

## ***The Count of Monte Cristo* between 1844 and 2002. Losing Haydée**

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### **Abstract:**

*The Count of Monte Cristo* appeared, under the pen of Alexandre Dumas, in 1844 and has been a favorite of the seventh art during the past century, not only in its homeland, but also across the globe. But from novel to the big or TV screen, *The Count of Monte Cristo* lost some or more of the complexity and depth of Dumas' story.

Just like movies are not a faithful rendition of real life, but a selection of moments from real life, film adaptations are a selection of moments from the origin novel. The time factor has its say as well: it is difficult to imagine a faithful and complete transposition of a lengthy novel into a movie of 120 minutes or even into a TV series of 4-6 episodes. It is understandable that there are sacrifices (of characters, scenes, lines) to be made, not taking into account the alterations or additions brought by the vision(s) of the screenwriter and director. But what happens when these sacrifices affect maybe not the direct and most visible meaning of the novel, but the more subtle message of the author?

One of the most often sacrificed characters of Dumas' novel is Haydée, Ali Pasha's daughter, sold as a slave by Fernand Mondego and finally bought by the Count, and raised, under his guidance, in accordance with her rank as a princess. Screenwriters either diminished Haydée's role, presenting her more as a shallow character, or eliminated her completely from the story. Although she is not a frequent appearance in the novel, her role in the story weighs a lot more than that of many other characters. Through her, the Count accomplishes his vengeance on Fernand Mondego, but most important she is the one that brings him back to life with her love and devotion.

Edmond Dantès, as Count of Monte Cristo, considers himself an unerring agent of Providence, whose mission is to bring divine justice where human justice has failed. Therefore, he leaves behind any human emotion that would prevent him from following his path. Dehumanized, only a few characters can reach to his heart: Mercédès, Maximilien Morrel and Haydée. Whereas Mercédès and the Morrels are connections to the past, Haydée represents his future, as it is revealed in the last chapter of the novel. Although sure of the love and gratitude of Maximilien, he is ready to leave this life and go back into the shadow of death. The only thing that stops him is the acknowledgement of Haydée's love, which he understands as a reward from God. With her at his side, he can face life again, with all of its sufferings and joys. He is reborn again, this time leaving his destiny into the hands of God, and finally learning that "*all human wisdom is summed up in these two words, wait and hope*".

Instead of letting Haydée honor her role, screenwriters have come up with various alternatives. Most of the times, whether with Haydée present or absent from the story, Dantès finally reconciles with Mercédès, with whom he finds happiness (the 1998 TV series and the 2002 movie). In one other case (the 1975 movie), the screenwriter decided to punish Dantès for his thirst for revenge by making him lose Mercédès, while Haydée was aiming only to punish Fernand Mondego for betraying her father.

As these examples show, although probably faithful to their own vision of the story, the screenwriters deprived the main character and the entire story of their depth and fundamental message.

**Key words:** literature, film adaptation, character analysis

**Motto:** “*Forgive us, Madam, for the humiliation that we have inflicted on you*” (*Le Comte de Monte Cristo*, 1998)

“*The novel of Alexandre Dumas experienced a success that was never gainsaid, in spite of a romantic side that some may find today excessive. But as they are, if we like it or not, these purely imaginary characters became historic. It was with this in mind that we made them live again on the screen.*” (*Le Comte de Monte-Cristo*, 1943) [translated by the author from French].

These are the few phrases that mark the beginning of the 1943 adaptation of *The Count of Monte Cristo*, directed by Robert Vernay. It may well still be a valid explanation for the numerous adaptations of Dumas’ novel, published for the first time as a serial story between 1844 and 1846 in the feuilleton of *Journal des Débats*. And they are many indeed. From 1908, when the first film depicting the adventures of Edmond Dantès was made, until 2002, year that promoted the last adaptation of the novel, *The Count of Monte Cristo* proved to be a favorite of the seventh art. With a story and characters that steal the heart of readers, the novel is imposing through the complexity of its story and beautiful in the simplicity of the emotions it arouses. Its length and many sub-plots offer the possibility of an always different adaptation: being more or less faithful to the novel, the screenwriter has a large area from where to select what to keep and what to leave behind. But in spite of the generosity of Dumas’ pen, screenwriters chose sometimes to fabricate scenes, lines or characters, or to distort them in such a way that they contradict the spirit of Dumas’ story.

Just like movies are not a faithful rendition of real life, but a selection of moments from real life, film adaptations are a selection of moments from the origin novel. There is also the problem of transposing visually elements of the novel which are the privilege of writing, such as descriptions of emotions, of states of mind, of thoughts. The time factor has its say as well: it is difficult to imagine a faithful and complete transposition of a lengthy novel, like *The Count of Monte Cristo*, into a movie of 2-3 hours or even into a TV series reaching up to 9 hours. It is therefore understandable that this requires some sacrifices (of characters, scenes, or lines). Then, one has to take into account the alterations or additions brought by the vision(s) of the screenwriter and director. But what happens when, although keeping the direct and most visible meaning of the novel, its subtler message is affected or completely lost?

From novel to film, *The Count of Monte Cristo* lost some or more of the complexity and depth of Dumas’ story. It has lost characters, sub-plots, chronology and logic, personality and feelings of its characters. Some adaptations can stand for themselves, as independent stories, in spite of these alterations. But others cannot even boast with that and they look more like a series of scenes or episodes put together without having a real connection between them. There is however a common feature for most of these movies and that is a superficially link with the written story, which is limited to the first level of understanding of the novel: the accomplishment of Edmond Dantès’ vengeance. Therefore, they can be considered at most inspired from and not an adaptation of Dumas’ novel.

One of the most often sacrificed characters from *The Count of Monte Cristo* is Haydée, daughter of Ali Pasha, who plays an essential role in the punishment of Fernand, at this point in the story Count of Morcerf. Moreover, Dumas also gives her the mission to reconnect Monte Cristo to life, through her love and devotion. She is not a frequent appearance in the

novel, but thanks to her double role she is one of the most important characters of the story. Haydée's relation with Monte Cristo blooms only at the end of the novel, yet it marks a new beginning for Dumas' hero. Screenwriters have unfortunately lost the true meaning of the ending, even when they remained faithful to the action, and Haydée rarely represents the idea that she embodies in the novel.

Before analyzing the portrayal of Haydée in the adaptations of *The Count of Monte Cristo*, it is necessary to understand intimately the two characters, Monte Cristo and Haydée, and the relation between them. This will also make possible an insight into the ending imagined by Dumas, which will undoubtedly bring the recognition of this ending as the only valid one.

### **Edmond Dantès, from mate of the *Pharaon* to angel of vengeance**

Alexandre Dumas began to write *The Count of Monte Cristo* in 1844, having in mind a real case of treason and vengeance (Dumas, 1857, p. 344; Peuchet, 1838, p. 197-228). But unlike François Picaud, the real hero of the story, his character accomplishes a superior mission: he is not an avenger, but a punisher following the plan of the Providence - he doesn't kill his enemies, but directs their destinies towards perdition with an unseen hand. With the collaboration of Auguste Maquet, who also helped him transform the novel into a play, Dumas created a complex character, with strong emotions and beliefs, whose story can be regarded as a *Bildungsroman*.

Edmond Dantès is a young man whose life is defined by three feelings: love for his father, esteem for his employer Pierre Morrel and adoration for his fiancée Mercédès. He is a good son and a skillful sailor in spite of his youth, loved and appreciated by Morrel and the other sailors. His sole ambition is to become captain ("*Without her captain! [...] pray mind what you say, for you are touching on the most secret wishes of my heart*", Dumas, 1888, ch.1) and the husband of the beautiful Mercédès. His dreams are on the verge of coming true when, at just 19 years old, he is promised the *Pharaon* and he is just minutes away from his marriage. Most unexpectedly, Dantès is thrown in a world of isolation ("*alone in darkness and in silence*", ch.8; "*lost in the depths of his dungeon*", Dumas, 1998, vol. 1, p. 280), suffering ("*his energetic spirit [...] was imprisoned like an eagle in a cage*", ch.15), and ignorance ("*asking himself what crime he had committed that he was thus punished*", ch.8) by an unknown hand.

Fallen into despair, he is saved from his suicidal thoughts by the "*protecting hand of God*" (ch.15), who sends in his isolated dungeon the abbe Faria. Faria will take him in his care, as an apprentice and a son ("*I will be your son [...] I shall love you as I loved my father*", ch. 15; "*You are my son, Dantes [...] God has sent you to me to console, at one and the same time, the man who could not be a father, and the prisoner who could not get free.*", ch. 18). Later, convinced of the nobility of Edmond's heart, he makes him his heir and thus the future owner of an immense fortune. Dantès' gratitude is not less grand, as he tells the abbe that his presence and the knowledge he gave him represent his real treasure ("*this is my treasure, my beloved friend, and with this you have made me rich and happy*", ch.19).

Escaped from prison, Dantès, who once preferred to ignore the names of those of his friends jealous of him to prevent himself from hating them (ch.7), has only one thought: to

avenge himself on those who wronged him by throwing him in prison, making his father die of grief and hunger and throwing his fiancée into the arms of another man. Therefore, he adds to his physical transformation a change of heart, spirit and financial situation. He dehumanizes himself, letting go all human feelings (*“the way he desired to follow [...] the end he wished to achieve; his heart was in a fair way of petrifying in his bosom”*, ch.22; *“[...] farewell kindness, humanity, and gratitude! Farewell to all the feelings that expand the heart!”*, ch.30; *“his heart was like bronze”*, ch.88). The once *“noble-hearted young fellow”* (ch.5), *“full of affection for everybody”* (ch.7) now preaches egotism: *“ [I never take care of my neighbour,] I never seek to protect a society which does not protect me [...]”* (ch.40). He also learns to master his emotions and hide his thoughts under a phlegmatic face, mysterious smiles, an air of simplicity and perfect manners. Once an open book to others (*“ingenuous and open countenance”*, ch.7), his face is now a secret even for the most piercing eyes (*“despite the depth of his gaze, the king’s attorney couldn’t see anything beyond his skin”*, Dumas, 1998, vol. 4, p. 15). On the contrary, his eyes penetrate the deepest thoughts of others, just like they penetrate darkness.

With an innate intelligence and a thirst for knowledge induced by Faria, Dantès embarks on a journey of continuous study, thus coming to master all languages, customs and sciences (*“you are the epitome of all human knowledge, and you seem like a being descended from a wiser and more advanced world than ours”*, ch.117); whereas his immense fortune opens all doors (*“all things are to be sold to such as care to pay the price”*, ch.46).

By assuming a new identity, as Count of Monte Cristo, Dantès simply responds to all these changes, which allow him to dominate over people and things. Adding to this his strong belief that he is God’s envoy, an angel of vengeance, the Count is truly an exceptional being, almost a demigod (*“you are my judge on earth, as the Almighty is in heaven”*, ch.45; *“I believe you, my lord, as implicitly as if God had spoken to me”*, ch. 92) - this is the key in which his dehumanization must be read: he becomes a superior being, not an inferior one. He also imposes this conviction to the others, who believe him to be a vampire (*“he is no other than Lord Ruthven himself in a living form”*, ch.34) or *“a being returned from the other world”*, a man *“of no age”* (ch.41) and *“not of the same race”* (ch.40) with them, coming from a farther place than the end of the world (ch.41); he thus inspires both admiration and awe. He is given the power to control not only other people’s destinies (Ali, his servant, is *“a mere slave—a dog, who, should he fail in his duty towards me, I should not discharge from my service, but kill”*, ch. 46), but his own as well (*“[...] I have consented, by my free will, to stop my arm, already raised to strike, and [...] with the arm which has been so powerful against others I have struck myself”*, ch.90). He is *“above the laws of society”* (ch. 41) and obeys only God (*“I lay aside that pride before God, who has taken me from nothing to make me what I am”*, ch. 48), whom he takes as a reference for all of his actions.

As an unerring agent of Providence, his mission, *“the most beautiful, noblest, most sublime thing in the world”* (ch.48), is to bring divine justice where human justice has failed, to reward the good and punish the bad (*“I have been heaven’s substitute to recompense the good—now the god of vengeance yields to me his power to punish the wicked!”*, ch.30). He *“works by secret springs, and moves by hidden ways”*, using all his skills and power and assuming several identities (Sinbad the Sailor, Abbe Busoni, Lord Wilmore), in order to accomplish his divine mission, the only purpose of his life. He recognizes only three

adversaries, but fears just one: his “*condition as a mortal being*”; the other two, distance and time, he had learned to subdue. All the rest, “*what men call the chances of fate—namely, ruin, change, circumstances*”, he had anticipated it and this makes him “*impenetrable*” (ch.48).

### **The Count of Monte Cristo’s connections with humanity**

The Count builds a wall around his heart, which the others hit when trying to get close to him (“*no one ever appeared to advance a step in that man's favor. Those who would, as it were, force a passage to his heart, found an impassable barrier.*”, ch.68). Nevertheless, even in his superior sphere he is touched to the heart by a limited number of characters: Mercédès, Maximilien Morrel and Haydée. Whereas Mercédès and the Morrels are connections to the past, Haydée represents his future, as it is revealed in the last chapter of the novel.

Mercédès is the woman Dantès adored in his youth and, although 24 years have past since they were separated, she still loves him. Her love makes her the only one to recognize Dantès in the person of the Count. Troubled to see her again, but able to control his emotions, he learns that he has forgiven her infidelity and that what he feels for her now is just a remembrance of the love he once felt. For this reason he yields to her suffering and promises to spare Albert in their duel (“*The lion was daunted; the avenger was conquered. ‘What do you ask of me? [...] your son's life? Well, he shall live!’*”, ch.89), although fully aware of the sacrifice he makes (“*Suppose that the Supreme Being, after having created the world and fertilized chaos, had paused in the work to spare an angel the tears that might one day flow for mortal sins from her immortal eyes [...] even then, Mercedes, you could not imagine what I lose in sacrificing my life at this moment.*”, ch.89). Disarmed by her grief, Monte Cristo finds out that he still has a heart and God himself is moved by the expression of the humanity of his angel of vengeance (“*these tears disappeared almost instantaneously, for, doubtless, God had sent some angel to collect them—far more precious were they in his eyes than the richest pearls of Guzerat and Ophir*”, ch.89).

Loving Morrel as a father (for which reason he creates his new genealogy as son of a shipowner), the Count himself loves Maximilien Morrel as his own son and doesn’t hide it (“*His smile is so sweet when he addresses me, that I forget it ever can be bitter to others*”, ch. 57). He mentions several times the happiness that Maximilien’s presence brings to him: “*can I have the happiness of being useful to you?*” (ch.94); “*I was delighted to see you again [...] I was really happy*” (ch.117). He also has Maximilien’s own happiness at heart; so much that, for his sake, he saves from a certain death Valentine, one of his enemies’ daughter (“*that daughter of an accursed race*”, ch.94). But he does more than saving her life. The Count, who considers them “*beloved children of my heart*”, wants to teach them the lesson of the true happiness: “*There is neither happiness nor misery in the world; there is only the comparison of one state with another, nothing more. He who has felt the deepest grief is best able to experience supreme happiness*”, and that of human wisdom: “*all human wisdom is summed up in these two words,—‘Wait and hope’*” (ch.117).

The meetings between the Count and the whole family Morrel are emotionally intense (see chs. 50, 105 and 112). It is with great difficulty that he fights against the feelings that invade his heart during his visits. In their presence, which he calls an antidote to the evil in the society, he regains some of his humanity. He remains nonetheless the same superior being, so

that their relation is rather one between a divine being and his worshippers (“*Julie threw herself into the arms of the count; Emmanuel embraced him as a guardian angel; Morrel again fell on his knees, and struck the ground with his forehead*”, ch.105).

### **Haydée, daughter of Epirus**

Following his habit of combining history and imagination, Dumas created in his *Count of Monte Cristo* the character of Haydée, as daughter of Ali Tepelini, Pasha of Yanina, and Vasiliki, his favorite. Her destiny will cross the Count’s due to a common enemy. In the novel, Ali Pasha is betrayed and sold to the Turks by Fernand Mondego, who is rewarded therefor with the Pasha’s fortune. He also gets Vasiliki and Haydée, but sells them as slaves. With her father killed and her mother died of grief, Haydée becomes an orphan and a slave, destined to the Sultan’s harem, at the age of only 4. But Monte Cristo finds her and buys her freedom from the Sultan with a beautiful emerald.

Haydée is a very interesting character, not only as an element of the exotic atmosphere surrounding the Count, but also because of the paradox between the importance of her role in the novel and her few appearances in the story. Her first role is as an instrument for the punishment of Fernand, but Dumas also entrusts her with the mission of bringing the Count back to life. Though few, her appearances are nevertheless well exploited and contain all the essence of the character, so that any other episode would have been redundant.

In the entire novel, Haydée appears only 9 times and another time her presence is just indicated (ch.36). A few more times she is mentioned by the other characters in their discussions about the Count or by Monte Cristo himself. Of her 9 physical presences, Haydée is an active character just in 7 of them: the visit of the Count in her apartments, in Paris (ch.49); at the Opera, in Paris (ch.53); the visit of the Count, accompanied by Albert, in her apartments (ch.77); the trial of the Count of Morcerf, at the House of Peers (ch.86); the night before the duel with Albert (ch.90); after the duel (ch.92); and on the island of Monte Cristo (ch.117). In the other two, she is introduced in the novel as a character (at the Argentina Theatre in Rome, ch.34) and is given an identity as a result of the first mention of her name (her arrival in Paris, ch.45). In the beginning of the next episode, she is also given a face through the full portrayal made of her by Dumas. One by one, her appearances reveal: the relation between Haydée and Monte Cristo; the recognition of the Count of Morcerf as the traitor of Ali Pasha by Haydée; the story of Haydée since the death of her father and until her purchase by the Count; the punishment of Fernand through her testimony; the Count’s awakening to his feelings for Haydée (chs.90 and 92); the Count’s acceptance of her salvific love.

Haydée is a woman of “*exquisite beauty*”, “*in the very springtide and fulness of youthful charms*”, not yet in her twenties. Her countenance has the perfect “*purely Grecian*” beauty: “[*large velvety black*] eyes, *finely formed nose, coral lips, and pearly teeth*”. With her white skin and her exquisitely moulded body, she seems a statue of Parian marble. As a contrast, her hair is of a blackness “*so intense that it [is] tinged with blue*”. Her attire, of the finest fabrics (silk, satin, cashmere) and richly decorated with gold, silver, pearls, coral and diamonds, is “*that of the women of Epirus*” (trousers, slippers with upturned toes, vest with long open sleeves, a sort of bodice, scarf on the waist; burnoose, large veil or mantle, as wraps) and she

wears it with “*ease and grace*” (chs.34 and 49). Her appearance is enhanced by her majestic bearing, with that “*dignified step which Virgil attributes to his goddesses*” (ch.86).

Since he took Haydée in his care, when she was only 13 years old, Monte Cristo raised her according to her rank as a princess and asked her servants to treat her “*with all the deference they would observe to a queen*” (ch.49). Not only he covered her with diamonds, gave her servants and carriages, but also looked after her education and cultivated her love for music and arts (“*like all unsophisticated natures, she loved whatever addressed itself to the ear or eye*”, Dumas, 1998, vol. 3, p. 385; “[...] *a small table [...] loaded with flowers, drawings, music albums*”, Dumas, 1998, vol. 4, p. 460); she became thus “*almost as civilised as a Parisian*” (ch.77). She speaks Greek with predilection, but also French (“*with the sonorous voice peculiar to the East*”, ch.86) and Italian (“*excellent Tuscan, and with that soft Roman accent which makes the language of Dante as sonorous as that of Homer*”, ch.77). She also learns the manner of living of every country they visit. She loves to play the guzla for the Count and she rarely misses a performance at the theatre or opera, which she watches with “*an almost childlike delight*” (ch.34). Though he usually presents her as a slave, Monte Cristo treats her as the lady of the house (“*Madame*”), asking for her permission to be received into her apartments (ch.49) or to present Albert to her (ch.77), and resigning everything to her care, when he is absent (ch.85).

In the house of the Count, she lives in a seclusion “*conformable with the habits and customs of the East*” (ch. 49), in an apartment furnished in the Oriental style, which is “*concealed by means of a tapestried entrance, that it would have puzzled the most curious to have divined [its] existence*” (ch. 45). Not even the servants of the Count are allowed to go to her apartments, except for Ali; she has her own servants: one Greek, Myrtho, and three French. Her isolation seems to be a personal choice (“*I don't wish to see anybody but you*”, ch.49; “*I love retirement and silence, because I can live with my thoughts and recollections of past days*”, ch.86) and not an imposition of the Count, who gives her absolute freedom to “*go abroad or remain in your apartments as may seem most agreeable to you*” (ch.49); he only asks her to keep the secret of her origin. But in spite of this “*so perfect a seclusion*” (ch.49), she is “*ignorant of nothing which passes in the world*”, as she receives “*all the newspapers, every [album], as well as every new piece of music*” (ch.86).

“*altogether unlike all other of her sex*”, she is a mystery to the other characters: “*Nobody knows who she is, or where she comes from*” (ch.34). Her beauty and the richness of her apparel are “*well worthy of being observed by either sex*” (ch.34) and her appearances in the boxes of theatres compete with the spectacle on stage. Her attire is the only clue to her identity (“*That woman is a Greek.*’ - ‘*This is easily noticed by her dress [...] - [...] it's here that my knowledge ends*””, Dumas, 1998, vol. 3, p. 376). She is therefore mentioned with the only ‘certain’ information: “*the fair Albanian*”; “*the lovely Greek girl*”; “*the beautiful Greek*”; “*the Greek mistress*”; “*his Greek*”; “*the young Greek girl*”. To make her even more mysterious, sometimes her presence is made known through the music of her guzla (chs.34 and 77) or a fancy dress (“*a blue domino, beneath which Franz's imagination easily pictured the beautiful Greek of the Argentina*”, ch.36). Monte Cristo reveals details about her gradually, but every new information arouses even more questions. The first time he talks about her, he tells Albert and his friends that she is his slave (“*I have something better than [a mistress], [...] I have a slave*”, ch.50); however, they see her more like a princess (“*if slave*

she be, she has all the air and manner of a princess”, ch. 53). To Madame de Villefort he talks about “a Greek princess of my acquaintance” (ch.52). Later, at the Opera, he denies that she is his daughter and presents her as “a poor unfortunate Greek left under my care” (ch. 53) and also reveals her name. To Mercédès, who questions him about being married, he tells partially the truth: “She is a slave whom I bought at Constantinople, madame, the daughter of a prince. I have adopted her as my daughter [...]” (ch.70). Since she lives retired in the house of the Count and is seen in public only at the theatre, the other characters can merely imagine the rest of her story: “No doubt she belongs to the same horrible race he does, and is, like himself, a dealer in magical arts” (ch.34). The only one who gets the privilege to meet her is Albert (“As regards the generality of mankind [her name is a secret]; but not for you, my dear viscount, who are one of my most intimate friends”), who also learns her identity (“Well, what is Haidee to Ali Tepelini?’ - ‘Merely his daughter’”, ch.77) and story.

Haydée herself makes her known to the Parisian society when she “claims the honor of being heard” in the House of Peers, during the trial of the Count of Morcerf. Although a Christian (“may God forgive me”, ch.86), she has always wanted to avenge her father’s death (“for every daughter of Epirus, revenge is a duty”, Dumas and Maquet, 2014, p. 49). Monte Cristo offers her, indirectly, the possibility to accomplish her vengeance. After making sure that she recognizes the Count of Morcerf as the traitor Fernand Mondego and ‘learns’ from her the story of the treason (ch.53), the Count just directs the events from the shadows, encouraging her to believe that “there is a God who will punish traitors” (ch.77). As she tells the committee, she came to testify “from a feeling of respect and grief” and the Count, at that time in Normandy, is unaware of her acts. She actually fears he will disapprove of her action, but “it is a glorious day for me [...] that on which I find at last an opportunity of avenging my father!” (ch.86).

### **Haydée and Monte Cristo: the angel of hope and the angel of punishment**

Dumas keeps the mystery about how the Count found Haydée. Monte Cristo himself says that she became his slave “simply from the circumstance of my having bought her one day, as I was passing through the market at Constantinople” (ch.77). However, considering his desire to punish his enemies, there is no doubt that chance had nothing to do with this. On the contrary, he must have looked for her, as he saw in the daughter of Ali Pasha an instrument of his vengeance. But the similarity of their sufferings (captivity, loss of the loved ones), inflicted on them by the same man, brings them near. The Count makes her his daughter, “having no one else to love in the world” (ch.70) and sheds over her a paternal love (“I love you as [my] child”, ch.49; “the Count of Monte Cristo surrounds me with every paternal care”, ch.86; “I have brought [her] up with the love of a father”, ch.90). For her part, Haydée calls him her “noble protector” (ch.86) and likens him to her father, as the only two men whom she ever loved: “My father said I was his joy—you style me your love,—and both of you have called me [your] child” (ch.49).

Haydée has towards Monte Cristo the attitude of a slave towards her master (“Are you no longer my master, or have I ceased to be your slave?”, ch.49; “He is my master, and I am his slave; he has the right to notice nothing”, ch. 117), of a daughter towards her father, but also of a woman in love towards her lover (she “kissed [his hand] with a mixture of love and



respect”, ch.45; she greets him after the duel with “[*all the enthousiasme of a daughter seeing a dear father*], *all the delight of a mistress seeing an adored lover*”, ch.92). Several times she makes quite clear that she feels for him a different love than that of a daughter for her father (“*He is here, and here*’, said she, touching her eyes and her heart. [...] ‘*You? [...] you are everywhere!*’”; “*In the morning, I shall rejoice in the prospect of your coming, and in the evening dwell with delight on the happiness I have enjoyed in your presence*”; “*The love I have for you is very different from the love I had for my father*” ch.49). Still, she is not coquettish or yet, her artlessness is her coquetry: “*Monte Cristo took the delicate hand of the young girl in his, and was about to raise it to his lips, when the [naive] child hastily withdrew it, and presented her cheek*” (ch.49). The extent of her love is described in the last chapter (Dumas, 1998, vol. 6, pp. 426-427): “*I love you as one loves her father, her brother, her husband! I love you as one loves her life, her God, for you are for me the most beautiful, the best and the greatest of created beings!*”. She loves him to the point of dying if he were to die: “*I never will leave you, for I am sure I could not exist without you*”; “*My father died, but I did not die. [Whereas] If you were to die, I should die too*” (ch.49); “*Well, if you die, [...] bequeath your fortune to others, for if you die I shall require nothing*” (ch.90); or if he were to leave her: “*You mean, then, that if I leave you, Haidee’ - ‘I should die; yes, my lord*” (ch.117). In this, maybe even more than in her appearance, she resembles Medora (“*she is just my idea of what Medora must have been*”, ch.34), the beautiful fair from Lord Byron’s *Corsair*, who kills herself as she believes her lover to be dead (Canto III, 19-21). Haidee from the Byronian *Don Juan*, who inspired Dumas in the choice of name for his character, also dies of grief at losing her lover (Canto IV).

Haydée would also make the sacrifice of her life for him (“[...] *me, who would yield my life for his*”, ch.117), hence she is able to feel when he is in danger (“*She had been standing at the door, to prevent his going out without seeing her [...] ‘she wished to see me, to speak to me; she has feared or guessed something*’”; “*Do you think of dying, my lord?*”, ch.90). This thought makes her suffer (“*And what I have suffered [...] you shall never know, my lord*”), but her subsequent relief couldn’t be greater (“*radiant with joy at seeing the count return safely*”, ch.92). The fear of losing him (“*Are you going to leave me?*”, ch.90) turns her usual gentleness into authority (“*an authoritative tone the count had never observed before, and which startled him*”, ch.90; “*this energy so unusual for a slave*”, Dumas, 1998, vol. 5, p. 287). Then again, the obedience she owes him as sign of her gratitude and love is much stronger than her own suffering: “*It is well, [...] your order shall be executed, my lord; I will forget even your name, and be happy*” (ch.117).

On the other hand, Monte Cristo gradually realizes that he loves Haydée. Her love for him remains at the stage of suspicion and its confirmation comes right at the end of the novel. Until then, she acts like an intermediary between his upper sphere, where he prepares his mission, surrounded by hatred and disgust, and the society of the Morrels, in which he feels genuinely happy; her presence accustoms him to emotions and gives his “*oppressed spirit*” a feeling of peace, thus preparing “*his mind to receive full and perfect happiness*” (ch.49). When he pays her a first visit in her apartments in Paris, he tells her that he won’t be unjust if she will fall in love with some young man. Seeing her insistence, he brings into discussion the difference of age between them, which will be more obvious in a few years (“*in ten years I shall be old, and you will be still young*”); but for her, love has no age (“*My father had a long*

white beard, but I loved him; he was sixty years old, but to me he was handsomer than all the fine youths I saw”, ch.49; furthermore, in the play, she tells him that “*God made me younger than [Mercédès] [...], so that I may have the joy to love you longer*”, Dumas and Maquet, 2014, p. 140). These may seem the thoughts of a father to his daughter, especially considering his analogy with the tree that doesn’t abandon the flower, but is abandoned by it. However, the “*profound tenderness*” in his smiles to her (ch.49) can also hide the concerns of a man for the happiness of the woman he loves (“*[...] if any misfortune happen to me, [...] I wish my daughter to be happy*”, ch.90), even if that is to be accomplished away from him. This is clearer when, before his duel with Albert, the Count names Haydée his main heiress and expresses as a last wish that Maximilien may marry Haydée if his heart is free (“*I cannot die without confiding her to some one*”; “*If his heart is free, and he will marry Haidee, [...] he will thus accomplish [not my last will, but] my last wish*”, ch.90). Maximilien’s answer that he is in love shatters his hope of leaving her in good hands - this saddens him at least as much as it did the prospective of not accomplishing his mission, if not more (“*Another hope defeated! [...] Poor Haidee!*”). Nonetheless, the nature of his feelings still remains hidden for himself (“*I forgot I had a daughter*”, ch.90), although maybe not for everyone. Maximilien, who “*heard him answer by a sigh to [Haydée’s] sob*” (ch.90), seems to have guessed their feelings for each other: “*You who love, and are beloved*” (ch.117), he tells the Count before ‘dying’.

Believing that Haydée has for him only “*the love and tenderness of a daughter*”, Monte Cristo understands for the first time that she might love him for real when he sees her concern for him the night before the duel and carries her in his arms to her apartment (“*the idea occurred to him for the first time, that perhaps she loved him otherwise than as a daughter loves a father*”, ch.90). He regretfully concludes that he might have had a chance to be loved and therefore to be happy (“*‘Alas’, murmured he, with intense suffering, ‘I might, then, have been happy yet’*”, ch.90). His happiness to see her, when he returns from the duel, is not less intense than hers, although not as evident. Kissing her forehead makes both their hearts beat strongly (“*a kiss which made two hearts throb at once, the one violently, the other [silently]*”, ch.92) and he dares to believe that he can love again. This belief is confirmed after his journey into the past of his imprisonment. Already having overcome the doubts risen in him with Edouard’s death, he overcomes another doubt concerning the woman he loves: while passing by the village of the Catalans, he looks away and murmurs Haydée’s name “*in a voice of tenderness, amounting almost to love*” (ch.113).

In the last chapter (ch.117), although he knows that he loves her, the Count is still not sure if she loves him back (in his own words, “*when we have suffered a long time, we have great difficulty in believing in [happiness]*”, ch.3). Therefore, with his mission accomplished, Monte Cristo is determined to punish himself for the pain he caused to the innocents and leave her side, not wanting to allow his destiny to overshadow hers. He sets her free, restoring her position, fortune and name, and asks her to “*forget even my name, and be happy*”. When she clearly confesses that she loves him, he accepts her redeeming love (“*Let it be, then, as you wish [...] Love me then, Haidee!*”).

But why is her love redeeming? And why is this one the only possible ending for Dumas’ hero?

Haydée's love has several effects on the Count, which he expresses directly or indirectly. The first takes the form of a hope: "*perhaps your love will make me forget all that I do not wish to remember*" (ch.117). Overcoming his doubts concerning his mission, Monte Cristo still has a remorse about the innocents who crossed his path and were crushed under his steps - this is what he wants to forget, as it is reiterated in his farewell letter to Maximilien and Valentine (and not his own sufferings, as erroneously is presented in some adaptations). Her love may therefore ease his conscience.

The second effect regards his intellect and faith: "*one word from you has enlightened me more than twenty years of [my] slow [wisdom]*" (ch.117). The Count again doesn't explain his affirmation, but it can be linked to the conclusion he reaches to in the end: "*all human wisdom is summed up in these two words,—'Wait and hope'*" (ch.117). His most ardent desire, while still at the Château d'If, is to "*win back the happiness of which I have been deprived*" (ch.20). His yearning for happiness is a constant in his life, whether expressed or concealed ("*I might, then, have been happy yet*", ch.90; he "*was beginning to think, what he had not for a long time dared to believe, that [...] he might yet be happy*", ch.92). He finally finds the long desired happiness in Haydée's love and that **one word** is her confession of love. He understands that happiness came into his life when he waited and hoped for it: "*Oh! My God! [...] would you permit me then to love again!*" (Dumas, 1998, vol. 5, p. 334); "*My God! my God! [...] what you had let me to suspect would therefore be real!*" (Dumas, 1998, vol. 6, p. 426). Because God was always a reference for him, he sees his happiness at Haydée's side as a gift from God (Haydée herself tells him, in the play, that God "*will reward you for everything you did for me*", Dumas and Maquet, 2014, p. 37), as a sign of his pardon ("*I wished to punish myself, but he has pardoned me*", ch.117). Consequently, he "*now acknowledges with Christian humility that God alone possesses supreme power and infinite wisdom*" (ch.117) and leaves his destiny into his hands. It is also worth mentioning here the Count's specification of the reason for which Haydée departed from Paris before him: "*To wait for me*" (ch.105); and likewise the fact that he calls her an "*angel of hope*" (Dumas and Maquet, 2014, p. 140).

A third effect of her love is his reattachment to life, understood with its sufferings and joys: "*through you I again take hold on life, through you I shall suffer, through you rejoice*" (ch.117). If Dantès, when recently escaped from prison, wanted to harden his heart to be apt for revenge, Monte Cristo gives in the end another explanation for his life away from human emotions, which also elucidates the transformation of his desire of vengeance into one of justice. Finding the treasure of Cardinal Spada, which he deemed if not imaginary, at least long ago discovered, made him believe that God has sent it to him "*to work out his own great designs*" (ch.112). He therefore sees his fortune as a "*priesthood*", which allowed him "*not a thought to this life*" that showed its sweetness to others, "*not one hour of serenity*", but was a continuous impulse to act like an "*exterminating angel*", "*immovable as [the deaf and blind] fate*" (ch.112 and Dumas, 1998, vol. 6, p. 300-301). From this state of spirit must be understood his comeback to life, which is confirmed by his gesture of reassuming his name, along with that of Count of Monte Cristo (see the double signature on his farewell letter, ch.117).

At this point, it is worth emphasizing some similarities between the relations of Edmond Dantès with the abbe Faria and of Monte Cristo with Haydée. The first regards the **reward of**

**devotion:** Dantès' devotion helps him pass the test of the abbe and thus obtain the treasure (*"I may now avow to you, since I have the proof of your fidelity"*, ch.18); while Haydée's devotion makes her pass the Count's test (*"forget even my name, and be happy"*, ch.117) and be welcomed as an angel of hope for the angel of punishment (Dumas and Maquet, 2014, p. 140). The second similarity is emphasized by **the effect of one's presence in the life of the other**. Dantès, a providential son to Faria, rekindles the abbe's chilled heart (*"his chilled affections were rekindled and invigorated by his contact with one so warm and ardent"*, ch.16) and becomes the reason of his reconciliation with the world (*"I have forgiven the world for the love of you"*, ch.18). On the other side, Haydée, as Monte Cristo's only connection to the world (*"I have but you in the world, Haidee"*, ch.117), makes him reattach himself to life.

The redeeming nature of Haydée's love for Monte Cristo results also from a comparison with the effects of the love he once felt for Mercédès and for the love he has for Maximilien. For their sake, he spares Albert and Valentine from his vengeance (*"It is written in the good book [...] that the sins of the fathers shall fall upon their children [...]"*, ch.89). Now, for Haydée's sake, he spares himself from the destiny he thought he must follow.

The love that the Count has for Haydée may not be as passionate as the one he had for Mercédès (Biglia, 1999, ch.1.1), but is not less powerful. Although he doesn't tell her directly that he loves her, while he asks her about her feelings and she confesses her love (*"Do you then love me?" [...] 'Oh, yes, [...] I do love you!'"*, ch.117), Dumas points this out: *"Monte Cristo was beginning to think, what he had not for a long time dared to believe, that there were two Mercedes in the world"* (ch.92). Haydée is then not **another woman**, but **another Mercédès**. Mercédès was for him **the woman** (*"She is not my mistress, [...] she is my betrothed"*, ch.1) and believing that Haydée is another Mercédès means that he loves her just as much as he once loved the Catalan. He, who usually dissimulates so well his emotions, is seized by *"an emotion he in vain endeavored to dissimulate"* when he learns about Valentine's love for Haydée. Having thus the guarantee of leaving Haydée among people who love her, he asks nothing more, in return to their happiness, than to *"render [Haydée] all the gratitude you fancy that you owe to me"*. Then his voice almost dies out at the thought of leaving her. Her suffering awakens *"the inmost recesses of his heart"*. For the first time, he cannot bear the *"brilliancy"* of her eyes. When she tells him that she loves him, he feels *"his heart dilate and throb"* (ch.117). He accepts his destiny at her side, be it really a reward or a punishment. All these confirm that Monte Cristo's love for Haydée is genuine.

The image of their reciprocal love is reinforced by the similarities and by the perfect harmony between them. Both Monte Cristo and Haydée suffered a similar fate, by the hand of the same man. This brings forth a desire of vengeance, which counts also as a yearning for justice. If Monte Cristo talks several time about both revenge and justice, Haydée justifies her testimony against Fernand with her want for revenge; but in the play, although likened to the *"avenging Nemesis"*, she makes her exit at the trial with the words *"It is justice!"* (Dumas and Maquet, 2014, p. 133 and 121). They are both mysterious in the eyes of the other characters, and can dissimulate their emotions and thoughts in front of them (*"his face was like marble"*, ch.88; *"She heard the count's sentence pronounced without betraying an expression of joy or pity"*, ch.86). They both appear as angels, alike (Monte Cristo is considered an angel by the Morrels and he also names Haydée an angel) or complementary (*"Be welcome, angel of hope, you who come to meet the angel of punishment!"*, Dumas and Maquet, 2014, p. 140). Their

devotion to a loved one helps them pass a test and then receive their reward (Dantès the secret of the treasure from Faria, and Haydée the happiness of staying with the Count). Their souls and destinies are intertwined: Haydée calls him the “*soul of her body*” and possessor of “*everything [...] in me and around me*” (Dumas and Maquet, 2014, p. 135 and 37). Being one, they feel each other’s pain (“*they heard him answer by a sigh to a sob from within*”, ch.90) and would share the same fate: “*If you were to die, I should die too*” (ch.49).

This presentation of the relation between the Count of Monte Cristo and Haydée shows that this ending is valid, plausible, and doesn’t take the reader completely by surprise, as Dumas left some clues to it throughout the story. But is there any other ending which could compete with Dumas’? Taking as an example the ending much preferred by screenwriters, as it will be shown further, with the Count and Mercédès reunited, it’s not difficult to notice, as Biglia (1999, ch.4.2) did, that such an ending is contrary to the evolution of the story and of its hero. Edmond Dantès has conquered his trials and has evolved, his new identity standing as a proof. On the other hand, Mercédès hasn’t fundamentally changed (“*if Mercedes [...] no longer resembles her former self in her features, [...] her heart is still the same*”, ch.89). The initial couple cannot be reunited without breaking the laws of logic: the Count would have to regress to his original state as Edmond Dantès, and therefore erase all his inner transformations. But with Haydée, he continues his evolution as a character: he rediscovers his old self (Edmond Dantès) and integrates it into his present self (Monte Cristo), thus becoming **Edmond Dantès, Count of Monte Cristo**. The happiness he regains in the end comes as a reward for accomplishing his mission, but also as a compensation for his previous sufferings: having felt “*the deepest grief*”, he can now “*experience supreme happiness*” (ch.117). This ending respects thus the evolution of the hero and it actually represents a new beginning for Monte Cristo: back to life, loving and being loved, and leaving towards new horizons. Monte Cristo himself foresees his happy ending with Haydée, when, leaving her apartments, he murmurs the lines of the Greek poet Pindar: “*Youth is a flower of which love is the fruit; happy is he who, after having watched its silent growth, is permitted to gather and call it his own*” (ch.49).

### **From novel to film. Losing Haydée**

With numerous adaptations made after Dumas’ *Count of Monte Cristo*, the analysis of Haydée’s portrayal represented an immense challenge. After an arduous research, I was able to get hold of 19 films and TV mini-series, made between 1908 and 2002, in Europe and outside of Europe. They are at least one per decade, but most of them are concentrated in the 1940s-1970s. They evolve from silent to talking movies and from black-and-white to color.

Haydée is completely eliminated from the story in the 1908 first adaptation of the novel and the 2002 film (still the most recent adaptation). The 1908 *Count of Monte Cristo* is a short film in 5 acts, which presents very briefly the Count’s vengeance. Haydée is not needed for the punishment of Fernand, nor the Count shows any other need or desire than his vengeance. On the contrary, the 2002 film, loosely based on Dumas’s novel, assumes one of the changes brought to the story by Charles Fechter (Pastiches Dumas, n.d.): Edmond and Mercédès make love before his imprisonment and therefore Albert is their son. The episode of Yanina is discarded, and with it also Haydée. In this case, Mercédès assumes a redeeming role: with her

love and fidelity (see the ring made of thread), she manages to make him let go of his hate and also rediscover God.

The other 17 movies can be divided into three categories, depending on the denouement of Haydée's story: a) there is no indication of what happened to her after the trial (1934, 1961, 1969, 1974); b) she appears after the trial, but the ending is different (1918, 1922, 1998); c) a similar, but not necessarily faithful, ending, as compared to Dumas' novel (1929, 1942, 1943, 1954, 1954, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1979, 1988). Aside from the ending, the screenplays keep some likeness to her story, but also present smaller or bigger differences. In relation to her participation in the plot, none of the 17 adaptations is completely faithful to the novel. She is either almost limited to the sub-plot of Fernand's punishment (even in the films from the third category, e.g. 1979) or she is much more involved in the whole story, as the Count shares with her his plans (1943, 1954 *El Conde...*, 1966). The various episodes in which she is present (the meetings with the Count, the recognition of Fernand, the trial, the ending scene) are generally a mixture of moments and lines taken from the novel and others distorted or invented; many details are however left aside, draining the episode of its profoundness.

The first resemblance or difference to be noticed regards her looks. The beautiful dark-haired and white-skinned Greek turns out to be sometimes a beautiful blonde (1954 *El Conde...*) or a dark-skinned fair (1974, 1998). While Dumas insists on her youth and artless air, Haydée doesn't fully keep these attributes on screen. The youngest Haydée is played by the Uzbek Nadira Mirzayeva in the 1988 *Uz'nik Zamka If*; she actually seems to be too young, especially in connection to the visible very old Monte Cristo. Of more or less the right age and spirit are the Haydées of Italian Cristina Grado from the 1954 French adaptation and Puerto Rican Mapy Cortés from the 1942 Mexican film. Also young, but somehow different in attitude (one shy, the other daring flirtatious) and are the portrayals of the American Virginia Brown Faire (1922) and the Lebanese Valerie Sarruf (1964). On the other hand, among the most mature Haydées are the French Madeleine Lyrisse (1918), the American Eleanor Phelps (1934), the French Lise Delamare (1943), the Argentinian Elina Colomer (1954 *El Conde...*), the Norwegian Anita Rummelhoff (1965), the French Isabelle de Valvert (1974) and the Spanish Inés Sastre (1998). As for her Oriental roots, the closest are the Serbian Mila Stanic, from the 1966 Italian TV Series, and the already mentioned Valerie Sarruf.

In the novel, Monte Cristo tells Haydée that she can keep her Grecian costume or give it up, as she pleases (ch.49). Since Dumas gives no different indications, it is rightly to presume that she remained faithful to the Oriental style. In movies, on the contrary, she makes use of this liberty and switches between the Oriental style (sometimes rather modern) and the European style (corresponding to the age of the novel or contemporary to the shootings), sometimes even combining them. She wears only her Oriental costume in the adaptations from 1918, 1934, 1964, 1974, 1979, 1988 and 1998. Sometimes wearing discrete jewelry, she reaches an abundance in the 1988 TV Mini-Series. Exotic elements are also added to her attire in the 1929 film. The makeup usually respects the rules of the times of the shootings, ranging from natural to heavy makeup. As for her hair, she lets it loose most of the times, keeps it braided or adapts it to a particular style (1922 - the 1920s style; 1954 *Le Comte...*, 1954 *El Conde...*, 1965, 1966 - a certain 19th century European style). In the French adaptations from 1943 and 1954, she also has flowers in her hair, just like Dumas describes her. An important

digression regarding her looks consists in her wearing a small jewel on her forehead in the 1961 and 1969 adaptations. A interpretation of the traditional Hindu bindi, this decoration pushes Haydée's origin too far in the East and in another religion.

Regarding her knowledge and passions, Haydée is rather a shallow character. In the 1922 film, she speaks only Arabic and the Count acts like her interpreter; whereas in the 1979 adaptation she speaks French with a heavy accent. It is however noteworthy the choice of using some Greek lines in the 1966 TV Series; also, in the 1954 *Le Comte...*, she barely speaks French when the Count buys her from El-Kobbir, but later she is very fluent - this can be attributed to the Counts beneficial influence. Her love for music is not well exploited: she plays the guzla only in the 1918, 1929, 1954 *Le Comte...*, 1965, 1966, 1974 and 1988 adaptations - in the latter, she also sings and dances for Monte Cristo. As for the Opera, only in the 1929, 1943, 1954 (both of them), 1979 and 1988 films she and the Count are shown at spectacles; in the 1966 TV Series their frequent presence at the Opera is just mentioned.

Something that might seem a minor detail, but which actually hides a contradiction with the novel, is the cigar in Haydée's hand in one scene of the 1964 TV Series (episode 12); the Count also smokes a cigar in one of their scenes together in the 1961 film. Only that Dumas clearly indicates that she loves the tobacco of the East, which is a perfume, but not cigars, because of their bad smell (ch.77). Furthermore, she is described as smoking from a hookah, when the Count comes to visit her (ch.49). Nevertheless, this aspect wasn't taken into consideration in the adaptations of the novel. The 1954 *Le Comte...* keeps only a trace of it: one of Haydée's joys is to prepare the waterpipe for the Count.

Her perfect seclusion is sometimes taken to the extreme and she leaves her apartment in the Count's house only for the trial of Fernand (1918, 1961). Because of this, she is but rarely on the lips of the other characters (1929, 1943, 1954 *El Conde...* - only after the trial, 1979, 1988). There are also examples in which she moves freely in the house (1942, 1943, 1954 *El Conde...*, 1965, 1966, 1974) or even accompanies Monte Cristo at parties (1922, 1942, 1988 - at the Carnival in Rome). In the 1922 film, Haydée is introduced to the Parisian society by Albert, at a welcome party for the Count, and later she is present at another party, this time hosted by the Count himself. She is presented not only with her name, but also her origin is revealed. Nevertheless, no unusual reaction comes from Fernand, present at both parties, nor from Haydée when she sees him. In the 1965 TV Mini-Series, Haydée is present at the party hosted by Monte Cristo, but she is not introduced to the other guests and she speaks only with Jacopo; she seems to have glimpsed Fernand, but has no reaction.

The meeting between Albert and Haydée is most of the times overlooked in the novel's adaptations. In the 1922 *Monte Cristo*, their mere acquaintance is pushed so far as to become lovers. The episode keeps a certain note of fidelity to the novel in the 1918 and 1966 films, but her story is much shorter and in the latter case neither the Count nor Haydée mention the name of Ali Pasha. In three other films the meeting is reduced to a simple introduction. In the 1929 *Monte Cristo*, the Count presents Haydée to Albert in his palace on the island of Monte Cristo; later, at the Opera in Paris, Albert behaves in a familiar way with her. The Opera is also their meeting place in the 1943 film; whereas in the 1954 Argentinian-Mexican adaptation, the introduction takes place in the garden of Monte Cristo, in Paris.

The main episode in which Haydée is present in movies is that of the punishment of Fernand. However, her appearance doesn't always respect the indications of Dumas. In the

1929 and 1934 films, the trial at the House of Peers is replaced with a short spectacle of tableaux vivants, during a party hosted by the Count. The continuation of the scene is different: in the first film, the spectacle, called *Memory of Yanina*, focuses on Ali Pasha and Haydée appears in the last tableau vivant. Fernand recognizes her and leaves, but returns later to challenge the Count to a duel. It is now that she accuses him for betraying her father and selling her as a slave. In the 1934 adaptation, the tableaux vivants show Fernand's adventure in Yanina. The Count instructs Haydée to run to the stage at the last tableau vivant, showing Fernand as he tried to save Ali Pasha from the Turks. She accuses Fernand, but then the Count treats the happening as an unfortunate incident in order to delude him.

Other digressions from the novel, which are not quite essential, include the trial taking place in open session, instead of a small committee without public (open session: 1922, 1942, 1943, 1954 *Le Comte de...*, 1954 *El Conde...*, 1961, 1979, 1998; small committee: 1918, 1964, 1965 - with public, 1966, 1969, 1974, 1988); the voting of an investigation and the request of the Peers that Haydée should come back the following day to testify again (1954 *Le Comte...*); she keeps the veil on her face during the entire hearing (1954 *Le Comte...*, 1988); the Count of Morcerf is not a member of the House of Peers, but of the National Academy of History - he is therefore questioned by the academicians (1954 *El Conde...*); she doesn't give the President of the House of Peers the documents, but shows them directly to the Peers - he therefore tells her that her grief doesn't authorize her to bring such accusations and the documents must be verified before taking into consideration her words (1961); Haydée is asked to retire before the verdict (1943, 1966); the president of the committee is willing to question Haydée only with Fernand's approval (1974); the acknowledgment of Haydée's identity not through documents, but through a distinct mark at her right ear (1998).

A more important digression however is the one regarding the motivation of Haydée for revenging her father. In every adaptation, but one, she yearns for the chance to find and expose the traitor; sometimes, that is actually her only desire in life. The one exception is the 1969 Haydée, played by Fiorella Faltoyano. She is not sure of the rightness of her vengeance, she is always fearful and full of grief at the thought of bringing back her sad past. The Count tells her over and over that justice is on their side, yet even before leaving for the trial she is not fully convinced of the step she is about to do. A general difference in comparison to the novel is the omission of her Christian faith in opposition to her desire of revenge.

The Count isn't usually mentioned as Haydée's guardian, but he is present at the trial and even gets involved in some of the adaptations. In 1922, he brings Haydée as a witness against Fernand and translates her deposition made in Arabic. In the 1954 *El Conde...*, both Monte Cristo and Haydée are in the public; at his sign, she comes forward and accuses Fernand, adding that the Count saved her from slavery. A scandal breaks and no other explanation is required. In 1974, the Count appears when Fernand accuses Haydée of being an impostor, and confirms her identity as daughter of Ali Pasha; the episodes then continues with the duel between Monte Cristo and Fernand. In 1998, he reacts at Fernand's accusation that Haydée being a slave cannot be heard and declares that he bought her freedom. He also participates at the session of the Peers in the 1961 film, but without getting involved. The Count is only mentioned in the 1942, 1965 and 1969 adaptations. The last case, the only one in which Monte Cristo is said to be away in Normandy, sins against the novel and its hero because the Count himself asks Haydée to say that he is not in Paris, when he actually is.



Furthermore, Haydée affirms that, although ignoring her coming to testify (double lie), she is sure he would not disapprove of her gesture.

The recognition of Fernand by Haydée is another episode often overlooked. Somehow faithful to the novel are the 1979 and 1988 versions of the episode, taking place at the Opera and with the Count seemingly ignorant of Fernand's identity. Still at the Opera, but this time with the complicity of the Count, the scene is kept also in the 1943 adaptation. In three other films (1954 *Le Comte...*, 1961 and 1966) she recognizes Fernand during a party hosted by the Count, as she stays hidden in another room or behind a curtain. In the 1942 film, Monte Cristo brings Haydée with him at a party hosted by Fernand, presenting her as his adoptive daughter. In these four cases, the Count admits openly his involvement.

In compensation for the changes made at her expense, Haydée is introduced in the episode of Albert's challenge to a duel. She is with the Count at the Opera in both the 1954 adaptations and she witnesses directly the dialogue between Monte Cristo and Albert. In the 1988 film, she remains in the box of the Count, whereas he goes out to talk to Albert, not before comforting her.

If Dumas invented the character of Haydée, screenwriters felt free to alter her story. The events of Yanina are not always presented in details, leaving many questions unanswered. However, even when they are, they rarely correspond to the 'reality' imagined by Dumas. Many times she had a different age when the events took place (a young girl - 1918, 1922; a young woman - 1929; 9 years - 1942; 2 years - 1943; 6 years - 1954 *Le Comte...*; 13 years - 1964; 7 years - 1966; 5 years - 1969). Whereas sometimes she doesn't mention the fate of her mother (1922, 1929, 1954 *Le Comte...*, 1954 *El Conde...*), in the 1966 TV-series she tells that her mother was killed by order of Fernand; the same happened in the 1988 film, where Fernand also cut Ali Pasha's finger to take his ring. She was taken from her mother by Fernand, in the 1922 *Monte Cristo*. In the 1964 adaptation, she and her mother were forced to witness Ali Pasha's killing. In the 1998 film the Turks killed her father, her mother and her two brothers and made her a slave in the harem. In the 1929 film, the events of Yanina are brought in the present of Edmond Dantès' escape from prison.

As for her purchase by the Count, only a few adaptations relate the story (1918, 1954 *Le Comte...*, 1964, 1988, 1998) and they do it even in more detail than the novel. She was bought before the events in Paris in the 1918, 1964 and 1988 films and during Monte Cristo's stay in Paris in the other two cases. Irrespective of the moment when the Count bought her, she was already a young woman (16 years - 1964; 18 years - 1954 *Le Comte...*; older - 1918 and 1998). The only accurate story regarding Haydée's age, both during the events of Yanina and her purchase by the Count, is presented in the 1988 adaptation. In two cases it is revealed how the Count found out about her: from the former captain Coclès, who worked for Morrel and travelled to Yanina - he is also the one who went back to the East in search of her (1998); from Mr. Thompson, who becomes a kind of adviser to Monte Cristo (1964). The two sources are evidently invented and have nothing to do with what happened in the novel. Other digressions from the story of Dumas are represented by Haydée's purchase with money (1918) and by her servant and nurse Fatima (1954 *Le Comte...*). The latter acts as an intermediary between Haydée and Monte Cristo, to whom she explains Haydée's words and gestures.

For the analysis of the relation between the Count of Monte Cristo and Haydée, as it is illustrated in the 17 adaptations of the novel, I will return to the three categories mentioned in the beginning of this subchapter. The first includes those films in which screenwriters lost interest in Haydée after the trial of Fernand and her fate remained therefore unknown. Not surprisingly, they are also characterized by the lowest number of her appearances in the story. Another specific feature they have in common is the complicity between her and the Count for the accomplishment of their revenge. In the 1934 *Count of Monte Cristo*, Haydée appears only two times: at the party hosted by the Count, when she accuses Fernand of being the traitor of her father, and at the trial of Monte Cristo, a totally invented episode, substituting the trial of Fernand. She is also said to have been seen riding many times with the Count, in his carriage. The relation between her and Monte Cristo is not exploited at all. There is no indication on how she came to be near him or what is her position in his house. The only time he speaks to her, in order to give her instructions on how to behave at the party, he addresses to her with the title of **princess**. For her part, she shows some concern about him at his trial, but then she disappears, never to be mentioned again. The 1961 Haydée clearly states that her only desire is to avenge her father. And she does nothing more than that. All her appearances are connected to her wish: a discussion with the Count about her plans, the recognition of Fernand and the testimony at the trial. She is grateful to Monte Cristo for saving her from slavery and promises to listen to his advices, which indeed he gives her. The Count guides her steps toward vengeance and warns her against the dangers in her path. Their relation is limited to their mutual desire of revenge. In the 1969 TV Series, Haydée comes to Paris especially for the trial of Fernand, but rather at the Count's request and not following her own wish. Besides the scene of the trial, she appears only three other times, with the Count trying to convince her of the rightness of their vengeance. He always calls her **princess** and his behavior towards her is probably the most passionate of all adaptations. She doesn't show the same passion towards him, but she does trust him completely and she expresses her fear not only for herself but for him also. Nonetheless, no relation breaks between them, as she disappears after the trial. For his part, the Count completes his vengeance and leaves France to travel on the sea, in search of a place where there are no corrupted people. The 1974 film shows a Haydée that is most immovable in her desire of revenge. She is concerned about the Count's feelings for Mercédès only to the extent that they might influence him. But he is also thinking only about his revenge. There are no gestures or words that could betray any kind of affection between them. They have the same purpose, so they stick together in order to reach it.

In the second category are included three films that don't abandon Haydée's story after the trial, but create an ending for her as well. Except for the first film (1918), where her fate is not completely clear, the following two present an alternative happy ending compared to the one in the novel. In the 1918 film, Monte Cristo buys the freedom of an already grown-up Haydée. His beneficial influence is easily noticed in the transformation of her attire, from dull to magnificent. With an always melancholy look, she shows an affectionate gratitude and obedience towards him. He also seems to be quite gentle with her, but nothing more. Her last appearance is on board the *Young Amelia* (the smugglers' ship), heading to Monte Cristo, while she plays the guzla for the Count. There is no indication of a relation between them or of her having a redeeming role in his life. The ending of the movie brings the Count only the accomplishment of his vengeance, because the character is thus portrayed that he doesn't

express any other need or desire, like happiness. There is neither any complicity between them for the punishment of Fernand, unlike in the next two films. In the 1922 *Monte Cristo*, her story seems rather focused on her love affair with Albert. As for her relation with the Count, he calls her his **ward**, while she respects him as her master (“*lord of my life*”). Thanks to him, they both find their way to happiness: they will live from fishing, Monte Cristo reunited with Mercédès and Haydée with Albert. With its characteristics (just two appearances of Haydée and her only desire to avenge her father), the 1998 TV Mini-Series should have been in the first category. However a last mention of her indicates an ending to her story. Monte Cristo finds out about Haydée after having already started his plan of revenge. He saves her from slavery because he needs her in order to accomplish his plan. But he is also moved by her sufferings and misfortunes. After the trial, the Count informs Camille of the betrothal between Haydée and Franz d’Epinay. Camille de la Richardais is an invented character, who is given some of the attributes of Haydée: her love for the Count makes her sacrifice herself for his happiness, but not before teaching him to forgive (a somehow redeeming role).

The third category, including the films that remained faithful to the ending of Dumas, is the largest. This doesn’t mean however that Haydée’s story is presented just like in the novel or that its ending has kept all the depth given to it by Dumas. The fidelity to the novel is generally at most literally and not in spirit, which makes the ending appear most of the times fake. Among these ten films are those who can be considered the most accurate adaptations in their entirety: 1942, 1964, 1966 and 1979. They do respect most of the ideas of the novel and some of the scenes are almost literally. Nonetheless, they are not without fault, especially concerning the story of Haydée. Considering all films of the category, the episodes dedicated to Haydée are rarely the ones in the novel. She is usually more present in the story before the trial. Afterwards, her appearances are rare and sometimes limited only to the ending. The first discussion between the Count and Haydée, taking place in her apartments, is kept in the 1942, 1964, 1965, 1966 and 1988 adaptations, but with various degrees of fidelity to the novel and sometimes changes of location. The dialogue is quite faithful in lines, including Haydée’s confession of love, although sometimes shortened. In the 1942 film, the scene is anticipated and moved on Monte Cristo, before starting their travels in Europe. The scene also exists in the 1954 French film, but unlike the previous ones, here is kept the setting, whereas the dialogue is different. There is but one exception and it regards the Count’s promise that they will soon go in the East. It is strange though that the scene is not shown in the 1979 film, which is, on the other hand, the only one keeping the episode at the theatre in Rome and presenting a quite faithful scene at the Opera in Paris. After the trial and before the ending, Haydée only appears in the 1942, 1943, 1954 *Le Comte...*, 1954 *El Conde...*, 1964, 1966 and 1988 films. They are usually scenes of little importance, sometimes even without lines. A different situation is in the 1943 film, but it generally presents a particular relation between the Count and Haydée. In the two 1954 adaptations, these scenes are connected to the ending scene. The 1964 and 1988 films show the meeting between Monte Cristo and Haydée before the duel with Albert, but it is different from the novel. Also in relation to the duel, the Count entrusts Haydée into someone’s care only in the 1954 *El Conde...* (his servant Leopardi) and 1964 (Maximilien). In the 1966 TV-Series, Haydée comes to meet Monte Cristo after the duel, happy and grateful that he is safe. Later, he is in her apartments when Fernand comes to

challenge him; the dialogue is limited to the lines concerning Fernand and no mention is made about either feelings for each other. A quite common characteristic, although without connection to the novel, is the complicity between the Count and Haydée concerning their revenge on Fernand (1942, 1954 *Le Comte...*). In some cases, the Count actually treats her more like a partner and shares with her his plans concerning all his enemies (1943, 1954 *El Conde...*, 1966). The only ones in which the Count remains 'uninvolved', or at least in which there is no indication of a complicity between them, are the 1929, 1964, 1965, 1979 and 1988 adaptations.

Regarding the ending, the scene on Monte Cristo is kept in the following films: 1929 (no dialogue, just a concluding intertitle), 1942 (anticipated before the arrival of Maximilien), 1964, 1966 (no dialogue) and 1979. The dialogue, where it exists, is shortened, but nevertheless faithful in the lines which have survived. In the other five films, the scene is moved on the Count's yacht, as they depart for the East: 1943 - a short dialogue, not related to their feelings for each other; 1954 *Le Comte...* - just their shadows as they embrace; 1954 *El Conde...* - they embrace and kiss (their talk was before the duel with Albert); 1965 - a long conversation [the language barrier prevents a faithful presentation of the dialogue]; 1988 (on the new *Pharaon*, heading for Marseille) - they embrace and kiss. Unlike in the novel, the ending with the formation of the couple Monte Cristo-Haydée is not always plausible in the adaptations and many times takes the viewer by surprise. For her part, Haydée usually reveals her feelings for the Count, either in words or in gestures: her anxiety when Fernand threatens him (1929); a clear confession of love (1942); a certain shyness, which she connects rather with her obedience toward him: "*The women of my country never question the will of their master*"; "*Did I ever question your will?*" (1943); her happiness to stay near him as long as possible, to call him "*my lord*" and serve him, her jealousy (1954 *Le Comte...*); her willingness to put her life at his disposal, her concern for him, a clear confession of her love and devotion (1954 *El Conde...*); her concern for him, her willingness to make any kind of sacrifice for him ("*when a woman loves, no sacrifice is too great for her*"), a clear confession of love and a rather flirtatious behavior (1964); an expression of adoration when talking about him, a confession of love and a determination to change his state of mind (1965); her concern for him being unhappy, her confession of love from the beginning, her loving look, her relief to see him safe and sound (1966); her confession of love in their last scene together, but nothing else (1979); a combination of shyness and directness, as she tries several time to kiss him, her concern for him and her confession of love from the beginning (1988).

On the other hand, the Count is much more reserved and what he shows towards her is generally just a tender affection. The story becomes complicated when, on the contrary, it is revealed that he still loves Mercédès (1943, 1954 *Le Comte...*, 1966). Not even in the ending scene the Count doesn't usually confess any feelings for her, just accepts hers: after her confession of love in the scene faithful to the novel (1964, 1979), or after the defeat of Fernand, as Haydée throws herself into his arms and he hugs her (1929, 1954 *Le Comte...*). In the 1954 French film, he sees her as a **child** ("*my little protégée*") and not as a woman, although he promises her to take her back to the East, where girls of her age are already considered women; when he bought her, he offered her his **friendship**. In the 1964 TV Series, the Count makes it clear from the beginning that all he wants her for is to avenge himself on Fernand. However, he embraces and comforts her when she expresses her concern for him; he

also confides her to Maximilien both before the duel and on Monte Cristo. The Norwegian TV Series from 1965 doesn't focus too much on their relation: the Count is puzzled by her confession of not loving him as a father and her running away crying; his confusion persists when, after his conversation with Mercédès, she gazes at him and then leaves without saying a word. Their last meeting, on his yacht, show a rather tormented Monte Cristo, who finally yields to her determination and takes her hands in his, smiling at her with love. The Count from the Italian 1966 TV Series has no gesture towards Haydée that could betray any feeling for her. The ending shows him kissing her hand and leaving the island with her. With no words spoken and no other indications, the role of Haydée in his life is not thus clear. The 1979 film, however faithful in general, leaves aside any concern for the relation between the Count and Haydée. No gesture or word from neither of them indicates any affection between them until the ending. This is why their last scene, precisely because of its literal fidelity to the novel, is false: it doesn't have any foundation and is also poorly played, in an affected manner. There is no chemistry between the two characters, they lack emotion, are untruthful and the Count seems weary of life, while she pushes obedience to passivity.

There are however a few exceptions, which show much more than the novel itself. In the 1942 film, once she confesses her love, he tells her that he has always loved her "*as a sister, a wife, a woman*"; he then tells Maximilien that this day is the happiest of his life. Unfortunately, until these last scenes, except for some endearing gestures, there was no evidence of this great love of his, of which he was fully aware ("*always loved you*"). In the Argentinian-Mexican 1954 film, the Count tells her at one point, as an answer to her confession, that he couldn't live without her either. Later, before the duel with Albert, he tells her that she will understand how much he loved her on her way back home, the next day. He is affected by her suffering and asks her not to speak anymore, because he will lose his courage. Receiving Albert's apologies and defeating Fernand, he goes after her and they reunite. The Russian version of the Count (1988) gives indirect signs of his affection for Haydée. He does reject her every time she tries to kiss him, but his behavior afterwards shows, on the contrary, that he indeed cares for her and in a different way than as a father. The first time, leaving her apartments, he throws Mercédès' portrait in the lake. The second time, he takes her hands in his and ask her to forgive him; moreover, it was him who wanted to see her before leaving for the duel with Albert. After accomplishing his revenge, Monte Cristo is shown twice more with Haydée at his side: they smile at one another, embrace and share a kiss. He indirectly tells her that he loves her, by giving thanks to God for allowing him to love again.

Another special case is in the 1943 film, where their relation remains the same from the beginning until the end and moreover is rather a partnership than a love affair. In their first conversation, the Count tells her that his only desire is to go back to the East, with her. This is exactly what he does in the end. He always addresses her as "*dear Haydée*", but her presence, even if quite constant (at breakfast, dinner, in his office), doesn't have the same humanizing effect like in the novel. She doesn't keep her redeeming role either, because he has lost interest in living once his mission was accomplished.

Regarding the salvific nature of Haydée's love, when it is the case, it usually stops at the first level, meaning the consolation of his spirit (1929, 1943, 1954 *El Conde...*, 1964, 1965 [maybe], 1979). It is however erroneously linked to his sufferings and not to those he inflicted

on innocents on his path to vengeance/justice. This happens also because the Count is rarely shown feeling any remorse. A most noteworthy aspect, as it is singular in the ten adaptations, is the connection between his love for Haydée and God, which the Count makes at the end of the 1988 TV Mini-Series. He sees his love for her as a gift from God and therefore her presence in his life is redeeming.

The reunification of the initial couple is however the favorite ending of screenwriters, whether the films actually end so or not. If not, they find various ways to suggest their preference for the hero's lover. The couple is reunited in only three films (1922, 1934, 1998; not taking into account the 2002 adaptation, where Haydée is not present). Nonetheless, in five others the Count still loves Mercédès (1943, 1954 *Le Comte...*, 1961, 1966, 1974) and wants to get back to her, before (1954) or after his vengeance is completed (1974) - but is refused; or leaves her the hope of reunification (1961). In this case, the **wait and hope** ending is there, although in a completely different way. There is no connection with God and the result is to be seen in the future. In the 1943 film, he actually confesses to Mercédès that she is the only one he ever loved and ever will, but he is aware of having grown too apart to get back together. Instead, the only clue to Monte Cristo's love for her, in the 1966 adaptation, is his passionate kiss the night she comes to ask for her son's life. Before that, when she asks him if he still loves that woman he loved in his youth, he answers that he has forgiven her. His elusive reply could also hide his true feelings for her.

## Conclusions

Dumas created Haydée in his *Count of Monte Cristo* in order to give his hero a means to his vengeance/justice and then to recompense him through her love. A most beautiful and mysterious character, capable of a strong love and devotion, she doesn't survive successfully the transposition of the novel on screen. Neither her appearance, nor her personality are faithfully reproduced in film. Other 'insignificant' details in her portrayal are overlooked or contradicted. Even her name is left aside in the 1974 adaptation, being indicated only in the closing credits; even she presents herself as merely "*the daughter of Ali Pasha*". It is no wonder then that she is neither permitted to fully honor the mission entrusted to her by Dumas.

None of the films discussed above are truly to the portrayal of Haydée. She is either reduced to her role as an instrument of justice/vengeance, or, at most, her love becomes a remedy to Monte Cristo's sufferings. He usually accepts her love without loving her back or, worse, still loving Mercédès. There are only three exceptions in which the Count clearly tells her that he loves her (1942, 1954 *El Conde...*, 1988) and in only one film (1988) he considers her presence in his life as a gift from God. This is not merely a problem of misrepresenting a character. Its effects go further and reach the main character and the story of the novel, which thus loses some of its meaning and depth.

In spite of the great number of films that keep the ending imagined by Dumas, this ending seems most of the times disconnected from the rest of the movie and false all the more when it is literally faithful to the novel. The fault is not to be entirely attributed to the distorted and incomplete presentation of Haydée's story. At least as grave, if not more, is the de-deification of the Count. In the 19th century, an ordinary character becoming a superior

being, in want of vengeance/justice, was appealing to the middle class readers (Biglia, 1999, ch.1.5). But such a character, that comes to be almost a demigod and sometimes considered even more than that, may seem too distant to the 20th and 21st century viewers. The romantic figure of Monte Cristo, an **ideal hero** for the people of the 19th century (Biglia, 1999, ch.1.7), didn't correspond anymore to the model of the ideal hero of the last century. It might be one of the reasons which led to this end. The few surviving lines, dropped occasionally, do not find roots in the story or are not supported by the manner in which the characters act. And if Monte Cristo is not a demigod any longer, his need to reconnect himself to life can't exist. He's just a man, powerful, intelligent, but still a man, who, after accomplishing his mission of vengeance/justice, is free to love again. This de-deification of the character is emphasized even more in the films in which the Count considers this new identity of his just a mask, to wear only until his vengeance is accomplished and then to give up completely in order to be again Edmond Dantès (1961, 1974, 1998). This is a **regression** both of the character and the story. On the contrary, in the novel, he rediscovers his old self in a journey in his past (ch.113), and he integrates it in his new self. The proof of this **evolution** is his signature on the letter to Maximilien and Valentine "*Edmond Dantès, Count of Monte Cristo*". But this is the beginning of another analysis.

As for Haydée, all that remains is to **wait and hope** that the seventh art will someday discover her as she truly is and that some film will faithfully portray both her and her story.

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