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Different media have different strengths and weaknesses that can hinder or augment the audience's perception of the work. Operas rely heavily on the musical score and libretto to bring the story to life but sacrifice the amount of detail included. Films rely on more visual means, like the actors' appearance and camera angles. Operatic adaptations can depict the characters, especially Manon, in a more well-rounded and less biased manner than the equivalent cinematic character.

When looking at adaptations, some differences cannot be avoided since the medium of reception is different. It is also difficult to objectively compare two different mediums as different aspects are highlighted or diminished depending on the means of reception. When defining the literary novel as the original work, which I will be using throughout this essay, there are many more details included in the characterization and narration that are not hindered by any physical means like set design, costumes, and accurate appearance between characters and actors. Reading a novel is a more private and low-pressure experience where the pace is set by the reader and their imagination guides them. However, as literature is primarily descriptive with no accompanying visual component, each member of the audience creates an image of the setting or Manon and has a different interpretation that varies from person to person. These differences in imagination can cause each person to take away a different moral message and

interpretation of the story, which can affect their reception of other works they are exposed to after the original work.

While operas, like films and other performance-based media, are more condensed than their literary inspiration, they allow the audience to share a common visual experience rather than rely on their imagination. Operas also expose the audience to the narrative in multiple channels, including both the visual and auditory, which can introduce new meaning for the situation. With films, the audience relies more on the dialogue between characters or narration to understand the story. Visual elements, like the actors' appearance, are focused on more in films more than operas as the camera frames and angles are much closer up in films. Mechanical equipment like cameras are used to create their cinematic pieces, so when the actor seems to be looking at you, the actor is looking at a camera. The invisibility of the camera helps hide the physical distance between the actors and the audience.

Characterization encompasses not only the overall impression of the character but also how the overall impression was achieved. Since different media have different strengths and weaknesses, the way a character is portrayed can vary. In literature, the audience receives information about the characters through descriptions, dialogue, and thoughts. However, in other performance-based media like operas and films, the amount of time to tell the story is more condensed, causing the creators to rely less on description to introduce the characters and narration. Instead, with these media focusing on visual elements, the creators can rely more on showing the audience the story rather than telling them the story. In operas, the characterization comes from the character's actions, singing, and leitmotif, or the music associated with the character. In films, the characterization comes from the character's dialogue, appearance, and interactions with others. While each media has different ways of achieving characterization,

comparing the character's overall impression between the media helps determine which media is the most effective in depicting the characters.

Opera adaptations use multiple channels to introduce the characters to the audience. As a performance-based medium, operas use the showing technique rather than telling as they rely on both visual and aural elements. The pair gives the audience implicit characterization as leitmotifs, or repeated musical phrasing or themes. In the Massenet opera, Manon appears three different times with different physical appearances. The repetitive melody acted somewhat like a leitmotif for her character, which can help the audience subconsciously recognize that it was Manon. Additionally, as the music was lively and playful, with a youthful charm, it helped emphasize her innocence and childlikeness. The music can also reveal implicit plot details. Without having to say that Des Grieux was being taken by his family in the first or second act, the audience can rely on the intense music instead. Implicit statements, like music or visual cues, rather than explicit means can be more impactful as music can evoke strong emotional feelings. Sometimes it can be much easier to show someone your feelings rather than explicitly saying how you feel. Relying more on one receptive channel, audio, along with a complementing visual setting, the audience can get more meaning out of the situation. Music was missing from the novel as the novel relied only on the author's words. With the opera, the audience can gain a new way to receive information, through both audio and visual means, that allows us to relate to the story. In both the operas by Massenet and Puccini, Manon has a voice both literally and figuratively. Since she has a voice, Manon also has a face and the power to tell her story with her words, which gives the audience an interpretation of Manon with little to no bias from outside characters like Des Grieux. Through the live performance, various musical cues, and the operatic equivalent of a monologue, the audience can see Manon as an actual person rather than an image

in our imagination. She is present to portray her character rather than be confined to Des Grieux's depiction of her in the novel. Her dialogue with M de B before Des Grieux's family takes him away in the first or second act reveals her concern for Des Grieux. When M de B tips her off about the arrival of Des Grieux's family, the audience gets insight into her character and the affection she has for him as she wants to warn him of it. Her affection was never emphasized in the novel, as it was told to us by Des Grieux through the Man of Honor because Des Grieux was occupied and likely never knew. She also sings us her monologue once he leaves to deliver his letter, revealing she believes she "isn't worthy of him" and seeming less like the Manon from the novel, who is funny and playful (Massenet). She also shows her more sentimental side as she reminisces of their time together as she says adieu, meaning farewell forever. These softer characteristics shown at the beginning of the opera give us a more deep characterization of Manon than the novel and the film. She gives us her thoughts, which were not seen as well in the films because of their focus on dialogue. The audience can also see her expression and actions, which were not shown visually in the novel other than each person's imagination.

Cinematic adaptations rely on dialogue, flashbacks, and montages to characterize Manon. Cinema also uses flashbacks to overcome the barrier of plot continuity found in operatic adaptations. Operas are live performance-based works, where all aspects of the viewing location contribute to the audience's perception of the work. Like in the Prevost novel, the narrative in the Clouzot film switches between the past and the present. In one instance, Robert Des Grieux describes the time that he and Manon met for the first time as he takes the audience back to his war days of World War II. Since, in previous adaptations, specifically of operatic adaptations, this act of moving throughout the narrative back in time from the current point in the story, at least visually, was not available. Using flashbacks allows the audience to understand the

background behind events or actions promptly. In the Aurel film, there are no flashbacks as the narrative is linear. Aurel, instead, uses montages where several scenes of related elements are put together into a sequence to show the narrative. These montages allow the audience to receive pieces of the narration in a faster manner than relying solely on dialogue. Montages also help contribute to the showing technique that performance-based media rely on, where visual elements are the primary focus. Dialogue and interactions between the characters also help characterize Manon and other characters. While the audience cannot hear about their thoughts as easily as operas allow the audience to, the characters' speech allows the audience to hear what they have to say or at least how they want to be portrayed to other characters.

Operatic adaptations depict Manon in a less biased way compared to cinematic adaptations. In the Massenet opera, Manon is depicted as young and naive yet interested in being in a higher social class. Massenet uses more subtle elements to signify her interest in the materialist and justify her desire to have fun, including the music, libretto, and Manon's actions. The idea of increased interest in materialism is emphasized throughout the opera, especially with the Court de la Reine scene. Manon has a feature song where she sings about not staying 20 years old forever. In this song, the audience can see a different side of her as a more confident and youthful person, rather than a naive and timid person in the cafe and Paris home scenes. By revealing new characteristics of Manon through song, Massenet gives Manon power to express herself without having a middle man like Des Grieux or the Man of Quality interpreting the story. In the Puccini opera, Manon is depicted as self-absorbed and materialistic. Manon's obsession with the location of her beauty spots shows her desire to fit in with societal standards and actualize or accentuate certain traits. Manon's desire to take her "[cherished] treasures" from Geronte's home rather than escape with Des Grieux reveals her infatuation with material things

(Puccini). Through the music, specifically Manon's repeated motif, the audience can implicitly think of the idea of Manon. The music, specifically the repeated musical motif, gives the audience an implicit understanding of the plot where the "drama is realized" without needing words (Sutcliffe). The repetitive melody helped the audience understand Manon's impact or presence in each scene, especially since her motif transformed in different forms. Throughout the opera, Manon is presented through the way other characters look at her, especially Des Grieux. The repetitive nature of Des Grieux's gestures emphasizes the direct connection between the verbalization of his feelings towards her and looking at her, which is also emphasized in the music. The music of the operas helps portray the characters by revealing their inner thoughts. For example, if the orchestra plays Manon's theme when Des Grieux is on the stage, the audience can assume that he is thinking of Manon. Manon seems to be depicted as an object of desire and one that is uncontainable since attention seems to always be on her, but she is unsatisfiable. Since in the operas, Manon is characterized by both visual elements and aural elements, her character can emphasize her traits in multiple ways and reveal different ones for each method. Relying more on one receptive channel, audio, along with a complementing visual setting, the audience can get more meaning out of the situation and relate to the story. In the Clouzot film, Manon is depicted as childlike, manipulative, and materialistic. The audience relies more on visual elements and dialogue to characterize Manon as these things. In the Clouzot film, it was difficult to tell who was narrating the story, whether Manon or Des Grieux was the narrator, because of the change in narrative pace. As the narration went between the past and present, especially with the camera angles, it was difficult to tell who was speaking. If Des Grieux was narrating the story, there was likely some bias included since the audience would receive the story from his interpretation rather than hearing from both Des Grieux and Manon. In the middle

of the film, as the narration went back to the present before going back into the past, Manon resumed the story and commented on Des Grieux's narration in voice-over form. This instance was one of the few times that the audience could hear directly from Manon instead of through her depiction by Des Grieux since she continued telling the story in the present time. Voice-overs by the character, rather than by an omniscient narrator, allow different characters to tell their part of the story and gain internal characterization and emotion. In this case, the audience could perceive the narration from Manon's perspective, if only for a short time, which allowed the audience to perceive Manon in an honest and unbiased way. In the Aurel film, Manon is depicted as confident, manipulative, and materialistic through her actions and interactions with other characters. The Aurel film also focused on her interest in the materialistic. Simon, and later Frank Janis, got Manon's attention by focusing on material things. Simon attended a fashion show with her, purchased her new dresses, and took her on a trip. Janis took her to a fashion designer for a new dress and provided a wealthy living space for her to reside in. Manon's hidden motives and manipulative side are revealed in the bathtub scene after seeing the way Manon smirks after Des Grieux assaults her. Manon, in the Aurel film, seems to be more in control of her story than the Clouzot film since she can finesse her way into getting what she wants and is alive to tell her story. There also seems to be no visible narrator as the dressing room montage (Aurel) opens the film rather than hearing about Des Grieux and Manon's reasoning for sneaking onto a ship as stowaways (Clouzot). Since the audience is not restricted by close-up camera angles nor visual jumps in narration when viewing operas, operas can give a straightforward and unaltered story. With films and novels, the ability for narration to happen off-screen or in description causes ambiguity in who is narrating the story. If unnecessary bias were to sneak into the story, like influence from Des Grieux or another character, the essence of the story and

portrayal of other characters can be misleading and create unbecoming judgments of characters' traits and motives.

While cinematic adaptations and original literary works are less effective in characterization compared to operatic adaptations, cinema and literature are effective in conveying the narrative. Cinema helps solve various narrative problems found in operatic adaptations by framing the scenes from different perspectives. Over-the-shoulder shots, headshots, and montages frame the scene for the audience and make it inclusive like the audience is living vicariously through the characters. When Des Grieux returned from his trip in the Clouzot film, the camera used the montage framing technique. It shows Des Grieux's face and then cuts to an image of the cigar, likely from M. Paul, and again to Des Grieux. These frames force the audience's perspective and reception of the scene as the audience is limited to what can be seen. This limitation is different from an opera where the audience can take in the atmosphere of the opera house and have the freedom to look where they please. However, this rigid cinematic framing with the accompanying music directs the audience's attention and interpretation of the scene, whether it is to emphasize emotions, express ideas, or foreshadow events. Cinema and literature also use flashbacks. Similar to Prevost's novel, in Clouzot's film, there are many instances where the scenes visibly switch between the past and the present. To switch between the past and present in operatic adaptations, the characters, instead, sing about the past. There can be more emphasis on past events in films since there are multiple channels, including audio and visual elements, enforcing this difference in time.

Different media have different strengths and weaknesses that can hinder or augment the audience's perception of the work. Operas rely heavily on the musical score and libretto to bring the story to life. However, films rely on more visual means like the actors' appearance and

camera angles. While cinematic adaptations can effectively show the narrative, operatic adaptations can depict the characters, especially Manon, in a more well-rounded manner than their equivalent cinematic character.