

Unseen Horrors: The Unmade Films of Hammer

Thesis submitted by

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Abstract

This doctoral thesis is an industrial study of Hammer Film Productions, focusing specifically on the period of 1955-2000, and foregrounding the company's unmade projects as primary case studies throughout. It represents a significant academic intervention by being the first sustained industry study to primarily utilise unmade projects. The study uses these projects to examine the evolving production strategies of Hammer throughout this period, and to demonstrate the methodological benefits of utilising unmade case studies in production histories.

Chapter 1 introduces the study, and sets out the scope, context and structure of the work. Chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature, considering unmade films relation to studies in adaptation, screenwriting, directing and producing, as well as existing works on Hammer Films. Chapter 3 begins the chronological study of Hammer, with the company attempting to capitalise on recent successes in the mid-1950s with three ambitious projects that ultimately failed to make it into production – Milton Subotsky's *Frankenstein*, the would-be television series *Tales of Frankenstein* and Richard Matheson's *The Night Creatures*. Chapter 4 examines Hammer's attempt to revitalise one of its most reliable franchises – *Dracula*, in response to declining American interest in the company. Notably, with a project entitled *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*. Chapter 5 examines the unmade project *Nessie*, and how it demonstrates Hammer's shift in production strategy in the late 1970s, as it moved away from a reliance on American finance and towards a more internationalised, piece-meal approach to funding. Chapter 6 explores the company's closure in 1979 and the tenure of Roy Skeggs, through the protracted production of *Vlad the Impaler*. The thesis concludes by reiterating how the analysis of these unmade case studies can enrich the broader contexts of company and production histories, and are essential to our wider understanding of film history.

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The vital help of the staff at the BFI Archive, BBFC Archive, Warner Bros. Archive, British Library and the Margaret Herrick Library is also hugely appreciated, and their help and guidance made research for the thesis a far less daunting prospect. Hammer Films have also been incredibly helpful in responding and solving any queries I had about Hammer's historical projects, to which I am grateful. I'd also like to thank

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Outside of Academia, I have been surrounded by the love and encouragement of my family throughout the PhD. I am fortunate enough to have such a large family that to express thanks to them all separately could result in a list as long as the thesis, but I am extremely grateful for all their help throughout the last three and a half years.

A running joke between me, my mum, dad and sister is that none of them really have a clue what I do for a living. Despite there absolutely being some truth to this, it has never stopped them offering their endless love and encouragement. All three of them have been unwavering pillars of support throughout the whole process, and I am incredibly lucky to have them. Now please read this thesis so you know what it is I actually do.

Finally, I would like to thank my partner Bryony who still, after over 8 years, surprises me with her kindness and generosity. I am confident that this thesis wouldn't exist if she hadn't been around to offer me endless support in the last three and a half years. Thank you doesn't really cover it.

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Figure 1:

Page 2 of Subotsky's unpublished and unproduced *Frankenstein* screenplay, which begins similarly to that of *The Bride of Frankenstein* (Whale 1935).

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Figure 3:

The title page of the screenplay *Nessie*. Credited solely to Bryan Forbes, despite alterations by Michael Carreras.

Figure 4:

The title page of Jonas McCord's *Vlad the Impaler* screenplay, which gives an address for Hammer's American office near the Warner Bros. Lot.

Notes On Text

Where the website boxofficemojo.com is referred to for box office figures, this is indicated in text by only the website name for brevity and presentation purposes. Full URL references can be found in the bibliography. British spelling is used throughout, with the exception of quotations which feature American spelling. When quotations utilise capitalisation or italics, these are replicated in text. Years of release are cited once in each separate chapter, with the bibliography and filmography providing full details. An itemised list of the materials relating to Hammer's unmade projects held in the Hammer Script Archive is available in the appendix.

Parts of Chapter 5 have been published as 'Nessie Has Risen from the Grave' in Hackett and Harrington's *Beasts of the Deep: Sea Creatures and Popular Culture* (2018) pp: 214-231. Parts of Chapter 6 have been published as 'Dracula unseen: The death and afterlife of Hammer's *Vlad the Impaler*' in *Journal of Adaptation in Film & Performance* 10 (3) (2017), pp: 203-215. These have been reproduced in their entirety in the appendix, with full references provided in the bibliography.

Chapter 1: Introduction

James Caterer, in his chapter for the edited collection *Sights Unseen: Unfinished British Films* (North 2008: 189-205), notes that ‘the film industry works by not making far more films than it ever actually makes... [T]o limit investigations to those films which completed the journey from script to screen is to miss out on a potential wealth of information’ (Caterer 2008: 190). Yet despite their prevalence within the film industry, the study of unmade films within academia has been neglected for some time. This is not to say that no work at all has been done within the field, but the few publications within the discipline have come from diverse quarters. Some work on unmade films has appeared across adaptation studies, director studies, screenplay studies and producer studies as the next chapter will establish, yet as this diversity suggests, extant examples share no singular or established methodological approach. This thesis is a significant original intervention which seeks to define the field. It will do so by presenting a chronological industry study of one of the most well-known British film production companies, Hammer Films, drawing extensively on previously unseen archival materials on its unmade films. The intention of the study is to demonstrate how examining the production histories of unmade films not only raises new methodological questions about the nature of film production, but also provides important contextual evidence that sheds new light on existing works. This latter point is one of the primary reasons that Hammer Films was chosen as the case study for the thesis.

The chapters that follow will present a chronological study of Hammer Films, from the establishment of their reputation as horror specialists in the late 1950s, to the conglomerate takeover of the Hammer brand in 2000. In each chapter the case studies examined will be unmade projects developed at the company within this period. The Hammer Script Archive at De Montfort University (DMU) will be the central resource within the study, being the source of the majority of the primary documentation (such as screenplays, financial documents, correspondence). The Script Archive, held in the Cinema and Television History Institute (CATHI) since 2012, received a second acquisition from Hammer in April 2016. This thesis represents the first sustained research project which has utilised the Script Archive and its materials as a primary resource, with almost no academic work having been done on the unmade films of

Hammer (with the key exception being Peter Hutchings' chapter on Hammer's attempted adaptation of *I Am Legend* (Matheson 1954), *The Night Creatures*, in *Sight Unseen* (2008: 53-71)).

Drawing on this unique archive, the thesis looks to examine three key research questions. What can these documents of the unmade tell us about Hammer Films and their evolving production strategies from 1957-2000? How are company and production histories enriched by the broader contextualisation that the inclusion of unmade case studies affords? What are the methodological benefits or challenges in utilising these unmade case studies? This introductory chapter lays out the approach, scope and context of the study, as well as the structure of the thesis.

Scope, Context and the Hammer Script Archive

The origin of this study is twofold, with my interest in unmade films coming at a distinctly separate time to my awareness of Hammer Films. My general interest in unmade projects came earlier, not through the horror genre, but through the comic book film, and the number of intriguing comic book adaptations left unmade by the Hollywood studios. As a fan of the genre, I read with great interest online articles on projects such as James Cameron's proposed *The Amazing Spider-Man* project (to which he was attached to in the mid-1990s), Tim Burton's *Superman Lives*, which got as far as casting Nicholas Cage in the title role and costume fittings in the late 1990s, and *Batman Triumphant*, Joel Schumacher's proposed follow up to the critical and commercial failure *Batman and Robin* (1997). This specific interest led to popular books on the subject such as *The Greatest Sci-Fi Movies Never Made* (Hughes 2008), *Tales from Development Hell: The Greatest Movies Never Made* (Hughes 2012) and the edited collection *The Greatest Movies You'll Never See* (Braund 2013), which demonstrated to me the true breadth of unmade projects in Hollywood.

These books' behind-the-scenes revelations inside Hollywood made me aware of the potential study of unmade films, and the proportion of time, creative energy and investment that goes into film development. However, most of these popular books do not apply their approach rigorously to a single company case study. This opportunity presented itself to me out of the context of my MA but the connection to Hammer only became apparent at Masters level through a study of Hammer's visual style. Like the

majority of work on Hammer, my Masters thesis failed to account for Hammer's unmade films, focusing specifically on their produced slate. However, during the Masters, two key texts alerted me to the potential of Hammer's unmade films. The first was the previously mentioned chapter in *Sights Unseen* written by Peter Hutchings, which detailed Hammer's attempt to produce *The Night Creatures*. This will be discussed in relation to its work in adaptation studies in Chapter 2, but it is of note here as the first academic work on Hammer that demonstrated its key argument (in this case, the evolving relationship between British and American modes of horror cinema) through an unmade case study. The second text was an interview with the managing director of Hammer, Michael Carreras in *The House of Hammer Magazine* #17, dated February 1978. The interview was conducted by Dez Skinn and John Brosnan, and is the second of a two-part interview, with this part focusing on the 'future films from the house of horror'. This interview plays a key role in contextualising the production of Hammer's aborted Dracula origin film *Vlad the Impaler* addressed in Chapter 6. But it is of significance here as marking the first time I came across these unmade productions being discussed not as unmade projects long-since terminated, but as contemporary active productions that were at that time in development, and taking up a huge amount of creative and financial effort. It was also during this time that I visited the Hammer Script Archive for my Masters thesis, after getting in touch with CATHI and being invited to visit DMU to spend a day at the Archive.

The serendipity of this visit cannot be overstated in relation to the origins of the study. At the time of my visit, in 2014, the Archive was then uncatalogued, and no digital list of its contents was publicly available. As such, it was only when visiting the Archive in person that I became aware of the number of unmade projects detailed within it. In her journal article '(Micro) Film Studies' in *Moving Image: The Journal of the Association of Moving Image Archivists*, Maria Antonia Vélez-Serna addresses the practicalities of archival study, noting that 'it is easy to underestimate the degree to which simple availability and access can determine entire research paths' (Vélez-Serna 2017: 95). This is undeniably a factor in this study, with the core originality of the research, as the first sustained academic project to focus on Hammer's unmade films, only being made possible through the fact the Archive is relatively new, and that I had been granted access to it through knowledge gained from a prior study. The Hammer

Script Archive was opened in 2012, and currently holds files on exactly 100 unmade television and film projects, with 171 separate pieces of ephemera directly related to these unmade works. Primary materials in the Archive include screenplays, treatments, financial documentation, extensive correspondence, posters (for produced films), production stills and press books. The appendix to this study provides an itemised list of the 171 different materials pertaining to Hammer's unmade projects.

With the foregrounding of these primary materials, this study's methodological approach undoubtedly falls under the remit of the 'New Film History'. The New Film History arose from a call for new methodological practices within film studies, due to an overreliance on textual analysis and the varied quality of contemporary film historiographies. This urging for a methodological shift is apparent as early as 1975, in Jay Leyda's paper 'Toward a New Film History' (40-41) published in *Cinema Journal*. This special issue of *Cinema Journal* was entitled 'Symposium on the Methodology of Film History', which presented papers from 'a meeting on Saturday May 25, 1974, in Montreal' (MacCann et al 1975: Editorial Note). Leyda notes that the aim of his two-page article is 'to describe what one group of graduate students at New York University (NYU) will be doing this year to improve or correct our present state of film history' (Leyda 1975: 41). Leyda critiques what he sees as the opportune rise of film history textbooks (due to the growing popularity of film studies), which lacked the necessary methodological rigour. Leyda's article addresses how NYU will address these issues, noting that the scope of their own study

[...] would have been unthinkable before the second war. Only since then has the basic material for study...become available to students and historians all over the world, through the generous network of international film archives. If we don't take advantage of these riches to break down the formulas and replace the frozen anecdotes, it will be our fault for surrendering our research responsibility (Leyda 1975: 41).

The same issue of *Cinema Journal* features a paper by Thomas Cripps entitled 'The Future Film Historian: Less Art and More Craft' (42-46). Cripps' paper targets specific publications and publishers he feels have failed to engage fully with the possibilities of film history, and presents a number of ways in which the discipline might evolve. Of note in particular to this study is Cripps' fifth point, where he notes that 'as quickly as possible before they are lost...[we must] gather the corporate and

personal papers of the studios into some systematic usable form in archives' (Cripps 1975: 45). Cripps goes on to note the importance of this action in shifting academic focus away from the director and towards other modes of production, suggesting that the preservation of these materials will allow detailed production histories on the role of the studio, which Cripps cites as 'the true auteur' (Cripps 1975: 45) within the film industry.

While this issue of *Cinema Journal* laid the groundwork for what would become considered the New Film History, it was Thomas Elsaesser's 1986 review article in *Sight and Sound*, entitled 'The New Film History' (246-251), which set out in detail the terms of this new approach. Like Cripps' article a decade earlier, Elsaesser identifies this new approach as a necessary response to 'a polemical dissatisfaction with the surveys and overviews, the tales of pioneers and adventurers that for too long passed as film histories' (1986: 246). Elsaesser's article examines contemporary scholarly works engaging in this New Film History, such as Robert C. Allen and Douglas Gomery's *Film History: Theory and Practice* (1985). In reviewing these books, Elsaesser touches on a number of fundamental aspects of what would become the New Film History.

A key recurring trait within these works is to look further than the film text itself, and utilise primary materials. Elsaesser notes that this has become increasingly possible for film historians as the 'takeover of the old studios by multinational conglomerates in the 1960s and 70s meant that huge stocks of company files were dumped on or donated to university libraries' (Elsaesser 1986: 248). With this new wealth of materials at the hands of the film historian, Elsaesser posits that:

One can now begin to write film history from both ends: from the top (David O.Selznick's memos, an MGM script conference, the entire United Artists company records) but also from the bottom upwards (the Balaban and Katz theatre chain, real estate values and the siting of local cinemas, the drive-in economy) (Elsaesser 1986: 248).

The 2007 edited collection *The New Film History* (Chapman, Glancy and Harper), takes Elsaesser's article, Allen and Gomery's *Film History: Theory and Practice*, and David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson's *The Classical Hollywood Cinema* (1988) as marking the emergence of the New Film History (Chapman, Glancy and Harper 2007: 5). The collection 'represents the expanding research agenda of film

history since 1985' (Chapman, Glancy and Harper 2007: 6), and seeks to historically contextualise the term, as well as define its core tenets. The first of these features identified in *The New Film History* is 'a greater level of methodological sophistication' (Chapman, Glancy and Harper 2007: 6). This sophistication involves the acknowledgment that 'films are shaped and determined by a combination of historical processes' (ibid), and although the film text itself should not be ignored as a key source of study, it should also not be used as a sole resource. Instead the editors argue that the New Film History 'places the film text at the nexus of a complex and dynamic set of relationships between producers and consumers' (2007: 7). This methodological sophistication, and the need to utilise a variety of sources to provide a detailed historical study, was also central to Elsaesser's original review article, where he states that 'to do film history today, one has to become an economic historian, a legal expert, a sociologist, an architectural historian, know about censorship and fiscal policy, read trade papers and fan magazines.' (Elsaesser 1986: 248).

The attempt to adopt different methodological practices in order to present the fullest account of the subject in question finds echoes in the concept of consilience, identified by Daniel Lord Smail in an article for *History Today* entitled 'Beyond the Great Divide' (2009: 21-23). Consilience is the methodological conceit that, in order to gain a fuller understanding of the past, one must use a variety of differing forms of evidence. The crux of Smail's article is the methodological divide between the disciplines of history and archaeology, and his belief that, after years of being seen as distinct in their methods and practices, they must become more united. Outlining how historical methodologies had originally moved further from archaeology following the time revolution (the disbanding of the notion that 'the human past could be no older than chronology allowed by the book of Genesis' (Smail 2009: 22)), Smail suggests that the concept of 'consilience' would work to unify what had become increasingly disparate practices. Smail notes, in regard to these forms of evidence, that 'using just one, you see your subject in an unreliable light. But now layer them one on top of the other and peer through the ensemble and...the bright light of the original can be reconstituted to some degree' (Smail 2009: 23). In regard to this study, consilience, the consolidation of different forms of evidence to bring forth a more detailed historical

account, will be a key methodological tool, with a variety of different primary and secondary materials being utilised throughout.

The second feature of the New Film History as identified by Chapman, Glancy and Harper is 'the central importance of primary sources' (2007: 7). This foregrounding of archival materials harks back to the special issue of the *Cinema Journal*, and Leyda's call to utilise the expanding number of film related archives. This feature holds a particular importance for the study, which is in itself primarily reliant on archival materials (in this case one archive in particular). *The New Film History* likens the film historian to an 'archaeologist who unearths new sources and materials, especially those which have been previously disregarded or overlooked' (Chapman, Glancy and Harper 2007: 7), which is relevant to this thesis due to one of its central components being the foregrounding of the unmade projects which have been ignored or marginalised in other studies.

The third component of the New Film History is the understanding 'that films are cultural artefacts with their own formal properties, and aesthetics, including visual style and aural qualities' (2007: 8). Chapman, Glancy and Harper make this point to specifically address the criticism of the old film history, which is that many analyses merely focused on the narrative of the film, as if studying a novel (2007: 8). This thesis, in part, challenges the view that production history is determined only by completed films. Indeed, its central argument is that any comprehensive industry study needs to take account of those projects that did not come to fruition, as well as those that did. So how do we define an unmade film? After all, a film in development can be anything from a flimsy outline or a two-page treatment; it can have undergone several script iterations; it might have got as far through pre-production as to have been budgeted, cast and crewed. Sometimes it has close relations to other projects that were completed; sometimes it stands alone as a long-forgotten ambition. Whatever an unmade film may be, it is defined, for the purposes of this thesis, by the evidence left behind in the archive.

The prioritising of contextual materials over the films themselves means that the research will be heavily reliant on archival sources. As such, it is of course important to acknowledge the evolving nature of the film archive. In the case of the Hammer Script Archive, this is perhaps most clearly demonstrated by the second delivery received from

Hammer in April 2016, seven months into this study. This not only provided new materials on existing unmade projects held within the Script Archive, but also delivered materials on projects of which the Archive originally had no record. As one would expect, this altered the study significantly. For example, the file on the *Vlad the Impaler* project, which I had been researching at the time, was expanded through access to three new scripts. This delivery also included a document dated February 2000 (Anon. 2000a), which listed all of Hammer's unmade properties, and whether or not Hammer still owned the rights to them. With Hammer being taken over by a consortium led by Charles Saatchi in 2000, this document was likely a directive from the new owners to see how much control they had over Hammer's existing library of unmade films (a point discussed further in Chapter 6). These two examples greatly altered Chapter 6, allowing me to create a comprehensive timeline for *Vlad the Impaler's* thirty-year development, and identify the dates of the various scripts through the unmade film rights document.

The document on Hammer's unmade properties not only listed the names of the screenwriters on the project, but also the dates on which Hammer bought the screenplay rights themselves. This made a chapter on *Vlad the Impaler* possible, as it solved one of the key issues facing a study on unmade films - how to historically contextualise undated material. Where nearly all films theatrically released in Britain have a known release date, undated materials on projects which did not come to fruition can be extremely hard to date. Knowing who wrote the treatment or screenplay for these projects can help give an approximate timeframe. For example Don Houghton, who will become a prominent figure in Chapter 4 of this study, began working at Hammer in 1972 and left due to medical reasons in 1981. Houghton wrote many of the unproduced projects discussed in this thesis, and his tenure at Hammer gives a broad indication of when the script was produced, but is far from an exact date. This film rights document therefore proved crucial, but was not a part of the Archive until seven months into the study. As these examples demonstrate, the materials held within the Hammer Archive are extensive but inconsistent. As noted by McKenna in his article 'Gaps and Gold in the Klinger Archive' in the *Journal of British Cinema and Television*, 'what the researcher wants from an archive and what the researcher gets are often two very different things' (McKenna 2012: 112), and the materials available in the Hammer

Script Archive have undoubtedly dictated some of the case studies used within this research. For example, the second delivery of materials in April 2016 included an incredibly detailed file on Hammer's unproduced *Vampirella* project. A proposed adaptation of the comic-book of the same name, *Vampirella* was in development at Hammer in the late 1970s, a period this thesis locates as crucially important to the company as they tried to move away from their established gothic films and towards big-budget genre films with international appeal. Whilst preparing the thesis, *Vampirella* appeared to match all the necessary criteria for Chapter 5, specifically, Hammer's attempt to shift their financial strategy to piecemeal international finance as opposed to relying solely on American money. The *Vampirella* file contained proposed cast lists, a shooting schedule and financial documentation so detailed that it listed the would-be costings of cast and crew accommodation.

However, one aspect that would have been essential to the chapter was details on the story, specifically a treatment or screenplay. As it stood, the file revealed that Hammer had accounted for £5.57 of stationery in its final budget (Anon. 1977a), but not one single plot point of the film. I attempted to find a script in other archives such as the BFI, and after being told first that Hammer did not have a copy, I finally procured two draft screenplays from them in August 2018, which are now held in the Hammer Script Archive. This was of course far too late for the study, and I had decided over a year earlier to utilise *Nessie* instead as the key case study of Chapter 5, with the Archive holding detailed financial documents, correspondence and, crucially, draft screenplays on the project. The addition to the *Vampirella* file of the two screenplays makes it one of the more detailed files now held in the Script Archive, and I have been contracted to write a chapter on the project for a forthcoming collection entitled *Horror Franchise Cinema* (McKenna and Proctor). However, for the purposes of this study, *Vampirella* acts as a pertinent reminder that basing one's research primarily within one specific archive undoubtedly leaves the researcher at the mercy of omissions and inconsistencies.

One of the ways of combatting the unreliability of some of these documents is through cross-referencing sources from other archives. Although the Hammer Script Archive is central to this study, I have also visited and utilised materials from the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) Archives, the British Film Institute (BFI)

Archive, the Margaret Herrick Library, and the University of Southern California's (USC) Warner Bros. Archive. Materials found in the BFI and BBFC on projects such as the unmade Hammer television show *Tales of Frankenstein* and the aforementioned *The Night Creatures* form a great deal of the primary documentation utilised in Chapter 3. Examining the unmade *Frankenstein* script written by Milton Subotsky (before Hammer's *The Curse of Frankenstein* (Fisher 1957)) in the Warner Bros. Archive allowed me to identify an untitled and undated *Frankenstein* script held at DMU in the Hammer Script Archive as a copy of Subotsky's script. The Margaret Herrick's files gave me the opportunity to expand Chapter 3, as I cross-referenced the Motion Picture Association of America's (MPAA) response to *The Night Creatures* script with BBFC files on the British Censor's reaction as well. In summary, the study of unmade films, as with many projects focusing on archival material, can lead to historical gaps as a result of inconsistent materials. However utilising sources from archives internationally has allowed me to provide more details on these fragmented production histories.

These archives gave the research far more scope. However, as the concept of consilience suggests, archival research is only one (albeit crucial) resource for a study on Hammer's unmade films, and others must be utilised to gain a greater understanding of the topic. With one of the key aspects of this particular study being to adopt new approaches to the study of a well-established production company, the question as to why Hammer is so extensively documented comes to the fore. I would argue Hammer has remained so significant within discussions of British cinema not only through academic accounts of the company, but through an engaged and still sizable fanbase. As noted in the discussion of the New Film History, increasing access to various film archives across the world plays an incalculable role in the preservation of unmade scripts and their related documents. However, the role of the fan and fan communities as custodians of both information and primary materials on unmade films should not be understated.

Fan magazines such as *The House of Hammer* (1976-1978) and *Little Shoppe of Horrors* (1972-) provide crucial contemporary accounts of Hammer from when it was active under Michael Carreras, with interviews and articles vital in examining the development of these projects. Today, fans of Hammer Films are still extremely active, particularly on social media forums. Groups such as the Facebook page 'The Hammer

Lovers' (which as of December 2018 has over 6,400 members) share photos, videos and posts on classic Hammer Films, as well as events and conventions related to the group. I.Q Hunter, in his monograph *Cult Film as a Guide to Life: Fandom Adaptation and Identity* (2016), notes that the critical attention fans give to marginalised or forgotten texts holds many key similarities to academia, surmising that 'this search for deeper, or secret, meanings is one of the compulsive pleasures of cultism and a point of significant intersection with everyday academic practice' (Hunter 2016: 42).

Non-academic studies of Hammer, and their uses and limitations within this study, will be discussed in the literature review. However, two prolific writers outside of academia, Denis Meikle and Marcus Hearn, also provided essential primary sources for this study. During the research, I reached out to Meikle via email, and met him for an interview in November 2016. The interview was fruitful, particularly in its detailing of a visit he made to Hammer during Roy Skeggs' tenure (mentioned in Chapter 6). However, Meikle made another significant contribution to the study and, more broadly, to the Hammer Script Archive. During the interview, he gave me a detailed production file on Hammer's unmade Bram Stoker biopic *Victim of his Imagination*, which included primary documents such as redrafted treatments and internal correspondence. The Script Archive originally only had one treatment for this project, written in 1972 by Don Houghton. Meikle's materials not only provided more details on this iteration of the project, but also revealed an attempted revival of it by Michael Carreras in 1992, long after he had left Hammer. These documents therefore allowed me to contextualise *Victim of his Imagination* as a key case study in Chapter 4, as it provided a full account of the project's origins and eventual revival.

Similarly, Marcus Hearn, an Associate Research Fellow of CATHI, has provided indispensable details on some of the unmade projects used within this study. For example, in the second delivery from Hammer in 2016, the Hammer Script Archive received internal correspondence and three treatments on an unmade Dracula film set in India, entitled *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*. The project was active at Hammer in 1974 at a similar time as another Dracula in India project was in development called *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*. Whether it is due to the fact there is a completed screenplay for *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*, or that it was written by Tony Hinds, one of Hammer's most notable producers, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*

has undoubtedly received more historical attention in comparison with that of *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*. For example, in October 2015, CATHI worked with the Mayhem Film Festival at Nottingham's Broadway Cinema to present a live reading of *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* script. The script was also adapted and produced as a BBC Radio 4 drama in 2017, directed by Mark Gatiss and narrated by Michael Sheen. One of the claims to originality of this study is that it is the first to analyse *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* and *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* as two distinct projects, with separate stories and production histories. In nearly all mentions of these two projects in other works on Hammer, *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* is presumed to have been an early draft of *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*. However, this would not have been possible without Hearn's assistance. During an interview in December 2016, Hearn discussed internal Hammer correspondence from the 1970s, which he had in his personal collection of Hammer memorabilia. In this interview, Hearn notes that he is reading from his own verbatim transcriptions of these documents made when he worked at Hammer in the 1990s, and that he believes the original primary materials have been lost by Hammer since (Hearn 2016). These notes from Hearn offer crucial information on the timeline of the project (as noted in detail in Chapter 4), and present essential context not available from within the Archive.

The Archive's importance has been outlined, but the emphasis here on the relationship of fans and non-academic experts with these primary materials is also important. The Hammer Script Archive is extremely extensive, but is by no means a complete source for all the projects analysed within this study. Due to this, and the scarcity of academic texts foregrounding unmade films, it is important to utilise non-academic work and the details and materials uncovered by fans of Hammer, in order to get a wider sense of the possibilities of unmade film studies within academic works.

As well as interviewing Hammer historians Meikle and Hearn, I also contacted people involved directly with the production of some of these unmade projects. With the majority of this study examining the period of 1956-1978, many of Hammer's production team, such as Michael Carreras, Tony Hinds, Jimmy Sangster and Don Houghton, had passed away by the time the study began. However, Chapter 6 examines Hammer up until the year 2000, and therefore it was possible to make contact with key figures in the development of *Vlad the Impaler*. John Peacock, the script editor at

Hammer in this period, initially agreed to an interview for the project but ultimately had to pass due to health reasons. Jonas McCord, one of the many screenwriters on the project, declined an interview, but was gracious enough to send a brief email outlining his approach to the project (referenced in Chapter 6). British screenwriter Arthur Ellis, who worked on *Vlad the Impaler* in the early 1980s, did agree to an interview, and not only provided a number of fascinating insights into the project (discussed in detail in Chapter 6), but also generously provided the Script Archive with two new screenplays. The first was a copy of a *Vlad the Impaler* script. The Hammer Script Archive already held one draft of Ellis' screenplay for that film, but the one provided by Ellis at interview was particularly valuable because it included pencil annotations from producers at Hammer. These demonstrated the specific issues Hammer had with Ellis' script, making Hammer's overall approach to the project more apparent. The second script Ellis donated to the Archive was an adaptation of an unpublished novel (Ellis 2016) entitled *Charlie* by R.P. Blount. Ellis was commissioned to work on the project, retitled *Black Sabbath* by Hammer, a number of years after his work on *Vlad the Impaler*. This not only gifted the Archive an entirely new script, but also gave me an indication of Hammer's production strategy at the time, which will be discussed in Chapter 6.

This thesis is the first chronological company study which utilises unmade films as its primary case studies, and these different resources, be they archival materials, interviews, academic books or non-academic/fan resources, will all help provide details on these unmade projects which, until now, have not been explored. As such, the broader methodological implications of its central focus are also of note, for example, foregrounding unmade texts frustrates a characteristic recourse in many studies of Hammer, which is a textual analysis of their most notable films' aesthetics. Using unmade texts obviously necessitates a shift away from analysis of Hammer's visual style, but allows an examination of the methods of production, and the creative roles of the managing director, producer and screenwriter. For example, a significant aspect of Chapter 4 is the increasingly tense relationship between Michael Carreras (managing director of Hammer at the time) and screenwriter Don Houghton. This study, which uses primary sources on a project's pre-production but has no finished film to textually analyse, must employ a methodology which focuses instead on the development/pre-

production process itself, as opposed to the finished film. The literature review will greatly expand on how unmade films can draw on the methodological practices of producer studies, as well as discussing key work already done with production studies on unmade films, particularly by Andrew Spicer and A.T Mckenna. However, at this stage it is important to emphasise that through examining the pre-production of a film as opposed to its production or release, key production roles that are often unrecognized or invisible within academic film studies gain more attention. By studying film development in its pre-production phase, we may achieve a more comprehensive account of its collaborative labours. For example, since many of the unmade projects discussed in the thesis reached screenplay stage (sometimes through several script versions), screenwriters are one vital component of the study. Chapter 4 and 5 in particular focus on the screenwriters' (Don Houghton and Bryan Forbes respectively) relationships with the managing director Michael Carreras. Don Houghton and Michael Carreras disagreed on many of the key aspects of *Houghton's Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* treatment, which thwarted progress on a production in which time was of the essence. Chapter 5 covers the would-be Loch Ness Monster film *Nessie*, and the fractious relationship between Carreras and the writer Bryan Forbes, which saw Forbes threatening to sue Hammer as a result.

As is apparent in these two examples, Michael Carreras' role at Hammer is the most comprehensively examined within the study. Carreras had several different roles at Hammer, from writer and director, to producer and managing director. Carreras' autocracy often caused tensions in his tenure as head of the company, for example, Chapter 5 details Forbes writing a furious letter to Carreras on finding out he has partially rewritten Forbes' script, with Carreras' instincts as a writer obscuring the long-term repercussions this may have had for him as managing director. Throughout this thesis, we see key creative decisions Carreras made in the role of managing director and producer, and the impact they had for the company in the face of a rapidly changing international market. How he responded to these changes highlights the various internal relationships between the managing director and screenwriter, or managing director and producer, as well as external relationships Hammer had with financiers, be it independent investors or major production companies such as Columbia (see Chapter 5).

A detailed study of these unmade projects does not only look to answer the question of why the proposed project did not get produced, but also foregrounds often neglected roles within the production process. A director is of course vital to any film, but as many of these case studies will demonstrate, they can often arrive late in the production process, with financing secured and a script already firmly in place. The conception of a film, and the intricacies involved in its development and funding, can often be overlooked in pursuit of the finished product. But where the researcher's pay-off in tracing the creative struggles during a production can often be the marks left on the film itself, unmade films tell untold stories about production cultures per se. Whereas the Literature Review will demonstrate the variety of ways unmade films have been used within existing works (such as in adaptation studies), one consistent aspect throughout is that prioritising the unmade film as a case study frustrates existing methodologies and as result, offers new methods for analysing the production process that underpins all films – those that are completed, and those that never see the light of day. Arguably, any comprehensive production history needs to account for both.

Structure

Chapter 2 of this study will elaborate on the literature mentioned within this introduction. This literature review will examine how other disciplines have so far dealt with unmade case studies, in an attempt to produce a detailed record of existing works within the field of unmade films. The first discipline examined within the literature review will be adaptation studies, where many of the existing work on unmade films reside. This section will examine the conscious shift in the last fifteen years away from debates in adaptation studies surrounding the fidelity of an adaptation to its original text. It will consider the role of unmade films in this debate, and how they are used to frustrate and alter the parameters of existing methodological approaches within adaptation studies. Secondly, the review will look at works on unmade films within the field of director studies and how they contextualise unproduced projects into a director's existing filmography, complicate notions of the director as the primary creative within film production, and foreground the often tenuous relationships between key creatives. The section that follows will then examine works on unmade films in

relation to screenwriting, and how these case studies can foreground the role of the writer in a film's development process, something which is often overlooked in industrial studies. Similarly, a section on unmade films in relation to producers will show how unmade projects have been used to underline the importance of the producer to a project's development, and again how neglected this crucial role is in many industrial studies. Finally, the review will then examine the existing works on Hammer Films, to detail the extensive work produced in the field, and suggest how the existing chronological studies of Hammer reveal gaps in their histories through their general neglect of Hammer's unmade films.

Chapter 3 begins the chronological study, offering key historical context on Hammer's pre-1950s history, before focusing in-depth on the late 1950s/early 1960s, as the company began to establish its reputation as experts in the field of horror. How Hammer crafted this reputation, and the precariousness of it in these formative years, will be studied through the use of three unmade Hammer projects. The first two will be projects relating to one of Hammer's most notable franchises, *Frankenstein* (1957-1973). Firstly, this study will examine the production contexts of the original *Frankenstein* project that was brought to Hammer by the American producer Elliot Hyman. This specific adaptation of Mary Shelley's 1818 gothic horror novel was written by American producer Milton Subotsky and is entirely different from the screenplay which became *The Curse of Frankenstein*. After examining this unmade project's turbulent production process, this section will then look at how Hammer tried to parlay the incredible success of *The Curse of Frankenstein* into television as well. Almost immediately after the success of *The Curse of Frankenstein*, Hammer entered into a co-production deal with Columbia, who under their television production company Screen Gems, looked to produce a series with Hammer called *The Tales of Frankenstein* for American television. However, only the pilot was produced, and Hammer found itself struggling to acclimatise from producing its own films in Britain with full authorial control, to co-producing a network television show made for American screens. Finally, this chapter will examine Hammer's attempts at consolidating its success in the horror genre through an examination of Richard Matheson's self-adaptation of his novel *I Am Legend - The Night Creatures*. *The Night Creatures* is an anomalous addition to Hammer's slate of horror films at this time,

which primarily looked to expand on the gothic horror trappings of *The Curse of Frankenstein*. The project ultimately failed to get past the British censor, and I argue that this proved a crucial learning curve for Hammer in regard to the types of horror material the censor was willing to tolerate.

Chapter 4 contextualises the 1960s at Hammer as a relatively stable period for the company, concurring with Hammer historian Marcus Hearn's assessment that 'it is a measure of Hammer's reputation and success that almost every subject they pitched to distributors from the mid-1950s to the late 1960s found finance' (Hearn 2011: 160). However, this chapter will go on to note the seismic shifts that happened within Hammer and the British film industry more broadly at the advent of the 1970s. The company moved production studios from Bray to Elstree, lost its most influential producer in Anthony Hinds when he retired in 1970, and finally changed hands in 1973, with James Carreras selling the company to his son Michael. In order to track this instability at Hammer, the chapter will focus on their most illustrious franchise - *Dracula*. Contextualising notable unmade *Dracula* projects into the canon of Hammer's produced *Dracula* series (1958-1974), the chapter will look at how Hammer tried to reinvigorate the franchise in the face of declining interest from American production and distribution companies. The key case study will be *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*, a project developed in 1974 by Don Houghton, which would have seen *Dracula* travel to India to marry the demon goddess Kali. *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* demonstrates Hammer's concerted efforts to revitalise an ailing franchise, but also shows Hammer struggling to find viable production deals without the full backing of American financiers. The chapter will posit that the failure of *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*, and the end of the *Dracula* franchise at Hammer, signalled a seismic shift in Hammer's production strategy.

Chapter 5 will then examine this strategy in detail, through the prism of Hammer's most ambitious unmade film - *Nessie*. This new strategy in the late 1970s saw Hammer attempt to mount large-scale, big-budget genre films in an attempt to court international finance. Wishing to move away from an overreliance on American money by financing projects through a number of different backers, *Nessie* stands as the apex of this strategy for Hammer. Using detailed financial records, correspondence and two draft screenplays of *Nessie* (all of which is held in the Hammer Script Archive), this

chapter chronicles *Nessie's* near three-year development, and contextualises it as one of the most important Hammer projects, made or unmade, of the late 1970s.

Chapter 6 will study the fallout of this strategy, namely Carreras' resignation, the company's forced closure by its creditors in 1979, and the revival of Hammer by two former board members (Roy Skeggs and Brian Lawrence) only a year later. Lawrence retired in 1985, but Skeggs stayed as the Managing Director of Hammer until 2000, though no theatrical films were produced during his tenure. In order to cover extensively Carreras' resignation and Skeggs' tenure, this chapter will examine an unmade project with a near thirty-year production history at Hammer - *Vlad the Impaler*. Firstly, examining the project's origins in 1974 under Carreras, this section will posit that *Vlad the Impaler*, a proposed big-budget Dracula origin story, can be seen as a transitional film from the old Hammer adaptations of Dracula, to the new strategy detailed in Chapter 5. However, after Carreras' resignation, the project languished in almost constant development during Skeggs' two decades in charge, and the project's history will be used to draw conclusions as to whether Skeggs' tenure at Hammer could truly be considered a new phase for the company.

The concluding chapter will draw on the methodological practices used within the thesis and the case studies mounted, to offer a revisionist history of Hammer's changing production culture that provides new insights into this well-documented studio. It will also reflect on the way unmade films are utilised in the thesis for a sustained chronological study of one production company over a fifty-year period, and the potential benefits for film history that this original approach demonstrates. Finally, the conclusion will propose the next steps for unmade film studies, and how it may be further developed as a key practice within the New Film History.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Summary

The following literature review will outline the existing fields in which work on unmade films have been produced. Work within adaptation studies, screenwriting studies, director studies and producer studies will be examined, in order to note how each field contextualises unmade case studies to frustrate existing methodological practices, or to foreground production roles often neglected in other works. These studies will undoubtedly be valuable to my own research, but this review also reveals the lack of a sustained industry study which primarily uses unmade projects as key case studies. It is this significant gap in academic works that this thesis will look to address. The literature review will also examine existing studies of Hammer both within academia and outside of it, to demonstrate how Hammer is contextualised within wider industry studies, as well in works which specifically focus on the company itself. Notable within this section is the lack of attention towards Hammer's unmade films, and a lack of a methodological shift when Hammer's output begins to stall in the late 1970s, when a significant number of their most prominent projects failed to make it into production.

Adaptation Studies

Work within adaptation studies will be vital to this thesis for two key reasons. The first is through current work within the field using unmade adaptations as case studies. Recent works within the field have looked to move away from debates surrounding the fidelity of adaptations to their source texts, and instead towards a study of the process of adaptation itself. One of the most effective ways this has been achieved is through a focus on unmade adaptations. This method circumvents the fidelity debate entirely, as there is no completed adapted film to compare to the original source. In lieu of a textual analysis of the source and adapted text, these works offer a detailed production history of the unmade adapted case study instead, offering new insights into the process of adapting material for the screen. This method is apparent in works by scholars such as Simone Murray (2008) and Peter Krämer (2016), and will be discussed in detail later within this section. The second way adaptation studies relates directly to this thesis is the field's relationship to Hammer as a company.

One of the key facets of Hammer's early success as a production company was its propensity and skill at adapting popular material. Adaptation was at the forefront of Hammer's strategy as early as 1948, with the release of *Dick Barton: Special Agent* (Goulding), an adaptation of the BBC radio series of the same name. Arguably the most notable example of this strategy is Hammer's X-rated success *The Quatermass Xperiment* (Guest 1955), which was adapted from Nigel Kneale's BBC television series *The Quatermass Experiment* (1953). David Pirie notes that it was 'possibly the earliest film to be adapted from television, which was then seen as the real enemy of the film industry' (Pirie 2008: 23). The film opened in August 1955 with Hammer at 'their lowest ebb' (Pirie 2008: 23), and would prove a tremendous success, eventually leading the way to Hammer's gothic adaptations of *The Curse of Frankenstein* (Fisher 1957) and *Dracula* (Fisher 1958). This focus on adaptations remained with Hammer until its initial closure in 1979, and is also apparent within its unmade projects. This thesis alone uses case studies which are adaptations of *Frankenstein* (Shelley 1818), *I Am Legend* (Matheson 1954) and *Dracula* (Stoker 1897), and the Hammer Script Archive holds several key unmade projects that are adapted from other works such as *Vampirella* and *The Haunting of Toby Jugg*. These two areas demonstrate adaptation studies' importance to this thesis, and this section will contextualise the relevant debates within the field, and examine how unmade films are utilised within different methodological frameworks in adaptation studies.

In the introduction to her book *The Adaptation Industry: The Cultural Economy of Contemporary Literary Adaptation*, Simone Murray notes that 'the discipline of adaptation studies is nothing if not self-reflexive' (Murray 2012: 1). 'Proliferating surveys of the state of the discipline, rigorous questioning of underpinning theoretical models, and rehearsings of the discipline's historical trajectory' (Murray 2012: 1) are seen as necessary for a field so intrinsically intertextual. This self-reflexivity within adaptation studies has seen comparative studies between the film and text, known within adaptation studies as the fidelity debate, come under increased scrutiny, with many contemporary scholars suggesting the need to move away from this methodological approach. Brian McFarlane in his book *Novel to Film* (1996), notes that 'discussion of adaptation has been bedevilled by the fidelity issue' (8), and suggests that 'no critical line is in greater need of re-examination - and devaluation' (McFarlane

1996: 8). Thomas Leitch also addresses this issue in his 2003 essay 'Twelve Fallacies in Contemporary Adaptation Theory', noting that one of the key fallacies related to adaptation studies is that 'fidelity is the most appropriate criterion to use in analysing adaptations' (Leitch 2003: 161). Leitch suggests that to underpin any methodology within adaptations to the fidelity of the screen work to the text 'is a hopelessly fallacious measure of a given adaptation's value because it is unattainable, undesirable and theoretically only possible in a trivial sense' (Leitch 2003: 161).

This departure from a methodological approach that foregrounds the fidelity of the adapted text is where the use of unmade case studies within adaptation studies have become particularly prominent. Instead of examining a text's fidelity, scholars such as Simone Murray have looked towards a methodology that examines the industrial implications of adapting a text, and the specific processes that are undertaken. This is apparent in Murray's article 'Phantom Adaptations: *Eucalyptus*, the Adaptation Industry and the Film that Never Was' (Murray 2008: 5-23), which outlines this industrial model within adaptation studies by focusing on an adaptation which was never completed, a film based on Murray Bail's 1998 novel *Eucalyptus*. Murray begins the article by addressing the failings of a methodological practice which foregrounds fidelity, noting that

a principal, but little-acknowledged, cost of this near-exclusive attention to 'what' has been adapted across media has been an understanding of 'how' adaptation functions industrially: namely, the stakeholders, institutions, commercial arrangements and legal frameworks which govern the flow of content across media (Murray 2008: 6).

By choosing this approach, Murray attempts to 'frustrate adaptation studies' habitual recourse to comparative textual analysis and force the discipline to engage with potential alternative methodologies for understanding how adaptation functions' (Murray 2008: 6). Murray achieves this through centring on the 'phantom adaptation' of Bail's novel, a 2005 unmade film which was to star Nicole Kidman, Russell Crowe and Hugo Weaving, and be directed by Jocelyn Moorhouse. Murray posits that with no tangible film to compare to the original novel, it allows her to pursue a methodological approach which focuses on the 'industrial, commercial and policy contexts out of which such texts emerge' (Murray 2008: 7). By forcing attention 'not just to the 'what' of adaptation but also to the 'how' the 'why' and the 'why not'' (Murray 2008: 16),

Murray is able to highlight areas of adaptation studies often neglected in favour of more traditional methodologies. This is not to say that Murray discards a comparative methodology entirely, as within the article Murray offers a direct comparison between the production contexts of the novel and the unmade film. Yet crucially, Murray uses this comparative analysis as a way of discussing the process of adaptation itself, drawing attention to industrial and cultural factors in both publishing and film production. Murray uses *Eucalyptus* and its failed adaptation to note a key similarity in both sectors, specifically, ‘a reduction in the importance of the *national*, long regarded as the prime site of cultural policy making, in favour of a growing significance of local institutions...and international networks’ (Murray 2008: 15). Murray concludes the article by noting that the relative neglect of unmade case studies within adaptation studies means that works within adaptations have ‘never fully escaped the undertow of fidelity criticism, if only because the choice of extant texts makes some form of compare-and-contrast critique almost irresistible’ (Murray 2008: 16). However, as Murray correctly identifies, ‘examining phantom adaptations, as an alternate approach, fundamentally disrupts such deeply ingrained critical impulses’ (Murray 2008: 16), and this thesis looks to expand this approach even further, utilising unmade adaptations to detail the production strategies of one studio over a period of over 40 years.

Whilst Murray’s use of unmade case studies is particularly pertinent to this thesis, other approaches have also looked to shift adaptation studies away from comparative analysis. One example relevant to this study is Robert Stam’s ‘Beyond Fidelity: The Dialogics of Adaptation’ (2000: 54-76) where he suggests that trying to examine what is transferred from a novel to a film is impractical because

[...]it assumes that a novel “contains” an extractable “essence,” a kind of “heart of the artichoke” hidden “underneath” the surface details of style...it is assumed there is an originary core, a kernel of meaning or nucleus of events that can be “delivered” by an adaptation (2000: 57).

Stam also notes that ‘the question of fidelity ignores the wider question: ‘fidelity to what’ (2000: 57)? This point is expanded on later within the chapter, where Stam considers the implications of intertextuality when studying adapted materials - ‘all texts are tissues of anonymous formulae, variations on those formulae, conscious and unconscious quotations, and confluences and inversions of other texts’ (Stam 2000: 64).

The concept of intertextuality has been addressed in many recent works within adaptation studies. Graham Allen defines intertextuality as the notion that ‘every text has its meaning... in relation to other texts’ (Allen 2011: 6), with Linda Hutcheon also noting that ‘texts are said to be mosaics of citations that are visible and invisible’ (Hutcheon 2006: 21). Hutcheon expands on this by citing the example of Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, and how many of the novel’s adaptations are ‘often seen as adaptations of other earlier films as they are of Bram Stoker’s novel’ (Hutcheon 2006: 21). Instead of adaptations scholars focusing primarily on the relationship between a source text and the film adaptation, one can also examine the filmic adaptation in a variety of other materials that permeate into each successive adaptation of a text. This methodological approach facilitates a shift away from the binary nature of source text to screen adaptations, and away from questions of fidelity within the material. As such this, methodological practice will be particularly useful in Chapter 3 and 4 of this study.

Chapter 3’s examination of Milton Subotsky’s unmade *Frankenstein* script cannot only be examined as an adaptation of Shelley’s novel, but must also take into account Universal’s *Frankenstein* (Whale 1931) and *The Bride of Frankenstein* (Whale 1935), as they were crucial to the project’s production and eventual failure. Chapter 4 will examine the development of Hammer’s *Dracula* franchise, with one of the key developments within the series’ production history was when Hammer produced two *Dracula* films set in contemporary London - *Dracula AD 1972* (Gibson 1972) and *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* (Gibson 1973). It is not, however, Stoker’s original novel that offers an understanding of why Hammer made this change, but instead an awareness of the popularity of American contemporary set vampire films such as *Count Yorga, Vampire* (Kelljan 1970) and *Blacula* (Crain 1972). An understanding of the relationship these case studies have with both their source text and other surrounding texts is therefore vital when considering their historical and production contexts.

Similarly, work on self-adaptation, and the methodological approach these works take, will prove particularly useful for this thesis. Chapter 3 examines the production history of Richard Matheson’s self-adaptation of his novel *I Am Legend* entitled *The Night Creatures*, and Chapter 6 looks at Brian Hayles’ adaptation of his own radio drama *Lord Dracula* entitled *Vlad the Impaler*. Utilising self-adaptation within my research framework necessitates an understanding of works within adaptation

studies on self-adaptation, as well as the possible issues that arise in adapting one's own work. For example, Jack Boozer in his article 'Novelist-Screenwriter versus Auteur Desire: *The Player*' (2013) notes that those who adapt their own work are in 'a double bind' (75), possibly either honing 'in too close to their source... or find[ing] themselves guilty of tampering with whatever qualities may have been appreciated in the novel' (Boozer 2013: 75). As Boozer suggests, this framework does not necessarily facilitate a shift away from the fidelity debate within adaptation, but instead, 'typical questions of a film's fidelity to its source become more complicated...[since] it is more difficult to claim that "this is not what the novelist wrote" or "meant" or "would have wanted"' (Boozer 2013: 75). This notion of self-adaptation's relationship with debates around fidelity is also examined by Sylvain Duguay, who notes that the study of self-adaptation as a process provides 'an important opportunity to shrug off criteria of fidelity since the author... doesn't have treasonous intentions towards himself' (Duguay 2012: 21). Instead of an opportunity to reframe the fidelity debate, Duguay instead suggests that the process of self-adaptation 'opens the way for a discussion of adaptation as a creative continuum on equal ground' (Duguay 2012: 21).

Work on self-adaptation, intertextuality and phantom adaptations are particularly relevant to this study through the way they foreground production processes, as opposed to a comparative textual analysis. In doing so, these works look to illuminate practices which otherwise would be neglected, and highlight the complex industrial contexts in which these works are produced. This thesis looks to greatly expand on Murray's work in particular, to offer a chronological study which utilises unmade projects (in many cases adaptations) to foreground new production contexts and highlight production roles which may have been neglected by other methodological practices.

Screenwriting Studies

Steven Price, in his book *Screenplay: Authorship, Theory and Criticism* (2010), analyses the importance of the screenplay both within the film industry and academia, and notes that 'one reason for the lack of critical attention to screenplays as texts is undoubtedly the tendency to regard them as mere pre-texts for movies, which kill or erase them on completion' (2010: xii). This is to say that the screenplay cannot exist as a piece of literature open to theoretical, critical or methodological examination because

the truest, most final form of the screenplay is the film itself. If this tendency is indeed correct, it perhaps resolves any questions as to why unmade films have received so little attention within academia. If a screenplay is merely a pre-text for a finished film, it stands to reason that a script with no finished film would be considered even less valuable academically. Yet, as Price goes on to demonstrate, the screenplay is far more than just a pre-text for a finished film, and screenplays for unmade projects can be vital resources within film history.

This section will examine several articles and chapters that have taken an approach that foregrounds an unmade project's screenplay as its primary case study. It is of note that, as well as completed screenplays, I also include treatments and synopses within this methodological remit as well, in order to fully explore the way these works emphasise the role of the screenwriter. The role of the screenwriter is a key part of a film's production, but is often overlooked in many works within film studies. The decision to include treatments, synopses and unfinished screenplays in this section also extends to the thesis itself, and warrants justification. One of the key struggles in the examination of unmade projects is determining how to ascertain the extent of the project's development. Whilst completed films are undoubtedly the work of significant financial and creative labour, it is much harder to determine, for example, how much developmental effort went into a one-page synopsis for an unmade project – a document that may be held in an archive with no other related materials. Typically, though far from always the case, a completed screenplay can be an indication that a substantial amount of development has gone into the project. If a screenplay has been written, it means the project has likely been discussed extensively, has been approved by a producer or a studio, and has potentially already had a synopsis or treatment written on the project previously. As noted, there are exceptions, such as if a script has been sent to a producer or studio by someone who has produced the screenplay entirely for free, and sent it to a studio or producer without prior consent with the hope they would want to make it. Often, however, a screenplay suggests that a project has been considered seriously enough for a studio or producer to pay for a screenwriter to develop it further. Synopses, treatments and unfinished screenplays, however, are perhaps more ambiguous in what they can tell us about an unproduced project's development. In comparison to a completed screenplay, these documents are often less substantial, and a

project with only a synopsis, treatment or unfinished screenplay could have still conceivably been discarded early in the development process. This thesis, specifically in Chapter 4's examination of *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*, uses multiple synopses and unfinished scripts as the primary documentation on the project. The multiple drafts of these treatments and unfinished scripts suggest a significant amount of developmental work, but this is made clear through contextualising these with others in the Hammer Script Archive, such as correspondence that underlines the extent of the project's development. Also beneficial in determining the legitimacy of these projects is the fact that, in the case of *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*, these treatments and unfinished screenplays were written by two employees at Hammer who had developed a number of projects extensively at the company, Don Houghton and Christopher Wicking.

Similarly, Andrew Moor's article 'Autobiography, the Self and Pressburger-Powell's *The Golden Years* Project' (2005) considers the synopsis for the unmade film *The Golden Years* (a biopic of the German composer Richard Strauss), significant as it was developed as a Powell and Pressburger project, and was written by Emeric Pressburger himself. Moor focuses specifically on the synopsis for the film in order to draw out thematic and stylistic traits present in Pressburger's existing body of work. Noting how Powell and Pressburger intended to have the camera 'occupy Strauss's place throughout the film' (Moor 2005: 17) in a point-of-view shot, Moor suggests that this is motivated thematically by *The Golden Years*' 'search' for Strauss (Moor 2005: 17), as it would have resulted in the audience not seeing the protagonist. This analysis brings Moor on to other identifiably recurrent themes in Powell and Pressburger's works; for example, Moor notes that 'the autobiographical properties of *The Golden Years* are related to Pressburger's status as a displaced person with a history of expatriation' (Moor 2005: 29). Moor contends that the notion of the exile is 'concerned with fragmented selves, and performed identities...[and] *The Golden Years*, like other Archer's films, has all these traits' (Moor 2005: 29). Moor therefore uses the unmade case study to centre on Pressburger not as a producer, but as a writer, and the thematic sentiments which connect his works. Dan North notes that Moor

is not interested in the business machinations that stunted the film's growth – he uses the film's detailed synopsis as an opportunity to read the film as another piece of the Powell-Pressburger authorial template...[and] in the process

granting rare primacy to Pressburger the writer over Powell the visualiser (North 2008: 8).

Dan North's edited collection also features Peter Hutchings' chapter 'American Vampires in Britain: Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend* and Hammer's *The Night Creatures*' (2008: 53-70). This is the only other academic work on unmade Hammer films, and, as noted in Chapter 1, it is a key text within Chapter 3 of this thesis. However, a brief examination of its methods in relation to how it utilises Matheson's unmade screenplay are also relevant at this juncture. Hutchings adopts a comparative model, and looks to analyse the tension that exists in a novel by an American writer being adapted by the same writer for a British company. Primarily using the screenplay of the unmade project as his primary source, Hutchings compares thematic and narrative similarities between Matheson's novel and his unmade screenplay for Hammer, and suggests that American and British horror 'might not be as distinct and separate from each other as has sometimes been supposed' (Hutchings 2008: 68).

By providing a comparative textual analysis of the produced novel and unproduced screenplay, Hutchings is able to examine the unmade work as an adaptation of the source novel, as well as providing broader context on the British film industry at the time it was written. Chapter 3 of this thesis will also examine *The Night Creatures*, albeit in relation to the censor and Hammer's films at the time. Hutchings' chapter looks to contextualise the screenplay not only as a lost adaptation but as a bridge between two distinct modes of horror.

The parallels and crossovers between unmade film studies and adaptations have already been made clear in this chapter, but another commonality is the self-reflexive nature of many of these studies. Before beginning his comparative study of *I Am Legend* and *The Night Creatures*, Hutchings initially discusses the critical value of the unmade film, noting the tendency for some works, particularly outside of academia, to 'virtually will the film into existence in an ideal form unsullied by those constraints and compromises that generally characterise film production' (Hutchings 2008: 55). Rather than idealise the unmade film, however, Hutchings instead posits that locating the script in question, *The Night Creatures*, 'in relation to the working practices of those people who tried to make it has the potential to offer a more nuanced account of the project' (Hutchings 2008: 55).

Contextualising unmade projects in relation to their historical and production contexts is one of the primary methods of analysis within this thesis, and is apparent in other works on unmade screenplays. Andrew Spicer's chapter 'An Impossible Task? Scripting *The Chilian Club*' (2011: 71-89) in Jill Nelmes *Analysing the Screenplay*, examines the unmade adaptation of George Shipway's 1971 novel *The Chilian Club* and the 'multifarious drafting and redrafting of scripts and full screenplays' (2011: 71) for the unproduced project. Spicer undertakes an analysis of the ten completed screenplays (2011: 71) held within the Michael Klinger Papers at the University of the West of England (UWE), but emphasises that although textual analysis of these screenplays plays a crucial role, 'the chapter will also pay close attention to the fluctuating nature of the collaborations involved and the contextual factors that shaped them' (Spicer 2011: 71). After a detailed chronology of the project, Spicer returns to the broader implications of his study, noting that what he hopes he has shown is 'the central importance of scrutinising the industrial, commercial and cultural context in analysing a screenplay' (2011: 85). He goes on to emphasise that this context is crucial when examining screenplays (produced or unproduced) 'if it is to produce a satisfactory account of the processes involved' (Spicer 2011: 85). The structure of Spicer's chapter is also pertinent to this thesis, as it chronologically maps the development of the project through the many specific screenplay drafts. In Chapter 6, I use a similar structure in examining the development of *Vlad the Impaler* over nearly twenty years, documenting each draft of the screenplay, the changes that were made, and Hammer's own position within the film industry when each draft is developed.

These examples show the multi-faceted way a screenplay for an unmade project can be utilised. Whilst Moor is less concerned with the industrial contexts in which Pressburger's synopsis is developed, his analysis of the thematic preoccupations of *The Golden Years* looks to emphasise Pressburger's talents as a screenwriter, and how the project would have fit into Powell and Pressburger's canon of films if it had been produced. Hutchings and Spicer, however, posit that the most comprehensive way to examine an unmade screenplay is through acknowledging its industrial contexts, and the relation of the screenwriter and screenwriting process to the unmade project as a whole. Whilst Moor's examination of *The Golden Years* is undoubtedly instructive in how it uses the unmade project to grant a primacy to the role of the screenwriter that is often

missing in works on Powell and Pressburger, this thesis will primarily utilise the methodology put forward by Hutchings and Spicer. As such, the screenplays utilised within this study will be contextualised within the industrial context of Hammer at the time of its development. This will include examining the writer's role in the production process, their relationship to other collaborators such as producers, and the project's relation to other Hammer projects (made or unmade) at the time. Perhaps the biggest gap within these studies, which will be filled by the thesis, is that they are limited to focusing on only one unmade project. This thesis will use unmade projects within an industrial study of Hammer that spans over 40 years, and as such changes as to what kind of projects Hammer was developing and who had been commissioned to write them will all be discussed, as well as the company's varying financial and distribution strategies necessitated by a changing film industry.

Director Studies

Whilst work on unmade films remains relatively scarce, one of the more common methodologies is situating an unmade project into the canon of a prominent director. Within these works, unmade films are often used as case studies to cement thematic preoccupations already noted in the director's established works, or instead to situate them historically in the director's filmography.

Robert Carringer's *The Making of Citizen Kane* (1985) briefly examines Orson Welles' ill-fated *Heart of Darkness* project, and situates it as a key factor in the development of *Citizen Kane* (Welles 1942). 'Welles was engaged [by RKO Studios] to produce, direct, write, and act in two feature films' (Carringer 1985: 1), the first of which was to be *Heart of Darkness*. Carringer dedicates the first chapter of the book to the production history of *Heart of Darkness*, noting that the tortured production process and eventual failure to complete the film led to such 'an atmosphere of extreme urgency that the idea for *Citizen Kane* came into being' (Carringer 1985:1). The chapters within *The Making of Citizen Kane* go through *Citizen Kane*'s production process methodologically. Chapters 2 and 3 cover 'Scripting' (Carringer 1985: 16-36) and 'Art Direction' (36-67), and Chapter 4, 5 and 6 cover 'Cinematography' (67-87), 'Postproduction and Release' (87-122) and 'Collaboration and *The Magnificent Ambersons*' (122-137). As such, Carringer uses the unmade project not to foreground

Heart of Darkness' production process, but as a literal step on the production path of *Citizen Kane*. Here it is not the unmade film itself that is of primary importance, but how it relates to the completed film.

One of the key similarities between this thesis and Carringer's study is the use of primary materials to provide historical and industrial context, with Carringer relying on an interview with Welles and pre-production materials such as concept art. An interesting point of departure however is Carringer's decision to focus on Welles' plan to shoot the entirety of *Heart of Darkness* through a point-of-view shot (Carringer 1985: 8). Carringer focuses on this specifically as a key reason the film was never produced, as Welles' insistence on the use of this device led to myriad technical problems in pre-production and an inflation of the budget, a key factor in the project stalling. By focusing on the technical and directorial choices Welles made on the failed film, Carringer is able to study *Heart of Darkness* in a more traditional framework of textual analysis. The tangibility of this point-of-view shot (despite never being utilised) allows the analysis to offer technical insights, such as issues with camera movements, often not available in the study of unmade films. Despite this significantly different approach to my own study, Carringer's contextualising of *Heart of Darkness* as a fundamental step in the production of *Citizen Kane* proves useful in demonstrating the significant impact unmade films can have on a production. Whilst some could see the inherent failure of unmade films to make it to the screen as a justification for a lack of academic recognition, projects like Welles' *Heart of Darkness* show the tangible effect these projects can have on directors and their most famous works. The attempt to demonstrate that unmade films must be understood within the wider context of their production and the subsequent impact their failure had on those involved is a key tenant of the thesis, and Carringer's chapter on *Heart of Darkness* ably demonstrates this approach.

Perhaps the most detailed example of an unmade film contextualised within the works of a well-known director is found in Alison Castle's *Stanley Kubrick's Napoleon: The Greatest Movie Never Made* (2009a). Like Welles, Stanley Kubrick has long been a fascination for film scholars, with Kubrick studies being a defined field in its own right. With only thirteen feature films produced, Kubrick's unmade projects far outnumber those he completed (Ulvieri 2017: 95-115), and Castle focuses on perhaps his most famous unmade project, *Napoleon*. Castles' study is notable as one of the most

comprehensive and significant examples of the chronicling of a single unmade film through the use of primary sources. The layout of the work in itself is impressive, featuring one large hollowed-out book as a casing, which then contains nine other separate books chronicling each individual aspect of the unmade film (not dissimilar to *The Making of Citizen Kane*), and the final draft of the script. The books are titled *Notes* (2009b), *Text* (2009c), *Reference* (2009d), *Script* (2009e), *Production* (2009f), *Correspondence* (2009g), *Chronology* (2009h), *Costumes* (2009i), *Location Scouting* (2009j), *Picture File* (2009k) and *Main Book* (2009l) (the casing).

Each book, with the exception of the *Main Book* and *Text*, contains photographs or copies of documents relating to each individual section. Castle outlines a brief introduction in each volume to make clear where the material is from, for example remarking in the introductory paragraph of *Notes* that ‘Kubrick was a prolific note-taker and doodler... therein is a selection of some of the most interesting examples of his note taking’ (2009b: 1). Yet other than these brief introductions, very little original written text is featured in the compendium. Instead the volumes rely primarily on the copies of correspondence and photographs collected from the Kubrick Archive, with a wealth of information for the reader to examine due to Kubrick’s meticulous filing and documenting. Even in *Text*, the one volume not entirely dedicated to primary data from the Kubrick Archives, the focus is more on the quantifiable analyses of Kubrick’s Napoleon files. For example, Jan Harlan examines ‘some of the key events that Kubrick found so compelling in his quest to flesh out the character of Napoleon’ (Harlan 2009: 16), and Geoffrey Ellis provides a chapter annotating Kubrick’s treatment, with both chapters focusing more squarely on the archival materials than the screenplay itself. The closest the book gets to a textual analysis is in Ellis’ third chapter in *Text*, entitled ‘Stanley Kubrick’s Napoleon: A Historian’s Critique of The Screenplay’ (Ellis 2009: 235-251), which attempts to determine the degree of historical accuracy featured within the screenplay.

Perhaps the biggest methodological decision taken by Castle in the book is to attempt to present these primary materials as objectively as possible. Castle notes in her introductory chapter of *Text* that her primary task when making these volumes was ‘to find a way to portray Kubrick’s project and its wealth of research material without betraying his intentions’ (Castle 2009c: 9). By showing these documents and

photographs with minimal analysis or context outside of Kubrick and the *Napoleon* project, Castle presents the materials as objectively as possible, stressing this with the final line of her introductory chapter: ‘Now dear reader, your present task is to decipher all these various artefacts as you please, and I hope you attack it with gusto’ (Castle 2009c: 10). However, the notion of objectivity is problematic given the primacy of the archival material presented. Whilst Castle refrains from interpreting or analysing the archival documentation explicitly, the primary sources that have been presented in the book have been carefully curated, and as such, even without analysis or interpretation, the choice of the materials that are used to present this history of Kubrick’s *Napoleon* is in itself a subjective choice by the author. Whilst Castle’s study is instructive in displaying the potential wealth of primary sources available in archives on unmade films, this thesis does not look to present the primary materials used within it in such a way. Instead they will be analysed and interpreted in relation to both the wider film industry and Hammer’s own production context at the time of the project’s development.

The examples of Carringer and Castle are similar to the extent that they both look to contextualise a prominent unmade project within an established director’s filmography, and as a result foreground the sheer amount of time and effort that directors such as Kubrick and Welles’ expended on ultimately unmade projects. However, other methodological approaches to unmade films can still centre on the director, but examine the relationships and personalities of the people involved as opposed to the unmade project itself. Harry Waldman argues in his book *Scenes Unseen: Unreleased and Uncompleted Films from the World’s Master Filmmakers* (1991), that ‘people’s failures often contain stories more compelling than their successes’ (1991: 2); it is these stories that are often detailed in works on unmade films in order to gain new understandings of the film industry itself. Waldman’s approach is discussed in Dan North’s introduction to his own edited collection *Sights Unseen: Unfinished British Films* (2008), currently the only scholarly edited collection on unmade films. North notes how by focusing on personalities and relationships, Waldman’s book ‘clearly relished the opportunity to agglomerate a store of scandal gossip and conflict’ (2008: 1). North also separately admits that ‘it seems strange that such an efficient, highly evolved studio system should ever have faltered’ (North 2008:

1). Therefore, the documentation of these failures behind the scenes allow us to see how this supposed monolithic system can be undone by the individuals within it, whilst also offering insights into why so many films within the industry remained unproduced. This is particularly pertinent to this thesis, which acknowledges wider industry factors as key reasons why many of the case studies remained unproduced, but also the significance of internal disputes within Hammer. This is perhaps most notable in Chapter 4, which details the differences of approach between managing director Michael Carreras and screenwriter Don Houghton to the treatment of *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*, and Chapter 5, which sees significant disagreements between Michael Carreras and *Nessie's* screenwriter Bryan Forbes which indefinitely delay the development of the project.

One example of this particular methodology appears in Raymond Armstrong's chapter of *Sights Unseen* (North 2008), entitled "'To Get Things Done...' Jarman, Bowie and Neutron" (105-120). The chapter charts the efforts of Derek Jarman to direct and produce the dystopian science fiction film *Neutron* in the early 1980s with musician David Bowie in the lead role. The chapter uses a variety of secondary sources, primarily utilising a published book of Jarman's scripts entitled *Up in the Air: Collected Film Scripts* (Jarman 1996). Although Armstrong uses the screenplay to offer a brief synopsis of the plot and characters of *Neutron*, the focal point of the chapter is undoubtedly on the relationship between Jarman and Bowie and, as a result, relies on first-hand accounts and anecdotes found primarily in autobiographical books by Jarman.

The chapter first notes the suitability of the project in relation to Bowie, by charting his fixation with science-fiction elements both in his music (with songs such as 'Space Oddity' (1969)) and his filmography (playing the lead role in Nicolas Roeg's 1976 film *The Man Who Fell to Earth*). After examining both the director and the star in relation to the project, Armstrong cites an incident involving Bowie being worried Jarman was possibly 'a practitioner of the black arts' (Armstrong 2008: 116) as the critical factor in the deterioration of Bowie and Jarman's working relationship. The chapter accentuates how productions can be slowed by something as small as a disagreement between two people, and the significance of personalities to the production of a film. This example also draws attention to the authorial choices of Jarman, with the very fact he was hoping to produce a science-fiction film a revelatory detail not reflected in an examination of only his produced films. Perhaps most

importantly for this thesis, this particularly director-focused methodology does not undervalue the collaborative aspect of filmmaking, or suggest that the director is the most central component of any project. Instead, by highlighting how a project can become waylaid through collaborator's relationships, it foregrounds the complexity of film production, and why so many potential projects remain unmade.

Armstrong's chapter foregrounds how a director-focused work with an unmade case study at its centre can problematise the notion of the director as the most vital component of a project, and this is also apparent in other study of unmade films. Peter Krämer's article 'Adaptation as Exploration: Stanley Kubrick, Literature and *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence*' (2016: 372-382), focuses on the protracted production of Steven Spielberg's *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence* (2001). The project began under Stanley Kubrick, who acquired the film rights to Brian Aldiss' book *Supertoys Last All Summer Long* (1969) 'November 1982...[and] spent much of the next fifteen years developing the incidents and themes of 'Supertoys' into various unusually long movie treatments' (Krämer 2016: 372). However, after Kubrick's death in 1999, the project was taken over by Kubrick's friend Steven Spielberg and was released under the title *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence* in 2001.

Similarly to Murray's use of a 'phantom adaptation' to self-reflexively examine methodological practices, Krämer discusses the ways in which this project could be analysed and concedes that in a strict sense, it is possible to 'understand *A.I.* as an adaptation of 'Supertoys'' (Krämer 2016: 373), and therefore one could utilise a methodology which would 'compare source text and adaptation (which elements of the short story were transferred into the film, which ones were changed or dropped)' (Krämer 2016: 373). However, instead Krämer outlines a different methodology - 'rather than focusing on a comparison between source text and end product I want to examine the process of adapting (or developing) the source text into different versions of a movie treatment (or script)' (Krämer 2016: 373). As such, Krämer avoids an analysis of the completed film, instead choosing to examine Kubrick's collaborative relationship with Aldiss and Spielberg. This study therefore fits the criteria of a director-focused study of an unmade project, as it centres on the development of a project by its would-be director that was never completed. However, a version of the film was eventually produced, and therefore Krämer's analysis of the original project's

development and its eventual stewardship by Spielberg to the screen foregrounds the complexity of assigning authorial ownership solely to a film's director. Krämer's article is not only useful to this thesis through its self-reflexive discussion on the benefits of unmade adaptations, but how it underlines the process of production, and the variety of crucial roles within it.

What these examples demonstrate is that, whilst even though some work on unmade projects looks to focus solely on the director as an authorial presence, many of these studies use the director as a gateway into an analysis of the collaborative efforts of film production. Acknowledging unmade projects as productions that take huge creative and financial effort to develop, as well as huge amounts of time, demonstrates how crucial they can be in offering us a more detailed examination of the film industry as a whole. In a 2014 blog post entitled 'Women Directors and Lost Projects', Shelley Cobb notes how examining these projects can also illuminate marginalised figures in the industry, specifically female directors. Cobb notes that during research for her book *Adaptation, Authorship, and Contemporary Women* (2015), she became fascinated by the long gaps that seem too often occur between films for female directors. Cobb uses Lynne Ramsey and Jocelyn Moorhouse as key examples, with Ramsey's third feature released nearly ten years after her second, and Moorhouse not directing a feature film until 18 years after her first, *A Thousand Acres* (1997). Cobb notes that 'it is these long years between feature films that I have been pondering, wondering how to write about them' (Cobb 2014). During this time both directors had films in development (notably Moorhouse worked on the previously mentioned *Eucalyptus*), but none were produced, and Cobb's suggests that these projects are 'intriguing for their gendered power battles and their stand-offs over scripts' (Cobb 2014). Cobb's acknowledges that 'just writing about the films women filmmakers do make leaves out whole portions of women's film history' (Cobb 2014). Unmade films can therefore be used to illuminate production histories that otherwise would not be told. This, as Cobb rightly argues, could foreground the marginalised role of women filmmakers, as well as also illuminate key production roles crucial to the filmmaking process which are often neglected or devalued within film history.

Producer Studies

In the opening paragraphs of his chapter ‘The Author as Author: Restoring the Screenwriter to British Film History’ in *The New Film History* (2007: 89-103), Andrew Spicer notes that one of the ‘most deleterious effects of the *auteur* theory’s cult of the director as the sole creative force within film-making has been to obscure the contribution of others involved in the production process’ (Spicer 2007: 89). Spicer’s main argument within the chapter is that in order to highlight the ‘essentially collaborative nature of film-making’, one must focus ‘on the film-making process, from initial idea through to marketing and promotion’ (Spicer 2007: 89). Spicer elaborates further in an article for the *New Review of Film and Television Studies* entitled ‘Creativity and commerce: Michael Klinger and new film history’ (2010: 297-314), where he notes that a study of the producer is not only valuable in foregrounding one role within the production of a film, but that

[...] the producer’s role is intermediary: he, occasionally she, mediates between the creative worlds of writers, directors, stars and cinematographers and the world of finance and business deals, thus encouraging a focus on the essentially collaborative and commercial nature of (feature) film-making and its relationship to social and cultural changes (Spicer 2010: 299).

This focus on the producer as a way of emphasising the collaborative nature of film development can draw attention away from studies which focus solely on the actual making of a film (where, as Spicer correctly points out, studies often focus disproportionately on the director) and towards industrial studies that examine the variety of crucial roles in film production. It is here where the benefits of utilising unmade films as case studies within producer studies becomes clear, as these projects necessitate a detailed look at the pre-production process, due to the fact that no actual film is ever produced. As a result, producer studies that utilise unmade films further draw attention away from the filmmaking process and towards that of a film’s development, emphasising films’ collaborative nature and emphasising oft-neglected roles such as the producer and screenwriter.

Despite the methodological benefits of centring a study around the role of the producer, the role has been significantly undervalued within many academic works, as rightly identified by Spicer and A.T McKenna’s *The Man Who Got Carter: Michael Klinger, Independent Production and the British Film Industry 1960- 1980* (2013). Spicer and McKenna go on to note that the lack of work on the role of producer is due

to the fact that, unlike a director's work, the producer's role is 'invisible' (2013: 7), and thus the challenge is to 'render that art visible by a detailed examination of the intricacies of a film's genesis, production and promotion' (Spicer and McKenna 2013: 7). As a result, producer studies are far less common than studies of notable directors, and work on producers that incorporates unmade films as case studies are even scarcer. *The Man Who Got Carter* is therefore extremely pertinent to the methodology of this thesis, as it not only examines production processes in Britain around the same period of this study, but also contextualises some of Klinger's unmade projects as well.

The Man Who Got Carter is an examination of the career of producer Michael Klinger and principally utilises primary documentation from the Michael Klinger Papers held at the University of the West of England. The study focuses on Klinger's career from his formation of Compton films with Tony Tenser in 1961, until his death in 1989. Towards the end of the study, Spicer and McKenna note the final decades of Klinger's career 'although resulting in very few feature films, is a story of almost undiminished energy' (Spicer and McKenna 2013:191). Like Hammer, Klinger found the changing industry in the late 1970s a hostile place for an independent British producer. However, Spicer and McKenna account for the lack of the producer's produced films in this period by focusing on a deal with Rank, that, despite resulting in no films being produced, was significant for Klinger. Chapter 8 of the book, 'A Rank Deal' (Spicer and McKenna 2013:151-171), details Klinger's move away from a strategy focusing on picture-by-picture finance, and towards trying to secure a package deal for four films with Rank, namely *The Chilian Club*, *Eagle in the Sky*, *The Limey* and *The Green Beach*. Spicer and McKenna analyse this arrangement's eventual failure as a key juncture in Klinger's producing career, noting that 'the collapse of the deal severely compromised his ability to mount large-scale productions and his [Klinger] status as a force to be reckoned with in British film production' (Spicer and McKenna 2013: 171). Despite these projects never making it into production, they are crucial to a history of Klinger as they show the damaging lasting effects their failure had on his producing career, and a key change in strategy for Klinger and his production methods. His deliberate move away from the tenuous nature of picture-by-picture deals and, theoretically, towards a more long-term approach in the form of a multi-film package deal is significant, and can only be discussed in relation to these unmade projects. This

is a key similarity with this study, which examines Hammer's changes in production strategies that would not be discernible without foregrounding unproduced projects. This is notable in Chapter 5, which discusses Michael Carreras' deliberate move away from a strategy that necessitated American finance, and towards a more internationalised, piecemeal approach to financing.

In a chapter for the forthcoming edited collection *Shadow Cinema: The Historical and Production Contexts of Unmade Films* (Eldridge, Fenwick and Foster 2020), entitled 'Parting the Iron Curtain: Michael Klinger's Attempt to Make *A Man and a Half*', Spicer also examines another unmade Klinger project, *A Man and a Half*. Spicer suggests that the role of the producer is central to the examination of unmade films, due to their place as 'the pivotal point in a highly volatile industry whose activities encompass the entire production process from genesis to exhibition' (Spicer 2020). The chapter examines the development of *A Man and a Half* from 1968 through to Klinger's death in 1989, and one can identify parallels between the struggles of Klinger and Hammer in this period. One clear similarity is the reliance on American support for projects, which became extremely difficult to secure as the 1970s progressed. Spicer notes that Klinger's 'efforts were frustrated by the general withdrawal of American capital that had underpinned British production for a decade, a process which neither he, nor any other individual producer could influence' (Spicer 2020). The impact this withdrawal of American finance had on Hammer was seismic, and will be a central part of Chapters 4 and 5.

Prior to these studies on Klinger, Spicer analysed how unmade films can be used to examine a producer's work in more detail in his chapter for Dan North's edited collection *Sights Unseen* entitled 'Missing Boxes: The Unmade Films of Sydney Box, 1940-1967' (87-105). Spicer utilises four unmade case studies to underline 'the broader constraints and pressures under which producers were working in a very volatile period of British cinema history' (Spicer 2008: 87). In the chapter's conclusion, Spicer notes that unmade films are vital to any examination of a producer's career 'as they show the limits of what was possible at any given moment and are also very revealing about his or her ambitions' (Spicer 2008: 102). I would argue that this is a central component of this study as well, with later chapters in particular (such as Chapter 5 and Chapter 6), examining how Hammer struggled to alter their production strategies after the

withdrawal of American finance, and the limitations of an independent British production company relying so heavily on American finance and distribution.

Outside of Spicer and McKenna, very few pieces of academic work have been done on the producer and unmade films. Perhaps the most recent published study of a producer and their unmade work is Peter Krämer's article 'An Angel in Hell: Artur Brauner and the Attempt to Make a German Oskar-Schindler-Biopic' (2018: 45-80). Like Spicer and McKenna, Krämer utilises the unmade project to emphasise the truly collaborative nature of film production, noting that the article's primary aim is

to outline the enormous variety and complexity of Brauner's engagement with the Schindler project, his involvement in script development, his search for personnel (often negotiating simultaneously with several candidates for the same job) and for money, his dealings with other rather unreliable, even actively hostile business partners and funding bodies (Krämer 2018: 48).

After producing a detailed account of the project, Krämer references Spielberg's *Schindler's List* (1993), and the amount of academic work that has been published on the film. In doing so Krämer stresses that despite both being projects based on the same person, the literature on Spielberg's film 'rarely comments on the fact that from 1950s onwards there had been several unsuccessful attempts, first in the United States and then in Germany, to make a biopic about Oskar Schindler' (Krämer 2018: 70).

As noted earlier in this section, producer studies that utilise unmade films have received relatively little academic attention. Yet it is arguably within producer studies that unmade films can be best utilised, demonstrating the creative labour and collaborative effort of the development process, and the intricacies involved in film production. This study will therefore look to demonstrate how utilising unmade films can illuminate the role of the producer (such as in the case of James and Michael Carreras) and their collaborators, and give us a comprehensive production history of Hammer as a studio.

Hammer Films

Hammer as a company has been extensively documented elsewhere: through studies on the British gothic tradition (Forshaw 2013, Rigby 2002, Hutchings 1993, Pirie 1973); as a key case study in broader works on British cinema and genre (Hunter 2013, Walker

2016, Harper and Porter 2003); and through books dedicated solely to a chronological examination of the company's history (Hearn and Barnes 2007, Meikle 2009, Hearn 2011, Kinsey 2002, Kinsey 2007). A common thread within works on Hammer is to contextualise the company in relation to its perceived Britishness both domestically and overseas, apparent in texts such as Peter Hutchings' *Hammer and Beyond: The British Horror Film* (1993), Sarah Street's *Transatlantic Crossings: British Feature Films in the USA* (2002) and Jonathan Rigby's *English Gothic: A Century of Horror Cinema* (2002). David Pirie's *A Heritage of Horror* in 1973, revised and updated as *A New Heritage of Horror* in 2008, is also a crucial text for many studies of Hammer. Pirie called for a 'detailed revaluation of British cinema' (Pirie 2008: xiv), suggesting that these studies were lacking due to 'America and certain other countries hav[ing] appeared much richer hunting-ground for serious film critics; for another, the films on which to base such a study have not always been forthcoming' (Pirie 2008: xiv). Pirie specifically focuses on the British horror film, an area he posits is 'a significant major casualty of the refusal to take commercial English films seriously' (Pirie 2008: xiv). Pirie looks to 'locate horror cinema within a British gothic tradition' (Hutchings 1993: 4), underlining the intrinsic links Britain has with the horror genre - '[on] commercial, historical and artistic grounds...the horror genre... remains the only staple cinematic myth which Britain can properly claim its own' (Pirie 2008: xv). Of primary importance to Pirie in this analysis is Hammer Films. He outlines the sparse history of horror cinema in Britain pre-1950 (as does chapter 3 of this study), and provides a history of Hammer's development as a studio. Pirie's methodological approach is a broad one, with archival materials from the BBFC placed aside detailed textual analysis, and the depth of this study, as well as its status as one of the first in a now well-established field, has been extremely influential.

Jonathan Rigby positions Pirie's book as a 'pioneering' (Rigby 2002: 10) text, referencing Pirie's assertion that the horror genre's origins are inherently linked to Britain. Rigby goes on to outline the history of gothic fiction within Britain, as well as its definable traits in his introductory chapter 'British Horror in Embryo' (2002: 10-37). Here he notes that 'the rash of Gothic fictions which proliferated between 1765 and 1820 - with further eruptions throughout the Victorian era... established an iconography which is still familiar to us through the cinema' (Rigby 2002: 11). For Rigby, this

iconography includes ‘dank crypts, rugged landscapes and forbidding castles populated by persecuted heroines, Satanic villains, madmen, fatal women, vampires, doppelgangers and werewolves’ (Rigby 2002: 11). He then pursues a chronological framework from the silent era to the beginning of the 21st century, with the book ‘structured around a core selection of 100 films’ (Rigby 2002:10). Like Pirie, despite being a broader study of the genre, Hammer is prevalent throughout the book due to the ‘global impact’ (Rigby 2002: 10) of the company’s gothic horrors. However, unlike Pirie, Rigby focuses more on a textual analysis of the films themselves, offering some historical context, but concerning himself more with what he sees as the qualities or failures of the films themselves.

In *British Gothic Cinema* (2013), Forshaw also utilises well-known gothic iconography and tropes to define British gothic cinema. Forshaw, like Rigby, presents a chronological study of gothic cinema, beginning with the gothics’ origins in literature through to contemporary cinema. Even more so than Rigby, he foregrounds textual analysis of individual films over the production contexts or archival materials. The key argument presented by Forshaw is that the gothic genre has been dramatically altered since its original inception, with the primary thesis of the book being ‘to examine whether the Gothic impulse is now a mongrelised, cheapened form or a thoroughgoing re-invention of still potent tropes’ (Forshaw 2013: 2). The centrality of Hammer Films to this study is apparent in the first page of the book, where he posits a narrower version of this central question, asking whether Terrence Fisher’s *Dracula: Prince of Darkness* (1966)

[...] represents the final popular debasement of the gothic form inaugurated by such writers as Stoker and Coleridge, or is it a transmuting of the Gothic impulse into something very different from the original expressions of the form, but equally worthy of consideration (Forshaw 2013: 1).

Although significantly different methodologically speaking, these books are useful to my study not only for cross-referencing historical details on Hammer and its filmography, but also in how they explore Hammer in the context of British cinema. This is perhaps, in relation to this study, most significantly explored in Peter Hutchings’ *Hammer and Beyond: The British Horror Film*. As the title suggests, Hammer is contextualised within the study in relation to its perceived Britishness, with Hutchings

outlining a broader focus on the historical and industrial contexts of these gothic horror films:

In order to ascertain the importance and the merit of British horror, as well as the reasons for Hammer's dominance, we also need to recognise that both creators and audiences exist within and in relation to a particular historical context' (1993: 1).

Despite a chronological structure and a focus on the wider contexts these films were produced in, Hutchings also relies on a detailed textual analysis of some of Hammer's key films throughout the book. This textual examination extends to a psychoanalytic study of Hammer's gothic films. One notable example is in Chapter 3 of *Hammer and Beyond* (54-98), where Hutchings discusses the 'distinctively oedipal qualities of Hammer's conceptualisation of male identity' (Hutchings 1993: 71). Using Hammer's late 1950s gothics, such as *Dracula* and *The Mummy* (Fisher 1959), Hutchings surmises that many of its male characters, such as Stephen Banning and Jonathan Harker, 'go in fear of a tyrannical father figure (who does not necessarily have to be present for his baleful influence to be felt)' (Hutchings 1993: 71).

The merits of utilising a variety of methodologies within one study was considered in relation to the notion of consilience in the previous chapter, but Hutchings also acknowledges this necessity himself, noting that anyone committed to a study of these horror films must

[...] be aware of how they fit into and sometimes diverge from the characteristic practices and concerns of British cinema at the time of their production. Only in this way can a sense be gained both of their social resonance and their cinematic specificity (Hutchings 1993: 2).

Of particular importance to Hutchings is how contemporary critics at the time reacted to the release of Hammer's films. Hutchings suggests that the press reviews and books that appeared within the period of the late 1950s through to the early 1970s form 'a significant part of the cultural climate within which British horror was created and developed, and for that reason alone are relevant to a contextual understanding of the genre' (1993: 3). Hutchings' seminal work draws on these disparate methodologies to produce a detailed examination of the critical reception of these films, the resulting

impact this had on Hammer, and Hammer's (and the British horror film in general) importance within a contemporary national context.

This idea, of Hammer's intrinsic link to the British gothic tradition, is a focal point of all of the previously mentioned texts, and is undoubtedly a necessary and credible area of study. However, of similar importance is Hammer's status as a recognisably British company which focused its production and finance strategy primarily on international markets. This fascinating contrast will be key throughout this study, as Hammer's relationship with international markets, and how it alters its strategies in the 1970s in the face of waning American interest, will be crucial to understanding the context surrounding many of its unmade works.

The relationship between the British and American film industry is examined throughout many texts, notably in Sarah Street's *Transatlantic Crossings: British Feature Films in the USA*. The book covers the marketing and reception of British films across the Atlantic, challenging assumptions 'that British films made little headway, largely because of Hollywood's domination of the home market' (Street 2002: 1). Instead, Street posits that her study demonstrates that 'when British films were given a chance many were successful despite their apparent "Britishness"' (Street 2002: 2). The book is made even more pertinent to the study through Street's examination of the marketing and distribution practices of Hammer's *The Curse of Frankenstein* and *Dracula*. Street provides a detailed study of the marketing campaign of both films within the United States, concluding that it 'clearly contributed to the film's box-office success' (Street 2002: 157). Both campaigns emphasised the horrific aspects of the films, utilising 'exploitation stunts' (Street 2002: 158) to create word-of-mouth around the film. Street notes that *The Curse of Frankenstein* 'was the first British film to take advantage of the changing nature of the cinema audience, exploiting its appeal to the young people who frequented drive-ins theatres' (Street 2002: 158).

Similarly, Matthew Jones examines the marketing and reception of American Science Fiction films in Britain in *Science Fiction Cinema and 1950s Britain: Recontextualizing Cultural Anxiety* (2018). Jones posits that 'the reception of Hollywood cinema in post-war Britain raises the possibility that Britons found meaning in 1950s science fiction's nuclear creatures that was not necessarily available to audiences in the United States' (Jones 2018: 2). By examining closely the relationship

between the two film industries and the films' appeal outside of domestic markets, Jones argues for a more complex and wider reading of these films in relation to the contexts of their reception. Jones uses Hammer as a case study within the monograph as it was one of the few British companies producing science fiction films at the time. This use of Hammer as a small case study in a broader work is evidenced in several pieces of literature. Notably, Hammer is often cited in works chronicling the history of British cinema. For example, in Justine Ashby and Andrew Higson's *British Cinema, Past and Present* (2000), Marcia Landy's 'The Other Side of Paradise: British Cinema from an American Perspective' (63-80) and Peter Hutchings' 'Authorship and British Cinema: The case of Roy Ward Baker' (166-179) both use Hammer as a central case study. The company also plays a significant role in Sarah Street's *British National Cinema* (2009), Sue Harper and Vincent Porter's *British Cinema of the 1950s* (2003) and Jim Leach's *British Film* (2004). Harper and Porter's book has a dedicated chapter on Hammer which is crucial to this study's contextualisation of Hammer's fledging attempts to secure American finance, detailed in Chapter 3. In relation to Harper and Porter's broader arguments, Hammer's significance to their study of 1950s British Cinema is through Hammer's unusually varied fortunes in this period, with Harper and Porter noting that the company 'developed from an undistinguished, ramshackle outfit to an efficient, international company which made important innovations in style and subject matter' (Harper and Porter 2003: 151). It is how Hammer developed within this period that is of interest to the authors, as it involves factors which are relevant to the broader study of the decade, such as American and British co-productions and censorship. Hammer therefore acts as a cogent case study which envelops wider industrial factors of the time, allowing a discussion of industry-wide developments through the study of only one independent British studio.

As well as these wider histories of British cinema, work on Hammer has appeared across studies of genre outside of gothic horror. As noted previously, Hammer features in Jones' examination of the science fiction film, and the company also plays a prominent role in I.Q. Hunter's *British Trash Cinema* (2013) and *Cult Film as a Guide to Life: Fandom, Adaptation and Identity* (2016). Hammer's crime thrillers are also discussed within Steve Chibnall and Robert Murphy's edited collection *British Crime*

Cinema (1999), most notably in Spicer's chapter 'The Emergence of the British Tough Guy: Stanley Baker, Masculinity and the Crime Thriller' (81-93).

All of the books mentioned within this section have contextualised Hammer within wider studies, such as through British cinema itself, genre, or the films' overseas reception. However, as noted within the introduction, there are key non-academic texts which focus solely on Hammer: namely, books by Wayne Kinsey, Marcus Hearn and Denis Meikle. Five books in particular by these writers - *Hammer: The Bray Studio Years* (Kinsey 2002), *Hammer: The Elstree Years* (Kinsey 2007), *A History of Horrors: The Rise and Fall of the House of Hammer* (Meikle 2009), *The Hammer Story: The Authorised History of Hammer Films* (Hearn and Barnes 2007) and *The Hammer Vault* (Hearn 2011) - will act as key sources in the historical overview of Hammer in the forthcoming chapters. These are not academic texts, but do feature detailed primary sources, such as archival research and interviews, providing detailed accounts of Hammer Films under James and Michael Carreras. However, a problem with this approach is the lack of a methodological shift when Hammer's filmography becomes more and more infrequent in the late 1970s. Between 1950 and 1959, Hammer produced 61 feature films: 1960 and 1969 saw Hammer produce 54; and between 1970 and 1979, this figure fell dramatically to 33. Yet more telling is the fact that 31 of those films were produced before 1975, with only *To The Devil a Daughter* (Sykes 1976) and *The Lady Vanishes* (Page 1979) produced between 1975 and 1979. None of the above publications alter their methodologies when discussing the final years of Hammer under Carreras, and although most do mention some of Hammer's unmade projects, they are often removed from the context of the chronological examination of Hammer. For example, in Hearn's *The Hammer Vault* he presents a film-by-film chronological account of Hammer, but the unmade films of Hammer appear grouped together in a six-page spread on page 160 to 165, and the projects mentioned range from the year 1958 to 1979. As a result, these unmade projects are removed from their production context and ultimately put in a vacuum, with no contextualised analysis of how they affected Hammer at the time they were proposed, or what position Hammer were in at the time of their development.

Like the aforementioned books, this study's research parameters focus primarily on Hammer's horror output. This is so that the key difference foregrounded in this

alternate history of Hammer is the significance of the unmade case studies, although it is acknowledged that there is a comparative dearth of research focusing on Hammer's work outside the horror genre. However, by focusing on the horror genre, this study will highlight how important the consideration of their unmade works is to understanding the impact and workings of the company and the wider film industry, and how a comprehensive company history cannot be provided by consideration of completed films alone.

Chapter 3: 1956-1963

The Birth of Hammer Horror: Subotsky's *Frankenstein* and Matheson's *The Night Creatures*

Introduction

The following chapters will detail the rise and fall of Hammer over a near forty-five-year period. This initial chapter will chart Hammer's most successful period, as it produced a number of financially profitable films and worked with nearly all of the Hollywood majors. The late 1950s saw Hammer cement its reputation as experts in the gothic genre, a reputation it would go on to cultivate over the next two decades. With this international success in the late 1950s, it is worth emphasising how Hammer became one of the most notable British film companies of the 20th century.

Exclusive Films was formed by Enrique Carreras and William Hinds in May 1935. Individually Carreras and Hinds brought a good deal of experience to the venture. Carreras had formerly run a successful chain of cinemas until 1935, and William Hinds, after a background in vaudeville and theatre (under the stage name Will Hammer), had registered his own film company, Hammer Films, in 1934. Both were savvy businessmen (with Hinds also being the owner of jewellers W.Hinds) but in 1937, only two years after the partnership, a slump in the British film industry saw Hammer Films go into liquidation.

Exclusive survived, and 1938 and 1939 saw the hiring of Enrique's son James and William's son Tony respectively. James Carreras and Tony Hinds would go on to be essential to Hammer's success, and will be key figures in my examination of Hammer, particularly in this chapter and Chapter 4. However, their duties at Hammer were put on hold due to the advent of the Second World War, in which both served. 1947 saw Hammer Films revived as a production arm of Exclusive, as Exclusive began to focus on low budget 'quota quickie' productions. By 1949, Hammer was an officially registered company, with Enrique and James Carreras, and William and Tony Hinds as joint directors, while James Carreras took overall charge of the fledging production arm. Enrique Carreras died on 15th October 1950, after which point William Hinds would

take a less active role in the company, leaving James Carreras and Tony Hinds to mould this new iteration of Hammer. This chapter will primarily examine the period of 1956-1963, as Hammer, under the stewardship of James Carreras and Tony Hinds, became renowned as specialists in the gothic horror genre. As this chapter charts the consolidation of this success, it differs considerably from the later chapters, which primarily focus on how Hammer tried to reverse the decline brought on by an ailing national film industry.

In order to gain insights into Hammer's success in the late 1950s and the ensuing decade, it is crucial to have an understanding of the company's relationship with the American film industry. As each chapter of this thesis will attest, Hammer's production strategies, from the late 1940s to the company's closure in 1979, all centre around American distribution and finance. It is therefore prudent at this stage to outline the industrial context of Anglo-American relations, and how Hammer operated in the period leading up to the late 1950s.

The immediate post-war period in Britain was marked by 'intense activity in UK film policy' (Magor and Schlesinger 2009: 302). The British government, in an attempt to 'vastly increase exports and reduce imports, used increased import taxes on American films as one of a number of such measures' (Kerrigan 2010: 66). This was known as the 'Dalton Duty' (after then Chancellor of the Exchequer Hugh Dalton), and would prove disastrous for Anglo-American industry relations, with Hollywood boycotting the British market (Kerrigan 2010: 66, Harper and Porter 2003: 114, Stubbs 2009: 2). The industry suffered, with Sarah Street noting that this crisis 'underlined the British film industry's structural weaknesses and vulnerable position in world markets' (Street 2002: 92). In 1950, this intense activity came to an end with the establishment of the British Film Fund, known as the Eady Levy. The Eady Levy required exhibitors to retain a proportion of the ticket price and give half of this sum to fund British film production (Fenwick 2017: 192, Magor and Schlesinger 2009: 302). Introduced as a voluntary scheme, the Eady Levy 'became compulsory under the 1957 Cinematograph Film Act and was administered by the British Film Fund Agency (BFFA) set up in that year' (Magor and Schlesinger 2009: 302). However, of note is the definition of a British film:

[...] the scheme made no distinction between the wholly British companies and the British subsidies which the Hollywood companies had previously

established to repatriate their blocked currency, and so British-registered runaway productions were able to qualify as British films (Stubbs 2009: 5).

These runaway productions came 'to dominate the production fund' (Stubbs 2009: 7), and as a result it became increasingly difficult to maintain a clear distinction between American runaway production and 'indigenous' British film-making (Stubbs 2009: 1). The Levy was not the only reason American production emigrated to Britain, with the exchange rate of the dollar meaning it was still cheaper to shoot in the UK (Fenwick 2017: 193, Magor and Schlesinger 2009: 302). However, the Levy was undeniably crucial to the British film industry at the time.

Whilst it was the Eady Levy in 1950 that heralded the resurgence of Anglo-American industrial relations, Hammer Films had secured a transatlantic partnership two years prior. In the late 1940s, Hammer was making finance and distribution deals on a film-by-film basis, and James Carreras looked to 'muster more reliable financial support' (Harper and Porter 2003: 141). This led to a deal between Hammer and the American production company Robert Lippert Productions in 1948, to produce B-pictures for the American market. This shift away from indigenous radio adaptations such as the *Dick Barton* trilogy (1948-1950) and towards transnational B-movies was taken because Hammer 'could supply at reasonable cost the kind of modest B-picture that was fast dying out in Hollywood due to rising costs and a shrinking market' (Eyles et al. 1994: 29). The relative success of the arrangement saw Lippert and Hammer sign a new five-year deal in 1950 (Harper and Porter 2003: 141).

Through this deal, Hammer and Lippert utilised the Eady Levy, with 'ensuing unremarkable second-feature fillers made by Hammer/Exclusive featur[ing] fading American stars such as Richard Carlson, Zachary Scott, Cesar Romero, Dan Duryea, Dane Clark, Richard Conte and John Ireland' (Springhall 2009: 15). The Lippert deal also meant that Hammer distributed twelve films to American cinemas a year, but perhaps more crucially ensured that Lippert 'would give substantial help in fine-tuning them for that market' (Harper and Porter 2003: 141). This help primarily came in post-production, with American editors ensuring the films appealed to American markets. Specifically, Harper and Porter note one instance where the editor Leon Basha was employed to make one of these co-productions - *Whispering Smith Hits London* (Searle 1952) - 'less Britishy' (Harper and Porter 2003: 142). The actual benefits of this 'fine-

tuning' is incalculable, but this early guidance in how best to break through into the lucrative American market was undoubtedly advantageous for Hammer, and was arguably a fundamental element in Hammer's later transatlantic success.

As the 1950s progressed, the company had been bolstered by the reception of its first X-rated film *The Quatermass Xperiment* (Guest 1955), an adaptation of Nigel Kneale's seminal BBC television series *The Quatermass Experiment* (Kneale 1953). Released in black and white, the film broke new ground for Hammer not just with its X-certificate, but as arguably the company's first foray into the horror genre. This was suggested by Denis Meikle, who notes that with the release of *The Quatermass Xperiment*, 'Hammer Horror also arrived on the scene' (2009: 20). In the following section of this chapter, I will briefly contextualise *The Quatermass Xperiment* as part of a fledgling British horror cycle. However, with its narrative focused on space exploration and an extra-terrestrial disease, the film is arguably more indebted to the science fiction genre. This is telling as, in the wake of the film's success, Hammer initially looked to emphasise elements of science-fiction in its upcoming X-rated films. Hammer produced *X the Unknown* (Norman 1956), a black and white science-fiction film notable for being the writing debut of Jimmy Sangster, and a direct sequel to *The Quatermass Xperiment*, *Quatermass 2* (Guest), was released in May 1957. It was a relative success, but was overshadowed by another Hammer release in May 1957, *The Curse of Frankenstein* (Fisher).

The Curse of Frankenstein was Hammer's first colour gothic horror, and the beginning of a longstanding cycle of such films. Its outstanding success would see Hammer produce six further instalments in the *Frankenstein* series (1957-1973). The success of *The Curse of Frankenstein* would have a monumental effect on the company, as they looked to immediately capitalise on its reception with an adaptation of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) in 1958, which produced eight sequels (1960-1974). *The Quatermass Xperiment* may have been crucial in gaining Hammer international success (and notoriety), but it was *The Curse of Frankenstein* that provided the template for the majority of Hammer's later gothic horror films.

However, whilst their production slate may indicate that Hammer transitioned naturally into the gothic horror cycle, one of the key notions put forward in this chapter is how crucial the pre-production development and immediate aftermath of *The Curse*

of *Frankenstein* was for Hammer. Using materials held at the Hammer Script Archive, the British Film Institute (BFI) Archive, the Warner Bros. Archive and the Margaret Herrick Library, this chapter will primarily use three key unmade projects at Hammer to demonstrate how different Hammer's trajectory during the production and immediately after the release of *The Curse of Frankenstein* could have been.

Firstly, I will examine the production context of *The Curse of Frankenstein* itself. Although the produced film had a script by Jimmy Sangster, Sangster's screenplay was not the beginning of the project at Hammer. The project was initially pitched to producer Elliot Hyman (whose involvement with Hammer will be discussed later in the chapter) by Milton Subotsky and Max Rosenberg. Subotsky and Rosenberg were two American producers who, fresh off their first feature film (1956's *Rock, Rock, Rock!* (Price)), were looking to produce a version of *Frankenstein* (1818) faithful to Shelley's original novel (Kinsey 2002: 50). This script was written by Subotsky, and after he and Rosenberg had pitched the script to Elliot Hyman, Hyman passed it on to James Carreras. Subotsky's script is held at the Warner Bros. Archive at the University of Southern California (USC) in Los Angeles, and not only offers a glimpse at an alternate version of arguably Hammer's most important film, but also, by examining its production and development, demonstrates how Hammer came to formulate their oft-replicated brand of gothic horror.

This section will also discuss the immediate plans for expansion Hammer had following *The Curse of Frankenstein*, notably their attempted *Frankenstein* television series, which was to be co-produced by Columbia. The project's development came at a key point for Hammer, as they looked to capitalise on the success of *The Curse of Frankenstein*. Their failure to parlay this accomplishment into a successful series stands as one of the few failures Hammer had in the immediate aftermath of *The Curse of Frankenstein*. Utilising materials held at the BFI Archive, specifically correspondence between Jimmy Sangster and Michael Carreras, I will chart the development and eventual failure of this series, and the consequences its failure had internally at Hammer.

The second section of this chapter will examine one of the best-known unmade projects in Hammer's history, Richard Matheson's screenplay *The Night Creatures*, based on his novel *I Am Legend* (1954). Hammer flew Matheson to London to adapt his

novel almost immediately after the release of *The Curse of Frankenstein*. As noted, Hammer's produced slate charts a seemingly coherent path to their status as specialists in the gothic horror genre, with *Dracula* (Fisher 1958) following only one year after *The Curse of Frankenstein*. However, *The Night Creatures* would have offered a strikingly different trajectory for the company. *I Am Legend* is a contemporary-set novel which sees the last man on Earth, Robert Neville, looking to find a cure for a worldwide epidemic, which has left the remnants of humanity as plague-ridden vampires. *The Night Creatures*, as one would expect from a self-adaptation, remained relatively faithful to its source, and Hammer were no doubt looking to capitalise on its new-found infamy as horror.

However, the project stalled due to the British Board of Film Censor's (BBFC) refusal to pass the screenplay. Hammer had encountered some difficulty with the censor in the past with its X-rated *The Quatermass Xperiment* and *The Curse of Frankenstein*, but for Hammer, the Board's refusal to pass the film was unprecedented. This decision came at a crucial time for Hammer. *The Night Creatures* was submitted simultaneously with the sequel to *The Curse of Frankenstein*, *The Revenge of Frankenstein* (Fisher 1958), and *Dracula* had been submitted only six weeks earlier. *The Night Creatures* therefore came at the exact same time as Hammer looked to cement their credentials in the field of gothic horror, and if it had been produced would have initiated a markedly different style of Hammer horror. Utilising the screenplay held at the Hammer Script Archive, and documentation held at the BBFC Archive and the Margaret Herrick Library, this section will offer a detailed analysis of how one of Hammer's most ambitious projects was curtailed and why, and examine what effect the screenplay remaining unproduced had on Hammer.

Assembling *Frankenstein*: Subotsky, Hammer and the Gothic Horror

1956 is arguably the most important year in Hammer's history. It saw the conclusion of a brief cycle of films, with *Quatermass 2* beginning shooting on the 21st May (Kinsey 2002: 49) heralding the end of Hammer's short-lived black and white, X-rated science-fiction cycle. It also saw the end of Hammer's longstanding deal with Robert Lippert Productions. Although the expiration of the Lippert deal in 1956 could be seen as potential crisis point for Hammer, its end actually proved to be remarkably fortuitous to

the company's later success. With the Lippert deal ending, James Carreras began looking for new partners, a task which seemingly complemented his management style. In his memoir, Hammer director Freddie Francis notes that:

Jimmy loved the business side, the wheeler-dealing and the glamor. He was a socialite and more interested in that and running The Variety Club of Great Britain than he was in film production. We rarely saw him during filming because I suspect he didn't really care what we were doing. As far as he was concerned, we could have been making furniture (Francis with Dalton 2013: 115).

The charitable organisations of The Variety Club of Great Britain and its international branch The Variety Club gave Carreras access to a huge number of society's most wealthy patrons, and he held a number of prominent positions in both branches, eventually serving for two terms as president of the Variety Club International from 1961 (Meikle 2009: 14). Carreras utilised his connection to the Variety Club to secure Hammer's next partnership. Through their mutual association of the Variety Club (Pirie 2008: 57, Kinsey 2002: 50), Carreras struck a deal with Eliot Hyman and Associated Artists Pictures. This deal benefitted Hammer almost immediately. When Hyman was pitched a new version of *Frankenstein* by the relatively inexperienced duo of Milton Subotsky and Max Rosenberg, he knew exactly which company to call.

At this stage it is important to note the state of British horror preceding Hammer's *The Curse of Frankenstein*, not only to emphasise how ground-breaking it was at the time, but also to account for the changes that followed its release. In *Hammer and Beyond*, Hutchings notes that, as the American horror cinema thrived in the 1930s, 'throughout this period British cinema was strikingly deficient in horror production' (Hutchings 1993: 24). This was in no small part due to the British Censor, and its distaste towards the formation of a British horror cinema. However, although the censor explicitly looked to dissuade the production of horror films, some of the methods that actually impeded British horror material over other national cinemas were far subtler. For example, as detailed in Guy Phelps *Film Censorship* (1975), the emergence of sound in the 1920s gave the censor significant difficulties, as the Board did not have the relevant sound equipment to watch the films. This led to a lasting tradition of scripts being sent to the censor before a production. As noted by Phelps:

This, of course, allowed the Board an even greater degree of control than it had previously enjoyed. It is easier to insist on alterations to a project that exists only on paper than demand cuts in a finished film representing huge financial investment (1975: 35).

Naturally, it was far easier for the British censor to procure scripts from British productions than international ones, 'thus penalizing the home industry at the expense of foreign productions' (Phelps 1975: 36). However, the primary reason horror production in the United Kingdom was curtailed was the censor's belief that the material would have a damaging impact on society. Discussing the 'H' certificate, put in place to designate films featuring horrific material in 1935 (1975: 36), then President of the Board Edward Shortt wrote:

Although a separate category has been established for these films, I am sorry to learn that they are on the increase, as I cannot believe that such films are wholesome, pandering as they do to the love of the morbid and horrible (cited in Phelps 1975: 36).

With this kind of rhetoric from the President of the British Board of Film Censor, it is clear that Phelps assertion of 'the censors' continuing belief in their role as protectors of public morality, as a buffer between the public and a rapacious industry' (Phelps 1975: 36) holds significant merit.

This is not to say that no British horror films were produced in this period. Two titans of the American Universal horror cycle, Bela Lugosi and Boris Karloff, emigrated to the UK for horror productions. Lugosi came to England for *The Mystery of the Mary Celeste* (Clift 1935), which is not a particularly notable film except for the fact it was produced by the first iteration of Hammer Films in 1935. Karloff returned to England (for the first time in 24 years (Rigby 2002: 18)) for a more auspicious production - *The Ghoul* (Hayes Hunter 1933). However, despite being a genuine British horror picture the film underperformed commercially and 'was considered a disappointment' (Rigby 2002: 20) on its release. Around the same period, actor Tod Slaughter starred in a number of British horror melodramas that are of note. David Pirie dismissed Slaughter's series of quota quickies as 'pretty unwatchable' (Pirie 2008: 14) and Slaughter's performance as 'even less filmic I think than Lugosi' (Pirie 2008: 13). However, Hutchings, although not examining Slaughter's films in detail, notes that they at least demonstrate that 'elements which would later be mobilised within a distinctive British

horror genre were already in existence in British Cinema before the war' (Hutchings 1993: 25). Although Slaughter's work contains fragments of a British horror cinema, Hutchings claims that Ealing Studios' *Dead of Night* (Cavalcanti, Crichton, Hamer and Dearden 1945) 'is the first important recognisably British horror film' (Hutchings 1993: 25). *Dead of Night* is an anthology film which sees architect Walter Craig (Mervyn Jones) arrive at a strangely familiar house party, leading several guests to confide their own strange (and supernatural) experiences. *Dead of Night* is perhaps primarily remembered for the section that sees ventriloquist Maxwell Frere (Michael Redgrave) growing increasingly paranoid and obsessed with his dummy Hugo. Forshaw notes that the 'subversive nature of this deeply creepy episode should not be underestimated, and the murderous, independently minded dummy at war with its putative master has been much imitated since' (Forshaw 2013: 107). *Dead of Night* is unquestionably a British horror film, but would prove to be an anomaly for Ealing and a 'false start for the horror genre in this country' (Hutchings 1993: 36). Hutchings himself attributes this to the inherent strangeness of *Dead of Night* as a film. Calling it 'one of the most formally aberrant films British cinema has ever produced', Hutchings suggests that the film was so anomalous that Ealing 'retreated from what in many ways was a complete dead end' (Hutchings 1993: 36). In the decade that followed *Dead of Night*, British horror production slowed to an almost complete stop.

The proceeding decade saw changes not only for Hammer, but for British cinema generally. The 1950s saw a financial crisis in British cinema, with 'declining admissions and the closing down of a large number of cinemas' (Hutchings 1993: 37). Hammer also found themselves in a period of transition in the mid-1950s. As noted previously Hammer's deal with Lippert was coming to an end, and 1954 saw the National Film Finance Corporation (NFFC) cease funding second features (Harper and Porter 2003: 143). This necessitated a complete change in Hammer's production strategy, and Hammer found themselves with 'neither the markets nor capital' (Harper and Porter 2003: 143) to facilitate that change. However, the production of *The Quatermass Xperiment* proved not only a lifeline for Hammer, but an unmitigated success. *The Quatermass Xperiment* can be seen as a truly risky proposition for Hammer as this was one of the first cinematic adaptations of a television programme, a format that was seen as a direct threat to survival of cinema (Pirie 2008: 23). It also

made use of the X-certificate to emphasise the story's horror elements, becoming only the twelfth film to have an X-rating since the certificate's inception in 1951. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, *The Quatermass Xperiment* proved successful enough for Hammer to change course and begin to make a series of similar films. However, *Quatermass 2* and *X the Unknown*, whilst both having X certificates, emphasised science fiction over horror. When Hyman approached Carreras with Subotsky and Rosenberg's *Frankenstein*, this signalled the first shift towards a more explicitly horror-focused Hammer Films.

James Carreras agreed to enter into a partnership with Hyman on *Frankenstein*, and by March 1956, 'James and Michael Carreras had begun negotiations based on a working draft of the screenplay' (Meikle 2009: 31). The Warner Bros. Archive at the USC holds a copy of Subotsky's script dated 1956. The Hammer Script Archive also holds a copy of an undated and untitled scanned copy of a script which, when cross-referenced with the one held at the Warner Archive, is confirmed to be a duplicate of Subotsky's script. Though the script did not necessarily have a direct textual influence on Sangster's screenplay for *The Curse of Frankenstein*, it was the genesis of the *Frankenstein* project at Hammer, and as such was fundamental to Hammer's later success within the gothic horror genre.

Subotsky's screenplay differs almost entirely from Sangster's eventually produced script, and is a more faithful adaptation of Mary Shelley's original novel. It is also keenly influenced by Universal's earlier adaptations directed by James Whale, *Frankenstein* (1931) and *The Bride of Frankenstein* (1935). It starts with a prologue startlingly similar to that of *The Bride of Frankenstein*. Opening 'in the summer of 1818' (Subotsky 1956: 1), it begins on the night that Mary Shelley conceives the novel *Frankenstein*. No dialogue is spoken, but the narrator notes how this night birthed 'the greatest horror story of all time' (Subotsky 1956: 3). Unlike Sangster's *The Curse of Frankenstein*, which, despite a brief flashback of Victor as a young child, focuses entirely on Frankenstein as an adult, Subotsky's script is mainly focused on a young Frankenstein beginning his experiments at university. Like Whale's adaptations before it, Subotsky's script emphasises the creature over his creator, an important distinction to make when regarding Sangster's later adaptation, which focuses far more on Peter Cushing's Baron. Both Whale and Subotsky have several sequences that see the

Creature having escaped Frankenstein's laboratory and exploring the world on his own. For example, in a sequence roughly halfway through the screenplay, the Creature comes upon a child who has fallen in the lake, and rescues her. However, her father and a group of villagers arrive to see the Creature standing over her and attack it, forcing it to flee. This leads directly into another loosely adapted sequence from the novel and *The Bride of Frankenstein*, as the Creature is taken in by a blind man who takes pity on him and offers him food and shelter. However, when the blind man's family return, it is revealed to be the family of the girl who attacked the Creature. These sequences, despite having precedent in the novel, are strongly reminiscent of Whale's previous films, a factor that would go on to be a concern for Hammer later in its production.

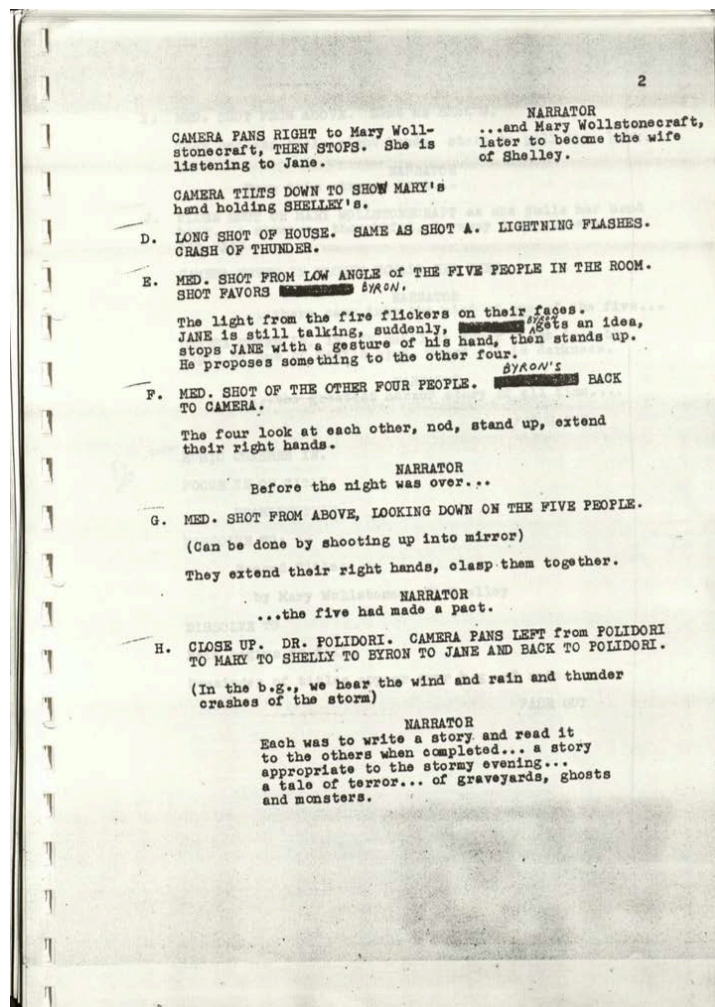


Figure 1: Page 2 of Subotsky's unpublished and unproduced *Frankenstein* screenplay, which begins similarly to that of *The Bride of Frankenstein* (Whale 1935).

Subotsky's script also features a clear reference to Jack Pierce's iconic design of the Creature in Whale's *Frankenstein* films. Although giving no actual description of the Creature, Subotsky specifies the 'electrodes on the Creature's head' (Subotsky 1956: 34). Removed from context, these homages to Whale's earlier films would not be particularly notable. Adaptations of the same novel are bound to have similarities, and Subotsky's nod to Whale's films could be interpreted as a deferential acknowledgment of *Frankenstein* and *The Bride of Frankenstein*'s permeation of popular culture. However, these sequences and homages became one of the fundamental reasons Subotsky's script was eventually deemed unsuitable at Hammer. The ubiquity of Universal's *Frankenstein* series (1931-1948) meant that Universal did not take Hammer's decision to produce their own version lightly. With a sense of ownership over the property, Universal looked to curtail Hammer at every turn, raising 'the prospect of a lawsuit against the company should their picture contain any elements, textual or otherwise, unique to their movies' (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 22). On August 23rd 1956, James Carreras wrote to Hyman, breaking down into five points Hammer's strategy to deal with Universal's attempts to stop the production. The first three deal with the fact that Mary Shelley's novel was in fact in the public domain, and therefore, in the words of James Carreras 'if our screenplay is based on the book "FRANKENSTEIN" nobody on earth can do anything about it' (Carreras to Hyman: 23rd August 1956). Carreras had been informed of this on the same day that he wrote to Hyman (23rd), as a letter contained in the BFI Archive and dated 24th August from an unknown source reads:

With reference to our conversation over the telephone yesterday, I have made investigations and find that the work entitled "FRANKENSTEIN"...is in the public domain and you are entitled to make a film based thereon together with such alterations and additions thereto as you may desire (Anonymous to Carreras: 24th August 1956).

Although this seemed to present a clear justification for Hammer to adapt the novel itself, Carreras also highlighted a key issue this gave the production: 'If we use any ideas in the Universal International pictures on "FRANKENSTEIN", then we are headed for trouble' (Carreras to Hyman: 23rd August 1956). Universal's attempts to hinder Hammer's adaptation of *Frankenstein* plagued the production, and continued throughout its development, even as the project began filming. Two days into the

filming of the picture, Carreras sent a memo to Hyman dated 21st November 1956, noting that ‘Universal International have objected to the registration of the title “THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN”’ and urged his American partner to ‘fight this with everything you’ve got, because we are advised here that being in the public domain anybody can call a film “Frankenstein”’ (Carreras to Hyman: 21st November 1956). This extreme pressure by Universal put Subotsky and Hammer in an extraordinarily difficult position. It immediately scuppered Hammer’s first plan for the production, which was to potentially produce the picture in black and white and enlist Boris Karloff to star (Rigby 2002: 43, Hearn and Barnes 2007: 23). Universal’s copyright concerns also immediately ruled out the prologue to Subotsky’s script, and the brief note he gave on the Creature’s design.

These two examples are particularly overt, but the vagueness of the wording in Universal’s threat to Hammer - ‘textual or otherwise’ - made it difficult for the company to discern what material would keep them on the right side of Universal’s lawyers. Even Subotsky’s adaptation of some of Shelley’s scenes could potential cause issue. One of the most striking sequences in Whale’s *Frankenstein* sees an inversion of Shelley’s scene at the lake, where the Creature, in a tragic misunderstanding, drowns a child he had briefly befriended. This also could be said for the Creature’s visit to the blind man, which appears in the book, but is also a key sequence in Whale’s *The Bride of Frankenstein*. These sequences, despite initially featuring in some form in Shelley’s novel, have elements that at least echo Universal’s own films.

Despite Subotsky’s script referencing Shelley’s novel far more than Whale’s earlier films, even producers at Hammer saw the script as merely a lesser version of Universal’s adaptations. Tony Hinds, who was brought onto the project as a producer later in development, noted that one of the key reasons he eventually brought in Sangster was that Subotsky’s script ‘was a complete steal’ (cited in Meikle 2009: 35). Hammer realised that the script would fall foul of Universal. In a detailed letter to Subotsky from Michael Carreras, one of Carreras’ main concerns was the script’s similarities to Universal’s *Frankenstein*. He wrote:

[it] must very carefully be checked that there is no parallel to the original film (Universal 1931). It is not sufficient to take the book and write an original from it; if this is done you will find that at least 80% of the good ideas were used in the original (cited in Kinsey 2002: 50).

Despite the script not being particularly well received by Carreras (and later Hinds), Hammer was clearly still considering using the script. The company sent it to the BBFC to get their advice on what potential rating the film would receive. The script was sent back on 22nd June with some minor cuts noted but relatively little resistance from the censor (*The Curse of Frankenstein* File, BBFC Archive). By this time Hinds had come on board as a producer and was less enthusiastic about the script than Michael Carreras. With this in mind, Hinds noted to James Carreras that, due to the novel being in the public domain, Hammer was not necessarily beholden to Subotsky's script, and could develop its own (Meikle 2009: 36, Rigby 2002: 43).

Jimmy Sangster, who had been a production manager at Hammer since 1954 and had recently written his first feature film, *X the Unknown*, was offered *The Curse of Frankenstein* by Hinds himself. In his memoir *Inside Hammer* (2001), Sangster recounts that Hinds 'asked me to start from scratch and write my version based on the original book' (Sangster 2001: 27). Sangster also notes that 'I had no idea at the time that there was a script already in existence, and to this day I've never read it' (Sangster 2001: 27). Given Sangster's position as a production manager at the company, one would think that Sangster was at least aware of the ongoing pre-production of *Frankenstein*. However, there is no contradictory evidence to Sangster's claim of having never seen Subotsky's script, though it does share one overt similarity to his own. Both begin with Baron Frankenstein in prison, with a visit causing him to recount his misadventures. The flashbacks then form the main crux of the film. This does not occur in the book, and is either a coincidental use of a framing device, or Sangster utilising a small element of Subotsky's former script.

Sangster avoids the pitfalls of Subotsky's script by producing an extremely loose adaptation of Shelley's novel. Furthermore, Sangster puts some distance between his screenplay and Universal's films not only by altering key parts of the narrative, but by drastically altering the characterisation of Frankenstein himself. Sangster notes that 'the first major change I made was to make Baron Frankenstein the villain, as opposed to the monster' (Sangster 2001: 28). Colin Clive's portrayal of the monster's creator in *Frankenstein* and *The Bride of Frankenstein* was of a driven and often obsessive man compelled to push the boundaries of science for the greater good of mankind. However, he was by no means the primary focus of the films, which 'centred on the Monster

rather than Frankenstein himself' (Hutchings 1993: 101). In contrast, Sangster's Baron is an arrogant, unsympathetic and murderous figure. With both narrative and characterisation dramatically altered in his draft, Sangster's script put crucial distance between Universal's films series and Hammer's upcoming gothic horror.

Not only did these changes shift Hammer's *The Curse of Frankenstein* away from Universal's earlier films, but just by merely hiring Sangster, the perception of the project markedly changed. Subotsky and Rosenberg's involvement with the project, instigated by Eliot Hyman, highlighted the transatlantic partnership between Hammer and Hyman (and through Hyman, Warner Bros.). However, despite Hyman still being a critical part of the project's financing (Barnett 2014: 233-237), Sangster's hiring meant that the project's cast, director, producers and writer were all British. Therefore Hammer, by bringing in Sangster instead of Subotsky, created another degree of separation by crafting what is essentially an entirely British production.

The film's release and subsequent international success laid the groundwork for Hammer's later gothic horrors. However, this examination of Subotsky's script and the production context of *The Curse of Frankenstein* more broadly demonstrates how some of the key components of Hammer's gothic horror formula were dictated by circumstance rather than long-term strategising. Subotsky's script would have undoubtedly presented a more conventional take on the material, but despite clear misgivings from Hammer producers such as Tony Hinds, Hammer did initially seem content enough to send the script for approval to the BBFC, with the intent to seemingly produce the picture in black and white. It was Universal's insistence that the production differ entirely from their own which caused Hammer to seriously reconsider the project again. Subotsky's script featured many key sequences and characters from Shelley's novel, and as such featured enough similar material to Universal's films to worry Hammer. Hinds' decision to hire Sangster to produce his own *Frankenstein* script was prudent not only due to Sangster's desire to radically alter the characters and events of the novel, but also due to his status as a former production manager. In an interview with Wayne Kinsey, Sangster notes that one of the first questions he asked Hinds on being offered the assignment was 'how much are we going to spend on the picture?' (in Kinsey 2010: 97) Sangster's experience in managing a production, and his knowledge of Hammer's frugal budgets, made him a more than adept replacement for Subotsky.

Sangster's ideas would ignite Hinds' enthusiasm for the project, leading to its eventual shooting in colour. Almost every memorable component of what would become Hammer's gothic horror formula would be visible in *The Curse of Frankenstein*, yet as the above clearly demonstrates, many of its most enduring facets, such as its focus on an antagonistic Baron Frankenstein over the creature and startlingly original creature design, came about through the lessons learned in the troubled production process of Subotsky's *Frankenstein*.

Hammer was quick to capitalise on the monumental success of *The Curse of Frankenstein*. In October 1957, Hammer submitted Sangster's screenplay for *Dracula* to the BBFC, and in November that same year, the sequel to *The Curse of Frankenstein*, *The Revenge of Frankenstein*, was also submitted to the BBFC (along with *The Night Creatures*, which will be discussed in the following section). Hammer was quick to respond to audiences' desire for more gothic horror films, but also looked to bring this success to television as well.

Two crucial deals in the months of June and September 1957 facilitated what was to be Hammer's first foray into television. The first was between Universal and Screen Gems, Columbia's television production subsidiary, with *Billboard* noting 'the acquisition of 550 Universal features' (Strong 1957: 18) in its June 17th issue. This deal saw Screen Gems acquire a substantial portion of Universal's pre-1948 horror product, which was packaged as *Shock!* or *Shock Theater*. This was the first package of horror films on the television market, and within little more than a week, nine television stations had 'shelled out some \$2,500,000 for Screen Gem's new "Shock" package of 52 chillers' (Anon. 1957a: 28, 40). Horror on television was clearly immensely profitable for Screen Gems and Columbia, and laid the groundwork for a more ambitious venture further down the line.

The second deal came in September 1957 and was between Hammer and Columbia. Despite *The Curse of Frankenstein* proving to be a huge success for Hammer, Warner Bros. and Elliot Hyman, the financial partnership had proven extremely testing. The BFI holds correspondence from James Carreras to Hyman sent on October 1st 1957. Carreras began the letter clearly referencing an accusation levelled at him by Hyman: 'Hysterical you suggest. After looking through our correspondence it's a wonder I'm not biting lumps out of the carpet' (Carreras to Hyman: 1st October

1957). Carreras also underlined the key issue between Hammer and Hyman/Warner: 'No pre-production cash from you and your share twelve days after the shooting starts - What sort of 50/50 partnership is that'? (Carreras to Hyman: 1st October 1957).

Eager to move on from this after the success of *The Curse of Frankenstein*, Hammer secured a three-picture deal with Columbia in September 1957. The September 11th 1957 issue of *Variety* notes that the three films produced under the deal were to be *The Snorkel* (Green 1958), *The Camp on Blood Island* (Guest 1958) and *The Blood of Frankenstein*, which was the sequel to *The Curse of Frankenstein* that would later be renamed *The Revenge of Frankenstein*. The deal secured Hammer worldwide distribution for all three pictures, and fifty per cent financing for *The Snorkel* and *The Camp on Blood Island* (with Hammer fully financing *The Revenge of Frankenstein*) (Myers 1957: 7, 12). Crucially, this deal also gave Hammer access to Columbia's Screen Gems, and less than two weeks later, Screen Gems announced their own television show *Tales of Frankenstein*. Interestingly, Hammer is not mentioned in the article, and the series was touted as having Boris Karloff set to 'host and occasionally star' (Anon. 1957b: 31). By late October however, Hammer's involvement as co-producers on the show was made clear and the nature of the deal was further explained. In the 23rd October issue of *Variety*, the trade noted that ABC (the American Broadcasting Company), had agreed to co-produce the venture (Anon. 1957c: 50). The same article outlined that 'production on the show will be split between Hollywood and England, with Bryan Foy producing shows on the Coast and James Carreras...in England' (Anon. 1957c: 50). The article also went on to note that the *Tales of Frankenstein* will be an anthology series, and that Boris Karloff 'is now out of the picture' (Anon. 1957c: 50).

The BFI Archive holds materials which detail internal correspondence at Hammer, and demonstrate that Hammer was taking the opportunity of American syndication very seriously. The first and seemingly earliest letter is from Jimmy Sangster and was undated, but the Archive also holds what is clearly Michael Carreras' reply, dated 15th October 1957. Sangster's original letter (presumably written a week or less before this), detailed eight potential avenues in which he would take the Frankenstein character. These various escapades include (but are not limited to) the Baron dabbling in 'voodoo' and 'black magic', having a 'set to with Zombies' and

trying to comprehend ‘how much pain can a human being stand’ (Sangster to Carreras: Undated). Carreras writes back to Sangster asking if he ‘would be available to write six thirty minute stories for this series’ (Carreras to Sangster: 15th October 1957). Tony Hinds is designated to oversee production for Hammer in America (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 36), which makes it clear that Hammer was looking to closely replicate the success of *The Curse of Frankenstein* by utilising the same creative team.

An article in *Broadcasting* notes that the series was to have thirty-nine episodes, with twenty produced in the United States under producer Bryan Foy, whilst James Carreras would produce nineteen in the United Kingdom (Anon. 1957d: 90). The article also notes that the series was looking to be shown in the 1958/1959 season on American television. The pilot for *Tales of Frankenstein* (Siodmak) was produced in January 1958, with German actor Anton Doffing in the title role. This immediately shows an increase in Hammer’s relationship with American studios, with this project not only relying on American financiers and distributors, but actually planning on filming half of the episodes in America as well, handing over control of these episode to Foy.

However, before examining the pilot (ultimately the only produced episode of the series), it is worth examining Hammer’s long-term plan for the series, which were set out in a document dated 28th February 1958, and titled ‘General information for Writers’. Held at the BFI Archive, this detailed document was to act as a bible for writers drafted in to work on the show, covering the length of each episode, recurring sets and characters (and character profiles), and notes to producers on how to select and engage writers for the series. The document noted that the series will be twenty-six episodes (down from the originally mooted thirty-nine), with thirteen made in the United Kingdom. Surprisingly, the document also revealed that only eight of these ‘will actually include the character of Baron Frankenstein’ (Anon. 1958a). The BFI Archive also holds five treatments for potential episodes dated between March and April 1958 (Rawlinson 1958, Woodhouse 1958, Kersh 1958, Dryhurst 1958, Bryan 1958). These synopses are by five separate writers and do not seem to be based on any of Sangster’s brief story outlines in his correspondence. Some of the writers drafted in for the project however were extremely experienced. For example, A.R Rawlinson (writer of *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (Hitchcock 1934)) had been a prolific writer for nearly four decades when he was drafted in to write the first synopsis.

This first synopsis is of note not just due the pedigree of the writer, but for the many story elements that are seemingly incorporated within later Hammer *Frankenstein* films. The story outline sees a man named Peter visiting Frankenstein's home village, and falling for a woman called Lisa, whom he meets outside Frankenstein's castle. They talk, but Peter notices a peculiar relationship between the Baron and Lisa. After Peter demands that the Baron let her leave the castle with him, the Baron says he will if Peter can persuade Lisa to leave. As Peter declares his love for her, Lisa stabs him in the shoulder. The Baron and Peter eventually try to subdue Lisa, but she falls from the stairs and is killed. The Baron reveals to Peter that Lisa was one of his creations, born with no heart or soul, and due to this, had slowly become evil. At the end of the episode, Peter leaves the castle as the Baron goes back to his laboratory. Producer Tony Hinds wrote of the synopsis: 'I feel that the story is acceptable up to paragraph 24. From there on, it should be improved. It might be an idea to keep the girl alive and to use her in say, story number 2' (Hinds to Rawlinson: 26th March 1958). Despite a relatively lukewarm response to the synopsis from Hinds, elements of Rawlinson's story can be identified in *Frankenstein Created Woman* (Fisher 1967), which sees the doomed romance of two villagers result in the creation of a female monster by Frankenstein. Produced nearly a decade later, *Frankenstein Created Woman* has parallels with Rawlinson's plot synopsis, and interestingly, is written by Hinds under his pseudonym John Elder.

Another treatment held at the BFI also seemingly influences a later film. The fifth treatment was written by Peter Bryan and begins with Frankenstein approaching a successful hypnotist named Khotan for help waking his new creature. Frankenstein has successfully transferred a brain into a new host, but the Creature is effectively brain-dead. Frankenstein hopes that Khotan (who is in fact a disgraced Austrian doctor) will be able to use hypnosis to finally awaken it. The hypnosis is successful, but the Creature immediately kills Khotan (and the Creature itself is also killed in the struggle). Khotan awakens but finds his mind has been transferred into the body of the Creature, and Frankenstein strongly implies that this had been his plan all along. Khotan hypnotises Frankenstein and attempts to put his own mind into a less monstrous body, but fails. In his last act he hypnotises his daughter into killing him, making her instantly forget the moment she does it.

This synopsis is notable as, like Rawlinson's, it has a number of key similarities with an eventually produced Frankenstein film, in this case, *The Evil of Frankenstein* (Francis 1964). The film is again written by Tony Hinds (under the pseudonym John Elder), and sees the Baron seek the services of the hypnotist Zoltan in waking his Creature. Zoltan plays a more antagonistic role than Khotan, hypnotising the Creature for his own malevolent purposes. Despite this small alteration, the similarities are startling, particularly as it was Tony Hinds who initially commented on Bryan's synopsis, noting 'I like this. There may be too much plot, but this can be remedied in the screenplay' (Hinds to Bryan: 8th May 1958). Although neither Rawlinson nor Bryan was credited in later productions (although not stated in the document, it is likely Hammer owned the rights to the synopses once submitted), Bryan did go on to work for Hammer in the 1960s, writing the screenplays for *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (Fisher 1959), *The Brides of Dracula* (Fisher 1960) and *The Plague of the Zombies* (Gilling 1966).

Despite these intriguing synopses (which also included adventures such as the Baron cloning himself), the project ultimately came undone after only a pilot was shot. Initially, Tony Hinds was sent to oversee the production of the pilot, but soon returned to England frustrated with the project (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 36). Michael Carreras reportedly flew out to Hollywood in mid-November (Anon. 1957e: 16), and star Diffing followed in early December (Anon. 1957f: 52). According to the 'General Information for Writers' document, the production commenced in January 1958. Carreras would later note that the experience in America overseeing the pilot was 'one of the unhappiest experiences of my screen career' (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 36), and it is clear that there was a significant tension between Columbia/Screen Gems and Hammer over the portrayal of the Baron and his creation, and the tone of the Frankenstein television series.

As noted, Hammer initially turning to Jimmy Sangster and Tony Hinds to write and produce the project indicates they were looking to replicate the success of *The Curse of Frankenstein*. Sangster himself, in his brief plot synopses sent to Michael Carreras, suggested that this will be the same antagonistic and ruthless Baron he wrote in *The Curse of Frankenstein*, noting that in one story Frankenstein 'becomes interested in Black Magic and the power of the Devil... he considers the Devil and he have a

certain affinity' (Sangster to Carreras: Undated). However, the pilot is far from Hammer's depiction of the Baron, and the overall tone of the pilot (widely available since falling out of copyright) is more aligned with Universal's 1930s/1940s cycle. Notably, the director of the pilot and executive producer on the project was Curt Siodmak, who had been a crucial figure in much of Universal's 1940s horror output. Siodmak had written the screenplay for *The Invisible Man Returns* (May 1940), *The Wolf Man* (Wagner 1941) and *Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man* (Neill 1943), as well as directing *Son of Dracula* in 1943. Compounding this notion, Screen Gems' acquisition of Universal's horror output for television also gave the company the right to utilise elements of Universal's *Frankenstein* on the small screen. This is clear in the design of Frankenstein's Monster in the pilot. Quite clearly a direct homage to Jack Pierce's makeup, this move away from Hammer and towards Universal's original design proved to be a point of contention for Michael Carreras. On December 9th 1957, Carreras sent producer Irving Birking a memo regarding the Creatures' appearance. Attaching Hammer's own planned designs, Carreras noted that current design of the Creature does not go far enough, and that Columbia 'should seriously consider marking the face itself with further scar tissue and signs of burns' (Carreras to Birking: 9th December 1957). These suggestions clearly went unheeded, with Columbia preferring to utilise Pierce's original design. This obvious shift away from Hammer's own iteration of *Frankenstein* is also clear in their depiction of the titular character. Whilst Diffing's Baron is scheming and emotionless, he is far from Sangster and Cushing's murderous antagonist in *The Curse of Frankenstein*.

The difference is perhaps most striking in a sequence in the pilot where husband and wife Paul and Christine seek out the Baron in order to save Paul's life. Paul is dying from an unspecified illness and the Baron, whose Monster needs a brain, refuses to help. When Paul succumbs to his illness shortly afterwards, the Baron digs up his body and transplants Paul's brain into the Monster. This is in marked contrast to the strategy laid out by Cushing's Frankenstein when he is searching for a brain for his Creature in *The Curse of Frankenstein*. Cushing's Baron invites the distinguished Professor Bernstein to his castle and after he arrives, invites him to examine a painting at the top of the stairs. The Baron then throws Bernstein from the top, killing the Professor and thus securing an intelligent brain for his Creature. In the television pilot, the Baron's crime (for which

he is arrested at the end) is grave-robbing. Whereas Hammer's Frankenstein leaves a multitude of bodies in his wake on the quest to create life, Diffring's more neutral Baron, Siodmak's direction and the clear homage to Pierce's makeup result in an episode which lacks any of Hammer's identity.

As seen in the examination of *The Curse of Frankenstein*, this is clearly due to the fact that nearly every production decision made on *The Curse of Frankenstein* was in direct opposition to Universal's film cycle. *Tales of Frankenstein* offered Hammer what would have been at the time their greatest opportunity to permeate the American market. This was not just a co-financing or distribution opportunity, but the chance to have creative control over what could have potentially been a long-running series on American television. Ultimately, it was the closeness with Universal at this juncture (through Columbia) that seemingly undid the production's hopes of making it beyond the pilot.

The Curse of Frankenstein saw Hammer produce the film in-house with its own creative team and autonomy, and due to the extraordinary production context detailed earlier within this section, produced a unique interpretation of Shelley's novel. However, after producing an adaptation so distinct from Universal's, Hammer found themselves working with a partner closely associated with Universal's 1930s/1940s horror cycle. It is unlikely that Screen Gems would have even considered a horror television series if it had not been for the success of *Shock*, yet their acquisition and subsequent ownership of the television rights to Universal's adaptations inevitably complicated the production of *Tales of Frankenstein*. It is also of note that this process occurred before Hammer's distinctive gothic horror expertise had crystallised. Not only were *The Revenge of Frankenstein* and *Dracula* not yet released, but Hammer was clearly not necessarily wedded to the idea of the gothic horror film. Like the X-rated science-fiction cycle before it, Hammer were undoubtedly aware that this trend and apparent enthusiasm for the gothic genre could potentially diminish quickly, and as such, did not focus solely on gothic horror, but looked at other aspects of the horror film as well.

The Beginning of a Legend: Hammer's Path to *The Night Creatures*

Whereas the success of *The Curse of Frankenstein* had buoyed Hammer and rekindled audience enthusiasm for the gothic horror genre, the diminishing returns of Hammer's X-rated science-fiction cycle and the then recent collapse of the *Tales of Frankenstein* demonstrated that Hammer were by no means invulnerable. As such Hammer looked beyond *Frankenstein* and *Dracula* to other horror novels which could potentially lead to mainstream success. Perhaps the most pertinent example of this is Richard Matheson's novel *I am Legend*, which has permeated popular culture since its initial publication sixty-five years ago. This is in no small part due to the three film adaptations that have been produced - *The Last Man on Earth* (Salkow 1964) starring Vincent Price, *The Omega Man* (Sagal 1971) starring Charlton Heston and *I Am Legend* (Lawrence 2007) starring Will Smith. Several renowned films, whilst not direct adaptations, have also born a number of similarities to *I Am Legend's* general concept, for example, George Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* (1968) and Danny Boyle's contemporary zombie thriller *28 Days Later* (2002), the latter of which was so similar to Matheson's novel that it nearly curtailed Lawrence and Smith's eventual adaptation (Hughes 2008: 143).

The Night Creatures is also one of the only unmade Hammer films to have received any academic attention. Stacey Abbott in *Undead Apocalypse: Vampires and Zombies in the Twenty-First Century* (2016), examines the many adaptations of *I Am Legend* in the chapter 'The Legacy of Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend*' (Abbott 2016: 9-39). In this chapter, Abbott contextualises *The Night Creatures* in relation to other adaptations of Matheson's novel, noting how the script's shocking imagery fell foul of the British and American censors (23-29). Peter Hutchings' chapter 'American Vampires in Britain: Richard Matheson's *I Am Legend* and Hammer's *The Night Creatures*', in Dan North's *Sights Unseen* (2008: 53-71), utilises a comparative account of Matheson's novel and script in order to interrogate 'the relation between British and American models of horror' (Hutchings 2008: 55). Examining the process of an American contemporary horror novel being adapted by the same author for a British production company, Hutchings compares thematic and narrative similarities between Matheson's novel and his unmade screenplay for Hammer, and suggests that these two types of horror 'might not be as distinct and separate from each other as has sometimes been supposed' (Hutchings 2008: 68).

However, in his chapter Hutchings also stresses that, despite *I Am Legend*'s standing as a classic horror novel and Hammer's own popularity in the horror genre at the time, *The Night Creatures* was not an indispensable project for either Hammer or Matheson. Hutchings suggests that 'before we rush to install *The Night Creatures* in the canon of "unfilmed greats", it is instructive to note the response to its abandonment of some of the key figures involved in its creation' (Hutchings 2008: 55). He then goes on to note that Matheson, producer Michael Carreras, and would-be director of the film Val Guest

[show little] in the way of artistic lamentation...but instead just expressions of annoyance at the time and money wasted on the project. It is precisely the attitude that one might expect of jobbing directors, producers and writers, all of whom had busy careers and quickly moved onto other projects after *The Night Creatures* shut down (Hutchings 2008: 55).

Hutchings here touches on one of the key recurring issues in work on unmade films: the tendency to position the film in question as somehow being an essential or valuable object, which through its failure to be produced has been lost forever. As a result, many works take on a reverence for the unmade project, looking to recreate or imagine the would-be film, as opposed to analysing its historical development or production context. Despite Hutchings' argument being both pertinent and rational, I would suggest that, by emphasising it so keenly with *The Night Creatures*, he arguably undersells the importance the film had in shaping Hammer's trajectory.

Despite Hutchings' insistence that *The Night Creatures* was essentially a short-lived annoyance for Hammer and Matheson, the project was remarkable in a number of ways. Firstly, it stands as a notable blemish on an impressive record of produced films in a period where Hammer was gaining international recognition. Secondly, the reasons for *The Night Creatures* not making it to the screen are markedly different from every other notable unmade Hammer film. Whereas later chapters will chronicle the financial and even cultural roadblocks Hammer faced, *The Night Creatures*' key undoing was the BBFC (British Board of Film Censors). This section will utilise documentation held at the BBFC Archives and reports on *The Night Creatures* by the MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America) held at the Margaret Herrick Library in Los Angeles to examine the complex relationship *The Night Creatures* had with the censor. Whereas Hutchings proposes that Carreras' attitude to the project demonstrated that Hammer

‘quickly moved on to other projects’, examining the BBFC files alongside the MPAA documents shows that Michael Carreras was potentially still involved with the project in 1961, four years after Hammer first submitted the screenplay to the BBFC. This section will cross-reference the screenplay for *The Night Creatures*, held in the Hammer Script Archive, with this documentation, to reposition the project’s place in Hammer’s filmography at a time when their identity as horror specialists was by no means assured.

Matheson’s script was submitted to Hammer in November 1957 and as such can be considered as a response from Hammer to the success of *The Curse of Frankenstein*, which had been in development as early as March 1956 (Meikle 2009: 31). *The Curse of Frankenstein* entered production in November that year (Anon. 1956: 21), with *Dracula*, (perhaps next to *Frankenstein* the most famous gothic novel of the nineteenth century, and a crucial film in Universal’s own horror cycle in the 1930s) announced as a follow-up after its success. An article in *Picturegoer* dated 7th September 1957 noted that *Dracula* begins production ‘next month’ (Hutchinson 1957: 16), and less than three weeks later, an article in *Variety* noted that Richard Matheson has arrived in London ‘to write screenplay [sic] of his upcoming novel, “I Am Legend,” for Hammer Film Productions’ (Anon. 1957g: 74). Despite erroneously listing the novel as upcoming (it was first published in the United States in 1954 and in the United Kingdom in 1956), this announcement creates a symbiotic connection between *The Curse of Frankenstein*, *Dracula* and *The Night Creatures*. As discussed earlier, *The Curse of Frankenstein* demonstrated to Hammer that the horror genre offered the company new prospects in regard to American finance and distribution, and *Dracula* and *The Night Creatures* can be seen as the next potential step in their exploitation of this new market.

However, despite both dealing with vampirism, *The Night Creatures* and *Dracula* were markedly different properties for Hammer. Whereas the period setting, gothic iconography, and *Dracula*’s longstanding status in popular culture made a Hammer adaptation all but inevitable after the success of *The Curse of Frankenstein*, Matheson’s novel is a different proposition. *I Am Legend* is a contemporary-set, post-apocalyptic science fiction horror novel, in which vampirism is a plague as opposed to a supernatural affliction.

To go further, one could argue that one of the primary successes of Matheson’s novel is that it works in direct opposition to Stoker’s *Dracula*. This is apparent in

Chapter 3 of *I Am Legend*, which begins with Neville reading a copy of Stoker's *Dracula*:

Thank *you*. Dr Van Helsing, he thought, putting down his copy of 'Dracula'... It was true. The book was a hodgepodge of superstitions and soap-opera clichés, but that line was true; no one had believed in them, and how could they fight something they didn't believe in? (Matheson 1954: 23).

By overtly referencing the 'superstitions' and 'clichés' of vampirism that had entered the public lexicon after Stoker's novel (and perhaps more pertinently after Browning's *Dracula* (1931)), Matheson not only pre-empted any comparisons between Stoker's novel and his own but also, by acknowledging that the story is happening in a contemporary setting in which the novel *Dracula* exists, Matheson aligned the world of *I Am Legend* more closely with our own. Late 1957 therefore proved to be an interesting time at Hammer. Only less than three weeks after beginning production on *Dracula*, the company flew in the author responsible for a horror novel that redefined and challenged every assumption audiences had about *Dracula* and vampire mythology.

As a result of the fact that these productions were being developed simultaneously, I would argue, as put forward in the first section of this chapter, that Hammer did not have a long-term strategy in place to capitalise on the success of *The Curse of Frankenstein*. As well as these remarkably different but high-profile horror projects, Hammer released *The Abominable Snowman* (Guest) in August 1957. Produced almost directly after *The Curse of Frankenstein* (which finished filming on 3rd January 1957, while shooting on *The Abominable Snowman* commenced on 28th January 1957 (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 22-26)) the film utilises *The Curse of Frankenstein* star Peter Cushing, but in a markedly different film. Shot in black and white and forsaking visceral or overt horror sequences for a foreboding, tense atmosphere, the film is a far cry from the colour gothic opulence of *The Curse of Frankenstein*. Even the film's primary monster, the mythical Yeti, is never fully seen. The film received an A certificate, and despite featuring facets of the horror genre (for example, members of the Himalayan expedition are picked off one by one), the film felt more like a 'throwback' (Meikle 2009: 45) to an older school of horror cinema, before *The Curse of Frankenstein* had signalled a new way forward for Hammer.

With *The Abominable Snowman* seemingly a relic from Hammer's pre-*Curse* days, and *Dracula* following steadfast in the tracks left by *The Curse of Frankenstein*, *The Night Creatures* is arguably the one true outlier in Hammer's horror production slate immediately following *The Curse of Frankenstein*. An adaptation of a book only three years old, which redefined the landscape of vampire fiction, it is almost impossible to configure how this film would have impacted Hammer on release. Ultimately however, *The Night Creatures* stands as one of Hammer's earliest and most notable unmade projects, not due to Hammer's own reluctance to produce *The Night Creatures*, but the refusal of the censor to approve Matheson's script.

Censoring *The Night Creatures*

The Night Creatures was put into development at the beginning of Hammer's most prolific period. As suggested previously, the company had first seen success with X-certificate films with *The Quatermass Xperiment*. Although the cycle of films that followed it soon diminished, Hammer still utilised the X-certificate as it turned to gothic horror. This not only gave Hammer a unique selling point for its new horror product, but predictably put the company firmly in the sights of the British film censor.

This period was the beginning of a complex history between the company and the BBFC. In his memoir, former Director of the BBFC John Trevelyan briefly discusses the relationship the censor and Hammer had, suggesting an amicable agreement:

Horror films were rarely a problem since most of them came to us from Hammer Films, the most successful company in this field, from who we always had full co-operation...I remember a talk I had with Sir James (Jimmy) Carreras many years ago in which we agreed that his company's horror films would avoid mixing sex with horror and would avoid scenes some people could regard as disgusting and revolting (Trevelyan 1977: 165-166).

Yet a cursory examination of Hammer's dealings with the BBFC, particularly in the period of 1956-1961, show that it was far from amicable. Sangster's script for *The Curse of Frankenstein* was almost rejected, with the report from examiner Audrey Fields, dated 10th October, noting that the script had 'a lip-smacking relish for mutilated corpses, repulsive dismembered hands and eyeballs removed from the head' (Fields 1956) and that whilst they could not reject the story outline outright, 'a great many

details will have to be modified or eliminated' (Fields 1956). Examiner Frank Crofts went further, noting that Hammer 'should have the script re-written and send it in again' (Croft 1956).

The status of *The Curse of Frankenstein* as the first British colour gothic made it a risky prospect in regard to assessing the censor's reaction. With no precedent to compare it to, Hammer had no real idea how the BBFC would react. However, this arguably worked in Hammer's favour. Treated almost as an anomalous one-off, *The Curse of Frankenstein* actually came out of its battle with the censor 'relatively unscathed' (Kinsey 2002: 80). However, as Hammer began to capitalise on the success of *The Curse of Frankenstein*, a proliferation of horror output from the company and the industry more broadly led to a stronger stance by the censor.

This came to a head in 1960 with the release of *Peeping Tom* (Powell 1960). The subsequent release and moral panic surrounding the film (Rigby 2002: 73, Hunter 2013: 9, Pirie 2008: 128) saw the BBFC trying to salvage its reputation (badly damaged after passing *Peeping Tom*) by taking a much firmer stance against the new influx of British horror films. Meikle suggests that this new firmer stance by the BBFC nearly altered Hammer's path entirely, with the censor not only strongly condemning the screenplays for Hammer's (ultimately unmade) *The Rape of Sabena* and the eventually produced *The Curse of the Werewolf* (Fisher 1961), but suggesting Hammer move away from horror altogether (Meikle 2009: 107-108).

Despite Hammer seemingly considering scaling back the production of horror films, financial necessity ultimately won out. Columbia had been unimpressed with some of producer Michael Carreras' recent offerings, and told James Carreras to keep him in check. With the censor already firing a warning shot in regard to *The Rape of Sabena*, and its status as a period piece with elements of exploitation (as opposed to a more marketable gothic horror), James Carreras decided to pull the plug on the project. However, after realising the production was so close to filming (with sets already being built), James Carreras decided to move forward with *The Curse of the Werewolf*, which utilised the already-built sets (Meikle 2009: 107-108). Despite the issues with the BBFC however, Hammer did not heed their warnings. *The Curse of the Werewolf* not only featured Hammer's now standardised practice of horror and blood, but also a problematic rape scene at the beginning of the film, to which the censors strongly

objected. After a lengthy battle, the film did eventually garner an X certificate, but at some cost. The film had been substantially edited, with the BBFC 'imposing painfully visible cuts enhanced by tell-tale jumps in the soundtrack' (Kinsey 2002: 216). It was in between these tumultuous periods that *The Night Creatures* was developed, after *The Curse of Frankenstein* had ushered in a new phase of colour gothic horror, but just before the BBFC's hardened stance on this new wave of British horror films.

The screenplay takes place in Canada, in the town of Hudson, an alteration from the novel's American setting. This is particularly relevant to Hutchings's study of the American Matheson working with the British production company Hammer, as Canada signalled 'a neutral space where Americanness and Britishness might profitably co-exist and engage with each other' (Hutchings 2008: 62). The narrative begins with the protagonist Robert Neville doing his daily preparations in a post-plague world, such as checking his generator and food supplies, and ensuring that his electric fence is working. At night he listens to the calls of his former neighbours (now vampires), as they try to persuade him to join them. The script flashes back to before the plague, with Neville and his wife and daughter. We see how the plague resulted in the death of his daughter and, eventually, his wife too. At night, Neville stays indoors and is tormented by the vampires surrounding his house. By day, he experiments on the vampires, and drives around the town killing them whilst they sleep, by either staking them or exposing them to direct sunlight. Towards the end of the screenplay he finds another apparent survivor, Ruth, whom he takes to his house and eventually becomes romantically involved with. After Neville tests her blood and finding her infected by the plague, Ruth reveals she is part of a new group of the infected, who seem to retain their higher brain functions and can walk in the day, and that she had been sent to spy on Neville. As the more rabid vampires break through Neville's defences and attack the house, Ruth's group of new vampires also make their move, killing the rabid vampires and taking Neville away, to investigate his immunity to the plague.

Even by contemporary standards, the script's horror imagery remains potent, particularly in the film's first act flashback scenes. With Neville's daughter having succumbed to the plague and the government enforcing a law that all bodies should be burned, Neville is forced to take his daughter's body, in a sack, to a huge fire pit outside the town limits. As he arrives, two officials grab his daughter's body from his hands and

take her away towards the pit, preventing Neville from having any chance of closure. It is a nihilistic and harrowing sequence, and the screenplay remains tonally bleak throughout. The film's contemporary setting may have also caused more issues than Hammer's gothic horror films. With most of Hammer's gothics located in a non-specific eastern European village hundreds of years ago, a degree of separation occurs which lends itself to some of the more fantastical elements of the films' narrative. *The Night Creatures* does not have this separation and, as is apparent in chapter 3 of *I Am Legend* (where Neville finds a copy of Stoker's *Dracula*), even attempts to bridge the gap between reality and the world of *The Night Creatures*. Nevertheless, Hammer seemed undeterred by Matheson's script and submitted it, along with *The Curse of Frankenstein* sequel, *The Revenge of Frankenstein*, to the BBFC and the MPAA on 20 November 1957 (Anderson to Trevelyan: 20th November 1957, Anderson to Shurlock: 20th November 1957).

As noted previously, the screenplay for *The Night Creatures* was strongly condemned by the BBFC who advised Hammer against making it. Although this seems like a definitive move by the censor, the BBFC Archive's reveals that the screenplay caused some debate, and was considered by some examiners to be passable with some cuts made. However, the initial response from the first examiner was a sign of the screenplay's eventual fate. Audrey Fields, in her brief initial report on 25 November 1957 wrote:

In a word, NO. I feel too ill at the moment to add anything to this, but I am confident that I can put our point to the company in a letter of not more than ten lines (and probably less). I have rough notes on the more repulsive details, and will keep this by me, but I think the story synopsis speaks for itself.

This opinion is reiterated by an unnamed examiner on 1st December 1957, who noted that they 'recommend that the company be told that we don't think a film based on this script would receive our certificate' before ending the report noting that 'it does not seem worthwhile to list the offending scenes, since the whole idea behind the story seems so unsavoury' (Anon. 1957h).

Although these early reports demonstrate the strong initial response to Matheson's script, it is notable that neither report actually referenced any specific scenes they find offensive, with both instead just referring to the general synopsis and

story, as opposed to the way it is portrayed or depicted. This is notable as BBFC reports often listed specific instances within scripts which would prevent them from passing it, citing page numbers and suggesting alterations or deletions. The above reports did not go into these specifics, thereby suggesting a far more emotive reading of the screenplay. However, this is not to say that the BBFC's reaction was particularly reactionary. The script has many sequences throughout which would have been considered too gruesome or horrific to pass unchanged. However, these initial readings seem to refuse to engage with the specifics of the script, making it impossible for Hammer to know how to make the screenplay more agreeable.

Across the Atlantic, however, Hammer received more positive news. Not only did the MPAA, under the directorship of Geoffrey Shurlock, produce a detailed report on the alterations that Hammer would have to make, but the suggestions were far removed from the emotive outcry of the BBFC. Firstly, the general conceit of the story, which seemed to offend the BBFC in principle, was not a problem for the MPAA, with Shurlock noting explicitly that 'the basic story seems to meet the requirements of the Production Code' (Shurlock to Hinds: 4th December 1957). Shurlock noted seventeen alterations which would have to be made for the MPAA to consider passing the screenplay. Peculiarly, over half of these do not touch on the horror imagery throughout, but are primarily concerned with blasphemous language, such as 'Dam' [sic] and 'my God'.

Around the same time, the BBFC examiners also found themselves in an internal debate. Whereas the first examiners had rejected the script outright, a third found some positives, noting that 'the story... is not a bad one with an interesting twist at the end' (Anon. 1957i). They noted that the script has 'a large number of incidents we would have to cut out', however, they concluded by saying that the BBFC 'should get in Anthony Hinds and tell him our requirements' (Anon. 1957i). Audrey Fields, the initial examiner, wrote to the Secretary, John Nicholls, noted the divisiveness of the script: 'You will see that there is some difference of opinion here. I myself would not wish to try and draft a letter implying acceptance even of the underlying idea, unless the President decides this should be done' (Fields to Nicholls: 3rd December 1957). Ultimately, the Secretary sided with Fields' initial assessment, writing to Tony Hinds to reject the script on 12th December 1957:

I am afraid we can hold out no hope of being able to give a certificate to a film based on this script, which, in gruesomeness, horror and violence, goes well beyond what we should feel justified in accepting for screen entertainment, even in the X category (Nicholls to Hinds).

Despite this initial setback, Hammer clearly sensed that *The Night Creatures* was not yet a lost cause. Although they were unaware of the BBFC's own internal discussions regarding the viability of *The Night Creatures*, Hammer had received the MPAA's verdict, and could see a notable difference in the BBFC and MPAA's assessment of Matheson's screenplay. This therefore allowed Hammer to again contact the BBFC, using the MPAA's verdict as their primary counterpoint to the British censor's decision.

Hammer took over two months to initially contest the decision made by the BBFC. James Carreras himself wrote to Nichols noting that Hammer had also submitted the script to the MPAA and thought that the BBFC 'would be interested in the letter which they [the MPAA] wrote to Tony Hinds dated January 28th 1958' (Carreras to Nicholls: 26th February 1958). Carreras hoped that the MPAA's letter would make the BBFC reconsider the original decision, with Carreras wanting the opportunity to discuss the script with Nicholls in person. Nicholls passed the script back to the examiners, but the results were the same. One examiner (anonymised in the BBFC's records but by process of eliminating people mentioned in the correspondence, most likely Fields), refused to read the script, having read it when it was initially submitted. Noting that they will not read it just 'because of a letter from the MPAA to Hammer Films indicating general approval of it' (Anon. 1958b), the examiner only decided to pass it on to another reviewer rather than denying it again immediately due to the fact that one reviewer previously 'was less against it than the President, FNC (Croft) and myself' (Anon. 1958b).

This back and forth between Hammer, the MPAA, and the BBFC, demonstrates that the BBFC was far from united. The script not only caused an internal debate between the censors themselves, but also highlighted how different the MPAA and BBFC's own notions of censorable material really were. This is compounded in the official report made after Carreras' letter (and after Fields had refused to read it again and passed it on). If anything, the report was even more damning of *The Night Creatures* than Field's initially assessment in 1957. Observing that they had 'noted as

many as 44 points which I disliked', the reviewer goes as far as to call the script 'the product of a diseased mind' (Anon. 1958c). The reviewer also openly attacked the assessment of the MPAA: 'I am astonished at Shurlock's letter. He is apparently prepared to accept all the real nastiness provided phrases like 'my god' and 'dammit' are deleted' (Anon. 1958c).

However perhaps of most interest in this report is the reporter's seemingly preconceived notion of Hammer as a company. The report notes that if it was merely a 'straight horror film' it would 'probably be acceptable', but 'with the elements of sex and the gruesomeness, which the promoters will doubtless be most reluctant to abandon, it becomes quite prohibitive' (Anon. 1958c). This is the first overt reference to how Hammer's new-found reputation as horror specialists had perhaps hindered their chances of the film getting made. Whereas, as argued previously, *The Curse of Frankenstein* got through the censors as an atypical one-off, the submission of the *Dracula* screenplay on 8th October 1957 to the BBFC, followed by the screenplays for *The Revenge of Frankenstein* and *The Night Creatures* on 21st November, made it clear that Hammer was planning on exploiting the horror genre long-term. Therefore, I would suggest that this perhaps led to the BBFC's presumption that Hammer was specifically looking to make shocking horror material, and as a result would simply refuse to contemplate toning down aspects of *The Night Creatures*. The reaction to the script can therefore be seen as a precursor to the BBFC's response to the influx of horror product two years later. Clearly aware that the release and subsequent success of *The Curse of Frankenstein* in May 1957 was the start of a new advent of horror product, the censor's reaction to *The Night Creatures* could arguably be seen as an attempt to demonstrate to Hammer that the censor had the power to stop a film in its tracks, and would utilise it when necessary.

The BBFC Archive holds correspondence from Nicholls to Carreras once again rejecting the screenplay for *The Night Creatures*. Nicholls noted that although he 'read with interest your copy of Mr Shurlock's letter', the film still passed 'the bounds of legitimate horror' (Nicholls to Carreras: 11th March 1958). What constitutes as 'legitimate' within the horror genre is never expanded on by Nicholls, and this vagueness as to why specifically *The Night Creatures* was impossible to pass with any changes was never elaborated on. In fact, even on its second submission to the censor

no changes or specific scenes were discussed or noted. Despite the lack of concrete reasoning, this rejection would prove to be the final time Hammer officially submitted the script to the BBFC.

However, Hammer was still seemingly involved in the screenplay in the early 1960s. Nearly three years after Hammer's final submission of the script to the BBFC, John Trevelyan, now director of the BBFC, received a letter from R. Paul Elwood, writing in regard to *The Night Creatures* screenplay. Elwood is identified, in an inter-office memo at the MPAA between Gordon White and Geoffrey Shurlock, as

[...] having telephoned [the MPAA] from Atlantic City a few days ago and said that he had acquired rights to the script for THE NIGHT CREATURES. He said he had approached a big company about distribution of a film based on this script, and had been told that he would have to deal with Code objections first (White to Shurlock: 30th March 1961).

Elwood wrote to Trevelyan regarding James Carreras. Elwood suggested that he had corresponded with Carreras, who told Elwood he had recently 'obtained an unofficial reaction from the British Censor [regarding *The Night Creatures*], which is still by no means favourable' (Elwood to Trevelyan: 24th August 1961). Suggesting that this 'leaves him rather puzzled', Elwood went on to note that the script had undergone substantial changes, and now 'has the potential to become one of the screen's most popular thrillers' (Elwood to Trevelyan: 24th August 1961). Elwood's lengthy letter seemed to be aimed at trying to reverse the decision of the BBFC, using a tactic James Carreras had tried three years earlier - pitting the opinion of the MPAA against the BBFC. Elwood did so by noting that the substantial changes made to *The Night Creatures* had resulted in Geoffrey Shurlock at the MPAA finding the material acceptable under the production code.

Cross-referencing this correspondence at the BBFC Archive with the MPAA files at the Margaret Herrick Library, it is clear that Elwood did indeed engage in lengthy discussions with the MPAA through to March 1962. On 22nd May 1961, after nearly eight weeks of correspondence, Elwood submitted a revised script of *The Night Creatures* to the MPAA, and Shurlock replied noting that 'with the extensive changes in this new version of your story, we wish to note that this material now seems acceptable under the requirements of the Production Code' (Shurlock to Elwood: 24th May 1961).

Clearly enthused by this, Elwood (still apparently coordinating with James Carreras) wrote the above-mentioned letter to Trevelyan. However, Trevelyan's own response to Elwood, held in the BBFC Archive, is illuminating. Noting that he would have to see the script again as it had been 'more than four years since [we] considered the original script' (Trevelyan to Elwood: 28th August 1961), Trevelyan also warned Elwood that even though time had passed, the script potentially would be more difficult to pass in 1961 than it was in 1957. Trevelyan wrote:

In recent years we have found it necessary to be cautious about horror films, probably more cautious than we were a few years ago... [horror] films are now infrequent. As a result, when they are shown to the public they tend to invite a much greater degree of public criticism than the film would have invited even a few years ago. Criticism of what is shown on the cinema screens has increased substantially during the last two years and we think it might be inadvisable to issue certificates to films which we think will intensify this criticism (Trevelyan to Elwood: 28th August 1961).

It was around this time that the BBFC encountered considerable criticism for their handling of *Peeping Tom*, and were keen to keep a closer eye on horror material shown to the public. Despite Trevelyan promising that any resubmitted script would 'receive fair and objective consideration', this excerpt from Trevelyan explicitly states that the BBFC was not giving certificates to these films based merely on the film itself, but were also considering their own relationship to the public, and the damage passing a horror film such as *The Night Creatures* might do for the censor's own reputation.

After noting that Michael Carreras 'is having Anthony Hinds take care of matters concerning script revisions' (Elwood to Trevelyan: 3rd September 1961), Elwood assures Trevelyan that Hammer would resubmit the script again imminently. However, the correspondence took a bizarre turn with a handwritten note by Trevelyan on a copy of a letter from Elwood dated 16th September 1961. Trevelyan's note read:

Spoke to Col. [James] Carreras on telephone. He said that he knows nothing of any proposal for Mike [Carreras] to be associated with making this picture. He himself would have nothing to do with it, and would stop Michael doing it (Trevelyan 1961).

This note offers up a number of questions regarding this revival of *The Night Creatures* script, and the nature of Hammer's involvement. Perhaps most pressing is the nature of

Elwood's relationship with Hammer. Throughout the correspondence, Elwood regularly referred to Hammer's involvement in the project's revival, and specifically mentioned Tony Hinds, James Carreras and Michael Carreras throughout his correspondence. However, the note by Trevelyan explicitly stated that James Carreras has no idea about the arrangement, whilst also casting significant doubt about Elwood's business relationship with Michael Carreras. Elwood clearly had a copy of the script (he gives detailed references to scenes throughout his correspondence with the MPAA and BBFC), but there is a potential scenario where Elwood perhaps exaggerated Hammer's involvement with *The Night Creatures* revival. However, it is pertinent to note that it would be wise of James Carreras to distance himself from what had already proved a controversial screenplay for Hammer. This is around the same time that the BBFC had not only exacted significant cuts to *The Curse of the Werewolf*, but had even strongly encouraged James Carreras to move away from horror films altogether. Although neither potential scenario is confirmed in the correspondence between Trevelyan and Elwood, this is one of the last pieces of correspondence held in the BBFC Archive between Trevelyan and Elwood, and Elwood's involvement with the project seems to cease entirely by early 1962.

The final chapter in Hammer's *The Night Creatures* saga came when 'an economical Hammer sold the screenplay to American producer Robert Lippert' (Hutchings 2008: 54). As noted at the beginning of this chapter, Hammer had a longstanding relationship with Lippert dating back to the late 1940s. Therefore, Hammer selling *The Night Creatures* on to Lippert in the early 1960s, after their great success within the gothic horror genre in the United Kingdom and United States, offers a neat, cyclical aspect to *The Night Creatures* turbulent production process. *The Night Creatures* underwent significant changes (so much so that Matheson took his name off the eventually used script), and the film was retitled *The Last Man on Earth* and finally shot in Italy. Despite these changes, one thing remained constant, and that was the difficulty the film had with the BBFC. Despite the film no longer having anything to do with Hammer, it was James Carreras who came to its aid when talks had seemingly stalled between Lippert and the BBFC. The BBFC Archive holds correspondence from Carreras to Trevelyan regarding *The Last Man on Earth*, noting that Lippert 'has had a lot of trouble' with the film (Carreras to Trevelyan: 23rd November 1964). Not only did

Carreras write to Trevelyan on Lippert's behalf, but he actually submitted the film to the censor. Trevelyan wrote back to Carreras three days later, noting that the film was submitted in July 1963, and that the BBFC 'gave Fox some cuts, but they decided not to proceed and the picture has therefore never been cleared by us' (Trevelyan to Carreras: 26th November 1964). Trevelyan ended the letter by saying that 'if your company, or any other company, will make these cuts we are prepared to clear the picture'. The film would eventually see the light of day, but 'had no noticeable impact at all when it opened in the mid-1960s' (Hutchings 2008: 67).

Conclusion

The period of 1956-1958 was a crucial time for Hammer. Together, these case studies of Subotsky's *Frankenstein*, *Tales of Frankenstein* and *The Night Creatures* highlight the precarious situation Hammer was in during this period, with each of these projects coming as a reaction to a recent success. Subotsky's *Frankenstein* was pitched to Hammer immediately after their success with *The Quatermass Xperiment*, and *Tales of Frankenstein* and *The Night Creatures* were all made possible after *The Curse of Frankenstein*. However, in each individual case, Hammer's identity as horror specialists was not yet secured. Due to an intensive focus by Hammer in the proceeding years, 'Hammer Horror' would become identifiable through its tone, setting, characters and recurring cast and crew. As will be seen in later chapters, this label as horror experts was not always a blessing for Hammer, and could be somewhat limiting. However, it proved an essential part of Hammer's success throughout the 1960s, and gave Hammer the security to later diversify into other genres.

This chapter's focus on Hammer before this label had been attached therefore allows us to view the studio in a state of flux, looking to capitalise on recent triumphs but with no longstanding pattern of success to follow. Instead Hammer initially looked to other successful cycles outside its own output for guidance. Subotsky's *Frankenstein*, as noted in the first section of this chapter, was to be produced cheaply in black and white, and potentially star Boris Karloff. *Tales of Frankenstein* looked to both Hammer's recent successful adaptation and Universal's former 1930s/40s horror cycle, ultimately to the detriment and eventual failure of the show itself. *The Night Creatures* looked to capitalise on *The Curse of Frankenstein's* reception, but looked outside of the

gothic horror genre to a more contemporary and darker story, which was seen by the British Board of Film Censors as unacceptable.

This ties in to another key factor which links each of the three case studies in this chapter, and resonates with later chapters as well. Despite Hammer not yet having a consistent identity in place with regards to its horror product, it was not internal factors that fatally undermined these three unmade projects, but external factors outside Hammer's direct control. Hammer had agreed to Subotsky's *Frankenstein* project and developed it extensively, even sending off a script to the BBFC to ensure a suitable rating. It was only after Universal threatened to shut down production and sue Hammer if they utilised any aspects of James Whale's *Frankenstein* or *The Bride of Frankenstein*, that Hammer realised it had to radically alter their approach. This ultimately led to the firing of Subotsky and the instalment of Jimmy Sangster, who would go on to be a prolific figure in Hammer's later years. It is notable that, although Hammer fired Subotsky, he was not entirely cut from the production. As an acknowledgement of his vital role in Hammer developing a *Frankenstein* project, Subotsky received 15% of the profits and £5000 for his role in the birth of Hammer's *Frankenstein* (Kinsey 2002: 60). Subotsky would return to the British horror scene in 1962 where, along with his partner Max Rosenberg, he founded Amicus Productions, the outfit which utilised many original Hammer stars (such as Cushing and Lee) and became known for portmanteau horror films.

Tales of Frankenstein was ultimately undone by Screen Gems relying more on the legacy of Universal than the recent Hammer iteration of *Frankenstein*. The recruitment of Sangster and Hinds, two of Hammer's key architects on *The Curse of Frankenstein*, demonstrates that Hammer was clearly hoping that *Tales of Frankenstein* would offer a means to bring their unique interpretation of the character to the small screen. However, Screen Gems had recently acquired Universal's library of horror films for distribution on television, and after having great success airing them, was seemingly reluctant to move away from a tried and tested formula. This left Hammer in an impossible position. Although it is highly unlikely that Screen Gems would have entered a co-production deal with Hammer without the previous success of *Shock*, trying to merge the traditions of Universal's gothics with Hammer's new approach proved untenable, and the television show was never picked up.

Finally, *The Night Creatures* was undone not by Hammer, but by the BBFC, though Hammer was by no means blameless. Matheson's script features some harrowing scenes by today's standards, and clearly would not pass the censor in 1958. However, although Hammer was no doubt prepared to alter the script to the censor's satisfaction, the censor instead refused to engage with any specific issues in the script itself, instead deeming the story of the screenplay unsuitable in any fashion. Correspondence between Hammer and the BBFC, and Hammer and the MPAA, show that the American and British censor differed in their opinions on the script, a fact Hammer tried to use to its advantage. However, the BBFC stood firm on its decision, and despite a brief and bizarre attempt to revive the script in the early 1960s, Hammer's *The Night Creatures* never made it to the screen. What effect it may have had on Hammer's production slate can only be speculated. At the time, its failure meant that Hammer's horror product was restricted almost entirely to the gothic horror genre. One can venture that if it had been released and proven internationally successful, it could have led Hammer down a different path entirely.

These failures came at a time when Hammer found itself reacting to a number of changes internally and externally, primarily brought on by its successes. However, Hammer would find its footing as it moved into the 1960s. Anglo-American industrial relations grew even more robust throughout the 1960s and, by 1967, 'ninety per cent of funding for 'British films' came from the USA, with investment peaking in 1968 at 31.3million dollars' (Magor and Schlesinger 2009: 302). James Carreras exploited this industry trend, proving adept at fostering a number of lucrative financial and distribution arrangements with major US production companies, primarily on the strength of their gothic horror product. Notably for this chapter, Hammer's third film in their *Frankenstein* series, *The Evil of Frankenstein*, was financed and distributed by Universal. This allowed Hammer to utilise elements of Universal's own series, and this is telling not only in the Creature's design, but key story elements as well. Tony Hinds wrote the screenplay, which consists of flashbacks to Frankenstein's first experiments, shown to be markedly different from the ones depicted in *The Curse of Frankenstein*. Frankenstein himself seems to be entirely different as a character, and is notably less antagonistic. The film then, acts as a later experiment in the merging of Universal's and Hammer's sensibilities. The film itself was produced, completed and distributed, so is

undoubtedly more successful in this amalgamation than *Tales of Frankenstein*. However, the film is jarringly disconcerting in comparison with earlier and later entries in the series, demonstrating once more that Hammer and Universal's adaptations of *Frankenstein* were more effective when kept distinct. More *Frankenstein* sequels followed throughout the sixties, and Hammer efficiently added several more gothic monsters to its arsenal. With success and a strong brand identity procured, the 1960s saw a distinct lack of unproduced films at Hammer. However, as the 1970s approached, a number of fundamental changes both industry-wide and internally at Hammer suggested their success may not be permanent.

Chapter 4: 1968-1974

The Curse of *Dracula*: Stagnation and Innovation in Hammer's *Dracula* Franchise

Introduction

In his book *The Hammer Vault* (2011), Marcus Hearn notes that 'it is a measure of Hammer's reputation and success that almost every subject they pitched to distributors from the mid-1950s to the late 1960s found finance' (Hearn 2011: 160). Chapter 3 covered a number of notable exceptions as Hammer began to adapt to its new position as horror specialists, but for the most part this statement is correct. Throughout most of the 1960s, Hammer capitalised on its success in the horror genre, producing a slew of sequels to some of its late-1950s gothic horror films, and consolidating this success by diversifying into other genres.

However, whilst Hammer's output seemed to move from strength to strength, the 1960s were not bereft of behind-the-scenes incidents. In 1961, after escalating tensions between him and his father, Michael Carreras left Hammer and formed his own production company Capricorn Productions. This was in part due to the ongoing issues with Columbia, which was a factor in the cancellation of *The Rape of Sabena*, noted in Chapter 3. Frustrated that this passion project had been cancelled and that he 'found himself playing second fiddle again as executive producer to nine out of the next thirteen of Hammer's pictures in '60-'61' (Kinsey 2010: 65) Carreras left shortly before production began on *Captain Clegg* (Scott 1962). Despite his official departure, Carreras still worked frequently with Hammer throughout the 1960s as an independent director, writer and producer, directing films such as *Maniac* (Carreras 1963), *The Curse of the Mummy's Tomb* (Carreras 1964) and *Slave Girls* (Carreras 1967).

A more permanent change came when Hammer moved from Bray Studios to Elstree. Hammer had made their home at Bray Studios in 1951, where a home studio proved a shrewd financial move. The reused and redressed sets that recur throughout Hammer's Bray films undoubtedly contribute to the notion of a distinct Hammer style and aesthetic. Moreover, Hammer's time at Bray (1951-1967) is intrinsically linked to

Hammer's peak as a company, echoed in Laurie N. Ede's assertion that 'the best Hammer horrors were made when the company had a stable studio base at Bray, and a stable group of technicians' (Ede 2012: 54).

However, this fall from grace was not merely due to location, but also a myriad of industrial factors that caused Hammer to rethink its entire finance and distribution strategy. Due to the Eady Levy and the cheaper cost of production in the United Kingdom (outlined in the previous chapter), by the 1960s American capital in Britain was at an unprecedented height (Dickinson 1983: 92). However, this overreliance on American finance in Britain would prove to be costly for Hammer and the industry more broadly. In a remarkably prescient article in *Sight and Sound* entitled 'England, Their England' (1966), Penelope Houston discusses film funding in the United Kingdom and the dependency on American support. Noting how a great deal of American production money 'is now concentrated in London... partly no doubt because it's easier, closer and offers the attractions of being abroad without the snags of having to work in a foreign language' (Houston 1966: 55), Houston outlines the positives of this influx of American finance in Britain:

The Americans are not driving the British out of work: they are creating employment. They are not setting out to Americanise British films: they are using a good deal of British talent to develop an international cinema' (Houston 1966: 55).

However, Houston also outlines the tenuous nature of this relationship, noting that 'everything is fine, in fact, unless and until the Americans move out. Then it has been suggested... "the British film industry could collapse in a month"' (Houston 1966: 56). The lack of more reliable or long-term finance is noted by Houston (echoing Street's previously cited assertion on the post-war British industry's 'structural weaknesses and vulnerable position in world markets' (Street 2002: 92)), who emphasises that

[...] there is of course, no guarantee of permanence, no tying investment in plant or fixed assets. This is mostly picture-by-picture finance, depending on such chancy things as the tastes of producers and directors, or the type of story in vogue at the moment' (Houston 1966: 56).

Houston's deliberations would come to pass in the late 1960s. In the late 1960s/early 1970s, the American economy and film industry went into recession (Baillieu and

Goodchild 2002: 95, Casper 2011: 48). Between 1969 and 1971 alone ‘only one in ten films cleared a profit. About 40 percent of labor was unemployed’ (Casper 2011: 48). This resulted in the withdrawal of ‘the extensive American financial support for British production which had been such a key feature of the industry’s optimism in the 1960s’ (Higson 1993: 217). Outside of American finance, social factors also contributed to this decline in the industry, with cinema attendance dropping dramatically as television and other leisure activities became increasingly popular (Street 2009: 105, Higson 1993: 217, Hutchings 1993: 159).

The large-scale withdrawal of American finance alone would have been critical for Hammer, but it was not the company’s only blight. Hammer’s success within the horror genre led to a proliferation of horror product within the British market in the 1960s and 1970s, notably Amicus Films, Tigon, Anglo-Amalgamated and Tyburn (Hutchings 2004: 29, Conrich 2008: 26). Amicus was perhaps the most notable, particularly as it was founded by Milton Subotsky and Max Rosenberg, who had so nearly worked for Hammer on the unmade *Frankenstein* project in 1956. Subotsky and Rosenberg had worked in the horror genre before, not just with the unmade *Frankenstein*, but through producing *The City of the Dead* (Moxey 1960). Although Rosenberg is uncredited, he played a major part in gaining finance for the film (Nutman 2008: 26). Amicus Production, Ltd. was officially formed on November 1961 (Nutman 2008: 32), and produced fourteen horror films between 1964 and 1974. Hutchings notes that the frequency with which British stars such as Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee appeared within Amicus’ films, and the fact they were all by made by British directors, ‘suggest that Amicus should be seen as an integral part of the British horror movement of the 1960s and 1970s’ (Hutchings 2002: 131).

Amicus’ (and companies such as Tyburn’s) use of actors and directors notable for their work in Hammer ‘cannily attempted to utilise the same creative approach’ as Hammer (Forshaw 2013: 80). This use of recurring creative talent associated with the company meant that ‘Hammer Horror’ ‘became a generic description’ (Forshaw 2013: 80), as opposed to only being associated with Hammer Films. As such, as the financial and distribution networks the company had relied on so heavily fell apart, competition within the genre actually increased in the first part of the 1970s (Conrich 2008: 26, Street 2009: 106), putting further strain on the company.

Within Hammer itself, the most sizable change in this period was when James Carreras, who had been Managing Director of the company since his own father's death on 15th October 1950, sold his stake in Hammer to his son Michael on 31st January 1973 (Meikle 2009: 205, Hearn and Barnes 2007: 133-134). James Carreras had been looking to leave Hammer for some time. In 1969 he attempted to broker a deal with EMI head Bernard Delfont, which would have seen EMI take a 75 per cent stake in Hammer Films (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 133). When this failed, he turned to Tony Tenser at Tigon in 1971. This deal came close to fruition, with contracts being drawn and a meeting held. However, disappointed in the terms offered (due to the fact it was on a performance basis, James Carreras was to be far less well rewarded than he initially thought) this deal was also shelved (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 133-134, Harper and Smith 2012: 125). Michael Carreras had returned to Hammer as managing director in January 1971, and one of his first acts was to appoint Roy Skeggs as production supervisor (Meikle 2009: 189). Skeggs would go on to be managing director himself from 1979 to 2000, and his role at the company will be the focus of Chapter 6. Despite Michael Carreras' prominent position at Hammer, he had not been aware that his father was looking to sell the company, and had to move quickly. He took out a £400,000 loan with the Pension Fund Securities (PFS), and made an official offer to his father to take over the company in 1973. James Carreras accepted the deal, making Michael Carreras the official head of Hammer.

Michael Carreras' tenure at the head of the company, for what would prove to be its final seven years, could lead some to consider a correlation between Carreras' appointment and the company's eventual failure. In his chapter 'The End of Hammer' in *Seventies British Cinema* (Shail 2008: 14-25) Wheeler Winston Dixon notes that Hammer, 'which was still a significant force in British cinema in 1969, saw the 1970s as a period of decay and terminal collapse' (Dixon 2008: 14). Personnel changes, the move to Elstree from Bray, and the change from James Carreras to Michael Carreras all arguably confirm the notion that Hammer was losing many of the facets that had once made it such a successful studio.

Despite the huge economic changes in the late 1960s and 1970s which fundamentally altered Hammer's entire production strategy, some studies on the decline of the company have placed a particular emphasis on the apparent stagnation of

Hammer's films, citing this as a key factor in its decline and eventual closure. In his 1992 article 'Twilight of the Monsters: The English Horror Film 1968-1975', David Sanjek identifies George Romero's *The Night of the Living Dead* (1968) as a crucial moment in horror cinema. Sanjek positions *The Night of the Living Dead* as the film that broke the rules set firmly in place by British horror films such as Hammer's, with its impact setting in motion 'the decline of the British horror film and the myth it embodied' (Sanjek 1992: 112):

Violence that once was implied...now was shown in all its visceral details. The film's victims in several cases became themselves monsters, thereby muddying the distinction between the monstrous and the normal as well as locating terror in the everyday world (Sanjek 1992: 111).

Sanjek specifically cites Hammer's output in stark contrast with Romero's film, noting how by 1968 Hammer's films had become 'increasingly safe and formulaic' (Sanjek 1992: 112). Sanjek notes that the film's moral ambiguity and bleakness put the 'tidy universe of the English horror film...in jeopardy' (Sanjek 1992: 112). This is also echoed in Laurie N. Ede's previously mentioned chapter in *British Film Culture in the 1970s: The Boundaries of Pleasure*, 'British Film Design in the 1970s', where he notes that, by the 1970s, 'the Hammers were burdened by a lack of imagination' (2012: 54).

Whilst it is difficult to look past the critical failure of Hammer's distribution and financial networks as the primary reason for the company's eventual downfall, this notion that Hammer itself struggled to innovate within the confines of a genre with which they were synonymous is an interesting one. Between 1957-1970, Hammer had produced 27 films that could be categorised as gothic horror, with seven *Frankenstein* films and seven *Dracula* films amongst them (Hammer would go on to produce one more *Frankenstein* film and three more *Dracula* pictures). As such, this argument of a lack of innovation or creative stagnation is one with merit. Yet this chapter will argue that through an analysis of Hammer's unmade projects within this period, it is clear that Michael Carreras' tenure is not one that lacked innovation. This will be done primarily through an examination of Hammer's most immutable franchise, *Dracula*.

In the first section of the chapter I will present a brief overview of Hammer's produced *Dracula* franchise to establish the history and development of the series. It will also note the recurring visual and thematic motifs many of Hammer's *Dracula*

films relied upon, in order to give context to the notion of aesthetic/thematic stagnation put forward in work such as Sanjek's. As well as these films, the primary aim of this section will be to integrate three unmade films into the Dracula canon, all initially considered under James Carreras' stewardship, but ultimately decided against. The first is Kevin Francis' *Dracula's Feast of Blood*, which was to act as both a direct sequel to *Dracula has Risen from the Grave* (Francis 1968), as well as incorporating elements of Stoker's novel that had not yet been used in the franchise. The section will examine its plot and production context, and crucially, how it led to one of Hammer's most prolific producers, Anthony Hinds, leaving the company. Furthermore, I will examine what could be considered one of Hammer's most experimental attempts at revitalising the Dracula character, Don Houghton's *Victim of His Imagination*. This was to be a biopic of Bram Stoker which incorporated elements of the Dracula mythos into its story. The project was considered in 1972, James Carreras' final year at the company, but would go on to become a clear passion project for Michael Carreras, who revived the project again in the early 1990s, long after his association with Hammer had ended. The project's initial development in 1972 at such a crucial time at Hammer makes it a notable one, particularly as it uses the character of Dracula in a way Hammer never had before. I will then examine the seven-year production history of one of Hammer's most well-known unmade films, Tony Hind's *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*. Originally written in September 1970 and titled *Dracula High Priest of Vampires*, the project was revived under Michael Carreras' management in 1977 under the title *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*. I will examine the production context of *Dracula High Priest of Vampires/The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* in relation to Hammer's courting of American distribution and finance, and its similarities to and differences from other instalments within the Dracula series.

The second section will focus solely on an in-depth analysis of *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*. Developed under Michael Carreras by Don Houghton in 1974, the project exists in the Hammer Script Archive as several synopses and treatments by Houghton, George Trow and Christopher Wicking. Both *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* and *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* shared the same concept of Dracula in India, and saw the Count driven into hiding in the former, and preparing for a demonic wedding in the latter.

Due to the general concept similarities, *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*'s production history is often conflated with that of *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*, and it is often described as a redrafted version of the latter. For example, Kinsey's *Hammer Films: The Elstree Years* (2007) suggests that 'Don Houghton revised Hinds script, submitting a nineteen-page treatment under the striking new title *Kali- Devil Bride of Dracula* [sic] in June [1974]' (394). Meikle's *History of Horror* states that 'Hinds' script was later dusted off, retitled (as *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*) and handed over to the resourceful Chris Wicking' (Meikle 2009: 213), and Hearn, in *The Hammer Vault* (2011), says that that '[Hinds' story] was overhauled and various drafts of *Kali...Devil Bride of Dracula* were written by Don Houghton and Chris Wicking' (162). Yet from the materials in the Hammer Script Archive it is clear that they are distinct projects, which were developed at different times by different creative talent. The section will therefore look to reposition *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*'s place in historical and industrial studies of Hammer, as well as examine the film's complex production history as a British film with American backing, which needed approval from the Indian government. I will also examine the story premise of *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*, including the political and ideological issues regarding its Indian setting, and its broader position within the Dracula franchise.

Reviving Dracula: The Reinvention of Hammer's *Dracula* Series

Hammer's 1958 *Dracula* (Fisher) cemented the company as the new standard-bearer for British gothic cinema. The first film to feature Hammer's 'most iconic character' (Rose 2014: 119), *Dracula*'s reputation has only grown in stature, with the British Film Institute restoring and re-releasing the film in 2007, and then again in 2013, with additional footage recovered in Japan restored and integrated into the film. At the time of its release, the international success of the film saw Hammer put in the enviable position of devising a sequel for a character who had only ever originally appeared in a single stand-alone novel. Hammer had dealt with this before with the *Frankenstein* series (1957-1974), continuing ably after the original adaptation (which took far more liberties with its original source material than *Dracula* did) had proven successful.

The issue was temporarily circumvented with the reluctance of Christopher Lee to reprise his role in a sequel, fearing being typecast. As a result, the character of

Dracula was omitted from the sequel, and a new vampire, David Peel's Baron Meinster, faced off against a returning Peter Cushing as Dr Van Helsing. Yet despite featuring an original screenplay and a new villain, *The Brides of Dracula* (Fisher 1960) can still be seen to 'reproduce the structures' (Hutchings 1993: 120) of the original *Dracula*, with the gothic iconography and recurring theme of the 'battle between vampire and savant-professional over the women within a weakened patriarchy' (Hutching 1993: 120).

Christopher Lee was eventually tempted back to the role, in *Dracula: Prince of Darkness* (Fisher 1966). Set ten years after the original, the film is still anchored in the gothic archetypes and iconography which, even on Lee's second appearance as the Count, contained 'little that audiences hadn't seen before' (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 97). With *Dracula: Prince of Darkness* putting an end to eight years of hibernation, Lee's Dracula began to stalk cinema screens with increasing frequency. *Dracula has Risen from the Grave* saw the departure of Terence Fisher from the series, but the film proved relatively successful at the box office, with the November 30th issue of *Kinematograph Weekly* noting that 'all records were broken by *Dracula has Risen from the Grave* on the first day of its ABC release' (cited in Kinsey 2007: 97). However, despite director Freddie Francis bringing a distinctive visual style to the franchise, the film's narrative remains similar to its predecessors, with Lee's Dracula terrorising a 19th century 'cod mittel-Europe' (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 30). The franchise continued to be bound by these spatial and temporal limitations in the follow-up, *Taste the Blood of Dracula* (Sasdy 1970). Although narratively unremarkable, *Taste the Blood of Dracula's* production history was to have a seismic effect on Hammer in the long term.

After Freddie Francis had completed *Dracula has Risen from the Grave*, Hammer received an unsolicited script from Francis' son Kevin, who had been a former runner at Hammer (Hearn 2011: 118). Dated March 1969 and held in the Hammer Script Archive, the script, *Dracula's Feast of Blood*, acts as a direct sequel to *Dracula has Risen from the Grave*, whilst also going back to Stoker's original text for inspiration. This in itself is significant, as although Hammer had cemented its own Dracula formula, each entry had become increasingly untethered from the novel, with only the title character betraying any semblance of fidelity to Stoker's original creation. Noting in the introduction to the script that he 'thought when writing "DRACULA'S FEAST OF BLOOD" that I would return, as near as I could without doubling up on

previous films, to BRAM STOKER'S novel' (1969: 1), Francis reintroduced a number of characters and narrative plot points from Stoker's original text. *Dracula's Feast of Blood* reinstates Van Helsing as the series protagonist, and introduces characters such as John Seward and Renfield, as well as featuring key scenes from the novel excised by Sangster in his initial adaptation, such as Dracula's oversea voyage on the ship *The Demeter*. By adhering closely to Stoker's novel, Francis' script would have potentially pleased Christopher Lee, who had grown increasingly frustrated by the lack of fidelity to Stoker's work. In a letter to his fan club, Lee announced that he would appear in *Taste the Blood of Dracula* due to his agent 'with the very best of intentions, [having] virtually committed me to playing Dracula for the fourth time in yet another Hammer production' (Lee cited in Kinsey 2007: 139). Lee's hesitancy to play the character stemmed from Hammer's depiction of Dracula in the sequels, where he was basically reduced to a near silent, stalking killer. Yet Francis' script, despite not featuring the Count at his most verbose, does feature one key aspect of the novel ignored in previous Hammer versions, the Count beginning the story as an old man and getting gradually younger:

The body is still tall and majestic, but the steel grey hair is snowy white and the forehead deeply lined with age. He has not been able to acquire the amount of blood necessary to keep him young and alive and this lack of blood has made him age (Francis 1969: 18).

This depiction of Dracula as old, only growing younger through the consumption of blood, was a key reason Lee did the Spanish *Dracula El Conde Dracula* (Franco 1970) - 'it was the only opportunity I ever had for portraying Stoker's character physically on the screen exactly as he described him - as an old man dressed in black getting progressively younger during the story' (Lee cited in Brosnan 1976: 172). However, despite utilising Stoker's original text and characters, Kevin Francis' script was formally declined by Hammer, on 19 May 1969 (Kinsey 2007: 137, Hearn and Barnes 2007: 130). There are two possibilities as to why Francis' script was not chosen. Firstly, the 112-page screenplay is more ambitious and potentially costly than other Hammer *Dracula* entries. For example, the climax involves a ship being set on fire in open waters which, considering Hammer's penchant for interiors and closed sets, would have proven difficult. There are also a number of locations including Dracula's castle, Transylvania,

the Demeter, London and Seward's asylum. More crucially, Hammer were still unsure if Lee would even return to the role, with Brian Lawrence at one stage giving Tony Hinds 'the go-ahead to write a Dracula film without the Count in it' (Kinsey 2007: 137).

Hinds would go on to write the script for *Taste the Blood of Dracula* under his pseudonym John Elder, having to hastily reinsert the Count when Lee agreed to play the role once more. Lee's reluctance to play Dracula had made for a tumultuous pre-production process, but after filming wrapped, Hammer found itself in even more difficulty. Kevin Francis alleged that at least two similar scenes from *Dracula's Feast of Blood* appeared in *Taste the Blood of Dracula* (Meikle 2009: 183, Hearn and Barnes 2007: 130-131, Kinsey 2007: 158). Comparing both screenplays (both held in the Hammer Script Archive) it is difficult to see which specific scenes Francis is referring to. Both screenplays feature the character Dracula, but other than this they are seemingly unrelated, featuring different characters and locations. Despite Francis conceding that 'John Elder [Tony Hinds] didn't put my two scenes in' (cited in Hearn and Barnes 2007: 131), Hinds' role as both screenwriter and producer at Hammer meant that he had no tangible proof that he had not read Francis' script. After a bad experience in America overseeing Hammer's first foray into television *Journey to the Unknown* (1968-1969), the *Dracula's Feast of Blood* controversy proved to be the final straw, and Hinds resigned from the company effective from May 1970 (Kinsey 2010: 60).

Hinds had been a pivotal part of Hammer and was one of the key figures behind the success of the gothic horror cycle. Director Don Sharp noted that Hammer 'went wrong when Tony Hinds left... I don't think anyone else had the same sympathy, the same feeling for quality' (cited in Meikle 2009: 177). The departure of many Hammer stalwarts in the early 1970s such as director Freddie Francis, editor James Needs and production designer Bernard Robinson arguably signalled the beginning of the end of Hammer's gothic cycle, yet the Dracula series soldiered on.

By the time *Scars of Dracula* (Baker 1970) was released, it was the sixth entry in a series which was now over a decade old. Although the established formula was present in *Scars of Dracula*, it was the final instalment of it on-screen and, behind the scenes, the beginning of a new finance and distribution deal for Hammer. With waning interest from American majors, James Carreras turned to Associated British Picture Corporation (ABPC), who had been under the ownership of EMI since 1969, to

distribute the film (Hearn 2011: 125, Meikle 2009: 182-183, Kinsey 2007: 206). Under this deal Hammer effectively had 100 per cent British finance, but for the first time since the 1950s, Hammer had no American distribution guarantee (Hearn 2011: 125, Meikle 2009: 182-183). As well as this, the funding offered by the British independent ABPC was far below what had been given by American majors such as Warner Bros., meaning no film could cost over \$200,000 (Hearn 2011: 125). ABPC were also not able to secure significant American distribution for *Scars of Dracula* and its double bill feature *Horror of Frankenstein* (Sangster 1970), meaning the films had a relatively limited theatrical run in the United States.

This is significant for several reasons. First, it underlines the point made in the introduction that although the correlation between Michael Carreras' instalment as head of Hammer and the company's decline is often cited, the seeds of Hammer's eventual failure were planted three years before James Carreras left the company. Not only had Hinds and other Hammer regulars departed, but Hammer's most viable (and crucially, marketable) franchise had been turned down for distribution by the Hollywood majors. This left Hammer with very limited budgets to make the films, and very few options regarding transatlantic distribution, the latter of which had been fundamental to Hammer's longstanding success. Second, this deal shows a lack of interest in the current Hammer Dracula product. As noted earlier, this Dracula formula had been in place for twelve years by the time of *Scars of Dracula*'s release, and now with *Scars of Dracula* only being produced through a tight budget and limited United States distribution, it was clear that this formula was in drastic need of reinvention.

The series had been in financial decline since the success of *Dracula Has Risen from the Grave*, and after *Scars of Dracula*'s limited distribution put paid to any hopes of a decent box office (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 139), Hammer opted to take the series in what seemed like a bold new direction, resurrecting Dracula in contemporary London in *Dracula AD 1972* (Gibson 1972) and its sequel *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* (Gibson 1973). Both projects got the backing of Warner Bros., which proved a marked improvement over the ABPC deal, but the films themselves were far less innovative than their concepts may suggest.

Warner had approached Hammer with the idea of a contemporary Dracula film after the success of American International Picture's (AIP) *Count Yorga, Vampire*

(Kelljan 1970). *Count Yorga, Vampire* presents a vampire story with a similar narrative structure to that of a Hammer Dracula film (a vampire stalks a group of young people and picks them off one by one), but moved the story to contemporary Los Angeles. The film proved successful enough financially for a sequel to be commissioned (*The Return of Count Yorga* (Kelljan 1971)), and received some positive critical reviews. These specifically referenced the modern setting of the film, with the *Monthly Film Bulletin* remarking that 'a contemporary Los Angeles setting makes an unusual background for a story which, though it derives from standard vampire lore, is treated in a manner that is appreciably removed from routine' (Thompson 1971: 6). Warner and Hammer were not the only ones to see the lucrative potential of a contemporary vampire story. AIP followed *Count Yorga, Vampire* with *Blacula* (Crain 1972), a Blaxploitation horror which sees the protagonist Prince Mamuwalde turned into a vampire by Count Dracula in a 19th Century prologue, before awaking in contemporary Los Angeles as Blacula. 1972 also saw the release of the television movie *The Night Stalker* (Moxey), a film written by Richard Matheson and produced by Dan Curtis (who directed the contemporary vampire film *House of Dark Shadows* in 1970). Set in contemporary Las Vegas, it was the 'most widely-watched TV movie of all time on the US airwaves' (Hallenbeck 2010: 167).

Hammer were therefore not innovating when they gave the *Dracula* series a contemporary setting, but merely attempting to diversify the franchise by banking on proven genre trends. The one advantage Hammer had was its lead characters of Dracula and Van Helsing (Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing in their first Dracula film together since the original), with the contemporary setting offering audiences a chance to see these characters in a new context. Yet even this opportunity is arguably wasted. Whereas *Count Yorga, Vampire* and *Blacula* present their eponymous characters as relatively comfortable in their new contemporary setting, Christopher Lee's Dracula is confined to the remnants of a gothic church for *Dracula AD 1972*'s entirety. This decision seemed to come from Michael Carreras himself, who in an interview with Alan Frank said he 'was very strong in dragging in a deserted and empty churchyard as much as possible, to give it a midnight flavour' (cited in Hallenbeck 2010: 162). This suggests that, despite the contemporary setting, Carreras and Hammer were resistant to any major alterations to their premier franchise. Even the choice to finally bring back

Cushing's Van Helsing after a 12-year absence can be seen as Hammer negating the dramatic temporal shift.

The Satanic Rites of Dracula seemed to have a firmer grasp of its setting, with Dracula now under the guise of evil industrialist D.D. Denham. Yet despite being more generically disparate than any other film in the series, invoking spy films and conspiracy thrillers, the film still ends with a fight to the death between Van Helsing and Dracula in a decrepit mansion house. Although the merits of the films themselves can be disputed, the contemporary Dracula instalments did little to help the withering box office. Despite the backing of an American major, and this supposed reinvention of the character onscreen, Warner did not even end up releasing *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* in the United States until 1978 (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 164).

The tension between Hammer's traditional gothic iconography and the need for a radical new approach is particularly apparent in Hammer's contemporary *Dracula* films. Whereas these films did not radicalise the format enough, an examination of the unproduced Dracula projects being considered at Hammer at the time shows a studio fully aware that a change is needed. Although some of these ideas were so high concept they didn't get past an initial outline (*Dracula on Ice*, an ice rink musical written by Houghton in 1973, stands as the most unfathomable), others were considered much more seriously.

One such project, *Victim of His Imagination*, perhaps uses the Dracula character more experimentally than any other proposed or produced film. The film is a biopic of Bram Stoker, and the narrative begins with Stoker on his deathbed in 1912, tormented by visions of monsters from his previous works. Developed by Don Houghton in 1972, the Hammer Script Archive holds a 29-page treatment of the project (1972a). Its status as a part of the Hammer Dracula series, however, is more difficult to define than other entries. By 1972, Hammer had been developing *Dracula* projects for 14 years, yet a biopic focusing on the author of the novel is undoubtedly dissimilar to anything Hammer had produced at that time. The treatment features Stoker suffering from night-terrors, and it is within these sequences where the character of Dracula features, appearing as a nightmarish vision that haunts Stoker. The narrative then flashes back to key moments in his life, focusing on his initial meeting with Henry Irving, the famous actor whom Stoker managed for years, and his relationship with his wife Florence.

Meanwhile, in 1912, his doctor looks for clues in Stoker's work which might help ease his suffering. Even at treatment stage, it is difficult to see how the ambitious narrative structure would have translated on to screen. Not only is there a flashback structure at its centre, but it also introduces dream sequences (usually tied thematically with the narrative), which incorporate scenes from Stoker's works. For example, as Stoker struggles to put a face to the character of Dracula, he sits watching Irving perform in the Lyceum theatre, before having a realisation: 'BRAM's brain reels as the figure of IRVING becomes transformed into the awesome spectre of - Count Dracula...Is Irving the monster he has created' (Houghton 1972a: 21)?

This three-pronged structure would have inevitably been convoluted on screen, though the treatment does contain several interesting meta-textual elements. One of these is in regard to casting. The role of Stoker was offered to Shane Briant (who was under a two-year contract at Hammer), with Christopher Lee to play Henry Irving (Briant in Skal 2011: 15). The casting of Lee in particular seems like Hammer attempting to placate an actor who had grown tired of his most iconic role. Aware that Lee was growing increasingly frustrated at reprising his role of Dracula, but also keen not to overexploit their star attraction in other films, Hammer potentially saw that the role of Irving gave Lee the chance to develop a new role which drew heavily on Lee's association with the Dracula character (with Lee even playing Dracula in the nightmare sequences). This link between Irving, Stoker's difficult and demanding boss, and the vampire Dracula is also interestingly explored in Houghton's treatment. This connection has been made numerous times throughout biographical works on Stoker, yet Skal suggests that 'Houghton may be, in fact, the first biographical writer of any kind to have considered a direct Irving/Dracula connection' (Skal 2011: 16). With only one Stoker biography widely available at the time of his treatment (*A Biography of Dracula: The Life Story of Bram Stoker* by Harry Ludlam (1962)), Houghton's script focuses less on historical accuracy and more on the quasi-psychological reasons behind Stoker's horror works, drawing parallels between 'real life' events and his novels. As well as being structurally complex, the narrative is also somewhat muddled, with Houghton seemingly unsure whether to focus on the historical details of Stoker's life, or the horror elements one might expect from a Hammer film that features Dracula. The nightmare

sequences and biographical elements are so generically disparate it is difficult to see how it would have made it to screen as a cohesive whole.

Having never produced a traditional biopic and struggling to find international finance for anything but Dracula films at this stage (at the time Hammer were under contract with Warner Bros. for its two contemporary Dracula films), Houghton could have conceivably seen *Victim of His Imagination* as an easier sell by including genre set pieces such as the nightmare sequences. This would have allowed the film (and its marketing) to focus heavily on the character of Dracula through both the origins of the literary character and his appearance within the nightmare sequences. Michael Carreras was enthusiastic about the project, and in a pull-out celebrating Hammer's 25th Anniversary in December 1972 (Anon. 1972), the project is listed with other films as 'tuning up' at Hammer. However, Hammer chairman James Carreras and Warner Bros. were clearly less enthusiastic, deciding to press on with the contemporary Dracula films instead. The project laid in stasis for two decades.

With James Carreras still Chairman of Hammer, it could be suggested that *Victim of His Imagination's* distinct approach to the Dracula character cannot be considered as part of Michael Carreras' attempt to revitalise the character after he took over the role of Chairman. However, it is clear through the archival materials held in the Hammer Script Archive that Carreras himself held a passion for this particular project. After I conducted an interview with Denis Meikle, which will be referred to in Chapter 6, Meikle donated a number of files to the Hammer Script Archive. These materials had been given to Meikle by Michael Carreras and detailed his attempts to revive the project in 1992, long after he had left Hammer Films. A brief look at this project's development in 1992 not only shows us a glimpse of Michael Carreras' approach as a writer to the character of Dracula (Carreras himself never directed or wrote a *Dracula* film), but also displays a clear affinity for Don Houghton's original story.

The Hammer Script Archive holds a number of treatments and correspondence on the 1990s revival of the project. There are three treatments: a heavily annotated version of Don Houghton's January 1972 version (1972b), a detailed handwritten 15-page treatment (Undated(a)) written by Carreras and a typed copy of this same treatment which runs to 13-pages and is dated May 1992, also by Carreras. There is also an extremely detailed timeline of Stoker's life (Carreras Undated(b)), correspondence

from Carreras to his lawyer Richard Hatton (25th March 1992), a separate letter to Hammer's Managing Director Roy Skeggs (26th March 1992) and correspondence from Ted Newsom (Undated), who was working for Hammer in the early 1990s and wrote and directed the documentary *Flesh and Blood: The Hammer Heritage of Horror* (1994).

Little changes in regard to the story and structure. It retains the flashbacks and the nightmare sequences but attempts to tighten the three-pronged structure by centring each flashback around an Irving theatrical production (such as *The Rivals* and *Hamlet*). Carreras also adds much more historical detail, as apparent through the previously mentioned timeline. The May 1992 draft also has several historical footnotes which add context and veracity to sequences within the treatment. This could be due to the fact Carreras had first returned to *Victim of His Imagination* after planning on writing his own book on Stoker. In correspondence to Skeggs dated 26th March 1992, Carreras noted that he came to write a new treatment for *Victim of His Imagination* 'after compiling all my notes for the novel that I would still like to write as a long-term project' (Carreras to Skeggs: 26th March 1992). As a result of this, the treatment contains far more historical detail on Stoker's life than Houghton's treatment, and even replaces the character of 'The Doctor' with Stoker's real-life acquaintance Professor Arminus Vambrey, who is often anecdotally linked to the character of Abraham Van Helsing. Carreras himself leans on this association by having Vambrey be the first to tell Stoker about the vampire legend. The Hammer Script Archive also holds a newspaper cutting from the April 14th 1992 edition of *The Daily Mail*, which has a feature entitled 'Scarred for Life by Nightmare Terrors' (26) by Jenny Hope, the paper's medical correspondent. The article gives an explanation on what a night terror is, and has accounts from people affected by them. This was most likely kept by Carreras as research, as the key framing device of *Victim of His Imagination* is Vambrey and Stoker's wife Florence trying to find the cause of Stoker's night terrors before he dies. This again showed an effort to ground the stories biographical elements in fact.

Carreras noted to Richard Hatton that he envisioned the project for television, and potentially part of a series which could have follow-ups on Edgar Allen Poe and H.P Lovecraft ('a similar series of features to those that Ken Russell did on composers' (Carreras to Hatton: 26th March 1992)). Carreras also suggested that Francis Ford

Coppola's then forthcoming *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992), and 'its attendant Razz a Matazz publicity' (Carreras to Hatton: 26th March 1992) could help sell the project. An undated letter to Carreras from Ted Newsom, who was looking to arrange an interview for the *Flesh and Blood* documentary, noted that Carreras' proposal for *Victim of His Imagination* had been received well by Warner/Hammer (Newsom to Carreras: Undated). Hammer's deal with Warner Bros. in the 1990s will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6, but it ultimately resulted in no films being produced. Carreras had been diagnosed with cancer only two years before pursuing *Victim of His Imagination*. Although given the all-clear in 1992, Michael Carreras passed away on the 19th April 1994, with *Victim of His Imagination* remaining unproduced. The radical approach this treatment takes to the Dracula character, and Carreras' clear enthusiasm for the project, make it an important object of enquiry when examining Hammer's approach to the *Dracula* series in the 1970s. The brief examination of Carreras' attempts to revive *Victim of His Imagination* in 1992 compounds the notion that this was a significant project for Carreras personally, and despite the unmade film never being produced, it stands as a key project in Hammer's *Dracula* series.

Although *Victim of His Imagination's* development period lasted two decades, perhaps the most well-known unmade Dracula film of the 1970s period is *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* written by Tony Hinds (under his pseudonym John Elder). Perhaps due to its enticing premise, which offers a high concept approach to one of Hammer's most famous horror icons, the project has been Hammer's most enticing 'what-if' scenario since its conception nearly fifty years ago. In 2014, the project was adapted as a dramatized script reading at the Nottingham Mayhem Festival in October, in association with De Montfort University's Cinema and Television History Research Institute (which provided the screenplay and ephemera for the event). As recently as 2017, the project was adapted for BBC Radio 4, directed by Mark Gatiss and narrated by Michael Sheen. Both versions utilise John Elder's *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* script, which is held in the Hammer Script Archive and dated February 1977.

As well as the Hammer Script Archive, a key source in my research on *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* was an interview conducted with Hammer historian Marcus Hearn. In the interview Hearn, who used to work at Hammer in the 1990s, drew on detailed documentation and correspondence he discovered in Hammer's legal

archive in the mid-1990s. The majority of this material has been subsequently shredded or lost in multiple takeovers and office moves over the last two decades. The following analysis of *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* will cross-reference this interview with the primary material available in the Hammer Script Archive, providing an in-depth and detailed analysis of *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*'s production history. However, it is pertinent to note the difficulty in relying on a timeline that does not originate from primary sources. When cross-referenced with the primary sources available within the Archive, the accuracy of the details within the Hearn interview is clear; however, these missing documents illuminate crucial gaps in production histories and documentation relating to these unmade projects, and foregrounds the difficulty of examining unmade texts.

The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula began as a draft entitled *Dracula High Priests of Vampires*, and was Hammer's first attempt at mounting a Dracula in India project. After *Scars of Dracula* proved to be the critical and financial nadir of the Dracula franchise, the recently departed Tony Hinds offered Hammer a potential way to revitalise the series. Having resigned from Hammer on the 19th May 1970, Hinds delivered the *Dracula High Priest of Vampires* script only three months later, with board member Brian Lawrence informing Hammer's board of directors that they had received the script from Hinds, and that it had already been sent to Norman Katz, president of Warner International (Hearn 2016).

This script features the protagonist Penny travelling to India to find her missing sister, who is ultimately discovered to have been taken by Dracula. Dracula has fled to India after being driven out of his castle in Transylvania by the 'searching light of civilisation' (Elder Undated: 1), and has aligned himself with the Rani, a High Priestess with her own deadly cult, The Temple of Blood. In comparison to the later *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*, Dracula himself features prominently within the script. Not only does Dracula act as the primary antagonist for Penny, but he also engages in something of a civil war against the Rani and her blood cult. Early in the screenplay, Dracula is furious that one of his most recently turned victims was taken by the cult and sacrificed by the Rani. This confrontation comes to a head on page 79 of *Dracula High Priest of Vampires*, where Dracula refuses to give them a sacrifice: 'What do you know of blood? To you and your foolish followers it is something to spill...to waste....to drench your

unclean bodies in. You know nothing. Nothing of its life-giving spirit. Life without end' (Elder Undated: 79). This dialogue exchange also suggests that Dracula has somehow corrupted the local Indian authorities to turn a blind eye to the Rani's crimes: 'who is it that controls the authorities... that makes it safe for you to continue your childish games...that keeps you and that man of yours from retribution' (Elder Undated: 80). This inversion of the Dracula novel, which saw the Eastern aristocrat corrupting the West, is explored partially in *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* (Ward Baker 1974), which will be discussed in the next section. However, in *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires*, it is arguably undermined by the decision to have Dracula represented for the majority of the film as a Chinese nobleman. Here, however, four years before *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* had even been considered for production, Hinds presents a similar thematic inversion but to even greater effect. Not only does Dracula remain as the Western aristocrat of Hammer's series throughout, but he also features much more prominently in *Dracula High Priest of Vampires* than *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires*.

The script also predicts future franchise offerings by utilising a contemporary setting. Far from *Dracula AD 1972*'s overt foregrounding of its new modern setting, *Dracula High Priest of Vampires* does not actually feature an explicit date in which it is set. However, the action certainly takes place significantly later than any Hammer Dracula story had before. The third act set piece features a car chase through a parade celebrating the Hindu god Krishna and his bride. More specifically, when Penny is bitten by a snake on page 59 of *Dracula High Priest of Vampires*, she is rescued by her friend Prem, who rips off her trousers, and with a knife, cuts open the wound before sucking the poison out. As Penny recovers, she 'feels the bandage under the cloth of her jeans' (Elder Undated: 60). Although far from definitive, the reference to cars, contemporary clothing, and no explicit date given in the script referencing a period setting suggests a contemporary time period. This is one of the key differences in *Dracula High Priest of Vampires* and the eventual rewrite *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*, which features the same plot and characters, but is explicitly set in the 1930s.

Another crucial difference between *Dracula High Priest of Vampires* and *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* is the former's nude scenes, which are all removed from the latter. *Dracula High Priest of Vampires*' nude sequences could perhaps be

correlated to the time in which the screenplay was written. In the interview with Hearn, he suggests that Hinds likely wrote the project after leaving Hammer in May 1970 (Hearn 2016). As previously mentioned, the board meeting in which *Dracula High Priest of Vampires* is first discussed was in September of the same year, meaning that it is likely that Hinds wrote the screenplay between May and September 1970. As noted by Hearn, ‘one of the crucial things that happens during that time, right in the middle of that time, is the nature of the X certificate changes’ (Hearn 2016). On July 1st 1970, the ‘AA’ category was introduced, intending to ‘reduce the wide gap between the ‘A’ and the ‘X’ (Phelps 1975: 120). The new AA certificate was designated to films suitable ‘to persons of fourteen years and over’ (Trevelyan 1977: 63). With this new certificate introduced between the A and the X, the X certificate age restriction was raised from sixteen to eighteen (Phelps 1975: 120, Trevelyan 1977: 63). As a result, films could begin to feature more explicit material. Post-1970, Hammer would use this new certificate to dramatic effect in their films, with *The Vampire Lovers* (Ward Baker 1970), *Lust for a Vampire* (Sangster 1971) and *Twins of Evil* (Hough 1971) all examples of films released after the new X certificate which feature far more nudity and overt violence than former gothic horror offerings. Trevelyan himself notes this in *What the Censor Saw*, suggesting in relation to Hammer, ‘nudity became quite common in these films, and by 1970 we even had lesbian vampires’ (1977: 166).

One could therefore consider that Hinds, either due to pressure by Hammer or his instincts as a former producer at the company, added more nudity into the script as a response to the more lenient certificate. This not only includes the sequence where Prem rips off Penny’s jeans and sucks the poison from her leg, but even more explicitly, a scene where Dracula forces one of his victims (Prem’s sister Lakshmi) to dance naked. Hinds’ later draft of the script, *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*, notably removed these sequences, with Prem instead cutting through Penny’s jeans to draw out the poison. The scene with Lakshmi and Dracula is also altered, as it ends with Lakshmi only beginning to remove her Sari. With this redraft occurring in 1977, the reasons for toning down these sequences is not definitively stated. However, one could argue that with the more lenient X certificate model now in its seventh year, audiences no longer found these new exploitative pictures new or exciting, and subsequently they were no longer necessary. Hinds himself was no fan of the more exploitative model Hammer

had begun to adopt in 1970, noting that he ‘hated the tits-and-bums films that Jim [Carreras] was keen to make’ (Murphy 1998: 11).

In hindsight, the script delivered to Hammer in September 1970 contained many of the facets that would be featured in later Hammer Dracula Films. The contemporary setting, the plot featuring a British character in an Eastern country, and a heavier emphasis on more exploitive components (in this case, nudity). Yet the project was ultimately turned down by Warner Bros. In the interview with Hearn, he suggests it was a meeting between Michael Carreras and Norman Katz in January 1971 that decided the fate of *Dracula High Priest of Vampires*, with the project not mentioned again until 1977 (Hearn 2016). Hearn also notes that since the project’s initial inception in September 1970, Hammer were keen to stress to Warner Bros. that the film would be more expensive than previous Dracula entries: ‘Lawrence tells the board that Warner must be informed of the fact that this script cannot be produced in India for anything less than £225,000’ (Hearn 2016). However as noted earlier, Hammer’s previous Dracula film *Scars of Dracula* had been made for under \$200,000 and had a limited release in the United States. Consequently, one could see why Warner Bros. would be reluctant to not only increase the budget significantly for the next film, but also allow Hammer to shoot on location in India. Instead, buoyed by the success of contemporary vampire films such as *Count Yorga, Vampire*, shooting for what would become *Dracula AD 1972* commenced in September 1971.

However, this was not the last time Hammer attempted to develop *Dracula High Priest of Vampires*. After an aborted attempt in 1974 to again sell the project to Warner (which will be discussed in the following section of this chapter), Michael Carreras turned once more to Hind’s script in 1977. As mentioned previously, the script entitled *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* by Tony Hinds is dated February 1977, and is a redrafted version of Hind’s *Dracula High Priest of Vampires*. Correspondence suggests that it was Carreras who first asked Hinds to revisit this concept. On the 31st January 1977, Hinds wrote in what is clearly a response to Carreras regarding *Dracula High Priest of Vampires*, ‘I’ll certainly have a look through this, and see if it needs updating or anything’. On the 3rd of February, only four days later, Hinds’ sent the script back, writing to Carreras:

I've gone through the script page by page and have done some tightening and eased some of the dialogue. I like this story, always have. But I must be the first to admit it has dated in the seven years since I wrote it, and in the event that you're able to set it up, I would strongly suggest a fairly substantial rewrite using all the incident but giving it much more punch. But I do not suppose you would want to become involved in anything that would cost money, until you are sure of a deal (Hinds to Carreras: 3rd February 1977).

Why at this stage Hammer was looking once more to pursue Hinds' script is unknown. Hinds' suggestion that Hammer would not want to spend any money until 'sure of a deal' suggests that Carreras was yet to secure a financier or distributor for the project, unlike with *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* where Warner approached Hammer. Perhaps *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* was Hammer, financially strapped in 1977, attempting to use a pre-existing and pre-sold script featuring one of their most marketable characters. This was a clear example of how dire circumstances had become at Hammer by the late 1970s.

Dracula in India: *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*

After *Dracula High Priest of Vampires* was initially declined by Warner Bros. in 1971, it would lay dormant for six years. However, Hammer would revisit the concept of 'Dracula in India' only three years later in 1974. It is here when books that chronicle Hammer's history begin to conflate the production of *Dracula High Priests of Vampires/The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* and *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, histories of Hammer often suggest that *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* was merely a different title for *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*, whereas in fact in relation to both production and narrative it had more in common with *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires*.

Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires was released in 1974, after the contemporary *Dracula* films had proven a financial disappointment for Hammer and Warner. This put extra pressure on the next instalment of the series, with Hammer's next *Dracula* film not only having to reenergise the character on-screen, but also keep Warner Bros. on-board as distributors. In order to do so, Hammer found themselves having to dramatically alter the way they produced and financed their films as well. Exploiting writer Don Houghton's family connections (his wife's father was a personal friend of Run Run Shaw (Kinsey 2007: 380)), Hammer entered into a co-production with Shaw

Brothers, a studio in Hong Kong. Famed for their Kung-Fu films, the studio had been struggling to adapt since the death of its most famous filmic export, Bruce Lee. As Bettinson suggests, this deal seemingly ‘betrayed the instability of two studios in decline’ (2011: 123), with both looking for new ways to refresh their diminishing genre cycles.

After two entries in the series had seemingly exhausted a contemporary time period, Hammer took the character back to the advent of the 20th century. Instead Hammer looked to innovate the ailing franchise with a change of location, with the film being primarily set in China. Set in 1904 and starring Peter Cushing as Van Helsing, the temporal shift back to a more familiarly gothic time period, and Cushing’s reprisal of his original character, suggest that Hammer may have been looking to minimise some of the more subversive aspects of the previous two entries. This is compounded in the film’s prologue, which opens in 1804 in Transylvania, and features John Forbes-Robertson’s Dracula (replacing Lee, who played the character for the final time in *The Satanic Rites of Dracula*) emerging from his coffin in the customary fashion of Hammer’s former gothics. Yet the traditional gothic norms are altered by the end of the prologue, which sees Dracula possess the body of Chinese acolyte Kah, who, for most of the film, is the visual representation of Count Dracula.

As noted briefly in section one, the notion of the Western aristocrat of Dracula invading the East offers an interesting inversion of Stoker’s original *Dracula* (1897) novel, which sees an Eastern European menace invade Western high society (Hunter 2000: 82). Stoker’s novel had played on fears of Dracula as the foreign other, yet this had never been a primary factor in Hammer and Lee’s interpretation of the character (primarily due to Sangster and Fisher setting the first *Dracula* in Eastern Europe, instead of having Dracula travel to England). This offered Hammer a fascinating opportunity with *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* to present a new facet to a character they had been portraying for sixteen years. Despite Hunter’s suggestion that, although the film ‘titillates the audience with the spectacle of Eastern tortures, it emphasises that they are overseen by a Western aristocrat’ (2000: 86), I would argue that by having Dracula possess the Chinese nobleman Kah at the beginning of the film, the notion of the Western aristocrat invading Eastern culture is squandered. This, like *Dracula AD 1972* limiting Dracula to the gothic trappings of an abandoned church, once more

suggests Hammer was not fully comfortable with the dramatic changes they were making with the character. Nevertheless, Warner Bros. were seemingly pleased enough with the film, as in December 1973, shortly after *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* had completed filming, Warner invited Hammer to prepare a similar Dracula film, this time set in India. However, in a Hammer board meeting, Carreras did outline one key difference in the approach between *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* and *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* - instead of a co-production, the project was to be funded wholly by Warner, who were looking to utilise frozen rupees held in India to finance the film. These rupees were profits from Warner Bros. films they could not, due to the laws at the time, repatriate, meaning that Warner Bros. had a significant sum of money it could only invest in India (see Ivory, cited in Long 2006: 1).

A piece of correspondence from Brian Lawrence to Michael Carreras dated 12th March 1974 (when Carreras is in Los Angeles to meet Warner Bros.) suggested Hammer's original idea was to dust off Hinds' *High Priest of Vampires* script, and four years later, offer it to Warner Bros. again. Lawrence wrote:

[...] trust you have received Hinds Dracula High Priest of Vampires script, and that you may be able to get the Indian situation sorted with Warner. Whilst India I assume will present as many problems as Hong Kong, we would at least be spending all of Warner money and not ours (Lawrence to Carreras: 12th March 1974).

However, the Hammer Script Archive indicates that, within two months of Carreras approaching Warner with *Dracula High Priest of Vampires*, it had once again been rejected, and Hammer had already begun work on the first draft synopsis of what would become *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*. Written by Don Houghton in May 1974, the Hammer Script Archive holds a 20-page synopsis entitled *Dracula and the Curse of Kali* (1974a). In total, the Archive holds three *Kali* outlines written by Houghton, and one brief four-page synopsis, all dated between May and November 1974. The Script Archive also holds treatments by George Trow and Christopher Wicking, which will be discussed later in this section of the chapter.

Dracula and the Curse of Kali focuses on the impending wedding of two demonic entities, Dracula and the Hindu goddess Kali. This was not the first time Kali had been utilised in a Hammer horror film, with the Hindu Goddess being the focus of

The Stranglers of Bombay (Fisher 1959). *The Stranglers of Bombay* told the story of the Thuggee Cult of Kali, an organized crime group who worshipped Kali and were responsible, according to the film's end title card, for 'over a million' deaths, before eventually being wiped out by the British forces in India. Although the film's screenplay is based on real events, Meikle argues that *The Stranglers of Bombay* demonstrated that the strictures of the Hammer horror film 'were not only entrenched, they were becoming immutable' (Meikle 2009: 79). Despite being shot in black and white for a more authentic, documentary appeal, the film sacrifices authenticity for scares akin to Hammer's fledgling gothic horror cycle. As a result of replicating the gothic's clear dichotomy of good and evil, the story's focus on a group of white, western saviours against an Eastern menace becomes even more problematic. With the film's final quote from Major General Sir William Sleeman that 'if we have done nothing else for India, we have done this good thing' (Fisher 1959) seemingly attempting to portray colonial rule as having a positive impact on the country.

Houghton's treatment, at first glance, also seems to be attempting to depict Kali as an omnipotent force of evil. It begins with two 'historical notes' (Houghton 1974a: 2), the first of which outlines the significance of Kali in Hindu culture. Houghton's treatment relies on Kali being presented as the film's primary antagonist, and therefore he focuses specifically on the facets of Kali that would lend themselves to a Hammer horror film. Kali, the goddess of time, doomsday and death, is often artistically depicted with a 'necklace of skulls, her skirt made of severed arms, and above all her lolling tongue which is shown oversize, red and dripping with the blood of sacrificial victims' (Blurton 1993: 173). This gruesome imagery, coupled with Kali's association with death, allowed Houghton and Hammer to realise Kali as an antagonistic, demonic entity, enabling them to foreground the 'spectacle of Eastern tortures' (Hunter 2000: 86) effectively used in *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires*. Describing her as a 'vision of violence and debauchery...[who] represented the lust for life terminating in tormented death' (1974a: 2), Houghton essentially attempts to equate Kali as a female equivalent of the Judeo-Christian Devil. However, Kali's standing within Hindu culture is more complex. Heather Elgood in *Hinduism and the Religious Arts* notes that, 'despite her gruesome appearance Kali holds...a key position in Hindu religious devotion' (2000: 73). In fact, it is often the case that Kali's frightening image is only there to act as a

‘barrier placed before the devotee, who must have the courage to seek the inner depths of her compassion...or universal power she represents’ (Jones and Ryan 2006: 221). Worshipped as a mother figure, Kali has also become adopted by feminist movements as well. This is in part due to one of the most iconic images of Kali depicting her stood over the god Shiva, who is lying prone, suggesting that the ‘transcendent power of Shiva can only be made immanent through interaction with the dominant goddess’ (Blurton 1993: 173).

Houghton’s foregrounding of Kali as the treatment’s antagonist does however allow him to minimize the role of Dracula within the story. Whereas *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* would have most likely been reliant on Christopher Lee reprising his role as Dracula once again (due to the prominence of the character within the script), *Dracula and the Curse of Kali*, similarly to *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires*, would only feature the Count in a handful of scenes. Although one could naturally assume this was due to Lee no longer wanting to reprise his role, Carreras himself suggested this

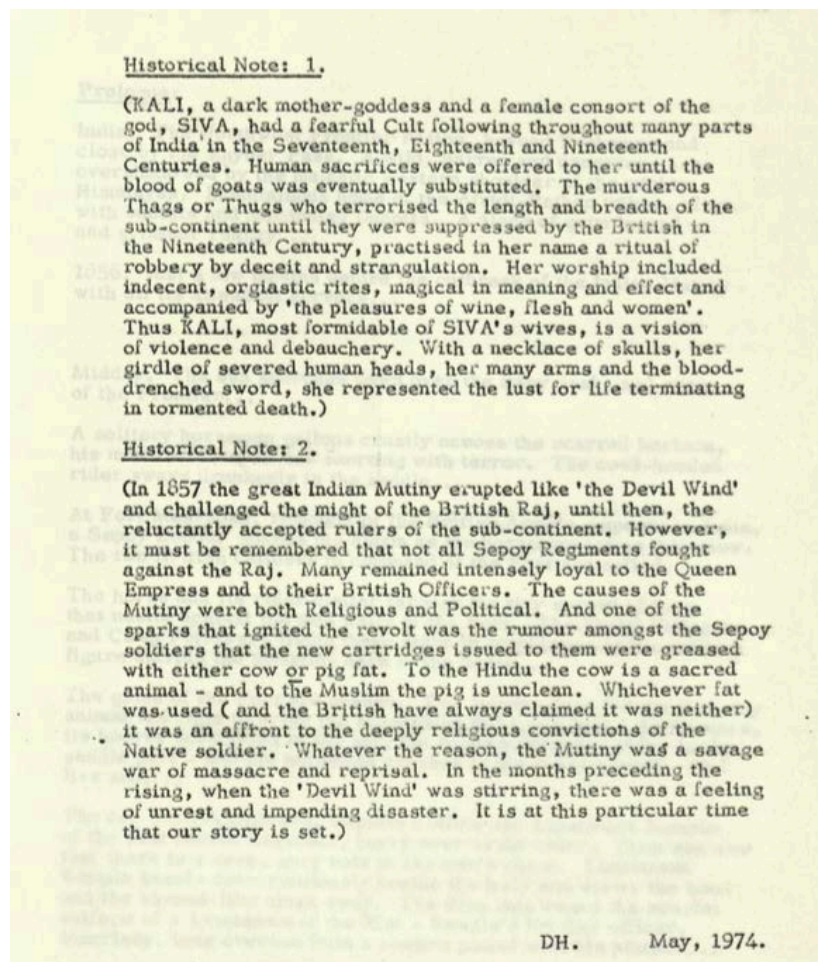


Figure 2: The historical notes that precede Don Houghton’s *Dracula and The Curse of Kali*.

was a deliberate story decision. In an unpublished interview with Steve Swires at the Famous Monster Convention in 1975, Carreras discussed the depiction of Dracula in *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* and the possibility of Lee playing the role:

I will not, to be perfectly honest, offer the part to Christopher Lee. We will be treating this Dracula as a young and virile sensual character, because he will have to have a romantic involvement with Kali, the goddess of the thuggees. With all due respect to Christopher and his talents, he would not suit this particular interpretation (Carreras in Swires 1975).

In Houghton's treatment Dracula appears twice. Firstly, 11 pages into the 20-page treatment he is introduced on his way to India, killing a merchant and his family in Afghanistan, before he 'gallops away from Jalalabad, eastward to the Khyber Pass' (Houghton 1974a: 11). Finally, he appears in the third act to marry Kali, only to find he has been tricked, and 'Kali' is not the goddess herself, but a fake, an unwilling woman sacrificed and reincarnated by an evil high priest named Shinwar Khan.

By having the physical manifestation of Kali be an imposter, and positioning the fictional Shinwar Khan as the true villain of the film (alongside Dracula), Houghton displays some awareness of the necessary sensitivity needed to utilise a Hindu deity within the context of an exploitation film, showing a clear distinction between his treatment and *The Stranglers of Bombay*. Houghton also goes one further than just distancing Kali from the horrific acts of the antagonist, by suggesting that the actual goddess Kali is responsible for the destruction of the villains within the film. As Dracula attacks Khan for deceiving him, the temple begins to collapse:

The giant stone effigy of Kali cracks. The statue pitches forward. The granite swords in her six arms sweep down...Kali had answered her High Priest. As the statue crashes-the stone swords impale them, striking through their chests- and into their evil hearts (Houghton 1974a: 20).

This suggestion that the real incarnation of Kali is in fact acting as a force for good is arguably Houghton attempting to circumvent any potential issues or controversy that could arise from having Kali herself as the film's villain.

The protagonist of the film is Dr Louis Van Helsing, the father of Laurence Van Helsing who is eventually 'destined to become the renowned Vampire-Hunter immortalised by Bram Stoker' (Houghton 1974a: 8). Similar to how *Dracula AD 1972*

had to make its main protagonist a descendent of Van Helsing due to the film's contemporary setting, Houghton's storyline necessitates that the *Dracula and the Curse of Kali* would have to be set fifty years before Stoker's original novel. Meaning that whilst Hammer's 'original' Van Helsing appears in the treatment, it is only briefly as a child.

This shift in protagonist is required due to the treatment's temporal and spatial setting being crucial to the overall narrative. As argued in the previous section, many of Hammer's *Dracula* films are deliberately vague about the time and place in which they are set, presenting a pan-European setting presumably somewhere in the 19th century. This changes however with *Dracula and the Curse of Kali*, which Houghton begins with the previously mentioned 'historical notes'. The first details Kali's place in Hinduism, whilst the second provides historical context to the time the film is set: 1856, months before the Indian Rebellion of 1857. The Rebellion saw several Sepoy soldiers in the East India Trading Company's army revolt, which quickly escalated into widespread army and civilian rebellions. Called 'the Indian Mutiny' by Houghton, he describes it in his historical note as 'a savage war of massacre and reprisal' (Houghton 1974a: 2), and notes that in the lead up to the rebellion, 'there was a sense of unrest and impending disaster' (Houghton 1974a: 2). This feeling of unrest and tension in the months preceding the rebellion is accurate, with Saul David in his historical account *The Indian Mutiny* (2002) noting that the Governor-General Dalhousie, as early as 1855, had reflected on 'the danger of withdrawing for any purpose too many troops from a country which, though tranquil and unwarlike in itself, is yet liable to such volcanic outbursts of popular violence as this now before us' (cited in David 2002: 10). As noted by Houghton, this feeling of dread leading up to the rebellion is referred to as 'the devil winds' (Houghton 1974a: 2), and one of Houghton's most effective choices within the treatment is to make this a literal presence within the narrative, stirring forebodingly to foreshadow the impending arrival of *Dracula* in India.

The specificity of the setting creates an effective atmosphere of tension, and is referenced directly in the narrative, not only through the 'devil winds', but by a plot point that sees two British officers found mutilated and killed, and the Indian soldiers nowhere to be found. The British Captain, Purnell, 'is certain that the Sepoys have mutinied, killed their Officers and are now roaming the countryside hell-bent on

destroying every Englishman in the Northwest Frontier' (Houghton 1974a: 6). It is later revealed that the Sepoys have been kidnapped for ritual sacrifice by the same killers of the British soldiers, but this tension between the Indian and British soldiers forms a crucial crux within the narrative. As previously mentioned, this reliance on a specific time and place, particularly one with real historical relevance, sets *Dracula and the Curse of Kali* apart from every produced Hammer Dracula film, as well as the other treatments written for the *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* project.

Yet by setting the film in such a contentious and bloodied period of colonial Indian history, Houghton arguably creates some serious production issues for the prospective film. The previous section noted how Hammer had primarily received funding for its Dracula films through majors such as Warner Bros., smaller companies such as ABPC, or co-production deals, such as Hammer and Shaw Brothers partnering on *The Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires*. However, *Dracula and the Curse of Kali* would have necessitated a funding strategy which, at least in part, played a key role in the film remaining unproduced. Whilst the film was to be backed by Warner Bros. (as noted in Lawrence's memo to Carreras), they had insisted on setting it in India due to accruing a significant number of rupees which could only be utilised by filming on location in India. This is referenced in correspondence from Michael Carreras to Don Houghton, who notes that the eventual screenplay 'must be submitted to the Indian authorities by Warner and no-one else, if they are to obtain use of their 'frozen' rupees' (Carreras to Houghton: 14th October 1974). As a result of this situation, Warner Bros. and Hammer were therefore reliant on the Indian government approving the film for production.

Houghton's script would likely have been extremely difficult to get approved by the Indian Government. Its use of Hindu gods in an exploitation/horror context (and the antagonistic denotations they have until the very end of the film), coupled with it being set at one of the most turbulent and bloodied times in India's colonial past, creates a prospective film that could have attracted a considerable amount of controversy if released. This is not to say that Houghton was necessarily ignorant of the potential pitfalls of the story. As noted previously, he subverted this view of Kali as an antagonistic figure at the end of the film, and showed the cult's victims to be as much the Indian soldiers and villagers as it is the British soldiers. Houghton also has several

Indian protagonists within the film such as Lal Gomal, an Indian professor and contemporary of Van Helsing, Hugh Fennell, an Anglo-Indian politician who is the first to believe Van Helsing and Gomal about Dracula's impending arrival, and Ranji Hissar described as a 'prince of the mountain tribes' (Houghton 1974a: 12) and eventual ally of Van Helsing. There is also an important sequence featuring the character Bahrud Singh, a Sepoy Sergeant who is part of British soldier Lieutenant Ashwood's regiment. After Ashwood and his men are ambushed by Khan's cult, Ashwood tells Singh to ride and get help. Utilising the seeds of discord sewn through the treatment's setting, Houghton attempts to make the reader doubt Singh's loyalty as he retreats:

[...] he stumbles to his horse, mounts it with difficulty and gallops out of the Valley. It is impossible to know whether the Sepoy Sergeant intends to actually return to the Fort for help- or make good his escape and get as far away from the Temple as he can (Houghton 1974a: 16).

Yet at the climax of the film, as the protagonists are overwhelmed by Khan's forces, Singh returns with reinforcements, 'the Sepoy Sergeant has remained faithful to Ashwood - and returned with Captain Purnell and the Lancers' (Houghton 1974a: 18).

One could argue that despite Houghton's attempt at a more diverse cast of characters and the heroic moments he gives them, these are merely conciliatory gestures. The main characters of the story are undoubtedly the British Van Helsing and Ashwood, and even Singh's heroic moment is problematic, seemingly suggesting that on the brink of the Indian Rebellion, it is remaining faithful to the British colonisers that is an attribute worthy of admiration. However, when compared to *The Stranglers of Bombay*, it is undoubtedly a more nuanced (if not necessarily accurate) depiction of 19th century India, featuring an attempt to complicate the antagonistic associations of Kali within the treatment, and a more diverse cast of protagonists.

Carreras himself did not seem to think that the film's setting or use of Kali would hinder it. The Hammer Script Archive holds another copy of Houghton's *Dracula and the Curse of Kali* treatment, which has been annotated by Michael Carreras. There were no notes made on the treatment itself in relation to its story, with the most significant change being Carreras altering the title to *Dracula and the Blood Lust of Kali* (1974b) and dating it June 1974. Houghton himself submitted a new draft of the treatment in June, with minor changes and another new title - *Kali Devil Bride of*

Dracula (1974c). Seemingly in response to this treatment, Carreras wrote to Houghton in October that ‘Warners...have indicated to me that we should develop this project into Screenplay form as quickly as possible’ (Carreras to Houghton: 14th October 1974). This also suggests that, as well as Carreras, Warner Bros. seemed relatively content. Warner Bros.’ main issue seemed to be not with the potential controversial topics, but story-based, with Carreras noting that Warner ‘feel[s] the Treatment needs more horror to arrive at a final balance of 50% Hammer ingredient and 50% Bengal Lancers’ (Carreras to Houghton: 14th October 1974). Carreras also suggested a prologue for the film almost identical to that of *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires*, with ‘emissaries from Kali calling on Drac in Transylvania and signing the wedding pact’ (Carreras to Houghton: 14th October 1974). Yet Carreras’ main note for Houghton was to have the literal incarnation of Kali as the film’s villain, a proposal that clearly caused tension between Houghton and Carreras.

Carreras suggested that the film should, during the main story, ‘cut to either Drac and his ‘Bats’ causing havoc as they travel south, or Kali and her thugees causing havoc as they travel North’ (Carreras to Houghton: 14th October 1974). This would give Dracula a larger role than in Houghton’s original treatment, and would also fulfil Warner’s desire for more horror material. Carreras envisages the literal embodiment of Kali as a ‘sort of motivated mummy’ (Carreras to Houghton: 14th October 1974), and perhaps even more troublingly, sees the opportunity to utilise the British Film Censors’ more lenient X certificate for a sex scene involving Kali, as she ‘has young village lads brought to her for sex (with six hands- wow!) and then she emasculates them’ (Carreras to Houghton: 14th October 1974).

Carreras’ notes seem to suggest that his own issues with the treatment came from Houghton’s attempts to complicate the simple good and evil dichotomy of Hammer’s traditional gothics. Whereas *The Stranglers of Bombay* presented the moral certainty of the protagonists against the evil otherness of the Cult of Kali, Houghton attempts to subvert this dichotomy, suggesting that whilst Shinwar Khan had used the image of Kali to indoctrinate his murderous cult, Kali herself was a fair and just deity, and ultimately the conqueror of evil. By suggesting that Houghton should increase the horrific elements of the film, and have Kali as its primary antagonist, Carreras was essentially asking him to strip away this subversive element. This request draws

parallels with what had exasperated director Terence Fisher whilst working on *The Stranglers of Bombay*:

The producers felt it was better in black and white because it was a documentary story rather than a myth, but in the written word there was too much Frankenstein and Dracula on the page, and I was still with the previous approach (Fisher 1964: 8).

Whereas Fisher was talking about working under James Carreras on *The Stranglers of Bombay*, this insistence on the primacy of horror material within the script, even if it is to the detriment of the narrative, was also clearly reflected in Michael Carreras' notes on *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*.

Don Houghton's response to Carreras' proposal, sent two days later on the 16th October, clearly shows that it is Houghton, and not the managing director Michael Carreras, who was aware of the huge issues that would arise from utilising Kali in this way. Houghton writes that 'with one very important and vital exception, I agree, in the main, with the suggestions outlined in your memo of 14/10/74' (Houghton to Carreras: 16th October 1974). Houghton's vital exception was Carreras' suggested use of Kali, with him noting that narratively

[...] this new conception gives me a lot of plotting troubles and makes my job more difficult - without I believe adding anything significant to the property...Kali is a Goddess and therefore cannot be destroyed - how, then, do I bring the picture to a climax? We can hardly have Kali and Dracula walking off, hand in hand, into the sunset (Houghton to Carreras: 16th October 1974).

However, Houghton's primary concern was that using Kali in this way would almost certainly curtail any hopes Hammer and Warner had in getting the film made. Noting that in Hinduism 'Kali is very much venerated' (Houghton to Carreras: 16th October 1974), Houghton underlined that any presumption that Kali would 'marry Dracula, a western figment of imagination, would be totally unacceptable to the majority of Indians' (Houghton to Carreras: 16th October 1974). He even went so far as to draw parallels between Kali and the Virgin Mary, noting how it would be 'unpleasantly blasphemous for us to visibly reincarnate, say, the Virgin Mary in fiction - and then linking her with Dracula' (Houghton to Carreras: 16th October 1974). Houghton emphasised that he has already pre-empted this potentially controversial aspect of the

script by presenting Shinwar Khan as an antagonist who ‘uses the Kali Cult for his own base purposes’ (Houghton to Carreras: 16th October 1974), with Kali destroying Khan in the film’s climax an act of ‘retribution for the blasphemy that has been perpetrated in her name’ (Houghton to Carreras: 16th October 1974).

Houghton also demonstrated that he is knowledgeable about the process of gaining approval from the Indian authorities. His fax to Carreras named both Nandini Satpathy, who was Chief Minister of Odisha at the time (she served from March 1974 until December 1976), and the Deputy Minister Dharam Vir Singh as key figures in the process. Houghton emphasised how both were ‘prominent (and somewhat strict) leaders of the Hindi and Sikh communities’ (Houghton to Carreras: 16th October 1974) who would not tolerate Carreras’ vision of a real Kali. Houghton was also clearly aware of how difficult the process would be regardless of this change:

It is going to be extremely difficult for Warners to negotiate with the Indian Authorities anyway, but I maintain it will be an impossible task to present a Script to Delhi for production anywhere in India which features Kali in the form suggested (Houghton to Carreras: 16th October 1974).

If the production of *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* really did hang so precariously on the reaction of the Indian authorities, why would Carreras risk potential catastrophe by including the literal embodiment of Kali? Although a general unfamiliarity with and obliviousness to Indian culture could be to blame, it could also come down to Carreras merely attempting to replicate his last successful film as closely as possible. As noted earlier in this section of the chapter, *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* only became a viable proposition for Warner Bros. after the relative success of *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires*. With *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* therefore the key reason for Warner’s interest, Carreras would understandably want to reproduce the film’s structure and style as much as possible. For the most part Houghton’s script does correspond to this. For one, *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* emphasises action as well as horror through David Chiang’s character Hsi Ching. Hsi Ching, along with his five martial arts-trained brothers, engage in several kung-fu action set pieces against the seven Golden Vampires. In *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*, a similar balance is struck through the use of the British Army and Sepoy Soldiers in India going up against Khan’s cult.

As well as sharing action set-pieces throughout, the two projects also share a number of similarities in their narratives as well. In *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires*, Hsi Ching's love interest Vanessa is bitten by a vampire, and when Ching attempts to save her, Vanessa seduces him and bites him as well. Realising his fate, Ching sacrifices himself and Vanessa, throwing them both onto a wooden stake. In *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*, Prince Hissar joins Van Helsing's party to find his partner Lalamir. However, at the film's climax it is revealed that Lalamir has been turned into the 'fake' Kali, and after an aborted rescue attempt, Hissar throws both himself and the undead Lalamir into a fire pit. This doomed romance subplot in both films, as well as the action set pieces, clearly demonstrate that Houghton was aware that although *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* did not directly follow on from *Legend of the* , it was for all intents and purposes a spiritual sequel to the Hammer and Shaw Brothers' co-production.

With this in mind, one can see why Carreras would see no problem in increasing the 'spectacle of Eastern tortures' to include a physical manifestation of Kali. *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* itself had also attempted to utilise Eastern religious practices to expand upon its vampire mythology, with Van Helsing noting that the Golden Vampires will recoil from images of Buddha as well as a crucifix. However, although the treatment for *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* and *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* are remarkably similar, their production contexts were not, and this, as Houghton identifies, is the crucial issue. Whereas *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* had required the backing of a Chinese production company to ensure its completion, it did not require the express permission of the Chinese government to go ahead. In the case of *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*, Warner Bros.' rupees are a legal issue and therefore, in order for them to be cleared to use in film production, the Indian authorities must have the final say. As such, Warner Bros. and Hammer were essentially at the behest of the Indian government, which meant their usual use of exploitation tactics became a direct pitfall for the film's potential production.

Houghton's strong rebuttal of Carreras' alternate story did initially seem to have been taken on board. In November 1974, only weeks after Carreras and Houghton's correspondence, Houghton wrote a 4-page synopsis entitled *A Devil Bride for Dracula* (Undated), which was expanded into a 12-page treatment titled *Devil Bride of Dracula* (1974d), a rewritten version of his *Kali and the Devil Bride of Dracula* treatment.

Notably, one of Carreras' requests, for a prologue featuring Dracula being summoned from his castle, was granted. However, the most fundamental changes are twofold. Firstly, Houghton moved the story away from the Indian Rebellion, with the script now set primarily in 1899, putting the film five years before *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* and effectively making it a prequel. Unlike previous drafts, this treatment also makes direct allusions to the fact it is only one instalment in an ongoing series. The treatment begins with Dracula destroyed, with his casket having a 'plain wooden stake' (Houghton 1974b: 1) driven through it, before Dracula is eventually resurrected by the end of the prologue. Dracula and Van Helsing's paths are clearly supposed to have crossed in previous adventures, with Dracula seeing Van Helsing at the film's climax and 'remembering the stake that pierced his evil heart and turned him into dust...promises that Van Helsing will know Eternal Torment' (Houghton 1974d: 10).

The shift away from the historical context of the Indian Rebellion, from a narrative standpoint, arguably diffuses some of the more interesting character interactions and the foreboding atmosphere found in Houghton's previous draft, as well as throwing up a number of confusing questions about the series' chronology. However, from a production perspective, this move makes a good deal of sense. Having the film set on the precipice of one of the most bloodied and violent moments in the history of Anglo-Indian relations could have caused several difficulties in getting the film passed by the Indian authorities, meaning that ultimately this temporal shift seems a more appropriate direction for the project's production.

To this extent, the second major change to the script also sees Houghton trying to circumvent any potential controversy with the Indian authorities. Instead of utilising the real Thuggee Cult of Kali, Houghton entirely fictionalises the antagonistic cult within the treatment. The treatment's primary villain is now 'the Snake Goddess' (Houghton 1974d: 6), whose evil followers, 'the Cult of the Cobra' (Houghton 1974d: 6), cut swathes of destruction across India, in anticipation of the Snake Goddess' marriage to the vampire Dracula. Although Houghton had been careful in his first draft to not have Kali as the actual antagonist, he has clearly concluded that even invoking Kali in relation to the film's primary antagonists would be too much of a risk. Instead, Houghton not only changes the name of the villain, but has one of the treatment's new protagonists, a mystic called Maya Devi, be a 'disciple of the Mother-God, Kali'

(Houghton 1974d: 6). As a result, the treatment's only reference to Kali is to associate her with the forces of good, demonstrating again Houghton's attempts to pre-empt any issues the Indian authorities may have with his treatment. Yet despite these alterations made by Houghton, this was not seemingly enough for Hammer. Although the Archive holds no evidence as to why this change came about, this was to be Houghton's last draft of the *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* project.

Carreras, however, had not yet given up hope. The Hammer Script Archive holds an undated 19-page treatment entitled *Unholy Dracula* (Anon. Undated), which has no writer cited. However, a piece of correspondence in the Archive, although again undated, does offer some idea of the chronology of this draft and who wrote it. The correspondence is from George Trow, an American essayist and playwright who at the time had only written one screenplay, *Savages* (1972), which was directed by James Ivory and produced by Merchant Ivory Productions. This is significant as Ismail Merchant, the Indian-born producer and other half of Merchant Ivory Productions, was copied into the fax along with Michael Carreras. This one piece of correspondence is the only evidence that Merchant was in any way involved with the *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* project, and whether it was merely in an advisory capacity to Trow or in a potentially more hands-on role as a producer is unknown. However, it was clearly Trow who had a prior relationship with Merchant, as Trow would later also go on to write *The Proprietor* (1996), a film which Merchant himself directed. *The Proprietor* and *Savages* are Trow's only two produced screenplay credits.

Trow's correspondence contains notes on what appears to be the *Unholy Dracula* treatment. In the correspondence Trow detailed the treatment in bullet points, and expanded upon certain plot points and justified their inclusion, suggesting it is most likely Trow who wrote *Unholy Dracula*. It is also extremely likely that Trow's treatment came after Houghton's multiple drafts of the project. This is apparent through Trow's correspondence with Carreras and Merchant, where he made direct mention of 'The Eyeless Ones' (Houghton 1974a: 7) appearing in the 'first treatment' (Trow to Carreras and Merchant: Undated). Houghton's first treatment, *Dracula and the Curse of Kali*, is the only one held in the Hammer Script Archive which makes reference to the Eyeless Ones, making it likely that Houghton was first on the project and Trow had access to his treatments.

Despite clearly utilising elements of Houghton's drafts, the *Unholy Dracula* treatment is markedly different. Most noticeably, the treatment reinstates a Hindu Goddess as the film's main antagonist. Trow uses the warrior goddess Durga (who is synonymous with Kali), as the Goddess Dracula is due to marry. Durga, although never literally personified, is represented by the character Shermilla, who is referred to as 'the Daughter of Durga' (Anon. Undated: 13) after she is bestowed with the powers of the goddess through a ritual sacrifice. Trow also never alludes to the fact that Durga is being misused or misrepresented by Shermilla's cult, and in fact directly suggests Durga is antagonistic. At the end of the treatment, after the death of Dracula and Shermilla, they 'decompose to dust, [and] the statue of Durga decomposes as well' (Anon. Undated: 19). The decomposition of the statue at the same time as the villains symbolically links Durga with the antagonists. Trow also introduces a subplot in which, in order for Durga's full powers to be reinstated and for her to wed Dracula, thirteen jewels from 'the Statue of Diva' (Anon. Undated: 13) must be reinstated, creating a race between the protagonists and antagonists to find the final jewel. Unlike Houghton, Trow also makes clear what Dracula will gain from the partnership with Durga: the ability to walk in the daylight.

Carreras, however did not seem impressed with Trow's approach. On the 19-page treatment, annotations in red, which seem to match Carreras' handwriting, point out plot and character inconsistencies throughout. Perhaps the most pertinent follows a sequence where Dracula 'laughs hideously' (Anon. Undated: 15), with Carreras noting 'this is Dracula... not some comic strip villain' (15). Despite what seems to be Carreras' disenchantment with Trow's approach to a Dracula in India story, the fact that Trow was on the project at all demonstrates that Carreras was clearly not content with Houghton's approach to the material. This is further underlined by the reinstatement of an actual Goddess within the script, and one whose depiction is overtly antagonistic.

This disagreement between Carreras and Houghton about the story of *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* was not their first. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, Houghton's family connections had been instrumental in ensuring that the co-production deal between Hammer and Shaw Brothers went ahead. Due to his importance, both as the screenwriter of *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* and *Shatter* (Carreras 1974) (the second film in Hammer and Shaw Brother's two-picture deal), and

as Hammer's contact point with Hong Kong, Carreras promoted Houghton to the role of Associate Producer for both films (Kinsey 2007: 308, Hearn and Barnes 2007: 164). However, Carreras, who had expected the role to be a relatively simple one for Houghton, flew in from California to Hong Kong to find the production of *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* in complete disarray: 'he was supposed to be doing schedules and so on, but I don't know what he was doing' (Carreras cited in Kinsey 2007: 389). Due to Houghton's apparent mishandling of the production, Carreras dismissed Houghton from the set of *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires*, and from the upcoming production of *Shatter* (Kinsey 2007: 388, Hearn and Barnes 2007: 164-165, Meikle 2009: 212-213). Principal production for *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* ran between 22nd October and 11th December 1973 (Kinsey 2007: 381, Hearn and Barnes 2007: 164), meaning there was only five months between Houghton's firing and him turning in the treatment for *Dracula and the Curse of Kali*. Whether these issues affected the development of *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* is only speculation, but the disagreements on the project could have only exacerbated any tension between the pair. Houghton eventually left Hammer in 1975, leaving behind a number of enticing unmade projects such as *The Day the Earth Cracked Open* (1970), *The Savage Jackboot* (1973), *Victim of His Imagination* and ultimately, *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*.

After Trow's attempts at *Unholy Dracula*, Carreras enlisted Hammer stalwart Christopher Wicking to write what appears to be the final version of the *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* project, titled *Devil Bride* (Undated(a)). Wicking was a screenwriter who in Hammer's final years became an essential part of the company, with Kinsey noting that by 1979 'Hammer basically consisted of Carreras, Tom Sachs and Wicking' (2010: 115). Originally working for Hammer on *Blood from the Mummy's Tomb* (Holt 1964) and *Demons of the Mind* (Sykes 1971), Wicking's only other credited Hammer film was their final horror film under Carreras, *To the Devil a Daughter* (Sykes 1976). Yet despite only having these three credits for Hammer, Wicking was an integral part of many unmade Hammer projects. Most notably he produced screenplays for *Vampirella* in 1975 and *Nessie* (Forbes, Wicking and Starr) in 1978, two of Hammer's most ambitious unmade films.

The Archive holds three undated and incomplete screenplays for Wicking's *Devil Bride* (one 33 pages (Undated(b)), one 27 pages (Undated(c)) and the other 9

pages) with no writer cited but filed in a small folder under the heading 'Christopher Wicking Drafts'. Two of the screenplays seem to be largely the same script, with a few alterations. The 9-page draft and the longer 27-page draft both begin identically in Bombay in 1856. Both screenplays see Abraham Van Helsing attending a ceremony held by an Indian cult. The ceremony sees Abraham suffer a hallucination of the goddess Diva (this is where the 9-page draft ends), and after waking up handcuffed to a hospital bed, he is tasked by the head of the East India Trading Company to find and expose the resurgent 'Cult of Diva' (Wicking Undated(c): 10), who are killing off high ranking East India officials.

With only uncompleted and undated drafts held in the Hammer Script Archive, it is difficult to determine exactly when in the process Wicking was brought in to contribute to the *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* project. A closer examination of the screenplays themselves however does give an indication. If Trow's correspondence is accurate and Houghton's *Dracula and the Curse of Kali* is the first treatment of this entire project, it is clear Wicking's *Devil Bride* was written sometime after this, as his treatments take narrative motifs and entire sequences from Houghton's *Dracula and the Curse of Kali*. The screenplay uses the same setting as Houghton's draft, months before the Indian Rebellion, and the 'devil wind' is also directly referenced, just before a soldier is strangled to death by a Thuggee cult member (Wicking Undated(c): 19). Most tellingly, Wicking's script features a sequence in which a soldier speeds towards a base on horseback and smashes through the camp gates, as soldiers rush to the man's aid and find him already dead, with his eyes and heart removed (Undated(c): 13). The sequence, however, first appears in Houghton's *The Curse of Kali*, his first draft of the project and, based on Trow's correspondence, the original treatment in the *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* project. This clearly demonstrates that not only was Wicking's draft after Houghton's, but that Wicking clearly had knowledge of Houghton's original treatment.

Although this evidence strongly suggests that Wicking wrote his draft after Houghton, comparisons between Wicking's screenplays and Trow's treatment are less clear on the chronology. The fact that Trow explicitly references Houghton's treatment, but mentions no others, suggests that Wicking wrote his *Devil Bride* drafts after Trow, although this is not conclusive. If this is indeed the case, Wicking has potentially utilised plot elements from Trow's *Unholy Dracula*, such as the hunt for the last Jewel

of Diva. Wicking's script features a sequence in which, as Van Helsing inspects the quarters of a man murdered by the Thuggee, he comes across an emptied safe (Wicking Undated(c): 27). Although the script ends before this is expanded upon, this could possibly be Wicking's version of the jewel subplot coming into play.

The Hammer Script Archive holds no evidence of Carreras' response to Wicking's draft, but *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*, as a project, simply ran out of time. In their correspondence on 14th October, Carreras emphasises to Houghton that 'speed was of the essence', due to the precarious situation Warner was in with regards to their rupees in India. Ultimately, Carreras' failure to settle on a treatment or proposal for *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* proved fatal to the project. A change of government policy in India meant that Warner Bros. no longer had to use its assets solely in India (Kinsey 2007: 394). *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* was quickly discarded by Warner Bros., and *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* remained Hammer's last Dracula film.

Conclusion

Hammer's production problems were not merely internal, but external as well. Whereas the brief summary of the produced Dracula films in the first section of this chapter arguably lends credence to the suggestion that Hammer's gothic cycle was stagnating and lacked innovation, it is clear to see why Hammer would have persevered with this formula for so long. The 1970s saw the slow withdrawal of nearly every major American investor in Hammer, and one of the company's only consistent internationally funded film series was *Dracula*. Whilst this funding was still available, it would have been unwise for Hammer to dramatically alter this formula. It was only when ABPC struggled to find large scale American distribution for *Scars of Dracula* that Hammer was forced to react to a changing international market.

This, I would argue, counters any accusation that Hammer were sluggish to respond to cultural or industrial changes. Between 1970 and 1973, Hammer considered *Dracula High Priest of Vampires*, Tony Hinds' first draft of a Dracula in India concept; *Dracula's Feast of Blood*, which would have been more faithful to the original novel than arguably any Hammer *Dracula* sequel before it; and *Victim of His Imagination*, a film about Bram Stoker which would have used a complex structure to balance elements of both the biopic and the horror film. These unmade projects, coupled with the two

produced contemporary Dracula films, clearly show that Hammer was aware that the current state of the film industry necessitated a dramatic change to its premier franchise. This attempted innovation of the *Dracula* series is apparent in Hammer's final Dracula film, *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires*, yet the production of the film itself exposed some of the internal pressures within Hammer at the time. A tumultuous and ultimately costly co-production between Hammer and Shaw Brothers, the project would not only prove complex financially (as will be discussed in the next chapter), but also created tensions between Houghton and Carreras, which eventually carried over into the pre-production of *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*.

Kali Devil Bride of Dracula proved a project that, at the time of inception, had too many pressures, external and internal, thrust upon it. Many were entirely out of Hammer's control. Warner Bros.' complex financial situation with the Indian government led to enormous time pressures for Hammer, and Warner necessitating that Hammer's eventual script had to be approved by the Indian government was creatively restricting for Houghton and Carreras. It is apparent when reading the treatment that the horror material which features in *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* is no more gruesome or shocking than other Hammer horror films of the 1970s. Even the use of the goddess Kali would probably not have caused Houghton or Carreras much consternation if not for having to be approved by the Indian government. Hammer's own film, *The Stranglers of Bombay*, had utilised the spectre of Kali effectively (if not unproblematically), and even outside of Hammer, Kali has been utilised throughout western film and television for decades. In 1973, the year before *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* was developed at Hammer, *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad* (Hessler) was released and sees Sinbad and his allies engage an enchanted statue of Kali in a sword fight (with Kali holding a sword in each of her six arms). Ismail Merchant, who was at least aware of Hammer's attempts to utilise Kali and her cult in Trow's version of *Unholy Dracula*, would produce a film adaptation of John Master's novel *The Deceivers* in 1988, directed by Nicholas Meyers. The film is set in 1825, and tells the story of the British army's infiltration and eventual destruction of the Thuggee Cult. Pitched more as a historical drama than a horror or exploitation film, *The Deceivers* can be seen as the film Fisher was hoping to make with *The Stranglers of Bombay*, before Hammer insisted on increasing the horror and exploitation content.

Perhaps the most well-known example of Kali and her cult in cinema is *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (Spielberg 1984), which shares many similarities with Houghton's first draft of *Dracula and the Curse of Kali*. The film sees archaeologist and adventurer Indiana Jones uncover a Kali worshipping cult led by Mola Ram, whose blood rituals and sacrifices at the altar of Kali call to mind the character of Shinwar Khan in Houghton's draft. *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, made a decade after *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*, is arguably more egregious than anything Houghton wrote. Not only is there never a distinction made between the horrific acts of Mola Ram and the actual goddess Kali, but Kali is portrayed in effect as a Hindu devil figure, with Indiana Jones at the film's denouement shouting to Mola Ram: 'Prepare to meet Kali, in Hell' (Spielberg 1984)! *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* was temporarily banned in India, but this proved little hindrance to the film's financial success. Its buoyant box office in the United States ensured the film had the highest grossing weekend of 1984, and the third highest overall gross that year (boxofficemojo.com).

This is the crucial difference for Hammer. Whereas *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* was not reliant on the backing of foreign investment or box office, Hammer in 1974 was almost completely dependent. The departure of James Carreras in 1973 and the subsequent loss of American backing left Hammer and new owner Michael Carreras in a desperate position, and despite Warner Bros. backing, *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula's* subject matter meant the project was always going to struggle to meet the Indian government's approval. Carreras however, clearly aware that horror remained Hammer's most marketable international export, remained steadfast in retaining the exploitation element, arguably to the project's detriment. Despite this reliance on the horror genre, Houghton's *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* showed at least some promise. Its diverse cast of characters and setting on the precipice of the Indian Rebellion (at least in *Dracula and the Curse of Kali*) creates a more nuanced approach to a *Dracula* story than many before it. Ultimately it was the restrictive production process, and not the treatment itself, that proved the primary hindrance.

Perhaps *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula's* most significant lasting legacy is the death knell it sounded for the *Dracula* franchise at the time. Although Hammer would not know it at the time, *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* was to be their final *Dracula* film. *Kali the Devil Bride of Dracula* was commissioned by Warner Bros. on the back

of *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires*, therefore making it the last Dracula film for which Hammer had upfront financial support. One could perhaps see *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* as merely a victim of circumstance, with the Indian government's decision to change their monetary policy and thus free Warner Bros.'s rupees entirely out of their hands. However, the strained relationship between Houghton and Carreras, as well as Carreras' ignorance (wilful or not) of what kind of exploitation material would get past the Indian government, created a laborious process. Even after at least seven months of development and three writers, *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* never seemingly made it to screenplay stage. Ultimately Carreras came to realise that Hammer not only had to change its entire financial and distribution structure to survive, but, even with radical reinventions, the company could also no longer rely on the gothic icon that had helped build Hammer's house of horror. Instead, as I will go on to explore in Chapter 5, Carreras opted for a bold new strategy that would see Hammer risk everything in an attempt to gain back the support of the American majors.

Chapter 5: 1975-1979

The Hunt for *Nessie*: Finding Finance in a Failing Industry

Introduction

This chapter will detail the pre-production of Hammer's most ambitious unmade project - *Nessie*. Developed between 1975 and 1978, *Nessie* was a multimillion-dollar co-production with major financing from Japan, Hollywood, Germany and South Africa, as well as other production outfits in Britain, such as Paradine. The international scale of the production was reflected in the screenplay, which sees the Loch Ness Monster rampage across the world from Scotland to the Canary Islands and Hong Kong harbour.

This chapter will focus on the near four-year production of *Nessie*, with the timeframe of its development allowing a detailed examination of Hammer's production activity in this period, from 1975 to 1979. The analysis of Hammer's ambitious attempts to court international finance, would not be apparent through a focus on their produced features, as within this period Hammer only released two films (*To the Devil a Daughter* (Sykes 1976) and *The Lady Vanishes* (Page 1979)). As suggested in Chapter 2, vital production context for this period can often be missing from other studies of Hammer due to their focus on Hammer's produced films, and not their unmade projects. This chapter will therefore attempt to foreground *Nessie*'s development in this period to reveal a significant shift in production strategy for Hammer that would, within other studies, go unnoticed. In order to do so, this chapter will primarily use materials held in the Hammer Script Archive. The Archive holds two screenplays for *Nessie*. One is labelled 'third draft', is 135 pages long and is dated August 1976 (Forbes). The other, dated 28th March 1978 (Forbes, Wicking and Starr), is only 120 pages long and has fewer and much less ambitious action and special effects sequences. The Hammer Script Archive also holds the '*Nessie* File', a ring-binder containing extensive pre-production materials on the project dating from 1976 to 1978. These range from internal office memos and correspondence with potential financiers, to notes on the script, and letters on the search for a director.

Using these materials, the chapter will focus on two aspects of *Nessie*'s development which not only led to the collapse of the project, but are also indicative of the wider problems which ultimately led to Hammer's closure. Firstly, the chapter will examine Hammer's attempt to garner international backing for the project, which was budgeted at \$7million. *Nessie* acts as a salient case study of how a British independent studio, such as Hammer, who had relied so much on American finance and distribution streams since the late 1940s, attempted to operate as the major American studios became less inclined to finance and distribute British films. An examination specifically of Hammer's relationship with Toho studios in Japan, who were brought on in the early stages of the project to provide the special effects (as well as a third of the budget), will detail Hammer's strategy of co-production with a studio outside of America, and will draw some comparisons with Hammer's previous co-production deal with the Hong Kong studio, Shaw Brothers. This section will also examine Hammer's relationship with Columbia Pictures in the United States. As discussed in Chapter 3, Columbia had distributed several Hammer films throughout the late 1950s and 1960s, partnering with them for *The Revenge of Frankenstein* (Fisher 1958), and continuing with films such as *The Gorgon* (Fisher 1964), *The Curse of the Mummy's Tomb* (Carreras 1964) and *Fanatic* (Narizzano 1965). Despite this earlier relationship with Columbia, since 1972 Hammer had no real support from Hollywood outside of Warner Bros. By examining the complex financial arrangements and utilising Hammer's relationship with Toho and Columbia as case studies, the chapter will highlight the insurmountable difficulties Hammer had in attempting to finance a \$7million genre picture as an independent studio, in a film industry which was changing rapidly.

Although the withdrawal of American finance and the subsequent decline of the British film industry was outside of Hammer's control, the second section of this chapter will utilise the case study of *Nessie* to examine internal issues at Hammer throughout the development process, namely major disagreements between Carreras and screenwriter Bryan Forbes. The treatment and handling of these disagreements with Forbes suggest that even outside of financing, Hammer was struggling with the magnitude of a project like *Nessie*. By examining Hammer's relationship with Forbes, as well as performing a textual analysis of *Nessie*'s screenplays, the chapter will show how Hammer struggled to manage a project that was unlike anything they had

undertaken before, at a time when the studio itself was in clear decline. In examining wider issues outside of Hammer's control, such as the effect of the industry-wide crisis, as well as crucial issues within Hammer itself, the analysis of *Nessie* will provide a detailed account of the key factors which ultimately led to Hammer's closure in 1979. In order to do this successfully, *Nessie* will be examined within the context of other Hammer partnerships and projects, such as their deal with the Shaw Brothers which led to the co-productions *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* (Ward-Baker 1974) and *Shatter* (Carreras 1974).

Toho, Columbia and the Financial Complexity of *Nessie*

Before examining the complex financial packaging of *Nessie* over the four years of its production, it is important to contextualise how Hammer had attempted to find international production and distribution deals elsewhere, after the initial collapse of American backing in the early 1970s. Chapter 3 detailed Hammer's original courting of American finance, which began in the mid-1940s with Robert Lippert Productions. James Carreras had then utilised his connections at the Variety Club to pursue a deal with Elliot Hyman and Warner Brothers for *The Curse of Frankenstein* (Fisher 1957), with the subsequent success of that film opening up a number of opportunities for finance from American majors. However, as documented in Chapter 4, these once reliable avenues of production finance and distribution eventually began to fade, with even Hammer's most reliable franchises struggling to gain attention.

With Hammer no longer being able to rely on the United States, Michael Carreras had to pursue distribution and finance from other territories, with perhaps the most significant international deal Hammer brokered within the mid-1970s being a co-production between Hammer and Shaw Brothers. As noted in the previous chapter, this venture with the Hong Kong production company saw the release of Hammer's final Dracula film *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* as well as the crime thriller *Shatter*. Both productions were fraught with difficulties. Shot entirely in China at the Shaw's Movietown complex, Hammer found itself struggling to adapt to the Shaw Brothers' production methods, with Hammer famously finding the studio inadequately soundproofed due to most Shaw Brothers films at the time relying on post-production dubbing as opposed to recording sound on set (Kinsey 2007: 383, Hearn and Barnes

2007: 165). Hammer were not the only ones frustrated by the co-production process, with Shaw Brothers unhappy with how the action set pieces were progressing and insisting on setting up a second unit for the action sequences, with Ward Baker ‘forced to cede the staging of *Legend*’s martial arts scenes to Shaw’s leading action choreographers’ (Bettinson 2011: 125).

However, the issue which caused Hammer lasting damage was the films running over budget. Hammer had already taken out a ‘significant loan’ (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 165) to finance the two films, and the increased costs damaged both their long-term financial standing as well as their relationship with Shaw Brothers, with the Hammer Script Archive holding correspondence between Vee King Shaw (Shaw Brothers head of production and distribution) and Michael Carreras still settling accounts on *Shatter* in November 1977, nearly three years after the film had finished shooting.

Despite the arduous production process, the films were completed, yet Carreras struggled to find American distribution, with Warner Bros. deciding not to distribute *Shatter* in the United States until 1976 and *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* in 1978. In the unpublished interview with Steve Swires at the Famous Monster Convention (briefly mentioned in the previous chapter), Carreras expressed his frustration with Warner Bros.’ handling of *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* and *Shatter*:

Warner Bros, with whom we have had a number of very successful world-wide releases, feels that the expensive American marketing of a Hammer horror film isn’t justified by the returns they will get. They maintain, contrary to what our hard-core [sic] fans believe, that the American horror market is “soft”, and has been so for the past two years (Carreras in Swires 1975).

Even after partnering with an international studio to produce two feature films, a venture Hammer found taxing from both a production and financial standpoint, American distribution remained elusive. Carreras’ frustrations are apparent in the above quote, and he was also clearly aware that Hammer’s reliance on the horror market to secure international finance was no longer a viable strategy. *Nessie* can be seen as Carreras’ response to the horror market weakening, shifting away from the gothic genre and characters such as Dracula and instead focusing on big-budget genre films with the potential for cross-market appeal. Yet the deliberate strategy to increase the budget of

these potential projects, in a market where Hammer was struggling to distribute their mid-to-low budget films, is one with clear risks attached.

This move away from genres with which Hammer had previously found success was also echoed in the production of their final film under Carreras, *The Lady Vanishes*. A remake of Hitchcock's 1938 thriller this project would not have been out of place on Hammer's production slate in the mid-1960s, which saw it produce a slew of black and white thrillers. However, at this time, and with Carreras fully aware of the general apathy towards the current Hammer product, Carreras deliberately distanced the project from this genre. The Margaret Herrick Library holds a piece of correspondence sent with a screenplay for *The Lady Vanishes* by George Axelrod and a separate treatment by Brian Hayles (Anon. to Carreras: 14th November 1974) (whose relationship with Hammer will be discussed in the next chapter). In this correspondence, Carreras was being asked to decide between the two approaches to *The Lady Vanishes*. The unnamed sender noted that despite being 'very ingenious' (Anon. to Carreras: 14th November 1974), Hayles' version 'rests on suspense, requires complete credibility and I don't believe that is possible with the basic material involved' (Anon. to Carreras: 14th November 1974). Instead, the writer recommended going with Axelrod's script as it 'has a zany style which would be acceptable and, with some adjustment and addition, could supply an audience with lots of surprises and fun' (Anon. to Carreras: 14th November 1974). Axelrod's screenplay was indeed chosen for the project, notably demonstrating Carreras' belief (also expressed in the Famous Monster Convention interview) that genres Hammer had previously relied upon were no longer viable.

The Lady Vanishes originally had funding both from American International Pictures (AIP) and Rank Film (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 170, Kinsey 2007: 416, Meikle 2009: 222), but after AIP dropped out due to disagreements over casting, Rank took over the financing of the film (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 170, Kinsey 2007: 416, Meikle 2009: 222) which was released in 1979. However, the British film industry was in decline throughout the late 1970s, and the deal with Rank proved more an exception than any kind of recurrent strategy. Even this one instance of Hammer attempting to co-produce a film with another British company ended badly, with the budget ballooning to the point where Rank removed Hammer and Carreras from the film entirely (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 170, Kinsey 2007: 41). *Nessie* then, seems to be a synthesis of *The Lady*

Vanishes' production strategy and the deal with Shaw Brothers, reliant initially on the backing of UK distributors, before expanding to the point that international finance became a necessity for the project.

However, before this expansion *Nessie* was very much a British production. The idea germinated at Hammer with a treatment written by Clarke Reynolds (who wrote *The Viking Queen* (Chaffey 1967) for Hammer), with Hammer's script editor, Christopher Wicking, also involved (Carreras to Lloyd: 6th January 1976). Euan Lloyd, despite being a member of Hammer's board of directors at the time, came aboard the project as a separate producer under his own company, Euan Lloyd Productions, effectively making *Nessie* a co-production from the beginning, albeit with a member of Hammer's own board of directors. Yet only three weeks later, on 5th February 1976, *The Daily Mail* reported that the broadcaster David Frost was planning a rival Loch Ness film, *Carnivore* (Carreras to Lloyd: 5th February 1976). Carreras contacted Frost that same day to alert him to this (Carreras to Frost: 5th February 1976), with Frost suggesting they join forces on one Loch Ness Monster project (Carreras to Lloyd: 10th February 1976) and Frost's Paradine Films co-produce the film as well.

Even in this very early stage of development, and with no international finance or distribution deals in place, *Nessie* was becoming a complex production, with three British companies - Hammer, Euan Lloyd Productions and Paradine - all having a financial stake in the film. However, even with three production companies in place, the project still had vital hurdles to overcome. Firstly, the need to find an international distributor, but also, for the film to work at all, Hammer and its partners had to find a way to bring *Nessie* herself to the big screen.

In the first correspondence held in the archive for *Nessie*, dated 6th January 1976 and written when the project was at treatment stage, Carreras identified that the special effects would be vital to the project's success: 'the key to the whole film still remains as who will be in control of the special effects and co-direct these sequences' (Carreras to Lloyd: 6th January 1976). Carreras suggested Jim Danforth for the role, noting that 'if Danforth is still uncommitted to King Kong, and could become involved, then this would be the answer' (Carreras to Lloyd: 6th January 1976). Danforth had created the impressive prehistoric monsters for Hammer's *When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth* (Guest 1970), which had earned him an Academy Award nomination. The suggestion of

Danforth at this stage of the production indicates that Carreras originally perceived *Nessie* as being like other Hammer Films that had relied heavily on creature effects, with a specialist taking over from the film's director to stage these effect sequences separately. This method had been used with Danforth on *When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth*, and Ray Harryhausen on *One Million Years B.C.* (Chaffey 1966). However, Danforth proved unavailable to Hammer due to his work on *The Legend of King Kong*, a film that, like *Nessie*, would never be filmed.

As a result of Danforth's unavailability, Hammer entered into a deal that had notable similarities to their previous venture with Shaw Brothers. On the 11th March 1976, an agreement was drafted between Hammer Productions, Euan Lloyd Productions and Toho Studios of Japan (with Paradine not yet an official partner on the project). *Nessie* was still at treatment stage at this point, but the contract stated that 'subject to Toho-Towa approving the screenplay...the British Companies and Toho-Towa will enter into a joint-venture for the co-production of the film' (Toho Draft Agreement: 11th March 1976). *Nessie* was budgeted at three million dollars in the contract and it was stated that:

One third of the budget shall be advanced by Toho-Towa and spent directly or indirectly in Japan on the Special Effects sequences, including the services of Mr. Shokei Nakano together with the facilities under his supervision (Toho Draft Agreement: 11th March 1976).

In many ways, the co-production deal was a shrewd decision by Hammer. Not only did they secure a considerable amount of the film's budget, as well as a distributor in Japan, they also enlisted a company which specialised in creating special effects for genre films. Toho had become internationally synonymous with the *kaiju* film after the success of Ishiro Honda's *Godzilla* in 1954. In 1956, a re-edited version of the film with newly shot footage was released in the United States as *Godzilla, King of the Monsters!* (Honda/Morse), 'a version made palatable both linguistically and politically for the American market' (Tsutski 2006: 2). The film grossed more than \$2million, an extremely respectable figure when considering the rights for the project were purchased from Toho for only \$25,000 (Tsutski 2004: 41). By the time Hammer entered into a co-production arrangement with Toho, *Godzilla* had become an international success, with fifteen *Godzilla* films being produced by 1976.

However, despite the seemingly astute nature of the deal, there are clear parallels with the troubled co-production with Shaw Brothers. For example, the establishment of a second unit to shoot all the special effect sequences recalls Shaw Brothers bringing in their own choreographers to direct the Kung-Fu set pieces in *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires*. On *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires*, the entire production was located in China, and although this in itself caused many issues for the production, it at least allowed Hammer and Shaw Brothers to respond in real time to any issues they had with the project itself. However, the co-production deal with Toho relied on long distance correspondence and sporadic visits from Hammer to Japan and Toho to England. The deal also led to time pressures being put on the development of the screenplay. Only one day after the contract was signed between Hammer, Lloyd and Toho, Lloyd faxed Carreras informing him that he had promised Toho a first draft of the script ‘within four weeks’ (Lloyd to Carreras: 12th March 1976). Toho would have been understandably anxious to see a script from Hammer, with the contract agreed at only the treatment stage. Carreras responded informing Lloyd that the ‘first draft script is to be ready by April 12th’ (Carreras to Lloyd: 15th March 1976), leaving less than a month for the script to be completed. This inevitably resulted in a rushed writing process (a factor I will consider later within this chapter), but undoubtedly caused an initial strain on the relationship between Hammer and Toho. On the 2nd April, as Lloyd was about to leave for Japan to visit Toho in person, Carreras sent two packages to Lloyd and a letter explaining that one of the packages contained ‘a copy of Chris Wicking’s second draft as far as he has got’ and the second package contained ‘a presentation and screenplay of *Vampirella*’ (Carreras to Lloyd: 2nd April 1976). What is notable about the letter initially is that Carreras attempting to capitalise on the deal with Toho by expanding it to other projects. Carreras had been pursuing an adaptation of the science-fiction comic *Vampirella* since 1975. In the unpublished interview with Steven Swires mentioned in Chapter 4, Carreras gave an update on *Vampirella*: ‘we have a full screenplay written by Christopher Wicking. We have already cast Barbra Leigh in the title role, with Peter Cushing as her side-kick Pendragon, and we are hoping for a summer 1976 release date’ (Carreras in Swires 1975). This expected release date obviously never transpired, and Carreras, less than a month after signing the *Nessie* deal with Toho, looked to capitalise on this deal by offering Toho the ‘Far East’ distribution rights to *Vampirella* (Carreras

to Lloyd: 2nd April 1976). Although this may have suggested confidence in the arrangement between Toho and Hammer, this piece of correspondence also indicates that Hammer had not been able to fully complete a script to send to Toho with Lloyd. The phrasing of Carreras' fax, noting that the script is as far as 'he [Wicking] has got', implies that Hammer had failed to meet the first deadline agreed with Toho. Therefore, less than one month into the deal, Hammer found themselves under increased pressure to complete a script, and, despite having started to tout potential future collaborations with the company, already ran the risk of frustrating Toho by not producing a screenplay on the agreed date.

However, perhaps the biggest concern to the viability of the deal came at the Cannes Film Festival in May 1976, only two months after the deal between Toho, Lloyd, Frost and Hammer had been struck. The project was well-represented at Cannes, with a significant advertising campaign in trades such as *Variety*, who ran a full-page advertisement in the May 19th 1976 issue. What is immediately apparent in the advertisement itself is the budget for the film, with the project announced as the '\$7,000,000 Production/Nessie the Loch Ness Monster' (Anon. 1976a: 40). Between the signing of the original deal and Cannes, the project's budget had more than doubled from its initial \$3million, with Toho's original \$1million contribution, once a third of the film's budget, now only a seventh. No information is held in the Hammer Script Archive that suggests why the budget increased so dramatically, but a document dated 8th July 1976 written by Carreras gives a detailed budget breakdown, and lists Toho's contribution as \$1,900,000, nearly double the original figure.

Despite the project being in development for another eighteen months after this point, it is the move to increase the budget to \$7million that arguably hindered any real chance *Nessie* had of being put into active production. Not only did it require Hammer and its partners to look for other investors, but this new budget also put a strain on Hammer's relationship with existing partners. On 23rd July, a new contract was drafted by Lloyd and sent to Toho films. The contract was between Richmond Film Production (West) Ltd and Toho, with Richmond being a production subsidiary set up by Lloyd (Toho Draft Agreement: 23rd July 1976). This new contract signifies the beginning of a difficult period between Hammer and Toho. Firstly, Hammer had still failed to send a final production script to Toho, with Hammer board member Tom Sachs sending script

revisions on 30th July. This seemed to be a frequent occurrence, with Sachs calling the pages ‘revisions to the pages which we sent you last week’ (Sachs to Matsuoka: 30th July 1976). Less than a week later, Carreras and Lloyd cancelled a trip to visit Toho just five days before their intended departure due to ‘casting and British production planning’ (Carreras and Lloyd to Toho: 4th August 1976). These missed deadlines and the prioritising of other production needs over Toho’s concerns undoubtedly put a strain on the partnership with the Japanese company.

Later in the chapter, I will examine Hammer’s own role in the failure of *Nessie*, largely as a result of its inexperience at mounting such a large production. However, at this juncture it is noteworthy that Hammer’s relationship with Toho is further strained not only by a new contract and budget, but by Hammer’s own failure to meet agreed arrangements, both in regard to the script and the meeting in Japan. These issues came to a head in a telex sent by Toho on August 4th 1976, which contested fifteen separate articles within the newly drawn up contract. The first, and most notable, was the budget for Toho’s special effect sequences. The telex stated that ‘the budget of one million nine hundred thousand dollars for special effects sequences is based on first draft of script and any further departure therefrom required by Richmond cannot be included in said budget’ (Matsuoka to Lloyd and Carreras: 4th August 1976). Toho was clearly concerned that, with the script still being developed, key sequences may be altered. Their subsequent request that ‘any sequences additionally required by Richmond should be photographed at Richmond’s expense’ (Matsuoka to Lloyd and Carreras: 4th August 1976) clearly showed the company looking for assurances from Hammer, Lloyd and Frost that any dramatic changes in the screenplay would not result in Toho having to contribute further to the budget. Toho also looked for guarantees that the film’s quality would match its budget: ‘Richmond to provide director of international fame and top box-office drawing stars’ (Matsuoka to Lloyd and Carreras: 4th August 1976). Also of note in the telex is Toho asking for the partial ownership of the Nessie character: ‘Toho to become co-propertier [sic] of copyrights to special effects sequences, including name and character of Nessie’ (Matsuoka to Lloyd and Carreras: 4th August 1976). This is a significant request as, for the most part, the deal with Toho had centred on the film’s production and distribution in Japan and other territories in the Far East. Owning the rights to the character would potentially extend to the worldwide marketing and

merchandising, as well as theoretically impacting any possible sequel to the film as well. Although the vagueness of the request makes it difficult to specify what Toho were explicitly looking for by becoming co-owner of the Nessie character, the telex sent by Matsuoka, and the points discussed within it, make it clear that Toho was looking for more from Hammer, both in assurances about the project's production as well as financial recoupment, now that their contribution to the project was close to two million dollars.

Lloyd replied within five days of Matsuoka's telex, providing answers to each individual issue raised about the contract. There are two significant passages in Lloyd's response. Firstly, his reaction to Toho's request to co-own the character:

The entire copyright of this film and everything contained therein must rest with the Maker of the film, namely the London company. However, under the terms of our final distribution agreement Toho will share in the benefits of licence and elsewhere in the world through its equity position. To that extent therefore you are co-proprietors (Lloyd to Matsuoka: 9th August 1976).

In this response, Lloyd effectively dismissed Toho's request to partially own the character of Nessie, suggesting that the already-agreed terms make them, 'to that extent', co-proprietors. However, despite Lloyd attempting to suggest Toho already effectively co-owned the rights to the character, this point does show the potential complications of having another studio co-directing sequences of the film. Although Toho was only providing \$1,900,000 of the \$7million budget, the company was responsible for all effects sequences featuring Nessie, and the design and creation of the creature itself. Consequently, their request to co-own the rights to the character held some weight, and further complicated the relationship between Toho and Hammer. This was perhaps best expressed by Toho's Isao Matsuoka nearly a month after the contract was first sent: 'rights resulted from creative work by each party should rest with the party who did said creative work' (Matsuoka to Lloyd: 13th September 1976). As a result, the Toho and Hammer deal in effect became even more complex than their previous deal with Shaw Brothers, as Hammer was handing over almost complete creative control to Toho in the creation of Nessie, and, as a result, Toho was vital to the film's production. However, in relative financial terms, Toho was a minor partner, with other companies such as Columbia and a German tax shelter group (both discussed later in the chapter), holding a larger financial stake in the project.

The nature of Toho's relationship with *Nessie* was further complicated by Lloyd in his initial response to Toho's 4th August telex regarding issues with the contract. In responding to Toho's concerns, Lloyd attempted to clarify the nature of the relationship between Hammer and Toho. However, his explanation contradicted the initial contract in one key area:

To avoid any possible misunderstanding between us I feel it is necessary to reconfirm that our relationship should not be construed as a full coproduction. You are, of course, a minority partner in this enterprise and are providing facilities (and to that extent an investment) in return for distribution rights and equity in the film (Lloyd to Matsuoka: 9th August 1976).

Although Lloyd stated that he is merely 'reconfirming' the nature of the deal, the insistence that the deal 'should not be construed as a full coproduction' was obviously a significant alteration from the initial contract (signed only five months before this exchange). The contract signed in March specifically stated that this was a coproduction deal (Toho Draft Agreement: 11th March 1976), and therefore this shows a dramatic departure from the original deal with Toho. The thinking behind this was most likely that, due to the budget increase for the film, Toho's financial stake in the production had been significantly reduced in percentage, if not absolute, terms.

These many setbacks in the Toho deal could be construed as a sign of incompetence at Hammer, yet it is important to reaffirm the mammoth task Hammer had given itself in trying to bring *Nessie* to the screen. In August 1976, the month in which these contract negotiations between Hammer and Toho took place, Hammer was concurrently attempting to garner finance and distribution from various outlets around the globe. Carreras himself was attempting to put together a complex financial package in Germany with Dr Helmut Gierse and Constantin Film, which would not only secure a large part of the finance for *Nessie*, but also potentially secure Hammer's long-term future. Carreras suggested utilising the 'current Tax Shelter situation' (Carreras to Gierse: 26th August 1976) to set up a production outfit for Hammer in Germany. This deal will be further examined in Chapter 6, but in relation to *Nessie*, the German tax shelter group went on to offer a significant share of the budget, '\$2,450,000 (35%) on the basis of pari-passu recoupment and 17 ½ % of world profits' (Carreras to Begelman: 27th October 1976). This was a sizable sum, but the fact that Carreras still had to find a

significant amount of the budget, even with this deal in place, underlines the enormity of a project like *Nessie* for a British independent such as Hammer.

Whilst Carreras brokered this deal, Lloyd not only dealt with the contract negotiations with Toho, but also entered negotiations with Martin Wragge of Martin Wragge Productions to provide 'certain financial facilities up to \$500,000 for the purpose of filming certain sequences of this film in South Africa' (Lloyd to Wragge: 18th August 1976). Lloyd looked to take advantage of the fact that South Africa is one of the many key locations in the film script, with Lloyd noting in a letter to Wragge's associate that 'Nessie is coming to Cape Waters and in a way to make your mind boggle' (Lloyd to Pierotti: 18th August 1976). Even using only the month of August as an example, it is clear that Hammer, or more specifically Carreras and Lloyd, was attempting to juggle a number of complex financial arrangements. This once again led to Toho becoming frustrated with Hammer. Lloyd, in a letter to Carreras, acknowledged that it was essential to Hammer's relationship with Toho that they visit Japan in September, with Lloyd noting that 'any postponement will make them unduly nervous as we are already behind schedule' (Lloyd to Carreras: 30th August 1976). As such, it was not necessarily ineptitude or incompetence that led to a fractious relationship with Toho, but this was rather just a symptom of a comparatively small independent production outfit such as Hammer attempting to secure finance and distribution deals for a \$7million project.

As Hammer continued to grapple with the enormity of a project such as *Nessie*, October 1976 saw Hammer turn its attention to another crucial component of *Nessie*'s production, American distribution and finance. Despite Hammer's attempts to garner American distribution for previous projects having proven increasingly difficult throughout the mid-to-late 1970s, it became inevitable that they would once more have to turn to the United States to salvage *Nessie*. Even with pieced-together financing from around the world, such as the previously mentioned deals in Japan, South Africa and Germany, a project of *Nessie*'s size necessitated the backing of an American studio. With the project first broached in January 1976, it seems surprising that Hammer did *not* officially approach an American studio until October, nine months after the *Nessie* project began. However, by waiting until some of the other financing was secured, Hammer approached Columbia in October with \$4,350,000 of the \$7million dollar

budget already in place and, perhaps even more crucially, a director signed on to the project.

Assigning a director to the project had been no easy task. Bryan Forbes was signed on as a writer and potential director in June 1976 (Anon. 1976b), and his work on the project will be examined in detail in the next section. However, by July 1976 Forbes had declined Hammer's offer to direct *Nessie* (Forbes to Carreras and Lloyd: 22nd July 1976), and by September 1976, Mark Robson (*Von Ryan's Express* (1965) and *Earthquake* (1974)) and Richard Fleischer (*20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1954) and *Soylent Green* (1973)) had also turned Hammer down (Carreras to Gersh: 22nd September 1976). These setbacks aside, by November 1976 Hammer had finally secured a director in Michael Anderson. Anderson had directed *Logan's Run*, which was released in 1976 and, despite a near \$9million budget, proved to be a substantial box office hit for its studio MGM, saving them from potential bankruptcy (Brock 2014: 105). However, Hammer were perhaps more drawn to Anderson due to the film he had just completed, *Orca* (1977). *Orca* is significant due to its status as one of the most significant films in the 'Jawsploitation' cycle (Hunter 2016: 77), a term Hunter uses to identify films that, after the monumental success of *Jaws* (Spielberg 1975), attempted to 'hook audiences with comparable pleasures' (Hunter 2016: 84). This often involved reworking *Jaws*' animal attack plot with other animals or sea creatures, such as bears in *Grizzly* (Girdler 1976) or piranhas in *Piranhas* (Dante 1976) (Foster and Hunter 2018: 217).

Orca's variation on the premise of *Jaws*, specifically in its eco-friendly narrative which sympathises with the creature (in this case a killer-whale), also has similarities with *Nessie*, which could be classified as an unmade British Jawsploitation picture. The relationship between *Jaws* and *Nessie* is not only apparent in the basic 'sea-monster on the loose' premise, but permeates nearly all aspects of production, from references in the screenplay, to merchandise and marketing. Although I will provide a more detailed examination of the plot in the latter half of this chapter, it is worth at this stage noting how heavily *Nessie* wears its influences. Firstly, *Jaws* is referenced twice by name in the screenplay itself. Two doomed lovers on a private yacht directly in *Nessie*'s path of destruction watch *Jaws* on a television set (Forbes 1976: 68), then later, as *Nessie* travels through the ocean, she is confronted by a great white shark 'bigger than *Jaws*'

(Forbes 1976: 95). These allusions to *Jaws* are apparent in the characters as well, most notably the big game hunter Channon. Channon is essentially a substitute for Quint (Robert Shaw), the grizzled shark hunter in *Jaws*, although Channon takes on a more antagonistic role, working against the two protagonists to try and kill Nessie instead of capturing her. Like Quint, Channon does not make it to the film's conclusion, being beheaded by a tuna fish net at the beginning of the film's third act.

Outside of the screenplay, marketing companies had also begun to see the similarities between the two projects and looked to capitalise on *Nessie's* Jawsploitation credentials. After a meeting with Seinger and Associates Advertising Company, who did the promotional campaign for *Jaws*, Carreras was sent a detailed proposal by Tony Seinger outlining how his company would approach the marketing of *Nessie* (Seinger to Carreras: 28th July 1976). Lloyd replied thanking Seinger for his letter, and noted that 'the fine campaign [Seinger] did on *Jaws* deserves praise which I gladly give' (Lloyd to Seinger: 18th August 1976). Hammer was also approached by Gateway Productions, a company responsible for the merchandising of *Jaws*, and in their letter Gateway was keen to stress the connection, noting that they cited *Jaws* as a reference 'because it is more comparable to your production of *Nessie* than the many TV properties we handle' (Charlton to Carreras: 24th June 1976). Charlton also suggested that, due to the similarities with *Jaws*, they could begin to merchandise *Nessie* straight away, instead of having to 'wait until after a massive worldwide promotion of the production had made its impact and the release of the film' (Charlton to Carreras: 24th June 1976).

The referential screenplay, as well as the correspondence with the merchandise and marketing agencies that handled *Jaws*, determines *Nessie's* status as an unmade Jawsploitation picture. However, what separates it from the others was its budget, which, at over \$7million, was equal to *Jaws's* own (boxofficemojo.com). As such, the choice of Michael Anderson as the film's director was both astute and understandable, given that he had helmed *Orca*, a film that had a \$6million budget. As a result of Anderson signing on, Hammer entered production on what would have been the most expensive film of the Jawsploitation cycle, with a director who had recently finished the production of another expensive Jawsploitation project.

Despite a tumultuous pre-production period up to that point, in September, when Hammer approached Columbia Pictures, the film was arguably at its most marketable.

They had guarantees on a considerable portion of the budget, a completed screenplay, a director who had not only worked on big budget material but who had just wrapped a strikingly similar picture to *Nessie*, and advertising and merchandising companies with proven track records in the genre also showing interest. With this considered it is perhaps not surprising that Columbia opened talks with Hammer about financing and distributing *Nessie*, and eventually set out the terms of a potential deal.

These terms are laid out in two documents held in the Hammer Script Archive. One is a handwritten note by Carreras, dated 17th November 1976 and titled 'Nessie-Columbia', and the other is a separate undated memo written by Carreras which stated, in reference to Columbia, what 'they do not like', what 'they want', what 'they accept', and what 'they are considering' (Carreras Undated(c)). Together, these two documents give a detailed account of Columbia's terms.

Columbia offered to give Hammer the full amount of \$2,650,000, a number which, with Toho and the German tax shelter money, would take the project to the \$7million target figure. However, Columbia also outlined several terms and conditions that could potentially complicate Hammer's relationships with existing partners. On the handwritten notes' 'do not like' section is the name of the director, Michael Anderson (Carreras Undated(c)). As previously stated, Hammer had a difficult time attaching a director to the project before Anderson signed on. Anderson had only been confirmed for the project for eight weeks, yet Hammer found itself in a position where it could seemingly only gain the financing from Columbia if it lost one of their primary assets in Anderson. Furthermore, Carreras' note made it clear that, although Columbia accepted that Toho had the Japanese distribution rights to the project and that their 25% cut of worldwide profits would exclude Japan, the American studio was less accepting of losing the German/Austrian market to Gierse's Constantin Films and the German tax shelter group. Carreras' note stated that Columbia had explicitly asked for the German/Austrian rights and, in addition, was also considering 'the value and viability' (Carreras Undated(c)) of the tax shelter deal already in place in Germany. These issues were exacerbated by the time pressures of the tax shelter deal in Germany, something made clear by Carreras in his initial letter to Columbia: 'I apologize for the urgency in this matter, but it is a basic requirement of the German Tax Shelter group that distribution arrangements are completed before going to the market next week'

(Carreras to Begelman: 27th October 1976). Although negotiations between studios in this kind of arrangement are not uncommon, the indication that the German tax shelter deal also rested on an agreement with Columbia (due to it being time-sensitive) put Hammer under immense pressure, and in the precarious position of potentially losing both Columbia and the tax shelter group as partners.

However, perhaps even more potentially damaging to the deal was Columbia's insistence on a quality clause in relation to Toho's special effects. In a fax from Lloyd to Carreras, Lloyd was clearly fearful of such a clause being discussed: 'Please avoid at all costs any question of quality clause with Columbia or major as this would in my opinion negate the deal totally' (Lloyd to Carreras: Undated). The fax also indicates that, after Columbia had noted its wariness of Hammer's deal with Toho, Hammer went to Toho to seek assurances that would assuage Columbia's fears, by having a quality clause written into Hammer's own contract with Toho. This then led to tensions between Hammer and Toho, with Lloyd noting that 'the Toho revised contract states "to Hammer's reasonable satisfaction", however, I expect further argument on this as they are trying to insist that quality should not be inferior to King Kong Vs. Godzilla' (Lloyd to Carreras: Undated). The fact that Toho would only go so far as to say the effects would be on par with *King Kong vs. Godzilla* (Honda 1962) would hardly have been reassuring for Hammer or Columbia. Released nearly fifteen years before *Nessie* began production, *King Kong vs. Godzilla* relied on Toho's patented 'suitmation' technique (Kalat 2017: 61), which relied on actors in large suits moving through small-scale scenery to bring the titular monsters to life. As such, it is perhaps understandable that Columbia would be reticent to allow Toho to continue the effects on what was to be a large scale, big-budget production. To add further context, in 1976, Columbia were deep in production on Steven Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977), a \$19million blockbuster that would prove ground-breaking in its use of special effects. With Columbia's expectations likely built on these very high standards, Toho's suitmation would struggle to impress.

Hammer was forced to intervene and defend Toho to Columbia, attempting to, in Carreras' own words to Columbia's Stanley Jaffe, 'ease your quality fears' (Carreras to Jaffe: 23rd November 1976). In order to do this, Carreras put forward a four-point plan to Columbia. Firstly, he suggested increasing Toho's special effects budget by half a

million dollars from \$1,900,000 to \$2,400,000. Secondly, Carreras proposed having a representative of Columbia in Japan at Toho to provide ‘constant supervision of progress and quality’ (Carreras to Jaffe: 23rd November 1976). Both suggestions seem like practical and sensible solutions to the issue at hand, yet Carreras’ next point in the letter suggests a less firm grasp of the situation. In an attempt to convince Columbia that Hammer could produce a project of *Nessie’s* scale, Carreras attempted to stress his own experience producing effects-heavy films:

I have been directly associated with the production of space-science-fiction, pre-historic and countless horror special effects, and I believe the reputation earned over the last twenty years for high quality production for minimal cost are accepted by both the industry and by world audiences (Carreras to Jaffe: 23rd November 1976).

Indeed, Hammer had in the past been involved with its own effects-driven films, and Carreras was keen to point out its experience with genre films, from the prehistoric creatures of *One Million BC* to the science fiction of *Moon Zero Two* (Ward Baker 1969). Yet Carreras also made the point that the quality of the effects within these films was balanced by the ‘minimal cost’ in bringing them to the screen. These films did not necessarily offer good special effects, but rather good special effects within the parameters of their (often small) budgets. As a result, despite Hammer and Carreras having always been shrewd in the budgeting of Hammer’s films (for example by using Bray Studios as its home studio between 1952-1966, utilising tight filming schedules, shooting films back to back and reusing sets), Carreras was promoting himself as economical to an industry that was becoming increasingly more relaxed about producing films with large budgets.

This leads to perhaps the strongest argument that *Nessie’s* fate was truly out of Carreras, Lloyd, and Hammer’s hands. At the end of 1976, as Hammer began negotiating with Columbia, Hollywood stood on the precipice of a change that would significantly alter the industry for decades: the rise of the blockbuster. After the financial caution that had followed the fiscal crisis in Hollywood between 1969 and 1971, key shifts within the industry began to take place, namely the buying of film companies by multi-conglomerates and the move away from staggered releases to wide releases brought on by the success of *The Godfather* (Coppola 1972) and *Jaws* (which opened simultaneously on 350 and 464 screens respectively (Hall 2006: 164-169)). As a

result, Hollywood began to dramatically increase the budgets of its most prominent pictures. *Star Wars* (Lucas) was released in May 1977 on a budget of roughly \$12million and, by November 1977, had become the highest grossing film ever made (second when accounting for inflation, behind *Gone with the Wind* (Fleming 1940)) (Kermode 2005: 173, Krämer 2005: 89). Columbia's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* followed in November 1977, which proved to be an enormous hit for Columbia and, along with *Star Wars*, 'persuaded the major studios that science fiction could generate massive profits' (Hall 2006: 175). Therefore, in 1976, with Columbia deep in production on *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and 20th Century Fox's *Star Wars* seven months from release, *Nessie*, in hindsight, seemed to be adrift in a changing film industry. It was a special effects-driven film aimed to entice Hollywood studios, but with a budget simultaneously too large for Hammer to produce itself, and too small to convince the Hollywood majors that the effects could be done successfully.

Whereas Hammer could not have possibly foreseen the arrival of these blockbuster films, Carreras was fully responsible for the disastrous move he took in another effort to ease Columbia's quality concerns. In the previously mentioned letter to Columbia, Carreras suggested sending Columbia footage from Toho's new film: 'I have shipped in from London the final reels of Toho's "Conflagration" which contain the destruction of Tokyo Harbour- similar to our destruction of Hong Kong, for you to see and judge the quality' (Carreras to Jaffe: 23rd November 1976). The footage was sent to Bill Tennant, a former agent who was then a production vice president at Columbia (McClintick 1982: 280) the following day, with a request by Carreras for him to 'attend the screening' as and when it took place (Carreras to Tennant: 24th November 1976). Carreras' request went unheeded and he received a reply from Stanley Jaffe, another vice president of production, less than a week later:

While I admire the work [Toho] did, the quality of what we saw would not be acceptable to us and, therefore, as so much of NESSIE would depend upon the quality of the special effects, we must unfortunately inform you that we feel it necessary to pass on the project (Jaffe to Carreras: 30th November 1976)

Carreras' gamble could not have gone worse, demonstrating a fundamental misunderstanding of Columbia's own expectations for the picture. It is not difficult to see why Columbia balked at the effects sequences in *Conflagration* (Ishida 1975). It

mainly relies on miniatures to stage its explosive set pieces, and reuses footage of an oil tanker explosion taken from *Godzilla vs. Hedorah* (Banno 1971). Again, this perhaps showed Hammer's naivety with such a big budget production. Whereas Carreras had clearly not only seen, but been impressed by Toho's efforts on *Conflagration*, Columbia had immediately pulled out of the project on viewing it, highlighting the gulf (which would only widen in the coming year) between Hammer's idea of an effects-driven film and a Hollywood major such as Columbia's. Despite Carreras' protestations that they had been producing genre pictures for 'the last twenty years', the industry had begun to change around Hammer, and the hope that *Nessie* could act as a bridge to a wider international audience and once again announce Hammer as major international players was sinking quickly.

To his credit, Carreras did manage to entice Columbia back onto the project, offering the studio assurances that included a visit to Toho to examine the storyboards of the effect sequences, an increase in the budget of the effects (as first proposed in his letter), and handing over to Columbia a complete production cross plot and budget breakdown (Carreras to Jaffe: 9th December 1976). The deal with Columbia stayed in place for six months, when a fax was sent by a nervous Carreras to Lloyd asking if Columbia was yet to 'make up their minds' (29th June 1977). However, once more the fate of the deal was taken completely out of Hammer's hands. Euphemistically referred to by Meikle as 'musical chairs in the Columbia boardroom' (2009: 221), 1977 saw Columbia Pictures engulfed in a scandal. The President of Columbia, David Begelman, was found to have embezzled close to \$75,000 from the company (Dick 1992: 30). Columbia mishandled the issue, only suspending Begelman when 'generally, forgery and embezzlement mean termination' (Dick 1992: 30). Making matters worse, Columbia reinstated Begelman until he resigned in February 1978 (Dick 1992: 30). The scandal was labelled 'HollywoodGate' (Anon. 1978), and became synonymous 'as a symbol of greed-driven Hollywood' (Dick 1992: 32). The ensuing aftermath resulted in Alan Hirschfield, then CEO of Columbia, resigning from the company.

Although Hammer's own hand in *Nessie*'s misfortune has been highlighted throughout the chapter (and will be dealt with further in the latter part), this particular situation was utterly out of its control. The Begelman scandal saw the studio left in disarray and Hammer's *Nessie* was cast aside by a company fighting to survive. Despite

Lloyd and Carreras' best efforts, *Nessie* had lost the backing of Columbia by September 1977 and, by October, Hammer was in danger of losing Toho as well. In a letter dated 24th October 1977, President of Toho Isao Matsuoka, seemingly furious at the mounting expenses on the project over the eighteen months since Toho signed on (Matsuoka notes that Toho's 'credit has been greatly damaged by [Hammer's] failure' (Matsuoka to Lloyd: 24th October 1977)), offered Hammer an ultimatum. First stating how it 'is a matter of great regret' that commencement on the production of *Nessie* had been so delayed, Matsuoka gave Hammer until 1st December to demonstrate to Toho 'that you can procure financing necessary for immediate commencement of shooting' (Matsuoka to Lloyd: 24th October 1977). December and January came and went, and although Toho was still on board with the project in February 1978 (Netter to Matsuoka: 24th February 1978) despite Hammer never seemingly providing evidence of financing, *Nessie* was dead in the water by the summer of 1978.

As noted in the introduction, *Nessie* was perhaps the peak of Carreras' new strategy for Hammer, which would have moved away from low-to-mid-budget genre pictures and instead looked to entice American majors with big-budget films with cross-market appeal. However, although Carreras had offered a radical new Hammer to the American majors, not much had really changed. Hammer was still dependent on American financial backing, and when they lost the support of Columbia, despite continuing for another year in development, *Nessie* never regained momentum and stayed, to use Carreras' own term, 'in dry-dock' (Carreras in Skinn and Brosnan 1978: 21).

Hammer's relationship with Toho also foregrounds how Hammer's ambitions perhaps superseded its capacity to develop a picture such as *Nessie*. The two-year relationship was mired by Toho's constant frustrations with Hammer over the delays in production, and the constant confusion about the nature of their arrangement. Quite clearly originating as a co-production deal, Hammer's scaling up of the budget to \$7million dollars from \$3million reduced Toho to a minor financial partner, but still a major factor in the film's potential success, due to the Japanese studio providing the special effects. This tension caused a rift between the companies, with Toho clearly doubting Hammer could provide the finance for the picture after the Columbia deal fell through.

However, despite Hammer's own faults during the production of *Nessie*, two points should be underlined. Firstly, to its credit, Hammer approached Columbia with a strong, saleable project (partly financed, with a director attached and marketers interested) and secured a deal. That Hammer even managed to achieve this international deal within the weakened British film industry is impressive. Secondly, it is necessary to point out that what I argue was the true killing blow to *Nessie*, the withdrawal of Columbia, was out of Hammer's control. Although Hammer did initially lose Columbia's support due to the issue with Toho's effects, the British studio regained it, and it was ultimately the changes at Columbia brought on by the Begelman scandal that derailed any chance the project had. This, as well as the blockbuster's rise to prominence in 1977, ultimately demonstrate that, despite Hammer's own faults when dealing with a project of this scale on the international stage, the true reason for *Nessie*'s failure was out of Hammer's hands.

The Domestic Difficulties of *Nessie*

Although examining Hammer's international deals can offer us a comprehensive picture of the company in relation to its partners and potential financiers, to examine Hammer internally and domestically can, I will argue, answer the question as to whether Hammer were truly up to the task of producing Carreras' proposed slate of proto-blockbusters. The previous chapter highlighted how difficult Hammer's situation had become as the 1970s progressed, and Carreras' new 'shit or bust attitude' (Hearn 2011: 162) can at best be seen as an optimistic but risky strategy to combat Hammer's decline. Focusing on large-scale productions as a result of failing to get mid-budget films financed seems wilfully self-destructive, but as noted in the previous section, Carreras was arguably quite prescient in predicting Hollywood's shift towards big-budget genre films.

However, the question of whether Hammer was in any state internally to pursue this strategy is a significant one, and one this section will explore. I will briefly examine the story of the screenplay and how it was received by potential financiers and talent. The screenplay, unlike the film's special effects or the international partnerships discussed in the previous section, was Hammer's responsibility alone, having firstly been developed in-house at Hammer before later being developed further by Bryan Forbes. However, even with Forbes' involvement, the project was still managed

intensively by Carreras, and therefore I argue that the screenplay is perhaps the best way to examine Hammer's approach to *Nessie* away from the influence of any international partners. Carreras and Forbes' relationship throughout the development of *Nessie* is key to understanding the issues with the screenplay that ultimately led to delays in it being sent to partners and financiers (one of the primary issues Toho had with Hammer). It also gives insight into how Hammer approached such a project and how a writer/director such as Forbes fit (or did not) within Hammer's method of production.

However, the archival gaps within this area should be acknowledged. The initial treatment by John Starr, mentioned by Carreras in his correspondence to Euan Lloyd on 6th January 1976, is missing, and in a letter sent out to Hammer staff dated 11th August 1976, Carreras referred to two similarly absent screenplays written before Forbes involvement, 'the first being from John Starr, the second being from Chris Wicking' (Carreras to Lloyd et al: 11th August 1976). The archive is also not in possession of any unaltered drafts written by Bryan Forbes after he was signed to the project. In correspondence to Michael Carreras, Forbes noted that he had written 'three separate drafts' (Forbes to Carreras: 28th August 1976) of the script, suggesting that, with Starr and Wicking's other drafts, there are five drafts of *Nessie* not held in the Hammer Script Archive. The Script Archive does hold two *Nessie* screenplays. One, dated August 1976, is described as the 'final Bryan Forbes Script Amended by Michael Carreras', and is 138 pages long. The second script is listed as being 'revised in March 1978' and is described as a 'screenplay by Christopher Wicking and John Starr, shooting script by Bryan Forbes'. At 120 pages, the script features less ambitious action and special effects sequences; this was the screenplay prepared, presumably by Carreras, for a trimmer, post-Columbia version.

Despite the limitations of the Archive's script holdings, ancillary materials such as production correspondence and financial documentation still provide a detailed overview of *Nessie*'s production history, as demonstrated in the previous section. One such document, which will be a primary focus of this section, is the previously mentioned letter from Forbes to Carreras where he indicated the existence of 'three other drafts' he had produced for the project. The crux of Forbes' letter is his anger at Carreras for amending his script significantly whilst still crediting Forbes as the sole author. In the letter, Forbes also attached five pages that detailed the changes Carreras

made to his draft, and why he felt these damaged the screenplay. Using these five pages, it is possible to get a sense, although not definitively, of what material was written by Forbes and what were Carreras' additions in the amended 1976 screenplay. As well as this, having two different screenplays still allows cross-referencing between both and, by looking at the similar elements apparent over the two screenplays dated nearly two years apart, it is possible to summarise the basic plot elements most likely consistent throughout the project's development.

In both screenplays, *Nessie* begins with a pre-credit sequence of steroids, Mutane 4, spilling into Loch Ness because of a truck crash. Nessie is a one-million-year-old elasmosaurus who suffers steroid-enhanced growth and, with the Loch polluted, escapes into the ocean. This leads to a number of set pieces as Nessie embarks on a journey to her ancient home in the South China Seas. Meanwhile, a vast array of characters from around the world attempt to stop her: arrogant TV reporter Mark Stafford, the film's nominable lead; Susan, a female scientist who wants the creature studied in a humane environment; Channon, an ill-fated hard-bitten huntsman; and Comfort, scientist turned company man who is out to ensure Nessie's demise at the hands of the US and UK governments. Both screenplays are also structured around a handful of disaster sequences; Nessie gets entangled with a nuclear submarine and tuna boats, causes an oil rig disaster and finally meets her end in the sea some miles from Hong Kong harbour.

The global nature of the film's plot is by no means coincidental and reflects Hammer's scramble for international finance. This is apparent from the previous section of this chapter, which noted that Lloyd had approached Martin Wragge's production company in South Africa with the promise that 'Nessie is coming to Cape Waters and in a way to make your mind boggle' (Lloyd to Pierotti: 18th August 1976). Hammer attempted to use the travelogue nature of the screenplay in order to directly appeal to specific foreign markets, a point made apparent in the overt description of the lead character, Stafford, as an American journalist, a clear appeal to the United States markets and a tactic Hammer had utilised since the late 1940s through their deal with Lippert Productions (Harper and Porter 2003: 141).

With its clear exploitation (or Jawsplotation) plot, and almost cynical attempt to cater to international markets, it is initially difficult to see what had attracted Bryan

Forbes to *Nessie*. Although there is no specific reference to it in the Script Archive, a good assumption would be that it was Forbes' prior relationship with David Frost of Paradine Productions, who came onto the *Nessie* project in February 1976. In 1976, Forbes had directed and co-written *The Slipper and the Rose*, a Paradine co-production (Hawk 1976: 27), on which David Frost had served as executive producer. The film, a \$4.5million musical adaptation of Cinderella with songs by the Sherman Brothers (Davies 1976: 108), drew positive notices from critics (Anon. 1976c: 35) and decent numbers at the box office (Thomas 1976a: 2, Thomas 1976b: 2), thereby making it plausible that Frost would recommend Forbes for *Nessie*.

However, although reviews for *The Slipper and the Rose* noted that Forbes had an 'honorable record' as a director and producer of family films (with *The Railway Children* (Jeffries 1970) and *The Tales of Beatrix Potter* (Mills 1971) all produced under Forbes' tenure as head of production at EMI), his previous directorial effort, *The Stepford Wives* (1975), showed a director comfortable with more adult fare. The plot of that film sees a couple move to the idyllic town of Stepford, only to discover that the eerily docile wives of Stepford are in fact robotic replacements made by their husbands. Causing controversy on its release due to claims of misogyny, the film was relatively well received by critics (Murf 1975: 28), but proved a difficult sell at the box office (Anon. 1975a: 18, Anon. 1975b: 14). However, its core concept proved too intriguing to be left alone and the film was eventually followed by three straight to television sequels, *Revenge of the Stepford Wives* (Fuest 1980), *The Stepford Children* (Levi 1987) and *The Stepford Husbands* (Walton 1996), and in 2004 a remake, *The Stepford Wives* (Oz), starring Nicole Kidman and Matthew Broderick. Unlike with Michael Anderson, where it is possible to chart a clear path from *Orca* to *Nessie*, Forbes, despite having previously worked with Frost, was a less obvious choice for the project. Clearly not a director fixed to one genre, Forbes had also had a career as an actor (even starring in two Hammer Films, *Quatermass 2* (Guest 1957) and *Yesterday's Enemy* (Guest 1959)), and had worked at EMI as a production head from 1969 to 1971, resigning in the wake of several financial issues and failed projects. Forbes himself suggests that Hammer's production deal with EMI was an 'old pals act' (in Meikle 2009: 185) between James Carreras and Delfont, which actually prohibited Forbes from making some of the films he wanted: 'the very slender resources at my disposal...meant that I had to cancel other

films which I would have preferred and which, I think, might have more materially contributed to the commercial success of my programme' (Forbes in Meikle 2009: 185). However, whatever the reason, be it his prior dealings with Hammer as actor and EMI production head, or his relationship with David Frost on *The Slipper and the Rose*, Hammer was keen to have Forbes both write and direct the picture.

This intention for Forbes to helm the picture as well as write it ultimately led to tensions between Forbes and Hammer. Forbes' contract was officially sent as a draft on 28th June 1976, but was summarised in a Hammer memo written on 11th June. Forbes was given four weeks to work on the screenplay, at \$10,000 a week (Anon: 11th June 1976). If the script was to Hammer's satisfaction, Forbes was then to be given first refusal to direct, for a fee of \$200,000 dollars for twenty-six weeks of production (Wesson and Williams to Carreras: 14th June 1976). Although this was only written as an 'option' to direct, there was a clear indication that Hammer fully expected Forbes to helm the picture. Even before the contract was drafted, Doug Netter, an associate of Euan Lloyd, wrote to potential financier Salah Hassanein and overtly stated that 'Forbes will direct the film' (Netter to Hassanein: 23rd June 1976). However, on July 22nd 1976, whilst under contract to write *Nessie*, Forbes wrote to Carreras and Lloyd declining the offer to direct:

In reaching and formally tendering my decision not to proceed with the Direction of the film, I felt that I must attempt some rational explanation for what you have been kind enough to say will be a great disappointment to you and is certainly a disappointment to me (Forbes to Carreras and Lloyd: 22nd July 1976).

Forbes went on to say that he hoped the script proved that he had taken the project seriously, saying that he felt his draft offered a 'blueprint which could make an exciting and somewhat different film in this particular genre' (Forbes to Carreras and Lloyd: 22nd July 1976). However, he also envisioned the film as needing 'a director who paints in broader strokes than [he] does' (Forbes to Carreras and Lloyd: 22nd July 1976) referring to himself as a 'miniaturist' who had never 'lost sight of my own limitations' (Forbes to Carreras and Lloyd: 22nd July 1976). Forbes, in his own way, essentially tells Carreras and Lloyd that the project is not within his capacity as a director. This seems a fair assessment as his work before had all been on smaller budget fare, with even the grandiose *The Slipper and the Rose*, arguably Forbes most mainstream and elaborate

film, being in a totally different genre to *Nessie*, as well as significantly less expensive. However, one could also argue that Forbes was distancing himself from the project, and that *Nessie* was somewhat beneath him. In the same letter, Forbes also seemed keen to distance himself from the script itself. He wrote:

I think it would be very wrong for me ever to ask for sole authorship of the piece... I believe that full recognition should be accorded to those previous writers who provided the framework and basic construction of the script (Forbes to Carreras and Lloyd: 22nd July 1976).

In just this letter, Forbes withdrew as director and insisted on not being the screenplay's sole author. This suggests that perhaps Forbes was indeed enticed onto the project as a favour to his former producer David Frost, a notion compounded by a later letter from Forbes where he noted that 'it is a matter of fact that \$40,000 is below my market rate for a rewrite' (Forbes to Carreras: 4th September 1976).

Although Forbes' true feelings about the project can only be speculated on, the tensions that this produced between him and Hammer demonstrate one way in which Hammer ultimately bears culpability for some of the other issues that hindered the development of this project. Hammer had already told potential investors that Forbes was on-board, and Forbes himself noted that Hammer had seemed particularly keen to have him. In his letter officially announcing that he will not direct the picture, when Hammer and Forbes were on more cordial terms, Forbes framed this as a flattering gesture, saying that he must explain his decision not to direct, a decision Hammer 'have been kind enough to say will be a great disappointment' (Forbes to Carreras and Lloyd: 22nd July 1976). Yet by September, due to disputes over pay and screenplay alterations (which I will discuss later in this section), the relationship between Forbes and Hammer became less amicable, and Forbes offers insights which show just how much Hammer wanted him to direct the film. Forbes wrote that even on initially meeting with Hammer before the contracts were signed, Forbes had 'arrived at the decision...the film was not my cup of tea as a director' (Forbes to Carreras: 4th September 1976). Forbes noted that making this decision so quickly should have benefited Hammer as he decided immediately as opposed to causing delay, allowing Hammer to begin searching for a new director immediately (Forbes to Carreras: 4th September 1976). However, Forbes suggested that Lloyd and Carreras 'persuaded [him] to take a raincheck on the

directorial assignment' (Forbes to Carreras: 4th September 1976). This therefore suggests that Hammer had delayed the project by attempting to convince Forbes to direct the film, instead of taking his initial refusal and moving on to search for a new director. This is particularly significant since, as seen in the previous section, Hammer often cited time pressures as a key reason why the production was delayed. As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, factors included the numerous delays in sending the script to Toho, as well as the time pressures Hammer stress to Columbia regarding the German tax shelter group. However, here it is clear that these time pressures were not merely a consequence of an independent company like Hammer trying to juggle several complex international deals, but instead were, at least if we are to believe Forbes, entirely of the company's own making.

Hammer's desperation to secure a writer/director of Forbes' standing was also already problematic due to the Toho deal. By this time, Hammer already had a longstanding deal with Toho to do the special effects, and Toho was already in production on these effects based on Starr's treatment and Wicking's drafts. As a result, Forbes was extremely limited in what he could change conceptually about the project, as he stated in the September letter to Carreras:

You were at some pains to tell me that the basic conception could not be materially altered because of the arrangement with your Japanese partners and the fact that they had already commenced work and would be thrown by any drastic change (Forbes to Carreras: 4th September 1976).

One must therefore question what Hammer felt it could offer Forbes. As writer/director, one would assume that he expected a fair amount of autonomy on any given project, being able to conceive and then execute his own work from page to screen. However, this was clearly not the case with *Nessie*. As a writer, Forbes' hands were tied by previous deals Hammer had made long before he joined the project, meaning he could only rewrite the screenplay around existing action set-pieces that could not be altered. Although perhaps cynical, one could suggest that, where creative control was lacking, financial reward may also have been equally enticing. However, again this is clearly not the case in relation to *Nessie* since, as previously mentioned, Forbes was working below his market rate. Therefore, Hammer could not conceivably expect to attract a writer and director such as Forbes to *Nessie*, and by delaying the inevitable and refusing to look for

other directors, Hammer stalled the project even further, causing additional pressure on Hammer's increasingly fractious relationships with existing partners.

As these international relationships became more and more strained, so too did Hammer's relationship with Forbes, primarily due to two factors. The first issue was the authorship of the screenplay itself. In a social visit to David Frost's house, Forbes had happened upon a script for *Nessie* on Frost's table and was angered by two things. One was that, despite Forbes making it clear that he had not wanted to be credited as the sole author of the script, he was in fact the only writer listed on the title page. Secondly, the script itself had been significantly amended without Forbes' knowledge, with no mention of this fact on the screenplay itself and no suggestion of who had made the amendments. Forbes was furious, and wrote to Carreras, noting that, although Hammer had the legal right to change Forbes script:

What you do not have the right to do is to make such changes and, without reference to me, issue that script with a title page which states I am the sole author. This I object to most strongly and will, if necessary, take legal action to prevent (Forbes to Carreras: 28th August 1976).

Forbes is seemingly not angry about the changes made to the script, but instead that the amendments were made under his name. In the same letter, Forbes also noted that the reason he looked at Frost's copy of the script in the first place is that 'nobody had sent me a copy' (Forbes to Carreras: 28th August 1976). This indicates a fundamental lack of communication between Hammer and Forbes, particularly when Carreras had sent a letter with his thoughts on Forbes' script on 11th August 1976 to Euan Lloyd, Erica Bond, Chris Wicking, John Starr and Tom Sachs, but not Forbes himself. Carreras was clearly not fully content with Forbes' draft either, with his first point in the letter being that 'this is not a shooting script and a lot of very detailed work will have to be done before it becomes one' (Carreras to Lloyd et al: 11th August 1976). Carreras then went on to list three pages of amendments he felt should be made to the script. Why Carreras did not tell Forbes about his grievances with the script is unknown, but it is clear that Carreras decided to change the script himself, amending it whilst still keeping Forbes listed as the sole author. This is confirmed by a letter from Carreras to Lloyd enclosing amendment pages (Carreras to Lloyd: 26th August 1976) for the script, sent two days before Forbes' letter to Carreras. The question of why Carreras would keep Forbes in

the dark about these amendments is perplexing, as is the question of why Carreras would employ a writer of Forbes' talent only to alter his work without consultation. Forbes himself made this point:

On the purely practical and business level I find it odd that you employ somebody like me, and pay me high fees, presumably because you believe that I have shown evidence that I possess certain talents, and then proceed to change my work without further reference to me (Forbes to Carreras: 28th August 1976).

He even noted that it was not an availability issue that stopped Carreras from consulting him, saying that 'I was also at some pains to tell you that I was available to do further work on the script, should my last revised version still require additional material' (Forbes to Carreras: 28th August 1976). Along with the letter, Forbes also sent five pages of notes on the amended script, focusing primarily on why the changes made by Carreras actually made the script worse. It is hard not to feel that this disagreement, in which Forbes threatened legal action against Hammer if the company did not alter the screenplay credit, could easily have been avoided if Hammer had approached Forbes directly with the issue, or even simply altered the script to reflect that it was no longer solely Forbes' work. This later point in particular also reflected badly on Hammer, given that in the correspondence where Forbes passed on directing the picture, he specifically asked that he would not be solely credited for the film.

What is also noteworthy are the dates in which this correspondence takes place, well after Forbes' initial four-week contract had ended. This was first brought up by Forbes' agent in a letter to Carreras on 10th August 1976, where he noted that not only was Forbes not fully paid in line with his contract (Forbes was still owed \$20,000 of the original \$40,000 (Williams to Carreras: 10th August 1976)), but he believed that Forbes is owed another \$10,000 due to additional services rendered. It is worth emphasising that Hammer had failed to pay a client under contract their agreed fee, a fact that could potentially get lost in the numerous other issues between Hammer and Forbes. Although the \$10,000 extra asked for by Williams was under special circumstances (which Carreras debated later), the blame for the fact that Hammer had simply not paid Forbes fifty per cent of his contracted fee laid squarely with them. Again, this calls into question Hammer's own conduct when putting together a film such as *Nessie*. The factors outside of the company's control were documented in the previous section, but

paying the writer of the project on time rests solely with Hammer, and whatever the reason, be it disorganisation or simply not having the capital, it suggests once again

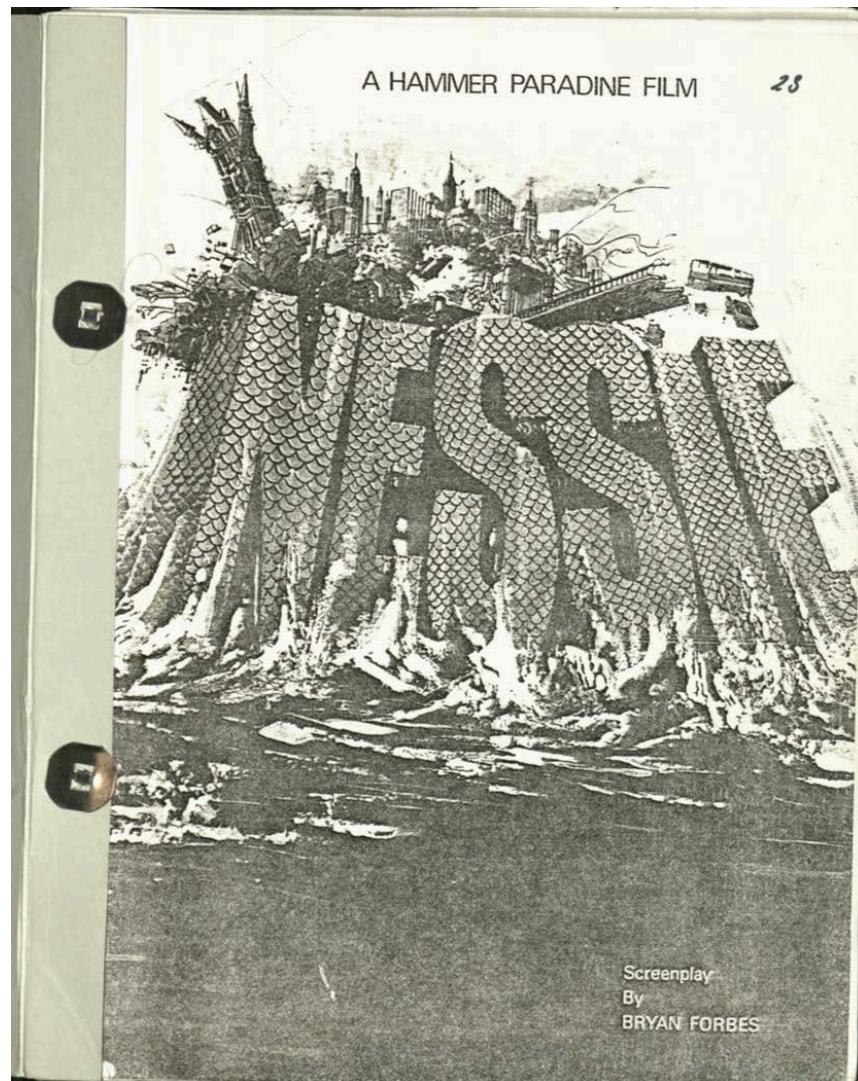


Figure 3: The title page of the screenplay *Nessie*. Credited solely to Bryan Forbes, despite alterations by Michael Carreras.

Hammer was significantly out of its depth with *Nessie*.

This issue was exacerbated when Carreras replied to Williams' request saying that he 'feels strongly that Bryan has yet to complete his assignment' (Carreras to Williams: 31st August 1976). Here Carreras' clear frustration at Forbes for not accepting the role of director became blatantly apparent. He noted that the figure of \$40,000 was agreed as it was presumed that Forbes would not only write the initial script, but 'as director Bryan would have accepted the screenplay that was delivered at the end of that period and then would have continued to re-write it until satisfied' (Carreras to

Williams: 31st August 1976). Carreras suggested that the \$40,000 offered to Forbes was not supposed to be just for the four weeks, but would have covered other writing/rewriting duties he would have taken during production of the film as director. Carreras finished his response to Williams by clarifying what he meant when he says he feels Forbes had yet to complete his assignment: ‘No major changes or thought are involved, only the refining and polishing of what is a major screenplay for a major film, for which we now have to attract a major director of Bryan’s own calibre’ (Carreras to Williams: 31st August 1976). This reaffirms the point made earlier within this section, that by Hammer assuming Forbes would direct, only for him to turn them down, the relationship between the two was irreversibly damaged. Forbes sent his own reply to Carreras noting that he handed in a first draft of his screenplay on 16th July, the second draft on July 26th and after a meeting on August 3rd, ‘went away and wrote a third draft, again incorporating the pooled suggestions’ (Forbes to Carreras: 4th September 1976). In total, Forbes told Carreras that Hammer had his services for ‘a total of seven weeks and two days’ (Forbes to Carreras: 4th September 1976).

As noted in the previous section, one of the fundamental issues Toho had with Hammer was the company’s failure to deliver the script on time, and then constant sending of changes and amendments, which made it impossible for Toho to actually begin designing the set pieces. The length of time it takes to get the script together was also incredibly long. With a treatment drafted on 6th January 1976, the fact that the script was still not finalised eight months later was clearly a huge issue for the project, and, unlike many of the issues that came from the international deals, the blame again laid solely with Hammer. Unlike the rest of the production, which truly was an international affair, the script was developed exclusively by Hammer, and their failure to secure a final screenplay after eight months of development, and writers such as John Starr, Christopher Wicking, Bryan Forbes and Carreras himself all having tackled the project, suggests again that regardless of the issues with financiers, Hammer was in no position to develop these big-budget projects.

Even after Carreras’ amendments (or perhaps, Forbes would argue, because of these amendments) the script was still not enticing to potential investors. Martin Wragge, one of the potential investors that Hammer approached, bluntly itemised the script’s problems in a letter to Carreras:

I think the story is thin, the dialogue functional at best, the characters (with the exception of the girl) unsympathetic, and therefore, it seems to me, the success of the projects turns on the expertise of the sp fx people in Japan. IS THAT ENOUGH? (Wragge to Carreras: 31st August 1976)

Hammer therefore found themselves, even after the protracted disagreement with Forbes, without a script that could secure investment.

Carreras eventually agreed to pay Forbes the extra \$10,000 for his additional work on the script (Williams to Carreras: September 1976), and Williams even offered Carreras Forbes' services to the eventual director: 'subject to his availability Bryan Forbes Ltd. could supply his services to consult with the director of the film and if requested to render further screen writing services' (Williams to Carreras: September 1976). However, by this point, it is hard to believe that the damage was not already done. Hammer had not only lost a potential ally of some standing in Forbes due to both financial issues and through questioning his commitment to the film, but in doing so had also caused multiple delays to a project that Carreras was always keen to stress was under immense time constraints.

This again emphasises the point that Hammer was really in no fit state to attempt to expand production to the level of *Nessie*. In trying to negotiate the tricky financial packaging overseas, Carreras was often slow in responding to letters, delaying the process further. For example, after Forbes' furious response to Carreras' letter which stated that Forbes had not fully completed his assignment, it took Carreras ten days to respond, saying that he had just 'returned from a week in Berlin' (Carreras to Forbes: 14th September 1976), which corresponds with a period when Carreras was attempting to secure the German tax shelter deal. After multiple letters from Williams to Carreras demanding to know why Forbes had yet to be paid his final \$10,000 (letters dated 23rd November and 16th December 1976), Carreras apologised for the delay and gave the explanation that he 'has just returned after three months in sunny California' (Carreras to Williams: 23rd December 1976), which corresponds with the Columbia deal. Therefore, it seems that Hammer simply did not have enough staff to cover for Carreras' absences and to keep a project such as *Nessie* on schedule. There is no doubt that international deals were essential to the project, but to only be able to deal with

each potential collaborator individually was quite clearly not sustainable on a project this size.

This issue was compounded as other projects began to take priority over *Nessie*. In 1977, Euan Lloyd began developing *The Wild Geese* (McLaglen 1978), a \$12million production starring Richard Harris, Richard Burton and Roger Moore, which was to shoot in South Africa for eight weeks, and was ‘probably the biggest British production since the days of *Lawrence of Arabia* and *The Guns of Navarone*’ (Anon. 1977b: 13). Naturally this project had a long production process which took up a great deal of Lloyd’s time, something that put him at odds with Carreras. In a letter to Lloyd in June 1977 which began ‘whilst I’m always hopeful “no news is good news”’ (Carreras to Lloyd: 29th June 1977), Carreras asked Lloyd for urgent updates regarding the Columbia deal and a potential television deal with the ABC Network. At the end of the letter Carreras signed off by telling Lloyd: ‘I trust all goes well with the Wild Geese, but please understand that both Paradine and Hammer are totally concerned with the launching of ‘Nessie’ (Carreras to Lloyd: 29th June 1977). This (not particularly subtle) reference to Lloyd’s other commitments impeding the progress of *Nessie* was even more pronounced when, as demonstrated throughout this chapter, it was primarily only Carreras and Lloyd who attempted to broker deals on *Nessie*. However, under similar circumstances, Lloyd also questioned Carreras’ commitment to the project. As Hammer’s last ever film under Carreras, *The Lady Vanishes* was given the greenlight and having, in his own words, ‘sweated blood’ (Lloyd to Carreras: 2nd November 1977) over the Toho deal, Lloyd wrote to Carreras asking him to confirm his commitment to the project: ‘You have one helluva job to do at production level and I would not go to further trouble unless you personally commit wholeheartedly’ (Lloyd to Carreras: 2nd November 1977). Carreras replied with just four words: ‘I am committed wholeheartedly’ (Carreras to Lloyd: 4th November 1977). Whilst it is difficult to dispute Carreras’ own enthusiasm for the project, *Nessie* ultimately stands as a clear example of Hammer’s domestic and international problems. At home, Hammer failed to keep collaborators such as Forbes’ on-board, leading to a protracted production process that also affected international partners like Toho. Meanwhile, the project’s enormity made it extraordinarily difficult for producers such as Lloyd to find finance or distribution.

Nessie was undoubtedly an incredibly ambitious project, but ultimately, Hammer were in no position in the mid-to-late 1970s to be able to fulfil the project's potential.

Conclusion

In his chapter 'The End of Hammer' in *Seventies British Cinema* (Shail 2008), previously cited in Chapter 4, Wheeler Winston Dixon suggests that the key factor in Hammer's decline was that the company 'failed to understand the cultural shift that the end of the 1960s represented' (Dixon 2008: 14). This idea that Hammer, a major innovator of the British horror film in the late 1950s and 60s, gradually lost touch with its fan base is a pertinent one. Hammer instead relied on domestic comedy spin-offs such as *On the Buses* (Booth 1971) and remakes such as *The Lady Vanishes*, while even the company's horror fare, such as *To the Devil a Daughter*, seemed derivative of genuinely innovative American horror cinema such as *The Exorcist* (Friedkin 1973). This arguably displayed a studio in terminal financial and creative decline. Yet as this chapter's case study shows, the few pictures Hammer produced in this period do not tell the whole story. Instead, one must look to a project like *Nessie*, vast in scope and ambitious by almost any measure, to fully understand Hammer's downfall in the late 1970s.

Nessie in fact stands as the perfect microcosm of Hammer's decline, with myriad factors resulting in its eventual failure, some of Hammer's own doing and others entirely out of the company's hands. Whereas Hammer's produced films show a company in a creative rut, *Nessie* shows Hammer, and its managing director Michael Carreras, at their most self-destructively ambitious. Clearly aware that Hammer had to innovate not just in regard to what films the studio made, but in how these films were financed, Carreras embarked on an ambitious financial strategy. Seemingly taking some inspiration from the Shaw Brothers deal, which saw Hammer and Shaw Brothers synthesise their particular genre expertise in an attempt to innovate their respective film cycles (horror and kung-fu), Hammer turned to special effects veterans Toho to help develop *Nessie*. As mentioned in the chapter, in theory this was an astute move by Hammer, and although the Hammer/Shaw Brothers deal proved a harrowing experience for both parties, it at least saw two films produced and released.

Yet the Toho deal was also beset with problems and, emblematic of *Nessie* itself, these were both of Hammer's own doing and also symptomatic of the film industry at the time. Hammer's tempestuous relationship with Bryan Forbes, which saw him threaten to refer Hammer to the Writers Guild of America and take legal action, resulted in crucial delays which frustrated Toho and put time pressures on the entire project. Due to the piecemeal financing of *Nessie*, Hammer also found itself put in difficult situations as a result of previous deals. For example, Hammer could not offer Forbes the creative freedom necessary to entice him onto the project as both writer and director due to Toho having already begun work on specific effects sequences, limiting his ability to substantially change the script. Hammer's pre-existing relationship with Toho also impacted the proposed Columbia deal, with the Hollywood major reluctant to back the project with Toho on board. Although not Hammer's fault directly, the attempt to appease several different parties across multiple continents highlights the mammoth task the studio had set themselves.

This in turn leads to another key question when examining *Nessie*: was the project ever feasible? Hammer at this stage was 'reduced to a handful of executives and a few office staff' (Meikle 2009: 215) and, as noted in the previous section, this often led to numerous delays in responding to financial and creative partners on *Nessie*, with Lloyd and Carreras spread thin across other projects as well. The examination of Hammer's relationship with Forbes, as well as the screenplay itself, also suggests that Hammer's ambitions did not match the reality of its own situation. Yet, the project did provide Hammer with some short-term benefits. Despite *Nessie* never making it into production, Hammer did manage to secure some initial financing for the project. With Hammer's own finances in a dire state by late 1976, this *Nessie* pre-production money, according to Hammer board member Tom Sachs, did not only go towards launching the film, but was also used to 'bolster the company's finances as well' (cited in Meikle 2009: 222).

Nessie is an unmade production which had serious and tangible consequences for Hammer. On the one hand, its tortured, near four-year production inevitably had a significant impact on Hammer's meagre resources, and significant consequences for other Hammer projects. *Nessie*, as well as other unmade projects such as *Vampirella* and *Vlad the Impaler*, also no doubt contributed to Hammer's once fast-moving

production slate shuddering to a halt. On the other hand, the project also demonstrates that, although Hammer's late 1970s filmography depicts a studio suffering from chronic creative stagnation, Carreras was not only aware of Hammer's need to innovate, but had a plan on how to do so. The detailed production file held in the Hammer Script Archive demonstrates that *Nessie* was not just erroneous wishful thinking, but the apex of a strategy which targeted international finance with big-budget productions.

Nessie's fate as an unmade \$7million Jawsplotation film was sealed through Hammer's own faults, as well as a number of wider industrial factors that proved impossible to predict. The feeble state of the British film industry, as well as the American majors' weariness of Hammer's once efficacious brand of gothic horror, meant Hammer had to resort to creative piecemeal financing. However, as the project ballooned to \$7million it became almost inevitable that Hammer would be unable to sustain its myriad complex financial and creative relationships. As a result, *Nessie* stands as perhaps the most significant example of Carreras' doomed ambitions for a new era of Hammer.

Chapter 6: 1974-2000

The Death and Afterlife of Hammer Films and the *Vlad the Impaler* Project

Introduction

This chapter will examine the transition from the era of Michael Carreras to Roy Skeggs and Brian Lawrence, and Skeggs' subsequent two decades as the sole managing director of Hammer. In order to examine Skeggs' time at the company as managing director, the unmade projects do not only become essential tools, but in fact the only way to get any semblance of the company's planned output, as no films were produced under Skeggs' tenure. As such, the majority of studies on Hammer do not cover Skeggs' directorship in any depth. This chapter aims to address this lack of scholarship, as well as examine the final years of Michael Carreras' tenure as managing director of Hammer Films.

Despite the attempts detailed in Chapters 4 and 5, Carreras failed to keep Hammer afloat, and in April 1979, Hammer was put into the hands of an official receiver at the Insolvency Service, with Carreras removed as managing director. Skeggs and Lawrence were invited by the ICI (the creditors of Pension Fund Services (PFS) who by 1979 technically owned Hammer) to continue collecting the royalties from the Hammer library, as the ICI 'clearly had no use for a film production company or library' (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 171). As such, 1979 was 'the year that Hammer changed hands for the first time since its inception in 1934' (Walker 2016: 111).

However, it would be difficult to define Skeggs' tenure at Hammer as the start of a new era. Skeggs had been a fixture at Hammer since October 1963, initially serving as production accountant on *The Evil of Frankenstein* (Francis 1964) before being promoted to the company's accountant two years later (Kinsey 2010: 73). As noted in Chapter 4, Michael Carreras' return to the company in 1971 saw Skeggs promoted to production supervisor and, by November 1974, he had taken the place of the recently resigned Brian Lawrence on the board of directors at Hammer (Kinsey 2010: 73). Less than one year later, however, he also tendered his resignation: 'Skeggs' resignation was formally noted by a despondent Carreras at a meeting held on Wednesday 17th December 1975' (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 169). Despite Skeggs and Lawrence

resigning from the board, both continued to manage Hammer's film library and collect royalties, and were the clear candidates to take over Hammer from the ICI after Carreras' forced departure (Kinsey 2010: 73, Hearn and Barnes 2007: 16).

Early in his term as co-managing director with Brian Lawrence, Skeggs produced two television series under the Hammer banner, *Hammer House of Horror* (1980) and *Hammer House of Mystery and Suspense* (1984-1985), and these are often noted or analysed in works such as *The Hammer Vault* (Hearn 2011) or *Hammer on Television* (Hallenbeck 2018). However, Skeggs' time at Hammer is more often cited as just a footnote, with most histories or analyses of the company ending in 1979. This is almost certainly down to the complete lack of produced films during the period of 1980 to 2000, but this does not mean Skeggs was not trying to get projects produced in his two decades in charge.

One project that was developed for nearly Skeggs' entire term as managing director was *Vlad the Impaler*. The Dracula origin story originally began development under Carreras in 1974 as an adaptation of Brian Hayles' Radio 4 drama, *Lord Dracula* (1974). *Vlad the Impaler* would have been an important project in Carreras' attempts to produce larger scale, big-budget productions for international markets, as detailed in Chapter 5. Yet the project outlasted Michael Carreras' tenure and became a stalwart of the Skeggs' era. Under Skeggs, *Vlad the Impaler* underwent a tremendous amount of developmental and pre-production work. As such, *Vlad the Impaler* clearly demonstrates that Skeggs was not merely content with Hammer's sporadic television output, but had clear plans to move Hammer back into theatrical production.

This chapter will trace the development of Hammer's unmade *Vlad the Impaler*, from its origins in 1974 under Carreras and beyond the transition into to Skeggs' tenure. Primarily utilising the Hammer Script Archive and contemporary trade magazines, the chapter will cover Carreras' final years at Hammer and Skeggs' following two decades as the head of Hammer. Five versions of *Vlad the Impaler* will be analysed, alongside what is seemingly Hayles' first draft of the screenplay, entitled *Dracula the Beginning* (Hayles Undated(a)). The first *Vlad the Impaler* script is Hayles' own self-adaptation of his radio play, with a draft screenplay attributed solely to him held in the Hammer Script Archive (Hayles Undated(b)). The other four *Vlad the Impaler* scripts are credited to Brian Hayles, but with one separate credit for additional material on each

script. These are accredited to Arthur Ellis (Ellis Undated(a)), John Peacock (Peacock Undated(a)) and Jonas McCord, with McCord being credited on one script with the title *Vlad the Impaler* (McCord Undated(a)) and an identical but renamed version called *Vlad Dracul* (McCord Undated(b)). *Vlad the Impaler* will therefore act as a through-line throughout the managerial changeover and the proceeding decades. In effect, this chapter will present a comprehensive timeline on an unmade film in order to gain an understanding of a twenty-year period where Hammer were, in terms of produced films at least, seemingly entirely inactive. The chapter is split into three sections; the first will cover the initial development of *Vlad the Impaler* under Michael Carreras, whilst the second will address the project's development at the beginning of Skeggs' tenure, and finally, the third considers the project in Skeggs' final decade as the managing director of Hammer.

Carreras' *Vlad the Impaler*: 1974-1979

As noted above, the *Vlad the Impaler* project was developed for nearly three decades at Hammer, a remarkably long time for a project never actually produced. What is also remarkable, throughout the rewrites and changes within the Hammer hierarchy, is how closely each draft stays to the original narrative of the radio play from which it was adapted. Although this case study will not primarily rely on a textual analysis of the different iterations of the scripts, the changes each new writer makes will be referred to throughout, and therefore it is necessary to first outline the basic narrative tenets which are initially established in the radio play. I will then outline how the decisions made by Michael Carreras impacted the production trajectory of not only *Vlad the Impaler* but Hammer more widely, in order to shed light on how Hammer's changing leadership contributed to the company's slate of unmade films.

On the 27th April 1974, BBC Radio 4 produced a one-off drama from Brian Hayles entitled *Lord Dracula*. The ninety-minute drama tells the story of Vlad Tepes, tyrannical ruler of Transylvania, who is arrested for his brutal war crimes at the beginning of the play. After years in prison, he pledges himself to God under the stewardship of a monk called Benedek, and returns to his castle in Transylvania. Vlad has a wife, Ilonya, with the two having fallen in love as she cared for him in prison. He is greeted by his oldest son Istvan, and reveals that he and Ilonya are expecting a child.

Ilonya and Vlad's unborn son dies in childbirth, and Vlad renounces God. With Benedek as his captive 'witness' (Hayles 1974), he begins another reign of terror, and is soon seduced by the witch Militsa, who introduces Vlad to the dark arts. In the play's third act, Vlad is reborn as the undead Dracula and is confronted by Benedek and Istvan. In the ensuing struggle, Militsa is killed and Dracula is supposedly beheaded. However, it is revealed that they had not killed Dracula but, through Dracula's sorcery, another monk called Jacob. Benedek and Istvan are both arrested and eventually executed for the crime.

While the narrative of *Vlad the Impaler* will be compared throughout the many drafts of the project, another key source utilised in this examination of *Vlad the Impaler* under Carreras will be an interview with Carreras printed in the February 1978 issue of *House of Hammer* magazine. The interview took place four years into the development of the project, but provides details on how *Vlad the Impaler* initially came to Hammer in 1974. Even at the time of the interview, the project seemed to still be on Hammer's slate: 'we're going to do a film about Vlad the Impaler, the original Dracula. It will be based on a radio play by Brian Hayles' (Carreras in Skinn and Brosnan 1978: 21). Discussing how the project originated in 1974, Carreras remarked that Hammer immediately bought the rights to the project after its original airing in April of that year, noting that although he missed the original broadcast, he 'finally played it the following Friday night... it was one of the most marvellous broadcasts I'd ever heard. It was tremendous! So I quickly rang Brian, we met and did a deal' (Carreras in Skinn and Brosnan 1978: 21).

Hayles' *Dracula The Beginning* is seemingly a self-adapted screenplay of Hayles' own radio play, *Lord Dracula*. As one might expect from a self-adapted work, it is extremely faithful to the original radio play. No date is given on the screenplay itself, but the passing of Brian Hayles in 1978, and the title change in all other drafts to *Vlad the Impaler*, suggest this is likely to be the first draft of the project for Hammer. The screenplay features only superficial differences to the radio play, with even entire dialogue sections reproduced verbatim. The largest change is in the third act, where Dracula frames Istvan and Benedek for the death of Ilonya and his unborn child, not that of the monk Jacob, who is jettisoned from the script entirely. Istvan is also spared

execution in the screenplay, instead being sentenced to life imprisonment. Benedek however suffers the same fate as in the radio play.

At this point in Carreras' tenure, *Vlad the Impaler* seemed to be a natural fit on Hammer's production slate. It was to be an ambitious and expensive production, in line with Carreras' 'shit or bust' strategy discussed in the previous chapter. However, unlike *Nessie*, which would have been an entirely new venture for Hammer, *Vlad the Impaler* effectively acted as an origin story for Hammer's most famous franchise, and as a result the project was both inherently familiar as a Hammer product whilst diversifying enough from the Dracula formula discussed in Chapter 4 to demonstrate Carreras' new ambitions for Hammer in the mid-to-late 1970s. Hayle's script moved quickly through pre-production, being sent to potential directors only six months after the radio play had aired. In October 1974, Carreras offered directorial duties on the project to Ken Russell.

Hammer's attempt to bring Russell into the fold chimes with Carreras' overhaul of Hammer's production strategy at this time, and could be seen as a response to the resurgence of the horror film in America and an attempt to gain critical legitimacy. This critical support of the new wave of American horror film can be traced back to the late 1960s, when Hollywood began to harness the talents of several European directors who 'were associated, to varying degrees, with self-consciously artistic movements and 'new waves' in European cinema' (Krämer 2005: 86). One such filmmaker, Roman Polanski, directed *Rosemary's Baby* (1968), an adaptation of Ira Levin's 1967 novel of the same name. The film (along with *Night of the Living Dead* (Romero 1968)) signalled a new wave of American horror films that spoke 'to the rapidly changing social and sexual values of the era' (Shiel 2006: 30). Polanski's status as a proponent of independent art cinema (which was also emphasized in the casting of John Cassavetes in a lead role) added critical credibility to the horror genre, and provided a new and distinctive blueprint for horror cinema. Similarly, William Friedkin's *The Exorcist* (1973) once again fused the sensibilities of the artistically credible director with a big-budget horror film (following his previous critical and commercial success, *The French Connection* (1971)). Combatively visceral and explicit, *The Exorcist* 'bore as little resemblance to the gothic chillers of the 60s as Nixon did to JFK' (Kermode 1997: 9). Its subsequent box office success suggested a significant shift in what audiences wanted from horror films, with Hammer's own gothic formula (which, despite the proposed strategy shift,

was still in effect as late as 1974 with *Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell* (Fisher)) in clear need of an overhaul.

To Carreras' credit, his letter to Russell seems like a significant step in this direction. Russell's reputation as an audacious and provocative director had been truly cemented by *The Devils*' release in 1971. Critically reviled ('*The Devils* is so totally and manically hated by nearly every critic I have read that it seems an excess to select the parts which are hated more than the entire film' (Atkins 1976: 59)), the film is undoubtedly the work of a filmmaker with a singular distinctive vision. I.Q. Hunter cites *The Devils* as Russell's masterpiece and a condensation of his key themes, 'the force of repression, the imperturbability of sex, ceaseless change and transformation, politics as eroticism and Catholic-inspired kitsch' (Hunter 2013: 153). Russell can therefore be seen as a director who 'abolished the line between art and exploitation' (Hunter 2013: 152) in similar ways to Polanski and Friedkin. However, in correspondence with Carreras, Russell was extremely critical of the script itself, particularly the third act: 'the bloodbath at the end is as unnecessary as it is obnoxious. Blood, particularly movie blood, is not synonymous with horror' (Russell to Carreras: October 1974). Russell ended his letter just as bluntly, signing off by writing 'please don't misunderstand me, I would like to make a horror film with you – a real one' (Russell to Carreras: October 1974). In Carreras' reply to Russell, he noted that he 'heartily agree[s]' (Carreras to Russell: October 1974) with Russell's comments about the script, which seems at odds with comments Carreras made in public about the project. In 1978, he stated that 'I think it will be a hell of a movie' (Skinn and Brosnan 1978: 21) and nine years later, in an interview with *Fangoria* in May 1987, long after leaving Hammer, Carreras stated that 'the script is still my prize possession and I will never give up the idea of doing it. If we were allowed to make one more film, *Vlad the Impaler* would be it' (Swires 1987: 64). Despite his reply to Russell noting that he was well aware of the script's weaknesses, these other comments from Carreras suggest he was in fact pleased with the script, and denote a significant divide between the projects Carreras felt Hammer should be producing, and the tastes of a more radical director such as Russell.

Despite Carreras' affection for the project, progress on *Vlad the Impaler* notably slowed after 1974. As discussed in the preceding chapters, Hammer saw the systematic

collapse of its international finance and distribution networks in the mid-1970s, and like other projects in his bold new strategy for Hammer, Carreras clearly realised he had to think outside of the United Kingdom and the United States if he were to find funding for *Vlad the Impaler*. Whilst examining funding options for *Nessie*, Carreras sent a fax to Doctor Helmut Gierse in West Germany on 26th August 1976 (discussed in Chapter 5) laying out an ambitious co-production plan:

I would like you to consider the possibility of Hammer Films setting up a Production Organization in Germany using the availability of the current Tax Shelter situation and a direct relationship with your Company in terms of investment, to secure the distribution rights of the German, Swiss and Austrian Territories (Carreras to Gierse: 26th August 1976).

Along with this proposal, Carreras listed several mooted television and film projects, with the common denominator being to ‘base the productions in Germany’ (Carreras to Gierse: 26th August 1976). One of these potential projects was entitled *The Blasphemer*, with the synopsis noting it would be ‘based on the historical character of Vlad Tepes’ (Carreras to Gierse: 26th August 1976). Unfortunately for Hammer, the deal with Gierse never developed. An article in the November 21st 1977 issue of *Der Spiegel*, detailing Gierse being summoned to the Dusseldorf Chamber of Commerce and Industry by investors after the recent failure of ‘the Constantin film loan’ (Anon. 1977c), perhaps indicates why. Yet despite this, Carreras was still clearly considering filming in Germany even after the collapse of this deal, demonstrating the dire financial situation Hammer had found itself in at the time. Carreras noted: ‘it is more economically viable - there’s more film finance available in Germany today than in America at the moment, and certainly much more than is available in this country’ (Carreras in Skinn and Brosnan 1978: 21).

Whereas *The House of Hammer* interview in 1978 saw Carreras looking back at the initial production of *Vlad the Impaler*, Carreras also discussed ambitious plans for Hammer’s *Vlad the Impaler* in the future as well. Carreras suggested that the project will seek an A-list star, noting that Hammer had ‘sent the script to people like Richard Burton and Richard Harris’ (Carreras in Skinn and Brosnan 1978: 21) even though Hammer ‘hadn’t selected a director yet’ (ibid). However, these details offered by Carreras were notably vague. Carreras’ iteration of *Vlad the Impaler* seemed to have suffered the same fate as projects such as *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* and *Nessie*.

Carreras, be it due to his admiration for Hayles' script or as part of his strategy to try and produce more ambitious films, had touted that *Vlad the Impaler* 'will be four, if not five, times as expensive as any single Hammer film' (ibid). Later in 1987, Carreras says the project ultimately failed because he 'was never able to find one company willing to finance the entire project' (Swires 1987: 64). This denotes a change in strategy from the piecemeal financing of *Nessie* as Carreras looked to find a single source of finance instead of several different backers. However, one key similarity between both *Vlad the Impaler* and *Nessie* is the sheer scale of the projects. This, at a time when the industry was becoming more and more risk averse, ultimately put an end to Carreras' iteration of *Vlad the Impaler*.

With the failure of projects such as *Vlad the Impaler* and *Nessie* throughout the 1970s, Michael Carreras' position at Hammer eventually became untenable, and he was removed as managing director in April 1979, after taking over the company from his father James Carreras in 1972. It is difficult to compare father and son in regard to their success as chairman, as Michael undoubtedly was operating at a fraught time for the industry, whereas James Carreras presided over Hammer, for the most part, at a time of prosperity and close Anglo-American industrial relations. However, despite the production contexts in which the two operated being wildly different, some comparisons can be extracted. As noted in Chapter 3, Freddie Francis suggested that James Carreras 'loved the business side, the wheeler-dealing and the glamor' (Francis with Dalton 2013: 115) as opposed to the production of the films themselves. James Carreras, a former cars salesman, was a pragmatic businessman not wedded to one genre of film. Porter, in his chapter 'The Context of Creativity: Ealing Studios and Hammer Films' in *British Cinema History* (Curran and Porter 1983), notes that James Carreras' primary goal as a producer was to simply 'produce films for the world market at a profit, without regard for the subject-matter of the films concerned' (Porter 1983: 193). Carreras himself freely admitted this, noting in an issue of *Variety* that, if the horror market were to collapse, 'I'm prepared to make Strauss waltzes tomorrow if they'll make money' (in Anon. 1958d: 7). Francis equated this pragmatism with a lack of interest in the films themselves, suggesting that as far as James Carreras 'was concerned, we could have been making furniture' (Francis with Dalton 2013: 115). This may seem a dismissive comment from Francis, but on closer examination, by correctly

identifying James Carreras' strengths as a businessman as opposed to a creative, Francis foregrounded an often overlooked quality in the film producer. This trait is identified in the introduction to Spicer, McKenna and Meir's edited collection *Beyond the Bottom Line: The Producer in Film and Television Studies* (2014) as 'self-promotion and showmanship' (11). The authors go on to suggest that 'this showmanship need not always be outright self-promotion but includes an ability to promote and hence sell the 'package'' (Spicer, McKenna and Meir 2014: 12). A crucial part of this is through the development of 'reputation networks' (Spicer, McKenna and Meir 2014: 12), defined by Meir in a separate article as the 'ability to package and sell his products, first to financial backers then subsequently to distributors in order to stay in business' (Meir 2009: 470). Spicer and McKenna also elaborate on this trait in the conclusion to *The Man Who Got Carter: Michael Klinger, Independent and the British Film Industry 1960-1980* (2013), where they note in regard to Michael Klinger that his 'charisma was a vital if intangible asset in his producer's armoury' (Spicer and McKenna 2013: 194). Spicer, McKenna and Meir correctly identify this as an 'indispensable' (2014: 12) aspect of the producer, and it is undoubtedly where James Carreras' strengths lay as chairman, with his ability to nurture business relationships (often through his connections at the Variety Club) a fundamental component of Hammer's success in the 1950s and 1960s.

As intangible and immeasurable as this trait may be, an analysis of projects such as *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*, *Nessie* and *Vlad the Impaler* suggest that this business savvy was not shared by Michael Carreras. As Hammer moved into the 1970s and the company's struggles began, James Carreras relied on prior relationships and old acquaintances to secure finance and distribution. This was noted in the previous chapter, with Bryan Forbes arguing that his tenure as head of production of EMI was marred due to the insistence by Bernard Delfont that Hammer were to have a place on their schedules (Meikle 2009: 185). However, the departure of James Carreras from the company saw the end of these 'old pal acts' (Forbes in Meikle 2009: 185):

Soon after [Michael bought Hammer] EMI support for future production (the development deal that was to have ensured Hammer's business continuity) was withdrawn. The reason was simple: cooperation between EMI and Hammer had been on a "personal" basis, and as far as Bernard Delfont was concerned, Michael was *not* his father (Meikle 2009: 205).

As well as the withdrawal of this existing deal, an examination of Hammer's unmade projects shows Michael Carreras struggling to cultivate new ones. A crucial component in the failure of *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* was the protracted writing process, exasperated by the fractious relationship between Michael Carreras and Don Houghton. This inability to work productively with writers is emphasised even further in Carreras' relationship with Bryan Forbes on *Nessie*, which soured so dramatically that Forbes even threatened to take Carreras to court. Outside of these creative conflicts, Michael Carreras' Hammer also struggled to maintain any lasting international partnerships, with their deals with Shaw Brothers, Toho and Rank all ending acrimoniously. Despite his clear passion for the company, Michael Carreras simply seemed to lack the requisite charm and charisma often found in the most successful producers.

As emphasised previously, Michael Carreras' decisions and relationships as chairman of Hammer cannot be separated from the financial constraints he found himself working within. During James Carreras' time as chairman, *Variety* published an article that detailed his finance and distribution strategies: 'According to Carreras, the deals vary from picture to picture and include outright buys of Hammer financed pictures or involve co-production deals' (Anon. 1958d: 7). It is key here to note the 'outright buy' part of this strategy. Ever the pragmatist, James Carreras was seemingly more concerned with the immediate benefits of these international deals and less with the long-term implications of selling the entirety of the rights to a project to a financier or distributor. This was a lesson that Michael Carreras was to learn the hard way when he inherited the company from his father, noting that '80 percent of what I thought was there wasn't there at all' (in Meikle 2009: 207).

The failure of later projects, such as *Vlad the Impaler*, undoubtedly contributed to Hammer's closure, yet even at the time Michael Carreras took over the company, Hammer was by no means at the height of their success. In the aforementioned *Fangoria* interview in 1987, Michael Carreras positioned the buyout as an emotional and irrational business move:

I discovered my father was secretly negotiating to sell Hammer to EMI...I was bloody cross, and may have made some rather hasty, regrettable decisions. I knew I didn't want him to do what he was doing, so I set about preventing him

and captured Hammer for myself...I was pissed off that I hadn't been told what was happening. Perhaps I overreacted (Carreras in Swires 1987: 61-62).

Whereas James Carreras 'quit whilst the going was good' (Brian Lawrence in Meikle 2009: 207), Michael had made a rash decision based not only on his anger at his father, but on his affection for a company which had originally been his grandfather's. James Carreras, who had never displayed any affection for the film business in particular, nor the horror films Hammer had become most notable for, clearly gauged that Hammer was exhausting the financial and distribution networks they had depended on in the 1950s and 1960s, and left Hammer before the decline began. Michael Carreras had always been heavily involved in the creative process of filmmaking, as a writer and director. The lack of creative freedom was one of the key reasons he left Hammer in 1961, frustrated in his role as executive producer and wanting to get back 'to the floor' (Carreras to Swires 1987: 61).

These creative instincts saw Michael Carreras produce a bold and innovative strategy for the declining company, with the purpose of reigniting interest in the Hammer brand. Projects such as *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*, *Nessie* and *Vlad the Impaler* demonstrate the scale of ambition Michael Carreras had for the company, and refute any claims of creative stagnation at Hammer in the mid-to-late 1970s. As I examined in Chapter 4 and 5, these creative instincts are the key reason Carreras' relationship with writers such as Houghton and Forbes broke down, with Carreras often trying to impose his own ideas onto writers, either working within the confines of extremely limiting production contexts (such as Houghton on *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*) or causing conflict due to meddling with others' work uncredited and without their permission (such as with Forbes on *Nessie*).

Ultimately, Michael Carreras' tenure as chairman of Hammer was fundamentally undermined from its inception, due to the short-term pragmatism of its former owner James Carreras. Michael Carreras' passion for the film industry stood in stark contrast to his father's, but proved both a blessing and a curse for Hammer. As this section has showed by tracing the production history of *Vlad the Impaler*, Michael Carreras' creative instincts, apparent when he attempted to attract Ken Russell to the project, offered new ways for the company to potentially innovate its production slate and gain international recognition, but they also often frustrated creative and financial

partners, and isolated Hammer when they were in desperate need of new financial and distribution networks.

The Skeggs Years: *Vlad the Impaler* 1980-1990

It is at this point in Hammer's history where almost every study of the company ends. The removal of Carreras in 1979 is in some respects a natural end point. It marks the last time a Carreras or Hinds would ever work at the company, and more importantly no feature films were released by Hammer for almost three decades after. One of the few studies to examine Hammer post-1979 appears in Johnny Walker's *Contemporary British Horror Cinema* in the chapter 'Let the Quiet Ones in' (2016: 109-129), which covers Hammer's revival in the 21st century, their development as a brand and their recent filmic output. Walker gives a brief analysis of Hammer from 1979 to 2005, before primarily focusing on their return to film production. However, despite briefly contextualising the company's 30-year hiatus, the period between 1980-2000 is not given detailed consideration. In fact, Hammer in the years 1979 to 2000 has received no consideration in any industrial or production history of the company. No films were produced, but the company remained active, and an examination of their unmade projects reveals a number of attempts to close several international production finance deals. The following two sections therefore look to present a detailed examination of a lost period of Hammer history, illuminate the production methods of Roy Skeggs and draw comparisons between this iteration of Hammer and the one that preceded it. This will be done through a close analysis of Skeggs' tenure, achieved primarily through the tracing of *Vlad the Impaler*'s production.

With Carreras removed as managing director in 1979, Roy Skeggs and Brian Lawrence were brought on quickly by the creditors. As well as their associations with Hammer, Skeggs and Lawrence had a separate production company called Cinema Arts International. Through this production company, Skeggs and Lawrence focused on adapting British sitcoms for theatrical release such as *Rising Damp* (McGrath 1980) and *George and Mildred* (Frazer-Jones 1980). Through the revenue gained by these television spin-offs and the success of the television series produced by Skeggs and Lawrence - *Hammer House of Horror* - Skeggs and Lawrence cleared Hammer's debts with the ICI and bought back Hammer for \$100,000 (Kinsey 2007: 417, Meikle 2009:

225, Hearn and Barnes 2007: 171). With Hammer's debt cleared and Skeggs and Lawrence the outright owners of Hammer, they began in earnest to consider production under the Hammer banner.

With Skeggs and Lawrence now definitively in charge, one could see how this could be termed as a new era of Hammer Films. It was the first time Hammer had ever been owned by someone outside of the Carreras family and the decision to have *Hammer House of Horror*, a television series, as their first project suggested a new creative focus and market for the newly reborn company. Whilst its immediate focus on television would prove to be an indicator of where Skeggs' and Lawrence's priorities lay in the early to mid 1980s, the idea that this was in any way a new iteration of Hammer would ultimately prove to be false. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, Skeggs had been associated with Hammer since 1963, holding various roles at the company, including as a member of its board of directors, for over twelve years. Lawrence himself joined Hammer 'mere months after James Carreras' (Kinsey 2010: 18) in 1945, working primarily as a sales manager before eventually also joining Hammer's board of directors. These intrinsic links back to the old Hammer were also compounded by the reliance on John Peacock as the key creative liaison within this period. Peacock had worked at Hammer as a screenwriter in the 1970s under Carreras, writing *Straight on Till Morning* (Collinson 1972) and *To the Devil a Daughter* (Sykes 1976) for the company. Peacock's role at Hammer under Skeggs and Lawrence would be a significant one. After initially being brought on as a story editor for the television show *Hammer House of Mystery and Suspense*, Peacock became the driving creative force at Hammer in this period, not only producing his own draft of *Vlad the Impaler* in the late 1980s (discussed further in this section), but also acting as the key 'go between' for Hammer and the first writer drafted by Skeggs and Lawrence to rewrite *Vlad the Impaler*, a British writer named Arthur Ellis.

This section will examine Ellis' and Peacock's work on *Vlad the Impaler* (as well as briefly contextualising an unmade television project of Peacock's entitled *Moulin Rouge*) to argue two key points about Hammer in the 1980s. Firstly, Skeggs' and Lawrence's decision to prioritise television over Hammer's potential theatrical output fatally impeded any potential progress on *Vlad the Impaler* due to the company's limited creative and financial resources at the time. Secondly, this section will posit that

viewing Skeggs and Lawrence's takeover of Hammer as a new phase for the company is a misnomer, with it still firmly in the grasp of Hammer's old guard. As a result, key creative decisions on pre-existing projects such as *Vlad the Impaler*, which had been held in such reverence by key figures at Hammer in the 1970s, were left in a state of inertia which ultimately prevented them from moving into production.

Skeggs' and Lawrence's immediate focus on television production at Hammer is not particularly surprising. Hammer had always been interested in gaining a foothold in the television market, as noted in Chapter 3's discussion of *The Tales of Frankenstein* in 1958, and the troubled production of *Journey to the Unknown* (1968-1969), which played a key part in the eventual departure of Tony Hinds from the company (discussed in Chapter 4). Whereas Carreras had seemingly tried to combat the advent of television by attempting to mount bigger and more bombastic blockbusters, Skeggs and Lawrence simply seemed to acknowledge the shift noted by Sarah Street in her examination of the decline of British cinema in the 1970s, that one of the primary reasons for the collapse was that 'cinema admissions were declining at the same time as the popularity of television and other amusements increased' (Street 2009: 105). By 1983, Skeggs and Lawrence had produced two television shows under the Hammer banner.

As noted, *Hammer House of Horror* allowed Skeggs and Lawrence to clear Hammer's debts with the ICI and buy back Hammer. The second show, *Hammer House of Mystery and Suspense*, gave an indication of their long-term strategy. Skeggs and Lawrence enlisted American studio 20th Century Fox to produce *Hammer House of Mystery and Suspense*. This deal and Hammer's subsequent shift to television in the early 1980s suggest that Skeggs and Lawrence had learned a valuable lesson from Carreras' failures. Despite complex co-production deals on films such as *To the Devil a Daughter* and *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* (Ward Baker 1974), as well as attempts to raise international finance outside of America for projects such as *Nessie*, Carreras did not manage to keep the company afloat after the withdrawal of American finance. Skeggs and Lawrence diversifying away from theatrical production immediately, as well as their courting of 20th Century Fox, suggest that they were keen to set out a new strategy for Hammer going forward. However, despite their short-term success in the early eighties in television production, no theatrical films were produced under Skeggs' two decades in charge.

However, that is not to say that there were not attempts to move back into film production, with *Vlad the Impaler* being a key example. The first attempt by Skeggs to redevelop *Vlad the Impaler* is with British writer Arthur Ellis, with a script held within the Hammer Script Archive listed as being written by Brian Hayles with additional material by Arthur Ellis. There is another draft of *Vlad the Impaler* also with the same credit, which is an identical draft but with pencil annotations and deletions (Ellis Undated(b)). In an interview I conducted with Ellis on 30th April 2016, Ellis dated his work on the script to ‘around [19]82/83’ (Ellis 2016), after Skeggs and Lawrence had bought Hammer back from the creditors. Ellis noted that he was approached by John Peacock, who ‘was working fairly full time at Hammer’ (Ellis 2016), as the script editor on the project and ‘go-between’ (Ellis 2016) for Ellis, Skeggs and Lawrence. The fact that it was John Peacock who approached Ellis on behalf of Hammer certainly aligns with the ‘82/83’ timeframe given by Ellis. Don Houghton was initially ‘appointed head of Hammer’s script and story department’ (Kinsey 2007: 421) in 1981, but fell ill during production of *Hammer House of Mystery and Suspense* (which began development in 1983). Peacock was brought in to finish the television series, and stayed on with Hammer after its completion (Kinsey 2007: 421). It is therefore likely that Ellis was developing the script parallel with the production of *Hammer House of Mystery and Suspense* in 1983, a point discussed further later in this section.

Despite being early in Skeggs and Lawrence’s tenure, Ellis’ time working on *Vlad the Impaler* suggests a tension at Hammer between wanting to engage new writers to rework and modernise projects, and holding existing work on *Vlad the Impaler* in an almost reverential state, ultimately impeding any major alterations or departures from the old Hammer model. Ellis noted in the interview that he received a brief from Peacock on how Hammer were looking to reimagine the project, with Ellis noting that ‘the way I understood it they wanted it to be modernised... a bit less period gothic and more *Omen*-y type gothic’ (Ellis 2016). This brief was quite broad and lacked any detail on specific changes Skeggs and Lawrence were looking for in Ellis’ new draft. As such, Ellis’ draft remains largely the same as Hayles’ original screenplay.

However, despite this similarity, the draft does feature additional material by Ellis, which can be seen as a response to Peacock’s brief. Firstly, the screenplay is literally modernised by Ellis through the creation of a contemporary prologue and

epilogue. The prologue features an action set-piece that sees a vampire-hunter clearing out a nest of vampires in a dilapidated house, before his ruminations on the origin of the vampire sees the narrative shift back to the time of Vlad the Impaler, where Hayles' original story begins. The epilogue is on the last page of the script and takes us back to present day as the vampire hunter leaves the house. It seemingly teases a present-day sequel, with the last words spoken by the hunter being: 'oh where shall we meet, my sad Lord Dracula... that we may duel once again' (Ellis Undated(a): 139).

Although Ellis recounted this structural change as his primary alteration to Hayles' script, he also infused his draft with several overtly supernatural sequences, which arguably have a greater effect on the narrative as a whole. In Hayles' screenplay it is not until page 42 of the 118-page draft that the witch Militsa appears, the first acknowledgment of the supernatural within the script. However, not only does Ellis immediately set up the script as a supernatural drama by adding a prologue featuring vampires, he also introduces supernatural elements much earlier in the narrative's main timeline. For example, on page 6 of Ellis' script a demonic horse named Salmander (who Vlad later takes as his own) is birthed from Hell, said to be sent by Satan himself: 'we are left in no doubt that the Devil has given birth to a plan of awesome evil...' (Ellis Undated(a): 7). Clearly Ellis' inclusion of such supernatural material from the very start of the script marks his as a very different take on the project to Hayles'.

Yet the second, annotated copy of Ellis' screenplay held in the Hammer Script Archive shows that it was these sequences that Skeggs and Lawrence were dissatisfied with. Many of the more overt supernatural sequences, such as the demonic horse at the beginning of the screenplay, are crossed out in pencil, leaving the modern prologue and epilogue as the only significant additions by Ellis to Hayles' original draft. Ellis himself expressed confusion as to why he was drafted in to work on what was clearly a revered script: 'according to John... the script was very, very much appreciated. They [Hammer] liked the script' (Ellis 2016). As a result, Ellis felt that the changes he made were incremental and added little to the screenplay:

I said to John I don't know why I'm doing this, I'm only doing this because it's different, and that's my only criteria for doing it. I don't understand why I'm... I'm only putting a modern bookend type thing in it

so I can say I've done a rewrite on it. There didn't seem to be any logic to it that I could work out (Ellis 2016).

This suggests an indecisiveness and capriciousness on the part of Skeggs and Lawrence. By bringing on Ellis, Skeggs and Lawrence are clearly acknowledging that Hayles' original screenplay needed to be updated. Yet the contemporary scenes added by Ellis are set in a dilapidated manor, an intrinsically gothic setting with no real temporal attachment to the present day (similar to the issues with the portrayal of Dracula in *Dracula AD 1972* discussed in Chapter 4). Skeggs and Lawrence's reluctance to allow anything more than a small structural change suggests that they were unsure what ultimately needed altering in Hayles' original screenplay.

However, when considering *Vlad the Impaler's* protracted and often convoluted development in this period, it is pertinent to note that it comes at a time when Skeggs and Lawrence were clearly far more concerned with Hammer's television enterprise as opposed to theatrical production. During Ellis' work on *Vlad the Impaler*, Hammer's limited resources were stretched with regards to the deal with 20th Century Fox to produce *Hammer House of Mystery and Suspense*. This ambitious co-production for television saw Hammer having to find the capital to produce the first two episodes, as well as find a way to extend the scripts from their original runtime of one hour to ninety minutes at the behest of Fox (Ilott 1984: 13). Although Fox had insisted on the 90-minute run time (Ilott 1984: 13), the limited budget and 'extremely tight schedules' (Ilott 1984: 13) made the anthology series an extremely pressured process for Skeggs and Lawrence. As a result of this, and the fact the first two episodes were fully funded by Hammer, *Hammer House of Mystery and Suspense* undoubtedly became a priority, with all potential theatrical productions put on hold.

This is further demonstrated by another unmade television project at Hammer around this time, *Moulin Rouge*. The Hammer Script Archive holds a series overview (Peacock Undated(b)) and a completed script for episode eight of the project (Peacock Undated(c)), which were both written and developed by John Peacock. The overview document describes the planned show as 'a series of thirteen one-hour plays depicting the history of the Moulin Rouge and Montmartre in its heyday; the dramatized true stories of some of the characters painted by Toulouse Lautrec' (Peacock Undated(b)). The document provides thirteen one-page synopses, one for each episode, with each one

presented next to the painting that inspired it. Episode eight, to be titled ‘Golden Helmets’, was developed as a full screenplay by Peacock. Effectively a retelling of Jacques Becker’s 1952 film *Casque d’Or* (including identical character names and plot points), the script’s completion demonstrates that Hammer was clearly seriously considering the project. Notable as a clear departure from the horror brand that Skeggs and Lawrence had effectively cultivated for their previous television projects, the series is also of note as it was clearly being considered by Hammer at around the same time as Ellis’ work on *Vlad the Impaler*.

Although no date is given for the overview of the script, it is clear that it is written during Peacock’s tenure as story editor at Hammer under Skeggs and Lawrence (which began after Houghton’s illness in 1981). The timeframe is apparent as Peacock would go on to write a show for BBC Radio 4 with almost the exact same premise entitled *Posters of the Moulin Rouge*, a four-part drama which aired its first episode in December 1989. With the project clearly no longer at Hammer by this point, this puts *Moulin Rouge*’s initial development around the same period of *Hammer House of Mystery and Suspense*, as well as Ellis’ work on *Vlad the Impaler*. This demonstrates that the three key figures at Hammer during this period - Roy Skeggs, Brian Lawrence and John Peacock – were all extensively developing television projects for Hammer at this time. This perhaps resolves Ellis’ own queries as to the proposed vagueness and lack of direction to his brief on *Vlad the Impaler*, with Hammer clearly looking to prioritise its television output over theatrical production due to the successful release of *Hammer House of Horror*.

Ellis’ time on *Vlad the Impaler* ultimately came to an end with the project no closer to production. Despite this lack of success, Ellis was recruited by Hammer again in the late 1980s (through Peacock) to work on an adaptation of the unpublished novel *Charlie* by R.P. Blount. The Hammer Script Archive holds an undated ‘confidential report’ from Peacock to Skeggs, which includes a story breakdown and locations for *Charlie*, and potential ways Hammer could adapt it as a television series. Sometime after this, Ellis is approached by Peacock to adapt it as a feature film entitled *Black Sabbath* (Ellis 2016). At least three years seem to have passed since Ellis’ worked on *Vlad the Impaler*, since the *Black Sabbath* (Ellis Undated(c)) screenplay rights were not acquired by Hammer until 16th April 1986 (Anon. 2000a). Ellis worked much longer on

this project than he did *Vlad the Impaler*, writing the screenplay (he is listed as sole author on the script) and also doing a number of revisions on his first draft. In my interview with him, Ellis recalls working on the project for ‘a number of months’ (Ellis 2016).

Hammer’s reasoning for rehiring Ellis after the unsuccessful work on the *Vlad the Impaler* project is difficult to ascertain. As noted in earlier chapters, Hammer had initially risen to prominence in the mid-to-late 1950s through the refining of a recurring Hammer style, which came through a reliance on previous contacts and recurring workers to craft a consistent style and tone. Yet these contacts and workers only became recurring figures after the success of *The Curse of Frankenstein* (Fisher 1957). There is a clear logic in procuring the same cast and crew after a successful picture, but Ellis is rehired by Hammer only after the failure of the *Vlad the Impaler* rewrite, suggesting that Hammer was simply utilising Ellis due to their relatively limited resources. This is perhaps best reflected by Denis Meikle, in an interview I conducted in November 2016, where he spoke about a visit to Hammer under Skeggs in the 1980s: ‘I went to see him at Elstree, he had one girl, one secretary girl outside, and him at his big desk, that was Hammer’ (Meikle 2016). Despite being listed on a production slate for Hammer in the July 4th edition of *Screen International* in 1987 (Falks: 2), *Black Sabbath* ultimately never moved past the scripting stage. This failure again calls into question why Skeggs and Lawrence looked to Ellis to develop the project after the failure of *Vlad the Impaler*. The examination of *Vlad the Impaler*’s development under Ellis, and Meikle’s above quote, suggests it was out of necessity, with the company having lacked the creative resources it once had.

With Ellis’ draft of *Vlad the Impaler* not moving forward at Hammer, the project stalled once more. Brian Lawrence would retire from Hammer in May 1985 following the end of *Hammer House of Mystery and Suspense* (Meikle 2009: 225, Kinsey 2007: 423), selling his stake in the company and leaving Skeggs as the sole owner of Hammer. The end of *Hammer House of Mystery and Suspense* would also ultimately signal the end of Hammer’s television output as well. Skeggs noted that despite the difficult production, the show was initially renewed by Fox due to the studio being ‘pleased with foreign sales, and delighted with the low cost of production’ (Skeggs to Klemensen 2016: 47). However, Skeggs’ primary contact at the studio, Steve Roberts,

left Fox, leading to the studio cancelling Robert's future portfolio (Skeggs to Klemensen 2016: 47). This was the end of Hammer's television output under Skeggs (not including retrospectives or documentaries such as *Flesh and Blood: The Hammer Heritage of Horror* (Newsom 1994)).

However, late 1980 did see a potential revival in Hammer's hopes of restarting theatrical production. An article in *Screen International* in July 1987 tells of a deal being brokered between Skeggs and American producer Steve Krantz. The deal, which came 'following two years of intensive financial planning and packaging' (Falks 1987: 2) on Skeggs' part, lists five films on Hammer's slate, ready to begin theatrical production: *The House On The Strand*, *The Haunting of Toby Jugg*, *Vlad the Impaler*, *Black Sabbath* and *The White Witch of Rose Hall*. The announcement that Hammer was back in active production with *Vlad the Impaler* coincides with another draft of the script held in the archive, with this iteration being bought by Hammer in December 1988 (Anon. 2000a). Brian Hayles is still listed as the sole writer, but revisions have this time been completed by John Peacock.

The script discards all of Ellis' changes (including the prologue and epilogue), with Peacock instead revising Hayles' original draft. The first and second act are extremely similar to Hayles' script, with only formatting issues being the key difference. There is, however, a significant change in the third act of the script. In Hayles' original draft (also maintained by Ellis in his revisions), Vlad and Militsa hold a black mass to turn Vlad into the vampire Dracula. Vlad dies but through the ceremony is later reborn. When Vlad is declared dead in the Hayles draft, Vlad and Militsa concoct a plot to retain his fortune and estate by leaving it to his estranged younger brother Vlaachim, who no one previously knew existed. Vlaachim arrives to take over the estate and is welcomed by most as the new heir to Vlad's fortune. However, after Benedek and Istvan inspect Vlad's grave and find his body missing, they realise that Vlaachim is in fact a revitalized and newly youthful Vlad, now a vampire. It is a convoluted twist, but works sufficiently enough in the radio play, where the slight change in the vocal performance of the lead actor makes the characters of Vlad and Vlaachim distinguishable. Yet on screen the artifice of characters not recognizing Vlaachim as Vlad (who, if like the radio play, would be played by the same actor), would perhaps impact the spectator's suspension of disbelief. Peacock rectifies this, by

altering the narrative so that Vlad has left all his estate and fortune to Militsa, making her the ruler of Tirgoviste. This simplifies the narrative whilst also circumventing the complications of realising the Vlaachim twist on camera.

This was by far Peacock's greatest change to Hayles' original screenplay, emphasising the lack of revisions to a now fifteen-year-old script. Like Ellis before him, Peacock seems to have been restricted by the changes he can make to the script. Whereas Ellis was a freelancer working for Hammer, Peacock had an extensive background with the company and is effectively their in-house script editor at this stage. This underlines that it was Hammer who was unwilling to dramatically alter Hayles' original script. The fact that the revisions were done by Peacock also seems to compound the notion that Hammer were reluctant or unable to seek new writers and talent. Nine years into his tenure as Chairman of Hammer, Skeggs still seemed gripped by the same issues apparent when Ellis was brought on to revise *Vlad the Impaler*.

Despite this, there is some evidence which suggests this latest draft of the screenplay by Peacock moved *Vlad the Impaler* the closest it had been to production since the 1970s. The Hammer Script Archive holds a shooting schedule which corresponds with Peacock's revisions. The schedule takes into account whether a scene will be interior or exterior, whether it is set at day or night, how many actors/crowd or stunt actors will be necessary, and any other potential 'special requirements' for the sequence. The careful planning of each scene suggests a move forward in the writing process, as they begin to break down each scene into its component parts in preparation for potential production. It could therefore be presumed that, if this document was being produced, the script had been finalised and that Hammer was now putting the film into pre-production. The fact that Hammer had also announced a co-production deal with Krantz for *Vlad the Impaler* only a year before also supports the idea it was the closest it had been to production in the Skeggs era.

However, despite this promising sign, the schedule is missing some information which would have been crucial if the production were in fact close to filming. The information given in the schedule is exclusively based on the script, with no details of filming locations, dates or crew featured at all. The question of why a schedule even exists at this stage could perhaps be tied to Peacock's position at Hammer. If Peacock is working closely with Skeggs as a script editor, he would have been aware of the need to

have a schedule prepared for the film once the script was written, and therefore could have produced it concurrently with the script, as opposed to sometime after.

Despite the revised screenplay, schedule, and the announcement of possible American finance through the deal with Steve Krantz, neither *Vlad the Impaler* or any of the mooted projects made a significant step into production. Whereas one could see the inclusion of a schedule for *Vlad the Impaler*, which correlates with the screenplay, as a comparatively positive step forward from Ellis' draft, the fact that it is Peacock who has revised the script also potentially presents a step backwards. With the project being developed by Peacock with Skeggs overseeing it, *Vlad the Impaler* was effectively in the hands of two people who had been working with Hammer since 1963 and 1972 respectively. Although the installation of Skeggs and Lawrence in 1979 seemed to signal a new iteration of Hammer, removed from both James and Michael Carreras' tenures, nearly a decade later it was still very much the Hammer old-guard developing a project that, in this instance, had also been in development for over a decade at the time.

Skeggs and the Warner Bros. Deal: *Vlad the Impaler* 1990-2000

Whereas the previous section examined Skeggs' initial plans for production after buying Hammer, the advent of the 1990s saw Skeggs having been in charge of the company for a decade and still with no feature films produced. However, whilst the 1980s first saw the prioritising of television production, followed by a growing reliance on a small circle of writers such as Peacock and Ellis, the 1990s saw Skeggs alter his strategy for Hammer. With Hammer's original gothic horror successes such as *The Curse of Frankenstein* and *Dracula* (Fisher 1958) now over thirty years old, the notion that Hammer was a respectable company with a legacy of having been truly innovative was beginning to take hold. Wayne Kinsey specifically dates the moment this change occurs, noting that 'in August 1996, Hammer became respectable again when the Barbican celebrated 40 years of Hammer Horror' (2007: 424). Yet as this section will go on to detail, Skeggs recognised this shift towards nostalgic respectability for Hammer's former films even earlier, moving away from his attempts to produce films not previously associated with Hammer, and instead focusing on the potential of Hammer's existing library of films.

As this section will detail, Skeggs made a number of American finance and production deals at this time based solely on the option to remake past Hammer productions. Yet despite this change in approach, *Vlad the Impaler* remained a consistent fixture on Hammer's production slate throughout this period. A new draft was written by American writer Jonas McCord and will be analysed in relation to the other drafts of the script later in this section. Tracing the development of *Vlad the Impaler* will also illuminate by far the biggest production deal Skeggs made as managing director of Hammer, which was a long-term deal with Warner Bros. The section will consider Skeggs' new strategy and argue that this focus on pre-existing properties and the clear attempt to garner American finance saw him falling back on the tactics of James and Michael Carreras, as well as chronicling Skeggs' last years at Hammer.

The beginning of the 1990s presented the best opportunity yet for *Vlad the Impaler*. Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* was released in 1992 and was a significant commercial success, grossing over \$200million from a \$40million budget (boxofficemojo.com). Chapter 4 briefly discussed Michael Carreras' attempts at reviving the Stoker biopic, *Victim of his Imagination*, in the 1990s with support from Hammer. In Carreras' letter to his lawyer Richard Hatton, he noted that the 'Razz a Matazz publicity' (Carreras to Hatton: 26th March 1992) surrounding *Bram Stoker's Dracula* could make his proposed Stoker project highly marketable. This would have been even more relevant to Hammer's *Vlad the Impaler*, as *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, more than any other adaptation before it, intrinsically ties the historical figure of Vlad Tepes with Dracula. Although there is no material held within the Hammer Script Archive that suggest Skeggs took particular notice of *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, the depiction of Vlad Tepes' transformation into Dracula and the circumstances in which it happens (immediately following the death of Vlad's wife) draw clear similarities with Hammer's then near twenty-year-old *Vlad the Impaler* project. The box office receipts for the film also clearly demonstrated that a Dracula project could still do significant international business.

The link between *Bram Stoker's Dracula* and *Vlad the Impaler* is merely speculative, but a more concrete move forward for the project, and Hammer generally, occurred only a year later. The July 30th 1993 edition of *Screen International* ran an

article entitled 'Hammer back from the Dead' (Bateman 1993: 2), detailing a new deal between Hammer and Warner Bros. (specifically Shuler and Donner Productions) to produce 'a major slate of titles in 1994, including a series of remakes of classic Hammer titles' (Bateman 1993: 2). This information alone indicated a more auspicious arrangement than the one six years before with Krantz, with a studio co-production deal as opposed to the finance of one producer. The co-production deal was also indicated to be long term, with Hammer intending to 'make five films with Warner for the next year and 15 more over the following three years' (Bateman 1993: 2). The deal seemed to focus mainly on remaking Hammer titles, naming '*The Quatermass Experiment*, *Stolen Face* and *The Devil Rides Out*' (Bateman 1993: 2). The idea to move away from new projects and perhaps exploit the existing Hammer titles from the 1950s and 1960s seems to have been a deliberate effort from Skeggs to move Hammer back into active production, and, as posited at the beginning of this section, seems to be a deliberate shift away from Skeggs' strategy in the 1980s to develop original titles under the Hammer name. Ellis' work for Hammer in the early eighties on *Vlad the Impaler* and *Black Sabbath* may have been adaptations (a radio play and an unpublished book respectively), but they were not remakes of old Hammer films. Similarly, the 1987 Krantz deal listed five properties ready to put in to production, but while some were adaptations, none were Hammer remakes.

It did not necessarily seem to be the Warner deal that instigated this shift in Hammer's production strategy. As mentioned in the *Screen International* article, Hammer had a 'separate deal' (Bateman 1993: 2) to remake Val Guest's *The Day the Earth Caught Fire* (1961), working with the 'UK's Winchester Films for Twentieth Century Fox' (Bateman 1993: 2). Despite the original *The Day the Earth Caught Fire* not being a Hammer film, a script for the proposed remake by Kevin Quinn is held within the Hammer Script Archive and although undated, three drafts of this project were registered with the Writers Guild of America, the first on 1st June 1992 (Jones Forthcoming). As with the Warner Bros. deal, Hammer's relationship with Winchester Films (also referred to as Winchester Productions) seems to have been focused specifically on remaking old Hammer properties. The Hammer Script Archive holds a script dated 25th June 1992 entitled *Legacy* (Sidaway and Sidaway) which, despite having 'Winchester Productions' written on its cover, has no writer listed on the

screenplay itself. The Script Archive also holds a document from 29th February 2000, which is an exhaustive audit of all of Hammer's unmade projects past and present, with the key goal seemingly being to understand who holds the underlying screen rights for these projects (Anon. 2000a). *Legacy* is listed on this document, and the writers are listed as Robert and Ashley Sidaway (founders of Winchester Pictures). Furthermore, the project is described as a 'remake of Quatermass and the Pit using just the plot-line, to avoid legal issues' (Anon. 2000a). The Sidaway's also appear as writers on another unmade Hammer script held in the Archive: *The Four Sided Triangle* (Undated) (listed as being rewritten by Joe-Michael Terry). A remake of the 1953 Terence Fisher science fiction film of the same name, this script is not dated, but is listed as 'a work in progress' (Anon. 2000a). A second draft of *The Four Sided Triangle*, written by Christopher Wicking, is dated July 1992. These projects show that the idea to explore remakes of existing Hammer films was not necessarily put forward by Warner Bros., but potentially by Skeggs himself, as the same strategy seemed to be in place between Hammer and several different producers and studios. Therefore, in terms of developing screenplays of Hammer remakes, 1992 saw a flurry of activity, particularly in the months of June and July, which seemed to culminate the following year with the Warner Bros. deal. This was a clear move away from the strategies of the 1980s, with Skeggs instead embracing Hammer's legacy of classic horror films.

The one outlier of this strategy is *Vlad the Impaler*, which was also listed as preparing to begin production in the *Screen International* article. Although it is not listed in the slate of remakes Warner Bros. was looking at developing, it is mentioned towards the end of the article: 'Hammer also has a \$12m remake of *Vlad the Impaler* set to shoot in Romania early next year, possibly in a deal with Rank Film Distributors' (Bateman 1993: 2). Romania had been the proposed shooting location for Carreras' initial iteration of *Vlad the Impaler*, though Carreras noted that, when asking permission from the Romanian Government, they 'turned [Hammer] down flat' due to *Vlad* still being considered a 'national hero' (Carreras in Skinn and Brosnan 1978: 21). What is telling about this 1993 announcement (despite erroneously referring to the project as a 'remake') is the specificity of it in comparison with the 1987 article, with a budget, location and distributor all seemingly in place. Unlike the 1987 Krantz announcement, this new slate of Hammer films also gained traction outside of the initial press release in

Screen International. 5th August 1993 saw the British newspaper *The Independent* run the headline ‘Hammer Films returns to revamp horror classics’ (Connett 1993). The article repeated much of the information given in the *Screen International* article, but offered other insights as well. Namely, Skeggs, interviewed for the article, suggested that Warner Bros. were financing the production costs of the films: ‘we are scripting five films at the moment, which Warner Brothers will bankroll’ (Skeggs in Connett 1993). He also noted that *Vlad* was very much still in production: ‘we are making a new film called *Vlad the Impaler*, who inspired the *Dracula* story, which will be shot in Romania next year’ (Skeggs in Connett 1993). A week later in the August 12th issue of *The Stage and Television Today*, another article on the deal was published, entitled ‘Warner snaps up Hammer classics’. This seemed to confirm the nature of the deal:

The agreement has been signed with Hammer and Donner/Schuler-Donner Productions to develop film and television productions based on classic Hammer films and new material acquired by the British company. Warners will also have exclusive rights to develop and produce properties from the Hammer library’ (Anon. 1993: 20).

These articles together seem to create a clearer picture of this co-production deal. Warner Bros. were prepared to finance the pictures, in exchange for the rights to produce and remake some of the classic horror titles in Hammer’s catalogue.

Like the Krantz deal before it, the announcement of a new production deal led simultaneously to a new revision of *Vlad the Impaler* (with screenplay credit still being given solely to Hayles). This time, writer Jonas McCord revised a draft, with Hammer purchasing the screen rights to his script on 30th November 1993 (Anon. 2000a). The Hammer Script Archive holds two exact copies of McCord’s script, with the only difference being the title and the title page. One is entitled *Vlad the Impaler* and is listed as a first draft. The second is not listed as a first draft and is entitled *Vlad Dracul* (McCord Undated(b)). Although the actual scripts are identical, the title page for the *Vlad the Impaler* version of this script also features another interesting detail in the form of an American postal address for ‘Hammer International’. The script’s listing of Hammer’s American address (situated opposite the Warner Bros. lot), is the only document in the Script Archive that confirms that Hammer had a physical presence in Hollywood as part of the Warner co-production deal, a significant development for a company who had relied heavily on the American film industry since the 1950s. The

draft retitled *Vlad Dracul* does not feature this address, only that of Hammer's UK base in Borehamwood.

McCord is an American writer/director who, by 1993, had mainly served as executive producer for television shows such as *Dirty Dozen: The Series* (1988) and *The*

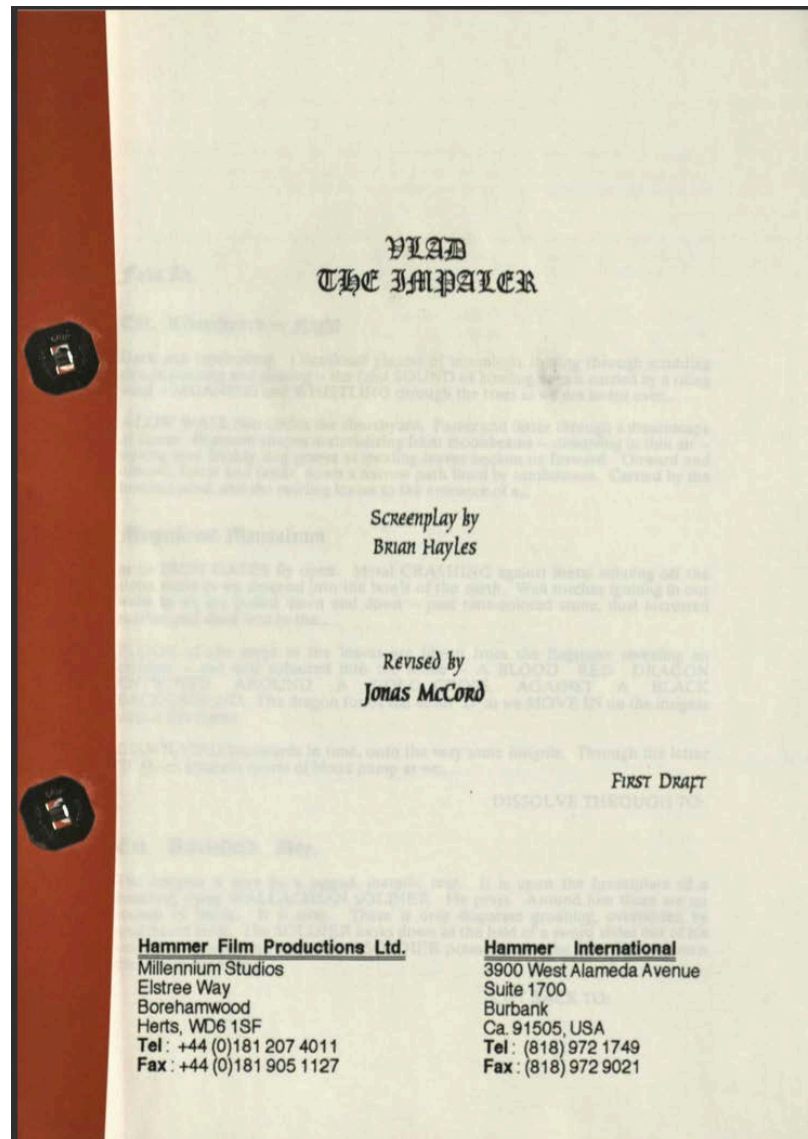


Figure 4: The title page of Jonas McCord's *Vlad the Impaler* screenplay, which gives an address for Hammer's American office near the Warner Bros. Lot.

Young Riders (1989-1992). McCord's involvement was almost certainly a by-product of the Warner co-production deal, which, as well as providing financial support to new feature films, also opened up a new network of writers and directors to Hammer through Warner Bros.' status as one of the largest film production companies in Hollywood.

Focusing on existing properties, as well as exploiting the Hollywood majors to get films into production, Skeggs seemed at this stage to have adopted the production strategies utilised by both James and Michael Carreras in their tenures in charge of Hammer. It was with these new American allies that Skeggs' finally sought support in order to get *Vlad the Impaler* into production.

In private email correspondence on the 6th May 2016, McCord noted that he 'did quite an extensive rewrite' on *Vlad the Impaler*, with his usual method being to 'base everything on historical fact'. Although McCord's draft does not offer the historical detail mentioned by McCord, it is an extensive rewrite of the project, with significant changes to the narrative. First of note is that the Vlaachim twist (which sees Vlad pose as his own long-lost brother Vlaachim), removed entirely from Peacock's draft of the script, was once again featured. Although this casts doubt on to whether McCord had read Peacock's revisions, there is definitive evidence that he had seen Ellis' version, as McCord also included the point-of-view possession sequence added by Ellis, where Vlad is 'imbued by the devil himself' (Ellis Undated(a), McCord Undated(a)) after the death of his wife. However, this is the only surviving piece of any of Ellis' revisions, with no modern prologue or epilogue included in McCord's script. McCord undid many of the changes made by Peacock in the film's third act, and completely altered the majority of the first act of the screenplay. The main plot points stayed relatively the same, but characters such as Vlad's wife Ilonya were given larger roles and character dynamics were radically altered.

These changes mostly occurred when Vlad returns to his castle after being initially 'redeemed' by Benedek. In Hayles' draft of the script (and subsequent revisions up to the McCord draft) the character of Ilonya does not feature heavily in the story and is ultimately a plot device whose death triggers Vlad's lust for vengeance against God. In Hayles', Ellis' and Peacock's draft of the script, Ilonya enters labour only three pages after arriving at Tirgoviste Castle and dies ten pages later (nine in Peacock's draft). In McCord's draft, the relationship between Vlad and Ilonya was developed further, with nineteen pages between her arrival and death.

The cause of her premature labour was also altered. Whereas in previous drafts it was due to the long ride to the castle, McCord's draft has it take place during a major action set piece in the first act (entirely added by McCord), which sees Ilonya thrown

from the horse Salmander during a boar hunt she insists on attending with Vlad. McCord also uses this sequence to revive the theme that Vlad's fate may be predestined (originally developed by Ellis). Firstly, it is Salmander, (the horse the devil birthed from Hell in Ellis' draft) who throws her to the ground, and afterwards Ilonya sees a 'girl, with the face of an angel and the heart of stone' (McCord Undated(a): 35) standing next to the boar after she falls. The script later insinuates that this young girl was the witch Milita in another form. This sequence, as well as the previously mentioned possession scene, suggest that Vlad is chosen by the Devil to become Dracula, a thematic sentiment that, until this screenplay, had only appeared in Ellis' revisions of *Vlad the Impaler*. However, despite the extra sequences featuring Ilonya, after her death the script strays very little from the original Hayles draft. McCord's two main contributions were ultimately to give a stronger focus on the relationship between Vlad and Ilonya and to reinstate elements of the supernatural first added by Ellis.

Although there are no notes from anyone working at Hammer regarding this script, there is evidence that Skeggs was sufficiently satisfied with it to put the film in pre-production. In the February 3rd 1995 issue of *Screen International*, there was a section that listed European film production companies and the films they had in active development. *Vlad the Impaler* appeared on the list under Hammer's name, with a production credit for Skeggs and the screenplay credit listed as 'Jonas McCord based on a screenplay by Brian Hayles' (Anon. 1995: 37). The listing also reveals the budget as \$18million, up from the \$12million first mentioned in the 1993 *Screen International* article. Hammer's production slate also appeared the following year in *Screen International* in the 26th July 1996 issue (Anon.: 31). *Vlad the Impaler* was listed again, this time with McCord receiving sole credit as writer and Hayles' story credit reduced to a mention in the brief one-line synopsis.

However, there was one crucial change since the previous listing. The film at this point had a director attached. Xavier Koller was listed as the director for the project in 1996 and also in the March 28th 1997 issue one year later (Anon.: 43), signalling his long-term involvement with the project. Koller had recently released the Disney adventure film *Squanto: A Warriors Tale* (1994), his first English language production, having originally hailed from Switzerland. *Squanto: A Warrior's Tale* tells the story of a 17th-century Native American who, after initially being kidnapped and sold into

slavery, helped bring about peaceful liaisons between a group of English Settlers and the Pokanoket tribe in America. More notably, however, Koller had also directed *Journey of Hope* in 1990, which told the story of a Turkish family who, after hearing of the promise and financial security of a life in Switzerland, sell their land and livestock and set off on a treacherous journey across multiple countries in an effort to find a better life. The film would go on to win the Best Foreign Language Film at the 1990 Academy Awards. There is seemingly no other documentation of Koller's involvement with *Vlad the Impaler* other than these production slates, but both *Journey of Hope* and *Squanto: A Warrior's Tale* indicate a director not bound by a particular genre or style. It would be overly speculative to suggest how he would have brought *Vlad the Impaler* to the screen, but soon after Koller's announcement, *Vlad the Impaler* once again stalled, this time for good.

Two articles in 1996 seem to offer two primary reasons why Hammer, under Skeggs, failed to produce *Vlad the Impaler* or any other feature film in the 1990s. The first of these reasons was that, after over thirty years working for Hammer and 16 years in charge, Skeggs was considering retirement. The second reason stemmed from the complex legal issues surrounding who owned the rights to existing Hammer films. In an interview printed in the June 30th edition of *The Observer*, Skeggs, whilst promoting the current crop of Hammer films he was hoping to get into production, revealed that the Warner deal with Donner had expired without producing any films: '[me and Donner are] still very good friends but he's so busy doing other things... the deal ran out a year ago but it was a good start. It got Paramount and Fox interested' (Skeggs in Gilbert 1996: 137). Skeggs did still tout a slew of titles Hammer had in production (including *Vlad the Impaler*), and also seemed more committed to a strategy of exploiting Hammer's pre-existing properties: 'all the American majors want to remake Hammer films. We've five signed deals with companies like Fox, New World and Warner' (Skeggs in Gilbert 1996: 137). In a particularly prescient comment, Skeggs went on to note the shift in Hollywood towards projects based on existing intellectual properties, including sequels and remakes: 'they have so little original material that's worthwhile. A few years ago they didn't want to do remakes. Now everybody wants to' (Skeggs in Gilbert 1996: 137).

However, in the same article Skeggs also strongly hinted that he was considering reducing his involvement as owner of Hammer, and possibly even considering retirement: 'I'm 60 and it's time I relaxed a bit. I shall stay on as chairman. If I'm not enjoying it after a couple of years, I can sell my holding' (Skeggs in Gilbert 1996: 137). With no overarching production deal in place and Skeggs seemingly sensing that his time at Hammer was coming to an end, it seemed Hammer's chances of going back into active production were becoming increasingly unlikely.

This is compounded by a more technical detail which potentially indicates why Hammer, after adopting an approach that heavily relied on remaking many of their existing properties, failed to move these projects into production. In an article in *Billboard* magazine dated June 8th 1996, entitled 'Demand for Reclaiming Foreign C'rights Less Frenzied Than Expected' (91), Seth Goldstein writes on section 104A of the Copyright Act, which took effect on 1st January 1996, and the impact (or, as the title of the article suggests, lack of impact) this copyright law will have on the film and music industry. The Act restored 'ownership of foreign works... that had passed into the public domain here [in America]' (Goldstein 1996: 91), and it was assumed that, when the Act came into place, the US copyright office would see 'a flood of applications from overseas rights holders who want to reclaim their herds of video cash cows' (Goldstein 1996: 91). However, this wasn't the case, and relatively few applications were received. The exception to this lack of demand was Hammer Films, which applied for '141 features' (Goldstein 1996: 91) from the US Copyright Office. This was suggested as a positive for the company by Goldstein in the article, who saw Hammer's reclamation of these titles as 'a new lease on life for still [sic] feisty inventory that stands a chance at being rediscovered by a '90s audience' (Goldstein 1996: 91). However, it also suggests a wider problem at Hammer as they began to focus on their own existing properties, namely, which properties they actually owned the rights to. After officially taking over Hammer in 1973, Michael Carreras had found himself in similar circumstances regarding the rights to many of Hammer's most recognised films. Due to 'the way Sir James Carreras had done business, the rights to most of Hammer's Films were owned by the companies that had financed them' (Meikle 2009: 207). As noted earlier in the chapter, this ultimately meant that Michael Carreras bought a company which did not own many of its most famous titles. Nearly

twenty-five years later, Skeggs found himself in a similar position. One notable example is the previously mentioned *Legacy*, a remake of *Quatermass and the Pit* (Ward Baker 1967), which had to be retitled by Hammer due to rights issues. Affirming this evidence is the document of literary materials owned by Hammer, dated 29th February 2000, which lists the unmade titles in Hammer's catalogue and who owns the specific rights to them. That this document even exists suggests Hammer knew that this was a prevailing issue, but the findings of the document also illustrate the often-complex issues surrounding many of their properties.

Despite this undoubtedly being a major issue for Skeggs during his tenure, particularly in the 1990s as he shifts towards exploiting Hammer's existing properties, it is difficult to definitively suggest that this was the key to *Vlad the Impaler's* undoing. The literary document itemising Hammer's projects and their rights status lists separately the Ellis, Peacock and McCord drafts, noting on each that the project was 'last optioned 24/10/93 (now lapsed)' (Anon. 2000a). With *Vlad the Impaler* listed on Screen International's European production slates in the March 28th 1997 issue, one can presume that the rights lapsed somewhere between 1997 and 2000. The loss of the rights to the project offer a possible explanation for why it seemed to disappear from Hammer's schedules after 1997. After twenty-three years of production, two managing directors and four screenwriters, *Vlad the Impaler* had finally been struck a killing blow.

By following the trajectory of *Vlad the Impaler* under Skeggs, a number of insights into how Hammer operated under his tenure can be established. Firstly, it becomes clear that defining Skeggs and Lawrence's appointments as managing directors in 1980 as the start of a 'new' phase of Hammer is incorrect. Although this was the first time in the company's history a Carreras was not working at Hammer, Skeggs had been working under both James and Michael Carreras since the early 1960s. As a member of the board of directors, Skeggs had been a key component of Hammer in the late 1970s under Michael Carreras. Therefore, Skeggs' reluctance to move outside of the relatively small circle of contacts Hammer had in the late 1970s, and his utilisation of people like John Peacock, for example, who worked under Carreras most notably on *To the Devil a Daughter*, was unsurprising given the context.

Although Skeggs' tenure was marred by the lack of any theatrical films being produced, it is important to contextualise this in relation to Hammer's financial

precariousness in the early 1980s. As discussed earlier within the chapter, the success of the *Hammer House of Horror* television series had allowed Skeggs and Lawrence to purchase Hammer from ICI, but although they had control of the company, it was a far cry from the internationally recognised powerhouse it had once been. In addition, Hammer's limited resources were stretched with regards to the deal with 20th Century Fox to produce *Hammer House of Mystery and Suspense*, with Hammer having to find the capital to produce the first two episodes, as well as find a way to extend the scripts from their original runtime of one hour to ninety minutes at the behest of Fox.

With both creative and financial resources strained by *Hammer House of Mystery and Suspense*, it is perhaps no wonder that Ellis' initial brief for *Vlad the Impaler* was both vague and contradictory. Asked to modernise a historical drama, Ellis updated the script with a modern prologue and epilogue, and a demonic possession narrative that gave the script more overt supernatural sequences. However, as the annotated version of Ellis' revised script attests, Hammer was only interested in a superficial change to the narrative structure. As Ellis' own quotes emphasised previously in the chapter, this added nothing to the main narrative crux, but Hammer seemed disinterested in the more drastic changes made by Ellis. Whether hiring Ellis again for *Black Sabbath* was considered a second chance by Hammer, or merely the result of desperation due to the few contacts the company had in the industry at this time, is impossible to say. Be it down to the growing pains of new ownership or the pressures of their television production, Hammer, in the early 1980s, seemed completely inert in regard to their theatrical output.

Hammer's overreliance on contacts established in the 1970s was perhaps at its most blatant towards the end of the 1980s, with Peacock himself revising Hayles' script. This came off the back of a co-production deal with American producer Steve Krantz, which lined up five Hammer films for production. Peacock's script did alter the narrative more drastically than Ellis, by removing the 'Vlaachim' twist, but it is remarkable how little Peacock altered a now fourteen-year-old script. Carreras' quote cited in the first section of this chapter, in which he reverentially calls *Vlad the Impaler* his most 'prized possession', demonstrates how highly regarded Hayles' script was by Hammer under Carreras. This admiration for the script clearly continued into Skeggs' tenure, as not only was he persevering with the project nearly a decade and a half after

its initial inception, but the changes made to it were so minimal that Hayles retained sole screenwriting credit on both Ellis' and Peacock's revised drafts. At this stage, Hammer seemed uncertain what to do with the script, even after hiring two writers to revise it. Skeggs clearly did not deem it fit for active production, yet he also seems reticent to alter the script in any meaningful way. Although it is speculative to make any causal links between Skeggs' background in the industry and this lack of development, it is worth noting his initial and most significant role at Hammer was as an accountant as opposed to any creative role. Whereas Michael Carreras had experience as both producer and director, Skeggs, although having fairly regular success brokering American co-production deals with Fox in 1983, Krantz in 1987, and Warner Bros. in 1993, seemed to lack creative intuition, failing to take the next step and put projects, such as *Vlad the Impaler* (which had already had significant developmental work), into production.

Although Skeggs seemed to lack the creative instincts of either James or Michael Carreras, he was quick to latch onto a shift in Hammer's reputation in the early 1990s, securing a significant co-production deal with Warner Bros. based solely on the films Hammer had in its back catalogue. As Hammer Films had slowly grown in stature critically, directors who had watched these films when younger had now risen to prominence in the industry. Skeggs capitalised by shifting his entire production strategy to pre-existing Hammer properties. Skeggs himself noted how influential Hammer Films had been on contemporary directors, saying that Joe Dante, who at this juncture was signed up to direct a remake of *The Devil Rides Out* (Fisher 1968), was a 'Hammer buff', and that 'Martin Scorsese knows more about Hammer Films than I do. He's got a library of all the films' (Skeggs in Gilbert 1996: 137). Adapting properties with pre-existing audiences had been a facet of Hammer since *Dick Barton: Special Agent* (Goulding) in 1948. Skeggs however, looked to utilise this strategy with Hammer's own properties, relying on past successes to open up deals for Hammer's future theatrical output. Lauren Schuler-Donner, one of the key proponents of the Warner deal, suggested that this not only offered Hammer the chance to bring in existing audiences, but also to bring the films into the mainstream:

American audiences aren't so familiar with the Quatermass pictures. They only had cult appeal initially. But if we do *The Quatermass Xperiment* right, the

whole world will embrace the character (Schuler-Donner in Jones 1994: 4).

This seemed to be an expansion on Hammer's policy throughout the '50s, '60s and '70s. Whereas American distribution (and often finance) had always been integral to Hammer's strategy, Skeggs, through this co-production deal, looked to utilise American funding, locations, directors and actors. This is best encapsulated through the American office address found on Jonas McCord's script for *Vlad the Impaler*. Hammer was not only looking to utilise the funding and distribution options available through American partnerships, but was looking in effect to make Hammer an American production arm.

This strategy by Skeggs basically to assimilate Hammer into Warner through this deal, as well as his background in finance as opposed to film production, perhaps also contributes to the image of Skeggs as someone happy to just gain a profit from Hammer's name and legacy. This is suggested by Meikle in the quote presented earlier in this chapter, where he notes that Hammer was merely Skeggs sat 'at his big desk' (Meikle 2016). This certainly comes across in Wayne Kinsey's account of the Warner deal, where he states that 'this was not the Hammer we had come to love and the Hammer logo residing in what otherwise looked like a big Warner Bros movie did little to excite the more loyal fans' (Kinsey 2007: 424). Ultimately, Skeggs' ambitions did not come to fruition and, in 2000, Skeggs' sold Hammer to a consortium, led by Charles Saatchi (Kinsey 2007: 424, Meikle 2009: 226).

Conclusion

With no previous ties to Hammer's old guard, this new consortium was undoubtedly a new era for the company. However, whilst many accused Skeggs of exploiting Hammer's legacy for profit with no real plans for film production (a charge dispelled by this chapter), this new consortium made it explicit; exploiting the brand, not theatrical production, was the real priority. The announcement of the consortium's buyout in the February 14-20th weekly issue of *Variety* made this clear. A conciliatory mention of resuming active film production was made, but a quote from Larry Chrisfield, one of the members of the consortium, made no mention of it:

Not only are the new opportunities in digital television and the Internet multiplying the value of Hammer's existing assets, but digital production and distribution techniques enable us to add to those assets at low cost and low risk

(Chrisfield in Dawtrey 2000: 25).

This was also apparent in the 11th February issue of *Broadcast*, where Terry Ilott, creative head of this new Hammer outfit with his partner Peter Naish, described the purchase as ‘an investment in the brand’ (Ilott in Anon. 2000b: 2), with Hammer ‘not planning to build up a TV or film production business itself’ (Anon. 2000b: 2). Skeggs may never have had any films released theatrically, but the deals he made and the amount of developmental work he authorised on a project such as *Vlad the Impaler* suggest this was not through a lack of trying. At this point, however, Hammer was clearly not prioritising film production.

Hammer, after changing hands once more in 2007, resumed theatrical production in 2010 with *Let Me In* (Reeves 2010). However, *Vlad the Impaler* seemed to have died in the 1990s. Despite current Hammer owner Simon Oakes suggesting in an interview in *The Independent* in 2012 that Hammer was working on a ‘modern-day version of Dracula’ (Oakes in Clark 2012), Universal’s *Dracula Untold* (Shore 2014) seems to have put paid to any speculation that *Vlad the Impaler* may see the light of day. A Dracula origin story made in 2014, *Dracula Untold* sees Vlad, having already repented for his evil past by the beginning of the film, desperate to save his kingdom from Turkish forces. He is given temporary powers by a Nosferatu-like creature (as opposed to a Witch), but after the death of his wife, decides to keep his new vampiric powers to take vengeance on her killers. The plot sounds similar to *Vlad the Impaler*, but the tone is remarkably different to Hammer’s historical drama, adapting the story as more of a superhero origin story, with Vlad portrayed as an anti-hero rather than a villain (Louis 2017: 249-262).

The case study of *Vlad the Impaler* takes us through two iterations of Hammer, and comparisons between Michael Carreras and Roy Skeggs can consequently be made. The focus towards the end of their respective tenures on large scale productions that would necessitate international co-production finance is perhaps the most blatant, with Carreras looking to get big-budget films like *Vlad the Impaler* and *Nessie* off the ground and Skeggs, through the Warner deal, looking to remake older Hammer films as big-budget blockbusters.

Both Carreras and Skeggs also found themselves in difficult positions immediately after taking control of Hammer. In 1972, Michael Carreras inherited a

depleted company from his father, with key figures like Tony Hinds long since retired and many of the rights to former Hammer projects residing with the American majors who had distributed them. Skeggs also struggled to move outside of a small circle of former Hammer employees, seemingly relying solely on John Peacock and young British writers such as Arthur Ellis.

As stated in the introduction, *Vlad the Impaler* is a pertinent case study of Skeggs' years in charge. Its inception as a Carreras project allows comparisons in how both Hammer managers developed the project. The sheer amount of developmental work that went into *Vlad Impaler* also acts as a robust rebuttal of Skeggs' characterisation as someone more interested in Hammer's financial assets than film production. In effect, the project seems to perfectly embody the tensions of Skeggs as a member of the old guard, relying on older Hammer properties, American co-productions and former Hammer staff, and someone aware of the shift in the film industry towards established properties and remakes, cleverly utilising Hammer's library to garner interest from major American studios. *Vlad the Impaler* may have come to nothing, but Skeggs' time in charge at Hammer was an interesting and important chapter in Hammer's history.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Summary

This thesis has examined Hammer's unmade films over four decades, and has pursued three key research questions: What can these unmade projects tell us about Hammer Films and their evolving production strategies from 1957 to 2000? How do industrial and production histories benefit from the inclusion and contextualisation of unmade case studies? What are the methodological benefits or problems in utilising these unmade case studies? The thesis has examined these questions through a chronological study that foregrounded some of Hammer's most important unmade films.

The case studies' importance was determined through the tangible effects they had on Hammer and external financial or distribution partners - for example how much creative labour and financial effort were put in to the projects - as well as the evidence that was available for each case study. In presenting these detailed unmade case studies, the thesis has made use of a wealth of primary materials held in the Hammer Script Archive at DMU, supplementing these documents with materials from the BFI Archive, the BBFC Archive, the Margaret Herrick Library and the USC Warner Bros. Archive.

The USC Warner Bros. Archive was particularly important to Chapter 3, providing a completed screenplay for Milton Subotsky's *Frankenstein*. This not only allowed me to confirm that a previously unknown *Frankenstein* script in the Hammer Script Archive was in fact Subotsky's, but also provided essential detail on the screenplay's narrative. This was a crucial part of the chapter, as Universal's dissatisfaction with the production stemmed from their concern that it impinged upon their 1930s/1940s *Frankenstein* cycle. As well as the Warner Bros. Archive, the BFI's Hammer Collection was also essential in detailing the case studies in Chapter 3. In particular, it held correspondence that was useful in illuminating the financial partnership between James Carreras and Eliot Hyman on Subotsky's *Frankenstein* and the eventual *The Curse of Frankenstein* (Fisher 1957). The BFI's special collections also proved essential, as although the Hammer Script Archive held no details on *The Tales of Frankenstein* television series, the BFI held internal correspondence on the series, as well as a detailed guide for the writers, and synopses for several episodes. These allowed for a greater understanding of what the show would have entailed, and

the trade papers supplemented these materials with historical and production context on the format of the show and the plans for syndication. This wealth of primary evidence allowed me to assess *The Tales of Frankenstein*'s impact on Hammer at the time and contextualise it as an important project for the company. Notably it demonstrated how tenuous this still fledgling relationship was between Hammer and the American majors (in this case Columbia), and also demonstrated the project's effect on later sequels to *The Curse of Frankenstein* through the synopses held at the BFI Archive. This study is the first time Subotsky's *Frankenstein* and *The Tales of Frankenstein* have been utilised as case studies in academic work on Hammer.

Material on Chapter 3's final case study, *The Night Creatures*, was primarily provided through the combination of the BBFC Archive in London and the Margaret Herrick Library in Los Angeles. The case study primarily focused on the project's (and Hammer's) relationship with the censor both in Britain and America. As such, the BBFC Archive provided materials on the British censor's reaction to the project, both internally and externally. The Margaret Herrick Library provided files on the MPPA's own response, and this study is the first time that these materials had been cross referenced, providing an in-depth examination of the two censors reaction to *The Night Creatures*.

Chapter 4's examination of the unmade films within the *Dracula* franchise was made possible through the Hammer Script Archive. The Archive holds the screenplay for Kevin Francis' *Dracula Feast of Blood*, treatments on Don Houghton's version of *Victim of his Imagination*, and two screenplays and correspondence between Michael Carreras and Tony Hinds relating to *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula*. All material relating to the chapter's primary case study, *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*, is also held within the Hammer Script Archive. This includes the treatments by Don Houghton, George Trow and Christopher Wicking and correspondence between Carreras and Houghton, that revealed a fraught working relationship. It is also of note however that two interviews with Hammer historians Marcus Hearn and Denis Meikle provided much needed production and historical context to this chapter. The interview with Meikle itself did not provide any key information regarding these unmade case studies, but on the day of the interview he loaned to the Hammer Script Archive materials relating to a potential revival of the *Victim of his Imagination* project at Hammer in the 1990s.

Nothing regarding this potential new phase of the project was held at the Hammer Script Archive, making this donation crucial in understanding the full extent of this project and Michael Carreras' passion for it. Hearn's telephone interview proved extremely pertinent to the chapter, as he used his notes on lost Hammer correspondence once held at the company to answer questions relating to the timelines of both *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* and *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*. This helped me clearly differentiate the two as separate projects at Hammer, and denote their different narratives and different production contexts, something that has never been done in any other study of Hammer.

Chapter 5 and 6 again primarily utilised the extensive resources available in the Hammer Script Archive. Out of all of the files held on unmade projects within the Archive, the file on *Nessie* is by far the most detailed. It holds nearly three years of correspondence between Hammer personnel and their financial and creative partners, financial documentation outlining how Hammer were looking to gain investment in the production and two scripts on the project. It is extremely fortuitous that this is the case, as *Nessie* was undoubtedly one of Hammer's most ambitious films, with a \$7,000,000 budget and several international finance deals with companies such as Columbia and Toho.

The *Vlad the Impaler* file is less extensive in regards to correspondence, but holds six screenplays by four separate authors on the project ranging from 1974 to 1993. A timeline of these scripts was only possible however through a document (dated February 2000) which lists all of the rights to Hammer's unmade projects, and if Hammer still owned them. This list featured the dates the rights to these scripts were procured by Hammer, an essential factor when all of the *Vlad the Impaler* scripts were undated. As well as these materials the chapter was supplemented through the use of trade magazines, an interview with one of the writers, Arthur Ellis, and brief correspondence with another writer on the project Jonas McCord.

Through utilising archival material never used before in academic works on Hammer, this study has produced original findings relating to the company's emergence in the horror genre and its eventual decline. The remainder of this concluding chapter will survey how these materials have been utilised within the study, and summarise the key findings. It will demonstrate how the central research questions have been

addressed, and what new knowledge has been acquired about Hammer Films from this investigation. Finally, on a broader front, it will consider what may be drawn from this study about the value of unmade films in film production history, and the scope for further work in this area.

Findings

Through utilising these materials, one of the key findings of the thesis is how the contextualisation of unmade films within a broader industry study can disrupt and challenge pre-existing notions in established film histories. This is clear in the examination of the production process of Milton Subotsky's *Frankenstein*. Subotsky's script and its development were crucial to *The Curse of Frankenstein*'s production, however, Subotsky's importance to *The Curse of Frankenstein* is often minimised in other studies of Hammer, with some instead looking to the company's previous filmography to explain their move to gothic horror. This is apparent in *A History of Horrors* (2009), where Meikle looks to draw a direct parallel between *The Quatermass Xperiment* (Guest 1955) and *The Curse of Frankenstein*. Meikle quotes an interview with Michael Carreras regarding a meeting at Hammer on the special effects used to create the final monster in *The Quatermass Xperiment*, and the decision to give the decidedly unhuman looking creature a human eye. Carreras recounts:

[...] the idea of putting an eye into it came up...and the semblance of the last human cry...and the whole thing changed. And I remember at the meeting only a few sentences later, I heard somebody say: "You mean like the monster in *Frankenstein*..."? I'd never heard the name *Frankenstein* mentioned before then, but there was certainly a spark at that meeting (Carreras cited in Meikle 2009: 24).

Meikle goes on to note that 'it was a spark that would ignite into a flame' (Meikle 2009: 24), and he is not alone in encouraging this direct connection between *The Quatermass Xperiment* and *Frankenstein*. This is perhaps most blatantly demonstrated in Picart's *The Cinematic Rebirths of Frankenstein* (2002), where the author gives credit for the conception of Hammer's gothic horror cycle solely to chairman James Carreras suggesting – 'He conceived of the idea of remaking the "classic" horror films of the thirties and forties, but this time in vivid and graphic color' (Picart 2002: 99). This suggestion that it was James Carreras who envisaged *Frankenstein* as the next property

for Hammer to adapt, or that it was through the production of *The Quatermass Xperiment*, discounts the fact that the eventual *Frankenstein* project did not even originate at the company but with the American producer Eliot Hyman, and can lead to erroneous conceptions of Hammer's own production methods. The foregrounding of unmade projects can offer crucial and original insights into existing areas of enquiry. For example, Hammer's reliance on American finance and distribution is oft-noted, but the unmade films discussed in Chapter 3 show the development of this relationship, and, in the case of *The Tales of Frankenstein*, how fragile it was at the beginning of Hammer's gothic horror cycle.

Whilst examining Hammer's produced slate of films within this period would suggest a frictionless transition to a model that relied heavily on American finance and distribution, the unmade *The Tales of Frankenstein* television show demonstrates that this fledgling relationship was tenuous and not without difficulties. The examination of the project in Chapter 3 saw Hammer struggling to adapt to Screen Gems' own methods of production, a fact made all the more difficult due to Screen Gems trying to incorporate elements of the Universal cycle as well. This project may not have made it to the screen, but I would argue it is crucial to any examination of Hammer's emergence in the horror genre as it shows another potential path the company could have taken, towards X-rated horror content, but outside of the gothic horror genre they came to rely on. *The Night Creatures* is also a vital project in studying Hammer's emergence in the genre, with an analysis of the project's history shedding new light and offering original insights into Hammer's relationship with the BBFC and MPAA. Whereas *The Night Creatures* has been discussed in other works, such as Peter Hutchings' chapter in *Sights Unseen* (2008: 53-71) and in Stacey Abbott's *Undead Apocalypse* (2016), this thesis is the first to contextualise it in relation to Hammer and the censor, and utilises MPAA files on the project for the first time in any academic study. An examination of *The Night Creatures* development through these documents reveal that, despite Hutchings' assertion that the project was short-lived at Hammer, it was actually linked with the company for nearly four years. *The Night Creatures* would have a sizable impact on how the company operated with the censor from then on, with Hammer often keeping the BBFC closely informed about the potential production of a project, in order to prevent it from being outright rejected at screenplay stage.

More broadly, using these documents on an unmade project also foregrounded the differing processes of the British and American censors. The BBFC reacted strongly to the gruesome imagery in Matheson's script, and told Hammer in no uncertain terms that the project would be refused a certificate by the censor. Around the same time, the MPAA also gave their advice on the script, and were more concerned with the blasphemous language littered throughout. An examination of the BBFC files on the project show the British Censor's disbelief at this, with one reviewer noting that they were 'astonished at [head of the MPAA] Shurlock's letter. He is apparently prepared to accept all the real nastiness provided phrases like 'my god' and 'dammit' are deleted' (Anon. 1958c). *The Night Creatures* therefore not only provides original insights into Hammer's immediate production slate post-*The Curse of Frankenstein*, but also offers new contexts on the relationship between the British and American censors.

Chapter 3's examination of Subotsky's *Frankenstein*, *The Tales of Frankenstein* and *The Night Creatures* all demonstrate how Hammer looked to solidify and capitalise on their success in the gothic genre. However, later chapters utilise unmade case studies to detail key external and internal issues that led to Hammer's eventual decline. One of the key benefits of utilising unmade films is what they reveal about the production process itself, and the people involved with trying to make the film. As such this facilitates a shift away from textual analysis or director studies, towards a focus on film production roles under-represented in academic studies, such as the roles of the producer and screenwriter. This was the main focus of chapter's 4 and 5, with chapter 4 focusing on the development of the story for *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula*, and the creative differences that developed between managing director/producer Michael Carreras and writer Don Houghton.

Chapter 4 uses script treatments and correspondence to gain greater insights into the production strategies of Michael Carreras, and how they compared to his father's former tenure as head of the company. Michael had been involved heavily with the creative process of filmmaking since the 1950s, as a producer, writer and director. This chapter therefore looks to the pre-production of *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* to see how Carreras, involved in a complex financial arrangement with Warner Bros. that involved having to seek permission from the Indian Government, attempted to develop the project internally at Hammer. Using these materials demonstrates an unexpected divide

between Carreras and Houghton. Whereas it is not uncommon for writers and producers to have differences of opinion, it seems that throughout the correspondence relating to *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* it is Houghton who keeps reiterating Hammer's fragile financial situation, with Carreras offering suggestions to the story that would put Hammer at odds with the Indian Government. Carreras' hands-on approach to the creative decisions at Hammer (going as far to rewrite scripts, such as in the case of *Nessie*) was a departure from James Carreras' far less involved management style, and led to a number of key disputes between writers such as Houghton and Forbes. This provides new evidence for Hammer's decline and the increase in their unsuccessful projects, with key creative conflicts slowing down complex productions.

As well as examining the internal relationships at Hammer, these materials also offer the chance to see how Hammer looked to dramatically alter their finance and distribution strategy in the face of a rapidly changing market, as the American finance and distribution deals that Hammer had relied upon in the late 1950s and 1960s started to disappear. The detailed financial correspondence on *Nessie* held at the Hammer Script Archive notes how Carreras altered Hammer's course by moving away from the gothic horror genre (that had become less reliable in securing Hammer international distribution), and focusing on big-budget genre films. Whilst increasing the prospective budget of Hammer's films was undeniably risky in an economic downturn, Carreras hoped that these ambitious projects would have a global appeal that would entice international financiers. This is again where the importance of examining Hammer's unmade projects is underlined. Both chapter 4 and 5 demonstrate Carreras was well aware of Hammer's struggles, and was actively looking to alter Hammer's production and distribution strategies in response to the withdrawal of American finance. However, this change in strategy never resulted in a produced film and as such, studies of Hammer do not note this shift. Instead, Hammer's sparse film output in the late 1970s is seen as a derivative of other genre cinema, such as *To the Devil a Daughter* (Sykes 1976) or erroneous remakes with little connection to Hammer's own identity, such as *The Lady Vanishes* (Page 1979).

Yet projects such as *Kali Devil Bride of Dracula* and *Nessie* not only account for why Hammer's output in this period dramatically decreased (due to the amount of developmental work on these projects), but they also clearly show that Hammer did not

become creatively stagnant, and instead recognised a need for change at the company in the mid-1970s. These projects ultimately failed due to external factors such as fragile and complex financial arrangements, and internal creative arguments that slowed down production and fatally undermined the projects in question.

The final chapter of this thesis examines Carreras' final years in charge, and the tenure of Roy Skeggs, who had been a key figure at Hammer in the 1960s and 1970s before eventually taking over the company alongside Brian Lawrence in 1979. Skeggs' tenure in charge of Hammer lasted until 2000, and resulted in no films being produced. As such there has been no substantive academic writing on Skeggs' Hammer. Chapter 6 covered the protracted development of *Vlad the Impaler*, which began under Carreras in 1974 and was still in development in the mid-1990s long after Skeggs had taken charge of Hammer. The chapter uses the screenplays in the Hammer Script Archive and a legal document detailing the rights Hammer had to its scripts to create a timeline of development for the project, it is supplemented by an interview with one of the writers on the project Arthur Ellis, conducted for this study.

The chapter uses these materials to demonstrate that despite no films being produced under Skeggs' managerial reign at Hammer, he did attempt to revive the company through a number of deals with American financiers, most notably a multi-picture deal with Warner Bros. in 1993. The chapter's main conclusions surrounding Skeggs' tenure is that his lack of creative experience at Hammer and the company's financial precariousness made theatrical production hugely difficult, though he and Lawrence quickly identified television as a more viable option in the early 1980s. Ultimately, Skeggs' Hammer was not a 'new' phase for the company and was arguably just an extension of the former Hammer, with Skeggs having been involved with the company since 1963. However, Skeggs did identify a shift in the 1990s in the perception of Hammer Films. Whereas Skeggs' strategy in the 1980s seemed to revolve around television and producing original properties, the 1993 Warner Bros. deal suggests that Skeggs identified that in the fifteen years since Hammer's closure, the company had become respectable, even iconic, and was a key influence for many filmmakers working in Hollywood at the time. A large part of the Warner Bros. deal (primarily brokered through the producer duo of Richard Donner and Lauren Schuler-Donner), could therefore be seen as a key moment in the evolution of Hammer, where

the legacy of the company perhaps outweighed its current status. This chapter therefore uses unmade material to illuminate a phase of Hammer that, without the examination of unmade properties, would remain uncovered. *Vlad the Impaler* acts as a necessary guide through Skeggs' years in charge, which show the company's changing reputation in the industry, and Skeggs' attempt to revive Hammer through once again setting up American finance and distribution deals.

Further Study

This thesis was concerned from the outset not only to produce a revisionist history of Hammer Films based on new evidence about their unmade films, but to demonstrate the potential benefits to film production histories of a methodology that embraces unrealised as well as completed works. As a contribution to this still-emerging field, this study has looked to utilise a methodological framework situated within the 'New Film History' to foreground the importance of unmade case studies to industrial or production histories. However, it should be noted that in any study which primarily uses archival materials, there is often a need to adapt a methodology which best suits the materials at hand. This need for flexibility is readily apparent in this study. In Chapter 5, correspondence surrounding *Nessie* takes precedence over a textual analysis of the screenplay, not because this is not a more viable method of study but because the Archive holds an extremely detailed file covering over three years of correspondence on the project, revealing a significant amount about the project's development. In Chapter 6, correspondence surrounding *Vlad the Impaler* is not as readily available, but six separate screenplays by four different authors are held in the Hammer Script Archive, and therefore the screenplay is a key focus, as well as number of trade articles and interviews to add further veracity to the study. Like all historical studies, this thesis has utilised the best possible sources available from a wide variety of archives which has inevitably determined the approach. However, in all cases a mixed approach has been utilised to supplement archival sources and present a more accurate and detailed analysis. This is apparent in the three interviews utilised in the study, articles in the trades from the time of the production and contextualising these primary case studies with other made and unmade projects developed at the same time. This results in triangulation, where what one cannot learn from one particular project (because specific

archival materials such as correspondence are not available) can be learned from another. Providing a richer and more detailed study, and giving a greater veracity to the thesis' findings.

Though the need to adapt a pragmatic methodological framework is necessary when studying both produced and unproduced films, I would argue that it leads to a greater (and ultimately less consistent) variety of methodological practices within unmade films. No matter how a produced film's history is approached, each study will be anchored by the text itself. The film's narrative, time in development, director and cast are not suppositions or rumours, but fixed points for study. Without these, unmade film studies must look for other fixed points, which can vary depending on the material available to the researcher.

Although there is undoubtedly a great deal of archival material on unmade films, there is comparatively little written within the field. Peter Krämer concluded his most recent article on unmade films with the insistence that it was 'high time for the debate among film academics to do some catching up' (Krämer 2018: 71), and a cautious move in this direction does seem to be taking place. As well as the work cited in the Literature Review, an edited collection entitled *Shadow Cinema: The Historical and Production Contexts of Unmade Films* (Eldridge, Fenwick and Foster: 2020), is currently under contract at Bloomsbury, and De Montfort University (DMU) and the University of the West of England (UWE), are co-organising a conference on unmade films scheduled for September 2019. Both of these projects will result in a number of academics from a variety of different fields and institutions contributing to the ongoing debates surrounding unmade film studies, a welcome and necessary step forward for the field.

In order to fully expand the scope of study on unmade films, it will also be important to look beyond academia and archives, to non-academics as well. As discussed in Chapter 1 and noted by Krämer in the abovementioned article, 'cinephiles have long shown an interest in such unrealised projects' (Krämer 2018: 70), and non-academic groups and events can help sustain interest in unmade films long after the project has ceased production. Engaging with non-academic participants can also lead to uncovering new material, as many collectors and fans may hold primary materials not held in any of the archives (as was the case with Meikle's *Victim of his Imagination* donation to the archive). Parallel to this study, I have attempted to draw attention to

Hammer's unmade films beyond academia, through a discussion of the Hammer Script Archive on the documentary *Hammer Horror: The Warner Bros Years* (Hearn 2018), via an essay on unmade Dracula projects for a booklet in the recent Blu-ray release of *The Strangers of Bombay* (Fisher 1959), and by presenting a talk on Hammer's unmade horror projects at the Bram Stoker International Film Festival in Whitby in 2016. The Hammer Script Archive has also provided materials to the Mayhem Festival in Nottingham for two live script readings of Hammer projects in 2015 and 2017 (*The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* and *Zeppelins v Pterodactyls* respectively). These examples not only present to the public fascinating unmade projects from one of the country's most celebrated production studios, but also shows a way of disseminating research findings beyond conferences and publications to reach a wider audience.

Hammer Films is a well-established studio which has received a great deal of attention within academic works. This study however has demonstrated that the study of unmade films can disrupt and embellish established production histories, as well as present new and original findings. As this project demonstrates, unmade films are not merely interesting 'what if' scenarios or archival curiosities, but important primary texts which are as much a part of film history as the films that got made, and therefore deserving of further detailed study.

Word count (not including abstract, contents, acknowledgements, notes on text, appendices or bibliography): 85,691

Appendix I: Itemised list of unmade material in the Hammer Script Archive

<u>No.</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Document Date</u>	<u>Document Type</u>
1	A Gathering of Vultures (Unmade)	Oct 1977	Screenplay
2	All Hallow's Eve (Unmade)		Pre-Production script
3	An Eye For An Eye (Unmade)	c.1973	Original treatment
4	An Eye For An Eye (Unmade)	c.1973	Original treatment
5	An Eye For An Eye (Unmade)		Synopsis
6	An Eye For An Eye (Unmade)	30 th Oct 1973	Agreement
7	An Eye For An Eye (Unmade)	1 st Nov 1973	Agreement
8	Apple Tree, The (Unmade)		Screenplay
9	Apple Tree, The (Unmade)	29 th Jan 1988	Second copy
10	Beware of Darkness (Unmade)		First Draft script
11	Black Beauty (Unmade)	May 1968	Treatment
12	Black Sabbath (Unmade)		Screenplay
13	Black Sabbath (Unmade)	Jan 1986	Screenplay, 1st draft
14	Blood of the Foreign Legion (Unmade)	Jun 1964	Draft screenplay
15	Blood of the Foreign Legion (Unmade)	Sep 1963	Treatment (2)
16	Bloodorange! (Unmade)		First draft screenplay
17	Blood Will Have Blood (Unmade)	May 1977	Screenplay draft
18	Breaking Point, the,		First Draft Outline
19	Build us a Dam (Unmade)		Second Draft Screenplay (2)
20	Cat's Cradle (Unmade)		Screenplay
21	"Chaka Zulu"-The Black Napoleon- (Unmade)		Production Prospectus
22	Charlie (House of Hammer) (Unmade)		Synopsis
23	Children of The Wolf (Unmade)		Pre-production script
24	Curse of the Baron Frankenstein, The	c.2000	Prospective book treatment

25	Dark Forces: the Battle Against 20th Century Evil (unmade)		Treatment
26	Day in the Country, A (Unmade)		Screenplay
27	Day the Earth Caught Fire, The (Unmade)		Second Draft
28	Day the Earth Cracked Open, The (Unmade)		Pre-production script (photocopy)
29	Day the Earth Cracked Open, The (Unmade)		Rough story outline
30	Day the Earth Cracked Open, The (Unmade)		Storyboard notes
31	Day the Earth Cracked Open, The (Unmade)		Agreed story outline
32	Devil Behind Me, The (Unmade)	19 th Mar 1965	Screenplay
33	Devil Behind Me, The (Unmade)	Nov 1968	Revised screenplay
34	Devil's Door-Bell, the (Unmade)	c.1984	Original screenplay
35	Dracula (Pentagram Film Production) (Unmade)	c.1969	Screenplay
36	Dracula's Feast of Blood (Unmade)	Mar 1969	Screenplay
37	Dracula on Ice: The Legend of the Arch Vampire (Unmade)		Treatment
38	Dracula: the True Story (A Heritage of Horror) (Unmade)	12 th Jul 1978	Pre-production script
39	Edmundo Ros Half-Hour, The		No Script
40	Experiment, The, (Unmade)	Jun 1974	Final Draft
41	Experiment, The, (Unmade)	Jun 1974	Final Draft, 2nd copy
42	Fairytale Man (Unmade)		Screenplay
43	Flight of the Ghost (Unmade)	c.1992	[1st copy]
44	Four Sided Triangle, The (Unmade)	Jul 1992	First Draft Screenplay
45	Four Sided Triangle, The (Unmade)		Work in Progress
46	Godmother, The (Unmade)	Mar 1973	Plot Synopsis
47	Godmother, The (Unmade)		Screenplays (2)
48	Golden Helmets Episode 8		[1st copy]
49	Golden Helmets Episode 8		Shooting script

50	Haunting of Toby Jugg, The (Unmade)	Sep 1968	Synopsis by Brian Comport (2)
51	Haunting of Toby Jugg, The (Unmade)		Pre-production screenplay 1st draft
52	Head, The (Unmade)		Screenplay, 2nd draft
53	Heart of the Oak (Unmade)	c.1992	Pre-production Script
54	Herries (unmade)		Treatment
55	Herries (unmade)		Treatment
56	Hiss, The, (Unmade)		Screenplay
57	Hounds of God, The (Unmade)		Screenplay
58	Hour of the Rat (Unmade)		Treatment
59	House on the Strand, the (Unmade)		Pre-production script
60	In the Heat of the Night (Unmade)	11 th Sep 1960	1st draft screenplay
61	In the Heat of the Night (Unmade)	11 th Sep 1960	1st draft screenplay, 2nd copy
62	In the Sun (Unmade)	c.1966	Screenplay
63	Iron Warriors, The (Unmade)		Screenplay
64	Just for Kicks (Unmade)		Screenplay
65	Just for Kicks (Unmade)		Screenplay, 2nd copy
66	Kali - Devil Bride of Dracula (Unmade)	c.1974	Master Draft 1
67	Kali - Devil Bride of Dracula (Unmade)	c.1974	Master Draft 2
68	Kali - Devil Bride of Dracula (Unmade)	c.1974	Master Draft 3
69	Kali - Devil Bride of Dracula (Unmade)	16 th Oct 1974	Correspondence
70	Kali - Devil Bride of Dracula (Unmade)	14 th Oct 1974	Correspondence
71	Kali - Devil Bride of Dracula (Unmade)	14 th Oct 1974	Correspondence
72	Kali - Devil Bride of Dracula (Unmade)		Memo
73	Kali - Devil Bride of Dracula (Unmade)		Synopsis
74	Kali - Devil Bride of Dracula (Unmade)		Storyline Synopsis
75	Kali - Devil Bride of Dracula (Unmade)	May 1974	Storyline Synopsis
76	Kali - Devil Bride of Dracula (Unmade)		Treatment

77	Kali - Devil Bride of Dracula (Unmade)		Synopsis
78	Kali - Devil Bride of Dracula (Unmade)	May 1974	Storyline Synopsis
79	Kali - Devil Bride of Dracula (Unmade)	Nov 1974	Storyline Synopsis
80	Kill or be Killed (Unmade)		Script outline
81	Last of Summer, the (Unmade)	c.1970	Pre-production script
82	Last of Summer, the (Unmade)		Screenplay
83	Legacy (Unmade)	25 th Jun 1992	Revised 1st Draft
84	Love in Smoky Regions (Unmade)		Screenplay
85	Love in Smoky Regions (Unmade)	Oct 1962	Master scene script
86	Man From Mombasa (Unmade)		Presentation
87	Man From Mombasa (Unmade)		Episode screenplay: "Chain of Circumstance"
88	Man in the Middle, The (Unmade)		Treatment
89	Man With Two Shadows, The (Unmade)		Screenplay
90	Man With Two Shadows, The (Unmade)		Screenplay, 2nd copy
91	Man With Two Shadows, The (Unmade)		Synopsis
92	Mercenaries, The (Unmade)	Sep 1962	Screenplay
93	Mercenaries, The (Unmade)	Sep 1962	Screenplay, 2nd copy
94	Mistress of the Seas (Unmade)		Screen Outline
95	Mutation, The (Unmade)		Synopsis
96	Night Creatures, The	Nov 1957	Screenplay
97	Night of the Second Moon (Unmade)		Treatment
98	Outrage on Korakis (Unmade)		Treatment
99	Outrage on Korakis (Unmade)	Sep 1969 to Feb 1970	Letters
100	Phantasmagoria Serendipity (Unmade)		First Draft Screenplay
101	Phoenix, The (Unmade)		Screenplay
102	Prime Evil (Unmade)		Pre-Production script First Draft

103	Rape of Sabena, The (Unmade)		Master scene script
104	Reluctant Vampire, The (Unmade)		Screenplay
105	Reluctant Vampire, The (Unmade)		Screenplay, 2nd copy
106	Reluctant Vampire, The (Unmade)		Screenplay, 3rd copy
107	Reluctant Vampire, The (Unmade)		Screenplay, 4th copy
108	Reluctant Virgin, The (Unmade)	c.1967	Pre-production script
109	Restless (Unmade)	Jan 1973	Screenplay
110	Restless (Unmade)		Screenplay
111	Return to Fort Bravo (Unmade)	Oct 1971	Screenplay
112	Rouse the Lion Start the Hare (unmade)		Original Screenplay
113	Rouse the Lion Start the Hare (unmade)		Pre-production script
114	Ruffians (Unmade)		Master scene script
115	Savage Jackboot, The (Unmade)		Screenplay treatment
116	Savage Jackboot, The (Unmade)		Screenplay 1st Draft
117	Scent of New-Mown Hay, A (Unmade)		Screenplay (2)
118	Scent of New-Mown Hay, A (Unmade)	23 th Sep 1969	Synopsis
119	Scent of New-Mown Hay, A (Unmade)	23 th Sep 1969	Synopsis, 2nd copy
120	Scent of New-Mown Hay, A (Unmade)	23 th Sep 1969	Illustrated Treatment
121	Sensitive, The (Unmade)		Treatment (3)
122	Sleeping Beauty, The (Unmade)		Screenplay
123	Sleeping Beauty, The (Unmade)		Treatment
124	Sooty Solves the Great Bone Robbery		General folder
125	Sooty Solves the Great Bone Robbery		General folder (2)
126	Sooty Solves the Great Bone Robbery		Costing folder
127	Sooty Solves the Great Bone Robbery		Legal & accountancy insurance folder

128	Sooty Solves the Great Bone Robbery		Principality finance folder
129	Sooty Solves the Great Bone Robbery		Breakdown schedule folder
130	Sooty Solves the Great Bone Robbery		Vincent Shaw folder
131	Stones of Evil (Unmade)		Treatment
132	Stray Cat	c.1989	Pre-production
133	Tale of Two Great Britons, A (Unmade)		Draft screenplay
134	Telepathy (unmade)		Original Screenplay
135	These Hangman's Hands (Unmade)		
136	Thou Art With Me Satan (Unmade)	26 th May	Treatment
137	To Kill A Stranger (Unmade)		Screenplay
138	Tomorrow is Another Day (Unmade)		Pre-production Script
139	Undeclared, The (Unmade)		Screenplay
140	Undeclared, The (Unmade)		2nd copy
141	Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula, The (Unmade)		Pre-production script
142	Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula, The (Unmade)		Script
143	Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula, The (Unmade)	Feb 1977	Screenplay
144	Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula, The (Unmade)	Jan 1977	Original screenplay
145	Vampire Virgins, The (Unmade)		Storyline
146	Vampirella (Unmade)		No Script
147	Vampirella (Unmade)		Story Breakdowns
148	Vampirella (Unmade)	30 th Oct 1975	Proposed Cast List
149	Vampirella (Unmade)		Casting Availability
150	Vampirella (Unmade)	7 th Oct 1975	Preliminary Unit List
151	Vampirella (Unmade)	24 th Oct 1975	Set Breakdown
152	Vampirella (Unmade)	15 th Sep 1975	Provisional shooting schedule
153	Vampirella (Unmade)	15 th Oct 1975	Mirabelle Locations
154	Vampirella (Unmade)		Possible Vampirellas
155	Vampirella (Unmade)		Merchandising and promotional concepts
156	Vampirella (Unmade)		Final production budget

157	Vampirella (Unmade)	10 th Sep 1975	4th revised budget
158	Vampirella (Unmade)	3 rd Nov 1975	Estimated costs
159	Vampirella (Unmade)	1 st Apr 1977	Final statement of costs
160	Vampirella (Unmade)	23 rd Sep 1975	Sets and settings
161	Violent Sky, The (Unmade)		Book manuscript
162	Viper Three (Unmade)		Screenplay
163	Vlad Dracul (Unmade)		Pre-production script
164	Vlad the Impaler (Unmade)		Screenplay 2nd Draft
165	Vlad the Impaler (Unmade)		Screenplay 3rd Draft
166	Vlad the Impaler (Unmade)		Original screenplay
167	Vlad the Impaler (Unmade)		Screenplay 1st Draft
168	Werewolves of Moravia, The (Unmade)		Screenplay
169	When the Earth Cracked Open (Unmade)	1 st Feb 1969	Screenplay, 1st draft
170	White Zulu Chief (Unmade)		Synopsis
171	Zeppelins v Pterodactyls (Unmade)	4 th Jun 1970	Treatment

Appendix II: Publications

Appendix IIa: *Nessie* Has Risen from the Grave

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Hammer Films' *Nessie: The Loch Ness Monster* is the great lost British sea beast movie. Developed between 1976 and 1978, *Nessie* was Hammer's most ambitious project, a multimillion dollar co-production with Japan's Toho Studios and Hollywood's Columbia Pictures that would have seen the Loch Ness Monster rampage across the world from Scotland to the Canary Islands and Hong Kong harbour. The global scale of the film's plot was mirrored off-screen, with Hammer, desperate for financial backing, entering into a number of ill-fated distribution and finance deals before the production collapsed and Hammer himself went into receivership.

This chapter will track *Nessie*'s failed production and set the unmade film, or rather surviving archival traces of it, in the context of screen representations of the Loch Ness monster and other sea beasts. Although there is some information on *Nessie* online and in general histories of Hammer (Flint 1995, Hearn 2011: 164-65, Meikle 2008: 219-22), we shall mostly be drawing on the resources of the Hammer Script Archive at De Montfort University. The Archive, which Hammer delivered in 2012, holds over a hundred Hammer screenplays and a wealth of other documentation, such as financial records, correspondence, and cast lists. A further donation by Hammer in early 2016 brought us the '*Nessie* File', a ring-binder containing extensive pre-production materials on the project dating from 1976 to 1978. These range from internal offices memos and correspondence with potential financiers, to notes on the scripts, and letters on the search for a director. Although the Archive already held a 1976 screenplay for *Nessie*, this new delivery also included a shorter, considerably revised draft screenplay dated 1978. Most of the unpublished primary material referenced in this chapter is located in the Hammer Script Archive.

The Loch Ness Monster on Screen

The Loch Ness Monster, or Nessie as she is fondly known, is perhaps the most famous British cryptological aquatic beastie and occupies a prized place in Scottish mythology (Williams 2015).

Nessie's first screen appearance was in Ealing's *The Secret of the Loch* (Rosmer 1934), released in May 1934, nine months after 'the single sighting [of the monster crossing the road, by Mr and Mrs Spicer in August 1933] that really got the Loch Ness phenomenon off the ground' (Naish 2015: Loc 898) and a month after the most famous Loch Ness monster photograph (the so called 'Surgeon's photo', later discovered to be a hoax (Loxton and Prothero 2013: Loc 3042, Williams 2015: 233 - 7)). A 'quota quickie', inspired by the success of *King Kong* (Cooper and Schoedsack 1933), *The Secret of the Loch* is chiefly notable for being written by Charles Brackett, who worked with Hitchcock, and edited by a young David Lean. The monster, though stated in the film to be a diplodocus, is represented by an rear-projected iguana: 'No one associated with the film seems sure if they are making a comedy or a chiller, least of all the director [Milton Rosmer]', writes Steve Chibnall, who compares it to one of Ed Wood's low-grade Z-movies, such as *Plan Nine from Outer Space* (Wood 1959) (Chibnall 2012: 25).

Nessie had few other cameos in films and television till the 1960s and 1970s, when her profile was raised in by a flurry of sightings, popular books (Dinsdale 1961), and the Nessie-hunting that began in earnest with the Loch Ness Phenomena Investigation Bureau, which was set up in 1962. In *What a Whopper* (Gunn 1961), a farce written by Terry Nation, Nessie rears up at the end to announce 'What a whopper' and wink to the camera, while in *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* (Wilder 1969) she is revealed to be a submarine, a model of which was recovered in 2016. 1970 saw the Bureau (renamed the Loch Ness Investigation Bureau) team up with the Academy of Applied Science team to conduct sonar searches for Nessie and the resulting photograph of her supposed flipper (Rines et al 1976: 27; Williams 2015: 166 – 88, 240 - 43) renewed interest in what had become a 'money-spinner for the Great Glen' (Williams 2015: 268) and obligatory signifier of Scotland along with Tartan, bagpipes and haggis. In 'Scotland', for example, the first episode of season two of the zany British comedy

series, *The Goodies*, which was broadcast in 1971, the Goodies prevent a zookeeper's suicide and travel to Scotland to battle flying bagpipes and capture the Loch Ness Monster for the keeper's new 'monster house' exhibit at the zoo. Rather more notable was Nessie's appearance in the Tom Baker era *Doctor Who* series, 'Terror of the Zygons' (1975), written by Robert Banks Stewart and novelised by Terrence Dicks as *Doctor Who and the Loch Ness Monster* (Dicks 1976). The beast here was a Skarasen, an enhanced cybernetic monster controlled by the alien Zygons, which live off its 'lactic acid' as they wait to emerge from Loch Ness and take over Earth. Sent out to interrupt UNIT's investigation of attacks on North Sea oil rigs, the Skarasen pursues the Doctor to London and ends up in the Thames embankment before returning unharmed to the Loch. More recent Loch Ness films continue to depict Nessie as either a dangerous prehistoric survival or a beloved and benign symbol of Scottish national identity. Aside from *Incident at Loch Ness* (Penn 2004), a very odd mockumentary with Werner Herzog looking for the creature, they mostly comprise monster-on-the-loose horror movies (*Beyond Loch Ness* (Ziller 2008)) and British or British co-produced family films like *Loch Ness* (Henderson 1996) and *The Water Horse: Legend of the Deep* (Russell 2007), based on a Dick King-Smith novel (1990), in which Nessie is a friendly 'kelpie', or water spirit, and much like the alien in *E.T.: The Extraterrestrial* (Spielberg 1982).

The most significant precursor of Hammer's aborted *Nessie*, however, was another unmade venture touted by British independent company Compton in 1964. Michael Klinger and Tony Tenser had risen from local London exhibitors of uncensored or banned films to running their own independent production and distribution company, the Compton Group. In March 1964 the trade magazine *Box Office* reported that Compton had started production on a film called *The Loch Ness Monster*, whose script Tenser heralded as 'one of the most exciting science-fiction screenplays ever written' (Gruner 1964: 6). Cashing in on the renewed Nessie-fever, Compton's film would have been a late addition to the handful of British outsized monster movies at the turn of the 1960s that included *Gorgo* (Lourié 1961) and *Konga* (Lemont 1961) and, first and most important, *Behemoth the Sea Monster* (Hickox and Lourié 1959), also known tautologically as *The Giant Behemoth* (Conrich 1999). This British-American coproduction, with stop motion special effects by *King Kong*'s Willis O'Brien, was

directed by Douglas Hickox and Eugene Lourié, who made *Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* (1953), which set the template for such defining atomic age sea beast films as *Godzilla* (Hondo 1954) and *It Came from Beneath the Sea* (Gordon 1954). The behemoth itself was a paleosaurus, saturated by the radiation from nuclear tests and electric like an eel, which rises from the sea off Cornwall and attacks London, somehow becoming amphibious in the process. Although Compton's project, which features a radioactive monster like the behemoth (Spicer 2013: 26), predates Hammer's by over a decade, there are intriguing parallels beyond the general conceit. Like Hammer, Compton recognised that their ambitious project needed international backing. The script, Tenser informed *Box Office* 'demands such a large budget that we thought it was practicable to go to the states to find financial partners' (Gruner 1964: 6). And like Hammer, Compton struggled to put Nessie on screen. Announced in early 1964, the film 'had started but was postponed' by late 1965 (*Variety* 13 October 1965) and was still on the production slate in May 1966 (*Variety* 2 May 1966). Ultimately, the scale of the film and perhaps the quality of the script (Spicer describes it as 'a dull confection...which would have been expensive to make convincingly' (Spicer 2013: 26)) put paid to the project.

There is no evidence that Hammer's similarly doomed project drew material or inspiration from Compton's. But the continuing interest in Nessie and other cryptids such as the Yeti and Bigfoot made the mid-1970s a perfect time for Hammer to revive the idea (Dinsdale 1973, Lockton and Prothero 2013: Loc 1382 – 1840). Crucially, the release of Steven Spielberg's *Jaws* (1975), which became the highest grossing film of all time, had made sea beasts a highly commercial proposition for family-friendly thrillers. Not only a model for future blockbusters, *Jaws* was also the template for numerous '*Jaws*ploitation' movies that reworked its animal attack plot around such predators and sea beasts as bears (*Grizzly* (Girdler 1976), *Claws* (Bansbach and Pearson 1977)), piranhas (*Piranha* (Dante 1976)), killer whales (*Orca* (Anderson 1977)), and octopi (*Tentacles* (Assonitis 1977)) (Hunter 2016: 77 - 96). This sub-genre of the 'creature feature' still continues with *Deep Blue Sea* (Harlin 1999), *Sharknado* (Ferrante 2013) and many more, most of them mashups, on cable channels like SyFy. Hammer

could, in short, be forgiven for thinking that *Nessie* looked set to be both Britain's definitive *Jaws*ploitation film and a serious commercial proposition.¹

Pre-production

For Hammer, *Nessie* was an opportunity to revive its fortunes with an unprecedentedly expensive international co-production. Hammer had made its name in the 1950s with period Gothic horror films that updated the genre with lush, colourful but relatively low budget productions such as *The Curse of Frankenstein* (Fisher 1957) and *Dracula* (Fisher 1958). In the 1960s the studio successfully diversified its output with black and white thrillers like *Paranoiac* (Francis 1963) and prehistoric epics like the international hit *One Million Years B.C.* (Chaffey 1966). By the 1970s, however, Hammer was struggling with the withdrawal of American finance from British film production, as indeed were most British film companies – at the start of 1975 not a single film was in production at any British studio.

In 1972 a loan from Pension Fund Services, a division of the chemicals giant ICI, enabled Michael Carreras to buy the company off his father, James Carreras. The arrangement proved less agreeable than Michael had originally thought, for it transpired that many of Hammer's deals with American studios such as EMI had been developed through personal relationships or friendships with James Carreras. As a result, when James left Hammer, EMI immediately rescinded an agreement to produce another nine films, leaving Hammer with essentially no American backing (Meikle 2007: 207). Moreover, it was only after Michael Carreras took over the studio that he realised that the rights to most of its films were owned not by Hammer but by the companies that had financed them. Carreras quickly grasped that in order to ensure the sustainability of Hammer's financial model, the studio needed to diversify even further away from Gothic, cash in on other generic trends, and begin internationalising.

¹ In the end there were no British *Jaws*ploitation films in the 1970s, though there were British killer beast novels such as *The Surrey Cat* (Sinclair 1976) and *Man-Eater* (Willis 1977). A British *Jaws*ploitation film was, however, *nearly* made in the 1980s: *The Pike*, produced and written by straight to video exploitation king, Cliff Twemlow, and based on his novel of the same name (Twemlow 1982). Set in Lake Windermere, it was to have starred Joan Collins. Although a robotic giant pike was created, the film collapsed through lack of funding (Lee and Willis 2009: 212 - 17). Otherwise the nearest equivalent to a British *Jaws*ploitation film is Ridley Scott's *Alien*, which is *Jaws* recast as a serial killer in outer space.

Whereas Hammer had reaped financial rewards from its Gothic cycle since the late 1950s, it was now reliant on domestic successes like the sitcom spin off *On the Buses* (Booth 1971), which was the top grossing British film of its year. Aware that Hammer couldn't survive on domestic box office receipts alone, Carreras adopted a strategy that focused on coaxing foreign investment by mounting big budget international productions with A-list actors. This strategy saw Hammer's 'once enviable ratio of produced to unproduced titles' invert by 1975 (Hearn 2007: 160). In addition to the unmade Dracula-in-India film, *Kali – Devil Bride of Dracula*, 'there were 'four projects [that] dominated Carreras' desk' from 1975 till the studio folded in 1979 (Kinsey 2007: 412): a Dracula origin story, *Vlad the Impaler*; a comic-book adaptation, *Vampirella*; a remake of Hitchcock's *The Lady Vanishes* (Page 1979) (the only one of the four to make it to the screen); and, most ambitious of all, the multi-million dollar *Nessie*.

Of all these enticing projects it is *Nessie* that truly shows Carreras and Hammer out on a limb. To varying degrees *Kali*, *Vlad the Impaler*, and *Vampirella* all fit within Hammer's typical production output. The first two are Dracula films and, though *Vampirella* is as much science fiction as horror, it conforms to Hammer's usual practices of adapting material with a pre-existing fan base and centring a good deal of the marketing on the 'Hammer Glamour' of the prospective female star (in this case, Caroline Munro). While designed with a bigger budget in mind than Hammer's previous sci-fi/horror films, *Vampirella* clearly complemented the rest of Hammer's filmography. With *Nessie*, however, marketing would have focused on the creature itself and put big-budget special effects front and centre in a way Hammer had never done before. Even the prehistoric films with their stop-motion dinosaurs had given equal billing to the attractions of Raquel Welch and Victoria Vetri.

Nessie started pre-production at the beginning of 1976. At the time Hammer's directors were Michael Carreras and Euan Lloyd, an independent producer who had replaced Roy Skeggs on the board of directors. The storyline for *Nessie* (which is not in the Archive) was by Clarke Reynolds, who had written *The Viking Queen* (Chaffey 1967) for Hammer. At this point the intended film seemed to be called either *Nessie* or *Monster*. When *The Daily Mail* reported on 5 February 1976 that the broadcaster David Frost was planning a rival Loch Ness film, *Carnivore*, Hammer suggested joining forces

with Frost's production company, Paradine Films. Hammer and Paradine subsequently struck a deal with Toho Studios in Japan to make a film called *Nessie (The Loch Ness Monster)* with a budget of \$3million. In return for Japanese distribution rights Toho would contribute one third of the budget in the form of creating the special effects under the supervision of Shokei Nakano, who had taken over as special effects designer on the *Godzilla* films for which Toho had been celebrated since the 1950s. The writer John Starr, who was also working on *Vampirella*, submitted a screen treatment (also not in the Archive) and in April 1976 Chris Wicking produced the first draft screenplay, titled *Nessie*. Wicking was a prominent figure within Hammer as its fortunes became more precarious in the mid-1970s. Originally a script writer for American International Pictures on films such as *The Oblong Box* (Hessler 1969) and *Scream and Scream Again* (Hessler 1970), Wicking was first drafted in by Hammer to write *Blood from the Mummy's Tomb* (Holt 1971). By 1974, with Hammer in sharp decline, Wicking was promoted as the company's script editor and subsequently contributed to many of Hammer's most notable made and unmade projects. He wrote the second draft of *To the Devil – A Daughter* (Sykes 1976), Hammer's last horror film till its revival under new ownership in the 2000s, and was involved in writing both *Kali-Devil Bride of Dracula* and *Vampirella*.

With a script for *Nessie* in place, Carreras and Lloyd were tireless in promoting and pursuing finance for Hammer's most expensive film to date. The project gained momentum when Carreras took it to Cannes in May 1976. At the same time he organised an extensive print campaign for *Nessie* in British and American trade papers including *Variety*, which featured a single page black and white advertisement announcing the '\$7,000,000 production *Nessie: The Loch Ness Monster*' (*Variety* 19 May 1976). The print campaign, coupled with Carreras' appearance at Cannes, seemed to have the desired effect. Barry Spikings at the distributors British Lion faxed Carreras to congratulate him on *Nessie*, noting that the 'amount of in-built promotion must be enormous' (Spikings to Carreras 31 August 1976). Hammer was also approached by the agent of the veteran Canadian director and producer Mark Robson. Robson seemed a wise choice for *Nessie*, having handled a big budget and worked extensively with miniatures on Universal's disaster movie *Earthquake* (1974). However, though Hammer later made enquiries about Robson's interest in the project, June 1976 saw the studio

begin to close in on a deal with the British writer/director Bryan Forbes. Linked to Paradine for whom he was making *The Slipper and the Rose* (1976) and fresh from *The Stepford Wives* (1975), Forbes was engaged for four weeks to revise Wicking's script with first option to direct. For \$10,000 a week, which was below his market price, and seemingly as a favour, Forbes wrote three drafts, each preceded by extensive discussion in meetings with Carreras and Lloyd. Forbes turned down £200,000 and the chance to direct because he believed that the film was not his style, and indeed the whole project was in many ways beneath such a prominent industry figure, who had been head of production at EMI Films and one of the major creative forces in 1960s British cinema. Forbes's 'final, final version' was delivered on 10 August 1976, but Carreras continued to revise the screenplay behind his back and seems to have reintroduced bits of Wicking's script. In the meantime new drafts and blue pages kept being sent to Toho, whose patience began to wear thin and who also wanted copyright on Nessie character.²

Things turned nasty between Hammer and Forbes. During a social visit to David Frost Forbes came across a version of his screenplay that was credited solely to Forbes, though he had specifically requested it should not be. This draft was one that Carreras had substantially revised and in Forbes's opinion made considerably worse. In a highly critical letter Forbes presented Carreras with a long list of the failings of the revised screenplay. He was especially scathing about the muddled characterisation and the script's not 'moving away from the conventional formula of these horror-disaster films' (Forbes to Carreras 28 August 1976). Forbes had been contemptuous of the formula from the start, but as a hired hand he did not have sufficient leeway to alter the plot to make it any more original. It did not help that Hammer wouldn't pay him the extra \$10,000 he requested for the additional time he had spent on the screenplay, and the issue was resolved only when Carreras finally paid him six months later.

² It is fan lore that Toho 'had done a "complete story board" for the film, and had reportedly gone so far as to build a one-fourth scale Nessie model' (Berry 2002: 442) and 'even filmed some sequences before Hammer pulled funding' (Buxton 2016). Sketches of Nessie do seem to have been produced by Toho's Yasuyuki Inoue, who is reported to have published them in his 2011 book *The World of Special Effects Art Design* (Jarmillo 2012). As the book is available only in Japanese, the authors have not been able to confirm this, but the purported sketches are available online. There is no evidence at all, and certainly none in the Hammer Script Archive, that any scenes were ever filmed. The Nessie model is rumoured to turn up in the role of a dragon in Toho's *The Princess from the Moon* (Ichikawa 1987), but, like the claim made on the websites *Toho Kingdom* and *Wikizilla* that the *Nessie* screenplay was 250 pages long, this seems to be a myth.

The key problem, however, was not the ever-changing script but the difficulties involved in putting together a large budget from multiple sources, essentially by striking deals with distributors and applying for German tax shelter money. By this point the budget had ballooned, surpassing *Orca*'s \$6 million and approaching *Jaws*' \$8 – 9 million. (The average budget for a Hollywood studio film in 1978 was \$5 million, rising to \$11 million by 1980.) In August 1976, Carreras sent the screenplay for *Nessie* to a Dr. Gierse of the Gierse Group in West Germany, in the hope of gaining a loan from his struggling film distribution company Constantin, which had produced genre films in the 1960s and 'was just about kept alive by its sex-film profits' (Bergfelder 2004: 87).. However Carreras' aspirations were seemingly even bigger than the monstrous *Nessie* as he laid out to Gierse an ambitious co-production plan:

I would like you to consider the possibility of Hammer Films setting up a Production Organization in Germany using the availability of the current Tax Shelter situation and a direct relationship with your Company in terms of investment, to secure the distribution rights of the German, Swiss and Austrian Territories (Carreras to Gierse 26 August 1976).

The deal with Gierse was never struck, presumably because Constantin, which the Gierse Group had taken over in 1976, was declared bankrupt a year later (Anon. 1977, Bergfelder 2004: 87). Undeterred, Carreras and Lloyd sought money from South African investors and from Hemdale and Brent Walker in return for UK distribution rights, but in both cases without success. They also turned to the Hollywood majors, seeking finance from Twentieth Century Fox and Warner Bros. in return for distribution rights in the US and a number of foreign territories. Rank did agree to invest £500,000 in return for British distribution rights, but by the end of 1976 the rest of the finance was nowhere near settled, even though principal photography was planned for March 1977. Another Hollywood veteran, Michael Anderson, was pencilled in as director after he finished post-production on *Orca*, but no cast had yet been signed up.

October 1976 saw a more positive development when Hammer approached David Begelman, the head of Columbia, asking for \$2.65 million to complete financing. Columbia was interested but did not approve Anderson as director and wanted a special clause inserted into any contract with the producers guaranteeing the quality of Toho's special effects. To ease Columbia's worries, Carreras shipped reels of Toho's *Conflagration* [*High Seas Hijack*] (Ishida 1975), in which Nakano had staged scenes of

the destruction of Tokyo harbour, for the sceptical executives to inspect. Columbia was unimpressed by Nakano's efforts, but when Carreras proposed raising the amount allocated to special effects within an increased overall budget of \$7.5 million, a negative pick up deal was struck for the \$2.65 million and the special quality clause dropped. When Paradine was not able to raise their contribution to the budget, Carreras proposed to ask Columbia for \$4.5 million in return for worldwide distribution rights excluding UK and Japan. A new wrinkle appeared around this time: Twentieth Century Fox protested Hammer's use of the title, *The Loch Ness Monster*, on the grounds they also had a Loch Ness film in production.

From this point, the start of 1977, things began to unravel. Hammer approached Iranian bankers with no results and upheavals at Columbia led the studio to pull out entirely (Begelman, who was involved in illegal activity, was suspended in October 1977 and arrested in 1978) (McClintick 1982)). It remains tantalisingly unclear whether Columbia might have continued their association with Hammer and Toho if what Denis Meikle calls 'musical chairs at Columbia' had not occurred (Meikle 2008: 221). Toho lost patience entirely and they too vanished from the scene. With a final throw of the dice, Lloyd tried to fund *Nessie* through the same Geneva-based consortium of European banks that had backed his independently produced *The Wild Geese* (McLagen 1978). In March 1978 a newly revised script was nevertheless produced, presumably by Carreras, which eliminated some of earlier drafts' more expensive special effects and action scenes. By now Richard Harris, Katherine Ross and Richard Widmark were being touted as potential leads. Harris's involvement, in addition to Anderson's, risked making *Nessie* seem even more like a clone of *Orca*. The last we see of the project in the Hammer Script Archive is a letter from Carreras to the independent producer Jack Chartoff in April 1978, in which Carreras presents Chartoff with the new script and a budget breakdown, optimistically suggesting that *Nessie* was still 'viable despite the economic script revisions' (Carreras to Chartoff 20 June 1978). 'I am personally confident that *Nessie* will hit the silver screen later this year, hopefully Christmas 1978,' Carreras announced in issue 17 of *The House of Hammer* magazine. 'We've got Peter Scott, the naturalist [and Loch Ness Monster enthusiast] involved.... We wanted his approval of the drawings of Nessie and so on' (cited in Berry 2002: 442). But by then it was all over for Hammer. By the time Hammer's last film, *The*

Lady Vanishes (Page), was released in May 1979, the studio's funds had been frozen by PFS. Carreras resigned in April 1979 and Hammer went into receivership. *Nessie* was no more, and Fox's *Nessie* film didn't materialise either.

Why Did *Nessie* Fail?

How to make sense of this slow motion disaster? Despite the large and obvious problems with analysing unmade films, popular interest (Braun 2013) and scholarship in the area has grown in recent years, notably around Stanley Kubrick's lost projects such as *Napoleon* and *Aryan Papers* (Phillips 2005, Castle 2009). In *Sights Unseen*, the first academic book on unmade films, Dan North remarks of Don Boyd's unfinished *Gossip* that despite never being released 'the film is still textually active as a cultural object, articulating through its own scandalous dissolution something pertinent about its cultural and industrial context' (North 2008: 170). Exploring the production of unmade films can therefore provide what Peter Krämer refers to as a 'shadow history' of the film industry which integrates its failures into a more comprehensive understanding of the logic and vagaries of film production (Krämer 2016: 381). Moreover, it enables us to rethink all films in terms of a longitudinal process of repeated acts of adaptation, from screen treatments to draft screenplays and shooting script to revisions made on set, and, as Simone Murray argues, also to foreground the commercial and industrial determinants of textual production. Discussing an unmade adaptation of Murray Bail's 1998 novel *Eucalyptus*, Murray argues that attention to unrealised films frustrates 'adaptation studies' habitual recourse to comparative textual analysis and forces...[it to] engage with potential alternative methodologies for understanding how adaptation functions' (Murray 2008: 6). By focusing on an unmade adaptation, we can shift analysis to the industrial context surrounding the project and 'not just to the what of adaptation but also to the 'how' the 'why' and the 'why not' (Murray 2008: 16).

Although the chief reason that *Nessie* failed was that Hammer could not raise the budget, the grandiose scheme nonetheless had an undeniable logic. The subject matter, as we've seen, was certainly timely, given that not only Hammer but Paradine and Fox were also preparing Loch Ness films to cash in on the success of *Jaws* and the continuing popularity of the disaster film. The ambitious scale of *Nessie* was designed to rebrand a small British studio as a major international player, and the script, with its

multiple global locations and elaborate action sequences, could be regarded less as a blueprint than as a calling card to global investors. Indeed, getting both Toho and Columbia interested was something of a coup by the struggling company, and on a practical level *Nessie* did keep Hammer afloat in the short term. As Hammer producer Tom Sachs remarked, ‘every bit of money that came in – like front monies on *Nessie* at that time – helped not only to launch the picture, but bolster the company’s finances as well’ (cited in Meikle 2009: 222). In the end however, *Nessie* was quite simply far too expensive. Compared with *Nessie*’s \$7.5 million, *The Lady Vanishes* cost £2.1 million while *To the Devil – A Daughter* had a budget of only £360,000.

The screenplay too was an irresolvable problem. Despite multiple revisions the persistent lack of quality put off possible investors. Martin Wragge of Martin Wragge Productions in South Africa, one of the potential investors that Hammer approached, bluntly itemised the script’s problems in a letter to Carreras:

I think the story is thin, the dialogue functional at best, the characters (with the exception of the girl) unsympathetic, and therefore, it seems to me, the success of the projects turns on the expertise of the sp fx people in Japan. IS THAT ENOUGH? (Wragge to Carreras 31 August 1976)

There are two screenplays in the Hammer Archive. One, 135 pages with 479 scenes and dated August 1976, is clearly the Carreras-amended version of Forbes’s third draft screenplay which so annoyed Forbes. The other, dated 28 March 1978, is only 120 pages long and has fewer and much less ambitious action and special effects sequences. This must be the screenplay that Carreras prepared for a trimmer, post-Columbia version. The authors do not, as we noted previously, have access to the initial screen treatment, Wicking’s first draft, or any unamended versions of Forbes’s three drafts. This following is therefore a study in ‘adaptation’ with crucial gaps in evidence of the pre-production process and, of course, with the film itself missing – and the film would undoubtedly have deviated from any of the available screenplays. What we can do, however, is get a sense of the *kind* of film that was imagined and compare the producers’ conception, albeit modified through the various drafts, with other versions of, on the one hand, ‘Nessie’ films and TV programmes and, on the other, with the late-1970s cycle of *Jaws*ploitation films.

Nessie's basic plot, which is consistent across both screenplays in the Archive, begins with a pre-credit sequence of a truck crashing and spilling gallons of the steroid 'Mutane 4', into Loch Ness. Nessie, a one million year old elasmosaurus, rapidly undergoes steroid-enhanced growth and escapes from the polluted Loch into the North Sea. Nessie then embarks, like Moby Dick, on a world tour to its ancient home in the South China Seas. Meanwhile a somewhat confusing set of characters from around the world attempt to stop her – Mark Stafford, an arrogant television reporter and the film's lead; Susan, a female scientist who wants to study Nessie in a humane environment; Channon, an ill-fated hard-bitten huntsman; and Comfort, a scientist turned company man, who is out to ensure Nessie's demise at the hands of the British and American governments. Both the 1976 and 1978 screenplays are structured around a handful of set piece disaster sequences. As well as an oil rig and hovercraft, Nessie gets entangled with tuna boats and a nuclear submarine before coming to grief some miles from Hong Kong harbour in a sequence which, in the 1976 script, would rival the pyrotechnics of *Earthquake*. In terms of their underlying structure, both screenplays adhere to the sturdy classic linear horror plot employed in animal attack and sea beast films like *It Came from Beneath the Sea* and *Jaws*: the monster is roused from the depths, runs amok, and is finally and spectacularly killed itself. The screenplays' problems lie, first, with the confused characterisation – there are too many protagonists, none of them sympathetic; second, the dreadful dialogue (such as Stafford, the hero of the story, complaining that budget cuts at the network means 'the front office would ask me to fly economy with you peasants' (*Nessie* 1976 screenplay)) and, third, the incoherent confluence of influences and generic tropes that both overcomplicate the action and strip it of any real distinctiveness.

Neither screenplay wears its influences lightly. The big game hunter, Channon (presumably the Richard Harris role), is pretty much a substitute for Quint (Robert Shaw), the grizzled shark hunter in *Jaws*, (although Channon takes on a more antagonistic role, working against Stafford and Susan to try and kill Nessie instead of capture her). Like Quint, Channon does not make it to the film's conclusion and is beheaded by a tuna fish net at the beginning of the film's third act in a botched attempt to capture Nessie. *Jaws*, which like *Nessie* combined the sea beast and disaster movie, is also referenced directly. The film itself is seen on television on the boat of a couple

whom Nessie attacks while they are deep-sea diving. and Nessie later encounters a shark described in the script as ‘bigger than Jaws’ (*Nessie* 1976 screenplay). These connections to *Jaws* were, incidentally, echoed outside of the script itself. After the successful launch of the marketing campaign at Cannes in 1976, Carreras was contacted by Warwick Charlton, a representative of Gateway Projects, the company which ‘had been responsible for the merchandising of Jaws’ (Charlton to Carreras 24 June 1976). Charlton suggests to Carreras that ‘Jaws will be topped by Nessie in the field of character merchandise’, and arranges a meeting to discuss merchandising rights. However, the deal was seemingly never formalised and with no sign of the project being produced, discussions came to an end.

One key point of difference between *Jaws* and *Nessie* is that Nessie, unlike the shark in *Jaws* but in keeping with many other depictions of the Loch Ness Monster, is essentially a sympathetic creature, a symbol of an ancient natural order abused by modern science. At one point in the South China Seas, for example, Nessie swims past a carving of herself on the wall of an ancient submerged city and ‘MUSIC becomes imbued with inevitable tragedy’ (*Nessie* 1976 screenplay). As the story goes on, Nessie more closely resembles the tragic anti-hero of *King Kong* than the implacable killer in *Jaws*, and Susan, the scientist, tries, like Fay Wray, to save her from destruction by men.³ This sympathy for a sea beast is not a very common twist on *Jaws*ploitation, though it appears in precursors like *Gorgo* and some of the later *Godzilla* movies, and is essayed in *Orca*, in which the killer whale revenges itself on Captain Nolan (Richard Harris), a marine animal hunter, for killing its mate. To complicate matters further, *Nessie* enhances this ecologically sensitive revenge-of-nature scenario with a *Jaws*-derived conspiracy and cover up plot. Nessie becomes not only an over-determined symbol of evil science and the dangers of messing with nature but a victim of governmental and corporate power. Long speeches towards the end belatedly foist on Nessie some of the symbolic meaning that accrued to *Godzilla* as a product of the modern world (though the likely reference point was the environmental damage of the

³ It is appropriate that *Nessie* should echo the 1933 *King Kong* as the ‘monster fever’ that gripped the world after the box office success of ‘*King Kong* directly inspired the Loch Ness monster. There is no question that the birth of Nessie correlates closely in time with the release of the film’ (Loxton and Prothero 2013: Loc 2631 - 2645). It was not so much the film’s giant gorilla, though, as the long-necked sauropod depicted in the film that influenced sightings like the Spicers’ (Loxton and Prothero 2013: Loc 2672 – 2725).

Torrey Canyon oil spill in 1967 rather than fear of the atomic bomb). When the US air force sets Nessie aflame with oil from a damaged tanker, Stafford begins a live broadcast in which he chastises the American and British governments for their mistreatment of Nessie after the chemical disaster that led to her escape from the Loch. As well as portentous, this seems highly uncharacteristic of the brash and unsympathetic Stafford, and we suspect that, as the film builds to its climax, the audience would in any case be more interested in the action and special effects. Martin Wragge in particular did not think much of the ending, wondering 'who would want to watch that asshole being a wiseass for 10 whole bloody minutes' (Wragge to Carreras 31 August 1976).

The screenplays specify a remarkable number of locations as earnest of the film's international ambitions in worldwide territories. Hence the action skitters from Scotland, Washington, South Africa, and the Canary Islands to Gibraltar, London, and Hong Kong, which seems largely to be a wish list of sites for location shooting. While Carreras clearly wanted to internationalise Nessie herself as a star, the screenplays' global reach is arguably counterproductive as well as ensuring that the budget would be ruinously over-stretched. For one thing, considered as a Nessie film the material is stripped of distinctive local elements of Scottishness (this is no *Wicker Man* (Hardy 1973) style folk horror fable of the revenge of the Celtic repressed) and indeed of the Britishness long associated with Hammer. Despite the scripts' beginning in Scotland at Loch Ness, Stafford and Susan, the male and female leads, are Americans and only in the area for their respective jobs. It is true that importing American stars into British science fiction films had been standard practice since before *The Quatermass Xperiment* (Guest 1955), but Hammer were perhaps missing a trick by neglecting the local flavour of the material. Compared with the other Nessie movies, from *The Secret of the Loch* to *The Water Horse*, though sharing the latter's ultimately positive view of the monster, the screenplays of *Nessie* do their best to eliminate the Scottishness of the beast. When disaster first strikes in Scotland and Nessie begins her journey from the Loch to the sea, a Scottish Chief constable begins to head up the operation, before being dismissed by a British Minister and a member of the US State department. With all local and regional authority of Nessie and the Loch seemingly stripped away, the Constable leaves grumpily suggesting that he will 'concentrate on petty vice in Inverness then' (*Nessie* 1976 screenplay). Unlike the other Loch Ness films, *Nessie* promises little of the

'Kailyard' imagery of a touristic version of Scotland, all bagpipes and Tartan, of the sort parodied in *The Goodies* (Martin-Jones 2009: 89-112). Although the absence of kitschy national stereotypes is welcome, and it is true that Hammer probably wasn't concerned about subtextual niceties, one wonders why the monster is the iconically Scottish Nessie at all, beyond the semi-bankable name recognition. That a British beast in a British location seemed an inadequate scenario speaks too of the waning power and influence of the nation and the diminished kudos of its – and Hammer's – once globally valued contribution to genre filmmaking. As Matthew Jones notes, discussing Hammer's aborted remake of *The Day the Earth Caught Fire* (Guest 1961) in the 1990s, which transferred the setting from London to the United States:

Once famed for adaptations of British gothic novels and films set against the backdrops of London or the nation's countryside, Hammer seemingly no longer felt this was marketable and had instead turned its attention to settings that would be familiar to US audiences. (Jones 2015)

As a point of comparison, in terms of using Nessie productively the *Doctor Who* series, 'Terror of the Zygons', is somewhat more successful in mobilising both Scottishness and indeed Britishness. Although the monster is an alien cyborg, hardly a conventional representation of Nessie, the series makes amusingly Gothic play of Highland moors (actually filmed in Sussex) and revels in outrageous Tartan stereotypes, such as the Doctor wearing a tam o' shanter. The series moreover fits neatly into the archetypal scenarios of British science fiction movies. On the one hand, it is about a small scale alien invasion in an unlikely out of the way location, much of the action centres on a pub, and there is a disused quarry (though for once in *Doctor Who* it is actually a quarry and not a convenient stand in for an alien planet). On the other hand and crucially for our purposes, the Skarasen Nessie, like any properly self-respecting British beast, makes her way to London for the final showdown, as did the monsters in *The Lost World* (Hoyt), *Gorgo*, *Konga*, *Behemoth the Sea Monster* and *Queen Kong* (Agrama 1976) (Hunter 1999: 7 – 11). *Behemoth*, for example, combined the same elements as *Nessie* – a roused and irradiated monster, scenes of destruction – but ended with the plesiosaur rampaging up the Thames and overturning the Woolwich ferry. As in many British science fiction and monster films, the flattening of London carries echoes of the Blitz. In Hammer's somewhat self-defeating attempt at an international

epic, Nessie's cruise of holiday locations forgoes such possibilities by having a Scottish monster pitch up in the South Seas.

Of course, from the point of view of textual analysis, it is hard to judge the meanings and resonances that *might* have emerged from the *Nessie* that got away. We may be short-sighted and parochial in criticising the screenplays for neither exploiting the Scottishness of the legend nor repeating familiar tropes of British science fiction. After all it was in some ways the taint of insular small scale Britishness which Hammer was trying to overcome by promoting *Nessie* as an international co-production to rival generously budgeted Hollywood hits. Since the 1950s it was not unusual for British films, including many science films, to masquerade as American because the market was dominated by Hollywood (Pirie 1973: 133, Hunter 1999: 8). In fact, the *Nessie* screenplays are replete with tantalising possible interpretations. The nostalgic tour of post-imperialism (Gibraltar, South Africa, Hong Kong), the clash of ancient Britain with modernity (Nessie attacking the English Channel hovercraft), the sense of Britain sidelined in an age of American corporate power – these perhaps insinuate an embryonic self-reflexive commentary on British decline along the lines of *Juggernaut* (Lester 1974) (Sinyard 2010: 97 – 110). It is impossible to know whether these emergent themes would have survived translation to the screen.

The final reason for the production's stalling had to do with the uncertain adequacy of the special effects and here *Nessie* was, you might say, a very premature Western *Kaijin* (sea monster) movie. Columbia was right to be suspicious that *Nessie* herself was beyond Hammer's and Toho's resources (especially as Columbia was currently engaged in breaking new ground in special effects with Spielberg's \$18 - \$19 million extravaganza *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977)). Since the film's appeal rested on *seeing* the Monster, *Nessie* would have been wholly reliant upon the credibility of its special effects. These required not only monster effects but also model sharks and major scenes of oil rigs, hovercraft, oil tankers, and harbours being destroyed. It is unclear how this could be carried off in those pre-CGI days. Success with studio miniatures was obviously not impossible – *Earthquake*, which abounded in them, had had a similar budget of \$7 million – but, so far as creature features went, visions loomed of poor back-projection, men in rubber costumes as in *At the Earth's Core* (Connor 1976), and the fiasco of Rick Baker in a gorilla suit in the

remake of *King Kong* (Guillerman 1976). Even a major Hollywood production like *Jaws* had struggled to get its shark to work, except for the rubbery version at the end, and resorted to keeping the creature mostly offscreen except for point-of-view shots and makeshift synecdoches like barrels and fins. The back-projected glove puppet of *Doctor Who*'s Skarasen was a notorious failure and while staging an oil rig disaster with model work passed muster on children's television, it would hardly do for a major release bidding to compete with *King Kong*. Carreras's promise to Columbia and other investors that the special effects in *Nessie* would be no worse than those in Toho's *King Kong vs. Godzilla* (Honda 1962), in which the creatures were men in costumes, probably did not reassure them. One solution was stop motion animation, as in *Behemoth* and Hammer's prehistoric films, *One Million Years B.C.* and *When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth* (Guest 1970), but it was a very slow and expensive process. Before Toho's involvement, Hammer had nevertheless clearly regarded stop motion animation as the only viable way of creating *Nessie*. There is no evidence that Hammer approached Ray Harryhausen, the leading exponent of the technique, who had contributed stop motion 'Dynamation' creatures to *One Million Years B.C.*, *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad* (Hessler 1973) and *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger* (Wanamaker 1977), but, in one of the earliest pieces of correspondence on *Nessie* held in the Archive, Carreras writes to Euan Lloyd about the possibility of bringing stop motion animator Jim Danforth onto the project (Carreras to Lloyd 6 January 1976). Danforth had created the impressive prehistoric monsters for *When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth*, which had earned him an Academy Award nomination. He was unavailable, however, because he was starting work on another unmade monster film, Universal's *The Legend of King Kong*, which was beaten into production by Dino Laurentiis' rival *King Kong*. By March 1976, Hammer had in any case secured a contract with Toho.

As it happens, Hammer were right about Hollywood's shift towards special effects blockbusters, though their decision to make a relatively big-budget film rather than a straightforward *Jaws*ploitation film may seem quixotic in retrospect. They were right too that Hollywood was turning to upscaled exploitation films, like *Jaws*, but *Nessie* was neither a cheap and cheerful horror movie like *Piranha* nor (the option taken by recent Loch Ness films) a kids' movie in the tradition of *King Kong vs. Godzilla* and *Digby – the Biggest Dog in the World* (McGrath 1973). Britain would have a role as a

player in an industry newly orientated around blockbusters like *Star Wars* (Lucas 1977), *Superman* (Donner 1978), *Close Encounters* (in which EMI had invested money), and *Alien* (Scott 1979), but mostly as an investor in an essentially Hollywood product or as a provider of studio space, technicians and other creative talent.

For brave, understandable but misguided reasons, Hammer conceived and promoted *Nessie* as a major special effects driven blockbuster, but, judging by the scripts in the Archive, it lacked any sense of place or grounding in the legend of Nessie, had few prospects of decent special effects, and was lumbered by an incoherent ever-changing screenplay, which Carreras, whose strength lay in idiosyncratic camp like *Prehistoric Women* (Carreras 1968) and *Moon Zero Two* (Baker 1969), couldn't stop fiddling with. We suspect that if it had ever made it to the screen, it would have been a British nautical disaster to rival *Raise the Titanic* (Jameson 1980).

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Appendix IIb: Dracula unseen: The death and afterlife of Hammer's *Vlad the Impaler*

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Abstract

Few production companies have been as synonymous with one genre as Hammer Films and its horror output. However, for every 'Hammer Horror' successfully produced, several potential projects failed to make it into production. This article will utilize five separate drafts of the unmade Hammer project *Vlad the Impaler*, an adaptation of a BBC Radio 4 Drama produced in 1974. Utilizing *Vlad the Impaler* as a case study will allow for a further contextualization of Hammer's production methods between 1975 and 1979, a period in which Hammer only produced two theatrical films. The project was also developed further throughout the 1980/1990s, at a time when Hammer did not produce a single film. More broadly, this article will use *Vlad the Impaler* as a methodological case study, and examine how we can expand on existing works within the field on unmade adaptations.

Keywords

Hammer films

unmade adaptations

British Cinema

Dracula

Vlad the Impaler

horror cinema

Introduction

Since taking over the role of Managing Director of Hammer Films from his father James Carreras in 1972, Michael Carreras had seen many of Hammer's international finance and distribution deals fall apart, deals that had been a key facet to Hammer's success for over two decades. Aware that Hammer needed to rethink their

strategy going forward, the studio adopted what Hammer historian Marcus Hearn terms a ‘shit or bust attitude’ (Hearn 2011: 162). This new approach would see Hammer aim to move away from mid- to low-budget genre pictures and instead focus on investing heavily in big-budget films with A-list casts, that they hoped would lead to significant box office returns. None of these big-budget projects materialized, but some of these ambitious unmade films can be used to further contextualize Hammer’s history, as well as shed new light on one of Britain’s most iconic production studios.

This article will utilize materials held in the Hammer Script Archive at De Montfort University (DMU), which was donated by Hammer in 2012, with a further donation in 2016. The archive holds scripts, correspondence and financial documentation for hundreds of Hammer productions, including files on many of Hammer’s unmade projects. Specifically, it will utilize materials surrounding the unmade *Vlad the Impaler* project, which gestated at Hammer for nearly three decades but was never produced. This article will examine the four separate unmade screenplays held in the archive, which were adapted from the 1974 radio play *Lord Dracula* by Brian Hayles.

Over the last decade, Adaptations Studies has proven to be a fruitful area of examination for unmade films. Actively engaging in the methodological challenges an unmade project offers as a case study, work such as Simone Murray’s ‘Phantom adaptations: *Eucalyptus*, the adaptation industry and the film that never was’ (2008), offers the opportunity to use these case studies to examine new methods of analysis within the field. Using the book *Eucalyptus* (Bail 1998) and its unmade film adaptation of the same name, Murray, by having no completed film adaptation to compare the novel to, looks to ‘frustrate adaptation studies’ habitual recourse to comparative textual analysis and forces [...] [it to] engage with potential alternative methodologies for understanding how adaptation functions’ (Murray 2008: 6). The case study therefore allows Murray to focus specifically on the production and industrial context surrounding the adaptive process, as opposed to the question of fidelity to the original text.

Similarly, Peter Hutchings’ chapter ‘American Vampires in Britain: Richard Matheson’s *I Am Legend* and Hammer’s *The Night Creatures*’, in Dan North’s *Sights Unseen* (2008: 53–71), utilizes an unmade self-adaptation (Matheson adapted his own

novel for Hammer in 1957), to examine Hammer's production process in the late 1950s, as well as broader issues including 'the relation between British and American models of horror' (Hutchings 2008: 55). Examining the process of an American contemporary horror novel being adapted by the same author for a British production company, Hutchings compares thematic and narrative similarities between Matheson's novel and his unmade screenplay for Hammer, and suggests that these two types of horror 'might not be as distinct and separate from each other as has sometimes been supposed' (Hutchings 2008: 68). By utilizing this comparative methodological framework, Hutchings is able to examine *The Night Creatures* in relation to Hammer's own production context, as well as contribute to debates on national horror cinema.

Both Murray and Hutchings utilize methodological practices that foreground the unmade case study as an adapted work. Anchoring the unmade film to a completed text creates a tangibility arguably missing from other studies of an unmade film. In effect, unmade films could be considered 'pre-texts', a term Steven Price uses in his book *Screenplay: Authorship, Theory and Criticism* (2010). Price argues that screenplays have long been neglected in academic studies due to 'the tendency to regard them as mere pre-texts for movies, which kill or erase them on completion' (2010: xii). Unmade screenplays, as well as any archival documentation surrounding an unmade project, could also be considered a pre-text, with the text (the finished film) ultimately missing from any possible study. An unmade adaptation therefore offers a comparable completed text which one can draw narrative and thematic comparisons, as well as shed light on new industrial and production contexts. In relation to Hammer, *Vlad the Impaler* will be used to examine the production methods of a company who, in the period of 1975–79, only released two films (*To the Devil a Daughter* [Sykes, 1976] and *The Lady Vanishes* [Page, 1979]), and under Roy Skeggs, produced none in over two decades (1980–2000). The project began in 1974, under Hammer's Managing Director Michael Carreras. However, it would outlast Carreras' tenure at Hammer, and was in active development under Roy Skeggs, Managing Director of Hammer from 1980 to 2000. *Vlad the Impaler* effectively bridges the gap between Carreras' and Skeggs' tenure, acting as a cogent case study of Skeggs' years in charge. Despite Hammer not releasing any films theatrically under Skeggs, the amount of developmental and pre-production work that went into *Vlad the Impaler* over nearly twenty years shows that

Skeggs was not merely content with Hammer's sporadic television output, but had plans that rivalled Carreras' 'shit or bust' attitude in the late 1970s.

Carreras' *Vlad the Impaler* 1974–79

On the 27 April 1974, BBC Radio 4 produced a one-off drama from Brian Hayles entitled *Lord Dracula*. The 90-minute drama tells the story of Vlad Tepes, tyrannical ruler of Transylvania, who is arrested for his war crimes at the beginning of the play. After years in prison, he pledges himself to God under the stewardship of a monk called Benedek, and returns to his castle in Transylvania with Benedek and a new wife, Ilonya. However, the death of his child and Ilonya in childbirth sees Vlad turn to evil once more. Aligning himself with the witch Militsa, a black mass ceremony is held and Vlad is reborn as the vampire Dracula. The priest Benedek and Vlad's eldest son Istvan defeat and kill Militsa, but Dracula escapes, with Benedek framed for the death of Ilonya and executed.

In an interview in the February 1978 issue of *House of Hammer* magazine, Michael Carreras confirms that Hammer had been developing the project with Hayles since 1974: 'we're going to do a film about Vlad the Impaler, the original Dracula. It will be based on a radio play by Brian Hayles' (Carreras in Skinn and Brosnan 1978: 21). Carreras remarks that Hammer immediately bought the rights to the project after its original airing: 'it was one of the most marvellous broadcasts I'd ever heard. It was tremendous! So I quickly rang Brian, we met and did a deal' (Carreras in Skinn and Brosnan 1978: 21). The Hammer Script Archive holds an undated script by Brian Hayles entitled *Dracula: The Beginning*. With Brian Hayles passing in 1978, and the title change in all other drafts to *Vlad the Impaler*, it is likely to be the first draft of the project for Hammer.

As one might expect from a self-adapted work, it is extremely faithful to the original radio play, with entire dialogue sections produced verbatim. The project's status as a self-adaptation could arguably draw comparisons with Matheson and Hammer's *The Night Creature* project, and also poses interesting methodological questions about the self-adaptation process. In his article 'Novelist-screenwriter versus auteur desire: *The Player*' (2013) Jack Boozer notes that those who adapt their own work are in 'a double bind' (2013: 75), either honing 'in too close to their source [...] or

find[ing] themselves guilty of tampering with whatever qualities may have been appreciated in the novel' (Boozer 2013: 75). In the case of Hayles, it is the former, and noting Carreras' reaction to the radio play in the above quote, it is possible to suggest that this was not necessarily Hayles' wish, but Hammer's as well. Although one could argue that, like Murray's use of an unmade adaptation, work on self-adaptation allows for a methodology which moves away from questions of fidelity to the original text as the author 'probably doesn't have treasonous intentions towards himself' (Duguay 2012: 26), Boozer notes that an examination of a self-adapted work does not necessarily imply neglecting debates around fidelity, but instead that these debates become more complex. A self-adaptation merely creates more questions on the author's intentions, and makes it more difficult to claim 'that "this is not what the novelist wrote" or "meant" or "would have wanted"' (Boozer 2013: 75). In the case of *Lord Dracula* and *Vlad the Impaler*, these debates are complicated further. Whereas a methodology analysing a self-adapted work and the original text (similar to Hutching's work on *The Night Creatures*) would be viable in a comparative analysis of Hayles' *Lord Dracula* and his screenplay for Hammer, the project is developed further in three other screenplays by three separate authors – Arthur Ellis (1982/83) John Peacock (1988) and Jonas McCord (1993). Not only that, but at least two of the three adapters (Ellis and McCord), confirmed that they had never heard the radio-play, and that they only revised Hayles' original script. Therefore, the project shifts from a self-adaptation to an adaptation, and the source text itself changes. The *Vlad the Impaler* project therefore acts as an adaptation in flux, with any standardized or clear methodological framework forced to alter throughout a study of its long history. Like Murray's example of the unmade *Eucalyptus* frustrating existing methodologies, *Vlad the Impaler* also provides a distinctive case study as an unmade project within Adaptation Studies.

Hayle's script moved quickly through pre-production, being sent to potential directors only six months after his radio-play had aired. In October 1974, Carreras offered directorial duties on the project to Ken Russell. Hammer's courting of Russell itself shows a significant shift in their production strategy. Having developed a consistent gothic house style through a reliance on recurring creative talent throughout the early 1950s and 1960s, Hammer's attempt to bring Russell into the fold could be

seen as a reactive gesture to the resurgence of the horror film in America, and an attempt to gain critical legitimacy.

In the late 1960s, Hollywood began to harness the talents of several European directors who 'were associated, to varying degrees, with self-consciously artistic movements and 'new waves' in European cinema' (Krämer 2005: 86). One such filmmaker, Roman Polanski, directed *Rosemary's Baby* (Levin 1967), an adaptation of Ira Levin's 1967 novel of the same name. The film (along with *Night of the Living Dead* [Romero 1968]) signalled a New Wave of American horror films which spoke 'to the rapidly changing social and sexual values of the era' (Shiel 2006: 30). Polanski's status as a proponent for independent art cinema (which was also emphasized in the casting of John Cassavetes in a lead role) added critical credibility to the horror genre, and provided a new and distinctive blueprint for horror cinema. Similarly, William Friedkin's *The Exorcist* (1973) once again fused the sensibilities of the artistically credible director with a big-budget horror film (following his previous critical and commercial success *The French Connection* [1971]). Combatively visceral and explicit, *The Exorcist* 'bore as little resemblance to the gothic chillers of the 60s as Nixon did to JFK' (Kermode 1997: 9). Its subsequent box office success suggested a significant shift in what audiences wanted from horror films, with Hammer's own gothic formula (still in effect as late as 1974 with *Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell* [Fisher 1974]) in significant need of an overhaul.

To Carreras' credit, his letter to Russell seems like a significant step in this direction. Russell's reputation as an audacious and provocative director had been truly cemented by *The Devils* release in 1971. Critically reviled ('*The Devils* is so totally and manically hated by nearly every critic I have read that it seems an excess to select the parts which are hated more than the entire film' [Atkins 1976:59]), the film is undoubtedly the work of a filmmaker with a singular distinctive vision. I. Q. Hunter cites *The Devils* as Russell's masterpiece, and the condensation of his key themes – 'the force of repression, the imperturbability of sex, ceaseless change and transformation, politics as eroticism and Catholic-inspired kitsch' (Hunter 2013: 153). Russell can therefore be seen as a director who 'abolished the line between art and exploitation' (Hunter 2013: 152) in similar ways to that of Polanski and Friedkin. However, in correspondence with Carreras, Russell is extremely critical of the script itself,

particularly the third act: 'the bloodbath at the end is as unnecessary as it is obnoxious. Blood, particularly movie blood, is not synonymous with horror' (Russell 1974). Russell ends his letter just as bluntly, signing off 'please don't misunderstand me, I would like to make a horror film with you – a real one' (Russel 1974).

With Hammer struggling to attach a director, the financing of *Vlad the Impaler* also proved challenging. As noted in the introduction, Hammer, as early as 1948, had seen the advantages of aligning with American production and distribution arms. This relationship with American financiers and distributors flourished with Hammer's success in the horror market in the late 1950s and 1960s, with Hammer working with nearly every American major studio. Yet by 1975, Hammer found themselves without their most reliable Frankenstein and Dracula franchises, and more pressingly, without any American production deals.

Although seemingly a good fit on Hammer's production slate, *Vlad the Impaler* proved to be extremely difficult (and ultimately impossible) to finance. In an unpublished interview in November 1975, Carreras confirms that *Vlad the Impaler* is still in production, and is the 'big project' (Carreras in Swires 1975: 12) being developed at Hammer. In the same interview, Carreras also discusses the withdrawal of American interest in Hammer's films. First noting how essential American distribution is for Hammer ('in world-wide terms, it is generally half the potential market' [Carreras in Swires 1975: 10]), Carreras states that 'there is obviously a recession in the horror appeal at the present time, more so in the United States than in anywhere else in the world' (Carreras in Swires 1975: 11). This comment is seemingly incongruous with the resurgence of the American horror cinema in the late 1960s and 1970s. Carreras' comment comes only two years after the commercial success of *The Exorcist*, suggesting that American financiers had not grown weary of the horror genre, but that it was Hammer's particular brand of period gothic horror that they no longer saw as commercially viable.

Despite the lack of finance, Carreras still seems optimistic: 'we've sent the script to people like Richard Burton and Richard Harris but we don't now as yet who will play the lead [...] I think it will be a hell of a movie' (Skinn and Brosnan 1978: 21). Hammer's touting of big names for their projects was nothing new (Hammer had a long history of utilizing American actors to make their films more internationally viable), but

this again arguably reflects an attempt at legitimizing the Hammer horror film for international markets, with the potential casting of Burton or Harris comparable to Gregory Peck starring in *The Omen* (Donner 1976) two years previous. However, only a year after this interview in April 1979, Hammer was put into the hands of the Official Receiver, with Michael Carreras removed as Managing Director. Hammer would not produce another film for nearly three decades.

As Carreras admits in an interview in 1987, eight years after his tenure of Hammer had ended, *Vlad the Impaler*'s undoing was its scale, noting that he 'was never able to find one company willing to finance the entire project' (Swires 1987: 63). These large-scale projects, although an active attempt to revitalise Hammer, were ultimately seen as too uncertain for increasingly risk adverse American studios. Yet it is also of note that even before Hammer looked to finance the picture, issues were being raised about the screenplay itself, such as in the case of Ken Russell only six months into the project's development. Despite attempting to revitalize Hammer's horror output through the creative talent they were approaching (directors such as Russell and stars such as Burton and Harris), *Vlad the Impaler* is clearly fashioned in the mould of Hammer's existing period horror films, as opposed to the New Wave of American horror cinema. Polanski and Friedkin had exploited a contemporary setting that contrasted the recognisable banality of everyday life with the horror of the supernatural and satanic. Hammer meanwhile, despite dealing with similar satanic themes in *Vlad the Impaler*, relied on the tropes of the gothic horror genre and a period setting to remove itself from any real-life resonance.

Despite Russell's objections and the lack of enthusiasm from financiers, the Hammer Script Archive holds no evidence of Carreras bringing on another writer on the project. Carreras fondness for Hayles' screenplay is evident, not only through the four years of effort put in to getting the film into production, but also in the 1987 interview with Steve Swires, where he singles it out as the one project he wished he could still make: 'the script is still my prize possession and I will never give up the idea of doing it. If we were allowed to make one more film, *Vlad the Impaler* would be it' (1987: 63). Carreras' big-budget strategy may have made gestures towards radicalizing Hammer's horror output, but *Vlad the Impaler* ultimately remained identifiably a Hammer horror film. Arguably to its own detriment.

Roy Skeggs' *Vlad the Impaler* 1980–2000

Roy Skeggs had been a fixture at Hammer under both James and Michael Carreras since October 1963, serving as a production assistant, the company's accountant, production supervisor and, from November 1974, a member of the board of directors (Kinsey 2010: 73). After Hammer were put into the hands of the Official Receiver and Michael Carreras removed as Managing Director in 1979, Skeggs and former board member Brian Lawrence were invited by the ICI (the creditors of Pension Fund Services who now owned Hammer), to continue collecting the royalties from the Hammer library (Hearn and Barnes 2007: 171). Skeggs and Lawrence licenced the Hammer name to produce the anthology horror series *Hammer House of Horror* (1980), and used the revenue gained through the show to clear Hammer's debts with the ICI and buy back Hammer for only \$100,000 (Kinsey 2007: 417; Meikle 2009: 225; Hearn and Barnes 2007: 171). With Hammer now under their control, one of Skeggs' and Lawrence's priorities was reviving Hammer's *Vlad the Impaler* project, and the Hammer Script Archive holds three other drafts of *Vlad the Impaler* that can be dated within Skeggs' tenure at Hammer. This immediately shows a potential differentiation in approach between Carreras and Skeggs and Lawrence, as there are multiple drafts by different writers.

The first attempt by Skeggs to redevelop *Vlad the Impaler* is with British writer Arthur Ellis, with a script held within the Hammer Script Archive listed as being written by Brian Hayles with additional material by Arthur Ellis. There is another draft of *Vlad the Impaler* also with the same credit, which is an identical draft but with pencil annotations and deletions. In an interview conducted with Ellis on 30 April 2016, Ellis dates his work on the script to 'around 82/83' (Ellis 2016), after Skeggs and Lawrence had bought Hammer back from ICI. Ellis notes that he was approached by John Peacock, who 'was working fairly full time at Hammer' (Ellis 2016), as the script editor on the project and 'go-between' (Ellis 2016) between Ellis and Skeggs. Despite being early in Skeggs' and Lawrence's tenure, Ellis' time working on *Vlad the Impaler* suggests a tension at Hammer between wanting to engage new writers to rework and modernize projects, and holding work done under Carreras on *Vlad the Impaler* in an almost reverential state, ultimately impeding any major alterations or departures from

the old Hammer model. This state of inertia in the early days of Skeggs and Lawrence can be seen in an examination of Ellis' work on *Vlad the Impaler*, and the annotations and deletions made to his script.

As one would expect with Hayles still credited as the writer of the script, Ellis' alterations are relatively minor. The key characters and the narrative itself remain largely unaltered from Hayles' first draft and the original radio-play. Yet Ellis does make two significant changes, both in response to the brief given by Peacock to Ellis: 'the way I understood it they wanted it to be modernised [...] a bit less period gothic and more *Omen*-y type gothic' (Ellis 2016). First, Ellis literally modernises the story by creating a contemporary prologue and epilogue, which features an action set-piece that sees a vampire-hunter clearing out a nest of vampires in a dilapidated house, before his ruminations on the origin of the vampire sees the narrative shift back in time, to where Hayles' original story begins. The last page of the script takes us back to present day, as the vampire hunter leaves the house, and potentially sets up a present-day sequel, with the last words spoken by the hunter being: 'oh where shall we meet, my sad Lord Dracula [...] that we may duel once again' (Ellis c.1983: 139).

Although Ellis recounts this structural change as his primary alteration to Hayles' script, he also infuses it with several overtly supernatural sequences which arguably have a greater effect on the narrative as a whole. In Hayles' screenplay is not until page 42 of the 118-page draft that the witch Militsa appears and incites the first acknowledgment of the supernatural within the script. However not only does Ellis immediately set up the script as a supernatural drama by adding a prologue featuring vampires, he also introduces horror elements much earlier in the narrative's main timeline. For example, on page 6 of Ellis' script a demonic horse (later to be in possession of Vlad) is birthed from Hell, said to be sent by Satan himself ('we are left in no doubt that the Devil has given birth to a plan of awesome evil [...]') (Ellis c.1983: 7).

Yet the second, annotated copy of Ellis' screenplay held in the Hammer Script Archive shows that it was these sequences that Skeggs and Lawrence were dissatisfied with. Many of the more overt supernatural sequences, such as the demonic horse at the beginning of the screenplay, are crossed out in pencil, leaving the modern prologue and epilogue as the only significant additions by Ellis to Hayles' original draft. Ellis himself

expressed confusion as to why he was drafted in to work on what was clearly a revered script: ‘according to John [...] the script was very, very much appreciated. They [Hammer] liked the script’ (Ellis 2016). As a result, Ellis felt that the changes he made were incremental, and added little to the screenplay:

I said to John I don’t know why I’m doing this, I’m only doing this because it’s different, and that’s my only criteria for doing it. I don’t understand why I’m [...] I’m only putting a modern bookend type thing in it so I can say I’ve done a rewrite on it. There didn’t seem to be any logic to it that I could work out. (Ellis 2016).

This suggests an indecisiveness and capriciousness on the part of Skeggs and Lawrence. By bringing on Ellis, Skeggs and Lawrence are clearly acknowledging that Hayles’ original screenplay needed to be updated. Furthermore, Peacock’s suggestion to Ellis that he modernizes the screenplay could be seen as an acknowledgement of the popularity of the American horror cinema, which as mentioned earlier within the article, often utilized a contemporary setting. Yet these contemporary scenes are set in a dilapidated manor, an intrinsically gothic setting with no real temporal attachment to the present day, and Skeggs and Lawrence’s reluctance to allow anything more than a small structural change (as well as the vagueness of the brief itself) suggest they were unsure what ultimately needed altering in Hayles’ original screenplay.

The timing of Ellis’ rewrite may also have been a key factor in *Vlad the Impaler* being left in a state of inertia by Skeggs and Lawrence. Hammer’s limited resources were stretched with regards to a deal with 20th Century Fox to produce *Hammer House of Mystery and Suspense*, an ambitious co-production for television which saw Hammer having to find the capital to produce the first two episodes, as well as find a way to extend the scripts from their original runtime of one hour to ninety minutes on behest of Fox (Ilott 1984: 13). Having already produced *Hammer House of Horror*, and with a new television series in production, it seems likely that Skeggs and Lawrence were more concerned with Hammer’s television enterprise as opposed to theatrical production. As a result, production on *Vlad the Impaler* seems to halt after Ellis’s draft until 1987, when Hammer unveiled an ambitious co-production deal with American producer Steve Krantz.

In a Screen International article in July 1987, the project is announced as part of

a deal that followed ‘two years of intensive financial planning and packaging’ (Falks 1987: 2), and lists five films ready for pre-production – *The House On The Strand* (written by John Peacock), *The Haunting of Toby Jugg*, *Black Sabbath*, *The White Witch of Rose Hall* and *Vlad the Impaler*. The deal coincides with another rewrite of *Vlad the Impaler* in 1988, this time with revisions by John Peacock himself. Lawrence’s retirement in 1985 after *Mystery and Suspense* (Meikle 2009: 225; Kinsey 2007: 423) had left Skeggs now the sole owner of Hammer, and the Krantz deal highlights some comparisons with Skeggs’ Hammer and Carreras’ former Hammer outfit.

First, it is notable that following the co-production deal with 20th Century Fox for *Mystery and Suspense*, Skeggs once again pursues American backing for Hammer’s film productions. Like Carreras, Skeggs clearly sees the American market as the key to Hammer’s future success. But, again similar to Carreras in the late 1970s, Skeggs seems to lack the resources to mount these big-budget films. As posited earlier, one of the key facets to Hammer’s success in the late 1950s/1960s was the companies recurring use of certain key cast and crew members, which ensured a distinctive recurring style and a consistent approach to their gothic horror films in particular. Yet by the late 1970s nearly all of Hammer’s previously recurring talent had gone, leaving an increasingly small team behind. Although this is perhaps not a critical issue for Hammer when producing mid-budget pictures, as Carreras’ strategy shifts towards attempting to produce big-budget films, Hammer’s already limited resources are then stretched to breaking point. Comparatively Skeggs seems to be in a similar position with Hammer in the late 1980s. First, there seems to be a reliance on John Peacock as script editor under Skeggs. He not only oversees the production of *Mystery and Suspense* and Ellis’ draft of *Vlad the Impaler*, but the Script Archive holds records of nine other unmade scripts written by Peacock for Hammer. In fact, out of the five films mentioned in the Krantz production deal, four of them have pre-existing connections with Hammer. *The Haunting of Toby Jugg* script is held in the Hammer Script Archive, and is written by Val Guest, who directed Hammer’s first X-rated feature *The Quatermass Xperiment* (Guest 1955), and worked with Hammer on several occasions throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Also announced is *Black Sabbath* notable for having a screenplay written by Arthur Ellis after his work on *Vlad the Impaler*.

Ellis worked on *Black Sabbath* for ‘a number of months’ (Ellis 2016), with two

separate drafts of it held in the Hammer Script Archive. Ellis rehiring is perplexing, given how little of his work on *Vlad the Impaler* carries over to Peacock's draft (his most notable contribution, the prologue and epilogue, are excised). This reliance on pre-existing contacts demonstrates that Skeggs' Hammer is clearly operating on a small scale, with limited creative talent and resources. This is perhaps best reflected by Denis Meikle, in an interview where he discusses visiting Hammer under Skeggs in the 1980s: 'I went to see him at Elstree, he had one girl, one secretary girl outside, and him at his big desk, that was Hammer' (Meikle 2016). Although the Krantz deal never materialised, Skeggs' best opportunity to produce *Vlad the Impaler* came six years later, when he finally achieved what was a key facet of Hammer's former success, a co-production deal with a major American studio.

In the 30 July, 1993 edition of *Screen International*, an article entitled 'Hammer back from the Dead' (Bateman 1993: 2), detailed a new deal between Hammer and Warner Brothers (specifically Shuler and Donner Productions), to produce 'a major slate of titles in 1994, including a series of remakes of classic Hammer titles' (Bateman 1993: 2). This information alone indicates a more auspicious arrangement than with Krantz, with a studio co-production deal as opposed to the finance of one producer. The deal seems to focus mainly on remaking Hammer titles, naming 'The Quatermass Experiment, Stolen Face and The Devil Rides Out' (Bateman 1993: 2) as some of the first titles to be produced under the deal. The idea to move away from original projects and exploit existing Hammer titles seems to be a deliberate effort from Skeggs to move Hammer back into active production, and seems to be a shift away from Skeggs' strategy in the 1980s to develop projects outside of Hammer's existing films.

It is clearly the legacy of Hammer's former horror films have secured this deal with Warner. With the Hammer films of the 1950s and 1960s now seemingly considered classic films ripe for remaking, Hammer, who's propensity for adaptation had always been present, seemed to take advantage of this new-found prestige in an attempt to restart film production. This is made clear by producer Lauren Shuler-Donner in the February 1994 edition of *Cinefantastique* where she says that 'Hammer's extensive Library was the main reason we signed the deal [...] here's a company with a wealth of stories ready for interpretation (Shuler-Donner in Jones, 1994:4). As well as these remakes, *Vlad the Impaler* is once more announced as being in production through

this new co-production deal: ‘Hammer also has a \$12m remake of *Vlad the Impaler* set to shoot in Romania early next year, possibly in a deal with Rank Film Distributors’ (Bateman 1993: 2). What is telling about this announcement is the specificity of it in comparison with the 1987 article, with a budget, location and distributor all seemingly in place. As well as this, Warner and Hammer had also hired American screenwriter Jonas McCord to once again rewrite the screenplay.

McCord’s script is a synthesis of the three previous versions, including an expanded role for Vlad’s doomed love Ilonya. However, the rewrite is far from extensive. In fact, nearly two decades after Hayles’ original radio-play, it is remarkable how little the project had altered. All the characters and narrative beats of the radio-play are still present, with only incremental changes, such as the increased presence of Ilonya in McCord’s draft, notable. Yet McCord’s script, held in the Hammer Script Archive, does feature an interesting detail on the nature of the co-production deal between Hammer and Warner Brothers. On the title page of McCord’s *Vlad the Impaler*, there is an American address for ‘Hammer International’, situated on the Warner Brothers lot. Whereas the Warner deal draws direct parallels with how Hammer operated in the 1960s, Hammer’s physical presence on the Warner lot suggests a greater symbiotic relationship than ever before. The relationship with Warner also allows Hammer to expand its once meagre creative resources, as is apparent in the hiring of McCord. The project remains in development for some time, with *Screen International*, in the 26 July 1996 issue, listing *Vlad the Impaler* as still in production. As well as listing McCord as screenwriter, a director is also attached – Xavier Koller, who had recently directed Disney adventure film *Squanto: A Warrior’s Tale* (1994) and, more notably, *Journey of Hope* in 1990, which won the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. Koller is still attached to the project in the 28 March 1997 issue of *Screen International* a year later. But, in an interview in June that year with *The Observer*, Skeggs reveals that the deal with Warner has expired: ‘[me and Donner are] still very good friends but he’s so busy doing other things [...] the deal ran out a year ago but it was a good start. It got Paramount and Fox interested’ (Skeggs in Gilbert 1996: 137). In the same interview, Skeggs also heavily hints at potential retirement: ‘I’m 60 and it’s time I relaxed a bit. I shall stay on as chairman. If I’m not enjoying it after a couple of years, I can sell my holding’ (Skeggs in Gilbert 1996: 137). Skeggs eventually sold the company in 2000, to

a consortium led by Charles Saatchi (Kinsey 2007: 424; Meikle 2009: 226). After 26 years of production, two managing directors and four screenwriters, *Vlad the Impaler* had finally been struck a killing blow.

Conclusion

Vlad the Impaler's production under Carreras demonstrates that, despite Hammer only producing two films in the last five years of his tenure, he was keenly aware that Hammer's existing gothic horror films were in need of radical alteration to appeal to American studios. Hammer's pursuit of Russell suggests an acknowledgment of the director driven ethos emerging in American horror cinema, as does their search for A-list stars such as Harris and Burton to lead the film. Yet whilst the horror of American cinema took place in apartment blocks and children's bedrooms, Hammer still seemed fixated on the gothic iconography that had served it so well in the past. Carreras also seemed reliant on Hammer's previous propensity for adapting popular works. His clear enthusiasm for Hayles' radio-play and the subsequent hiring of Hayles to self-adapt his own work, arguably leads to a project that, with its gothic iconography and period setting, undermines any attempt to reshape Hammer in the wake of the new American horror cinema.

The undermining of potentially radical changes to Hammer's horror formula arguably continues through Skeggs' tenure, with many of Ellis' most noteworthy changes being removed by Skeggs and Peacock. However, in tracing *Vlad the Impaler*'s production throughout this period, *Vlad the Impaler* arguably becomes less the study of a phantom adaptation, and more an examination of a phantom studio. Hammer's failure under Skeggs to produce any theatrical films means that a detailed analysis of the studio in this period is absent from most studies on Hammer's history. However, the company was still active, and its pursuit of American finance deals does not only draw interesting parallels with Carreras' tenure, but also has a tangible effect on American majors such as Warner Brothers, with Hammer having a physical presence on their lot in the mid-1990s. In his article 'Adaptation as exploration: Stanley Kubrick, literature and *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence*' (2015: 372–82), Peter Krämer notes that unmade projects 'have absorbed much of the creativity and a substantial proportion of the financial investments of the American film industry' (Krämer, 2015: 381). Therefore, focusing on unmade

projects such as *Vlad the Impaler* can allow us to further contextualise and enhance our understanding of a major production company such as Hammer Films.

More broadly, *Vlad the Impaler*'s status as an unmade adaptation can arguably aid in the expansion of methodological practices within Adaptation Studies. The previously cited work done by Murray and Hutchings suggest new ways in which we can consider unmade adaptations and their production contexts, as well as, self-reflexively, the methodological practices used to examine these works. *Vlad the Impaler*'s instability as an adapted work (it is both a self-adaptation and an adaptation, with no final completed text), suggests that examining unmade adaptations can not only provide new production and industrial contexts, but can provide new methodological practices within Adaptation Studies itself.

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Horror of Frankenstein (1970). Directed by Jimmy Sangster. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

I Am Legend (2007). Directed by Francis Lawrence. USA: Warner Bros.

Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom (1984). Directed by Steven Spielberg. USA: Lucasfilm Ltd.

Invasion of Astro-Monster (1965). Directed by Ishiro Honda. Japan: Toho.

The Invisible Man Returns (1940). Directed by Joe May. USA: Universal Pictures.

Jaws (1975). Directed by Steven Spielberg. USA: Universal Pictures.

Journey of Hope (1990). Directed by Xavier Koller. Switzerland/Turkey: Miramax Films.

Journey to the Unknown (1968-1969) [TV Series]. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

King Kong vs. Godzilla (1962). Directed by Ishiro Honda. Japan: Toho.

The Lady Vanishes (1938). Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. United Kingdom: Gainsborough Pictures.

The Lady Vanishes (1979). Directed by Anthony Page. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions/Rank Films.

The Last Man on Earth (1964). Directed by Sidney Salkow. USA/Italy: Associated Producers Inc./Produzioni La Regina.

Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires (1974). Directed by Roy Ward Baker. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

Les Diaboliques (1955). Directed by Henri-Geroges Clouzot. France: Cinèdis.

Let Me In (2010). Directed by Matt Reeves. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

Logan's Run (1976). Directed by Michael Anderson. USA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

Lord Dracula (1974). Written by Brian Hayles. BBC Radio 4. 27th April, 20:30.

Lust for a Vampire (1971). Directed by Jimmy Sangster. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

The Man Who Fell to Earth (1976). Directed by Nicolas Roeg. United Kingdom: British Lion Films.

The Man Who Knew Too Much (1934). Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. United Kingdom: Gaumont British.

Maniac (1963). Directed by Michael Carreras. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

Moon Zero Two (1969). Directed by Roy Ward Baker. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

Mothra vs. Godzilla (1964). Directed by Ishiro Honda. Japan: Toho.

The Mummy (1959). Directed by Terrence Fisher. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

The Mystery of the Mary Celeste (1935). Directed by Denison Clift. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

Night of the Living Dead (1968). Directed by George Romero. USA: Image Ten.

The Night Stalker (1972). Directed by John Llewellyn Moxey. USA: Associated Broadcasting Company.

The Omega Man (1971). Directed by Boris Sagal. USA: Walter Seltzer Productions.

The Omen (1976). Directed by Richard Donner. USA: 20th Century Fox.

On the Buses (1971). Directed by Harry Booth. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

One Million Years B.C. (1966). Directed by Don Chaffey. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

Orca (1977). Directed by Michael Anderson. USA: Dino De Laurentiis.

Paranoiac (1963). Directed by Freddie Francis. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

Peeping Tom (1960). Directed by Michael Powell. United Kingdom: Anglo-Amalgamated.

Piranhas (1976). Directed by Joe Dante. USA: New World Pictures.

The Plague of the Zombies (1966). Directed by John Gilling. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

Posters of the Moulin Rouge (1989). Written by John Peacock. BBC Radio 4. December 1989 [4 part series].

The Proprietor (1996). Directed by Ismail Merchant. USA: Merchant Ivory Productions.

Psycho (1960). Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. USA: Paramount.

Quatermass 2 (1957). Directed by Val Guest. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

Quatermass and the Pit (1967). Directed by Roy Ward Baker. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

The Quatermass Experiment (1953) [TV Series]. United Kingdom: BBC.

The Quatermass Xperiment (1955). Directed by Val Guest. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

The Railway Children (1970). Directed by Lionel Jeffries. United Kingdom: EMI Elstree.

The Return of Count Yorga (1971). Directed by Bob Kelljan. USA: Peppertree Productions Inc.

The Revenge of Frankenstein (1958). Directed by Terrence Fisher. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

Revenge of the Stepford Wives (1980). Directed by Robert Fuest. United Kingdom: Edgar J. Scherick Associates.

Rising Damp (1980). Directed by Joseph McGrath. United Kingdom: Cinema Arts International Production.

Rock, Rock, Rock! (1956). Directed by Will Price. USA: Vanguard Productions.

Rosemary's Baby (1968). Directed by Roman Polanski. USA: Paramount.

The Satanic Rites of Dracula (1973). Directed by Alan Gibson. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

Savages (1972). Directed by James Ivory. USA: Merchant Ivory Productions.

Scars of Dracula (1970). Directed by Roy Ward Baker. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

Schindler's List (1993). Directed by Steven Spielberg. USA: Amblin Entertainment.

Shatter (1974). Directed by Michael Carreras. United Kingdom/Hong Kong: Hammer Film Productions/Shaw Brothers Studio.

Slave Girls (1967). Directed by Michael Carreras. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

The Slipper and the Rose (1976). Directed by Bryan Forbes. United Kingdom: Paradine Co-Production.

The Snorkel (1958). Directed by Guy Green. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

Son of Dracula (1943). Directed by Curt Siodmak. USA: Universal Pictures.

Son of Frankenstein (1939). Directed by Rowland V. Lee. USA: Universal Pictures.

Son of Godzilla (1967). Directed by Jun Fukuda. Japan: Toho.

Soylent Green (1973). Directed by Richard Fleisher. USA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

Squanto: A Warriors Tale (1994). Directed by Xavier Koller. USA: Disney Studios.

Star Wars (1977). Directed by George Lucas. USA: 20th Century Fox.

Straight on Till Morning (1972). Directed by Peter Collinson. United Kingdom:
Hammer Film Productions.

The Stepford Children (1987). Directed by Alan J. Levi. USA: Edgar J. Scherick
Associates.

The Stepford Husbands (1996). Directed by Fred Walton. USA: Edgar J. Scherick
Associates.

The Stepford Wives (1975). Directed by Bryan Forbes. USA: Palomar Pictures.

The Stepford Wives (2004). Directed by Frank Oz. USA: DeLine Pictures.

The Stranglers of Bombay (1959). Directed by Terence Fisher. United Kingdom:
Hammer Film Productions.

The Tales of Beatrix Potter (1971). Directed by Reginald Mills. United Kingdom: EMI
Elstree.

Tales of Frankenstein (1958) [TV Pilot]. Directed by Curt Siodmak. United
Kingdom/USA: Hammer Film Productions/Screen Gems.

Taste of Fear (1961). Directed by Seth Holt. United Kingdom: Hammer Film
Productions.

Taste the Blood of Dracula (1970). Directed by Peter Sasdy. United Kingdom: Hammer
Film Productions.

Terror of Mechagodzilla (1975). Directed by Ishiro Honda. Japan: Toho.

To the Devil a Daughter (1976). Directed by Peter Sykes. United Kingdom: Hammer
Film Productions.

Twins of Evil (1971). Directed by John Hough. United Kingdom: Hammer Film
Productions.

The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula (2017). Directed by Mark Gatiss. BBC Radio 4.
28th October.

The Vampire Lovers (1970). Directed by Roy Ward Baker. United Kingdom: Hammer
Film Productions.

The Viking Queen (1967). Directed by Don Chaffey. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

Von Ryan's Express (1965). Directed by Mark Robson. USA: 20th Century Fox.

When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth (1970). Directed by Val Guest. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

Whispering Smith Hits London (1952). Directed by Francis Searle. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

The Wild Geese (1978). Directed by Andrew V. McLaglen. United Kingdom: Richmond Film Productions (West) Ltd.

The Wolf Man (1941). Directed by George Waggner. USA: Universal Pictures.

X the Unknown (1956). Directed by Leslie Norman. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

Yesterday's Enemy (1959). Directed by Val Guest. United Kingdom: Hammer Film Productions.

The Young Riders (1989-1992) [TV Series]. USA: American Broadcasting Company.