

CHAPTER III

THE REALISATION OF ERIK'S FICTIONAL FINALISM

A. Discovering Erik's Fictional Finalism

Erik's fictional finalism can be traced from his past experiences and the sources of his inferiority feelings. However, the best way to analyse an individual, no matter what the focus of the analysis will be, is by observing his behaviours in the middle of his society instead of pulling him out from the social scene and studying the individual in private.

1. Past Experiences

Since *The Phantom of the Opera* is in the form of drama, any information about the character is absorbed mostly from the dialogues within. The writer gets data about Erik's past life from a dialogue between Giry, the ballet instructor and Raoul, the patron of Opera Populaire. Giry is the only person in the opera house who knows the background of Erik the Phantom.

Giry: *(She has glanced nervously about her and suddenly deciding to trust him, cuts in)* Very well. It was years ago. There was a travelling fair in the city. Tumblers, conjurors, human oddities.

Raoul: Go on...

Giry: *(Trance like, as she retraces the past)* And there was... I shall never forget him: a man... locked in a cage...

Raoul: In a cage...?

Giry: A prodigy, monsieur! Scholar, architect, musician

Raoul: *(Piecing together the jigsaw)* composer...

Giry: And an inventor too, monsieur. They boasted he had once built for the Shah of Persia, a maze of mirrors...

Raoul: *(Mystified and intensified, cuts in)* Who was this man...?

Giry: *(With a shudder)* A freak of nature... more monster... than man...

Raoul: *(A murmur)* Deformed...?

Giry: From birth, it seemed...

Raoul: My God...

Giry: And then...he went missing. He escaped

Raoul: Go on.

Giry: They never found him it was said he had died.

Raoul: *(Darkly)* But he didn't die, did he?

Giry: The world forgot him, but I never can... For in this darkness. I have seen him again...

Raoul: And so our Phantom's this man...

(The Phantom 2. 2)

From the dialogue above, we can see that Erik used to live in a circus community (travelling fair) and was displayed as freak because of his deformity. There is no clear evidence on how he got into the community the first place, but the fact that he ran away from the travelling fair indicates his objection to be in the community moreover to be "locked in a cage." Such experience shapes his rebellious character. He is a genius but it seems that he has to give up his genius by doing nothing but astounding curious circus-goers from behind his cage. His life in the

travelling fair is so traumatic because first, he doesn't want to be in the community and second, he is disparaged because of his oddity while actually he should have gained recognition for his genius.

Any study of individual psychology generally requires understanding of early childhood experiences. Memories about relationship with parents, siblings, and other adults are subconsciously internalised in a child's brain and are carried along throughout his adult's life. Erik's early childhood life is only stated shortly in the play as followed:

Phantom: ...This face, which earned a mother's fear and loathing
(2. 9)

There is no additional information about his father, his mother, and siblings (if any). But if Erik's mother herself despises him, imagine how other people treat him. Supports from parents are very significant in child's development. Erik did not get affection from his parent(s) and acceptance from other adults. People around him has abhorred and rejected him because of his congenital defect:

Phantom: (*Moving off again*) Hounded out by everyone! Met with
hatred everywhere! No kind word from anyone! No
compassion anywhere!
(2. 8)

Thus, it is easy to predict that he will grow up as a troubled individual. His virtuous desire to be recognised and to be accepted is layered by his ambition to revenge to the people who has mocked him. He wants to prove them that he is worthwhile to be in the society of normal people.

2. Erik's Fictional Finalism

Generally, the primary source of inferiority feelings is the body. Whenever people are asked about one thing that makes them unconfident, it is more likely they will point out a certain part of their body. Physical appearance has been used for ages as a standard to judge a person. It determines which race group one belongs to, one's social status, and even in some cases, one's future. Being born with a deformed face, Erik's future is foreseen to end up in a freak show.

Erik's face is his organ of inferiority. His deformed face seems to be the cause of his misery, but no one can guarantee that people will treat him differently when he is handsome for example. If one has a certain weakness or disability in him, he tends to either cover it or divert it to other positive feature of him. This sort of compensation over inferiority feelings also appears in Erik. He performs two compensations.

The earliest one is covering his face with a mask. The mask has been an important thing throughout Erik's life. Nevertheless, the meaning behind the usage of the mask is gradually changing. At first, the function of the mask is to hide his distorted face.

Phantom: ...A mask, my first unfeeling scrap of clothing...

(2. 9)

Probably he kept using the mask (or anything to cover his face) until he was sold to the travelling fair. There he had to 'unveiled' his face and showed his face as his 'best' feature to attract audiences. This was the most embarrassing moment in his life; it was like he was forced to be naked in public. For him, a mask is more important than clothing. When he escaped from the travelling fair, his mask

shifted to play a significant role in hiding his identity. Perhaps people didn't even care about his well being, but he did this in order to mingle with the society and to fulfil his basic needs. Yet, a traveller cannot wander all the time, so does Erik. He needs a place to stay. He longs for a place where he has opportunity to develop his talent and to attain recognition. We do not know how he got into the opera house the first place, but from the dialogue between Giry and Raoul about Erik's background, Opera Populaire revives his love for music.

At the opera house, the mask plays several roles depending on the impression Erik tries to create. For the opera people, the mask is used to induce terror. He acts as a ruling opera ghost. The mask gives him the sense of power over the opera people, the 'normal' people. Feeling like this is new for Erik because all the time he has been jeered at, but now the people who despise him are terrified. However, Erik manipulates the mask to help him to be the angel of music for Christine. By acting as her angel of music, Erik tries to use her as his medium to get success in the opera and later to gain recognition. Surprisingly, as he grows great affection toward her, the mask shifts back to the primary function, to hide deformity. He wants to look perfect in front of her. When Christine unmasks him, Erik is getting furious.

Christine: ... who was that shape in the shadow? Whose is the face
in the mask?

(She finally succeeds in tearing the mask from his face. THE PHANTOM springs up and rounds on her furiously. She clearly sees his face. The audience does not, as he is standing in profile and in shadow)

Phantom : Damn you! You little prying Pandora! You little demon- is this what you wanted see?

(1. 6)

Since Christine has a perfect figure, he also desires perfection for himself. The mask is his hope to create a new identity as Christine's long-desired angel of music and to win her heart. He is worried that when Christine sees his deformed face, she will feel disgusted and afraid to be with him.

Another compensation to cover up his deformity is by diverting people's attention away from it. He was known as a prodigy. He is a multi talented person. He has been trying to give valuable contributions to society by exploring any kind of fields. But it seems that the society blocks him from contributing just because he is considered "abnormal."¹ Therefore, he will continue to master any kind of works until his society accepts him for his contribution.

Feelings of inferiority and the ill treatment from the surrounding people trigger Erik to create a very ambitious fictional finalism. For him, the ideal life is when he is accepted by his society, allowed to contribute to the society, and recognised for his works despite his oddity.

¹ Anne Anastasi classifies the term "abnormal" into three distinct concepts:

1. *Anti-normative view*. Abnormality is any deviation from the ideal or perfect condition.
 2. *Pathological*. Abnormality is adaptation of the anti normative concepts to meet practical and social requirements.
 3. *Statistical*. The abnormal is the unusual, the relative infrequent.
- The writer assumes Erik falls in 2 categories. At first, his 'abnormality' was anti normative. Later, it develops into pathological due to personal and social implications.

B. Realisation of Erik's Fictional Finalism

The way one accomplishes fictional finalism can be observed from how he manages three tasks of life: work, community, and love. Everyone has his unique way in dealing with his tasks of life. One tends to show low activity but has a high social interest, another may do nothing but still has concern for the society, and the other likes to be active and has strong interest on the society. Erik is the kind of person who is very active in completing his tasks of life, but he does it just for his sake without any concern to the society he lives in. Despite his inborn will to blend in with the opera society, his ambition to pursue his own goals makes him to exploit others to work his own way.

1. Work

Erik perceives working as compensation over his deformed face. He believes if he gains success at work, his society will respect him and neglect his deformity. Still, the reality is beyond his expectation. He might be successful as scholar, architect, and musician, but how good is one in his profession does not determine the degree of success. Instead, it is how much one's profession or result of work gives advantage to the society. It is true that his multi talents enable him to master several skills of work, yet all he wants is acceptance and recognition. Being expert in varied jobs is not his primary pursuit because once he is acknowledged in one field; he will surely secure the circumstance. Since people do not recognise him in many ways, then Erik will keep on trying to find one profession.

Erik comes to Opera Populaire with one mission: to create a masterpiece opera. Why does he choose an opera? Without discussing further about his talent in music, opera is considered as the highest form of music/drama. Being disparaged all the time stimulates Erik to assume that in order to get recognition, he has to be stronger and higher than others, he has to be superior and do superior thing as well. In short, he demands perfection. He is not reluctant to criticise the performers at the opera. He regularly writes notes to the two managers of Opera Populaire, Andre and Firmin:

Firmin: (He has been sorting mail on his desk. Finding the two letters from PHANTOM) Oh, it seems you've got one too...

(He hands the letter to ANDRE, who opens it and reads)

Andre: "Dear Andre what a charming gala! Christine enjoyed a great success! We were hardly bereft when Carlotta left- otherwise the chorus was entrancing, but the dance was a lamentable mess

(1. 8)

Erik writes the notes not only to create terror, but also to make the opera perfect. His critic to the opera performance relies on his great musical skills. This is proven by the fact that Giry, the ballet instructor, is so disappointed by the performance of the ballet girls so that she commands them to rehearse immediately after the performance (1. 2). His ambition to be successful as a composer leads him to be a perfectionist. He is very determined and accepts no compromise. If he has to kill to be successful then he will do it.

Christine: And if he has to kill a thousand men –

Raoul : Forget this waking nightmare...

Christine: The Phantom of the Opera will kill

(1.10)

However, his perfectionism is not the only reason why he often writes notes to the managers. It is his great knowledge in music. He knows what good music sounds like and it troubles him if the music and the opera are played out of tunes. In other notes to Andre and Firmin he writes:

Firmin: Look, my friend, what we have here...

(He has two notes from the PHANTOM, one of which he hands to ANDRE, who opens it and reads)

Andre: “Dear Andre, re my orchestrations: We need another first bassoon. Get a player with tone – and that third trombone has to go! The man could not be deafer, so please preferably one who plays in tune!”

Firmin: *(Reading his letter)* “Dear Firmin, vis a vis my upera” some chorus-members must be sacked. If you could find out which has a sense of pitch – wisely though, I’ve managed to assign a rather minor role to those who cannot act.”

(2. 3)

From the notes above, it seems Erik wants to show off his musical talent. This is another way to get recognition too. But the notes sound arrogant. People have already grown to consider him as a threat. If the managers do follow his

instructions, it is merely because they are afraid of the Phantom not because of his brilliant ideas.

His interest in music reflects the notion that music is very important for him. It is not only as a medium to achieve recognition but also serves as fulfillment of spiritual needs. Thus, creating a masterpiece will mean a high achievement for his talent. From the lyric of the song *“The Music of the Night”* sung by Erik to Christine, we can see what music means to him:

Phantom: I have brought you to the seat of sweet music's
throne...to this kingdom where all must pay homage to
music... music

(1. 5)

This represents Erik's dedication to music. Everyone must give his best contribution to music. He calls his music *“The Music of the Night”* because through music people are expected to see his despair. Music travels through language and culture barriers. It intoxicates people to see the real beauty of life. The word *“night”* symbolises darkness, emptiness, and grief. When it is dark, we cannot see the shape of an object, we do not know whether the object is beautiful or ugly. We know the object is good or bad from the effect the object delivers to us. So is music, it is about how good it sounds and how it inspires people, not about who creates the music. This is exactly the same case in Erik's music. Music of the night doesn't mean some tunes played in the middle of the night. It is a persuasion to see the essence of something (In Erik's case, it can be music and or himself) without judging the superficial matters.

Phantom: ...Night-time sharpens, heightens each sensation...

Darkness stirs and wakes imagination...

Silently the senses abandon their defences...

Slowly, gently night unfurls its splendour...

Grasp it, sense it – tremulous and tender...

Turn your face away from the garish light of day,

Turn your thoughts away from cold, unfeeling light –

And listen to the music of the night...

(1. 5)

The “night” makes one more sensitive for he cannot see his surroundings. It evokes imagination. When one is filled with prejudice upon something, he tends to perceive everything related to the thing suspiciously. But when he is only exposed to the object without knowing the origin, he is likely to give fair judgment. This is also the reflection of Erik’s character. The dark of the night helps him to hide his distorted face. He desires people see the essence of him. He wants them to be aware of his capacity.

During the play, readers are given the performances of two operas such as Chalmereau’s *Hannibal* and Albrizzio’s *Il Muto*. Erik as the Phantom criticises both performances via notes to the managers. But, Erik is not only able to criticise. Towards the end of the play he promotes his own opera *Don Juan Triumphant*. He orders the managers to produce it at the Opera Populaire. He arranges the cast and the music. He even draws himself from the opera people and exile himself in his underground labyrinth for six months just to create the opera.

The opera people assume that Erik disappears for good. However, Christine can sense that the peaceful life at the opera house is only momentarily.

Meg/Giry : And all our fears are in the past!

Andre : Six months..

Piangi : Of relief!

Carlotta : Of delight!

Andre/Firmin: Of Elysian peace!

Meg/Giry : And we can breathe at last!

Carlotta : No more notes!

Piangi : No more ghost!

[...]

Christine : Think of it! A secret engagement! Look-your future
bride! Just think of it

Raoul : But why is it a secret? What have we to hide?

Christine : Please, let's not fight...

Raoul : Christine, you're free!

Cgristine : Wait till the time is right...

(2. 1)

By the time Erik reappears with his opera, Christine has been engaged to Raoul. She is afraid that her engagement will make Erik furious; therefore she tries to keep it in secret.

Don Juan Triumphant is Erik's final hope for achievement. In order to make his opera a successful one, he has to select the right actors and actresses for the cast. Christine, as already predicted, plays the leading actress. It seems that he

has prepared Christine to play as the leading actress from the very first time he stepped his feet into the opera. Actually there is a major reason why Erik is so enthusiastic in changing Christine from a chorus-member to a prima donna to replace the famous Carlotta. But before, the writer discusses the reason, the writer has to omit the possibility that Erik could be fall in love at first sight when he saw Christine singing, thus encourages him to make her a star. The writer has to keep this notion aside because this assumption is somewhat subjective with no evidence and irrelevant to the study. The first reason why Erik singles out Christine as his 'student' is because he sees Christine has a potential to be a prima donna with her stunning voice. But Carlotta, the prima donna, has gained her reputation as a leading actress before Christine. For that reason, the opera people do not take a chance raising a new star to replace the already famous one. They surely will look for another prima donna when Carlotta resigns or when she is not adored by opera lovers. But as long as people still love to see Carlotta, it is difficult for a newcomer like Christine to steal the attention even when she has more to offer. This occasion reminds Erik of his own condition. Erik is a genius but people ignored it just because there are many other genius people who are 'normal.' Therefore, orbiting Christine is like struggling for his recognition. He will do anything he can to make Christine a star. He teaches Christine regularly and sternly. When Raoul asks her out to celebrate the success of her first leading role, Christine declines:

Raoul : No doubt of it. Now we'll go to supper!

Christine : No, Raoul, the Angel of Music is very strict.

(1. 3)

Meanwhile, Erik realises that if he appears in front of Christine as an opera ghost, he will not be able to approach and teach her. So he disguises himself as the angel of music that Christine's father sent from heaven.

Christine: (abstracted, entering the dressing room)

Father once spoke of an angel...

I used to dream he'd appear

Now as I sing, I can sense him...

and I know he's here...

(trance-like)

Here in this room he calls me softly...

somewhere inside...

hiding...

Somehow I know he's always with me...

he – the unseen genius...

(1. 2)

To support his appearance as angel of music, he always comes to Christine's dressing room at night and sets a mood as if Christine was dreaming. It is frequent in the play when Christine describes about the Phantom, she is in the condition of trance² like. Erik approaches Christine when her state of mind is weak e.g. during sleeping. Erik bears in mind that only in a weak moment and behind the figure of angel of music can Christine accept him sincerely.

² According to Dennis Wier, Director of The Trance Institute, Switzerland, trance occurs when ever there is substantial cognitive defect loop of sufficient length of time to cause dissociation. Music consists of multiple trances, one for each repeating rhythm and melody. Most of these musical loops repeated only few times, thus not enough to induce trance. Musical trance can be described as the creation of multiple trances followed by their collapses.

2. Community

The success of one's interconnectedness with his society is strongly related to the degree of his feeling of community. Since there are no exact standards to measure one's feeling of community, the success is observed from his social interest, social sense, and social feeling (Stein and Edwards). However, the feeling of community is not the only prevailing factor in the relationship between one and his society. There are sets of rules, values, and norms working as the general conventions of the society. As a social being, everybody has a great feeling of community. Nonetheless, on some occasions, the feeling of community decreases to its lowest level. The causes of this decrease may come from inside and or outside the person. The most common causes are the discrepancies and clashes between personal interests and social interests. Whatever the cause is, the decrease of feeling of community affects the interconnectedness between a person and his society.

Erik always has problems with growing his feeling of community. At first, the opera society where Erik lives does not accept him because of his physical imperfection. Erik's reaction towards this rejection is very destructive. He doesn't realise that every society has different criteria for selecting its members. He cannot expect that he will be accepted in any societies. For a person like him, perhaps a circus community makes more sense than an opera society. He blames the opera society for treating him like trash and being discriminative. He should not do so because this is the mechanism of the society that is impossible to be altered by one person for the sake of one person only. In this case, he exploits his deformity as a tool to obtain people's sympathy and acceptance.

Nevertheless, the opera society and other societies in general are not ready to accept people with deformity. There is one general convention behind the reason why ‘abnormal’ people find it difficult to blend into the normal people society; it is the concept of God. The concept of God is wonderful is judged not on appearance but on deeds and a perfect being in God. In other words, how can anyone find fault in a perfect God? So, man thinks that since God made him in “His (God)” image then anything that is deformed in “His” image is less perfect and not worthy. This convention perhaps sounds too bold, but it lies unspoken inside almost all societies. Therefore, Erik should not blame his state of imperfection; on the contrary, he has to conform to his society to create adjustments.

Generally, disturbed individual tends to avoid or make distance with the society and blame them for being judgmental. But Erik is somewhat different. Besides keeping distance with people at the Opera Populaire, he also tries to interact with them. His avoidance can be noticed from the fact that he built a labyrinth underground the opera house with many secret passages to monitor the activities of the opera people.

Phantom: Down once more to the dungeon of my black despair!

Down we plunge to the prison of my mind!

Down that path into darkness deep as hell.

Why, you ask, was I bound and chained in this cold and dismal place? Not for any mortal sin, but the wickedness of my abhorrent face!

(2. 8)

As the opposite of the beauty and the grandeur of the opera house, the labyrinth underground captures the despair and the misfortune of Erik the Phantom. The labyrinth has several functions. Since the opera society do not want his presence among them, Erik has to build a dwelling that is separated from the society. At first, the place served only as hideaway. He felt like he was thrown in a dungeon for a crime he didn't commit. This condition heightens his motivation to revenge. As time goes by, the labyrinth becomes Erik's sanctuary because in this place he feels safe from people who always mock and disparage him. The labyrinth gives him freedom to express himself as a genius composer and becomes the source of his inspiration to create the so-called "Music of the Night." The readers can sense that the labyrinth is actually the manifestation of Erik's inner feeling. It is dark, mysterious, and abandoned, but it is furnished in some ways to give comfort to the person who lives there. It is just like the way we see Erik, he is hurt and abandoned, but somehow he tries to compromise with his misfortune.

Although he has built himself a 'kingdom' beneath the opera house, Erik seeks opportunity to take part into the daily life of the opera by making secret passages to the upper world. It can be said that he is the only person in the opera house who knows every corner of the opera house. He realises he cannot live forever in his labyrinth without interacting with the opera people. In this place he keeps distance with the society but at the same time sets up plans to confront them.

Why does Erik decide to interact with the society? There is an initial consideration that a person cannot live all by himself. He has to live side by side with others in harmony. He has to interact with others from the smallest group

(family) to a larger one (friends, neighbours, country). But the interaction has to be built upon a good will that enriches and benefits both the person and the society. When one side tries to push his/their personal interests, the interconnectedness spreads a negative tension for both sides. One side becomes the oppressor and the other the oppressed. The social person develops to be the anti social person and perceives others with prejudices. So, maybe we can say that Erik's interaction manifests from the inevitable feeling as social human that every human being cannot live by himself. But when the interaction turns out to be an imbalance one, it becomes a confrontation. We can see that his interaction with the society is not based on mutual interests between a man and his society. He forces the society to do everything as he said and wished because he considers the society is the one who should take the responsibility for his miserable life. The society of course deny this accusation by pointing out that it is Erik's destructive behaviour that suggests the urge to expel him from the society

The way Erik confronts the opera society is quite strategic. He doesn't confront them abruptly. Instead, he makes indirect confrontation to induce terror and manifest power. A disturbed individual has a tendency to feel powerless or powerful. Since Erik is an active and creative individual, he decides to appear powerful in front of the people who have underestimated him.

There are many ways he employs to create terror. He disguises as an opera ghost and haunts the opera. At first, his presence was taken as a fable (1. 10). Gradually, he becomes more real by teaching Christine to sing, sending warning notes, and even killing those who stand on his way. Also from the discussion in the previous sub-chapter, the writer has discussed about the notes Erik sends to

the managers. Besides to show off his knowledge in music, the notes also evoke terror to the opera people because the notes are written commands from the opera ghost (Erik) on how the opera is supposed to be managed whereas any objections will result in series of accidents. He also needs the opera people to fulfil his needs. He demands the managers to give him monthly salary and keep Box Five at the opera for him to see the performances (1. 8).

All the terrors give him feeling of a powerful person instead of useless freak. Fascinatingly, these terrors also work as an effort to get attention from the people. He believes that if he succeeds in attracting people's attention, they will notice his power, his creativity, his genius, and later it will direct them to accept him in the middle of the society. He doesn't realise that his attention getting is conducted in wrong ways. He threatens and even kills those who deny his commands. He believes that if he appears as a powerful person, he will be more superior than others who have taken him for granted. So by following this path, he will be able to achieve his fictional finalism.

3. Love

From the previous discussion, the writer has analysed how Erik plots Christine to attain his ambition and about the mask he wears. In this sub-chapter, the writer emphasizes on how Erik accomplishes one of the tasks of life, love. The analysis touches again the discussion about Christine and the mask as Erik realises his interest in Christine grows stronger and that he needs her more than just to sing for his music. He comes to comprehend the universal feeling of mankind, the needs to love and be loved in return.

At first, Erik needs Christine to make his song take flight and help him make the music of the night (1. 5). This utterance is repeated at the end of the play. Thus, we can conclude that his reason to approach Christine the first time was just to accomplish his ambition to produce a great music. Soon he discovers that Christine reminds him of his dream of perfection, his loss of parents, and his disregarded talents. In many ways, they share things in common. Only one great difference separates them. Christine has the opportunity to become a prima donna and to bring out her true capacities to the world. Erik does not.

The writer believes the aforementioned circumstances inspire Erik to position Christine as his imaginary mask. He trains Christine to be a diva and hides behind her success. He believes that Christine's success will turn people's heads to him because he is the one and only contributor in the discovery of the neglected diva. Factually, the reality seldom befriends with expectation. Christine does get the standing ovation, but Erik never receives any credits.

Erik tries to get her sympathy by complaining how his deformed face causes despair.

Phantom's Voice: Flattering child,

You shall know me,

see why in shadow I hide!

Look at your face in the mirror –

I am there inside!

(The figure of the PHANTOM becomes discernible behind the mirror)

(1. 3)

Then it seems that he positions himself as if he had a perfect figure like Christine's because only in that way can he gain recognition. When the Phantom's figure appears behind the mirror, the readers are directed to see how Erik and Christine complete each other. Christine endows the figure, whilst Erik the mind.

In the beginning, Christine did not realise that Erik had been using her. She was blinded by the thought of Erik becoming the angel of music, a tutor her late father sent from heaven. But as Erik becomes obsessed of her by abducting her, commanding the managers to give her a leading role in every performance and even killing innocent people like Buquet and Piangi; Christine comes to realise that she is part of Erik's plan to get people 's acceptance and recognition.

Phantom: Sing once again with me our strange duet...

My power over you grows stronger yet...

And though you turn from me,

to glance behind,

The Phantom of the Opera is there –

inside your mind...

Christine: Those who have seen your face

Draw back in fear...

I am the mask you wear...

Phantom : It's me they hear...

Both : Your/my spirit

And your/my voice,

In one combined:

The Phantom of the Opera

is there inside your/my mind...

(1.4)

From the song we have the idea about the combination of the two with Erik as the mastermind. "My power over you grows stronger yet," means he hasn't finished giving his lesson to her. Christine hasn't become the person he wanted her to be because she has doubts. She is confused with the presence of Erik and his overwhelming attention on her.

What does exactly Erik mean to her? Christine considers him to be her angel of music, guardian, teacher, inspiration, friend and father. She can never be sure of what he means to her because Erik is eager to control her and be the one, whomever it is, who means a lot to her. In that way, Christine will idolise him and this condition make him easier to dictate her moves. But instead of idolising him, Christine is certain that she is just part of Erik's plan. However, Erik has persuasive skills to influence her such as meeting her in her weakest moments and blurring his identity.

Nevertheless, the climax of the play happens when Christine unmask Erik the Phantom in Act I Scene 6 and Act II Scene 7. These are the moments when imaginary mask confronts the actual one. The first unmasking can be interpreted in two ways. First, Christine is curious about the face behind the mask. As she says before unmasking the Phantom:

Christine: Who was that shape in the shadow?

Whose is the face in the mask?

(1. 6)

The second interpretation is Christine challenging the Phantom to take off his actual mask and replace it with the imaginary mask. Even though she has figured out that Erik has been using her as his mask all the time, she is somehow willing to be his mask. Actually she needs Erik to guide her to be a prima donna. Maybe her ambition is not as much as Erik's but she starts to enjoy her success. Besides, as the daughter of a famous violinist, she is challenged to exceed her father's great name. But Erik cannot leave his real mask because the society hasn't accepted him the way he is and because he starts to love Christine.

His love for Christine discourages him to take off his mask. He is worried that his distorted face might frighten her.

Phantom: But Christine...

Fear can

Turn to love - you'll learn to see,

to find the man behind the monster: this...

repulsive carcass, who seems a beast,

but secretly dreams of beauty,

secretly... secretly...

(1.6)

He hopes Christine doesn't judge him by appearance. He tries to show her that underneath his ugliness lays true beauty. Erik conveys his intention to love her sincerely without deceiving her anymore.

On the other hand, Christine demonstrates no significant change of attitude after witnessing Erik's deformed face. The face gives her no horror but from it she learns to look inside Erik's despair. It represents the world of unending night

where daylight dissolves into darkness (1. 10). Supposed she was able to love Erik, it would be because of pity and compassion. She cannot love him unconditionally because Erik's love chains her in a way that he will constantly remind her of his sadness and her loss of her father. Thus, there is no other way but turning down his love and accept Raoul's love. To Raoul she sings:

Christine: All I want is freedom,

a world with no more night...

and you always beside me

to hold me

(1. 10)

“A world with no more night” is construed as her inclination to escape from the shadow of her father and Erik. Loving Erik means living under the shadow of her father and Erik's perpetual ambition. While loving Raoul allows her to be on her own.

Unfortunately, Erik takes her rejection differently. He accuses her for turning him down because of his deformity.

Phantom: That fate, which condemns me

to wallow in blood

has also denied me

the joys of the flesh...

this face –

the infection which poisons our love...

(2. 9)

It is not the face that makes Christine deny his love. On the contrary she tries to tell Erik that his face is not the source of his misfortune. The distorted face is his organ of inferiority. Erik realises it and despises it. Yet, at the same time he manipulates it to achieve his ambitions. Whenever he fails to get what he wants he puts the blame on the face and people's abhorrence of his deformity. On Erik's accusation, she objects:

Christine: This haunted face
 holds no horror for me now
 It's in your soul that true distortion lies...

(2. 9)

One thing among many other things that love teaches to man is the feeling of not hurting the loved one and pure desire to make his/her happy. Erik does not win Christine's heart. Yet, unlike the ways he confronts the previous two tasks of life, he conducts many ways to win her love without hurting her physically. One of them is by trying to eliminate Raoul from the love competition.

The love triangle among Christine, Erik, and Raoul is fascinating to be analysed. The love between Christine and Raoul has existed since they were teenagers. Maybe it's only sheer infatuation, but for some reason the love ceased to grow. Fate has brought them together in adult's life. The ecstasy of meeting old love revives Christine and Raoul to love each other once more. As stated earlier, Raoul's love is the kind of love that gives Christine freedom, a room to grow as herself without being haunted by the shadow of her father and Erik.

In some discussions, many assumed that Christine's love to Erik is somewhat sexual. Thus she lets herself to be intoxicated by him many times, in

other words, she surrenders herself. With Raoul she has equal position in love. But with Erik she becomes helpless. However the idea that Erik, in the eye of Christine, appears in several identities such as friend, teacher, guardian, angel, and even her father denies this assumption that suggests incest.

In the end, how does Erik accomplish the task of life? The writer assumes Erik gives up his love. He does try to kill Raoul so he can have Christine for himself. But Raoul warns him of the possibility of his love life with Christine when he eliminates him and takes Christine to live with him. Raoul said Erik couldn't win her love by making her his prisoner (2. 5). Erik also notices Raoul's honesty to love her when he makes a passionate plea to Christine when Erik asks her to choose him or Raoul.

Raoul: (Pleading, grasping the bars of the gate)

Free her!

Do what you like only free her!

Have you no pity?

[...]

I love her!

Does that mean nothing?

I love her!

Show some compassion

(2. 9)

As reaction of this remark, Erik gets angry. That means he really consider Raoul as his serious contender. He is able to sense the sincerity in Raoul's plea, the kind of sincerity he does not own. It makes him mad because he knows he cannot love

Christine as honestly as Raoul. He is preoccupied with his selfish ego. The word “compassion” only reminds him of how the people treat him badly without compassion. Perhaps he is capable of loving her earnestly if he realises his fictional finalism.

Another factor that encourages him to give up his love is Christine, towards the end of the play, quits to take part in his plan and refuses to live under his control.

Christine: Farewell my fallen idol and false friend...

One by one I've watched illusions shattered....

(2. 9)

Finally, Christine has power to escape from Erik's control. She even addresses Erik as her “fallen idol” and “false friend.” At this point Erik realizes that he is no longer able to rely on her to run his mission. Christine adds that Erik has deceived her and she has given her mind blindly (2. 9). Somehow her statements also hurt him because they mean he has lost one person who isn't afraid to see his deformed face, a person who gives the real meaning to the word “compassion.”

A kiss means a thousand meanings. A kiss represents love, affection, passion, pity, acceptance, compassion, and many more. A kiss holds a significant part in revealing human's genuine and pure feeling. In fairy tales and fables, a kiss always has magical properties, for example turning a frog into prince, turning a beast into prince, awakening Sleeping Beauty, etc. In *The Phantom of the Opera*, a kiss bestows important meaning to the relationship between Christine and Erik and to Erik's fulfillment of his tasks of life.

Christine and Raoul's kiss in Act I Scene 10 symbolises their solemn vow to love each other and is followed by their engagement. At the end of the play Christine kisses Erik. The way Webber gives description on both kisses illustrates the discrepancies between the two kisses. Christine's kiss for Raoul is not described intensely. The stage direction only states "*They kiss.*" But if we compare with the description of Christine's kiss to Erik, the stage description goes "*Now calmly facing him, she kisses him long and full on the lips. The embrace lasts a long time....*" There is a significant difference between the kissing scene in the novel and the one in the play. In the novel version, Christine kisses Erik on his forehead. While in Webber's version, the kiss happens on lips. For some readers, Christine kisses Erik in order to make him release her and Raoul. So it might not be a sincere kiss. But by referring to the novel version, the kiss on forehead symbolizes deep affection without the existence of lust or trick. Webber probably 'modified' the kissing scene for creating dramatic tension on stage. However, it might be too bold to conclude that the kiss illustrates who is the one Christine really loves. However, the kissing between Christine and Erik confers insight on the result of the realisation of his fictional finalism.

C. The Impacts of Erik's Realisation of Fictional Finalism

Eventually, Erik's efforts to realise his fictional finalism give positive and negative impacts on both Erik and the society. His struggle to realise his fictional finalism sharpens his work ethic and complicates his interaction with the society. Conversely, it also changes his idea of love into a better understanding. In contrast, the struggle could not alter the society's prejudice upon Erik.

1. The Impacts on Erik

Actually, Erik's fictional finalism is of positive one. He just dreams about acceptance and recognition from the opera society. But the way he fulfills his final goal is wrong. In completing his tasks of life, one can become a procrastinator or a workaholic. Erik is of the latter. Working aids him to compensate for his imperfection. By producing good works he expects he will get recognition. Working is also an evidence of his true capacity, his genius. This is the feature he would like to make prominent. Since people pay no attention on his existence, he is determined to be successful at work more than at the other two tasks of life.

In the earlier discussion, the writer has highlighted the importance of working as the compensation over his deformity. It drives him to be a perfectionist and to dictate people to do as he wishes. The workaholic tendency, however, splits his concentration. Among the three tasks of life, his ambition to be excellent at work exceeds the fulfillment of community and love. This can be traced from the fact that he draws himself from the hectic opera life for six months only to compose his *Don Juan Triumphant* opera. It means that for six months he has been neglecting the community and the need of love. When he returns to haunt the opera again (2. 1), his needs to accomplish the community and love tasks are intensified. His confrontation against the society is harsher than in the first act. There are more notes, more demands, another killing, and abduction.

It is somewhat difficult to conclude whether Erik is successful at work. He does produce his so-called music of the night, *Don Juan Triumphant*. The readers cannot find out whether the opera is going to be a masterpiece because before the curtain falls, commotion takes place in the opera house due to the chase of the

Phantom. However, we can say it is an accomplishment for Erik only but not for the society.

His effort to interact with the opera community makes him to be a powerful person on one side but on the other, an anxious person. He enjoys the time when people are afraid of his terrors, demands, and even appearances. Still, he is worried that he will not be able to pursue his goal because of people's denial.

In the mission to fulfill his need for love, although he doesn't get Christine's love, he learns that love should give freedom. Loving Christine means letting her go with the man she loves, Raoul (2. 9).

2. The Impacts on Society

The opera society becomes the oppressed party in the interaction with Erik. Erik demands them to accept and recognise him but at the same time he is abusing the people with his terrors. Whenever they refuse to do as he says, he gets furious and punishes them, for example, the murders of Buquet and Piangi, the lost of Carlotta's voice, and the falling of the chandelier. With his destructive behaviors, Erik appears more like a madman rather than a genius (1. 8).

His genius is essentially his capacity. All his talents make a great contribution although it seems that people do not give him a chance to contribute to the society. Genius is measured in its contribution to mankind's greater knowledge. His knowledge is great but it is not his contribution. What is, then, his contribution? What can his genius donate to humanity? Erik is a scholar, architect, inventor, musician, and composer. He masters various skills and has produced number of works such as the mirror maze and *Don Juan Triumphant* opera.

Unfortunately, all skills and works only benefit him. The society, on the other hand, has to suffer from his vigorous ambition.

Nevertheless, of all the great genius he inherits, Erik has his one true contribution. It is the awareness of a human condition that is as old as time itself, that no matter how great one genius is, if he isn't similar to the people around him, he is discriminated and prosecuted regardless of his disposition. He is perfectly normal person. He talks to himself through music for companionship. We must address that he has violent tendencies due to the fact he requires social interaction hence the talking to himself. The embodiment of this appears in the form of opera, *Don Juan Triumphant*. The opera speaks to the world of his dream, his love, and his agony. The song "Point of No Return" sung by Don Juan (played by Piangi but then taken over by Erik) and Aminta (Christine) seems to express the real feelings of Erik and Christine. Here we can see how profound Erik explores Christine and his minds.

Don Juan (Phantom): [...]

Past the point of no return –
no backward glances:
the games we've played till now
are at an end...
[...]

Aminta (Christine): You have brought me to that moment
where words run dry,
that moment where speech
disappears to silence, silence...

**I have come here hardly knowing
the reason why...
In my mind, I've already imagined
our body entwining defenceless and silent
[...]**

**Don Juan (Phantom): say you'll share with me one love,
one lifetime...
Lead me, save me from my solitude.**

(2. 7)

The society fails to grasp Erik's sincere ambition, obstacles, and rejection he has endured for achieving his fictional finalism. His great contribution is that human beings as people are ruthlessly cruel to any thing that deviates from what we consider "normal." In other words, human beings are preordained to fail since we cannot accept differences but only accentuate them, for example, in opera society, the opera people are "normal" because they are rich, talented, and beautiful; While Erik is "abnormal" because he is deformed. Human beings tend to categorise everything and classify it but also base it on the difference. The wrong paths Erik has undergone to reach his positive final goal only justify the society's prejudice that he is merely a useless but harmful freak. Thus, he must be evicted out of the opera society.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION