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Theodore Leinwand's The Great William: Writers Reading Shakespeare comprises seven chapter-length essays, each addressing literary response at the level of the individual reader. It's an often elusive topic; yet Leinwand's case studies are abundantly documented. Together, they invite a new view of reading, not merely as reception, but as itself a mode of appropriation.

Leinwand begins with Coleridge and Keats in the nineteenth century and moves on to Woolf in the early twentieth. He then settles down in the decades after World War Two, with Charles Olson, John Berryman, Allen Ginsberg, and Ted Hughes. The wide range of primary material includes Coleridge's lectures (in the records that survive); Keats's letters and marginalia; Woolf's reading notebooks; and the archives of the four postwar poets. Some of this material is well known, but much is not. Few Shakespeareans will have heard much about Berryman's unpublished commentaries on his own dreams (131-39).

While varying greatly in their origins and purposes, Leinwand's documents generally reflect two broad categories of response. One is "cognitive" — thinking about how a text is made and what it means. The other is "phenomenological" or "affective" — evoking sensory or emotional experiences associated with reading. Most of Leinwand's evidence skews toward the cognitive, as writers seek to explain Shakespeare. But phenomenological aspects also appear, and the cognitive can get mixed up with the affective.

The cognitive responses can look like appropriations, yielding versions of Shakespeare that serve a writer's practical needs. For example, pointing to Shakespeare's putative lapses can be liberating. Woolf thus depicts Shakespeare in her reading notes as hurried or distracted — a writer who doesn't always "take the trouble to work it out" when he hits a snag (quoted at 80). Perhaps his busy life in the theater won't let him "alone to think" (quoted at 82). Or maybe it's his temperament: in Coriolanus he seems "impatient," using "too few words for the meaning" (quoted at 83). While admiring the speed of Shakespeare's thoughts, Woolf also charges them with overtaking his pen,
overloading his words, and overtasking his readers. This is a less enchanted view of the poet whom we glimpse gauzily through the protagonist's eyes in *Orlando* — sitting alone, in a reverie, until he "very quickly" scribbles out his lines (Woolf 1956, 22).

In humanizing Shakespeare, Woolf was of course reacting to his deification by earlier writers such as Coleridge and Keats. Coleridge made Shakespearean lecturing a quasi-priestly occupation; only a sacred text could deserve such philological, psychological, and metaphysical labors. This vocation must have compensated somewhat for Coleridge's creative inhibitions — but also exacerbated them; officiating in the church of Shakespeare might be professionally enabling but poetically disabling. Keats, too, envisioned a demigod with "the utmost atchievement [sic] of human intellect prostrate beneath his indolent and kingly gaze" (quoted at 58); yet he was better than Coleridge at compartmentalizing this unattainable Shakespearean standard. In "On sitting down to read King Lear once again," which Leinwand compares in both its manuscript versions, Keats plans to emerge from the Shakespearean flames as a stronger poet (49-51).

If these Romantic cognitive appropriations gave us the deified modern Shakespeare, Leinwand's close reading of them reveals the complexity of this divinizing process. For example, two notions that echo through modern criticism are Coleridge's "myriad-minded Shakespeare" and Keats's "negative capability." Leinwand traces the first phrase back to 1801, when Coleridge writes "Shakespeare?" alongside the epithet "myriad-minded" in a Greek ecclesiastical text (23-24). It's a fitting origin for a phrase describing Shakespeare's supernal *nous* (Greek for "mind"). By contrast, "negative capability" fails to tell the whole story about the Keatsian Shakespeare, whose imaginative sympathy is not always quite as universal as this idea implies; as Leinwand shows, Keats sometimes allows Shakespeare a preferential love of "Beauty" that feels more sensual and partial (quoted at 50, 62).

By the mid-twentieth century, some poets' cognitive appropriations of Shakespeare are driven by the institutional economies of modernism and the academy: they see him as a source of cultural capital, potentially underwriting their own entry into the literary-canonical marketplace. In this way Olson, the Black Mountain poet and author of *The Maximus Poems*, enlists the later Shakespeare as an unlikely advocate for his own "objectist" or "projective" verse. On Olson's view, Shakespeare found "between H[amlet] & L[ear] . . . [that] the lyric & psychological [were] both dead" (quoted at 96), and accordingly began treating words as things. Equally self-serving, though in different ways, is Hughes's *Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being*. Leinwand finds some buried nuggets in this largely unread book: for example, Hughes makes the verbal figure *hendiadys* a miniature analogy of English cultural history (182-84). Yet Leinwand stops short of suggesting that we recuperate Hughes as a Shakespeare critic.
Next to Olson's and Hughes's grandiose rethinkings of Shakespeare, both Berryman's and Ginsberg's appear humble. Berryman poured countless hours into a *Lear* edition that he never finished. In his painstaking notes and lists — some reproduced as illustrations — Leinwand sees a "deep identification that compels one to rewrite the master's words," not so much by emending as by "reconfiguring" them (126). Then there are Berryman's wild Shakespearean glosses on his own dreams: his 154 dream analyses mirror the number of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* (132). Berryman occasionally asserts himself in his formal Shakespearean essays, which "pass judgment" on Shakespeare's style and even on his values (117-119). But on balance, he is servile — a Caliban to Shakespeare's Prospero. Leinwand calls him "Shakespeare's Berryman" (10).

Just one writer in *The Great William* seems to harbor no anxiety about Shakespeare, show no excessive deference, exhibit no restiveness under his authority. Ginsberg's recorded class lectures at Naropa in 1975 and 1980 depict Shakespeare as "funny" (quoted at 150). Although intellectually stimulated by Shakespeare, Ginsberg is far less reflexively cognitive — more intentionally phenomenological and affective — than Leinwand's other subjects. He praises Shakespeare's "William Carlos Williams-like" verses for their "tangible, corporeal, sensory, tactile . . . visual fact minute particulars" (quoted at 152). Of *The Tempest*, he says that Shakespeare does what "imagist poets have been working for eighty years" to do — "describe a cloud" — and that he delights us with "chiming" and "pretties" (quoted at 158, 159). This, Leinwand writes, is "reading Shakespeare by feel, by ear, and by mouth" (161).

Is Ginsberg uniquely free of the need to appropriate Shakespeare? Happy just to enjoy him? Leinwand does not go so far. Noting that Ginsberg once called Shakespeare "a primary source" (quoted at 142), Leinwand finds his poem "Kaddish" illuminated by Shakespearean parallels. These "Shakespearean shards" suggest that even the joyful Ginsberg used Shakespeare for his own artistic ends (164, 165).

Although Leinwand does not use the term "appropriation," his book implicitly supports the application of this concept to any substantial readerly engagement with Shakespeare. After all, reading as a cognitive activity is selective and shaped by readers' goals; so Andrew Elfenbein explains in his recent book *The Gist of Reading*, drawing on empirical research in psychology (Elfenbein 2018, 45). The traces of reading examined in *The Great William* attest to the variety of these readerly goals, as well as the intensity of the appropriative efforts that they can inspire.
References


interest "almost exclusively in exploring the conjunctions, the points of contact, between different realms of existence" (Richardson 2006, 3). André Breton, known as the founder of the movement, notes in the opening to his *Second Manifesto of Surrealism* that:

> Everything leads us to believe that there exists a certain point of the mind at which life and death, the real and the imaginary, past and future, the communicable and the incommunicable, the high and the low, cease to be perceived as contradiction. It would be in vain to see in surrealist activity any other motive than the hope of determining this point. (quoted in Rosemont 1978, 43)

That *Faust* represents an artistic manifestation of this project seems clear, since it so persistently juxtaposes and intermeshes different registers of reality.

But it is worth considering why Švankmajer might have been drawn to the Faust myth — or more specifically to Marlowe's *Faustus* — in order to make such a film. The Faust myth is clearly important to Švankmajer. *Faust* is not his first artistic engagement with it, since his first credit came as a puppeteer in *Johannes Doktor Faust*, a short film of 1958 by Emil Radok (Drábek and North 2011, 525). In a playful preface to the published screenplay of *Faust*, Švankmajer suggests that his personal attachment to the myth goes beyond the artistic, offering a striking account of a diabolic encounter during his college years:

> Whilst still a student I agreed with a friend (under the influence of reading gruesome horror stories) that one day we would call up Mephisto at midnight. We knew no magic formulae or magic incantations. We did not have a magic circle or any of the other necessary props. We just went into a newly-cut field and ran over the stubble calling to Mephisto. And he came. (Švankmajer 1996, vi)

The nature of Mephisto's arrival is sufficiently ambiguous to leave available a number of explanations: in the account, a gust of wind blows the two students into a ditch and then a car stops nearby, its door opening apparently in invitation. The two "did not doubt for an instant that it was Mephisto," but the effect of the encounter was to provoke questions about its nature: "Was it only a hallucination of an over-agitated imagination, or just some strange chance? Or was someone making fun of us? I don't know. We definitely experienced it as a terrifying reality which we had provoked ourselves" (Švankmajer 1996, vi).

How seriously we are meant to take Švankmajer in this para-textual account is unclear. We are left to ask — as the filmmaker claims to have done after his putative encounter with Mephisto — whether a trick is being played on us. But the point here seems to be that the myth
facilitates for Švankmajer an interplay between different orders of reality: whether the encounter is the result of a trick or not, as far as the collective perception of the two students was concerned, Mephisto's arrival was experienced as reality. Indeed, the experience is at its most interesting, from a surrealist perspective, if it is the product of a trick, since in that case it entails multiple realities existing simultaneously: Mephisto both has and has not appeared. It is significant that the state of mind required for this experience is facilitated by indulgence in literature (they are still "under the influence of reading gruesome horror stories"), especially as the account appears as an adjunct to a discussion of artistic creation being a negotiation between the registers of conscious planning and the "abyss of the unconscious" — between, as Richardson puts it in his identification of the surrealist focus, quoted earlier — two different realms of existence.

The notion that art or storytelling has the capacity to bring into contact different orders of reality is especially applicable to the Faust myth, since it is itself so concerned with interactions between the diabolic and the terrestrial worlds. This is particularly true of Marlowe's Faustus, in which the subject of the spatial relationship between earth and hell is raised in debate between Faustus and Mephistopheles:

FAUSTUS: Where are you damned?
MEPHISTOPHELES: In hell.
FAUSTUS: How comes it then that thou art out of hell?
MEPHISTOPHELES: Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it. (1.3.75-78)⁶

In this famous passage, which is one of the few parts of Marlowe's play to be reproduced verbatim in Švankmajer's film, hell and earth not only encounter one another but are depicted as coterminous; as Mephistopheles later states, "all places shall be hell that is not heaven" (2.1.129).

Marlowe's Faustus begins to look more like a proto-surrealist text, and its protagonist like a proto-surrealist, when one considers another statement by André Breton, made in his Surrealism and Painting. Breton declared that the ambition of surrealist art should be to

encompass the whole psychophysical field [constituted by] unfathomable depths [in which] there reigns the absence of contradiction, the relaxation of emotional tensions due to repression, a lack of the sense of time, and the replacement of external reality by a psychic reality obeying the pleasure principle. (quotted in Richardson 2006, 5)

The correlation is approximate, but each of the elements mentioned by Breton can be said to feature to some degree in Marlowe's play. Obedience to the pleasure principle is precisely what seems to govern Faustus's actions during the third and fourth acts of the play, between the sealing of the
bond and his return home on the eve of his damnation, as he hedonistically squanders his twenty-four years of earthly power. The play is in one sense structured around a very clear sense of time — twenty four years is the specific earthly duration that Faustus's adventures are given — but, as Joseph Candido has noted, its treatment of that duration is remarkably fluid, with the period of the bond elapsing in a seeming moment before the play culminates in Faustus's final hour which, marked by the sounding of a clock's chimes, speeds up as it progresses (Candido 2009).

Just as Švankmajer can write of a reality in which he encountered Mephisto irrespective of whether Mephisto was really there or not, the play dramatizes conflicting yet co-existent orders of time, on one level as the regular constant that is measured by a clock, and on another as the fluctuating and intangible force experienced by a human subject; for Candido, the play, and particularly the scene that dramatizes Faustus's final hour,

masterfully depicts the ironies of time as human beings tend to experience it — i.e.,

the paradox that time can seem virtually interminable during a period of relatively short duration and, alternatively, often seems to slip by unnoticed during a period of much greater length. (Candido 2009, 137-38)

Finally, Breton's urging of surrealist art to encompass "unfathomable depths [in which] reigns the absence of contradiction" calls directly to mind Faustus's desire to be resolved "of all ambiguities" (1.1.82) and his declaration that

Emperors and kings
Are but obeyed in their several provinces,
Nor can they raise the winds or rend the clouds;
But his dominion that exceeds in this [magic]
Stretcheth as far as doth the mind of man. (1.1.59-63)

As I have discussed elsewhere, Faustus's intellectual project is built on a foundation of occult hermetic philosophy that states as one of its central goals the achievement of a state of being in which contradictions become meaningless (Duxfield 2015, 65-88). The Pimander, the central text of hermetic philosophy, states that in order to achieve complete and divine knowledge, one must

Become higher than all heighth, lower than all depths, comprehend in thy self, the qualities of all Creatures, of the Fire, the Water, the Dry, and Moyst; and conceive likewise, that thou canst at once be every where in the Sea, in the Earth . . . Thou shalt at once understand thyself, not yet begotten in the Womb, young, old, to be dead, the things after death, and all these together. (Trismegistus 1657, H6r-H6v)
**Doctor Faustus**, then, with its blending of contradictory yet co-existent worlds, its protagonist set on the undermining of conventional intellectual distinctions, and its evocation of a state of mind unencumbered by binary oppositions, has already in place a set of dramatic effects and intellectual associations that render it fertile source material for a surrealist film maker.

Another important aspect of Marlowe's work as a source for Švankmajer is its status as a work specifically conceived for, and performed in, the public commercial theater. In this performance context, *Doctor Faustus* seems to have been a play with a unique capacity to trouble the distinction between world and play-world; this much is indicated by the notorious anecdote included in William Prynne's *Histriomastix*, among other places, which told of

> The visible apparition of the Devill on the stage at the Belsavage Play-house, in Queen Elizabeth's dayes (to the great amazement both of the actors and the spectators) while they were profanely playing the History of Faustus (the truth of which I have heard from many now alive, who well remember it) there being some distracted with that feareful sight. (quoted in Chambers 1923, 423-24)

This story seems to have gained currency as a myth, as another early modern account tells of a performance in Exeter during which the acting company received an unwelcome addition to its personnel: "as Faustus was busie in his magickall invocations . . . they were all persuaded, there was one devell too many amongst them" (quoted in Chambers 1923, 424). Whatever credence one pays to these accounts (and Prynne's, appearing as it does in a work of puritanical antitheatrical persuasion, would seem to have a clear motive to associate the performance of the play with the real appearance of the devil), they bespeak an anxiety about this specific play's potential to occasion contact between "real," theatrical, and diabolical realms.

Andrew Sofer has elegantly attributed this power to the relationship between *performance* and *performativity*: since a conjuration is a performative speech act — that is, an utterance which performs an action (e.g., "I declare this store open") — its utterance, whether in earnest and in private or as part of a theatrical performance on a public stage, carries the threat of being successful in its designated purpose. "For Elizabethans," Sofer suggests, "the power to conjure inhered in the utterance itself . . . rather than in the will or intention of the speaker" (Sofer 2009, 4). For that reason, the play was able to create a heightened state of receptivity to otherworldly experience, which again recalls Švankmajer's Mephistophelian encounter:

> It was precisely the potential for inadvertent magic on the part of the players — the belief that Faustus's spells might operate independent of actor and character — that thrilled and
alarmed Elizabethan audiences, causing them to see devils that were not literally there. (Sofer 2009, 2-3)

If, as Richardson suggests, surrealism's central focus is on "the conjunctions, the points of contact, between different realms of existence," then there could hardly be richer source material than Doctor Faustus (Richardson 2006, 4).

**Magic and Artifice: Švankmajer's *Faust* and Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus***

Having established some commonalities between the broader surrealist filmmaking project and the dramatic and intellectual world of *Doctor Faustus*, the rest of this essay will consider in detail the ways in which Švankmajer's *Faust* appropriates, manipulates, and reinvents specific aspects of Marlowe's play. In particular, I wish to examine the uses that Švankmajer makes of a metatheatrical strain that numerous critics have identified in the play.

As tends to be pointed out, *Doctor Faustus* is a play full of performances. Lucifer and Mephistopheles stage them at crucial times in order to divert Faustus's attention when it seems possible that he might turn to God. Thus, at the moment when the inscription "*homo fuge*" appears on Faustus's arm in the act of signing the deed, Mephistopheles stages a dance of devils "somewhat to delight his mind" (2.1.81-82), and later, when Faustus appears to be on the brink of repentance, Lucifer introduces the pageant of the seven deadly sins, inviting his victim to "mark this show" (2.3.105). Faustus later becomes a director of theatrical spectacles himself. The conjuring of Alexander the Great and his paramour for the entertainment of the Emperor Charles V is a case in point. Before summoning Alexander, Faustus offers Charles an honest account of the nature of the spectacle he is about to witness:

> But if it like your Grace, it is not in my ability to present before your eyes the true substantial bodies of those deceased princes, which long since are consumed to dust . . . But such spirits as can lively resemble Alexander and his paramour shall appear before your Grace in that manner that they best lived in, in their most flourishing estate (4.1.47-56)

By drawing attention to the artificiality of his own staged spectacle, Faustus also momentarily underscores the artificiality of the larger performance of which it is a part: the audience is not about to see a spirit in the likeness of Alexander, but an actor representing a spirit in the likeness of Alexander. Faustus's insistence on the theatricality of his show takes on a tragically ironic dimension later in the play, when he is unable to discern the same artificiality in Mephistopheles's summoning of Helen of Troy: it is at this point in the play that Faustus's embrace of illusory pleasures becomes complete.
Sara Munson Deats has noted the play's association of magic with theatrical performance, both with respect to the episodes just mentioned and in terms of its vocabulary. She points out that "the theatrical terms art, show, perform, and shadow are linked with magic to accentuate the similarities between these two arts that employ fantasy and illusion as their media" (Deats 2008, 22). For Deats, the play's equation of theatrical performance with magic represents an engagement with similar associations made in puritan anti-theatrical rhetoric and thereby ascribes to the theater some of the moral and theological taint associated with Renaissance occultism. As such, the play reveals an ambivalence on the part of the playwright towards the profession to which he belonged. But the relationship also works in the opposite direction. When magic and theater are associated in this way, the artificiality of theater — so often self-reflexively foregrounded by its most prominent practitioners — serves as an analogue of the illusoriness of any success, fame, or achievement derived from the earthly practice of magic or the pursuit of diabolical alliances. Faustus's apparent failure to understand this at the point of the Helen of Troy episode makes a central contribution to his downfall.

The association between occult magic and theatrical performance is, if anything, insisted upon to an even greater extent in Švankmajer's film than it is in Marlowe's play. When Faust follows the directions on the map given to him by Valdes and Cornelius, he discovers at the marked destination a theatrical dressing room. Apparently already aware of the action that the situation requires, Faust sits at a dressing table and assumes the costume of a Renaissance nobleman, complete with skin-whitening makeup, a wig, and a bushy false beard (a suggestion of the magician is added by a starry cape). Here, the ordinary, white-collar Faust engages in the kind of imaginary social mobility that so alarmed early modern anti-theatrical writers. What is striking about this scene is how unfazed Faust is by suddenly assuming the role of an actor; as Shera observes,

initially drawn . . . into a theatre, Faustus proceeds to behave as though he is vaguely familiar with the demands of this new world. He knows where to find the key to enter the dressing room and, later, he almost automatically applies his costume and stage makeup. With all the skills of a character in a dream, Faustus prepares for his impending theatrical role as though it were strangely routine. (Shera 2001, 137)

Shera makes this observation as part of a reading of the film as engaging with the psychoanalytic concept of the uncanny, implying that Faust's assumption of his new role in some way represents a return of the repressed. This is a reading that takes on an added dimension when considered in relation to a series of episodes that initially seem to be incidental. First, while perusing his map on his way into the theater Faust encounters a man fleeing the building in a state of terror. Secondly,
Faust crosses paths on a couple of occasions later in the film with an elderly and apparently destitute man carrying a severed leg wrapped in newspaper. These scenes find their significance in the film's dénouement, when Faust, attempting to escape the devils that have come to collect his soul, runs from the theater, and, in a reversal of the earlier scene, passes another man entering with a copy of Valdes and Cornelius's map. Shortly after, when Faust is mowed down and killed by a driverless car, the elderly man arrives at the scene and furtively carries away his leg, which (like that of his Marlovian forebearer) has been severed in the collision. The implication is clear: everything that has happened in the film has already happened before and is already happening again. Thus, Faust appears familiar with his actorly role because he — or at least previous incarnations of him — has already played it countless times before.

Equally, though, Faust's familiarity with his new role is consistent with other metacinematic techniques that the scene employs. As the camera positions itself behind Faust and directs the spectator's gaze towards his reflection in a mirror, the composition incorporates an effective screen-within-a-screen. Once Faust has finished putting on his costume, a new camera angle produces a close, front-on view of Faust's face (presumably still in the mirror, although by now its frame is outside the frame of the shot), at which point his gaze fixes directly on the camera and he sticks out his tongue. The deployment of mirrors and the direct gaze at the camera are both identified by Sarah Hatchuel as techniques through which cinematic adaptors of Shakespearean drama have sought to reproduce or transpose the effect of metatheater onto the screen, making the spectator aware of the presence both of the camera and of the actor (Hatchuel 2004, 94-126). As such, the audience sees in this moment not just Faust-as-actor, but actor-as-Faust-as-actor; with this effect in mind, the cosy familiarity with the theater dressing room setting makes sense, particularly in the case of Petr Cepek, who was primarily known for a distinguished career in Czech theater.

Despite Faust's apparent comfort in the dressing room environment, he soon shows himself to be anxious at the prospect of performance before an audience. In another scene that encourages an alienating recognition of the mechanics of the filmic medium, Faust, now fully regaled in costume, wanders around the wings of the theater and finds his way onto the stage. Peeping through the curtain, he sees (and, since at this moment the camera adopts his viewpoint, the audience also sees) people in modern dress filing into an auditorium, with the usual hum and chatter that constitutes the aural build up to a theatrical performance. What needs to be noted here, though, is that this generic auditorium might as easily be that of a cinema: while Faust is ostensibly looking out from the curtain onto the audience in a theater, any audience that happens to be watching Faust in a cinema is confronted at this point with what might be taken as a reflection of itself approximately fifteen minutes earlier, preparing to engage in the act of watching the film itself.
If this reflection jolts the audience members into awareness of their status as spectators, the sudden awareness of being watched seems to disturb Faust, whose response is to produce a penknife from his pocket and cut a vertical slash into the theatrical backcloth, through which he then escapes. In retreating from a confrontation with the "reality" of the theater/cinema audience, Faust moves into another order of reality that exists behind the stage or screen. In this realm, Faust's awareness of illusion, like that of Marlowe's Faustus before him, seems to melt away, as he engages with clay figures and with wooden marionettes without betraying any understanding of their artificiality. However, as a general rule (although, as I have already mentioned, there are complications to this generalization), the further Faust progresses in his commitment to magic, and the less he seems aware of the nature of the illusions around him, the more the film seems to advertise its artifice to its audience.

The most striking manifestation of this occurs, in another correlation with Marlowe's play, at the utterance of a performative speech act. Immediately before the signing of the deed, Mephisto (in one of the few passages — each of which is concerned with the summoning of Mephistopheles and the completion of the deal — to quote Marlowe directly), threatens to return to Hell if Faust will not formally hand over possession of his soul. At Faust's response — "Stay, Mephistophilis! / Aye, Mephistophilis, I give it thee" — a giant, wooden marionette's head lowers onto the head of Faust, and the rest of the scene, like several subsequent scenes, is performed in the medium of puppetry (57:40-58:30). Once this transformation has taken place, both the content and the delivery of the verse also becomes distinctly wooden, with undue emphasis and metrical irregularity drawing attention to the clumsiness of the rhyming verse. As tiny good angels repeatedly break the quills with which Faust attempts to sign the deed, the following dialogue is delivered with self-conscious bombast:

FAUST: A mystery, as you see
My quill lies snapped in two upon the floor.
MPanel: Do not prevaricate, you've plenty more.
You cannot now deny what we've agreed
So with your blood come sign the deed!
FAUST: Look, Mephisto, stranger still:
Again you see upon the floor a broken quill.
MPanel: Faustus, you try my patience sorely
Take another quill and sign the deed:
My acolytes stand ready and this time you'll succeed. (58:40-1:00:20)
The contrast with the sonorous Marlovian blank verse spoken only moments before is stark.

This heightened artifice is also evident in episodes equivalent to the two scenes from Marlowe's play discussed above, namely, the entertainment of Charles V and the liaison with the succubus Helen of Troy. In the first of these equivalent scenes, again performed in the medium of puppetry, Faust travels to Portugal, where he has heard that the King is celebrating a birthday. Like Charles, the king requests to see a show — in this case, not Alexander and his paramour, but the slaying of Goliath by David. After Faust very audibly calls for Mephisto's help (Marlowe's Faustus is much more careful to conceal his secondary role in the production of his illusions), cardboard cut-out figures representing the biblical personages are raised in modest puffs of smoke and are visibly held up from behind by wooden puppet devils. The already obvious ruse disintegrates entirely when Goliath is dropped by his operators, and the King, after some initial amazement at the scene, raises the alarm, occasioning the destruction of his kingdom at Faust's orders.

In the film, as in the play, Faust later becomes the victim rather than the orchestrator of one of these diabolical illusions. In the film's most disturbing scene, Faust, on the point of repentance, is presented with Helen, which in this case is one of the devil puppets seen regularly in the film, disguised by the addition of a doll-like mask and wig, a white gown, and an imitation vagina created by the means of a hand drill and a pubic wig. Faust removes his marionette's mask and pursues the puppet Helen in his human form, as if the exchange were happening on the plane of reality (although, crucially, the puppeteer's rod remains fixed to the top of his head). Only after chasing the succubus into the crypt of a ruined cathedral and having intercourse with it does Faust realize his error; as he catches sight of the devil's red, wooden shell underneath the disguise, his instinctive response — to vomit — highlights the difference between his own fleshy, visceral body and the grotesque, chattering, wooden puppet with which he has just copulated. As Hames puts it, "the episode joins the real and the imaginary in a tangible, nauseous and disruptive manner" (Hames 2008a, 92).

The bringing together of live acting and puppetry, of realist representation with deliberately archaic and alienating types of performance, is part of the film's engagement with the surrealist project of examining the points at which different orders of reality meet. While this might seem like a particularly modern — or perhaps postmodern (although Švankmajer would likely reject the application of the term to his work) — device, it has a model in Marlowe's play. As I have noted elsewhere, critics writing on Doctor Faustus have tended to observe the coexistence of dual generic frameworks in the play, noting its capacity to be read either as a tragedy depicting the fate of a flawed but admirable Renaissance hero whose resistance to theocratic dogma goes a step too far,
or as a medieval morality play, at the center of which is a clear admonition against wondering at unlawful things (Duxfield 2015, 65-74). This generic commingling does not simply make available multiple responses to the play's central character, but brings together, as Švankmajer's film does, approaches to representation that are associated with distinct historical moments and that differ on a conceptual level.

In her influential study of the early modern subject as realized on stage, Catherine Belsey distinguishes between two modes of staging: the emblematic, associated with medieval drama and characterized by figures standing as abstractions, and the illusionistic, which was emergent on the early modern stage and which aimed to give the impression of human characters with interior lives. In Belsey's terms, "[w]hile emblematic staging displays the signified, makes meaning visible, illusionism reproduces the referent, replicates what is already visible, already known" (Belsey 1985, 24). For Belsey, it is key that the illusionist mode is only emergent and not yet entirely dominant during the heyday of early modern English drama; both modes of representation coexist on the stage throughout the period. Darryl Grantley makes a similar point with specific reference to Marlowe:

> It could be argued that what we see in Marlowe . . . is effectively a simultaneity and coexistence of what might be termed the figural impulse, i.e., towards dramatic persona as paradigm or discursive category, and the subjective impulse, i.e., towards interiority and psychological integrity, in short that dramatic persona in Marlowe operates as both figure and character. (Grantley 1996, 227)

Thus, Faustus's agonizing over the destination of his soul is staged both emblematically by devices such as the presence of good and bad angels competing for influence over his actions, and illusionistically through features such as the great final soliloquy, which gives the impression of a psychologically complex human subject anguished by the realization of his fate.

What is important with respect to the current discussion is that the emblematic mode, though still present in Marlowe's theater and particularly in Faustus, is by this time well into the process of becoming outmoded. This juxtaposition of recognizably older forms with strikingly new modes of representation gives those older devices a metatheatrical quality. Grantley writes that

> The very outdatedness of the devils as a dramatic device underlines their identity as theatrical mechanisms, in a sort of alienation effect and this is further underlined by the fact that Marlowe pulls out all of the theatrical stops: they enter with thunder and lightning, and on occasion with fireworks. (Grantley 1996, 234)
To an Elizabethan audience, then, the play's more medieval, more emblematic aspects might have had a similar effect to that which the puppetry sequences in Švankmajer's *Faust* have on a modern viewer: they stand out as self-consciously theatrical, nakedly artificial, and oddly anachronistic. Indeed, Švankmajer encourages this effect in his film by giving his puppets a chipped and battered appearance that invests them with a sense of antiquity; these devils seem to be from another time as well as another world.

Finally, as Joel Altman has noted, the emblematic mode of representation has implications for the autonomy of the central character (Altman 1978, 381-82). When Faustus deliberates over the direction of his studies at the beginning of the play, the audience is given the impression of a subject with an interior life with the capacity to make choices. When, however, his interior deliberation is represented emblematically — when his thoughts are dramatized by the opposing persuasions of the good and bad angels — Faustus is deprived of any sense of agency, becoming instead the object of a conflict between external opposing forces. A similar effect is produced by Švankmajer's puppetry, although here it is more explicit. A puppet, after all, requires a puppeteer. When Faust promises to give his soul to Mephisto and the marionette's head is lowered onto his shoulders, he not only enters into a different order of reality but also visibly cedes control of his being, as his movements are operated in these scenes by a clearly visible pair of hands. Faust may have entered an illusory world, but his loss of self-determination is all too real.

**Conclusion**

I have not attempted to offer a comprehensive reading of Švankmajer's *Faust* in this essay. His is an enigmatic film susceptible to countless interpretations and derived from an eclectic selection of sources, and I make no claim to having arrived at a fixed sense of its overall meaning (if it can be said to possess such a thing) here. What I hope to have shown, however, are some of the complex ways in which the film engages with its Marlovian source. While the film's playful navigation between different orders of reality and commingling of variant artistic media are characteristic of a markedly twentieth-century set of surrealist interests, on a certain level these are interests that are shared by Marlowe's sixteenth-century play. Where Švankmajer's film sets the puppetry of old Czech tradition alongside realist acting and modern animation, Marlowe's play intersperses the emblematic mode of the medieval theater with the illusionistic mode of the Renaissance and beyond. Where *Faustus* employs metatheatrical techniques to underscore the illusoriness of the fruits of diabolical magic, *Faust* achieves a similar effect through a comparable cinematic self-reflexiveness. The necessary material for a surrealist filmmaker, it seems, is already present in
lawyer, the man who "legitimizes" the brutal and ruthless world in which Omkara and Tyagi find and lose whatever used to make them "brothers," looks at his disowned child with an expression that seems to prove that his hatred for the half-caste daughter-abductor can still make room for a bit of male-bonding. At the same time, however, the look in the eyes of Omkara is impossible to discern — a masterful decision by Bhardwaj, who will nonetheless clarify our doubts about it with the final shot in his film: Dolly, still wearing her bridal clothes, dead on her bed, swings above the underlying body of Omkara (figures 26a and 26b), as if they were the testimony of a strange cult in which goddess and worshipper can never find grounds to come together in terms other than those of a received fantasy. The final shot of Huapango speaks the same language as the camera, full-tilt overhead, pans over the dead couple, showing Julia, still in her gorgeous and dignified huasteco costume, and Otilio in his robe, pajamas, and cast, the hole in his head making a sharp contrast with the flowers on her head, looking somewhat like a dog at her feet — crippled, useless, a sad tribute at the shrine that he created for his virginal wife after killing her (figure 27).

Like Othello, both Huapango and Omkara make systemic violence prevail over subjects that only too late awaken to their tragic outcome. Unlike in Shakespeare, the Othello characters of these films are less tragic figures than criminals — blinded, yet still criminal. Both films "un-moor" the "Moor of Venice" by adapting the title part as a more sharply defined "other" than the still hard-to-pin-down dramatis persona that Shakespeare wrote. But this sharpens the spectator's attention, not only to the tragic conditions but also to the effects and implications of his crime, an artistic goal less grandiose but made more urgent by the current social and domestic violence in both the Indian and the Mexican contexts. In the criminal world of Omkara, male standards apply in full strength of violence as the driving force of social relations, while in Huapango they seem even more harmful, since their violence is concealed in the fabric of social convention. The final words of Tyagi to Omkara suggest what brings about these similar processes of destruction and self-destruction — "My truth and my lies have all got blurred together" (Omkara 12006) — just like the fantasies of Santiago, which from the fiction of a rehearsal, on screen become the reality of a fiction of love that has been real too long.

Notes
2. See, however, Burnett 2008.
3. This paper was originally presented in the panel "Un-mooring the Moor Beyond Cultural Borders," which I organized for the 2009 meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America in Washington, D.C.

4. Douglas Lanier has included the film at least since 2009 in his excellent lectures on the history of Othello on screen, and Burnett has presented papers including the film at least three times in international events since 2010; both must be preparing or publishing their studies as I revise this.

5. See Nishi Pulugurtha 2009, especially 107.

6. Figure 1 is interestingly similar to figure 3 (Santiago and Rodrigo from Huapango): both show silhouettes of male complicity in the dark.

7. Comprising the south of the state of Tamaulipas, and the northeast sections of San Luis Potosí, Querétaro and Hidalgo, as well as the north of Veracruz, in eastern Mexico.

8. For general information on this subject, see García Riera (1992).

9. For a thorough discussion of the genre, see Ayala Blanco (1993), especially 54-55.

10. To a Spanish speaker, the name Sant-Iago (Saint Jacques or Saint James) constitutes a self-evident irony. Additionally ironic — and mere coincidence in Shakespeare, though arguably an in-joke of the film — is the well-known Spanish tradition that identifies Saint James as a "Moor-killer" (Santiago Matamoros).

11. Tamaulipas is the easternmost state on the Mexico-U.S. border, and perhaps the most severely hit by the current wave of criminal violence; curiously, one of its main towns is called Matamoros. Huapango, released in 2003, makes no reference whatsoever to such violence. On the other hand, the film was not shot in Tamaulipas but on locations in or much closer to Mexico City.

12. Significantly, a song Otilio sings to Julia at their wedding feast is not a huapango but a waltz and bespeaks a love "triumphant."

13. For an entrance point into this phenomenon, see http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d26MMTRALkc.


15. A telling piece of trivia: the motto of the State of Jalisco's Association of Charros (roughly, "cowboys," now a category indicating men very adept at horse-riding and at a variety of Mexican rodeo activities) remains "Patria, Mujer y Caballo" ("Fatherland, Woman, and Horse"), a variation on the old motto of the National Federation of Charros, where the last two terms were actually inverted.
16. Curiously, throughout *Huapango* Otilio calls Julia *muñequita* — literally, "dolly."
References


