppers jump, and they jump <i>very high!</i>
Wolf (1996)	The grasshopper. Beware of the grasshopper. It’s not only the grasshopper that will hop, hop. <i>It hops quite well.</i>
Lofficier (2004)	The frog! Be careful of the frog! A frog does not only turn: it also croaks! It croaks! <i>As we might all croak when all is said and done!</i>
Rivière (2009)	Take care with the grasshopper!...Grasshoppers don’t just turn, they go off!...suddenly!...up into the air!...sky high!
Coward (2012)	The grasshopper! Beware of the grasshopper! A grasshopper not only turns: it leaps...leaps into the air... <i>straight up into the air.</i>

Looking at the translational choices made on the micro-level, we can see several different approaches to this passage, some of which are, in my opinion, more effective than others. Both Rivière and Coward chose to reproduce the stylistic choices Leroux made with his punctuation to convey Christine’s disjointed speech as she relays this horrible message to Raoul and the Persian in the torture chamber. Although the use of ellipses is much more marked in English than in French, it is stylistically closer to Leroux’s source text, and in this case accretion is not actually present given Christine’s emotional state in this scene. This chapter is told from the Persian’s perspective, and he notes directly after, “J’essaie ici de reproduire avec des phrases, des mots entrecoupés, des exclamations, le sens des paroles délirante de Christine!” (Leroux 314).

Blair, Wolf, J.M. and Randy Lofficier, and Coward all reproduced Leroux’s italics as well to give the end of the phrase more meaning and menace. Leroux makes extensive use of italics throughout the novel in unusual ways, which I will explore in more detail in a later section. Here, De Mattos’ and Rivière’s choices not to finish the phrase in italics represent a reduction because

they subdue the menace in the phantom's threat and the despair that is conveyed in Christine's voice as she repeats it.

In my opinion, Wolf's version is the least effective translation of this phrase. He eliminates the notion that the grasshopper turns and instead creates an elliptical juxtaposition, inferring that not just the grasshopper will hop, but the opera house as well (ie., explode). The implied link between the grasshopper and the explosion is tenuous at best here, and constitutes a contraction as the reader is unlikely to interpret the "hop" as a threat to blow up the opera house. Since this is a pivotal scene in the novel, if the threat goes undetected by the reader, this effect is quite significant on a meso- and even macro-level because it changes the phantom's intention from menacing to just bizarre. Furthermore, there is a reduction in voice because Wolf does not use any exclamation points or ellipses. The speech therefore comes across as more neutral and Christine seems less frightened in this rendering than in the source text.

Although it is Ribière and J.M. and Randy Lofficier's lexical choices and additions that differ the most from the source text, their translations make the threat the most clear in English, thus recreating the impact of Leroux's original work. This aligns with Berman's statement that a *grande traduction* should "créer un lien intense avec l'original, qui se mesure à l'impact que celui-ci a sur la culture réceptrice" (Berman, *Palimpsestes* 3). This does not necessarily mean, however, that Berman would label Ribière or J.M. and Randy Lofficier's translation as the great translation of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*. Both translations take more lexical and stylistic liberties with Leroux's text than the other translations in order to make them more approachable to the target audience, which conflicts with Berman's opinion that great translations are always more source-text oriented.

Finally, we come to J.M. and Randy Lofficier's translation of this section. They chose to transform the grasshopper into a frog in order to be able to insert a similar euphemism and menacing play on words as Leroux does in the source text. In terms of word play, this translation in English is the most similar to Leroux's French. J.M. and Randy Lofficier play on the double meaning of the word "croak" in English the same way that Leroux plays with the word "sauter" in French. This lexical choice to change the threat of an explosion into the broader threat of death has a minimal effect on the overall interpretation of the translation because it is clearly stated

earlier in the text when Raoul and the Persian discover the barrels full of gun powder that the phantom intends to blow up the opera house. The addition that J.M. and Randy Lofficier make in translating the final line as “As we might all croak when all is said and done!” is an explication to make the threat abundantly clear to the reader. There is also an transformation here: using the word “croak” links the phantom’s threat with his previous actions in the novel when Carlotta has difficulty singing because J.M. and Randy Lofficier also translate the noise Carlotta makes as a “croak” (Lofficier 113). The reader could conceivably interpret the threat in this case as something akin to what happens to Carlotta earlier. I will discuss this scene in more detail in the following section.

On the meso-level, J.M. and Randy Lofficier’s translational choices lead to an effect of accretion, since Christine’s voice and the threat are more pronounced than in the source text, and also constitutes a contraction, because the reader is unlikely to interpret the dialogue as anything but a threat to kill everyone in the opera house. There is a further effect of accretion in terms of the level of language: “as we all might croak when all is said and done” is a very eloquent way of expressing the euphemism. The translators could have opted for a lower level of language, using a phrase such as “just like we’ll all croak!” or something similar. However, this accretion does not lead the reader to understand the character of the phantom differently than in the source text. The Persian has already stated earlier in the chapter that Erik is prepared to die along with all the people he is threatening to blow up at the opera: “Quel plus beau cortège pourrait-il rêver pour mourir? Il allait descendre dans la tombe avec les plus belles épaules du monde, parées de tous les bijoux...” (Leroux 310). Therefore, J.M. and Randy Lofficier’s choice to use the pronoun “we” is accurate because it includes Erik in the impending death, whereas the pronoun “you” would have excluded him and changed the reader’s understanding of how events were to unfold.

The end of chapter 26 is also worth discussing because it presents the English translators with the challenge of translating onomatopoeic sounds. As Hervey and Higgins note in their book, *Thinking French Translation*, when faced with sound symbolism, the translator must decide if what matters is “the *specific sounds* in the ST’s alliteration, assonance, etc. (as in the case of the snakes), or [...] rather *the fact that there is* alliteration, assonance, etc. [...]” (Hervey and Higgins 81). Hervey and Higgins go on to say that with onomatopoeia, it is the specific

sounds of the word that matter, and that due to the nature of such words, “there will virtually always be some phonic translation loss” (81). Translators may choose to compensate in other areas of the text to try to make up for this loss.

The use of onomatopoeia is central to Leroux’s style in this novel. He uses it several times throughout the *Le Fantôme de l’Opéra*, and to great effect in the two most pivotal scenes: in chapter 8 when Carlotta loses her voice and croaks like a toad, and in chapter 26 when Christine chooses to turn the scorpion and the torture chamber floods with water to drown Raoul and the Persian. All the translators were confronted with the challenge of how best to translate these onomatopoeias in order to minimize the phonic loss and still maintain the meaning, style, and narrative drama of the source text. The English translations of excerpts from these two scenes are included in the tables below.

7.3 A Peculiar Noise for a Toad

Leroux (1910)	De cette bouche s’était échappé... ... <i>Un crapaud</i> ! Ah ! l’affreux, le hideux, le squameux, venimeux, écumeux, écumant, glapissant crapaud !... Par où était-il entré? Comment s’était-il accroupi sur la langue ? Les pattes de derrière repliées, pour bondir plus haut et plus loin, sournoisement, il était sorti du larynx, et... couac ! Couac ! Couac !... Ah ! le terrible couac ! Car vous pensez bien qu’il ne faut parler de crapaud qu’au figuré. On ne le voyait pas mais, par l’enfer ! on l’entendait. Couac !
De Mattos (1911)	Carlotta croaked like a toad: “Co-ack!”
Blair (1990)	From that mouth had come... a toad! A hideous, ghastly, scaly, venomous, foaming, croaking toad! Where had it come from? How had it crouched on her tongue? With its hind legs bent so that it could jump higher and farther, it had waited, then treacherously come out of her larynx and croaked. Croak! Croak! Ah, that terrible croak! As you must have realized, we are not talking about an actual, flesh-and-blood toad, but about the sound of one. That toad could not be seen but, by the devil, it could be heard! Croak!
Wolf (1996)	From that mouth there had escaped... A toad! Ah! A frightful, hideous, scaly, venomous, frothing, foaming, croaking toad! From where had it come? how had it crouched at the tip of her tongue? Its hind legs folded in order to jump higher and farther, it had come sneakily out of her larynx and —croak. Croak! Croak! Ah! that terrible croak! But you must clearly understand that one speaks of a toad here only figuratively. No one could see it, but, the devil take it, it could be heard. Croak.

Lofficier (2004)	That amazing mouth had let out... ...<i>A croak!</i> Ah! The awful, hideous, horrid, ghastly, repulsive, dreadful, frightful, shocking croak! How could it have happened? Had it been dangerously lurking behind the diva's vocal chords, lying in wait for its opportunity to treacherously escape her mouth and...croak! Croak! Croak! Ah! The dreadful thing!
Rivière (2009)	For her very mouth had just produced...a toad! And what an awful, hideous, scummy, slimy, venomous, hoarse toad it was! How did it find its way there? How did it come to crouch on her tongue with its hind legs folded so as to spring higher and further? It had surreptitiously issued from her larynx and ... croak! Croak! Croak! Oh! What a dreadful sound! The toad in question was, of course, a metaphorical one. It could not be seen, but, in Hell's name, it could be heard!
Coward (2012)	That mouth had spawned... <i>A toad!</i> A disgusting, hideous, scaly, poisonous, slimy, clammy, croaking toad! How had it got there? How could it have squatted on her tongue? Back legs braced under it ready to jump higher and further, it had crouched furtively in her larynx and leaped out with a loud <i>skaaark!</i> <i>Skaaark! Skaaark!...</i> that awful <i>skaaark!</i> Of course, we speak here of toads only in a metaphorical sense. There was nothing to see but, by God! there was plenty to hear. <i>Skaaark!</i>

As illustrated in the table, De Mattos' translation again immediately stands out as being significantly shorter than the source text. There are significant contraction and reduction effects. De Mattos' translation is merely a summary of the passage that retains none of Leroux's style and flair for the dramatic and conveys only the barest essential meaning. It also eliminates Leroux's playful trick on the reader where he creates a very vivid image of a toad emerging from Carlotta's mouth, then quickly subverts the description by telling the reader that he is sure they understand that there is no real toad, but rather only the very real sound of a toad that Carlotta is making. Not only is this comical, it is an example of why I believe Leroux's novel is a *récit fantastique*. Over and over again, Leroux's describes a seemingly supernatural event, then later he subverts the reader's understanding of the event by offering a different, plausible explanation for what occurred. While a toad emerging suddenly for someone's throat is fantastical and has no scientific explanation, the *sound* of a toad could simply mean that Carlotta had a bad throat cold that evening and "croaked" when she tried to hit the high notes. De Mattos' translation constitutes a contraction because it does not allow the reader vacillate between these two interpretations, or to enjoy the playful style that is so characteristic of the source text.

Leroux also plays with rhythm and rhyme in this passage. The list of adjectives rhyme, ending in “-eux” and “-ant,” as well as using two words beginning with “écu-” to continue a rhyming pattern while the rhyme scheme in the suffixes changes. This creates a distinct rhythm when reading the passage. While all the translations contain some rhyme in the list of adjectives, they are more often pairs of rhymes, such as “dreadful” and “frightful” (Lofficier) and “slimy” and “clammy” (Coward) rather than a long string of rhyming words. This constitutes a reduction because the narrator’s voice is more subdued than in the source text and the rhythm of the passage is altered. Wolf compensates for the reduction in the next line of the passage with the alliterative phrase, “the tip of her tongue,” which minimizes the reduction from earlier.

Blair’s translational choices, on the other hand, produce only minimal effects in this passage. There is an elimination that slightly downplays the hyperbole Leroux creates by using a long list of adjectives to describe the toad. Blair opts not to translate “écumant,” presumably because it is very similar in meaning to “écumeux” and its elimination would therefore have only a minimal impact. Blair opts to use the word croak to convey the noise the toad makes. This is a natural choice and is very similar phonetically to Leroux’s “couac” in the source text. However, there is a reduction here. Leroux plays with the French language by using “couac” to describe the noise the toad makes, when the *Grand Robert* identifies this onomatopoeia as a “cri du corbeau” as well as a “son faux et discordant rendu par une voix” and a “fausse note” (*Grand Robert en ligne* n.p.). In this respect the term very accurately describes Carlotta’s difficulty in producing the correct note, and also adds a sense of mystery to the event, since it is not normal for a toad to make this noise. Therefore, with the use of the word croak, there is an effect of reduction in the voice of the narrator as he describes and attempts to imitate the terrible sound coming from Carlotta’s mouth because it matches both the definitions in English of the sounds a toad makes and the sounds a person with a sore throat might make.

Wolf, in his translation, also opts for the word croak. This has the same effect of reduction as in Blair’s translation. Wolf’s translation, however, further subdues the narrator’s voice in the target text by once again eliminating a number of the exclamation marks at the end of Leroux’s sentences. This makes the translation feel flatter and less dramatic. These reductions

occur enough times in Wolf's translation that there is a macro-level voice effect of conciseness when compared with the source text.

J.M. and Randy Lofficier again choose to translate “couac” by “croak,” which, as explained above, leads to a reduction in voice due to the phonic translation loss and the play on meaning in the French when Leroux switches the animal that would normally make that noise. There is also an addition to the text in the Lofficiers' translation where Carlotta's mouth is described as “amazing.” This is a transformation because the amazing could now be interpreted as referring to Carlotta's singing ability or the fact that a toad has just leaped out of her mouth. What is most interesting about the Lofficiers' translation is their decision here to completely eliminate the toad from the scene, leaving only the croaking noise made by Carlotta. In order to compensate for this change throughout the passage, the translators transform the list of hyperbolic adjectives to apply to the sound a toad makes rather than the toad itself. This is a significant contraction because as described above, not only does it eliminate the possible interpretation that Carlotta has a real toad in her throat, it also constitutes a contraction on the level of the *récit fantastique* where Leroux continually provides one practical and one fantastical explanation for an event. The imagery of the toad crouching on Carlotta's tongue with its legs bent, ready to jump out is also transformed in the translation to a metaphor of some creature “lurking” and “lying in wait” to escape the diva's throat. This amounts to a contraction, because the reader can no longer be led to believe there is a real toad in Carlotta's throat. The translational choice also forces J.M. and Randy Lofficier to eliminate the sentence that follows—also leading to contraction—where Leroux playfully reveals the trick he has played on gullible readers by making them believe the toad is real through his vivid description.

Rivière also chooses the word croak as her onomatopoeia. There is a slight reduction because she eliminates the final instance of the word in the passage (Leroux's text contains four *couacs*, and Rivière's only three croaks). Rivière also makes certain syntactical choices that differ from the source text and combines sentences in a different manner. “Les pattes de derrière repliées, pour bondir plus haut et plus loin, sournoisement, il était sorti du larynx, et... couac !” in the target text becomes “How did it come to crouch on her tongue with its hind legs folded so as to spring higher and further? It had surreptitiously issued from her larynx and ... croak!” in

Rivière's translation. This reduces the impact of the toad's first croak. By breaking up the sentence, Rivière eliminates the sense that Leroux's phrase creates of some unstoppable force building up in Carlotta's throat, to finally be expelled in one loud *couac*! Rivière's sentence carries less dramatic weight and makes the first croak less impressive, leading to a reduction of the narrator's voice. The reduction is also reinforced because Rivière's translation does not have the same comical, mocking tone as the source text.

Coward's translation of this passage differs from the other translations in that he does not use the word croak. Instead, Coward makes the lexical choice to create an onomatopoeia, just as Leroux has done in the source text. The noise that Coward's toad makes is "skaark!" This is a larger phonic loss than simply using the English word croak because it bears little phonic resemblance to Leroux's "couac." The sound made by the consonant cluster "sk" is markedly different than a hard k sound, and "Skaark" stands out more in the English text than "couac" does in the French because while Leroux's onomatopoeia exists in French (albeit to describe the sound of a different animal), there is no word in English to describe the noise a toad makes that is similar to Coward's created sound. This causes accretion because the voice is more pronounced in the translation as a result of this unusual word. There is also accretion where Coward uses the verb "spawned" to describe the toad emerging from Carlotta's mouth where Leroux writes "s'était échappé." Spawned is a more unusual word in English, leading to a slightly more pronounced voice in the target text.

7.4 The Mysterious Voices of Joseph Buquet and Mme Giry

Coward is also the only translator to make a very specific choice with regards to the characters of Joseph Buquet, the chief stagehand, and Mme Giry, the usher. As I described in chapter 5 on paratext, Joseph Buquet's only direct speech in the novel is in chapter 1 when he describes what the phantom looks like. Leroux uses the same level of language for Joseph Buquet's description as he does when writing as the narrator or even as the directors of the opera:

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 chose horrible à voir. Trois ou quatre longues mèches brunes sur le front et derrière les oreilles font office de chevelure. (Leroux 15-16)

Coward's translation of Buquet's speech, however, differs:

He's tremendously thin and his coat hangs on a bag o' bones. His eyes are so deep-set you can't hardly make out the pupils which never move. In fact, all you can see is two great big black holes like sockets in a dead man's skull. The skin is stretched over the bones as tight as a drum, it's not white but a sickly sort of yellor. 'E get no nose to speak of, you can hardly see it side on, and the fact that there's no nose *to see* is the most 'orrible *sight!* three or four brown strandy wisps across his forehead and behind his ears is all he's got in the way of hair. (Coward 13)

Joseph Buquet in Coward's translation has a cockney accent, as does Mme Giry: "Now that, sir, is exackly wot I was wanting to talk to you about, so's you won't have the same bother as happened to M. Debieenne and M. Poligny... They didn't want to listen to me neither, at the start..." (Coward 47). In both cases, this creates a deformation effect because the voices are changed in the target text and it could lead a reader to understand the characters differently. The cockney accents in English were likely chosen by Coward because both Joseph Buquet and Mme Giry are working class and would have had lower social standing than characters such as the opera directors or the Comte de Chagny. However, Joseph Buquet is the "chef machiniste" and fills a higher leadership role in the opera house, and his way of speaking in the source text is no different than any of the other characters, regardless of social standing. We know based on the narrator's description of Mme Giry's clothing that she is poor, and there are a few occasions in the text where she uses contractions (for example, she refers to Moncharmin at one point as "mon brav' mossieu"), but this occurs far more infrequently than Mme Giry's cockney accent in Coward's translation, so there is still an effect of deformation.

7.5 Drowning in Onomatopoeia

Let us return now to the other major instance of onomatopoeia in Leroux's work. The following table provides the excerpt from the source text and the six English translations of the passage in which Raoul and the Persian are drowning in the torture chamber.

Leroux (1910)	Un dernier cri ! ...Erik !... Christine !... glou, glou, glou !... dans les oreilles ! ... glou, glou, glou !... au fond de l'eau noire, nos oreilles font glou-glou !... Et il me semble encore, avant de perdre tout à fait connaissance, entendre entre deux glouglous... "Tonneaux !... tonneaux !... Avez-vous des tonneaux à vendre ?"
De Mattos (1911)	A last cry: "Erik!... Christine!..." "Guggle, guggle, guggle!" in our ears. "Guggle! Guggle!" At the bottom of the dark water, our ears went, "Guggle! Guggle!" And, before losing consciousness entirely, I seemed to hear between two guggles: "Barrels! Barrels! Any barrels to sell?"
Blair (1990)	One last cry! "Erik! Christine!" A gurgling sound in our ears. Beneath the surface of the dark water, a gurgling in our ears. And just before I lost consciousness it seemed to me that I heard, through the gurgling, "Barrels! Barrels! Any barrels to sell?"
Wolf (1996)	A last cry! Erik...Christine... a gurgling... in our ears... gurgling, gurgling... from beneath the black water we hear it. And before completely losing consciousness, it seems to me that I hear between two 'gurglings,' the cry of 'Barrels! Barrels! Have you any barrels for sale?'
Lofficier (2004)	One last cry: "Erik!" "Christine!" "Gurgle, gurgle, gurgle," answered the water in our ears. At the bottom of the dark water, our ears heard only: "Gurgle, gurgle!" And before losing consciousness entirely, I seemed to hear, between two gurgles: "Barrels! Barrels! Any barrels for sale?"
Rivière (2009)	One last cry: 'Erik! Christine!' And then only the sound of the dark rushing water pounding in our ears as we sank deeper! And, before losing all consciousness, I dimly recollect hearing through the incessant din: 'Barrels! Barrels! Any old barrels! Any old barrels to sell?'
Coward (2012)	One last cry for help!... 'Erik!...Christine!' Sounds of water bubbling, fizzing in our ears!...gurgling, foaming... under the black water our ears rang, boiled with it!... And before losing consciousness, I seemed still to hear a voice calling above the swish and boil of water: <i>any old barrels!...barrels! ...any old barrels for sale?</i>

The challenges encountered in this passage with regard to Leroux's onomatopoeic use of "glou" are similar to those dealt with in the previously discussed passage with "couac." Blair, Wolf, J.M. and Randy Lofficier, and Coward all use the word gurgle/gurgling as a translation for "glou," which seems to be the most neutral option. I would suggest "glug" as a possible effective translation because it represents less of a phonic loss in English than gurgle: it is only one syllable like "glou," and begins with the same consonant cluster, "gl." However, none of the English translators opted to use this word. De Mattos opts for the marked and oddly comical

“guggle, guggle,” and Ribière avoids using onomatopoeia altogether by transforming the first person, stream of consciousness style in French, which is written in the present tense as if it were occurring right then, to a past tense description of what the Persian recalled of the events. In fact, Wolf is the only translator to keep this passage in the present tense. While this choice makes his translation grammatically closer to the source text, it also creates an effect of accretion because the historical present is used much more rarely in English than in French, so the voice in the passage becomes more pronounced. Wolf also uses the formation “seems to me that I hear between two ‘gurglings’” which is very unusual and marked in English. This also produces accretion.

Rivière describes her choices in this passage in the “translator’s note” at the beginning of her translation: “This translation deviates from the French on one occasion: at the very end of chapter 26, “The Scorpion or the Grasshopper?”, which marks the climax of the book. Any close rendition of the onomatopoeia used in this passage tended to weaken its dramatic import — given a choice, readers of the manuscript opted for my edited version” (Rivière lii). This is interesting because it shows that in this case (and likely elsewhere), Ribière’s translational choices were affected by others reading her translation and expressing a preference for one possible translations of the passage. While Ribière’s translation does carry “dramatic import,” there is a reduction in the voice and a change of focalization: the reader no longer feels as if he or she is immediately present, about to drown in the water filling the chamber. There is also an effect of accretion in the passage, where Ribière translates “il me semble” as “I dimly recollect” and a transformation where “entre deux glouglous” becomes “through the incessant din.” Rather than just the noise of “un liquide qui s’écoule par saccades,” the “incessant din” is constant, rather than stopping and starting (Dendien, *TLFI* n.p.). Ribière also completely eliminates Leroux’s use of onomatopoeia in this scene, which is an important style marker in the novel.

Another challenge is how to handle the broken nature of the narration, and the elliptical phrases. This passage in the novel is part of the Persian’s written account of what he and Raoul encountered when they descended into Erik’s lair under the opera house. Leroux’s use of broken, elliptical sentences and the constant interjection of the water rising around Raoul and the Persian create a very vivid image of the situation and an effective cliffhanger for the end of the chapter.

De Mattos and J.M. and Randy Lofficier both change the interjections into direct speech, which transforms the onomatopoeia from descriptive noises into dialogue as if the water were speaking to them. J.M. and Randy Lofficier's translation, however, results in a strange formation in English: "at the bottom of the dark water, our ears heard only: 'Gurgle, gurgle!'" Although this is very marked in English, Leroux also uses an unusual structure in French, "nos oreilles font glou-glou" so the voice effect here is minimal. Wolf recreates the elliptical phrases, but again removes a number of Leroux's exclamation marks, making the passage less dramatic and reducing the narrative voice. Coward opts for a series of different onomatopoeic words in English to try to capture the sound of the water. This is somewhat effective, but it loses the repetitive sounds of Leroux's text that continually flood the reader in the same way the water floods the characters.

This passage is important not only because it is a turning point in the plot where the phantom ends up saving Raoul and the Persian and releasing his hold on Christine, but also because, together with the scene involving Carlotta and the toad, it highlights how Leroux uses onomatopoeia both comically and dramatically in the source text. He plays with the rhythm and the sound of the words to amuse the reader, but also to create very vivid imagery in the reader's mind, making the danger feel more immediate and increasing the dramatic impact of certain scenes. These are two of the main characteristics of the writing in *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*. The plot moves forward rapidly and at least one dramatic or mysterious incident occurs in every chapter. Similarly, there are small comical vignettes in between the more tense dramatic ones to relieve the tension slightly before moving on to the next thrilling scene. The translators that consistently subdue the comical or dramatic nature of these scenes cause conciseness and shrinkage on the macro-level of the translation.

7.6 *Stressing the Meaning*

Leroux's original text is full of phrases and words in italics. In her translator's note, Ribière calls Leroux's use of italics "unusual and idiosyncratic" and opted to keep them in her translation (Ribière lii). Leroux uses italics in a number of ways throughout the text. Sometimes he appears to do this to add emphasis to reported speech, such as in chapter one when Meg Giry tells the other girls in the corps de ballet about the phantom's visits to box number five: "Mais

non !... *Le fantôme y vient et il n'y a personne*" (Leroux 22). Leroux also italicizes words such as "musique," "voix," "personne," "ombre," "ange," "génie," and "homme" when he wants to suggest to the reader that the unidentified person was the phantom or that the event that occurred was a result of the phantom's trickery. For example, when Moncharmin says "Quand je songe à cette première sortie, je ne puis séparer la confidence qui nous fut faite, dans leur cabinet, par MM. Debienné et Poligny de la présence à notre souper de ce *fantomatique* personnage que nul de nous ne connaissait" (Leroux 42). In this case, both the choice of the adjective "fantomatique" and the use of italics are clearly meant to make the reader believe it was the opera ghost who came to dinner. Leroux also uses italics for the letters written by the phantom to the opera house directors. Finally, italics are also employed to highlight important words and phrases within the novel. Near the end of the novel, for example, when Raoul and the Persian have been rescued from the flood but are still in Erik's lair under the opera, the narrator states "Erik revint... fit boire au daroga une potion, après lui avoir recommandé de ne plus adresser une parole à « sa femme » ni à personne, *parce que cela pouvait être très dangereux pour la santé de tout le monde*" (Leroux 323). Here italics are used to emphasize the menace in the phantom's words as well as indicating a switch from the narrator's voice to free indirect style. It is clear here that these words were spoken aloud to the Persian by the phantom. Although it is not true of all the italics used in the novel, in the majority of cases they are related to the phantom in one way or another. They imply that someone is speaking about the phantom, or they let the reader know that an event that occurred was a result of the phantom's actions.

Given the important role italics play in the original novel, the translators needed to address Leroux's use of italics in some way. Ribière clearly states that she faithfully reproduces Leroux's particular use of italics, thus keeping the same emphasis of the original and preserving a marker of Leroux's style (Ribière li-ii). De Mattos also more or less faithfully reproduces the italics from the source text, with the exception of the opera ghost's letters which are converted to plain text. Blair on the other hand, leaves the opera ghost's letters in italics but removes almost all the other italicized words and phrases from his translation. This constitutes a reduction in voice on the meso-level because the voices in Blair's translation, particularly the phantom's, are more subdued than in the source text. Since this effect accumulates throughout Blair's

translation, there is conciseness on the macro-level. Possibly as an attempt to compensate for the reductions, Blair inexplicably puts one passage in his translation into italics: a paragraph right before the chapter 26 cliffhanger discussed above, where Raoul and the Persian are trapped in the flooding torture chamber:

Ah! ah! rappelez-vous! Combien y a-t-il d'espace entre la branche de l'arbre de fer et le plafond en coupole de la chambre des Miroirs ?...Tâchez à vous souvenir!... Après tout, l'eau va peut-être s'arreter...elle trouvera sûrement son niveau... Tenez ! il me semble qu'ell s'arrête !...Non ! non ! horreur !...A la nage ! A la nage !... (Leroux 319)

Try to remember! How much space is there between the branch of the iron tree and the domed ceiling of the torture chamber? True to remember! After all, maybe the water will stop. It has to find its own level. Yes, I think it is stopping...No! No! It's horrible! We have to swim! Swim! (Blair 316)

This passage does not appear in italics in Leroux's original text. Blair may have been trying to compensate for removing italics elsewhere in the novel, or perhaps for eliminating the ellipses and a few of the interjections (ah! ah!) from this passage. However, this leads to an effect of accretion: since Blair does not use italics widely in the rest of the text, this passage is more pronounced than in Leroux's original, leading the reader to wonder if this section is particularly significant. This also has an effect of transformation, because it may lead the reader to new interpretations of this passage that have no clear link to the source text because the passage was not originally italicized.

Wolf reproduces Leroux's italics quite faithfully, creating the same effects as in the source text. Coward chooses to include most of the original italics, although there is a slight effect of reduction because in a few places where italics were used in the source text, Coward opts for plain text. J.M. and Randy Lofficier reproduce the italics in the original, but also place a number of larger passages in italics that were printed in plain text in the original. This leads to deformation since in a number of cases, the relevant voices are heightened as compared to the source text through the use of italics. Furthermore, the varied use of italics means the reader is less likely to associate the italicized words and phrases with the phantom in J.M. and Randy Lofficier's text than in Leroux's original, since there are many more passages italicized that do not refer (explicitly or implicitly) to the phantom. This destroys certain links in the text and may

lead the reader to interpret the phantom differently, thus causing contraction, if he or she associates Erik with fewer of the mysterious events in the novel.

This analysis of how each of the translators dealt with Leroux's italics shows that the English (re)translations of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* do not fit Berman's model of retranslation. For Berman, each subsequent translation is created to "réduire la défaillance originelle" of the initial translation (Berman, *Palimpsestes* 5). Yet when we look specifically at the translational choices related to the use of italics, De Mattos' initial translation of Leroux's work follows the source text extremely closely, whereas the next translation (Blair's in 1990), almost completely eliminates the italics. This does not match Berman's theory that each retranslation that follows the initial translation will improve on the translations before it and move closer to the source text.

7.7 Above the Traps: Macro-Level Effects

In this section, I will look at the translational choices I have described above and discuss how they affect the text on a macro-level and whether or not this leads the reader to interpret the translation differently than they would the source text.

De Mattos' translation is in some ways very close to the source text. Because it was written in 1911, just a year after Leroux's novel was first published, the English has more historical accuracy than some of the later translations because it was translated in the same time period. The translation stays close to the source text in many parts in terms of syntax and word choice, although it suffers in terms of readability in some passages because of this adherence to the French original. However, despite the positive aspects of this translation, we cannot overlook the extensive eliminations that occur throughout the text, ranging from single sentences to entire pages. The amount of text that is removed in De Mattos' version makes it an adaptation rather than a translation and with so many parts missing from the source text, it is impossible for the reader to come to a just interpretation of Leroux's work. De Mattos' text does fit Berman's description of initial translations, however: "les premières traductions sont celles qui sont le plus frappées par la non-traduction" (Berman, *Palimpsestes* 5). In this respect, De Mattos' translation fits Berman's model of retranslation.

Blair's 1990 retranslation is the first unabridged version of Leroux's text in English. In that respect, Blair expanded on De Mattos' original work and improved on what Berman would call "la défaillance originelle" (Berman, *Palimpsestes* 5). However, this translation is not without translational choices that affect how the reader understand the characters in the novel. The reduction we see in Blair's translation from choices such as the elimination of italics and exclamation points accumulates throughout the text leads to conciseness on the macro-level. Overall the voices in the novel are more subdued than in Leroux's source text. Blair's translation seems to have emerged when the right socio-cultural moment came about in the English-speaking world: the debut of Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical, *The Phantom of the Opera*. The musical opened on Broadway in 1988 and quickly became a huge success, giving publishers a great economic incentive to publish a new translation of Leroux's original work. I believe this was a driving factor behind Blair's 1990 translation.

Wolf's 1996 translation added a number of paratextual elements to differentiate it from the previous translations. As mentioned before, the text is heavily annotated and there are a number of stills from stage and screen productions of *The Phantom of the Opera*. These all influence the reader's perception and understanding of the text. These comments on the text lead to contractions and transformations since Wolf uses them to put forward his own personal interpretations of the text rather than simply providing the reader with factual or historical explications. If the reader chose to ignore the annotations and just read Wolf's translated text, they could conceivably deem it an effective translation of Leroux's work, although there are a number of mistranslations and odd syntactical choices that affect the text's readability as a whole. For example, in chapter 13, Leroux writes "je vous jouerai, à minuit sonnant, sur la tombe de votre père, La Résurrection de Lazare, avec le violon du mort" (Leroux 156). Wolf translates this as "I'll play the 'Resurrection of Lazarus' on 'the violin of death'" rather than making it clear that Erik will play the song on the violin of Christine's dead father (Wolf 166). However, if the comments are read along with Wolf's translation, I would argue that this translation could be considered an ideological translation since Wolf's annotations clearly promote his own specific interpretation of the text while excluding other interpretations.

J.M. and Randy Lofficier's 2004 translation of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* differs the most from the source text. I noted a number of contractions on the meso-level, leading to shrinkage on the macro-level. What stands out the most in their translation, however, is salience in the text of J.M. and Randy Lofficier's voices as translators. I noted many instances of accretion, such as in their translation of the *scorpion et sauterelle* passage discussed at the beginning of this chapter. Another example is the translation of the word "gamine" as "brat" when the narrator is describing Meg Giry in chapter 2. And although it is not part of the text proper, the short story at the end of the Lofficiers' translation about Erik's origins could be considered a transformation because it leads to a fundamentally different interpretation of the character of Erik, should the reader accept it as canonical. I believe the amount of accretion and deformation present in this translation of Leroux's work means that it fits Hewson's definition of an ontological translation and certainly warrants further study.

By contrast, Ribière's 2009 translation is the version I believe is the most effective in English. As discussed earlier in this chapter, there are some reductions and eliminations in her text, but they are not numerous enough to create a very large effect on the macro-level. As stated in her translator's note at the beginning of the translation, Ribière focused on readability in her translation, but also on "convey[ing] the flavour of the original" and trying to maintain historical accuracy and preserve Leroux's writing style as much as possible (Ribière li). Her annotations are well-researched and present facts, rather than her own personal interpretations. Using Hewson's scale for interpreting a text on the macro-level, I would say Ribière's translation is an example of divergent similarity. All translational choices have some effect on the reader, but Ribière's do not prohibit the reader from interpreting Leroux's original work in a similar way as they would if they read the source text.

Finally, David Coward's 2012 translation would fall in the category of relative divergence in Hewson's model. There are some major incidences of accretion (such as Joseph Buquet's and Mme Giry's cockney accents) which lead to a slight markedness of voices in the translation overall. He also makes a few unusual lexical choices at pivotal moments in the text which make an impression on the reader. However, Coward's text is very accurate and he clearly has a good sense of Leroux's writing style which he endeavours to convey through the translation. Although

the accretion effects in the text are very marked, they are not so strong that they lead to a radically different interpretation of the characters. For example, it could be argued that Mme Giry is clearly lower class in Leroux's novel based on the descriptions of her worn clothing and her slightly contracted speech in a few instances, so while Coward's portrayal of Giry as cockney is a strong example of accretion, it does not lead the reader to a vastly different understanding of her character.

As I have shown, each of the six English translations has its strengths and weaknesses, but the question still remains whether or not they collectively follow Berman's proposed trend of retranslations. Let us now return to the retranslation hypothesis to see how these (re)translations of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* related to Berman's model.

8. Conclusion

Berman's retranslation hypothesis suggests that after the initial translation, subsequent translations will continue to improve on the weaknesses of the previous translations until, at the favorable moment in the culture, the great translation of a work is produced. For Berman, this great translation will always be source-text oriented in terms of richness of language and impact in the target culture.

The six English translations of Gaston Leroux's *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* do not map perfectly onto this model. Just as other theorists such as Sharon Deane-Cox have shown, (re)translations rarely follow such a simple history-as-progress model, although in some cases the translations may confirm certain aspects of Berman's theory. De Mattos' initial translation of Leroux's work is "le plus frappée par la non-traduction," as Berman would describe it (Berman, *Palimpsestes* 5). There are large passages of text from the original that are not translated, making De Mattos' version an adaptation rather than a translation. A number of the later retranslations do seem to reduce the "weaknesses" of the earlier translations by smoothing out the style and eliminating earlier mistranslations. Moreover, in my opinion, the two most recent retranslations of Leroux's work, Ribière's and Coward's, are the most effective interpretations.

However, there are numerous aspects of these translations that do not fit at all with Berman's retranslation hypothesis. For example, Blair's translation came out at what would be the right cultural moment for a great translation to emerge, yet it is not the most effective of the translations and was surpassed by later English versions. Portions of Blair's retranslation could also be classified as an initial translation, since De Mattos' left out large portions of the source text. Furthermore, the translations are not always consistently the most effective or the least effective translation. Some of the earlier translations are more effective in certain areas, such as conveying Leroux's writing style, while within the same translation a character may be interpreted differently than in the source text or an important passage may not carry the same dramatic impact as in the source text. Berman's model leaves no room for such occurrences. While his essay is often understood in more essentialist terms and ignores the nuances within it, his history-as-progress model is not a particularly useful way to assess and compare

retranslations and has in this case been proven not to match the actual progression of the English translations of *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*.

8.1 Epilogue: Further Research

Through this research, I have been able to analyze the English translations of a story that has captivated people's imaginations for more than a century. While I was able to look at certain passages of the translations of Leroux's work in detail, there is certainly more room for further research on this topic and other related topics. It would be interesting to study just J.M. and Randy Lofficier's translation in detail and conduct a close analysis of more passages to verify if it indeed fits Hewson's definition of an ontological translation. Since ontological translations are quite rare, this might prove to be a good opportunity to study one and identify more distinguishing factors of ontological translations. It would also be useful here to contact the translators to ask them about specific translational choices they made. While conducting research for this paper, I tried to contact Lowell Blair and J.M. and Randy Lofficier via their publishers, but received no response. It may be worth following up with the translators to gain insights about their priorities and objectives for the translations—motivations that cannot often be ascertained simply by analyzing the text itself.

A corpus-based study of these translations could also yield some interesting results. The six translations provide a large enough but sufficiently restricted data set to study, for example, how the word *on* is translated throughout the text and how it affects readers' interpretations of the work. Such research would build on studies of the use of *on* by theorists such as Ashley Riggs in her Ph.D. thesis *Thrice Upon a Time: Feminist Fairy-Tale Rewritings by Angela Carter and Emma Donoghue, and Their French Translations*. It could also be especially pertinent here to replicate Deane-Cox's methodology and compare the results to her study on the use of *on* in George Sand's *La Mare au diable*. It would also be interesting to do a corpus-based study that compares the styles of lengthy 19th century chapter titles like those in *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* with their translations to look for trends and different approaches to translating such titles.

It is impossible to talk about *The Phantom of the Opera* without at least mentioning the famous musical and various film adaptations of Leroux's work. Since the musical has become

extremely successful and arguably surpassed the original French text in terms of cultural impact, it would be very interesting to study how reader's knowledge of the musical affects their interpretations of Leroux's original text and its translations.

Le Fantôme de l'Opéra has captivated people's imaginations for so long because it plays many roles all at once. It is a love story, a mystery, a thriller, a comedy. While this gave Gaston Leroux the freedom to write whatever he wished without be constrained by a specific genre, it also posed a rather challenging task to anyone who decided to translate it. While we may never know if the phantom really existed, we can continue to pore through the translations looking for clues and maybe someday in the future, the Angel of Music will rise again from beneath the Palais Garnier to haunt the pages of a new translation.

Works Cited

- Abbott, H. Porter. *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008. Print.
- “Accident à l’opéra: cinq cents kilos sur la tête d’une concierge.” *Le Matin* 21 May 1896: 1. Web. 23 April 2016. < <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k556689w/f1.item> >.
- Baker, Mona. *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*. London and New York: Routledge, 1992. Print.
- Berman, Antoine. *L’épreuve de l’étranger : Culture et traduction dans l’Allemagne romantique*. Paris: Gallimard, 1984. Print.
- . *La retraduction comme espace de la traduction*. Palimpsestes, 4, 1-7. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1990. Print.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *The rules of art: Genesis and structure of the literary field*. Trans. Susan Emanuel. California: Stanford University Press, 1996. Print.
- Brownlie, Siobhan. “Narrative Theory and Retranslation Theory.” *Across Language and Cultures* 7 (2), 2006. Print.
- Castex, Pierre-Georges. *Le conte fantastique en France de Nodier à Maupassant*. Paris: Librairie José Corti, 1951. Print.
- Deane-Cox, Sharon. *Retranslation: Translation, literature and reinterpretation*. London: Bloomsbury, 2014. Print.
- Dendien, Jacques. *La Trésor de la Langue Française informatisé*. Analyse et traitement informatique de la langue française. Web. 5 July 2016. < <http://atilf.atilf.fr/> >.
- “Duration of Copyright.” *United States Copyright Office* (2011): 2. Web. 30 May 2016. < <http://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ15a.pdf> >.
- Everist, Mark. *Mozart’s Ghosts: Haunting the Halls of Musical Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. Print.
- Gambier, Yves. “La retraduction, retour et détour.” *Meta: Translator’s Journal*, Vol. 39:3. 1994, 413-417. Web. 6 August 2016. < <https://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/1994/v39/n3/002799ar.pdf> >.

- Genette, Gérard. *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*. Trans. Jane E. Lewin. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Print.
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von. *West-östlicher Divan*. Frankfurt: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1819. Print.
- Grand Robert en ligne*. Dictionnaires Grand Robert, 2016. Web. 7 August 2016. < <http://www.lerobert.com/> >.
- Greskovic, Robert. *Ballet 101: A Complete Guide to Learning and Loving the Ballet*. New York: Hyperion, 1998. Print.
- Hervey, Sándor, and Higgins, Ian. *Thinking French Translation: A Course in Translation Method, French to English*. London and New York: Routledge, 2002. Print.
- Hewson, Lance. *An Approach to Translation Criticism: Emma and Madame Bovary in Translation*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2010. Print.
- . Parallèles – numéro 27(2), octobre 2015, review of Deane-Cox, Sharon (2014). *Retranslation: Translation, literature and reinterpretation*. London: Bloomsbury, 2015. Print.
- “High notes: the rise and rise of the phantom.” *The Guardian* 10 March 2010. Web. 25 May 2016. < <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2010/mar/10/phantom-of-the-opera> >.
- Juhel, Françoise, *Les Voix ensevelies*. BnF. n.d. Web. 23 April 2016. < <http://expositions.bnf.fr/voix/index.htm> >.
- Koskinen, Kaisa and Paloposki, Outi. “A thousand and one translations: revisiting retranslation.” *Claims, Changes, and Challenges in Translation Studies*, edited by Gyde Hansen, Kirsten Malmkjaer, and Daniel Gile, John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2004, pp. 27-38.
- Lecerle, Jean-Jacques. *Interpretation as Pragmatics*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999. Print.
- Leroux, Gaston. *Le Fantôme de l’Opéra*. Paris: Pierre Lafitte & Cie, 1910. Print.
- . *The Phantom of the Opera*. Trans. Lowell Blair. New York: Bantam Dell, 1990. Print.
- . *The Phantom of the Opera*. Trans. David Coward. New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2012. Print.

- . *The Phantom of the Opera*. Trans. Jean-Marc and Randy Lofficier. Encino, CA: Black Coat Press, 2004. Print.
- . *The Phantom of the Opera*. Trans. Alexander Teixeira de Mattos. London: Mills & Boon, 1911. Print.
- . *The Phantom of the Opera*. Trans. Mireille Ribière. London: Penguin Books Ltd., 2009. Print.
- . *The Essential Phantom of the Opera*. Trans. Leonard Wolf. New York: Byron Preiss Visual Publications, Inc., 1996. Print.
- . *Vue 42 - folio 11r*. Digital image. Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), Fonds Gaston Leroux. N.p., n.d. Web. 1 May 2016. < <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b55006352v/f1.planchecontact> >.
- Merriam-Webster Dictionary*. The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2016. Web. 5 July 2016. < <http://www.merriam-webster.com/> >.
- Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford University Press, 2016. Web. 6 July 2016. < <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/> >.
- Pessin, Alain, and Terrone, Patrice. *Littérature et Anarchie*. Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 1998. Print.
- “Phantom Translations: Be wary of Lowell Blair’s Translation.” *F. de l’Opéra: ce n’est pas un squelette ordinaire*. 1 November 2013. Web. 5 June 2016. < <http://fdelopera.tumblr.com/post/65697039298/phantom-translations-be-wary-of-lowell-bairs> >.
- Pym, Anthony. “Venuti’s Visibility.” *Target*, Vol. 8:1. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1996. 165-177. Web. 5 August 2016. < http://usuaris.tinet.cat/apym/on-line/translation/1996_Venuti.pdf >.
- Riggs, Ashley. *Thrice Upon a Time: Feminist Fairy-Tale Rewritings by Angela Carter and Emma Donoghue, and Their French Translations*. Thèse de doctorat, Université de Genève, 2014. Web. 30 July 2016. < <http://archive-ouverte.unige.ch/unige:41561> >.
- “Récit fantastique.” Académie Rouen, 2016. Web. 7 August 2016. < <http://ecoles.ac-rouen.fr/montivi/siteressources/file/Fantastique/definitionfantastique.pdf> >.

- Robinson, Douglas. *Retranslation and ideosomatic drift*. 1999. Web. 21 May 2016. < www.umass.edu/french/people/profiles/documents/Robinson.pdf >.
- . *Western Translation Theory from Herodotus to Nietzsche*. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 1997. Print.
- Roqueplan, Nestor. *Les Coulisses de l'Opéra*. Paris: Librairie Nouvelle, 1855: 51-53. Web. 1 May 2016. < <https://archive.org/stream/lescoulissesdel00roqugoog#page/n60/mode/2up> >.
- Shah, Raj. *No Ordinary Skeleton: Unmasking the Secret Source of Gaston Leroux's Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*. *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 50 (2013): 16-29. *Oxford Journals*. Web. 20 March 2016.
- Susam-Sarajeva, Şebnem. *Theories on the Move: Translation's Role in the Travels of Literary Theories*. Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2006. Print.
- Tahir Gürçağlar, Şehnaz. "Retranslation." *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, edited by Mona Baker and Gabriela Saldanha, Routledge, 2009. 233-236. Print.
- Todorov, Tzvetan. *Introduction à la littérature fantastique*. Paris: Éditions de seuil, 1970. Print.
- Venuti, Lawrence. *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. London and New York: Routledge, 1995. Print.
- . "Retranslations: The Creation of Value." *Translation and Culture*. Ed. Katherine M. Faull. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2004. 25-38. Print.
- Wright, K.C. "9 (Serious) Theatrical Superstitions." *Backstage*. 19 May 2015. Web. May 1, 2016. < <http://www.backstage.com/news/9-serious-theatrical-superstitions/> >.
- Yang, Wenfen. "Brief Study on Domestication and Foreignization in Translation." *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 1 (2010): 77-80. Web. 2 June 2016. < <http://ojs.academypublisher.com/index.php/jltr/article/viewFile/01017780/1511> >.