

# NOTRE-DAME CATHEDRAL IN CINEMATIC INTERPRETATIONS

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## 1. Introduction

The modern commitment of the French state to the preservation of Notre Dame is part of the country's history, art, and culture. At the time of mass tourism during the 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries, the Cathedral became one of Paris' most significant images and was noted by the highest authorities in the heritage field. As a result, in 1991, it became part of the property of "Paris, Banks of the Seine" and was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List [1-3]. This gem of Gothic architecture, a witness to the evolution of art for more than nine centuries, attracts at least thirteen million visitors a year, making it the most visited monument in Europe. Its partial destruction was the result of a fire in April 2019. It reverberated around the world because, in addition to its quality of being a symbol of France, it is a place where you can find religious, national, and historical values that are held dear by the French [4,5]

The Cathedral was opened in 1182 and became a cultural, artistic, historical, and religious building. Today it is known as the most important Catholic building in Paris. This was demonstrated by the fact that hundreds of devotees gathered after the tragedy of 2019 to pray together. Notre Dame, a living heritage structure is, of course, a cathedral and can be valued as a place of worship. However, it can be visited as a museum and this connection forms the uniqueness of this structure [6,7].

The importance of Notre Dame for Parisians - and not only for them - is explained by the formalities of majestic religious holidays and the important civil ceremonies held there in the past, such as the marriage of Mary Queen of Scots and the French Dauphin François (1558), the marriage of the French Princess Elizabeth of Valois (Elisabeth de Valois) and the Spanish King Philip II (Felipe II) (1559), as well as the marriage of Napoleon III (Charles Louis Napoléon Bonaparte) (1853) or his son's baptism in 1865. In 1302, the Cathedral became the place where significant political events happened, such as the opening of the States General - the first Parliament of the Kingdom of France - by Philip IV (Philippe IV le Bel). Notre Dame also has a dark side, as it became the place where both the writer Dominique Venner in 2013 and a young intellectual in exile in Paris in 1931, committed suicide [8-10].

Over the years, its great influence and mysterious beauty have made Notre Dame Cathedral a source of inspiration for artists and writers. A work that cannot be overlooked is, obviously, "The Hunchback of Notre Dame", Victor Hugo's masterpiece of 1831, which tells the dramatic story of the bell ringer Quasimodo and the gypsy Esmeralda. It has also served as inspiration for various cinematic performances, including the very successful Disney classic, The Hunchback of Notre Dame. Luc Plamondon

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and Riccardo Cocciante were also inspired by Victor Hugo's novel and wrote and composed the music for the play "Notre Dame de Paris", which debuted on September 16, 1998, in Paris under the direction of Gilles Mahe. The director followed the author's wishes, so, instead of developing the action theatrically, as in a musical, he arranged a performance in a semi-scenic form.

The scenery and costumed singers interacted only partially, and the play was interpreted in an almost concert form: the play's action alternated with songs and dances that, sometimes, were performed separately. The songs "Vivre", "Le Temps des Cathédrales" and "Belle" were released as singles in France and achieved great success. "Live for the One I Love", the English version of "Vivre", was recorded by Celine Dion.

The overwhelming success of the Paris production prompted the authors to export the show, adapting it in many countries. From 1998 to 2008, the performance took place in France, South Korea, Belgium, Switzerland, Canada, Russia, Spain, Italy, Great Britain and the USA. The 1996 Disney film, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and the 1998 theatrical performance, to the music of Riccardo Cocciante, were inspired by the aforementioned Hugo novel [11, 12].

Notre Dame is one of the greatest historical buildings not only in France, but also across the whole world, having an impact on various spheres of life: religious, cultural, architectural, national, etc. In this study, the aim was to study the influence of Notre Dame Cathedral on cinema by analyzing its representation in various films.

## 2. Materials and methods

This study is theoretical and was aimed at confirming the thesis that the Notre Dame Cathedral has had an impact on art due to its monumental architecture and historical background.

This is an aspect that has been reinforced and, in some ways, created by Victor Hugo and his novel; the main theme in this case study is consequently Notre Dame and related cinema heritage. Theoretical research is any cognitive procedure that is defined as a systematic structure, the main purpose of which is to answer the question posed in front of the researcher or to clarify the hypothesis underlying the study. This type of research allows one to expand their knowledge on a specific topic, promotes an approach to the truth, can give us a possibility to correct mistakes made in previous studies or to break the myths that could be created around the studied object or phenomenon. So, the main purpose of this theoretical research was to gain knowledge. To implement the research and achieve its goal, appropriate theoretical methods were chosen such as synthesis, descriptive, comparative and historical analyses, systematization, and generalization.

### 2.1. Study approach

The base of the research was created by analysis and synthesis which were used throughout the study to implement different tasks, as described below.

- *Descriptive analysis* was used to collect and systematize information about Notre Dame Cathedral, which resulted in a description of the characteristics of the structure both from the standpoint of its appearance, architectural composition, and from the standpoint of its significance in the cultural and historical

context.

- *Comparative analysis* was used to determine the role of the Cathedral in various cinematic interpretations and to determine how the structure was used in a particular production and how decisive its appearance was in the film production.
- *Historical analysis* was used to construct a chronology of the main events of Notre Dame: from its foundation till today. This made it possible to assess its influence on art throughout time, as well as to trace the stages of acquiring the status of a renowned World Heritage site.

The method of *analysis and synthesis* was used throughout the study in various forms. This approach is characterized by two different processes that logically complement each other. The analysis involved dividing the object into separate elements. The selected elements were then viewed from different sides and the goal was to share the most significant cultural and historical meanings of the Cathedral from the author's subjective viewpoint. Synthesis is the opposite of analysis, assuming a single integer combination of the studied elements and the target sides such as the impact of Notre Dame on the cultural and historical heritage of both France and the world. In the course of analysis and synthesis, the interrelations of the studied processes and phenomena, cause-and-effect relationships are naturally observed. The process of forming the concept developed during the research is based on the integrity of the process of analysis and synthesis. Analysis and synthesis are independent stages, but they are not separated from each other by scientific research. At each stage of the study, they take place as a whole, reflecting the relationship between the part and the whole, and they cannot be effectively used separately. It was for this reason that this method was chosen as the basis of the study. The material basis of the research was cinematic works, such as "Esmeralda", "Notre Dame de Paris", "The Hunchback of Notre Dame", and "Breathless".

### **3. Results and discussion**

#### **3.1. Architecture of the Cathedral**

Notre Dame de Paris is a majestic Catholic church on the island of Cité in the center of Paris. This outstanding monument is widely known in art and is one of the most famous places of worship in the world. Every year from 13 to 14 million tourists visit Notre Dame to see the rising Gothic silhouette decorated with fancy, stained glass windows and fantastic gargoyles. The architectural greatness of this cathedral can be imagined due to Figure 1 with its impressive spires and columns, but the beauty of Notre Dame cannot be fully imagined looking at the plan without feeling the soul of this building.

Notre Dame Cathedral is the geographical center of both Paris and the whole country. It is here that the so-called "zero kilometer" is located and from which all distances in France are counted. The church of Notre Dame de Paris is located on the site of ancient Romanesque, Christian and Merovingian shrines.

The construction of the magnificent building began in 1163 under King Ludwig VII, who devoted his whole life to the church. The Parisian bishop, Maurice de Sully, was the initiator of the Gothic cathedral creation, while Pope Alexander III had the honor of laying the foundation stone of the cathedral.

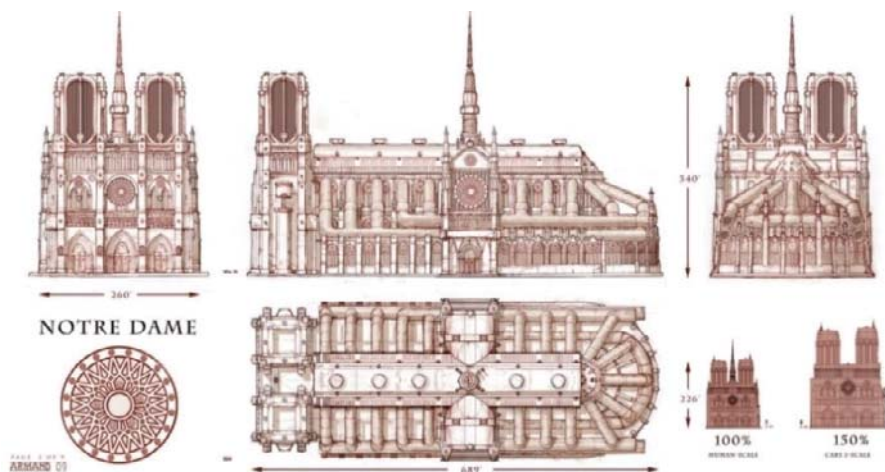


Figure 1. Architecture plan of the Notre Dame de Paris.

The construction lasted almost two centuries and was completed only in 1345. Many architects supervised the construction, helping them to build one of the most magnificent temples in the world. The cathedral is made in Gothic style, diluted with Romanesque elements. The ugly exits from the rain pipes were accompanied by gargoyles through which streamed the rainwater [13-15].

### 3.2. Notre Dame's historical context through time

The value of the majestic building lies not only in the incredible architecture, Gothic style and mythical sculptures. New royal families were formed under the arches of the cathedral, knights were blessed, and rich Parisians preserved their values.

In Notre Dame de Paris, Napoleon became king of the French Empire. In addition, the pastors of the cathedral helped the poor. The legendary trial of Joan of Arc took place in the temple, but after the girl's death the court acquitted her completely. Adjacent to Notre Dame, there is an annex – a treasury. Christian relics are kept here: a crown of thorns, a fragment of a cross and religious works of art.

### 3.3. Restoration of the cathedral

During its existence, the cathedral has seen thousands of battles. The French Revolution left the Catholic Church in disrepair. The precious artefacts of the temple were looted, and the sculptures were destroyed and beheaded; the building was in dire need of repair. In 1831, after Hugo published his novel in its honor, urging the nation to love the architecture of their homeland, the building was restored within 23 years (1841-1864). The novel "Notre Dame de Paris" made the Cathedral the center of the plot, evidently helping and promoting the repair work to be carried out. The work not only glorified the author, but also made him realize the value of the temple. Soon, Notre Dame was to be rebuilt under the guidance of the architect Viollet-le-Duc.

The restoration work lasted 23 years. Galleries of gargoyles and other sculptures were restored, chimeras were installed. The architect did not forget the cathedral tower either, destroyed by revolutionary actions in 1793 when Notre Dame became a Temple of Reason [16,17].

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the cathedral survived the Nazi occupation, and received nine new bells and a reconstructed organ in the new millennium for its 850th anniversary.

On April 15, 2019, flames engulfed Paris' Cathedral, the largest historical monument not only of France, Europe, but also of the whole world, praised by Victor Hugo in the famous novel "Notre Dame de Paris" and Osip Mandelstam in the poem "Notre Dame" of 1912. The fire, which raged for several hours, brought down the tower designed by the architect Viollet-le-Duc and built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Its frame was made of 500 tons of wood covered with 250 tons of lead sheets. The roof, built with 1300 oaks in the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries (the cathedral towers were finished in 1245 and the whole building completed in 1345), was also severely damaged, as well as part of the interior decorations [10,18]. But even before the building was rebuilt, several works of art were sent to the city hall for storage.

In particular, 16 copper statues around the base of the tower were removed for restoration. The crown of thorns of Jesus Christ and the Saint King Louis IX chiton were saved from the fire. Fortunately, two large rose windows in the south and north of the transept and sculptures by Antoine Coisevox, Guillaume the Elder and Nicolas Coust were not damaged by the fire.

Two of the cathedral's towers, medieval stained-glass windows and an organ were also preserved. 400 firefighters were involved in extinguishing the fire. People from all over the world responded to try to find a solution to the problem. State chiefs, international figures, and organizations expressed their condolences.

A few billionaires allocated hundreds of millions of euros for the cathedral restoration (Figure 2). Bells rang everywhere in solidarity with the French people, and people with flowers walked past French embassies around the world. And, of course, many remembered the tragedy of September 11, because the towers were filmed as often as Notre Dame.

### **3.4. Notre Dame in cinema art**

Notre Dame can be seen in a great many films (Figure 3) and the Lumiere brothers were the first to film the cathedral. Against its background, the characters of films, such as "Is Paris burning?", "Charade", "Amelie", "Angel-A", "Before Sunset", "Julie and Julia", "Paris, I love you", "Say I love you", and "Midnight" appeared before our eyes in Paris. The Cathedral is also reflected in computer games; for example, the Irishman, Sean Devlin in the action adventure "Saboteur" and British spy, Violette Chabot in the stealth action "Velvet Killer", see Notre Dame in German-occupied Paris; in the sci-fi thriller "Remember Me", Nilin fights against the backdrop of the cathedral of the future; and in Assassin's Creed: Unity, Arnaud Victor Dorian, lived in Paris at the time of the French Revolution.

It is noteworthy that an Ubisoft employee, Carolyn Miousse, the senior artist who worked on the aforementioned game helped in restoring the damaged cathedral due to the detailed model she created, which took more than a year to complete (14 months). Her model was used in recreating Notre Dame in real time. However, an Ubisoft spokesperson noted that the model had not been created as a historical reconstruction, so some differences in terms of scale occurred. In addition, Ubisoft donated €500k towards the reconstruction [19,20].





Figure 2. Cathedral restoration process after the fire in 2019.



Figure 3. Still from the film 'Notre-Dame on Fire'. France (2022).

Many people are familiar with Notre-Dame Cathedral due to Victor Hugo's novel, which influenced both the fate of the building and impacted the world's cultural heritage, but the novel has also been adapted for the stage. In 1836, Louise Bertin wrote the

opera “La Esmeralda”, which was staged in Paris on November 14 of the same year, based on a libretto by Hugo in four acts. In the early 1840s, Alexander Dargomyzhsky wrote another opera ‘Esmeralda’ which was first performed at the Bolshoi Theater on December 5, 1847 (December 17, according to the Julian calendar). Caesar Puni and Jules Perrault created a three-act ballet “Esmeralda” set in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Modern theatergoers are probably also familiar with the musical “Notre Dame de Paris” by Richard Cocciante and Luc Plamondon, written in France in 1998 together with Garou and based on “Quasimodo”. In 2002, the musical performance of Julius Kim was adapted for the Moscow Operetta Theatre, and since then, such actors as Anton Makarsky, Alexander Marakulin, Valery Yaremenko, Svetlana Svetikova, Vyacheslav Petkun, Eduard Shulzhevsky, Theona Dolnikova, Anastasia Stotskaya, Alexander Postolenko, Anna Nevskaya, Sergey Li and many others, have performed various roles in it. There are about two dozen film adaptations of the novel. The first was “Esmeralda” (1905) by the French directors, Alice Guy-Blaché and Victorin Jasset: Dennis Becke was Esmeralda and Henri Vorin, Quasimodo. In 1911, Albert Capellani’s “Notre Dame de Paris” was released with Henri Krauss and Stasia Naperkovskaya. In 1917, Teda Bara became Esmeralda in the version by Gordon Edwards. In the 1923 “The Hunchback of Notre Dame” the great and terrifying Lon Chaney was portrayed as Quasimodo in a horror drama thanks to the efforts of director Wallace Worsley and producers Carl Laemmle and Irving Thalberg (Figure 4).



Figure 4. ‘The Hunchback of Notre Dame’, 1923. Dom Claude (Nigel De Brulier) restrains Quasimodo (Lon Chaney) from violence.

According to the plot, the beautiful dancer, Esmeralda, bought by gypsies in early childhood, attracted the attention of Jehan, the vicious younger brother of Archbishop Claude Frolo. Overcome with passion, he decided to kidnap the dancer with the help of the ugly hunchbacked Quasimodo. Quasimodo’s makeup took an hour and a half to put on, using a 36-kilogram rubber pillow, a flesh-colored rubber suit, and a corset to

simulate a hump. A special device in the actor's mouth simulated suitable teeth. The cathedral itself was presented in the picture in the form of a detailed model with a height of about 75 m and a width of 50 m.

In 1939, William Dieterle directed the film of the same name (Figure 5). In this version, Maureen O'Hara appears as Esmeralda and Charles Laughton as Quasimodo, while Edmond O'Brien became a poet, Pierre Gringoire. Sir Cedric Hardwicke acted as Quasimodo's guardian and the Archdeacon, Claude Frollo. Loved by Esmeralda, Alan Marshal acted as the captain of the Royal Guard, Phoebus de Chateaupher. Views of Paris, as well as details of the interior of the Cathedral, can be seen in this film in the sets that were constructed by Van Nest Polglase. Many of the scenes were shot at the RKO Encino Ranch and those of the interior of the bell tower were shot at the University of Southern California's Mudd Hall of Philosophy.

One of the most famous "Notre Dame de Paris" adaptations that received the Cannes Film Festival Grand Prix, was staged by Jean Delannoy (1956) and shot by French and Italian cinematographers. A number of scenes showing the Cathedral were included in the film, but some of the movie scenes were filmed in pavilion. One more asset was the use of luxurious costumes in the film.

The film owes its success to the great Gina Lollobrigida (Figure 6) who decided to play barefoot even though the heroine of Victor Hugo had shoes. For this role she received the Bambi Award. The film takes us to medieval Paris, where the whole action unfolds and where a gypsy girl drives men crazy with her beauty. Claude Frollo, a strict priest of Notre Dame Cathedral, secretly falls in love with her, as does his disciple, the hunchback Quasimodo.



Figure 5. Charming Esmeralda and skillfully embodied Quasimodo. Still from 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame' by William Dieterle, 1939.





Figure 6. Esmeralda as Gina Lollobrigida in the film by Jean Delannoy (1956).

But the girl remains loyal to an aristocrat named Phoebus. Enraged by jealousy, the priest wounds him and Esmeralda is accused of committing a crime; the judges sentence the girl to death by hanging. Phoebus does nothing to save her, but the hunchbacked Quasimodo comes to the rescue of his beloved. The ending of the film is different from Hugo's novel's ending. In the movie, Esmeralda is killed by an arrow during the storming of the cathedral, and her last words are: "Life is beautiful". In this cinema version, it is worth mentioning that Anthony Quinn played Quasimodo (Figure 7) and Alain Cuny, Frollo.

The 1960 film "Breathless" is not dedicated to Notre Dame, but it was shot in Paris, so the architecture of the famous building is often seen in it. The film was directed by Jean-Luc Godard, starring Jean-Paul Belmondo, who played a young student who fell in love with another young student.

Directed by Michael Tuchner and Alan Hume, "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" (1982) was produced by Norman Rosemont and Malcolm J. Christopher and created by the United Kingdom and the United States of America cinematography group at the Pinewood Studios. The script of the film was based on Hugo's novel (Figure 8).

The role of Quasimodo was acted by Sir Anthony Hopkins (Figure 8) who fought for the love of Leslie-Ann Down, an Emmy nominee, and his opponent was Derek Jacobi as Frollo. Claude Frollo finds an ugly child at the foot of Notre Dame and decides to adopt him, giving the child the name, Quasimodo. After 20 years, Quasimodo becomes the bell ringer of the Cathedral, notices the dancing gypsy Esmeralda in the square and falls in love with her.

But Frollo, Gringoire and Captain Phoebus also fall in love with the gypsy. In the end, after some unhappy events, Esmeralda is sentenced to death, making Quasimodo kill Frollo; Quasimodo then falls from the tower to his death.

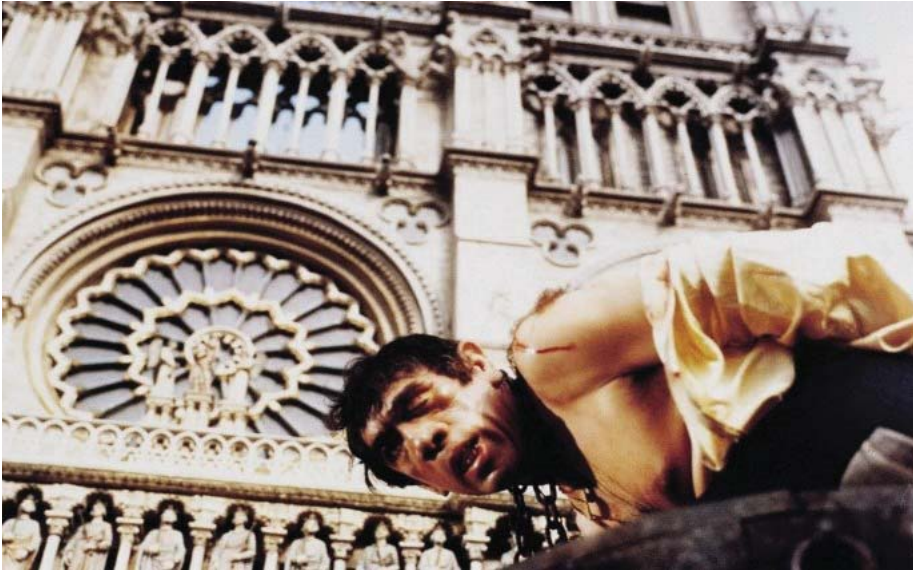


Figure 7. Anthony Quinn as Quasimodo. Still from the Jean Delannoy film (1956).



Figure 8. Esmeralda gives water to Quasimodo. Still from the film 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame', 1982.

The film also features such brilliant British actors as David Suchet and John Gielgud.

Notre Dame was used as the main location for filming, so, this film adaptation became the first that used the Cathedral locations for most of the scenes.

Moreover, the current adaptation was the first which was closely based on the plot of Hugo's novel.

Several cartoons have been created based on Victor Hugo's novel but the most famous of them is the Disney one directed by Kirk Wise and Gary Truesdale. The cartoon won an Oscar and a Golden Globe thanks to the music created by Alan Menken. The characters are voiced by Tom Hulce, Kevin Kline, Demi Moore, and Jason Alexander.

A sequel to the cartoon was made later, as well as a video game 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame' (Topsy Turvy Games) which came out in 2002. Disney is currently developing a remake of the game "The Hunchback" in which the focus is on the beautiful gypsy dancer Esmeralda, the powerful and influential judge Claude Frollo, who pursues her and secretly falls in love with her, the hunchback Quasimodo, and the young captain Phoebe who is also in love with Esmeralda. Of course, there is less cruelty in it than in the original and there is a happy ending here.

The Notre Dame Cathedral is present in the painted form. A year after the Disney version, during the success of Salma Hayek, Peter Medak shot "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" with this wonderful Mexican actress in the role of Esmeralda (Figure 9). Little known to the general public, Mandy Patinkin became Quasimodo (Figure 9), and Richard Harris, who later appeared as Albus Dumbledore in Harry Potter, became Claude Frollo.



Figure 9. A still from the screen adaptation of Hugo's novel by Peter Medak, 1997.

The plot of the film adaptation shows a strong discrepancy with the book. Quasimodo and Esmeralda, in particular, are older than the book heroes, and in the finale the



gypsy avoids death. Esmeralda was tried for a murder that she did not commit and found guilty after being tortured. Quasimodo tries to save her by taking her to Notre Dame which cannot be attacked by the authorities, as it is the home of God. Quasimodo and Esmeralda become friends and take care of one another, which does not please Frollo. Frollo consequently denounces Esmeralda to the authorities which means death for the girl and she is sentenced to death. Quasimodo cannot come to terms with this and gets a confession from Frollo about her not being guilty. Everyone in the square hears it, so the gypsy girl is acquitted. The archdeacon, completely distraught, attacks Esmeralda with a dagger in the Cathedral, but the hunchback protects her and throws Frollo off the cathedral tower. However, during the fight, Quasimodo is wounded and, bleeding, dies to the sound of the cathedral bells; Gringoire and Esmeralda are ringing the Notre Dame bells in tribute to Quasimodo.

In the famous 1998 blockbuster “Armageddon”, in which Bruce Willis once again heroically saves the world, in one scene flying debris falls on Notre Dame and destroys the Cathedral. Most likely, the director wanted to emphasize that the forces of nature can destroy man-made things in seconds, though, as it turned out in real life, it was not an asteroid.

In 1998, the musical “Notre Dame de Paris” was released on DVD and became the brightest film adaptation of Hugo’s famous novel (the composer is Riccardo Cocciante, while the author of the libretto is Luc Plamondon). The songs from this musical became so famous that the main hit “Belle” was named one of the best songs of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The song is sung by the main characters in the musical (Daniel Lavoie, Garou and Patrick Fiori), and has been translated into other languages, including Russian. In the original version, the musical toured Belgium, France, Canada and Switzerland. The same musical debuted at the French theater “Mogador” in 2000, but with some changes. These changes were followed by Italian, Russian, Spanish and several more versions of the musical. In the same year, an abridged American version of the musical was launched in Las Vegas, and an English version in London. In the English version, almost all the roles were played by the same artists as in the original. The musical was presented on Broadway in May 2001, premiered in Moscow on February 26, 2002, and by December 2017, more than 11 million viewers had watched the musical in 8 languages.

On the eve of the new century, French director Patrick Timsit staged the comedy “Quasimodo” based on the novel, in 1999, transferring the plot to modern Paris. Quasimodo is hunchbacked, bald, deaf, wears size 47 shoes and lives in the city of El Paris. The story tells of Quasimodo’s parents who, considering him to be ugly, abandon him to Archdeacon Frollo and adopt a Cuban girl Esmeralda, as their own daughter. Twenty years pass, and the city of El Paris is terrified: a freak maniac has already killed 18 women. The chief of police, a stupid erotomaniac Phoebus, investigates the case without even getting out of his polished Jeep and immediately begins to suspect Quasimodo. Each of the heroes has a goal. Quasimodo is trying to get rid of suspicions, Esmeralda is trying to reward Quasimodo for his suffering, Frollo wants to find out the truth and maybe hide it, and Phoebus simply has no time for trifles. Years later, Esmeralda (Melanie Thierry), the governor’s daughter, learns that Quasimodo (Timsit) is her parents’ true heir. Richard Berry played Frollo in the film which, in this case, had a happy ending.

In the cult comedy “Amelie” of 2001, a significant place that appeared was Norm-Dam. Although the film takes place in Montmartre, it has an iconic scene associated with the cathedral. Little Amelie and her mother go to the temple to pray for the family, but when they leave, a tourist jumps off the roof of the building and kills the woman. It did actually become the site of a bloody drama when writer and historian, Dominic

Venner, committed suicide at the same place in 1913. In the 2004 Steven Soderbergh film "Van Helsing", about the most famous fighter of evil spirits, Van Helsing and the villain, Mr. Hyde, fight along the walls of Notre Dame Cathedral. During the battle, the hero breaks a pink glass window, which is one of the few remaining giant stained-glass windows of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The most amazing thing is that in reality, they were not affected by the fire, which could be considered a great miracle and a matter of good luck. Another exciting 2011 film, "Midnight in Paris" is about a dream and a return to the past, in which Notre Dame de Paris is also shown as one of the integral attractions of Paris. The main character, played by Owen Wilson, incredibly finds himself in Paris in the past, where he meets the most famous representatives of French bohemia – Dali, Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein and many others.

Gargoyles are one of the symbols of Notre Dame de Paris. These chimeras were installed in the upper part of the building in the 1840s with the light hand of the architect Eugene Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc who was known for his innovative approach to restoration. Moreover, gargoyles became a well-known symbol elsewhere and were used separately in diverse cultural spaces. For example, they became central characters in the film "I am Frankenstein" and were not just statues, but active participants of the film plot. According to the film, they are the members of the secret Gargoyle order formed in Notre Dame. Its members appointed Archangel Michael as the founder of the order, whose duty it was to protect people from the legions of demons released by Satan from Tartarus. Gargoyles, were powerful warriors, created to fight the constant battle against evil and to save civilization. In "The Musketeers" of 2011 by Paul W. S. Anderson, D'Artagnan (Logan Lerman) and Rochefort (Mads Mikkelsen) are seen fighting on the roof of the cathedral. Despite the fact that it was a set, since the whole picture was shot in Germany, these frames help the audience to be transported to Paris, to the walls of Notre Dame Cathedral.

#### **4. Conclusions**

Depicting great historical buildings that have an impact on various spheres of society is an important task as it helps to preserve their heritage for future generations. Notre Dame Cathedral is one of the places of worship that has significance both in history and in art. Its image formed the basis of the cult work "Notre Dame de Paris" by Victor Hugo which, in turn, formed the basis of many cinematic interpretations of the novel. Moreover, its history, art heritage, and architectural execution are a source of inspiration for creativity. With the passage of time and in the aftermath of destructive events, the interior and exterior of buildings often lose their original appearance, and in some cases can be completely destroyed, so it is important to pass on history from generation to generation, capturing it with the help of various types of art forms and expressions. The events that took place in April 2019 and their consequences showed that Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris is more than a monument. It is a symbol of power and a reflection of French self-esteem. Over the years, millions of tourists have been there, they have visited it throughout its existence and continue to do so today, despite the destruction and recent reconstruction of the roof and spire. Built in the architectural style of early Gothic, Notre Dame de Paris is one of the oldest European cathedrals and is visited annually by millions of tourists and pilgrims from all over the world. For some reason, this structure is an exception, unique in the history of Gothic cathedrals. The influence of this historical structure on people is so great that it has become the object of literary and cinematic works, becoming a participant in events both in the foreground and at the level of secondary roles. The main work inspired by the image of Notre Dame is Victor Hugo's novel "Notre Dame Cathedral", which eventually formed



the basis of more than 20 cinematic interpretations, the entourage of which to one degree or another shows the external and internal performance of Notre Dame Cathedral.

Promising areas for future research on the topic are the following: consideration of the image of some other great architectural structure in cinematic interpretations; and the study of the image of Notre Dame Cathedral in other forms of art, for example, in literature, or painting.

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### Biographical notes

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### Summary

Notre Dame de Paris is a building with a huge architectural and artistic wealth, but at the same time, it is very mixed in its influence on the surrounding world, since the structure performs historical and cultural as well as political and national functions. The purpose of this study is to study the role of Notre Dame in cinema and analyze its representation on the big screen. We have chosen the following theoretical research methods: analysis and synthesis, descriptive analysis, comparative analysis, historical analysis, systematization, generalization. In the course of the study, the appearance, architectural composition, cultural and historical significance of the Cathedral was analyzed. A comparative analysis of various cinematic interpretations was also carried out, where the image of Notre Dame Cathedral was used. The study, moreover, created a chronology of the main events that have taken place there, from its foundation to today. It was found that Notre Dame Cathedral is a source of inspiration for artists, as it is one

of the greatest buildings not only in France, but also in the whole world, the cultural and historical heritage leading to the creation of art works expressed in different forms dedicated to Notre Dame or indirectly using its image. The research materials may be useful for specialists in the field of cinematographic art or historians whose subject of research is Notre Dame Cathedral.

### **Riassunto**

Notre Dame de Paris è un edificio di enorme ricchezza architettonica e artistica, ma allo stesso tempo è molto eterogenea nella sua influenza sul mondo circostante, poiché la struttura svolge funzioni storiche e culturali, nonché politiche e nazionali. Lo scopo di questo studio è quello di studiare il ruolo di Notre Dame nel cinema e analizzare la sua rappresentazione sul grande schermo. Sono stati scelti i seguenti metodi di ricerca teorica: analisi e sintesi, analisi descrittiva, analisi comparativa, analisi storica, sistematizzazione, generalizzazione. Nel corso dello studio sono stati analizzati l'aspetto, la composizione architettonica, il significato culturale e storico della Cattedrale. È stata inoltre effettuata un'analisi comparativa di varie interpretazioni cinematografiche, in cui è stata utilizzata l'immagine della Cattedrale di Notre Dame. Lo studio, inoltre, ha creato una cronologia dei principali eventi che vi si sono svolti, dalla sua fondazione ad oggi. Si è scoperto che la Cattedrale di Notre Dame è una fonte di ispirazione per gli artisti, in quanto è uno dei più grandi edifici non solo in Francia, ma anche in tutto il mondo, il patrimonio culturale e storico che porta alla creazione di opere d'arte espresse in diverse forme dedicate a Notre Dame o indirettamente utilizzando la sua immagine. I materiali di ricerca possono essere utili per gli specialisti nel campo dell'arte cinematografica o per gli storici il cui oggetto di ricerca è la Cattedrale di Notre Dame.