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A Constructed Evil

by

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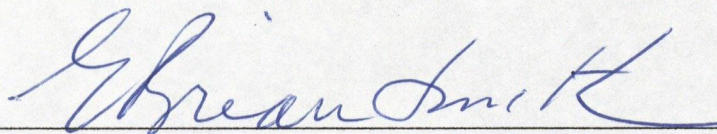
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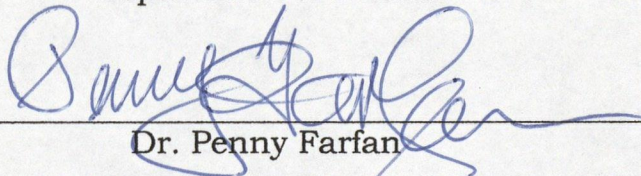
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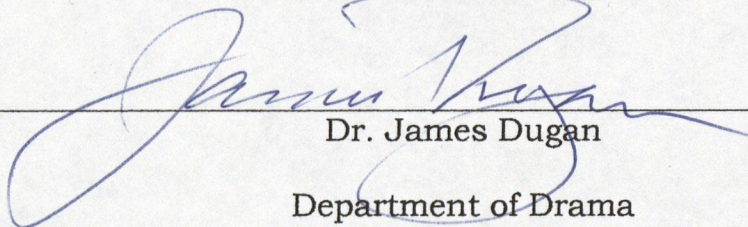
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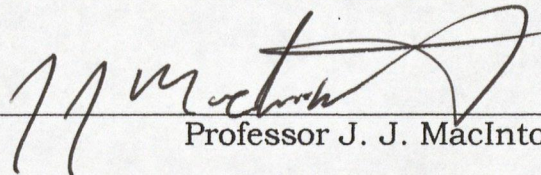
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Abstract

This document is a record of the directorial process involved in the development of the thesis production of Christopher Marlowe's, The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus, presented by the Department of Drama at the University of Calgary from November 27 to December 8, 2001. The Introduction outlines the basic questions that I began the process of directing with. Chapter One describes the historical and intellectual context of the thesis production. Chapter Two outlines the theoretical interpretation of my reading of the text and describes concepts that were derived from that reading. Chapter Three describes the process that was used to develop a performance text from the theoretical conceptual ideas, and includes an edited production journal that tracks the development of the design, rehearsal, and performance periods. Chapter Four is a retrospective of the elements of the thesis production, with commentary on the relative success of the conceptual theoretical interpretations and of the mise-en-scène.

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For My Family

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Introduction

My intention in this paper is to describe the process of directing the Tragical History of Doctor Faustus by Christopher Marlowe, that was staged in the Reeve Theatre of the University of Calgary between November 27 and December 8, 2001. I will try to give the reader a sense of the process that resulted in what appeared on stage. The art of directing is complex. The journey, from the moment the idea to produce this play as my thesis production occurred, to the performance that took place, was long and had many paths of exploration to consider and travel. I had much to discover. I also had much to learn about producing such a play in the environment of an educational institution.

I had to ask many questions: about content, production process, acting methods, design, special effects, the intent of the production and ultimately the politics of presenting a classical play in a time of “isms” and theory that in general have devolved as responses to classical literature. I will try to show how I approached these questions and how I came about asking them in the first place. I will refer to theoretical ideas that informed me during the journey, but I will not take the time and space to reproduce that research here. The amount of critical discourse on the script of Dr. Faustus is prodigious. The many interpretations of the meaning of the play, like the life of Marlowe himself, are ambiguous.

It is this ambiguity that I found to be core to the mystery of the play and to the mystery of undertaking a production of it.

My role as a director is to help a company of actors, designers and technicians realise a performance that produces in the minds of the spectator the question of “why does Faustus do what he does?” Further, keeping with the idea that a performance must be historicized in the Brechtian sense, I must find a way to relate that question to a contemporary understanding of evil, the source of evil and the manifestation or embodiment of that evil in action. The “why” of Faustus’ choices and his desires is a subject that fills libraries with volumes of speculation, exegesis, and hermeneutics. I am not going into that kind of development in this paper. My research questions are not primarily concerned with an academic understanding or a critical analysis of the play. I am concerned, however, with how to take the questions raised by critical exploration of the text to the stage.

Having said that my intention was not purely academic, I must add that I experimented with intellectual concepts based on theoretical critical writings and ideas that I have been exposed to during the research period and from required courses in the graduate programme of the Department of Drama. In my career as a director in the theatre I had made it a point to avoid conceptualising my work. My reasoning in this regard is due to the fact that I had worked as and with conceptual artists in the 1970’s. I had concluded that while there might be merit in the idea

that art is fundamentally a process of the mind, the execution of ideas based in cognitive processes inevitably results in unexpected development during production. This “unexpected development” became what I eventually came to expect. It was in fact, to my way of thinking, the core of the creative process. I noticed that if I insisted on keeping to an “original” concept, I was forced into trying to make my “unexpected developments” fit a plan that didn’t want to accept them. It was a bit like trying to fit Cinderella’s glass slipper on the foot of the nasty stepsister, Cinderella’s slipper being the unexpected development. So, in reaction to this I became what might be termed an “anti-conceptual” artist.

However, my personal philosophy contains a self-imposed tenet that goes something like, “I should try as many things in life as possible in order to have an experiential foundation for my opinions”. I thought that I should try to apply some concepts, gleaned from the theoretical and critical research mentioned above, to my thesis production. The university seemed the right place to experiment with theoretical concepts.

I will endeavour to explain these concepts, their sources and their development in this support document. I will comment on the relative success of them during the performance of the thesis production in the retrospective part of this paper.

Chapter One: Historical and Intellectual Context

Marlowe

Ambiguity is the first word that comes to mind when trying to think of a way to describe the discourse around The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus. There are diametrically opposed views on most aspects of the play, from the source of the texts, to the meaning of the play. Like the play, the accounts of the life of Christopher Marlowe and certainly of his death are ambiguous too. Given the strange and conflicting accounts of his violent death and the speculation surrounding the reasons for his demise, I thought it important to consider the possibility that the writing of Dr. Faustus might be connected to his murder. It is thought to be the last thing that he wrote and he was dead within three years of its premier performances. If there is a connection between the play and his death, then the play in its time might have been considered dangerous by those that felt threatened by it. The question then becomes why it might be so? What is it about the play that could cause a fearful reaction from those in power?

Marlowe was born to what would now be termed working class parents. Like Faustus who was "...born of parents base of stock..." he was able to find his way into the university and eventually receive a degree. Marlowe's degree, however, was bestowed only on recommendation of the Queen's Privy Council, the same council that may

have conspired in his death. Though he completed his undergraduate degree he was absent so much from his graduate studies, he would likely not have received a degree otherwise.

Marlowe worked for the secret service of the Queen of England controlled by Lord Walsingham. It is probable that Marlowe knew a great deal about what went on in the halls of power behind the facades of moral correctness erected over time to conceal the truth of the behaviour of the ruling class. He was writing from an informed position when it came to the motivations of members of the hierarchy. There is certainly a connection between the ideas in the play and the charges of atheism against Marlowe. Atheism at the time was directly connected to the similar charge of being Machiavellian, which in turn was analogous to being a supporter of the devil. To be an atheist invited burning at the stake, the same punishment reserved for heretics and witches.

Given what we know about how even the monarchy was manipulated in the earlier part of the century, Machiavelli “interpreted” was the likely operational management model for those within the power structure during the Elizabethan era. It would follow that anyone who was within the circle of influence, or had information about what palace life was really like, would seem a threat under the circumstances of a trial. To possess information that might harm the aristocracy’s image of propriety and, worse, perhaps show them to be Machiavellian, would be

to possess possibly dangerous information. This could threaten not only position but also life itself.

There is no proof of a link between the play and Marlowe's death. At best there is a circumstantial argument that the play was part of the case against him but the connection was made in my mind and affected the direction and interpretation of my production. I wondered why the play might have been seen as threatening. Though the play as published is derived from the English translation of the German Faustbuch, Marlowe has included dramatic action, not in that source, that implies criticism of political structures while appearing to be a moral sermon in support of the acceptable line of thought of his day. This is a "Machiavellian" strategy in and of itself.

Marlowe may have joined the School of Night, a secret society that included intellectuals and alchemists, mathematicians, peers of the realm and members of the Privy Council to Elizabeth. At the meetings of the School of Night it is thought that, among other things, discussions took place regarding the existence of the soul in man and the credibility of the scriptures. If Marlowe was working for the establishment and at the same time meeting with others of the establishment to question the values that were publicly encouraged and even demanded, then he had placed himself in a dangerous and rebellious position.

Arrested and charged with atheism, he was never to stand trial in the Star Chamber court because he was murdered before that could

happen. The theories regarding a conspiracy to kill him are numerous. Until recently there were at least seven theories as to why he was killed, not including the official one given on the coroner's report that he was killed in a scuffle over the reckoning of a tavern bill.

“Was he: (a) murdered on the orders of the earl of Essex, because a plot to use Marlowe to discredit Raleigh (sic) had gone wrong? (b) murdered on the orders of Sir Walter himself, to prevent him revealing Raleigh's atheism? (c) murdered by the security apparatus because he was a threat to the regime? (d) murdered by those planning the succession of Scotland's James VI to the English throne, because he knew too much? (e) murdered by William Shakespeare, because Marlowe was a better playwright? Or (f) not murdered at all, but spirited away to Europe, where he wrote Shakespeare's plays?” (Haigh 16)

There is an eighth and even more plausible theory that the Privy Council had him killed because Marlowe would have revealed, during a trial, that the very judges who were hearing his case were themselves atheists and Machiavellian. Whatever the reason Marlowe was killed, conspiratorial or not, it is known that he was accused of dangerous

thinking. Thomas Kydd was tortured into making the accusations of atheism against Marlowe. Writing that was discrediting to the crown was found in Kydd's possession. Kydd maintained that it was the writing of Marlowe, left among the papers of Kydd. Kydd was placed on the rack and came away a broken man. He died within a year of the torture, embittered towards both the Privy Council and Marlowe. It may be that the reason it took so long to publish the script of Dr. Faustus was that it was too dangerous to be associated with the writer.

The writing of the play is ascribed to Marlowe because of the language and there is little doubt that he is the author. As to whether or not the whole play was even published is yet one more ambiguous aspect to consider when contemplating a production of it. The life of Marlowe the artist and intellectual and the life of Marlowe the political activist and questioner of things sacred are overlapping and rife with inconsistencies. For sure his work caused a lot of excitement. It may have caused his death. Certainly it caused someone in the Privy Council to take the charges of atheism against Marlowe seriously enough to have him arraigned for an inquisition.

I asked the question: why might there be so much fuss over what appears to be a morality play that sends sinners to Hell? What context was Marlowe writing in? What was his environment and how had it been created? What kind of world did Marlowe inhabit and what were its

values? Most important to trying to understand this play was the question: What is evil?

How the latter question was answered partially defined the development of Christianity. The interpretation of Christianity became a key element in the development of Europe. The evolution of monarchy in Europe is interwoven with the development of the power of the Church. The Church created the original Inquisition as an outgrowth of its ability to inspire crusades against any thinking that challenged its version of cosmological and empirical order. That order defined the hierarchy of power on earth based on its definitions of good and evil. The hierarchical structures of state and church controlled the underlying philosophical, theological and political systems that defined “correctness” in the behaviour of the culture of Europe. In Dr. Faustus, Marlowe holds up these systems of thought for question and examination. In doing so, Marlowe opens the door for debate on the need to be subject to these concepts as defined by the hierarchies. He purposely renders the hierarchies as being hypocritical in their behaviour. He shows the weakness of those who command respect but deserve little of it. By this device, Marlowe parallels the personal choices of Faustus that become the focus of the narrative with his critique on the self-serving nature of those that rule. The reader is faced with the questions of personal position regarding good and evil action. The identification of the self

within the complex world of the character that is Faustus is found in his desire to be more important and powerful than self-perception allows.

Marlowe writes a play that deals with concepts and thought regarding propriety and allegiance to aristocracy but also to the ethics associated with higher learning. Marlowe is critical of how that learning is applied. Like the more direct attack on obvious power structures and their abuses, Marlowe criticises the academy and its lack of ability to turn all its knowledge to any practical use other than to support the status quo. The shape of power comes under attack through the story of Dr. Faustus.

A History of Evil

What exactly is it that Faustus challenges when it is represented as The Pit of Hell? The Hell described by Evil Angel in the last act is graphic enough to get a picture of what it was imagined to be in Marlowe's time. When the Pit is opened to reveal to Faustus the Hell he did not see on his first tour as a guest of Lucifer, Evil Angel tells him:

Now Faustus, let thine eyes with horror stare
 Into that vast perpetual torture-house.
 There are the furies tossing damned souls
 On burning forks. Their bodies broil in lead.
 There are live quarters broiling on the coals

That ne'er can die. This ever-burning chair
 Is for o'er tortured souls to rest them in.
 These, that are fed with sops of flaming fire,
 Were gluttons, and loved only delicates,
 And laughed to see the poor starve at their gates.

(Act 5, Sc. 2, ll. 126-134)

The common image of Hell at the time of the play's writing is not an existential entrapment as described by the character of Garcin in Jean Paul Sartre's play, No Exit, where "Hell is___other people" (47). Hell is relevant, in fact, to the lives of the people who lived in the period of the play's writing. The Church of Rome and the prelates and deacons of Calvinist England alike were responsible for the models of the Hell that Marlowe describes. The image of Hell was meant to be frightening. The Church was using methods of questioning that required the invention of machinery and processes that demonstrated the results of being a sinner without any equivocation whatsoever. There are plenty of references when it comes to understanding the nature of the physical pain that is associated with the renaissance perception of Hell and the fate that awaits Faustus when his contract is due. By the time of Marlowe, the image of the Devil and where the damned were bound had progressed through many stages.

Central to my thesis is that Marlowe is critical of hierarchy and its manipulation of political power to serve egoistic desires. The behaviour of

the hierarchy as described in the action of the play is the enactment of evil, directly attributable to choice. It is the idea of choice that Marlowe addresses in his critique of the morality of the figures he includes as characters in the story. The hypocrisy of the culture of power illustrates and embodies the reasons for the social inequities that were the reality of life in Elizabethan England and the Europe that Marlowe knew. The leaders can be viewed as part of a conspiracy of sorts to rebuild a barbarous duality aimed at keeping the faithful in a constant state of subjugation through fear. It is through a reconstruction of a dualistic cosmic view that the hierarchical leaders are able to maintain their positions as defenders of the faith. Faith in the "Name of the Father", is held to be the means by which the body and soul will be saved from the forces of evil. The source of evil, the constructed "Devil", is one of the key components in a worldview that is imposed on the "faithful". Faustus is seen as one that contests the truth as offered by this revised world view, only to discover that his will becomes subject to his ego and he creates his own hell. Implicit in the story is the resultant destruction of truth through the creation of a successful self-deception. The behaviour of the secular and spiritual leaders, including Faustus, the educated don, who represents Plato's "mature citizen", reveals the source of evil to be a result of the choices made by them.

Integral to this thesis is a search for an answer to the question "What is evil and where does it come from?" As it is a Christian

worldview that Marlowe speaks to in the play, the answers to the question must be sought here in relation to its Christian significance. I am going to quickly survey a very long span of time in this chapter. Some complex ideas will be discussed in a general way and must be considered in the context of application towards a production of Dr. Faustus. This research is not definitive and I seek only to guide the reader along a path that I read as plausible in that context.

The Christian history of evil is mystifying in that it undergoes revisions that can be linked to the evolution of Christian belief into the institution of The Church. The Church ultimately perverted its own foundations by taking one of the tenets of its early philosophies and reversing it to embrace what it had originally viewed as heretical thought. Early Christian doctrine held that evil was not an ungenerated power, as described by Manichaeism, but was the result of choice of the “free will”. Free will was given by God to humans as a gift so that they could know what “good” was. Humans were born with good in them. Where good was, so was God. Throughout subsequent development of The Church and the monarchies of Europe the idea that there was a “dark force” returned to the creed of the Church and became one of the most powerful tools for empire building that has ever existed. One might easily argue that the results of this return to a dualistic worldview is still being used as reason enough to create “necessary evils”.

Early Christian belief was a religion that was humanist in that the godhead became a force that resided within the personal. Definition of this condition was a great challenge to the theoreticians of Christianity; however, St. Augustine in his Neo-Platonic arguments, On Free Choice of the Will, reinforces Christianity as a religion of personal choices. Belief in what the source of evil actually is, is a defining difference between an hierarchical cosmology and one that is profoundly personal. During the Middle Ages this personal perspective was revised to become a return to dualism in terms of the opposing powers of good and evil.

These conflicting theories on the source of evil created for me a connection between the struggle of Augustine to understand the meaning of godhead and the struggle of Faustus to gain knowledge that would allow him to live with the power of a god. Given the dubious history of Marlowe's death, it might also be seen as a prophetic piece of writing wherein Faustus is Marlowe. So that the reader might understand this connection, I will outline a brief history of evil as it pertains to the milieu of Marlowe. It is within an understanding of the shifting views of the source of evil that the historical context for Marlowe's play resides and creates the philosophical context for the performance text of my production of Dr. Faustus. There is no proof for a factual connecting of the information in the following. I offer only a guideline for how my thinking was shaped by the reading.

Ancient Epicurean philosophy offered an argument against the idea of religion. The introduction to St. Augustine's On Free Choice of the Will, by L. H. Hackstaff, describes this argument:

Is God willing to prevent evil and suffering, but
unable to do so? If so, He is [...] not omnipotent.
Is He able, but not willing? If so, He is
malevolent [...]. Is He neither able nor willing?
Then it is absurd to call him God. Is he both
able and willing? Then, whence comes evil? (xv).

In an effort to answer this last question the Babylonian, Mani, developed a dualistic cosmology.

Mani lived in the middle of the third century B.C. His life was remarkably similar in many ways to that of Christ. He called himself "The Holy Ghost" and was killed for his claim by the Zoroastrian priests of his homeland. Like Christ, his martyrdom initiated a religion that was to last, in one form or another, for more than a millennium. It spread across North Africa and eventually into Europe via the Iberian Peninsula.

Manichaeism held that good and evil are necessary equal parts in the composition of the universe. There were two equal Kingdoms, without a genesis, eternal and uncompromising in their existence. The universe was made up of a Kingdom of Evil and a Kingdom of Good, forever in conflict, one trying to dominate the other, with leaders of equal power and strength. A god of goodness and light was forever in battle with a god

of evil and darkness. "...the Manichaeian theory presents the world of here and now as the locus of dramatic conflict between the two primal principles. Evil, like good, has its own integrity...[...].Man...embodying the conflict of the two principles...(xx)". The Dark side was associated with the physical body while the Light side was the realm of the spirit or mind. In short, humans were not responsible for the source of evil because, like good, it originated from a universal principal. It was only for men to exist within the realms of each and strive to do what was good in alliance with the forces of Light. Evil existed as an entity outside and independent of life, constantly trying to dominate the individual.

St. Augustine left Christianity to become a Manichee. He was fascinated with the idea of Christ, God as man, but he could not reconcile the fact of evil. The Christian was expected to trust his soul to the Christ, who would guide the individual to an understanding of God, or at least to live a good life. But if God was the source of all things, and God was in man, then God in man was the source of evil. This did not make sense if God was benevolent and loving. Manichaeism held that if one struggled to use one's intellect to discover enough truths while living then one would be able to release oneself from bondage to the position born to and be transformed into pure light upon dying. The Manichaeian god of good was benevolent but not omnipotent. Likewise the god of evil was malevolent but not omnipotent. This seemed a plausible, rational explanation to the young Augustine who identified himself as a

reasonable man. He was able to exercise critical thinking regarding Biblical study and to embrace the Platonic virtues of "...doctrine and ethics as opposed to liturgy and ritual" (xxii). Even the Christ figure was rationalised as one of the great thinkers and "...bringers of Light" (xxii).

Eventually, Augustine wearied of the chase for what became an obscure goal. The gnosis that was supposed to reveal all never materialised. Furthermore he began to discover mistakes in the supposed facts of the universe according to the Manichaeans and began to suspect the concept of the all-encompassing knowledge that was the saviour of the complete Manichee. When he asked his colleagues about the discrepancies he was told that a great teacher would come to Carthage to answer his questions. This teacher was a bishop of the Manichees named Faustus¹. Augustine asked his questions and the result of that meeting produced a great revelation in him. In his *Confessions* he tells us that although the Manichees had discovered many things about the world they had become "...puffed up..." by their successes. He writes about his meeting with the great teacher, "...There had then come to Carthage a certain Bishop of the Manichees, Faustus by name, a great snare of the Devil, and many were entangled by him through that lure of his smooth language..."

Augustine left the Manichaean enclave and moved to Rome and ultimately converted back to Christianity. He writes On Free Choice of the Will in which he lays out an explanation of one of the fundamental

beliefs of Christianity: that men are responsible for choosing what to do with free will, the most valuable gift of God that comes with life itself. Within all life, God exists and good is done and it is only through personal human choice within that existence that evil exists. Of all the teachings of Christianity, it is this that explains the mystery of that faith, that the singular Deity exists within all beings and all beings have the power to do good or evil. This means that evil is not a singular substance but a lack of substance or reality, reality being defined as existence itself. It is through determined choice that the will creates a void or absence of good and by inference, God.

Hence evil is to be explained, not as the creation of an incompetent God, not as the handiwork of some diabolic nature or principle, but as a result of the abuse of one of God's gifts, free will – an abuse which is to be attributed not to the Giver, but to those to whom it is given (xxv-xxvi).

So if this thumbnail description of the evolution of ideas about the source of evil can be accepted, then Christian souls were responsible only for maintaining a state of grace in order to achieve peace on earth. Since they were born "good", all that was necessary for them to do, to know their god, was to maintain a connection with that good. To be living was to be a temple of the Lord, the residence of God. For evil to exist at all it was required that the individual choose to create an absence of

good. Where then did the complex dominion of Hell that was accepted as factual, by the time of Marlowe, come from?

In the book of Isaiah, Lucifer is thrown out of Heaven for presuming to be as important as God, but it takes two thousand years for this idea of an angel who is thrown out of Heaven to evolve into a monstrous demon, the embodiment of evil. The principle of evil was a concept that had no figure to go with it until, as Robert Wernick points out:

the serpent who tempted Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden was later identified by Jewish rabbis and Christian church fathers with the Devil, the principle of Evil; but in the third chapter of Genesis as written, he is only a snake (112).

In Greek mythology, there is no single identity associated with evil deeds. In fact, there is a mirroring of biblical mythology in that it is the gods themselves who wreak havoc on earth. There is no clear development of the personification of evil. There is not even a separation of good and evil into equal forces until the sixth century BC and the writings of the prophet Zarathustra and the furthering of them by Mani.

At no point in most of pre-medieval Europe is there a specific deity of any kind associated with an all encompassing "ownership" or source of evil in the world other than that offered by the Manichees. The Greeks

had Pan and Dyonysis and even an underworld but these gods were more like the Jinn in parts of Asia. They functioned as spirits that served to help throw the individual off the path of what was considered righteousness in the respective cultures. But there were no real demonic characters in the pantheon of Western cosmologies. In the early Church, while there was Lucifer, and even Satan in the bible, these were not depicted as individual creatures that inhabited Hell in the way that came to be accepted as a kind of fact by Marlowe's day. Even the devil that Jesus faces, in the temptations of his time in the wilderness, is seen as one of the Jinn-like creatures of eastern lore. According to the ideas of Augustine, this devil would have been a kind of projection of the mind of Jesus. He writes, "...the spirit itself is subject to its own power of cognition...the body is subject to the power... [of]... need..." (147).

Dr. Faustus finds himself in a similar position to Jesus. The allegory of this story is one that has Jesus realising his power and position and being tempted by the thought of using that power to further His corporeal desires. It is Jesus' will that casts off the temptations. It is His choice to do what He sees as His responsible action, to go ahead into the future, with its hardships and personal sacrifice so that others will be freed of the dogma of blood sacrifice as an appeasement to a demanding and violent god. Faustus too struggles with a personal devil but, unlike Jesus, he chooses to control his devil rather than cast it out. This connection to Jesus' sacrifice is reinforced in Faustus' final

moments when he declares, “See, see, where Christ’s blood streams in the firmament” (5.2,156) and again when he calls for mercy, “...Oh God, if thou wilt not have mercy on my soul,/Yet, for Christ’s sake whose blood hath ransomed me,/ Impose some end to my incessant pain...” (5.2, 176-178).

It is not until the medieval period that a “personified” devil begins to appear in European literature or painting. Then, by degrees, there is the development of the idea of the monarch of Hell, who is actively seeking to steal souls from God’s creation “man”. With this development, the Devil arrives, with a capital “D”, and becomes more and more heinous in form and in what it seeks to do to souls. The form of The Devil is depicted as everything from a half naked man eating souls, to a snake with the face of a woman, to a giant hairy man that eats people, to a kind of dragon. The shape of the monster took as many deviant forms as the minds of artists could imagine. The Dominion of Hell became explained as a complex place complete with a hierarchy that mirrored human governments. Devils abounded complete with names, rank and job descriptions. The shapes of devils were often represented as animal forms combined with elements of humanity. Through this kind of imagery the creatures were positioned at the intersection of humanness and Nature, implying that devils were very much like humans. At the top of the ladder was Lucifer or Satan, ruling a Hell with a purpose: to tempt mankind into choosing to sin.

By creating or identifying an entity that prowls the universe seeking to destroy souls, tempting them to commit sin, and therefore be banished by God to Hell, the Church developed an enemy to do battle with. The Devil as an active force in the committing of sin becomes the “reason” for sin.

But why would the Church allow such a development? Hadn’t Augustine been right? Was there a Dark Side of the universe? Or was it because the Church had lost its way, its purpose? In its effort to convert souls to Christianity, the Church used whatever means it could to succeed. This meant making use of magic. Historian Keith Thomas, in writing about the Medieval Church explains:

Nearly every primitive religion is regarded by its adherents as a medium for obtaining supernatural power...a supernatural means of control over man’s earthly environment. The history of early Christianity offers no exception to this rule...converts...are acquiring not just a means of other-worldly salvation, but a new and more powerful magic...(27).

The early Church found that it was miracles that had the greatest power to convince and convert. These events were proof to the convert that they were doing the right thing in becoming Christian. They would be protected and saved. The Church superimposed its doctrine on existing

ideas of magic. Spells became prayers, saints replaced spirits, magic springs became holy wells and magic places became sacred ground. Churches were built on top of pagan temples and ancient feasts or rituals that existed regarding the movement of the stars, sun and moon became Holy Feast days. Even if the Church officially discouraged superstition, it benefited from the fact that most people of the time were superstitious. The magic of many of the “old” religions was held dear to the laity. It would follow then that the ancient idea that the world was made up of two kinds of beings, spiritual and corporal, would fall to the technique of overlaying the old with the new.

The “old” religions were grounded in a connection to Nature and things of the earth. Potions, spells, ritual and belief in a pantheon of spirits were difficult for many to let go of in favour of a personal connection with a singular God. Nature herself was considered in various forms and times to be a living thing that existed as a primal source of life. Magic was a method of interfacing with Nature and of understanding how She worked. As Evil Angel exhorts Faustus:

Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art
Wherein all nature's treasure is contained.
Be thou on earth as Jove is in the sky,
Lord and commander of these elements. (1.1,
69-72)

Magic practitioners were the priests and shamans of the old religions. When the Church, for the purpose of enfolded converts, both encouraged connection to some old ideas, with a patina of new understanding, and at the same time reviled superstition and magic, it created a dichotomy that was difficult to rationalise spiritually. It became necessary for the Church to explain that although there was ritual and miracles, it was different from magic because these “holy” events were under a kind of auspices that came from God and not really magic at all. The Church became an intercessor between the faithful and the Deity. As the power of the intercessor grew it became useful for temporal rulers to be associated with and indeed authorised by the Church. Bishops crowned the monarchs and “...it was the presence or absence of the Church’s authority which determined the propriety of any action...” (Thomas, 55). It was the authority of the Church, which determined that practitioners of magic were associates of the devil.

Exactly how magicians and witches became associated with the devil is not easy to track, historically. Witches and wizards were not a uniquely European phenomenon. They existed in many cultures and in many eras. They are as old as human history. By the time of the play’s writing though, there is a development that had long standing and far reaching effects on the practitioners of “old” religions. As Keith Thomas explains:

It was only in the late Middle Ages that a new element was added to the European concept of witchcraft which was to distinguish it from the witch-beliefs of other primitive peoples. This was the notion that the witch owed her powers to having made a deliberate pact with the Devil. [...] The origins of this new notion of witchcraft...are usually thought to lie in the Church's reaction to the Manichaeian (and by implication devil-worshipping) tendencies of the heretical Cathars and their successors... (521).

It is important to consider that the Cathars were more than a theological thorn in the side of the Church. One must take into account the political relationship between the Church and the Cathars. The Church, it may be argued, used the Cathars as a vehicle to expand their territory and influence. This conflict can also be seen as an early "reason" for the establishing of the branch of the Church responsible for the security of interpretation of the creed of the Church, The Office of the Inquisition.

The behaviour of the Christian Cathars was perceived as real resistance to the ideas and dogma of the Church. The Cathars challenged many teachings of the Church, but perhaps the most threatening aspect of their behaviour was the non-feudal distribution of land and property. Women were not chattels in this culture. They owned property and were

responsible. There was not a serf class. The Cathar religion did not own anything, nor were there “church” lands and holdings. The Pope of Rome was seen and described by them as the anti-Christ. Cathar social structure was a real alternative to hierarchical Catholic dogma and as such threatened to spread to other parts of Europe.

Using the excuse that the Cathars were heretics, because of the Manichaean associations, the Church convinced the French monarch to mount a crusade against them. The details of the crusade are horrific, mass executions by burning of the priests of the Cathars, populations of cities destroyed. Beziers, a city of over 20,000, was completely wiped out, whether or not the inhabitants were actually Cathars. The story of the Cathars is long and unnecessary to tell here, except for the point that the politics of the conflict seem more important than the philosophical differences.

The Church accused the Cathars of devil-worship and witchcraft as a convenient way of rationalising a campaign against them. The creation of a common enemy to France and to the Church resulted in a crusade that netted France a great deal of territory and the Roman Church a powerful ally in its campaign of expansion. The practise of using the technique of revising “primitive” worship to engage Christian theology worked here as it had in other cases, but in this instance, by creating the association between magic and the devil, the theology was invented to serve the politics of the Pope. What is relevant to my thesis is

that the manipulation of theology to defeat a “heresy” in fact leads to the incorporation of that heresy into a revised statement of belief of the Church. The Church, according to Augustine, had no need of a world that contained devils because all evil was accountable to the choice of the free will of men who created or projected into existence a lack of good. Yet here was the Church, using a dualistic philosophy of good and evil as a foundation to crush a “heresy” based in Manichaeian philosophy. The empire of the Church had shifted from the spiritual realm to the corporeal. So too had shifted the “place” that magic held in the cultures of Europe.

In ancient traditions the idea that anything to do with magic was an arrangement between the magician and certain spirits of the earth, air, fire or water. However, “...there was a great deal of difference between this idea of a *tacit* compact implicit in an individual’s magical dabblings and the myth of *explicit* covenants with Satan made by bands of self-conscious devil-worshippers...” (original emph.) (Thomas, 522). By the time of the writing of Marlowe’s play, the idea of a “contract” with the devil², was part of European culture. It shows up in published forms in Germany and in the Netherlands.

The idea of “holy crusades” gained momentum in the Church and was expanded to include Islam, which by this time was firmly established and growing. The faith of Islam created a trading empire that produced some of the most beautiful artefacts the world has known along with

technological inventions and mathematical theories that would influence Europe and eventually result in the Renaissance. Among other influences, the Crusaders on returning from their wars of plunder brought back not only tastes that had changed, but ideas that caused thinkers to adjust their view of the universe. Even so, the Church created the Inquisition to aid in the crusades against yet another “heresy”. As the Inquisition grew in power and its methods became more and more heinous, the images of the Dominion of Hell were planted firmly in the minds of the faithful. It was a place of perpetual torture, not only of the soul, but also of the body. Fear replaced Faith as the motivation to belong to and support the rule of the Church and its self-anointed rulers. At the same time the leaders of the Church became increasingly decadent and hypocritical in their behaviour. The images of Hell for the renaissance citizen were drawn from the dungeons of Torquemada in Spain and, equally, from the banquet halls of the Papal princes in Rome, Sienna, Milan, Genoa and other capitals of power. Not that the prelates of Rome were the only rulers who tortured their own people. Europe by the time of the Renaissance was a very dangerous place. But as Manchester points out,

...At any given moment the most dangerous enemy in Europe was the reigning pope...[...]...the five Vicars of Christ who ruled the Holy See during Magellan’s lifetime were the

least Christian of men: the least devout, least scrupulous, least compassionate, and among the least chaste – lechers, almost without exception. Ruthless in their pursuit of political power and personal gain... (37).

The exploits of the Borgias are probably the most infamous of the period because of the diaries of participants that attended their dinner parties. Those parties included homicide as entertainment, complex status games played out as orgies, incest, murder, all seven of the deadly sins to be sure, but it is the politics of the Borgias that is perhaps their most powerful legacy. Cardinal Borgia bought the Papacy (which had been legalised by his predecessor) and fathered many children. Two of them, Lucrezia and Cesare, are particularly famous. As Alexander VI, Borgia married this daughter to several men for political purposes. Alexander also married her to her brother Cesare at one point to cover the legitimacy of her child, who was his. Cesare became famous for his passionate pursuit of not only his sister but of power over other men. He was used as a model for Machiavelli's Il principe.

Although the Pope in the play is called Adrian there is no accurate historical link between any Pope of that name and the events or people described by the narrative. The text describes, however, the papal relationship to the kind of behaviour described above. Marlowe links his fictitious pontiff to the infamous Borgias when the Pope speaking to

Bruno refers to Alexander as being not his predecessor but his, “progenitor” (3.2,138). Later in the scene Marlowe gives us the reasoning of the Church for a shift of ecclesiastical interests when the Pope declares:

Is not all power on earth bestowed on us?
 And therefore though we would we cannot err...
 Behold...our seven-fold power from heaven,
 To bind or loose, lock fast, condemn or judge,
 Resign or seal, or what so pleaseth us.
 Then he and thou, and all the world, shall stoop,
 Or be assured of our dreadful curse,
 To light as heavy as the pains of hell. (3.2, 152-
 162)

The Church had become an empire, not only of faith, but also of earthly power. To succeed at this, it had become a defender against heresy, which it associated with devil worship. It embraced a worldview that included a place where devils existed, otherwise, how could it defend against them? It had come full circle from the ideas that Augustine had proposed which effectively eliminate the concept of a Dark Kingdom and its ruler. The Church became the ultimate imperial model, the Pope becoming the representative of God on Earth, leading armies against Lucifer and his minions that sweep the world tempting souls to become heretical. In fact, the behaviour of the Church leaders was the antithesis

of what it claimed to be. Through its rationalised primacy, the papacy decreed its purpose:

...We declare, say, define, and pronounce that it
is absolutely necessary for the salvation of every
human creature, to be subject to the Roman
Pontiff...

(Boniface VIII, Papal Bull, Unam Sanctum,
1302).

What had begun as a quite simple and effective idea to humanise the relationship of man to God had become a complex institution that served as the prime intermediary between humans and their spiritual centre. The Church had become a mockery of its founding principles, corrupt, divisive and self-serving at the expense of truth, compassion and the egalitarian precepts of the teachings of Christ. It had become a labyrinth of deceit. It had become the definer of Hell, its Pope the very model of The Devil. Added to this, the effect of the Reformation and its ideas about predetermination, firmly establishes in the minds of common folk the concept of an all-encompassing Dark Force responsible for the sins of men. By the time Marlowe writes Dr. Faustus, it was a simple matter to accept. It was either that or to reject all that the Churches stood for, thereby risking everlasting damnation, or at least burning at the stake. Marlowe's world had both Protestant and Catholic versions of

Hell. No matter what form of Christianity was adhered to, the punishments facing “sinners” were quite horrible.

The world that Marlowe lived in was governed by leaders who believed in their own right to rule as they saw fit, or as it would serve their interests. To do this they were manipulative amongst themselves certainly, but more than that, they deceived their subjects by preaching a worldview that served as a mask for the true purpose: imperial control of great fortunes. The masters exploited the common fears of their time: the fear of the unknown, the fear of being tortured and killed for impious behaviour and the fear of being sent to Hell. A taste of Hell could be had on earth if “faith”, in the interpretation of the teaching of Christ by the “experts”, ever wavered.

The ideals of “western culture” were seeded in the years that led up to and included the Renaissance, a time of both great discovery and great evil. The expansion of European fiefdoms into empires came on the heels of the expansion of the Church into the most powerful institution of its time. As the Church fought to maintain control of thought, it encouraged and abetted allies in the control of property. Those who disagreed with the politics of the Church leaders created their own versions of Christianity, but inevitably all embraced the idea that Hell and The Devil were, if not actually real, then immensely useful in the project of western hegemony.

In recreating a worldview that was fundamentally dualistic, the Church and its allies placed the source of evil outside the human body and mind once more. In doing so, the Devil became the reason for sin. Free will was relegated to the position of being used only to decide whether or not to be part of the belief system that opposes this source of sin. To “belong” one needed to obey the dictates of the system. One needed to learn one’s place within the hierarchy, trusting and having faith in God’s intermediaries, the chosen few, to shepherd one to the gates of Heaven. The power of free will became substantially reduced to a few choices; most of them having to do with obedience to law drawn up by the interpreters of the teachings of Christ. Evil once again was viewed as existing outside the “realm of light” and was a force constantly trying to dominate the individual. In fact though, it was the ideas of earthly lords that were dominant and the acts of those lords that defined the images of evil. The Church to this day teaches that the devil exists as an entity. Its Catechism of the Catholic Church holds that, “...He is only a creature, powerful from the fact that he is pure spirit, but still a creature...” (I.ii.1.7,395).

Marlowe’s play is about an educated man who challenges the learning of his day and the motivations of those who would be considered as the keepers of that learning. This learned man finds that he is capable of great things and that he is also capable of creating evil all on his own. Faustus uses his free will to create a “presence” which he thinks he can

control. His tragedy is that he comes to believe in his own creation so much so that he cannot control his own will in the end and is unable to stop himself from suffering the effects of what he knows to be illusion.

Notes

¹This reference to the name Faustus is the earliest that I found when searching for the origins of the name. The fact that Augustine becomes moved enough to convert to Christianity and name his former calling a heresy seems to indicate that the meeting with Faustus was critical to his decision. It is reasonable to assume that Marlowe, as a student of Divinity would have read Augustine's Confessions and possibly made some kind of connection between the German Faustus (of the Faustbuch) and the Bishop of the same name. I certainly did.

² I would like to thank Dr. J. J. MacIntosh for directing me towards the following 17th Century quote, that shows that this idea of a contract with the devil became thought of as a real possibility: "It is not unreasonable to think that by certain Laws of the great Polity of the *Invisible World* they gain a right against a man without explicit contract, if he be but once so rash as to tamper with the Mysteries of the *Dark Kingdome*, or to practise in them, or any way to make use of them." Henry More, An Explanation of the grand Mystery of Godliness, (London, 1660), p. 359

Chapter Two

Interpretation

This chapter deals with my interpretation of the play and will introduce some of the conceptual material that I refer to in the Introduction. The first section is a brief description of the published text of the play and the adjustments to that text that I performed. Following this is information regarding an earlier production of the play that I mounted in Norway. I consider that production as being research in the development of this thesis project. The third section contains a synopsis of conclusions I came to regarding the general nature of the character of Faustus and its representative position in the narrative. Included in this third section will be found conceptual reasoning regarding the character of Mephostophilis. Then comes a breakdown of choices I made regarding the interpretation and staging of The Chorus, the Comic Scenes, the character of the Old Man, Helen of Troy and the Scholars, and the concept of Hell at the end of the play.

The Text

The text of Dr. Faustus has been subject to many critical debates. The two texts known as “A” and “B” versions were published long after Marlowe’s death. The A-Text published in 1604 was likely compiled from the remembrances of actors who had performed the play. In 1616, the B-

Text was published with some 676 lines added to and 36 lines eliminated from the first publication. The debate has been about which one is more authentic and represents the intentions of the author. Arguments are generally reduced to declarations about the relationship of the two publications. “A” text is thought to be a “memorial reconstruction” while B-Text is thought to be closest to the original because of additions that were first commissioned some 14 years earlier than publication. Those additions didn’t make it into the first folio for some reason. But if one searches further, inevitably the opposite argument will arise, placing the “A” text as the truer because it doesn’t contain the additions.

What I took from this debate was the fact that no one really knows what the original text was like, or what Marlowe’s intentions were in presenting the play. I can only respond to the text in the reading of it, relative to the mounting of a production. I had to find a way to tell a story that had lodged itself in my consciousness and to communicate what I thought the script might mean in a contemporary field of resonance.

I used the Penguin Classics edition of the play edited by J.B. Stean. This edition is a compilation of the two texts, “A” and “B”. The resultant text published under the title The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus, is described by Stean as being “...reluctantly based...” on the 1616 version and annotates where he has used sections of the 1604 publication. Stean finds the “A” version to be more artful and more suited to engaging or challenging the mind than the “B” version. He

states that the added scenes from the 1616 publication create “...simple-minded comedy, innocuous enough except that it distracts the mind from what is serious and valuable in the play [...] and so lessens the poetic and dramatic intensity...” (261).

I don’t doubt that when produced in the London of the Elizabethan era, these scenes were humorous and perhaps even hilarious. They seem to be, like most topical or colloquial comedy, political in nature. The problem with them, in terms of a contemporary production is having them actually function as political humour. To take the “horse courser” scenes, for example: to be relevant to a contemporary audience, the members of the audience would have to be at least familiar with the true value of a horse to a working person in Marlowe’s audience and what it would mean to lose that value. I could have tried to substitute a pickup truck I suppose, but I thought I would just let it go because the meaning of including the comic scenes could be dealt with in another way. (See “Conceptual Aspect of the Thesis Production” below.)

I cut the play to suit what I thought would work in production, that is, relative to my reading of it. The scenes and many of the lines that I cut were almost entirely from the “B” version. I left in the “upper classes” scenes from this “B” version, along with the Prologue and the Act 3 Chorus while cutting back the comic scenes to make clear my interpretation of their meaning. I came to think of the result as primarily “A” with additions from the “B” version.

I changed the numbering system of the scenes to suit my rehearsals, converting the Act and Scene structure to a sequence of numbered scenes. Following is a breakdown of the scenes as included in the production with the source of the scene vis à vis the publication dates:

Sc. 1 – 1604, Prologue

Sc. 2 – 1604, Act 1 Sc. 1

Sc. 3 – 1604, Act 1 Sc. 2

Sc. 4 – 1604, Act 1 Sc. 3

Sc. 5 – 1604, Act 1 Sc. 4

Sc. 6 – 1604, Act 1 Sc. 5

Sc. 7 – 1604, Act 2 Sc. 1

Sc. 8 – 1616, Act 3 Sc. 1 Chorus

Sc. 9 – 1616, Act 3 Sc. 2 lines 22-203 and Sc. 3

Interval

Sc. 10 – 1604, Act 3 Sc. 4 lines 1-33, 60-65, 70-84

Sc. 11 – 1616, Act 3 Sc. 3 lines 109-125

Sc. 12 – 1616, Act 4 Sc. 1

Sc. 13 – 1616, Act 4 Sc. 2

Sc. 14 – 1616, Act 4 Sc. 3

Sc. 15 – 1616, Act 4 Sc. 7 lines 1-78, 129-133

Sc. 16 – 1604, Act 5 Sc. 1

Sc. 17 – 1616, Act 5 Sc. 2 lines 1-94

Sc. 18 – 1616, Act 5 Sc. 2 lines 106-126, 143-196 (1604),
126-143, 95-107

Sc. 19 – 1604, Epilogue

Background to the Production

In 1992, I worked for a theatre group in Oslo, Norway. The company was one hundred and twenty people fulfilling functions in all the departments you would expect to find in a theatre. The acting section had twenty actors, fifteen of whom were women. The producers had decided to mount a Norwegian translation of Marlowe's Dr. Faustus. I accepted the challenge of producing this play that has a cast that is entirely male, save for the paramour of Alexander the Great, a bar maid, a pregnant duchess and Helen of Troy, all basically walk-on roles.

I thought, "Why should all the major roles go to the young men of the company given these demographics?" I began to search for a solution. This was where I began in the development of the production, rather than in the more thorny area of interpretation. Because I decided eventually to cast a woman as Mephostophilis, the interpretation presented itself in the development of the production.

I tried many combinations of actors before deciding to go ahead with casting. I experimented with how a woman could play a role that was traditionally cast as male and quickly came to realise that there was not a good reason that the role should not be played as a "female" entity.

During rehearsals I discovered that sections of the dialogue that were difficult to grasp, in the reading, began to make sense because of the male-female relationship developing between Faustus and Mephostophilis. The relationship of these characters altered from an intellectual one to a carnal or visceral one. For example, one of Faustus' servants, Robin, has stolen one of his master's magic books and is trying to impress his friends. He says that he has taken the book so that he will be able to use the magic to have sex with Faustus' mistress: "She's born to bear with me, or else my art fails" (3.4, 19). There is no mistress in the cast list or the script and there are no other references to Faustus having a mistress. There is no follow up on this, the play being rife with inconsistencies, but it certainly makes the scene sensible if the mistress to Faustus is Mephostophilis. There are other places where the dialogue fits a relationship based on feelings one for the other. Faustus refers to, "...Sweet Mephostophilis..."(1.1,145) and later in the scene when Mephostophilis cajoles Faustus with, "...If thou lovest me, think no more of it..."(1.1,154).¹

Perhaps the fact that most convinced me that the relationship of Faustus with Mephostophilis could be based on desire was the changing of Faustus' reason for wanting the power that conjuring up the devil would bring him. Before actually having Mephostophilis appear to him, Faustus' reasoning is that he will use the power of magic to perform acts that would be useful to all of society. He offers to build bridges across the

Mediterranean Sea, to protect Germany with amazing fortifications and to bring exotic foods to Europe to feed the populations. When Mephostophilis does arrive though, Faustus writes a contract wherein four of the five clauses are designed to keep the body of Mephostophilis close to him.

In this first production, I did not investigate the political implications of the role of Mephostophilis played as a woman. I was aware of the obvious first thought when confronted with the idea of the devil represented as a woman. I imagined that I would hear statements like, “Here we go again, the evil woman as the cause of all man’s woes”...etc. I did not however feel great needs to defend the casting because the real reason for the role played as a woman was that I had wanted the women actors in the company to be doing interesting work. In fact, though I was aware of some feminist concerns and understood them somewhat, it was a purely lay understanding. I had done no research on feminist critical theory at the time. I was aware of the politics of gender in general terms but only through my participation in socialist cultural movements. I felt that feminism was part of a political development that had my complete support insofar as I understood what feminism meant at that time. I responded intuitively and sensitively to the circumstances, yet I was uninformed as to specific feminist critical theory regarding representation of the female form on stage. Had I been aware of critical theory, particularly from the perspective of authors like

that of Judith Butler,² Elin Diamond³ or Sue Ellen Case⁴ it would likely have affected the decisions and choices I made during production⁵.

In my Norwegian production, the casting also saw the role of the Pope played by and as a woman, as were most of the priests, cardinals, soldiers, clowns, devils and other roles of the cast. With only five men in the acting company, and one of them playing Faustus, it became futile to try to be gender specific in the casting. The world of the play in that production resulted in an unexpected perception regarding the political relationships of men to women. The effect of cross casting in this way was, in performance, to neutralise the gender aspects in the telling of the story. The audience accepted the world of the play as it was constructed. The necessary “constituent elements” of the play, claimed to exist in well-made drama by the patriarchal Aristotle, later criticised by theorists of the so-called “margin”, were evident.⁶ I should also mention that the production received favourable notices that mentioned the casting but found no fault with it. My fears of reinscribing male superiority myths were unfounded. This was especially encouraging because of the fact that Norway is one of the best examples of egalitarian socialist societies on earth, where feminist development has flourished.

What I came away with from this early production was a profound understanding of the nature of Faustus’ desire. Faustus binds himself to self-serving Pride. He indulges in the temptation to experience the dominion of his will over another. He grounds his relationship with

Mephostophilis in a sexual, erotic and violent Nature. Mephostophilis shows signs of being jealous of Faustus at times. The Seven Deadly Sins are at work in the servant of Lucifer as they are in Faustus. This rather co-dependant relationship serves well the themes of self-destruction and the embracing of evil.

When I first began the production process, it was with a relatively naïve perspective on the meaning of the play. I knew that it was more than a morality play in the style of the Mystery Cycles and that there was an underpainting to the obvious imagery. My intuitive understanding of the play was that it was about power and the misuse of power at a personal/political level. I knew too that there was a critique of hierarchy in the piece, but I associated this critique solely with the images of power that Marlowe had described and not with the underlying meaning of the images. I discovered that the sexual excitement that was created by Faustus desiring a female Mephostophilis helped the actors and the audience to relate to the story in a way that I thought was intended, somehow, by the author. My hunch was that there was more to this story than I had discovered but that I had uncovered something that might be worth exploring further.

Conceptual Aspects of the Thesis Production

The Character of Faustus

Not born to privilege but brought to a higher station because of education, Faustus represents the quintessential early modern explorer of ideas. The discoveries of these explorers altered ideas about the shape and composition of the universe and the relationship of humans to it and to each other. In addition to this theoretical exploration, and with the expansion of the known world and its accompanying empires, the subsequent notion of the superiority of European thought became rooted in the culture. This Eurocentric position can be associated with the gradual acceptance of scientific proofs as being the most accurate of methods for the understanding and deconstructing of Nature. From this perspective, the educated Faustus becomes representative of early modern thinking. He is the consummate scientist, politician and theologian. From men like him are produced theories and policies of procedure for the developing western hegemonic project. Ultimately that project becomes the conquest of nature, a view that comes out clearly in the writings of Francis Bacon (1561 – 1626)⁷.

Nature was central to primitive thought because primitive people saw themselves as connected to, or part of, nature. Magic, an acceptable part of primitive religion, was the utilisation of that connection. Modern

thinking was opposite to this. Modern men began to see themselves as above nature, because they were able to rationalise their attempts to control it. Anything not explainable through rational or scientific methods was unacceptable as knowledge.⁸ This placed the knowledge of the Church with its mystical or magical connection to the Will of God on earth in opposition to the new science. The Church decried rationalism as heretical thought. Yet it also saw the magic of the old religions, with their connection to nature as heretical too, which put it in line with rationalism. In a strange way, the Church and those it saw as heretics to its brand of mysticism became bedfellows in the conquest of nature and any peoples that maintained magical connections to it.

When Faustus rants about the value of all his learning in Act One, he attacks both the sciences and the theological tracts for not going far enough in their thinking. He uses a rational approach to make an argument for seeking knowledge from a source reviled by both religious philosophy and by academics. Concerning Aristotle he asks, "Is 'to dispute well' logic's chiefest end?/Affords this art no greater miracle?" (1.1, 8-9). About his success as a doctor of medicine he exclaims:

Yet art thou Faustus and a man.
 Couldst thou make men to live eternally,
 Or being dead, raise them to life again,
 Then this profession were to be esteemed. (1.1,
 23-26)

The study of law he dismisses:

This study fits a mercenary drudge,
 Who aims at nothing but external trash,
 Too servile and illiberal for me. (1.1, 34-36)

Divinity he loves yet finds the teaching of it to be of no consequence when it comes to understanding human life. He quotes Jerome's Bible and comments on it::

'The reward of sin is death.' That's hard. [...]
 'If we say that we have no sin
 We deceive ourselves, and there is no truth in
 us.'
 Why then, belike, we must sin,
 And so consequently die.
 Ay, we must die, an everlasting death.
 What doctrine call you this? Che sera, sera.
 'What will be, shall be.' Divinity, adieu! (1.1, 40-48)

He sums up his feelings:

Philosophy is odious and obscure.
 Both law and physic are for petty wits.
 Divinity is basest of the three,
 Unpleasant, harsh, contemptible and vile.

'Tis magic, magic that hath ravished me. (1.1,
105-9)

His argument is that of one who wishes to challenge all the knowledge of the acceptable canon of thought. He locates himself in a position at the centre of debate.

Essential Christian creeds, (The Apostle's Creed and the Nicean Creed) hold that humans are the vehicles through which the Holy Spirit prays, through Christ incarnate, to the Father. God lived in humans, but it was through choice that they performed good or evil acts. Science—natural philosophy, in Marlowe's day—seemed to agree with this position regarding choice, minus the need for a deity. That is, men determined their own good or evil through what they chose to study or perform. They determined their own direction because they were able to demystify their world. Faustus as the consummate “man” of his age places himself in the position of master of his own fate, controller of his world, creator of his future. He claims the position of godhead, as did Lucifer. He questions the need for God.

Like the revised Church, Faustus places the reason for sin outside the body, and outside the soul, by conjuring Mephostophilis. There is a search on the part of Faustus to find a scapegoat for his desires that are driven from the perspectives inherent in the idea of “the Seven Deadly Sins” of Pride, Covetousness, Envy, Wrath, Gluttony, Sloth, and Lechery. All of these “sins” personified in the play, are not devils. The sins are

related one to the other. All derive from Pride, read as egoism and “hubris”.

The sins are part of the seduction of Faustus. They parade into his study as part of a distraction arranged by Mephostophilis when Faustus begins to have doubts about his actions. He has just signed the pact, in his blood, because Mephostophilis has insisted that he formalise his agreement in writing so that there can be no doubt as to the terms of the agreement. This legal contract is fodder for speculation as to why it is included in the story. Part of the debate centres on whether the play is Calvinist or anti-Calvinist.

The Calvinist argument has the contract being the indication of Faustus’ fate as a sinner. It acts as a literal metaphor for his life being determined because of the nature of men. They are naturally sinful, and therefore condemned unless they can attain salvation through various rituals of self-abnegation and discipline. That Faustus is damned is a foregone conclusion because he deserves to be damned from the moment of his birth as an example to all as of power of sin and the natural fate of men. This determinism is the basis for Calvinist social control mechanisms.

The anti-Calvinist argument has the contract as an uncertainty principal. The devil knows that at any time, because of Faustus’ free will, there is the possibility that he can save himself simply by realising his folly in making a deal with Lucifer. Faustus can ask for forgiveness and

receive it. It is all up to him. Lucifer holds the contract as a security measure and as a symbol of Faustus' intentions. Mephostophilis uses it as a reminder of the agreement whenever Faustus begins to waver in his resolve. Mephostophilis must bring entertainment to beguile Faustus with distractions that bring him back to being interested in the "knowledge" that Hell offers. The free will of the individual is tempted to look away from the path of truth and to become the creator of the path desired. To control nature is the ideal of "Western Man" as the centre of an understood universe. Does this situate him above "God's creation" like Lucifer? The choice of Faustus, not his nature, then, becomes the issue.

Faustus must consider, at his last moment, the choice of whether to repent, ask forgiveness and attain heaven, or go to Hell. He has had his twenty-four years of power and has done nothing valuable with that power. He sought to expand his knowledge to include magic, and at the same time, he gave up his quest for knowledge because he no longer needed to discover anything. He became more and more concerned with his own pettiness and pride, lechery, greed and covetousness, that his desires lost all moral character. In conjuring up his version of the devil, Faustus finds creatures that are always there to do his bidding and in the end bear him to Hell. These "creatures" are manifestations of his desires, his lust or libido, that Augustine cites as the source of the reason that men choose to be evil.

The vision of Helen of Troy that he conjures for his friends reminds him that his life is nothing but illusion and he begins to want something real. He begins to repent, but after a particularly harsh reprimand from Mephostophilis, who behaves more like a jealous lover than a servant, Faustus consents to murder. The character of the Old Man comes to him to tell him to repent and attain salvation. Faustus almost relents to this argument but once more Mephostophilis threatens his resolve. Faustus advances from petty desires and parlour room magic to having the Old Man tortured and destroyed. He now believes in the illusion of Helen as substance, a kind of reward for his final act as a man. He gains a reality but gives up his soul when he sacrifices the Old Man. Faustus has crossed the line and blood is now on his hands. He becomes incapable of anything but despair, the ultimate sin born of Pride. Faustus deems the forgiveness of God as unattainable.

The Character of Mephostophilis

Mephostophilis is the ultimate act of magic that Faustus performs. He conjures the quintessence of evil from Christian mythology. According to the Church, it was only through a pact with the devil that magic or witchcraft was possible. In challenging the methodology of learning, Faustus arrives at the crossroads of that path and decides to proceed with the experiment.

Initially, Mephostophilis arrives as a fearful “dragon”. This symbol of the unknown is immediately rejected by Faustus, to be replaced by a form that Faustus decides is more appropriate and one that he can deal with: that of a Franciscan monk. While he waits for the return of Mephostophilis as the monk Faustus begins to swell with pride and says,

I see there's virtue in my heavenly words.

Who would not be proficient in this art?

How pliant is this Mephostophilis!

Full of obedience and humility,

Such is the force of magic and my spells.” (1.3, 27–31)

In 1.7, one of the clauses of the contract that Faustus later drafts reads, “...that he (Mephostophilis) shall appear to the said John Faustus at all times,/ in what shape and form soever he please” (104–105). The “transformative” nature of the idea that is Mephostophilis became significant to me.

To establish this nature, I staged the “friar” version of 1.3 as five separate entities, appearing and disappearing in different places.

Modulating voices overlapped each apparition to further the point that what Faustus appears to see, is in a constant state of change. Faustus questions the apparition about what it is and what hell is.

Mephostophilis leads Faustus into a trap with the argument, staying just slightly out of reach of Faustus' expectations of what he thought he was getting into. Mephostophilis rejects Faustus' demands that he be servant

to Faustus. When questioned about the reason that he appeared to Faustus, Mephostophilis says that it was because Faustus was ready, "...to abjure all godliness..." (53), which is what Augustine describes as necessary for the existence of evil. The pride of Faustus entices him to go further into the void created by his abjuration or negation of good when a seemingly weak Mephostophilis entreats him, "...Oh, Faustus, leave these frivolous demands, /Which strike a terror to my fainting soul" (1.3, 81-82). Faustus responds to this by becoming adamant. He scorns Mephostophilis' wavering position and brags, "...Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude..."(1.3, 85) and sends him packing to deliver Faustus' demands to Lucifer that Mephostophilis, "...always be obedient to my will..."(1.3, 97).

It was this idea of "manly will" that led me to consider conceptualising part of the story relative to feminist critical theory. I had learned something of this theory during one of the graduate level courses offered by the Department of Drama at the University of Calgary. It was in response to that learning that I began to make connections between some of the theoretical proposals, the nature of the story and the questions I had regarding the results of the male-female relationship of my Oslo production of the play.

Sue Ellen Case suggests that Aristotle is one of the founding fathers of the patriarchal hegemony of western world because of the influence of his theories on storytelling and on social structure. Case is

making an argument regarding the place of classical theatre in the contemporary world. She writes that there is an "...alliance of (classical) theatre with patriarchal prejudice..." (19). In her critique of The Politics, she points out that Aristotle strips women of the authority of choice enjoyed by men, and that he has defined women as courageous only in their ability to obey men (18). This struck a chord with me when I read the passages of the play described above. Faustus has taken the part of the man and relegated Mephostophilis to the role of the woman.

Faustus recognises himself as master of this entity that he sees before him. What does this mean in terms of the identity of Faustus? In her book, Sex, Gender and Desire in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe, Sara Deats compares Freud's theory of ego, super-ego and id to, "...a paradigm reminiscent of the tripartite soul of early modern (Elizabethan) psychology, in which the will often negotiated between reason and passion..."(27). The dialogue between Faustus and the Good and Evil Angels seemed an obvious parallel for this, but there was deeper significance in the relationship of Faustus to Mephostophilis. Deats goes on to describe how Jacques Lacan:

...transforms Freud's ego into the subject, not a personal identity at all but a semiotic construct, a position from which one generates meaning in society, [...]. (27).

If the subject (Faustus) accesses evil in the form of the d(evil), through a choice of the free will, then the apparition is part of its id(entity). The character of Mephostophilis is part of Faustus.

In Lacan's theory, as in Freud's, the individual is not the harmonious, unified, autonomous identity posited by liberal humanism; rather it is a dispersed, divided entity always in a state of flux and change (27).

Faustus' desire to know the "other" world of magic parallels the three phases of recognition of the self as described in the theories of Freud and Lacan. The apparition of Mephostophilis to Faustus is representative of the first or mirror phase, that phase known as "misrecognition" of the self. This phase presents identity as a unified construct, relative only to the outside world, the world of "the other". The subject feels isolated and separate from the "other". Faustus is profoundly dissatisfied with this version of self and seeks to change it. By causing Mephostophilis, the reflection of his desires, to gain power, to be transformative in nature, Faustus enters the psychological phase.

Had I as many souls as there be stars,
I'd give them all for Mephostophilis.

By him I'll be great emperor of the world...(102-4)

He imagines this part of himself to be many things and capable of doing what he wishes to be able to do. Faustus seeks that part of his identity

that will satisfy his longing for recognition as something unique and not merely a reflection of “others”.

The third phase of identification, the Symbolic order represents, “...not only the linguistic system but the social mores and morals structured by language – the Law of the Name-of-the-Father...”(28). Together the three phases are a combination of self-image and the image of perception relative to “others”. When Faustus sees and speaks to Mephostophilis he expresses the confusion of identity. The image of self from the position of “I” is different from the image of self as perceived by the “eye”. As Deats explains,

...from this hiatus the unconscious emerges. [...]

Therefore the subject is not a static entity but a process, always in a state of becoming. Nor is the conscious subject a unified entity; rather it is consistently split and dislocated by eruptions from the unconscious.

Furthermore,

...this concept of the unstable, divided subject is a discourse very much in circulation during the early modern period; [...] Lacan’s severed subject, desiring always its lost unity, thus [...] perpetually searching for their other halves, [...] the unruly, aspiring protagonists of Marlowe’s

plays...seek their completion in something
outside of themselves... (28).

Faustus recognises that he is incomplete:

...his dominion that exceeds in this (magic)
Stretcheth as far as doth the mind of man:
A sound magician is a demi-god.

Here, tire my brains to get a deity. (1.1, 59-63)

He is incapable of subduing the conflict. Faustus seeks to know this part of self that is lacking.

Within the context of feminist critical theory the Freud/Lacan process of identification reinscribes patriarchal hegemony. The theories reveal that the identification process is relative to the male perspective, identity of gender being a case of having or not having a symbolic protection against the sense of “lack” experienced in transiting the phases. Through the “phallogocentric symbolic system” posited by the theories, “lack” or “negation” are still associated with “the feminine” (Deats, 30-31). Mephostophilis as the symbol of evil, the negation of “good”, is gendered feminine.

The parallels between my research in Oslo and the readings I undertook regarding feminist critical theory were evident to me. The problem that I identified was going to be in the area of representation of the female form on stage and how to historicize the relationship and the ideas contained in that representation.

The politics of Elizabethan England were complex enough to warrant political theatre. Marlowe's plays have been analysed by Simon Shepherd as being subjective productions that were intended to reveal the level of state and church repression (by that time the same thing in England). Regarding the questions of a compact with the devil raised by Dr. Faustus, Shepherd writes:

...the act of selling out, together with the question of where hell actually *is* [orig. emphasis], all seem to relate much more closely to affairs in contemporary England than to issues of abstract morality. I would place the play in a context of re-invigorated state repression in the late 1580's... (139).

Part of the political landscape of the early modern period contained a discourse on gender construction. Deats makes a very good case for this, carefully detailing writing from the period in terms of language and the gender associations that are implicit in it. The discourse of the period was centred on the idea that people of either sex, were sometimes forced into "playing" the part of either man or woman. Not only in the plays of Marlowe, but of Shakespeare, Kydd and writers of earlier work, Deats shows that the concepts of masculine and feminine identities were thought of as relative; that they were constructed, one by the other; that they were performative. Shepherd agrees with her in that: "Marlowe's

texts, then, could be said to explore the construction of gender difference in representation and to problematise it" (196). Deats considers Marlowe's plays to "...present masculinity, not as something essential and universal, but as a state constantly threatened by usurpation from the 'woman' within" (65). She reminds us that "...gender, like the self, is volatile and transient, always in a state of flux and change" (67). In the Elizabethan theatre, gender was subject to continual destabilisation. Women, not being allowed on the stage, were represented by male actors and writers.

If the classical plays reinscribe patriarchal systems, then, I thought that I could alienate or foreground this idea within the discourse of gender construction. I knew that to do so was to risk that I would reinscribe the "maleness" of the gaze that I was presenting. My hope was that by placing the image of "woman" at the centre of the stage I would draw enough attention to the image that there could be no misunderstanding of my intention to include this discourse as a concept in the production. As Faustus sends the last illusion of the friar version of Mephostophilis packing to Lucifer we were to be left with the expectation that this scene was finished. Faustus is being very "male" at this point, in classical early modern terms, "...active, assertive, forceful..." (71). The "friar" is very nearly beaten by Faustus and quavering it falls to the ground in submission only to disappear. At this moment five women dressed in definitive "feminine" costumes appear

within the five-pointed star of the devil. They present Faustus with a mirror to look into. Reflected from the mirror, in a kind of blue flame, is that part of himself that he desires to know. Faustus assembles the vision of his completed self. He constructs his identity.

I cast five actors to play the role of Mephostophilis so that I could maintain the transformation theme and satisfy the clause of the contract that indicates that the shape of Mephostophilis could change, according to Faustus' whims. These "versions" of Mephostophilis were to do his bidding according to the agreement that was made. It was important though that they be perceived as "outlaw stereotypes" of the male gaze. They were to be variously seen as seductive, shrewish, jealous, vain and resentful. They would then complete the identity of Faustus that embraces the values inherent in the Seven Deadly Sins. Faustus has these entities perform magic and then takes credit for the "illusions" that they create. I sought to mirror the idea of patriarchal identity. By perceiving Mephostophilis not only as a woman but also as "women", Faustus embraces that identity. Instead of doing the good work of his reason in seeking the power of magic, the recognition of his other half, he chooses to perpetuate his single-minded drive to dominate and maintain his masculine individuality.

The Chorus as Company

This is a simple idea to facilitate the concept of using symbols of our culture to engage in debate regarding the value of the symbols. Instead of coming directly to the audience with a production that tells a story, I took from the lines of the prologue the idea that the company of actors, like the devils of the play, will present an illusion to the audience. "...We must now perform/the form of Faustus fortunes, good or bad/" (Chorus 1, 7-8). The "good or bad" of the story are to be determined by the reader based on the interaction of the elements or icons that symbolise our collective background of ideas. From the chorus will come all the characters of the play. The subject of the play, Dr. Faustus, is alienated within the chorus. His character is a sign for "...self-conceit..." (Chorus 1, 20).

The idea of hell is primal in most readers, yet it is not really a serious consideration in daily life. The members of the chorus would look like a gang of street punks that have taken charge of the theatre. By presenting an image of what the devils look like, that is, a contemporary image of disaffected youth, the alienating effect should cause the audience to be unsettled. From this unsettled or fearful place a connection between where they live and the ideas of the story can be made.

The Comic Scenes

The subplot to the play shows how the actions of the upper and middle classes (of which Faustus, as university professor, is a member) affect the lower classes. This is an important part of the play in my view. Yet the understanding of the sub-plot seemed to me impossible to bring to an audience that has a completely different value system, especially when it comes to horses, than that of Elizabethan London. As for Stean's assertion that these scenes are degrading to the poetics of the play, I think that would depend entirely on the success of the comedy in performance. Stean also suggests that these scenes do not "...occupy the *mind* at all...(orig. ital.)" (261). I don't agree with him on this and during the pre-production phase I kept trying to find a way to keep in the production what I thought to be the ideas behind the scenes.

If one can have an audience truly laughing at the "low" scenes, then they might be possible to bring the points being made about class superiority, by the story, to resonate within contemporary political environments. This should occur at the moment in the theatre when the audience recognise that the actions of monarchs, popes and arrogant intellectuals lead to the reasons why the lives of the "low" people are more difficult than those of the monarchies, aristocracies and theocracies that govern their lives. As I stated above, this objective seemed a real stretch for an audience of the culture that this thesis production was being created for and by. At first, I didn't want to include

these scenes because I feared that I could never make them work as well as they needed to in order to satisfy what I think is the reason they are included in the publication of 1616. However I thought of a possible way to try.

The “low” scenes culminate in the dinner party scene at the palace of the Duke and Duchess of Vanholt. By eliminating all the business with the horse I could make the “folk” who rattle the doors of the Duke represent not just specific characters, but all working class people. They are there to air grievances just as they are in the original, but by shifting the emphasis from individual complaints to class relationships, the scene reads as an opportunity for Faustus to advance his standing with the aristocracy. In the original scene the characters that Faustus takes advantage of come to collect their reckoning. He stuns them with magic and they stop complaining, to the delight of the Duke and Duchess. I raised the stakes by having the characters represent disaffected peasants who have come to the Duke to demand fairer treatment. Faustus offers to help the Duke. He then lures the peasants into a situation that deflects their purpose. He has his devils addict them to drugs and alcohol. The Duke and Duchess are impressed with this move and begin to include Faustus as “one of them”, feeding the hubris of Faustus.

The Old Man becomes Mother

I revised the part of the Old Man to be the mother of Faustus because of the love they seem to share between them. This character is the only one that has any real influence on Faustus. I sought to raise the stakes between them by making them parent and child. Faustus has this character not only killed but also tortured. If Mephostophilis, who performs the work with passion, is part of Faustus and the Old Man character is his mother, then this ultimate separation from her would support the constructed identity argument.

Faustus rejects the love and advice of this character because Mephostophilis threatens to tear him to pieces. A physical threat, but also a psychological one, that now causes Faustus great fear. In the beginning he was so sure that there was nothing that could harm him in the arrangement. Now, at the end of the period of the bargain, Faustus has gained a great respect for the power of Mephostophilis. That he has identified himself with this kind of creature is beginning to worry him. His rejection of the real love offered by The Old Man/Mother follows his near suicide. Mephostophilis offers him a dagger when he raves about being near the end of his contract, "...Faustus, come, thine hour is almost come..." (5.1, 55). The Old Man stays his hand and offers Faustus the opportunity to change his future. Hope is offered to the subject by way of an opportunity to fully recognise the "other". The tragedy is

deepened because Faustus replaces or trades the m(other) for the ultimate symbol of male possession, Helen of Troy.

Helen of Troy and the Scholars

Helen is Europa, the symbolic protected mother of European hegemony. Helen is another illusion created by patriarchal ideals. She is the captured and rescued heroine who gives herself to the hero. She is the reason for men to march off to war and glory. The pagan values of heroism are connected directly to the fetish of masculinity. This is a reinforcement of the values offered in the Emperor's wish to see Alexander the Great defeat Darius of Persia. The Emperor too wants to relish the rewards of heroism, the ownership of icons.

When, at the end of a party, the scholars ask Faustus to produce Helen for their entertainment, it seems that they are all interested in understanding something profound by doing so. But they are drunk, as Wagner tells us, and this must have consequences. By having at least one of the scholars be a woman the argument for the conjuring of Helen can be made to support the idea of Helen as a construction of the patriarchy. The attitude of the scholars towards the suggestion need not be uniform. When Scholar One makes the request to Faustus, to bring Helen to life at the party, he uses the phrase, "...whom all the world admires for majesty..." (5.1,16). After she arrives, Scholar Three says, "too simple is my wit to tell her worth/whom all the world admires for

majesty" (5.1, 29-30). It seems a rather caustic remark if taken as delivered from someone who does not agree with Scholar One's opinion of Helen. If Scholar Three were a feminist scholar, she would be unlikely to support Scholar One's patriarchal reinscribing of the myth of the pedestal-mounted, male generated, image of quintessential beauty and truth worth fighting and dying for.

Faustus takes possession of Helen as the object of life. Helen is a stolen object, one that lures men into action. She occupies the symbolic space of "mothers". Faustus reduces her value by seeking her as a way of passing the time while he, through Mephostophilis, destroys the "real" mother.

Helen is the only illusion created by Mephostophilis that does not vanish or turn back into devils playing the part. This is a turning point for Faustus. He has extended his desire beyond what he might have rejected in the beginning. He now accepts the illusions as reality.

Hell

Faustus' fear of death at the end of the play is driven from understanding that he has made a great mistake. It was not that he sought the knowledge of his completion but that he made that other part of his identity responsible for his weakness. He chose to have a servant to his will that was also the cause of his weakness of character. He, like the Church of the period of the play, endows the devil with the power to

manipulate. It is the act of this “allowance” that creates a convenient opposition for his will.

In his final hour, Faustus exclaims, “ See, see where Christ’s blood streams in the firmament./One drop would save my soul...” (5.2, 156). It was Christ that recognised the devil as an illusion and banished it from the earth. For this He was sacrificed. The blood is a sign of birth, a sign of feminine power, one drop of which will save Faustus, but he sees it as unattainable. He cries out for salvation to Christ but what comes out of his mouth is, “Oh, spare me Lucifer!” (5.2, 159). Then he can see the blood no more. His despair, the ultimate sin, blinds him. He seeks rebirth throughout his final soliloquy yet still he blames the devil for his predicament. His final word is to speak the name of Mephostophilis in a passionate last attempt to reunite.

Faustus embraced Mephostophilis for 24 years, yet only in the form that he would dictate. Finally he recognises that what he has done is to make an illusion of his life, one that overwhelms him as he dies. Faustus started his journey seeking to find out more about “self” and ends it by recognising that the devil does exist, because of “himself”. His free will chooses an evil that perpetuates separation of identity. Going to hell at the end of the play is really the fear of death coming home to Faustus.

Death by dismemberment is repeatedly mentioned in the dialogue by Mephostophilis and so Hell is a place where coming apart can mean

not only the loss of body parts, but also the dissolving of identity. Faustus reason for being a seeker of knowledge is shown to be self-serving. The meaning of the final words of the epilogue points at the subject once more:

Faustus is gone. Regard his hellish fall,
Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise
Only to wonder at unlawful things,
Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits,
To practise more than heavenly power permits.

Hell is the rejection of the feminine in culture. Heaven requires completion of identity. There can be only hell as a result of the “lack” created by the insistence of the subject’s ego to remain isolated and refrain from recognition of “the other” as a necessary part of “the self”.

Summation of Chapter Two

It was in the interest of Christian hierarchies to foster belief in a supreme ruler of Hell. This served two purposes. The first was to unite the faithful in opposition to a common enemy. The second was to create a climate of fear for those who would oppose the ambitions of the hierarchy. This was done in spite of the fact the teachings on which Christianity was founded enabled and encouraged personal freedom of choice for all. It was not in the interest of the rulers of Christian Europe

to have subjects that believed that they were capable of interpreting the teachings of Christ or of how the world should be arranged. This hypocritical positioning within a maligned Christianity created an hierarchy that eventually would try to conquer much of the world and its people, in both spiritual and temporal terms. The European identity was forged in this conquest. It was a male identity. Dr. Faustus is the subject of this identity.

I sought to parallel the development of patriarchal Euro-centric social structures, and their effect on the people who were subject to them, by having Faustus conjure a devil that was feminine in his search for a better understanding of the knowledge that shaped identity. The power of the feminine is what the patriarchy feared and so it sought to control it. If men would dualistically identify with light and understanding, then it gendered the opposite as feminine. Faustus conjures up that principle in his stand against heaven. Like the patriarchy he chooses to enslave the feminine to his own desires.

The final image of this production is five women standing at the points of a pentagram. Through choice of free will one of the great evils of civilisation, the subjugation of women, was perpetrated. The patriarchy placed women at the intersection of nature and evil. It made them the reason for being cast out of paradise. Dialectically it created the cause of its own eventual demise. To retreat from the symbolic dualism of maleness and femaleness and embrace the “other”, the “eternal feminine”

(Goethe, 277), would be to come to the understanding that Augustine sought regarding the unity of humanity and godhead. The tragedy of Dr. Faustus is his inability to do so.

From these complex concepts that engage a multitude of issues I hoped to find a way to stage a production that would allow an audience to both enjoy the spectacle of one of our primal modern myths and to perhaps generate questions as to why it is. I wished the public to wonder about the reasons that the premise for this story is so well understood by our culture.

Notes

¹ While such remarks are not uncommon between men in an Elizabethan context (example: Romeo to Tybalt: I do protest I never injured thee;/But love thee better than thou canst devise, (3.1, 70-1) they can also fit my interpretation.

² Judith Butler, writing about issues regarding the idea of the construction of gender points out: "The controversy over the meaning of *construction* appears to founder on the conventional philosophical polarity between free will and determinism". This seemed to fall squarely into the debate regarding the meaning of Dr. Faustus. Also, she writes about language as "...pervasively masculinist...(wherein)...women constitute the *unrepresentable* (orig. ital.). In other words, women represent the sex that cannot be thought, a linguistic absence and opacity." This begins to approach the idea that evil, being created by "lack", is really gendered feminine, by men. [Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity, New York, Routledge, 1990]

³ Elin Diamond's theory made me consider the idea of a female Mephistophilis as an alienating device. She writes: "When gender is 'alienated' or foregrounded, the spectator is enabled to see a sign system *as* (orig. ital.) a sign system..." p.85. This pointed out that, "The body, particularly the female

body, by virtue of entering the stage space, enters representation – it is...a signifying element...part of a theatrical sign system...in a system governed by...men for the pleasure of...(men)". ["Brechtian Theory/Feminist Theory: Towards a Gestic Feminist Criticism", The Drama Review, 32.1, (T117), Spring (1988): 82-94. p.89.]

⁴ Sue Ellen Case, Feminism and Theatre, MacMillan. London, 1988

⁵ These authors were studied in courses offered as part of the M.F.A degree programme leading to this thesis. They informed my thinking and led me to consider the casting of Mephostophilis as female as much more complex than I had intuitively understood.

⁶ Aristotle, in his Poetics claims that, "Tragedy depends for its effect on six constituent elements: plot, character, language, thought, the visual, and music". ["The constituent elements of tragedy", Poetics, Aristotle, *trans.* Kenneth McLeish. Theatre Communications Group: New York, 1998. P 10]

⁷ Francis Bacon writes extensively about the inability to find out anything new if natural philosophy (science) insists on sticking to old methods of understanding and examination. He then writes aphorisms about the possibilities that exist if indeed science becomes updated. The goals of science can be to find new values. He writes, "If a man endeavor to establish and extend the power and dominion of the human race itself over the universe, his ambition...is without doubt both a more wholesome and a more noble thing... . Now the empire of man over things depends wholly on the arts and sciences. For we cannot command nature except by obeying her." ["Aphorisms – Book One, CXXIX", The New Organon and Related Writings, Ed. Fulton H. Anderson, Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis, 1960. p.119]

⁸ See, Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic, Studies in Popular Beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth- century England. London: Penguin Books: 1971, *passim*. I am indebted to J. J. MacIntosh for pointing out the following to me. To quote him: "The often reluctant change in view can be noted throughout the century. For example, in All's Well that End's Well (act ii. scene 3), Lafeu says, 'They say miracles are past, and we have our philosophical persons to make modern and familiar, things supernatural and causeless.' Interestingly, the first Folio omitted the second comma, completely reversing the

sense of Lafeu's remark. Again, in 1645, Lord Culpepper wrote, '...this is no age for miracles; and certainly the king's condition is such that less than a miracle cannot save him...' (Clarendon Papers [Clarendon State Papers, Oxford, 1767], ii. p. 207)."

Chapter Three: Development of the Performance Text

The next part of this paper attempts to reveal how the main ideas discussed thus far transposed into the performance text. I will open the section with some thoughts on directorial process and the main areas of production. Following that will be an edited version of the production journal that I kept. It will track the development of the theoretical and design processes, the auditions, the rehearsal period and finally the performance period.

Process

The development of ideas and the translation of those ideas into performative dramatic action on a stage in front of an audience is the director's task. The outcome of that task is the experience that the audience and the company share at each performance. How those ideas get to the stage doesn't concern the audience, nor should they. However, because this paper is meant to be a support document to the thesis production and to serve as an insight into the director's process in the mounting of the play under discussion, I will include a few of my thoughts on the role of the director.

The "director" is an evolution of the position and responsibilities that were those of the "actor manager" of the nineteenth century. In various parts of Europe, the English term, "director" is translated to words that more closely resemble the meaning of that original managerial

term. It is known variously as “instruktor” and “regissör” or even as “regi” in some countries. These terms indicate that their meanings have something to do with their position in production as being both sources of information and of decision making with regard to the “lining up” or “registering” of the various parts of a production. In film the position became associated with the ideas surrounding the term “auteur”. By the end of the twentieth century reaction to the “auteur” had evolved to the point where plays were being produced that were non-text based and within the framework of personal or collective performance creations. My preferences for working methods fall somewhere between the notion of the director as being the prime visionary and the performance being developed entirely as a communal effort. I see the role of director as being one that is meant to help others find or discover what they need to enable them to be efficient in their participation in the story-telling and inspired in the performance of that participation.

In my career as a performer and as a director I have been involved in the development of methods that are applicable to the collective development of ideas. It was my intention to make use of those methods in the development of this project. I wanted the process to be centred on the notion of a creative group. Each member of the group had a role to “perform”, whether it was as director, designer, actor or technician. That is not to say that I intended any kind of “traditional” interpretation of what those roles or job descriptions were defined as. Neither was I

looking to invent something new in terms of what those roles meant. My hope was simply to create and maintain an environment whereby each member of the group felt safe enough to offer ideas for the benefit of the production. In this way, each member of the production team would take responsibility and ownership of the project. By “owning” the project, it becomes in the interest of all members to contribute ideas, even if the ideas are “risky”. I wanted an environment that encouraged risk-taking.

My experience is that it is often the ideas that are considered outside “acceptable” parameters within a given milieu or organisation that become the ones that lead to the most exciting and unexpected positive developments. It was my intention to have this approach to development include all departments and personnel involved in the production. I would be director, with the role of aligning ideas and contributing them as well.

Acting

Because the role of Faustus is a difficult one for an actor to manage, I sought the services of an experienced actor. I tried to engage some without salary and although there was interest in the role, it was not possible for any of them to commit to the time necessary. I thought about hiring a professional actor, but had not the budget to do this, if there was to be any scenography for the production. In the end I used the department students for all roles, including that of Faustus. I

thought I might be able to coach the students towards an understanding of the play and of the roles in it. I had worked with young actors in many productions and felt that these students might have a good time with the kinds of roles available. As a professional director I have found that if actors are indeed having fun, that is to say they are relaxed and confident, then they are capable of producing both efficient and effective characterisations.

There are many questions for the actors to ask of themselves when developing the characters of the play. Those playing humans have the job of trying to understand the world of Faustus. Those playing devils must find out what they think devils are. All need to learn the language of the play and gain the rhythms of the verse, vital to the understanding of the dialogue. Because the language is archaic, there is the problem of how to historicize the characters to become meaningful signs for a contemporary audience. This can be done in part through both the design of costumes and the use of alienation factors in image presentation. However, the behaviour of the characters most facilitates signification.

The images of the characters are primal in many ways. They live in the stories of western culture in various forms. The Popes of the medieval and renaissance periods are, to be sure, hierarchical ancestors of the Pope of today, but the image of the Pope is one that transcends eras. The historical and political implications of the scenes concerning the Pope are only partially important in and of themselves. What matters in

performance is the intensity of the dislike that Faustus has for this character. Faustus' insistence on embarrassing the self-proclaimed representative of Christ on Earth functions as a kind of vicarious thrill for the audience. The same is true of the Emperor figure. The audience is likely to be as interested in seeing the battle between Alexander the Great and Darius of Persia as is the Emperor but what matters most is the relationship of Faustus to the Emperor. Faustus is interested in status. In the case of the Pope, he seeks to lower the status of the Church, in the case of the Emperor, Faustus seeks to raise his own status. At the end of Act 1, Sc. 4, he reveals his desire to be the "emperor of the world". The fact that he settles for being admired by the Emperor is instance of his lack of resolve.

I asked the actors playing the devils to consider certain questions of what it must be like to be a devil. Initial, contemporary responses to this question were grounded in the images of the Devil as constructed by modern films and stories. The first kind of response was typically anything from a horrible monster to a "slick operator", something like Al Pacino in the film The Devil's Advocate or Jack Nicholson in The Witches of Eastwick. When the actors were pressed a little further, to consider the "reality" of actually being a devil, the problem became a little more interesting. One must think of the world of the devil. Where do they actually exist? If it is in a medieval Hell, what is that like?

The actors often had modern conceptions of Hell as a place where a person gets to do all the things that they are forbidden to do on earth. This is a reaction to the use of Hell and damnation as a repressive tool. But if the actor thinks about what Hell is like as described by Evil Angel at the end of the play, there can be no doubt that it is not a place where one could ever feel pleasure. This leads to other questions that must be considered, such as, what are devils anyway? Do devils ever feel satisfied? Is being a devil like being a person in misery or is it something else? What is magic? What is witchcraft and necromancy? Why were they so feared?

I asked the actors to question their concepts of hell and being a devil. For example, if as a devil they devised a scene in which they were being tortured by another devil, what were their feelings about the torture, other than the pain? Was there a reason for them to be being tortured, or were they just going through the motions as a dispirited body? If they had a past (as a character) or a particular sin that they could relate to as their reason for being in Hell, it seemed to make the torture more than just painful. The unending nature of the experience of Hell became an important factor. When in turn they become the torturers, does that give them a sense of relief, or must it not be a kind of punishment as well? What kind of relationships do devils have to each other? How does this affect their Hell? The actors had to develop realities for themselves based on their primal understanding of the concept of

Hell, but it proved to be the relationships with the other devils that brought the Hell they created to life.

I sought a performance criterion that would allow the characters to be representational but at the same time the interpretation of the roles must be believable. Alienation is most effective when it follows on a scene that draws the interest of the spectator into an illusion, which can then be shifted so as to destroy illusion. In working with the actors I directed them towards searching for a way to ground the roles in some kind of reality. I did not spend a lot of time with the theoretical aspects of the production for a number of reasons. The main reason was that I did not think it useful to have the actors trying to play to my theoretical concepts.

Design

Having great confidence in the designers assigned to the production I had made a conscious decision to interfere as little as possible with that process. This was important for another reason as well. I had designed the Oslo production and I knew that the images from that production would be “present” in my mind as we developed this one. I met with the design team many times and we spoke of ideas and images, but I was more abstract in my part of the conversation than I might have been had this been the first time I had directed this play. I did have some ideas that I knew I wanted to get into the design, but as to

how this was solved I fully intended to leave to the head designer. This was a challenge for me at many points in the process. My initial reactions to design proposals were curbed many times. I would take a full day at least before coming back with a response. In most cases this was successful, because the interval allowed me the time to appreciate the suggestion. The Oslo production eventually receded from my thinking and this production began to shape up in its own right.

The invention of the devil, historically and theoretically in this play, is a fundamental property of the thesis of the production, i.e., that devils are thought to be the cause for sinfulness, located outside the body and soul of the human. Parallel to this is the concept of the philosophical and empirical “other”, constructed as the devil. What kind of devil best suits Faustus if he demands that the form of Mephostophilis be changeable to suit his pleasure? This is an important design consideration that I felt must present a Mephostophilis that was tempting to all members of the audience. The actors playing this role would have to present themselves not only to Faustus but also to the readers of the production. What would the devils in this production look like? My feeling was to extend the psychological questions to the physical realm. The devils are not a uniform kind of creature. Each devil should have a history that shapes the image of that devil.

The human characters need to span the period from medieval to contemporary. The Pope and Cardinals were easy to imagine in this

respect because the basic costume of those characters has changed little in the interval. The Emperor need not be historically accurate to the period, but the imaged concept of “Emperor” is best served by medieval or at least exotic references. The same is true for the characters of Alexander and Darius. Certainly they are historical characters, but it is their mythological image that is at work in the narrative. The lower class characters need only be relative to what the upper classes look like.

The world of the play I thought to be late medieval or early renaissance in appearance. Not historically accurate recreations of medieval Germany and Rome, but an impression of the period through imagery borrowed from the period. Along with this period referencing I sought for a design that reflects the organic nature of the mind of Faustus as an individual and as a “universal” self. I also wished to be able to invade the present with imagery that transcends period. I hoped we could build a set on which we could juxtapose physical images that would allow us to alienate certain moments in the play with contemporary images overlaid on the action.

Sound

I sought an original score for this production and was extremely fortunate in finding a composer in the University of Calgary Department of Music. A graduate student was introduced to me by one of the professors in that department and on hearing some of her work I felt that

she might develop some truly interesting music. Happily, I was right in this assessment. The composer used a technique known as “electro-coustic”. This is a method that uses recorded sound samples, logged to a computer programme that has the capabilities of manipulating the tonalities, intervals and waveforms inherent in the sample. Through this kind of manipulation a unique sound can be applied to the principles of harmony in conjunction with other sounds handled in the same way. The composer then proceeded to combine these manipulations with musical instruments played live in performance. The final form of the orchestra was a cello, voice, and sound file recorded on mini-disk. Spatial manipulation of sound sources in the theatre was also to be part of the design.

Lights

I sought a light design that would serve to do more than illuminate the actors. At times this is all that is needed but there seemed a perfect opportunity for a designer to use the lights as the prime factor in executing the magic of the play. There were characters to make appear and disappear and there were special effects to execute that are part of the text. There were fireworks to consider and entertainments to choreograph as part of the text. The texture of the imagery would rely heavily on lighting. I also sought a design that might reflect some of the ideas regarding the dualism discussed in the earlier section of this paper.

I thought there might be something in the lighting that would imply the intersection of evil and good in the mind of the subject.

Journal

The next section is an edited version of the director's journal. The purpose of including this material is to try to give the reader a window into the cumulative process of taking the play to the stage. I have removed most anecdotal entries because the information they offered was superfluous to an understanding of how the ideas of the production were transposed to the theatre. I have left a few of the anecdotes in where they seem to serve towards this kind of understanding. The language of the journal is sometimes colloquial. I have tried to keep this to a minimum.

Production Journal

Feb 4: Reading about gender constructions and associations between Brechtian and Feminist theories (intertextuality) in Elin Diamond. In addition, Judith Butler has inspired in me some connections regarding the casting of Mephostophilis as a woman. This should add some or perhaps take away some gender considerations. Not sure which yet, but my intent is to both expose and then negate gender in the thematic aspects of power abuse.

The devil that Faustus wants should be a creature that at some level is attractive to all that see it. If there is to be a historicization of the play, then it should come in the fact that the idea of selling one's soul in order to keep company with this most alluring and powerful of temptations, be one that is offered as attractive to the spectator of the play. The nature of the desire that Faustus embodies must be implicit in the presentation of the story. The creature should be perhaps a metamorphosis-enabled entity. Each time we see the creature, it could be different. It can be whatever we want it to be, but in its seductive form it should seduce everyone.

Feb. 9: Meeting today to decide on designers for next season in the department. I am three for three in my requests regarding this thesis. I have the time slot, the play, and the designer I was hoping to have. I met with the designer for a quick talk about how to proceed. I have a closer grasp on the play than he does at this point and he wishes to get a good read in on it and some associated articles that I have for him. I spoke with him regarding the readings about gender that I have been pursuing. We also spoke a bit about the desire aspect and the metamorphosis quality of Mephostophilis. Change is a major factor in this play. Faustus changes from academic to...what...a self indulgent rake?...a carnal animal?...(no...this degrades animals)...a fallen angel?...

Mephostophilis changes all the time to suit the whims of Faustus. The dialogue works this relationship as a continual struggle for domination of the “other”.

The play is inside of Faustus. “Play” as in the interactions of the acts of his construction of the world. (Butler, re phenomenology) Imagery should retain some of the medieval quality suggested by the derivation of the legend and the characters. Medieval actions determined the images of the period of the play’s writing, and those images are what serve the development of western cultural mythologies regarding behaviour and social relationships.

I spoke with a philosophy professor (a member of my thesis committee) about several things regarding the Faustian connection to mythologies of good and evil, the heresies of the Cathars, Thomas Aquinas, and Mani. Mani developed a theory of equal parts, good and evil, evil located in the body and good in the mind. This could be a point because if I go with a feminine Mephostophilis, I might be reinscribing the Adam and Eve myth.

Feb 12: Ran an experiment in class today with the acting students.

Introduced them to the idea of a chorus and the idea that the chorus was devils that struggled to exist in a hell that was constantly reminding them of where they existed. Got a glimpse into the “group of devils” idea I have been thinking of. Investigated

ideas regarding the constitution of a devil and the life of one eternally tormented. A good question from one student. Do the devils change? They must be struggling against the knowledge that their situation is hopeless. In this way they get set up for positive change and then re-experience the pain of repression and torment. Is there a socialist analogy here?

Feb. 15: Questions at this time:

1. What is the significance of drawing attention to the gender aspects of casting Mephostophilis as female?
2. What relationship does the imagery of the play as written have to the medieval period of the Church, in particular the war on heresies?
3. How is this imagery relevant to today's images of good and evil? What aspects of production must be highlighted in interest of contemporary understandings of good and evil, and related topics like: acceptable losses, collateral damage, inevitability [fate?], and free will?

Feb. 28: I think it is OK to approach publicity as if the public has some of the basic information about the legend. The ideas inherent in the play are so much in our culture that it may be that the images are primal now. It is certain though that most people's idea of what a devil may be like are not going to be overwhelmingly of a Franciscan monk.

March 12: Opening with a gruesome vision of hell might be interesting.

Get the image up right at the top so we know what we are dealing with in terms of hell. I don't want to be confusing with regards to a philosophical hell, like no milk for the coffee or something..

March 19: First design meeting. It was a theoretical and general conversation about the nature of the play, the world of the play etc. I let them know that I thought the medieval imagery was important to indicate. I don't want to get too involved in trying to make it all contemporary. I think the contemporary aspects will become evident if we can tell the story accurately. The play contains definite images and a very specific hierarchy regarding characters. Even the devils have an hierarchy that must be maintained in the telling.

The action takes place at the intersection of the mind, the body and the spirit. I feel that it is important to realise the performance space as one in which all three elements of being alive are involved. The tragedy of the play comes in the dissolution of the intersection. One or the other takes over in the living of the life of Faustus and herein lies the tragedy, the losing of his soul. The set should reflect this location in some way. An organic quality to it perhaps, that allows for the illusion of the conjured world that Faustus chooses to create with his new-found power.

April 27: Faustus meets Mephostophilis as an image of himself but the image operates in a different sense of time? Mirrors of the self: the form of Mephostophilis as a projection of the will of Faustus. Metamorphosis to the projected image is the transference of power and of will to an idea created in the mind of Faustus?

The devils and creatures of the play are either real in the sense that they belong to the world of Faustus and the play, or they are artfully created illusions of the mind. Collectively and unconsciously, they are primal, in reaction to the realities of life on earth: war, repression of the mind and body, entrapment in cultural stereotyping. If cultures believe in the corporeal existence of “the devil”, it surely connects to the actions of real people.

Does Faustus speak the lines of the “good angel”? He projects all evil outside of himself. He thinks he is above evil, above all. Mephostophilis knows (or is?) the mind of Faustus, and the kind of image that Faustus desires. Mephostophilis is the “creature” that Faustus longs to be.

July 6: Can the ghosting or resonance of artwork that imparts meanings to the observer be mirrored in the production somehow? This story is not finite, but relived by people at any time in history. Visually this might be done through anachronisms in the design or in the behaviour of the characters.

Mephostophilis is a continually changing image, because Faustus desires to make things as interesting as possible. The goal here is to have the creature be attractive and tempting to the individual audience members.

Process with Designers is progressive. They warn me about the possible critical reaction to the carnality of Mephostophilis as a female image, but I cannot let that restrict the direction. I feel that the images are important to the historicization and alienation processes needed to present this play to a contemporary audience.

The Reeve Theatre, where the performance will take place, is a dark black hole that sucks up possibilities. If the play can start from a bleak landscape, become richer in values, then wind up at the bleak windswept black hole at the end, it may serve the intent of the ghosting aspect.

The designer introduced the idea that he would like to see Hell Mouth actually arrive as a large dragon at the end of the play to swallow Faustus. This could be interesting.

July 19: First meetings with the composer went very well. She has brilliant ideas about how to texture sound. I think she has the energy to produce a full soundscape. She wants to perform the music live each night and she agreed to be Music Director. Great!

August 20: The set will represent things that trap and contain: a giant metal grid that can hold prisoners of any era. Projections onto

skrimms and bolts of cloth will enable modification of the hard-edged reality of the theatre into illusions of other places.

Costume design is being based in Sado-Masochistic imagery for the devils and possibly for the other characters of the play as under dressing. The actors playing the roles will also be devils, but more interesting is the reference to the horrid behaviour of the powerful of the period that is the background to the play.

The historicized version of the world that Marlowe is critical of must come through in the playing. I hope it will be both obvious in the contemporary aspects and yet not over-stated.

September 1-9: Reading, Deats, Sex Gender and Desire in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe. Great introduction that ties together Feminist critical theories and cross-references in a very clear way the ideas that make up the history of feminism.

Reading How We Became Post Human by Hayles. It is primarily a visual art perspective but introduces interesting ideas around "Virtual Identity" in the present era when identity can be in so many forms that have little or nothing to do with humanism. It introduces the concept of the body as prosthesis, seamlessly articulated with machinery. It implies that human identity is a temporary or transitional phase in evolution. This seems to tie in somehow with the ideas that I am working with regarding the projection or construction of Mephostophilis by Faustus.

I find the ideas propounded by Freud and later Lacan on Freud regarding the 'mirror' phase of development to be of importance. Faustus is projecting or constructing his desired self by conjuring Mephostophilis. His mirror image is a misrecognition that represents his desire to understand the "other" world of nature and magic, gendered feminine. He seeks his feminine self in order to feel fulfilled. When he gains an understanding of this other half of his "androgynous sphere", he gains power. The use of that power is where his choice of free will comes to bear.

If the will is the source of reason, it is also the place of mind, and soul. Plato describes a mature adult as one who is able to suppress those aspects of the personality that interfere with reason, leaving reason as the measure of maturity. Augustine goes further and says that only those with control of their will are able to become wise and wisdom can only come to those who control their minds with reason. Augustine makes a case for evil being a thing of choice, not a thing that comes from a "place". He counters Mani with this argument. The Church must have thought that he was right since they made him Pope eventually. Then where does the devil come from by the time Marlowe writes his story?

September 10: Design needs to be shrunk due to costs. The designer says that he expected this to happen. The giant grid idea that we discussed over the summer is getting smaller but the idea is

getting bigger. I can see how to use this image of the world of the play. It fits into contemporary thinking and imagery yet the grid gives real texture to whatever we place on it. I hope we are able to climb on it.

I am conscious of resistance on my part to some of the ideas that come from the designer because they introduce ideas that I have not had. But I am stepping back and letting them sink in a bit before I react to them. This is proving to be a good thing to do as I see that the ideas he has certainly take the project into areas that I hoped they would go as far as historicizing the play.

Auditions this evening were long and tedious as I am so wiped out from lack of sleep and jet lag, yet I can recognise that we have some good prospects here. Lots of men are auditioning, which is a surprise. I didn't think there were that many in the department.

September 11: I watched the World Trade Centre get destroyed by terrorists. Talk about choosing to perform evil acts!

September 12: Met with the composer. She has been doing lots of work and is focusing on the project for this semester. She is getting a course credit for her graduate studies. That is great news. She is really good. Her sketch of an idea for pre-show ambience, the "sound of the grave" idea we discussed in the summer is brilliant

and exactly as I remember imagining it. I am quite excited about this aspect as I think it will make the production really have body.

Design meeting: started to go through the character descriptions. I was informed of the results of the costing meeting with the technical director. We are over budget before we even get started. I feel that people are getting turned on to the project a bit. It is early, but I am hopeful.

Resonance seems to be a catch or key phrase in describing the designers' approach. This creates a moving image of the ambiguity or ambivalence of the meaning of the text. As there is a plethora of divergent theses regarding the meaning, the origins and almost all aspects of the text, this seems to make sense in the approach to producing the play. Another helpful phrase is "multiple voices". This seems to speak to the idea that the universe created or generated by Faustus is one in which there are many sources and destinations for meaning and intent or purpose.

September 13: Continuing to go through the text, character by character and scene by scene. Ideas move about and overlap and become a little clearer, while at the same time define the strange quality of the historicizing aspects that are forever mobile. The time of the play is uncertain, and we do this by layering the look of the play, accessing imagery from many eras.

Contemporary looks are resonant of medieval looks in that much of fashion seems to draw from stories or myths of that period. Goths, sado-masochistic ideas, art students sporting both of these looks, along with some of the romantic aspects of medieval Europe, combine with indigenous peoples scarification rituals and fashions (tattoos etc.), to make up a kind of “street” look that communicates what can be described as a “post-post-modern” look. Mix that in with the post-human or digital look and we get a drift of where we think the costume design should be headed.

Also we can play with the genre of each scene, i.e, each part of the story can resonate with imagery (and perhaps style?) from various genres.

September 14. The seduction scene must generate a lot of heat. Up to this point, the play is almost predictable, leaving out the fact that we will expose a fantastic Mephostophilis at the end of the conjuring scene. The seduction of Faustus is key to understanding the desires of Faustus. The “Tango” aspect, the sparring between him and Mephostophilis shall be a long slow foreplay towards a consummation of the deal. “Consumatum est!”, Faustus exclaims at the point where he has decided to go ahead with the contract. How to do this is still a mystery. I know how to do it with one actor as Mephostophilis, but how to do it with several will be a challenge. It might not work. But that’s OK, because if it doesn’t

work, we go to the single actor version. Still, I will try the more complex way in the beginning. I must follow this hunch as far as it will take me.

The morning after scene (2.1) suddenly seemed to be a Noel Coward bit. They are at breakfast, Wagner is serving perhaps, with a bunch of devils getting in his way, and the two principals have their first “lover’s” quarrel. Dressed à la Coward perhaps, he in his dressing gown, she in her silk nightgown, or less for both perhaps? When Faustus refuses to withdraw the question about who made heaven, as he should do if he wants to keep her, she stomps out. He then begins to rationalise his decisions and is about to renege on the deal when in comes Lucifer and his gang. We now go into a kind of 1920’s German cabaret. Threatening Faustus at first and then, when he is cowed, Lucifer decides to entertain Faustus with a show.

September 18: Finalised the cast list and the Producer signed off on it. I asked the costumer if it would be OK to let all those who auditioned and can meet the schedule be in the play. She thought it would be doable, with care. The students seem so keen to be in the play and for me it seems a good idea to let them on the stage. So, since it is OK with the department, I will have 33 actors.

Met with a choreographer and went through the development to date. She has been studying dance in Guinea and Ghana for the

past two summers and has a very good spirit. She is interested in the spirit dances of cultures. She is building a show based on Haitian Voodoo themes of possession etc. Very interesting connection to the ideas we are dealing with. Makes me think of the “meaning” of the interest. Why are these kinds of ideas are being explored in our culture at this time.

September 20: Received a 1500 dollars donation to the budget. It doubles the set budget! The donor asked an interesting question. He asked, “Do you think it is a good idea for young people to be thinking about things like hell and the devil?” He seemed to be asking if I thought it to be wise to perpetrate such drivel on the public. I explained what I thought about how the devil was a construct, which could be traced through artifact and how I thought about the personal projections of Faustus being involved. He seemed to accept that by way of an answer.

Design meeting today was a little frustrating as we heard from the technical director that much of what we were proposing was not possible as we had presented it.

September 21: I dreamed of the play. It is starting early on this one. I had the thought that it might be useful to think of the Pope scene in Brechtian terms, insofar as the presentation is concerned. Projected text on the historical aspects of the behaviour of the hierarchy in the early Renaissance perhaps? In particular, the

information about the Borgia Popes might serve to underscore the raunchy scenes.

September 24: Design has been shrunk to a “doable” size. Cost seems to shrink everything and this means that the look changes and this means that the feel changes. The production will be different than imagined. It is necessary to build a theatre inside the empty black box of the Reeve. This results in using up the budget for set on structural foundations. All we have really created now is a version of an Elizabethan theatre, with an above, an inner reveal space and a playing area downstage. We will be able to keep the platforms for the various scene changes and will be able to fly Death in at the end to achieve a kind of Van Eyck image for the hell scene.

I am consciously stepping back on design solutions to see what happens. When the designer comes up with an idea that is contra to what I have imaged in my own mind I step back to let the new idea take some time to work itself around my preconceptions to see what happens. I am always thinking of dramatic action and image in action, and the designer thinks of images to represent the meaning of the action. We have yet to put the action into the images and structures of the design.

September 26: I think that there is some potential for video projections if we get the right artist involved. The problem is going

to be hardware, specifically projectors. I am trying to find a way to get hold of a powerful machine that will work in the Reeve. I may have to beg for one from a commercial source.

Helen of Troy: The goddess Europa, as embodied by Helen of Troy, represents an Angel of Mercy that is an image for "Mother's love". This is a European ideal. She must be protected at all costs (by men). Helen must be rescued by her husband. Helen must be owned by Faustus

It is with pride that Europe remembers its heritage of military emperors. Alexander the Great punishes Darius of Persia and slays him to prove a point. Alexander is the classical image of manhood, maleness and power. He is the model for many generals, emperors, popes and kings. He slays the (Asian) usurper and rescues the pride of European self-awareness by dominating and crushing opposition by rule of military power. He saves Europe.

The Emperor models his "self" on the life of Alexander. We could say that his identity is factored by the model before him. He sees his life as being remembered, like Alexander's, and for the same reasons. He may even convince himself that he is Alexander reincarnated. The death of Darius in the play is a reaffirmation of the belief of the Emperor that he is favoured in the battle for ultimate control of the European continent. The "victory" may be seen as a comment on the myth of the battles of the crusades. The

effects of the crusades were still evident on the continent of Europe at the time of the play's writing. The resulting effect of those wars was profound on the European mythology of empire.

September 28: Reading through the props list and getting a feel for what kinds of choices we have for fulfilling the list, what things will look like and how they will operate.

Music: The composer had worked on the finale music, but was unhappy with it. I suggested that she try to find a theme, then work through the play relative to that theme:

September 29: I prepared the script ready for rehearsal. Changed the scene numbering to 1 through 19. I feel better with this system than with acts and scenes.

October 1: We had an artist for the projections, but lost him because of time constraints. This is disappointing as he was so keen and had a great approach to the work, loved the play, the images of the period and the ideas of the play.

Met with the choreographer. She associated images to the ideas of the scene and its objective, or my objective, of generating heat in the audience. She picked out the images of fire to melt the blood, the circle of the conjuring scene, the beat of the scene as an organic thing, and the blood itself as a foundation to build a sexual rhythm and movement on.

October 2: The images for me to this point have been in a kind of repressed state, thinking them to be images left over from the previous production. I am not sure that I may have been right in doing so. It might be that I have repressed new ideas as well. It is odd to be so much outside the design of the play. I am contributing ideas of course, but I feel a little like I am responding to ideas more than generating them. The designer has come up with a set that is nothing like I would have built on the one hand, yet I am finding that there are similarities in the solving of the space with the Oslo production. There I had to build a theatre and a stage with an above, an inner reveal, a fore stage with wings and vomitoria left and right.

October 3: Costume design: is proceeding all right I think. The designer really builds a contemporary look into the mix. Sometimes it is too obvious for me, yet I feel he is unable to accurately let me know what the design is really like, because he is adjusting to circumstances of purchasing and finding materials. Some of the images are not striking home with me. I have somehow abrogated responsibility on the look of the play. I trust that this is the right way to go. Letting go of control is a good thing, but only to a certain limit. That limit comes when there is a danger of having no images in my own imagination. I wonder if it is possible to lose contact completely with the development. I don't think it is

happening, but today I felt a bit of a twinge during the costume meeting.

I am getting pressured to decide on casting. I had planned to cast from the ensemble based on some work I will do with them in rehearsal. I don't have a strong hunch about anyone for any particular role yet.

The workshop on text tonight went well, but revealed that there is a lot of work to do on text and verse. This will be a factor in choosing the roles. I hope that I am inspired in the casting.

October 4: The composer is developing a theme and has brought in the idea of the devil's interval (of ascending thirds I believe). This brings back the talk we had of Stravinsky in our earlier meetings.

My supervisor and I discussed the feminist critique of this production. I should expect questions on my choices of how to play Mephostophilis and on the perception of the female form on stage etc. However, I feel that I am on the right track with this, theoretically at least. Trying to alienate the concept seems to be the way to approach this.

Thoughts on the character of Mephostophilis: Faustus wants to study nature, creation, the universe and the nature of living. All of these areas are gendered feminine. This area is considered the realm of God and therefore not suitable for human study. Those who practice the arts of nature, the knowledge of plants and herbs,

the knowledge of the relationships of the stars to humans, the knowledge of the human body, knowledge of birth and death, are considered to be practitioners of Magic, (also considered the domain of evil and the devil). All are gendered feminine. Magic is associated with nature and with the spiritual world. The “magical” connection between sex and death put sex into the Church’s forbidden zone.

The abbeys of the time, run by women, who were educated, who wrote books, who maintained an understanding of Christianity tempered and layered with traditional or earth based knowledge, became the enemy of the Church. The women who were in these places were persecuted and eventually thousands were burned as witches and heretics.

October 5: Pressed to cast the show, otherwise the show “cannot be built in time”. This means that my idea of casting organically as we try things out must go by the way. I must hurry the beginning of the process in order that costume shop will not have to hurry the end of the process.

October 6: Spent fourteen hours making a casting chart/plot. Got most of it tied in. It is all a big guess. I wanted the students who were interested in the show to have a role in it. I cast thirty-three students because I felt that the show could handle that many actors. I was warned that this may be a problem and this casting

push has been the first perhaps. I don't know these actors or what they are capable of, so it is all a risk.

October 9: I must find a way to make this multiple Mephostophilis work. If Faustus' desire is the basis for the form of Mephostophilis, certainly the desire must change over twenty-four years.

Rigging meeting determined that flying the large Death figure is possible but will require some careful thought. How to rig it as a puppet was discussed. I thought poles would be most efficient. Technical Director from the University Theatre thought this to be the most likely solution as well. My preference would be to see Death as a puppet that climbs up and over the set. I fear the flying will be a bit corny.

October 11: The movement workshop tonight went well. The choreographer warmed them up and at the same time began to work on the idea of sexuality being part of the movement. She put the company through a series of well thought out exercises that functioned both as movement development and as demonstrations for her to assess the level of the actors regarding movement. Her evaluations of who might be front line dancers were what I thought they might be. The designer came to watch them move. I think it great, the way he takes part in the development of the project. I took the cast through some early "devilhood" development scenarios and introduced the idea that they are a gang of devils

who want to put on this play. They seem to like that and it is amazing how it seems to bring them into a unit. They were very compatible and the evening was calm. The feeling in the group was good.

We talked a bit about nudity on stage and asked if there were any that were not shy. Twelve people put their hands up. I explained that no one would have to do anything they didn't want to do. I also explained that I was only going with explicitness where it was warranted. I am trying to instil an adult approach to the subject. It is still a touchy one for many people in this part of the world. I understand that and intend to keep the development process professional. Several actors offered to show some parts of their bodies but not others. I told them that it was great that they felt comfortable about letting us know these things and that they could inform the costume designers if they wished.

October 14: First Rehearsal: Read through went as I suspected it would. That is, the text was difficult for many to read, mostly because of the lack of experience with verse. Some of the actors seem to have reading problems. There are words misspoken and sometimes changed. On the other hand there are a few who are good with the verse. The voices are mostly untrained and will need work. I talked to them about the work that we will do on how to

play verse. I told them that I would lead some workshops at the beginning of rehearsals on movement and on voice.

I also spoke a bit about the development of the concept of good and evil coming out of the Manichaean tradition and how that got translated to European and Christian thinking. It is interesting to see people react to this subject. Their eyes seem to look down when they are thinking about good and evil. Their faces look thoughtful and I wonder at the background information that is at play in the minds of the cast.

Faustus is going to need to work hard at his voice. He is aware of it though and has a great attitude to the work so far. He understands most of what he is reading yet he must find the rhythm.

I worked the beginning of the play, or the preshow and lead into the first chorus. It may work to have them all be dead on the set and come to life. I took the cast through some stage fighting exercises to get them to understand how to represent violence on the stage. I had them practice a few basic moves that engage the principal that the victim sells the violence, not the aggressor.

Spoke with the Mephostophilis group about experimenting to find the solution to how to do one character with five actors. At this point they all seem keen to go on this approach. Some of them are stronger with the text than others.

October 15: Began the evening by leading the group in warm-ups, both physical and vocal. Basic exercises but with the idea that this will become a regular event that the cast will perform. I have arranged for the rooms to be open to them as early as possible for them to warm-up.

Worked the devil chorus. Changed the idea from the slow intro to having them leap to their feet and challenge the audience. This seems to be the right direction. Began introductory work on text with principal actors. I will likely need to bring in someone to help the cast gain some understanding of how to speak verse.

October 16: There is no one working in the costumes shop this week so there is no movement on the costumes. I wonder at the need to have cast so early. I realised at the read through that I should probably have cast differently.

Meeting with the props-master, the designer and the technical director: Discussion over whether or not to use a cable or a track to fly the skeleton. I mentioned the puppet idea again but this was not met with much enthusiasm.

The cast is enthusiastic and the first scene is looking like it might be interesting. Assistant Director took them through some devil exercises that she wanted to try. Some seemed to like it and find it useful. I worked the first clown scene. It is difficult make sense of Elizabethan comedy that is so grounded in period

humour. My thinking on these comedy scenes is that they are there to show how the thinking of the aristocracy or the power culture devolves to the working or lower classes. This scene is about the attitude of those that have jobs to those who don't. We began to make headway when we tried the text as modern language.

Sc. 4 Faustus and Mephostophilis: As one would expect at this early stage, there were tentative responses on the part of the players to being intimate. The Mephostophilis group are all dancers and will eventually be able to get close physically I think. The text is a major challenge, but it is only day three and I think the understanding of the scene is there.

October 17. The technical director offered to make an elevated rehearsal platform that would meet his safety standards. He showed me his solution for the flying of Death.

The movement instructor for the department came in to work with Faustus and Mephostophilis to great benefit. The Mephostophilis group came up with the beginnings of a MultiMeph solution. I wish the movement instructor had time to work with the whole cast on a regular basis.

October 18. Scene 6. Choreography of the dance: The choreographer got the dancers into quite a good state of interaction. The music is good as a basis but it needs more

dynamics and should build to a climax to meet the end of the scene. I worked the text and then let the Mephostophilis group try to be part of the dance. They are all a little shy but seem positive.

October 19. Ran Scenes 1 – 6. I had been running separate rehearsals for the various groups of actors. There had begun to develop a bit of malaise over the scattering of rehearsals to other parts of the building etc. It was quite good for the cast to see what was developing in the other rehearsal rooms with other groups.

Conjuring of Mephostophilis: Tried doubling the Mephostophilis characters in hoods while the Mephostophilis group does the voices from off stage through a microphone. I think a bit of processing and sound swirl-around might work for this scene.

The designer came to watch the Mephostophilis apparition idea that had been developed. I think he is able to get some thinking done on this aspect now. It is great to have him look at things in rehearsal and comforting to know that he is working on how to make the magic work. He made some suggestions to take the image up into the upper level.

October 21. Sc. 7: The “Noel Coward” scene or the “Morning After Seduction” scene: This might play if we find the right attitudes. Faustus is having moments of inspired performance in rehearsal. Then he seems to distrust his own impulses and wants to control

everything. This interferes with the inspiration. Questioning his ideas about what acting is perhaps?

The Seven Deadly Sins Cabaret: The German Mafia bit with Lucifer and Belzebub just might work. It could go either way though-really heavy or just plain goofy. I am hoping for heavy.

Scene 6, the Lawyer from Hell: offering the contract will look good when the actors relax into the roles. I will concentrate on these bits with just two actors in the room. The seductive stuff will probably work out in the long run, when they are off book, relaxed and approaching truthful behaviour. The actors, being young, gravitate towards juvenile solutions to the relationships. Not enough life experience to understand the situations I am suggesting perhaps. Still time though.

The Dance: Choreographer agrees that the Dance must be sexy and erotic otherwise it just looks like art. She tried my Snake Dance idea towards the end of the rehearsal. The dancers seemed to be inspired by the idea and so was the choreographer. It sure looks like a snake with the dancers' arms moving in that reticulated way as the line moves along.

Got a note from the composer suggesting a drum track for the Dance. This is great, as I was about to write to her suggesting the same thing.

October 22. Spoke with the actor playing Lucifer: he was telling me that he didn't feel "in charge" as Lucifer. I suggested that he try to be still. He is a professional karate expert. I asked him if he knew about the ideas involved in being able to tell who was going to win a combat before the first blow was struck, when two master warriors face off. He said he knew what that was about. I said that it might be that quality that Lucifer needed. This seemed to make sense to him and sure enough, tonight it worked. Slowing down some of the other actors also helped them find a sense of power.

The devils are finding their way through to understanding their roles. I work with them on searching for ways to ground their roles in some kind of reality. As non-humans this is a challenge but is as important as if they were human.

The designer flagged a concern that I might be reinforcing cultural stereotypes by casting a woman of Asian descent as a fighting expert. This coming out of the concerns raised in critical theories regarding Orientalism and its effects on literature and the theatre and the semiotics of political images in the theatre. I had not considered that aspect. I seem to be colour-blind in this regard. I spoke with the actress about it and she was as surprised as I. She thinks of herself as Canadian and finds the fear of being politically incorrect a bit overblown even though she understands the phenomenon of Orientalism. We thought perhaps to alienate it

by making her appear as a kind of Ninja Mephostophilis. It would also add to the development of the variety format regarding genres in the progressive scenes. She seemed to like that idea.

October 23. Scene 7, the “Noel Coward” or the “Morning After”

scene: Mephostophilis is the lover who has stayed the night.

Faustus is ruminating on how he has set himself up to be damned because of Mephostophilis. The dialogue starts off as a bit of mutual teasing. Faustus tries to dominate Mephostophilis, who gets angry with him, ominously warns him to “remember this”, and leaves. It might work this way, if the characters can be represented as real people. This seems a more accessible approach than if they are represented as literary figures in a stylised presentation of intellectual arguments. The arguments are wrong, even for the times of the writing I think.

October 24-26 Scene 9, The Pope’s banquet: The comedy of this scene

should work well against the vile nature of the characters. The actors are having a great time with this one. Spoke with the props-master about the food for sc. 9 and that I was hoping we could have some food that looked real and went splat during the food fight. He thought he might be able to come with something.

Costume fittings began today. The costumes for the devils will look very street and punk. This should help the actors to become devils that are not Halloween characters. Help them to find

that “grounding” in some kind of reality. Certainly life on the streets for some is a kind of hell.

The dance sequence in scene six is becoming like an image out of Dante. More of that!

October 28. Alexander and Darius actors to begin the fight choreography today. I set them a task of learning the strike zones, the attack moves and the defence strokes. They must soon work with the fight swords to get used to the weight and the movement.

The principal actors are finding ways of making truthful contact and seem to be having a good time with the development of their understanding.

October 29. I asked the department’s voice expert to come in tonight and give the cast a workshop in vocal warm up. The effect was astounding! I had been leading warm-ups at the beginning of the rehearsal period, but I had to stop because I got so busy with so many things. It would sure be nice to have someone as good as the department expert at each rehearsal.

The designer wants to take the first row out of the seating for the production. I think this is a great idea and hope it can be sold to the producer as part of the design. It makes things a whole lot easier to stage.

October 30. Production Meeting: The props-master said that there had to be concessions on the props. In particular he was talking

about the fire effect for scene ten. I had thought that the scene would benefit by Mephostophilis igniting the trousers of Robin and Rafe (in lieu of turning them into animals). They want to have sex with her. I thought that setting fire to their trousers would be an appropriate punishment for them, but it looks like a no-go. This is a pity really as I think the fiery crotches to be a stronger image of ridicule towards the ideas of this scene, being about male desire for female submission.

I am going to have each Mephostophilis character introduced at the end of a scene in a kind of flash forward. This is to help facilitate the understanding of the different aspects of the character and to deal with the weirdness of having five people play one role. I want the audience to get it. I want to get it.

Scene 11, Third chorus: The “devil” that plays the “school-girl” Lechery character is delivering the lines. I suggested she try it as if the character of the schoolgirl had matured and she was now a feminist. It may be that this scene can answer to the male “gaze” theories of the female form on the stage. Here we have the image of Lechery setting up the audience for more of the same kind of thing that they see in the Cabaret scene and then delivering an anti-patriarchy speech. If this works out it might be a good scene.

Music: I mentioned to the composer that we had a musician who plays saxophone in the cast. This seemed to lift her spirits

about the Cabaret, which she said she was having trouble with. She will try to score something for him.

Costumes are a problem with regards to time management. The designer told me today that we might run out of time for the whole show. I asked him if I should cut some characters, but he didn't say yes. I will keep asking him, so that we can stay ahead of the game. I don't want to have all the devils built at the expense of something more important, like Mephostophilis.

October 31. Scene 13, The Emperor's court: The Emperor must be ruthless and all-powerful, his soldiers experts in killing. Fight choreography for this scene is roughed-in now, but the actors know where the zones are and are paying attention to each other regarding movement. This is a complex fight and must be handled carefully. The actor playing Alexander asked if he could choreograph some of the fight during their daily rehearsals. Since they are being so careful and the assistant director is with them all the time, I think it would be a good idea since it will give them a different way of thinking about the fight. I will still supervise it closely though.

November 1-2: Scene 14, Attack on Faustus. The cast seemed to have a very good time tonight. Benvolio set up his S.W.A.T. team. They learned to fall in, and to march. One actor had been in the military and knew something about marching and taught them some drill.

This enabled a pecking order to be established and jobs to be done by the various members of the squad.

I explained that the play must continue to get darker and darker to the end, and that we must try to find the truth of the situation. I think there was a little resentment perhaps in that I was pointing out the obvious. I had given the note that the soldiers seemed a little “cavalier” about killing. One actor offered that the soldiers were being cavalier because they were used to killing. I said that it might be true that some real soldiers are used to it, but that the cast was not. If it was possible to imagine the “bloody” truth of the scene, at the least, in order to be able to bring some sense of believable behaviour to it, then they might understand better what they are being cavalier about.

November 4. The cast is getting serious about the production. They are so young and inexperienced in terms of working, but they are doing very well. There could have been trouble with a cast of this size had there been a reason for them to feel disgruntled. I think everyone is going to be busy enough to keep them from getting bored.

Scene 16, Faustus’ last party: I described this scene to the cast as the “what does this mean, scene?” Helen represents Europa, the goddess of Europe, the reason to have pride as a European, to fight for the ideals of what it means to be European,

etc. I told them that I find this attitude to be ridiculous and a symptom of the kind of myth building that causes wars to be thought of as glorious. Helen is “Everyman’s” bride, the quintessential woman on the pedestal, to be admired and protected by all real men. She is both the reason for and the victim of patriarchal domination.

Making one of the scholars a feminist and not at all interested in seeing Helen, for the reasons that the men have, will work. She has lines about not having enough wit to determine if this really is Helen and a good reason to fight a war over. This might play well if we get the attitude of the scholar right. The line can be sarcastic, if nothing else, but I believe there is a deeper meaning to be found in the delivery.

November 5. Scene 15, The Duke and Duchess of Vanholt: The cross gender casting might actually work, if the actors can achieve truthful performances. Turning a comic scene into a political cartoon will only work if the characters are played for truth.

There is a deeper understanding of what is possible now in many of the actors. They are approaching problem solving in a serious way.

November 6. I am a bit concerned about the sound operation personnel assigned to this show. They are new to the work and the play and haven’t any experience on the sound system. The problem

is that they are unable to learn about it before the 14th of the month. This is worrying, as the operation of sound will be complex, particularly in sc. 4 with movement and processing of live sound together with recorded sound. The composer is working very hard to be on time with all the elements on her list. I hope she can be pleased with execution of her design.

November 7. The cabaret was bizarre tonight with the saxophone added in. It seems perfect for the scene, although we have to find a way to vary the pacing.

Set: Hell on Wheels is ready to use and looks great coming through the set. The technical director said that he had some labour budget left and could let the props-master use it to allow him to build some legs for Death. It will complete the image.

November 8. For me here are two kinds of theatre: The theatre of museums where artists try to copy each other in style and intention and then there is the theatre of meaning. It is the latter that I am interested in. Each production must strive to find the meaning of a play within the context of its production environment. Otherwise there is no reason to stage old plays like this one. As an artist I must seek the truth in whatever I am working on, in reference to the culture that I am a part of in the producing of the art. Actors on the stage must find the reality of the lives of the characters. What are they (the characters) trying to

do? Why are they there, with the other characters? What is the objective of their lives? What transformations are they trying to achieve in the other characters? What transformation is the “other” trying to effect in them? Without this understanding there is no through line of action, no relationship based on truth and therefore, no drama.

I am feeling that the actors are in need of something to get them past a fear of failure that prevents them from truly committing to their characters. I am not saying the right things to inspire them. I have had moments like this in other productions, but have always found a way through. I hope I can this time too.

The text is in rough shape, the verse suffering and the pace is slow. First act ran one hour and forty-five minutes today, act two coming in at one hour and ten minutes. Act one should be shorter by at least 30 minutes and act two shorter by 15 minutes. If only I could get across the need for clarity in the diction. They do understand the need for this, but I have not been successful in helping them to solve this problem at this time.

I have explained about the need to make the verbs most important, then the nouns etc. but still there is trouble for them trying to make the script become language. At this time it is still literature. They really need some focussed time on the text. I have

arranged for a verse coach to come in to work with the principals on Monday.

November 12. Verse coach came in today to run a workshop for Faustus and Mephostophilis. It seemed to inspire them and they were able to maintain their high into the evening rehearsals. The coach told me that he had worked with the actors on getting the verbs clear and made to be the important part of the line. What else he did to get them charged up, I don't know, but I am happy that he did.

November 13. The second verse workshop today made a great difference in the pope. He understands the verse in a new way and is making a great deal of sense of it. We worked towards an understanding of the kind of power that this pope enjoys. He had been playing it as a villain. I passed on a story that a friend had told me: There is a famous painting of Pope Innocent 3. In it he has an expression on his face that looks to be anger or displeasure or as if he is condemning somebody to be burnt at the stake. The unsettling part of the picture is that he is holding his hand delicately limp as he points, presumably to who or what he is referring. This gesture seems to imply that he is not in a stressful state or even an unpleasant state but that he is in fact enjoying himself.

We tried playing it this way in rehearsal and when the actor delivered his most angry lines and held his hand this way, the effect was to make him into someone who is enjoying the effect of

his power on those whom he is condemning to be tortured. When the Pope compares himself to Lucifer, when he threatens to bring hell to earth, this gesture, carried into the rest of his movement, made him seem much more powerful and frightening. He seems to be having a good time with the thought of torturing thousands of people all at once.

Ran a series of exercises with the actors with a view to the possibility of changing established patterns of performance so that the characters will appear to have more dimensions. We tried scenes using different playwrights as a kind of genre. We did scenes as if Tennessee Williams or Eugene O’Neil wrote them. This worked well, especially for the drunken party scene.

November 14. Scene 16: It finally occurred to me that the text of Wagner describes the kind of party that Faustus and his friends are having. They are ‘swilling’ away like Wagner has “never seen before”, so I got them to come out really drunk and bawdy and the scene took off. I found out more about what is happening to Faustus. He has become totally degraded here, tossing “mother” to the wolves to save his own skin and at the same time using Helen of Troy as a sex object for his own gratification to cloud his mind.

Wagner made great progress tonight. Got him finally to slow down and he understood what is meant by telling us that he think his master expects to die soon. He became very human.

Mephostophilis killing mother was frightening.

November 16-18 Setting Lighting Cues was a pleasure. It was calm and polite and very satisfying in that the design is so interesting. The method of covering areas, and making special areas available for the scenes is brilliant. I am very happy with the extreme care and thought that has gone into the design and the plot of the lights. There are lots of crosses and crosses on crosses on the scene. My thinking is to stage important action right in the intersection of the "crosses". The intersection of light and dark is where the mind of Faustus is located.

Setting sound cues was pleasant as well. The composer was there in the capacity of Musical Director. She is inexperienced at working in the theatre and seemed a little reticent. The technical director encouraged her to participate and to say what she wanted. I am glad to have her there because many of the sound cues she has prepared I have not heard as yet.

November 20. The composer didn't come to any further sound cue sessions. I have not been able to contact her. I don't know why, but she seems to have changed her mind about being Musical Director. I am now doing it. This is a problem because I don't know the music! It is a complex design that I haven't heard for the most part. There will be some consequences on this. We probably won't be ready to open.

Act Two is in slightly better shape than Act One, but still needs focus and pacing to bring it together. Most of the tech will not be complete before the opening. I don't know what to do, musically, with the epilogue. I will try having the soprano sing it.

November 21. Cue to Cue rehearsal. We got through Act 1. Will have to complete Act 2 on Friday before we try the run. Time is filling in so fast. The days fly by and I have PR appointments, costume fittings and technical and design worries. I think that things will work out in the end, they usually do, but we must be careful.

November 22. The Tech run was difficult, but it got through in OK time and if Act Two goes that well, we will be all right.

November 23. Act Two Tech and Run. Not as smooth as last night, but we got through it and now can see that all the pieces are there. Some are unfinished and need polish but are there.

November 25. Met some of the cast for a line run this afternoon. It went well and I ran some exercises for them to keep it lively. It was fun and we went for dinner together.

Dress rehearsal: The actors are itching for an audience. That would help set the pace for them, but no single element of the production is finished or ready for performance. Some previews would be good. Perhaps there is a way for the department to give more consideration to previews before ticket sales take over the

drive. I must tell the producer that in my opinion the play is not yet ready to open.

November 26. Met with the Producer and made my report to him.

About delaying the opening he couldn't move but did allow me to be giving notes through the first few nights performance. This is good as we can now approach the performances as previews.

Dress Rehearsal: To my surprise, the actor playing Faustus allowed the executioners to strip him naked for the last scene. This makes the image clear. Technical department flagged a possible problem with warnings of the nudity for the audience, but thought a sign in the lobby would do it.

November 27. Opening Night was successful. The play was performed in an efficient manner and the story is being told. Earlier in the day we had to weather a storm of controversy about the nudity, but the producer decided to go with the sign in the lobby. This is a relief to me, as neither the designer nor myself could make a call to clothe the actor at this point.

Notes to the actors will be typed out and placed on the callboard each night and I will hang around for a couple of nights trying to help get things tightened up. Sound cues are a real mess. The composer came to the opening and was horrified not to hear a lot of the music she had written. Her point is well taken, but I had to point out to her that as Musical Director she should have been

at the sound cue sessions and the technical rehearsals. I will try to get the levels fixed over the next few nights.

November 28. Second night run was hampered by the loss of two crew members and one actor. All was managed though and the pace was quicker by at least 10 minutes overall. Still room to trim in lots of places though.

There is a local “regional tradition” whereby the director is not allowed to give notes after opening. The reasoning behind this is so that control of the show can transfer to the cast and crew. Of course this has to happen but for me, as a professional, it is most important to present as finished a product as possible to the audience. Resistance to the director helping to fix problems seems odd, especially since we are considering the first few audiences as preview audiences.

November 29. Left notes today for a solution to the sound and music problems. I feel that I owe it to the composer and her wonderful music to try and get the design incorporated properly. I trust that the sound ops and the Stage Manager will find the groove of the music and the play in their operations.

(Evening after performance): The performance tonight made me think that the concept of five Mephostophilis is sound.

The staging is working and the audiences are enjoying the spectacle. More important, the story is being told quite clearly.

November 30. This was the first night that I did not take notes. I sat with friends and just let the show wash over me as if I was a normal customer. It worked! The show was good tonight, except for sound cues.

After the show, one of the Mephostophilis, who had appeared inspired this night, said to me that she “was not trying hard tonight and that she was just having fun with it all”. I said that she had learned something valuable about acting.

December 5. Sound cues: the panning effect on the Latin for sc. 4, the conjuring of Mephostophilis was in tonight, for the first time. The effect is wonderful and I have a chance to see how brilliant is the composer in designing it the way that we spoke of in our meetings. At last I know that it works.

December 8. Closing night performance. I am happy at the success of the performance tonight. Somehow the whole thing seemed at last to come together. I had thought that the show would come together after ten performances and sure enough it did. This is quite normal in the commercial theatre. It is why previews are held and why shows often open in smaller theatres before moving to bigger venues. The audience trains the actors to respond to them.

The show ran smoothly and energetically. The execution of the cues was almost flawless and the performers were in charge, as a whole, for the first time. Even when a mistake was made, a

dropping of lines, the cast and crew picked up the gaff and didn't miss a beat. The audience was unaware of the dropped bit, and the story was seamless. I felt good about it all and told the cast so.

Summation of Chapter Three

The complexity of the task of mounting this play is impossible to convey in its entirety. There were many factors that affected the day to day development that have not been included in this chapter because they do not directly relate to the ideas that I was working with.

Many of the theoretical ideas developed and made sense to me only when we were able to work with them in the rehearsal hall. These were the moments that I felt were the core of the process that I hoped for and described at the head of this chapter. When the actors felt comfortable with their part of the process they focussed all the elements that were working towards some kind of understanding of exactly why it was that we were in that hall. We were all interested in the story of Dr. Faustus and for as many reasons as there were participants in the project. Ultimately we wanted to know what the story meant to us and we wanted to tell that story clearly.

Through the production period we proposed theories that we hoped would work. When the audience arrived we were able to see what was working and what was not. Theatre creates many shapes and forms and is forever changing because the people who make it are seeking answers to questions about what it is and why we do it. There is one thing though that is a constant. Theatre happens only when the audience is in the hall. Everything else is “getting ready” for theatre. The process that I describe in this chapter is imperfect and I have no illusions about that. At no point in the whole process of making this play did I think that I had definitive answers to the questions that I had or that were asked of me. I had only possible answers. In the performance of those possible answers we found out that some of them were useful towards understanding the meaning of the play.

Chapter Four: Retrospective

In general terms I have to say that the project was a success. The show was popular, selling out all performances but second night. In fact many people were turned away at the box office. To accept the popularity of the show as a positive indicator is a must but the positive reactions to the production were a bit of a challenge for me. I learned a long time ago that when people are congratulating me, or telling me how much they enjoyed the show, it seems arrogant and condescending to disagree with them. If I make too much of pointing out the parts of the production that were not satisfactory for me, then it appears as if I am flouting the reactions of the audience as irrelevant. Some friends and colleagues that saw the production were more demanding, perhaps, than the majority of the audience and had reactions to the performance that closer resembled my own. I felt that although much of the production worked, there were elements of it that did not clearly achieve what I had hoped for.

I think that the story was told and understood by the audience. This is the most important aspect of a production for me. Anything else that succeeds is a bonus. If the narrative is clear, then at least the audience hears a good tale. This was achieved. The production was interesting to watch and listen to. Audience response was, in general, quite positive and there were many times when they were absorbed in the action and in the spectacle. It can be difficult to maintain a neutral

or open position on this point when one is involved so closely with the project. One gets to know the story so well, and what is supposed to be happening and being said, that at times it becomes unclear whether or not the lines are being delivered efficiently. Sometimes I felt too close to the ideas to maintain a clear perspective. I continually had to check my responses to see if my understanding was accurate or not.

In rehearsal the language of the play becomes familiar to the actors and to those of us not on the stage. Often we think we hear the words being said, when in fact we are probably completing the words and sentences because we know them already. Unless attended to closely, there is the danger that the actors become complacent in the delivery of lines, on a technical level. I maintained a direction to the cast in this matter and most of the cast was diligent in trying to improve their volume and diction, in addition to their characterisations.

The performances had enough combined visual and audio elements to fill in what the audience needed so that the story was understood. There were few really slow moments when the audience became bored because of lack of action. The production was efficient, for the most part, and on the final night achieved a state of confidence, enough so as to have a cast and crew relaxed and having fun. The performances of all departments that night were on line and on time. The flow of the production was at last achieved. Even when there was a mistake made during the run, for example, when a section of text was

dropped, the actors covered it without a glitch. The timing of the actors and that of the technical departments were good and the performance that night was the best of the run.

Some of the ideas worked on an intellectual level. During the production period I stubbornly hung on to the concepts that I had thought would be applicable, the thesis being partially contained in these conceptual areas. It may be that I maintained the attempt to make the play fit the concept when, at times, it might have been wiser to let some ideas go. As a professional director I had never worked conceptually before this project. That is, I had not made it a necessary part of production to include academically derived ideas. As stated in the introduction to this paper, in my career I have avoided conceptualising about the work of the playwright. My philosophy on how to make theatre, or art for that matter, comes from a work ethic that might be summed up in this way: My function as an artist is to stay with the inspiration that drives my need to produce, direct, or act in plays. For me there must be inspiration or a spontaneous feeling of moving forward, of discovery and reaction to real time events in the creation of art. Until I came to the university to do this project, I would not have attempted to mount a play in the way that I did when making this production of Dr. Faustus.

However, I did develop some concepts and tried to steer the production through the narrows of those confining ideas. To some extent, there was success and meaning to be derived from the work.

Achievements and Shortcomings of the Conceptual Aspects

The Chorus as Company

The idea that a company of devils is loosed from hell for a time on earth to present the text of Dr. Faustus served the production well. In general the cast was able to maintain the character of the devils in their roles of the play. The first chorus effectively set up the world of the production and allowed the play to be slightly displaced from what I thought might be an expectation on the part of the audience. I had thought that the audience might expect to come into the theatre to see a dusty old tome resurrected and presented as “standard” Elizabethan fare. The chorus appearing on stage as a band of rough looking, tattooed humans, that presented the dangerous image of a mob, served to start the play with a bit of a shock. If there was a frightening part of the production it was in this prologue. The foregrounding of the production, through the poster and promotions, in conjunction with the sign of the play as being about devils and hell, set up the audience to expect to see devils as characters. I don’t think that anyone expected to see the devils as representative of the acting company that is presenting the piece.

Throughout the production, the fact that the devils were the acting company was reincorporated through the costume design and through the performance as I had hoped it would be. From time to time the

characters being acted [by the devils], would be subverted by the characters of the devils coming through to the surface. This worked particularly well in the Darius and Alexander scene, when the Emperor is almost caught unawares by the “devil actors” breaking character and seemingly wanting to bite him [at least!].

I would like to have included the Mephostophilis group and Faustus as part of the chorus at the top of the show. This would have completed the concept nicely and would have left no ambiguity on this point, but I hesitated to ask the costume department to produce six more devil costumes for this. As it turned out, these were the only actors who were not part of the first chorus. Even the musicians played the roles of devils, bringing in their own costumes to the production and using make-up, to incorporate into the devil group. By the time the musicians had agreed to be devils, I had accepted the fact that Faustus and Mephostophilis would not be part of the chorus. They probably could have used make-up effects like the musicians, but the Mephostophilis costumes would have stood out as being very different from the rest of the devils. I don't think the audience really noticed that they weren't part of the chorus. Neither had their absence any detrimental value on the idea, but it was nevertheless, an unclosed circle.

Mephostophilis as female.

I have explained the background and the reasons for trying this idea, to have the character of Mephostophilis appear in the form of woman. When I try to determine if this “worked” or not, I have to say that it did. As hoped for, the relationship between the characters of Faustus and Mephostophilis generated occasional sexual energy; the relationship suffered in performance, because I was unable to bring the level of commitment on the part of the actor playing Faustus to a more truthful level. (see “Acting”, below). I think that if I had been successful in imparting the necessary understanding to the actor, or had said the right things to inspire him, the ideas surrounding this concept would have been more enabled.

In light of contemporary feminist theory regarding the image of woman on stage and the danger of reinforcing stereotype, it was absolutely necessary that the role of Mephostophilis be played with an element of acute power as being the prime factor in the character. The performances were effective, on the part of those women playing Mephostophilis, but often the reaction of Faustus to them was lacking in completing the effect. Like stage fighting, it doesn’t matter how strongly the punch is delivered; it matters most how it is received.

Multiple Incarnations of the Devil

This concept was the one that seemed the most mysterious to me when I thought of how to make it work. Indeed, I was very sceptical about having five actors play one role. How to make the continuity of character function seemed to be the prime obstacle in production. We tried to solve this in several ways. The design of the costumes, through the colour scheme, did work in aid of this, but it was not all. I thought that there might be a way to maintain continuity by having the voices overlap from off-stage, but this didn't work in rehearsal so we didn't go with it. I developed a routine in production that did seem to help in the transition from one form to the next. At the end of each scene with Mephostophilis in it, the form of the creature that is to be seen the next time that Mephostophilis appears, would be the last character to exit that scene. For example, when the clowns call Mephostophilis from Constantinople in order to make her their slave, there is an onstage transformation from one form to the next and then when Faustus enters the court of the Emperor, it is that form of Mephostophilis we see entering with him. This convention seemed to help with the identification of Mephostophilis in each scene in which the character appeared in a different form.

In scene 4, when Faustus conjures Mephostophilis, the multiple forms of the Franciscan monks set up the idea and set the stage for the entrance of Mephostophilis as the five female forms. I think this was a

surprise for the audience, but I never had the impression that it was confusing.

As I described in my journal of the production, I was uncertain as to how this would work or even if this would work. At the first previews I was ready to write it off as a totally bad idea, or at least an unsuccessful execution of the idea. I had convinced myself intellectually that the idea was sound, but felt that the continuity of the character was not established in the transformations from one form to the next. After two or three more performances though I began to see something that I had hoped to see.

Through the shifting of the form of Mephostophilis, an interesting alienation effect was established. There was no identification of a specific actor associated with the role. I think this served to “make strange” the idea of the devil as a “being”. Since there was not a singular performance of the character of this devil, the concept of the “construction” of a transformative personal devil by Faustus was reinforced. Mephostophilis was not “a” constructed form, but a depersonalised “other”. Initially, I had been looking for a way to connect the images and for a time felt that I had failed to successfully integrate the performances of the actors. Happily though, I found that it was the *discontinuous* aspect of the role that worked to establish the changing nature of Faustus’ desires. By disassociating the role from a single actor, the perception of the character was of a creature that had no fixed point in the field of

possibilities established by the conjuring of Faustus, except that which Faustus determined. There was no personality to Mephostophilis, only a place of focus or transformation of image for Faustus' projections of self.

The Seven Deadly Sins Cabaret

This turned out to be a favourite scene of mine and, based on comments received by me, of many members of the audience. The entertainment or diversion aspect proved effective when the Seven Deadly Sins arrived to take Faustus' thoughts away from repentance. The gangsters from Berlin and their cabaret of the senses worked well to hold the attention of not only Faustus but also of the audience. If there was a surprise to be had, it was the beginning of this scene. During performances the audience reacted physically upon understanding the nature of what they were seeing. I think the set-up of the Cabaret was handled well. The actors playing the roles of Lucifer and Belzebub understated their positions and the threatening aspect of their demeanour served to place the audience in a position of wondering why the "look" of the play was changing again. It was in this scene that the possibility of a "consistent" genre was put to rest. The design worked well, the music was a sharp departure from what had been advanced to this point and the delivery of the text was changed from an Elizabethan or even a pseudo-Edwardian mood into a hybrid Kurt Weill/contemporary lyric. Improvised dialogue from Belzebub completed

the transition from the more or less classic form of the text to a musical style. This served to lighten the mood of the production and it also helped set up the extreme behaviour of the Pope. The sensual nature of the sins, dealing with food for the most part in the text, was expanded to include more of the senses.

Condensing the Comic Scenes

I am not sure that calling these scenes comic in this production is accurate. Certainly the scenes should have been comical, and to a certain extent they began that way. The performers in the early scenes, between Robin and Wagner and the Scholars and Wagner, succeeded in lightening the load as far as the narrative was concerned. What humour was achieved was a result of the physical nature of the staging. The actors understood the verbal jokes of the text, but I never felt that we managed to make the jokes work for the audience. When Wagner tried to escape the Scholars in Scene 3, the audience responded with laughter, but the ensuing verbal banter regarding the argument was successful only in the attitudes adopted by the actors. Wagner trying to scare the Scholars or implying that something scary was happening inside the house to Faustus became humorous only when the actor delivered the lines like a “fire and brimstone” preacher might. When he had been doing an impersonation of a dour preacher, the lines went for nothing, but the

up tempo delivery at least made the scene lively, while still introducing the relationship of the lower classes to the idea of necromantic power.

The actor playing Robin succeeded in getting the audience to laugh, which is one of the purposes of his scenes, that is, to break up the darkness of the story. It served to enhance the tone of the heavy scenes while giving the audience a respite from them at the same time. However the inclusion of the scenes was more than the use of a tried and true format for creating variety. The political aspects of these scenes are more subtle and the amalgamation of the horse courser scenarios and the results of the searching for satisfaction from Faustus by the “low” characters, were, I think, successfully condensed.

I received comments from some audience members that scene 15, at the Duke of Vanholt’s palace, would have benefited from some suitable music to enhance the effects of the torpor induced by the drugs that were offered to the low characters by Faustus. I resisted this however, in order to underline the loneliness of the condition created by Faustus’ decision to “help” the Duke with his problem. I thought the scene worked to create the conditions needed to understand the underlying meaning of the comic scenes as a whole, that meaning being an underscoring of the causal conditions that exists in the relationships between the overlords and the under classes in the hegemony.

Helen of Troy

(a) The Scholars

Faustus' party for his friends the young scholars and, in particular, with the inclusion of the woman scholar, was part of the risky "feminist" concept that I was working with. I think my direction was right in this area in theoretical terms and it certainly was clear as to my interpretation of the meaning of Helen. The drunken scholars enter the scene and there is no doubt as to their state of mind. They call for Helen as "the most admirablest lady that ever lived..." (5.1, 14), in the middle of a bacchanalian excess. In rehearsal one day, the actor playing the part of the woman scholar responded, ad lib, to the line of the First Scholar that describes Helen, with the line, "...you think!". Her attitude was much more than sceptical and approached disdain. I thought that this was a wonderful addition to the performance text and so I included it as part of the actor's dialogue for this scene. The woman scholar disagrees with the idea that Helen should be seen as the ennoblement of Eurocentric male reasoning. It seemed to close a circle of meaning regarding the representation of women in this production.

The idea of shape shifting, being such an integral part of the concept of projected desire, was clearly the object of the scene when explored and performed this way. If there was a moment when I felt that my concepts surrounding the female form in this play were vindicated it was during this scene. Helen of Troy, the lost bride to Paris and by

extension all the kings of Europe, seen and desired by Faustus, becomes the pedestal-mounted feminine principal, held by patriarchal Eurocentric rationale to be reason enough to war over. The “virtuous” nature of European identity is exposed as not only a myth, but also as the brainchild of intellectual reasoning, *read male reasoning*. If Marlowe indicates that the scholars are drunk, and asking for Helen, and I am using the feminist argument regarding the patriarchal ownership of intellect, then by having the feminist scholar present in the scene, there has to be a conflict of ideas regarding the meaning of Helen. This was an attempt to historicize the play and bring that argument into focus. I further directed one of the male scholars to be interested in the female scholar, as part of the carnal nature of the environment. In performance, this read that he was more interested in her than he was in the illusion of Helen conjured up for their voyeuristic pleasure. On the nights of performance when the relationship of competition was successfully established in the characters of the second scholar (male) and the third scholar (female), I thought that my interpretation of the meaning of Helen was enhanced. Further, when the actors were playing the lustful angle well, Helen’s entrance as an angry woman/object served to outline the ideas I had regarding this scene.

I chose this scene to underscore the “illusion” of the apparitions. Having Mephostophilis force her to stand up as a model, pinch her cheeks to make them blush and force the smile of the beauty queen upon

her, drew attention to the “illusion” of Helen. This functioned as an alienating factor in the production and brought into consciousness the ideas surrounding the imaging of the female form by the production and possibly by Marlowe as well.

(b) Helen as Delusion

Faustus asks for Helen to return to him so that he can avoid the intent of Mother, which is to make him aware that he can still be saved, or save himself. Having Helen come back on stage as a sexually aggressive character, who takes charge in the fantasy of Faustus, made clear that Faustus’ intention was to remain locked in his delusional state. He makes a clear choice here to ignore the words of wisdom and solace offered to him. Mephostophilis allows the illusion of Helen to remain fixed as no other illusion has been in the play. Devils play the parts of the earlier illusions and Faustus has to warn the recipients of his tricks, the Emperor for example, that there is no substance to the image. In this case though, Faustus is allowed or allows himself to accept that what he embraces is enough to satisfy him. He no longer sees through his own deceptions and therefore we see him finally lose his soul. By going straight to the intent of this scene, as I interpreted the meaning of it, I felt that there was less ambiguity regarding the meaning of the scene. Faustus wants to ignore the guilt he has about condemning his mother to torture and suffering for him. The sacrifice is not his but it becomes a parallel to the myth of sacrifice. The self-indulgence of

Faustus in this scene is the worst we see in the play. If there were to be a time that we see Faustus lose his soul, it was here. I thought this scene worked well to close the Freud/Lacan circle regarding identity of self.

The Old Man becomes Mother of Faustus

This idea worked within the context of the identity arguments that I felt warranted exploration. The image of Faustus' mother was consciously conspicuous. The actress playing the role was not costumed nor made up to be the logical age of Faustus' mother, but was the image of his mother as a person "...base of stock" (First Chorus). When I first imagined the role, it was as an old woman, but the designer tried out the idea of making her look like the mother of a young Faustus. This again worked to alienate the idea and the image so that there was no ambiguity about the intent of the concept. In retrospect, once again I am happy to have had the input of this designer.

To have Faustus condemn the childhood image of his mother to torture and death closes the circle of identity and becomes the ultimate narcissistic act. He replaces the physical mother with the ideal Freudian bride of Helen. His real world is forsaken for his constructed world. I liked the image created by the two pairs of figures on the stage. Faustus in his personal communion with a figment of his imagination, the ideal woman he would want to possess, was juxtaposed with the real mother of his identity being destroyed by the projection of his creative power.

Faustus gives up his real identity for the illusion of dominion over European identity. As he is hauled off to the bedroom by Helen, a devil whose character is maintained for the first time in the play, (being performed by the same actor who appears as Good Angel), he allows himself to be dominated, in turn, by his own creation. After this he loses control of his ability to have the illusions disappear. He begins to believe them to be real enough to actually haul him off to hell. His narcissism is complete and he becomes trapped in the reflection of his own imagination. He has finally come to the point in his life when he refuses to listen to his intuition. He feels he has no choice but to believe that his own power is greater than any other power. He commits his parent/mentor to death and embraces his manipulations of reason.

Hell

I have reservations about the image of hell that we finally went with. I think the idea of a hell that reflects the reality of the contemporary world is sound. The Hell on Wheels platform rolling through the set to dominate the stage was a good effect. It was a very strange thing to watch come out of that seemingly tiny space defined by the reveal tent. It was, I think, unexpected and had good effect in terms of how it read. There was no doubt as to what was happening. The audience expected hell to be manifest somehow and this was appropriate enough. The torture/operating table and the executioner devils, looking

like archetypes from the medieval period, were scary enough. The staging worked well, including the arrival of Death, to a point.

Death looked like a good idea and it worked well enough, I suppose. I have heard from some that saw the production that they liked the idea, but when I ask them if they thought it a bit corny, they often indicated that perhaps it was, a little. I don't think it had to be corny or naïve in the least, but it did become that. The source for the image was the Van Eyck painting that is described in an earlier chapter, but I feel that the production was short-changed in the execution of the property. I deal with the reasons for this in the section on the environment of the production and in the retrospective section below, under properties. I think the image should have been frightening. This may be nearly impossible to achieve in the theatre because we are such an eclectic and experienced audience. However, if the figure had been constructed as I thought it should, and in hindsight, could have been, I feel we might have given the audience a pretty good chance of being at least startled.

Acting

I must be unequivocal about this. It must be acceptable that I include this performance factor, from my perspective, in the success of the thesis ideas. It is the responsibility of the director to help actors find what they need so that they can successfully execute the performance of the roles that they have been cast in. I never felt that we got the

performance level to where it might have gone had there been a little more time to train the actors. It is not my intention to blame the actors for any shortfalls in performance. I was very pleased with the level of achievement for many of them, yet in a play about fear, death and power, I never felt that any one character was ever really afraid of anything. There were many fine moments among the devils and their interactive improvisation. During the rehearsal process, there were moments when it looked like the devils would be quite scary. The opening scene was effective in this way, but as the play proceeded, the devils became less fearsome and less fearful of the world they inhabited.

I failed to bring the lead actor to understand the need to be afraid of what was happening to the character he was playing. This is vital in the role of Dr. Faustus. I moved more quickly than I had wanted to in deciding who was to play the lead role, and others as well. I wonder what might have been had I cast differently. It became obvious that I had moved too soon on the casting, but by the time it was obvious, it was also too late to change.

I also take entire responsibility for any of the shortcomings in the achievement of character by the young acting student who played the part of Faustus. It is the director's job to get the actors to look good and to inspire them. I think the actor who played the role was very intelligent and understood the nature of the role. He also found the arc of the play

for himself. This is a great thing to understand in learning to become an actor.

In rehearsal, at times, the actor was able to invest more of his intuition in his exploration of the character. Much of the work was wonderful and spontaneous. However when the play began to run in front of an audience, problems due to lack of experience came to bear.

In performance, the pressure to succeed becomes an obstacle for the actor that must be overcome or dissolved in some way if the spontaneity of the rehearsal process is to be achieved on stage. Like Olympic champions, who try to “give it a little extra effort”, and then trip over their own feet on the day of the race for the gold medal, actors, in a similar way, may try to give it that extra push. It is the “extra effort” that causes the muscles of the body to become rigid. This rigidity does nothing to allay the basic fear of failure that is operating in these situations. The performer who is relaxed and unafraid wins the day, whether on stage or on the playing field.

I think that this kind of situation is common among inexperienced actors who feel that they are not performing well unless it feels like they are working hard. Experienced performers understand that the best performances are usually those that feel as if nothing special has happened. Actor training is rife with methods of relaxation for the purpose of creating a condition of body whereby performance can be

driven from a position of confidence. Actors must find a method of belying the fear of the stage so that they can perform well.

I tried many things to help guide the actor playing Faustus towards an understanding of what was happening to him. When he tried my suggestions in performance, he made discoveries. For example, I gave him notes about taking his performance to the upper seats in the theatre. He had developed a habit of playing to a small circle of concentration around himself. He would play with his head slightly bowed. I showed him that in the Reeve Theatre, with its steep rake of the house, this had the effect of making it look as if he was speaking his lines to the floor. Eventually he brought his eyes to include the front two rows of audience. This was better and he told me that he was getting great reactions from people in those rows. I suggested that he extend that to the rest of the house otherwise the effect now was that he appeared to be excluding them. For some reason that I don't understand, he did not succeed in this. Many people who bought tickets never saw his eyes. If there is no way to make contact with the lead role in a play it becomes very difficult to have any sympathy, at least, with the character. If there is not sympathy with the character, there is no tragedy at his fall.

Without fear of the unknown, without fear of power, without fear of torture and death, there is no behavioural truth in the performance of the role of Faustus. Likewise, if the character seems not to react to the characters around him and their objectives, as characters, in terms of

transformation, to him or to others, there appears to be no truth in the performance. As with the lack of fear of the devil etc., the actor playing this role had difficulty reacting to what was happening around him and to him. There were moments when it he did inhabit the world of the play, but often he became too pre-occupied with his performance to react to the truth of the narrative, as the character must surely do. He literally didn't see things around him, didn't react to what was being offered to him and handled the performance as if he preferred to trust something other than that which had been found, by him, in the rehearsals.

I wished him to base the performances on the natural grain of his own intuitive behaviour. This actor seemed to develop great spontaneous understanding of the dramatic action during rehearsals, when I tried techniques that I use to help actors discover elements of behaviour in working towards the development of character. Then, in performance, there would appear to be regression to some other technique that was operating in him, and we would lose ground that had been gained in rehearsal.

On the occasions in rehearsal when the actor let go of the rigid control he maintained in performance, he was able to find that his reactions to whatever stimulus was driving the conditions of the narrative were sometimes surprising and not what he had thought they might be. He found that the life of the character was more like his own, in what it felt like to be Faustus. That is, he did not feel special as a

character. I explained that this was because the life of the character is not literary but human.

I told him stories about how winning sports figures or great heroes relate that the time of their winning or heroic deeds seem quite unremarkable while they are actually doing the thing. It is later that the realisation that something extraordinary has occurred. I then related this element of great performances to acting. My intent in this was to try and get him to understand that there was no need for him to be “perfect” in the role. He only had to let go of what he was trying to do, which was be perfect. He had made great progress in his understanding of the role, the play and of the process that I was using in the development of the performances, yet he was unable to trust that process when he was on stage. He was self-conscious about his performance.

In the final analysis I have to say that it was my greatest failure in this production. This is particularly troubling to me because in my professional career I had developed a reputation as a director who was able to draw fine performances from actors of all levels. If the performance of Faustus fell short, it was my fault. The actor is conscientious and intelligent. I failed to get him to the point where he could feel comfortable enough on stage to trust his intuition. The result was that the relationships between Faustus and the other characters, on which the thesis depended most, were not deep enough to attain the

dramatic action needed to fully engage the concepts surrounding identification.

I should note that because I cast such a large number of students in the ensemble, I also failed to foresee the problems that this would cause. As a result of the pressure on me to put actor's names to characters, I cast the roles before rehearsals started. This was a mistake in hindsight. I should have stayed with my intention to work the group a bit and then see who might be best for the various roles. I wanted to change the casting but I felt that this would cause stress amongst the students and probably initiate a bad feeling amongst the cast.

Designs

Set

The set functioned well in that it was a basic Elizabethan stage built inside the Reeve Theatre. The biggest problem was the configuration of the seating around the thrust area. Sight lines were compromised because of the square arrangement and, as a result, during sold-out performances anything happening within the reveal tent or on the upper platforms was lost to many patrons who had to sit in the upstage seating areas. I found the balcony section to be a weak area for performance. Even though the images there were well seen from the centre section of seating, that upper deck was weak somehow. The deck of the balcony was at a ten-foot elevation and was too far upstage to be a powerful

performance area. Only when the thrust was dark did that upper area function well and even then it appeared rather remote from the audience. The performance area functioned as a stage within a stage. In its eventual form it was not a design at all. The original idea of a matrix or grid on which the play was to be projected would have been more powerful.

The library book flats and the lectern were good ideas that helped create the feeling that the play was going to be presented as an “expected” production. The book flats created a forced perspective but the lectern seemed too small somehow. Sight lines were compromised by it. I kept it in only because I needed some place to put things down during the contract scene.

The opening hanging wall above was a great effect when it finally opened, as everyone expected it to. With the big hole in the middle of it to accommodate the rail that Death was to fly in on, the rail being visible the whole show, it was inevitable that something was going to happen there. It might have been nice to have the effect be more of a surprise than it was.

Hell on Wheels entering through the reveal tent was a very good effect and lacked only in that it was not dressed in the way we had wanted it to be. It was supposed to be dressed with instruments of torture, complete with modern methods, like electrical probes and machinery whirring away, medical apparatus along with medieval

instruments. In the end it arrived as a jail-cell cage. The operating table was very effective and created a final image of Faustus as crucified on it as he was dragged off to hell. The fading image was very good.

Death's entrance in the end was a great disappointment. The legs that were finally constructed were out of scale with the body making the image look comical. The method of entrance was difficult to control and the figure actually bounced and wobbled at its endpoint on the rail taking all power away from the image. Rather than creating a version of the "Harrowing of Death" from the Van Eyck triptych that was the inspiration for the image, we wound up with a low-budget looking, "heavy metal" rock music gag. What should have been frightening was farcical. I think that making the figure into a giant puppet controlled with long poles by the devils and making it climb over the back wall of the set would have been much more interesting. We had discussed this in production meetings, and it had been assessed as the most effective way of handling the image, but it didn't come to fruition.

Properties

The fighting swords were very good and allowed the stage fights to be brought to a level of performance that was inspiring to the actors. This made for interesting staging of the fight between Darius and Alexander and created tension in the storytelling. I found this work to be satisfying.

In general the props were weak in appearance and in function. I was most disappointed in the knife that was made for Mephostophilis.

Costumes

The costumes were wonderful. The devils had a variety to them that served the “street” look while at the same time incorporating animalistic and sadomasochistic imagery. The Pope and his retinue, the Emperor’s court and the Mephostophilis gowns were meticulously handled and what arrived on the set was always useful immediately. The progression of Faustus from a Victorian-looking professor to a rich playboy of any era was accomplished with style. The changing genre concept of the progressive scenes worked because of the costumes. Execution of the designs was handled in a professional way and I have only praise for the costume makers in this regard. If there is any negative criticism from me in this area it is perhaps the final version of the Good and Bad Angels. Even though it might be said that the over-all costume design was based in a 1980’s concept of “look”, in general, the “disco” look for the Angels was a bit too much of that.

Lighting

The lighting was perhaps the best part of the visual design over-all. The crosses formed by the lights and the shadows created a subliminal

commentary on the Christian themes of the play. The sculptural effect of the lights made the costumes work. The lights also helped to cover the fact that our “set” was only a stage with some entrances and exits. The organic matrix idea that we had discussed and were forced to leave behind was intimated by the criss-cross effect of the lights on the performers. I staged action to occur in the focus of those intersecting lines of light. Execution of the lighting design and the operation of the plot were both highlights for me.

Music

The texturing of the performance by the Music was excellent. I have high praise for the composition and the creation of the sound files by the composer. The combination of live and recorded music was very well thought out. The composer spent a lot of time on this piece and was very good to the production for that. I am very grateful and feel that I have had the opportunity to work with someone who is extremely talented in the composition of this kind of music. She was able to take the ideas of the play and the abstract interpretations that I brought to the discussion of those ideas and accurately produce a soundscape that enhanced the mood of the dramatic action.

One evening after a performance I was speaking with an audience member who was blind. She said that the music really made the play

work for her. She was never confused about the texture of the music, nor was she overwhelmed by it.

If the Composer had been able to follow through during the final weeks as Music Director, I feel that the performance would have benefited in many ways. Because I had to take over that role in the final week of production, other areas suffered in the finishing. Perhaps the problems that arose with the sound operation might have been solved had she been able to assume those duties.

Environment of the Production

My intention was to present the thesis that I describe in this document, while maintaining a close watch on the process of achieving that intention. On entering into the environment of the Department of Drama, I became conscious of various research questions that would be tested. Those questions were to do with the acting process and the design process. The relationship between the performers and the environment in which the performance is created affects the development of the project. The environment in which the research is conducted is a key element in the product of that research.

The development of good working relationships is the first priority in creating a successful group process. In tracking my journal entries I find that the first days of the process were positive developments in this priority. The feeling amongst the actors, the stage management and the

design team was a good one. There was anticipation of a rigorous and challenging time ahead that was exciting. The actors found their various ways through the work and in general the mood was inventive. I worked towards developing a group of individuals that felt creative, confident and able to allow themselves to risk experiencing new ideas and feelings in themselves as artists. It is a delicate balancing act on the part of the director to guide young student actors into areas of understanding that may raise questions about “how things are” in the theatre and even in their lives. The students were quite happy to be trying out techniques of character development that were new to them.

Ultimately the success or failure of a production lies on the shoulders of the director. No matter what my intentions were in this production, the journey towards achieving those intentions are based in my choices and what the effect of those choices is. I attempted, in terms of process, to create a working environment that was positive, creative and open to adjustment and ideas from all the sources that were available to the production. I made choices when faced with decisions that needed to be made. It is in the debate as to which direction to take, with the ideas offered during the production period, that the director must make choices. The relationships that are established in the process determine the values of those choices. When there comes the moment that ideas are presented for consideration, there also comes the moment

when the process demands, either, consensus or compromise. In this research environment, I felt that my choices were often the latter.

I had come to the production with many years of experience as a director and with several successes in achieving the goal of developing groups that were capable of producing ideas that were innovative, challenging and that were executed with confidence and skill. Overall the journey in this case was successful as well, but was hampered at times, in my opinion, on occasions where the environment of the production facility, i.e., its standard operating procedures, interfered with the process of establishing a sustained self-confidence in the performers. Like the point made in the production, by the “comic scenes”, about the trickle-down effect of thought, the procedural aspects of the institution affected the research being conducted in it.

I have described, in my journal, the director-designer relationship and how the design of the play was evolved. I describe how I avoided pushing my ideas through in the design process to accommodate an organic development that was driven from the expertise of the designer more than from my preconceptions. What I had not anticipated was the powerful effect of the environment of the production, or put another way, the means of production, on that process and on the final product of the design.

The dilution of the set design and the prop designs was probably unavoidable for budgetary reasons in part. But it may be that the culture

of the production environment is a factor here as well. It is my understanding that the model for departmental production methodologies is the local regional professional theatre. The fundamental rules of behaviour regarding hours of rehearsal, approaches to budgeting, relationships between departments along with issues of authority within those departments are based, I presume, on that model. My question in this regard is why this should be so. As far as I can see, there is no proof that the regional model is one that should be emulated. Should a research-based institution like a university not be trying to examine and challenge conventional knowledge and practices, instead of using them as goals for training purposes?

In fairness to the cast and crew and the production department, I feel that there was a prodigious amount of good work done by all involved. Intellectually many of the ideas seemed to work. Certainly the spectacle of the production achieved a success in the final run. If there is a final thought on the research and production process, in this environment, it is by way of an observation. Of consequence to the performance period, is the regional “tradition” of letting the production run without input from the director. In many parts of the world, the production “opens” only after a series of previews that allow for adjustments to the production, based on audience response. More importantly, this preview period allows the performers and the crew to experience the input of the audience to the event. In terms of research,

this part of theatre offers a wonderful opportunity. By leaving the performance to run on its own, without the benefit of extended previews, we miss the opportunity to guide students through the learning curve that attends the first two weeks of performance. In my experience, as an actor and as a director in the professional theatre, the first two weeks in front of an audience are when the production shapes up, if it is going to. This held true for *Dr. Faustus*.

The producer allowed me to give notes after opening, but even so, the notes were received sometimes grudgingly because, I think, of the effect of the learned “tradition”. My observation leads me to think that the period of performance might be considered as an area of study in and of itself. That is, that instructors, researchers and directors could stay involved in the performances, so that the student actors and crew might benefit from input from those sources, during the most important part of the theatre experience. Theatre is a group activity that only really occurs when the audience is in the performance space with the company, and the play is running. All else is moot.

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