Prospera's Looks: Adapting Shakespearean Reflexivity in *The Tempest* (Julie Taymor, 2010)

Introduction

Self-reflexivity is a defining feature of Shakespeare's works, to such an extent that, as Mary Ann Frese Witt recently pointed out, "most late-twentieth-century work written in English on metatheater, metadrama, or the play in the play concentrated on Shakespeare" (5). This metadramatic quality is an issue for film directors adapting Shakespeare's plays, who must be prepared to "wrestle with the challenge thrown up by ... reflexive techniques" (Stam, *Literature* 112; see also Rasmus 147). Meeting the standards of Shakespearean reflexivity on-screen consequently leads directors to devise various solutions, most of which seek to "duplicate" Shakespeare's reflexive techniques by resorting to "cinematic equivalents" for a play's metadramatic features (Rasmus 161), in the hope of "substituting" metacinema for metatheater (Rasmus 157; Hatchuel 160).

Because of the comprehensive scope of its specular patterns, *The Tempest* heightens the challenge of adapting Shakespearean reflexivity. One particular film, however, has received acclaim for finding appropriate solutions to adapt the reflexive motifs of *The Tempest*: Peter Greenaway's *Prospero's Books* (1991). The film centers on Prospero's library, treating it as the source of his knowledge, but also as the origin of the world of pictures that, Marlene Rodgers notes, "come out of [his] inkwell" (15). Walter Moser goes even further in his interpretation of the film, as he argues that Greenaway presents "the reality that emerges from the book" as "a mere theatrical setting resulting from [Prospero's] magically efficient Word" (57, my translation).

My contention is that Julie Taymor's recent adaptation of *The Tempest* (2010) improves on Greenaway's strategy thanks to one main change. As my title suggests, Taymor's approach has a lot in common with Greenaway's specular structures. Taymor, however, draws new conclusions from a similar pattern by selecting another nexus than Prospero's books. The film's major innovation is not the gender switch from Prospero to Prospera, but the choice to present an elaborate apparatus of articulated lenses and planetary models as the fountainhead of Prospera's powers (Fig. 1). By displacing the focus to Prospera's optical machine, Taymor's adaptation proposes a new "take" or "grid" (Stam, *Literature* 364) on the play. Whereas Greenaway treats reading and writing activities as the foundation of the play's drama and

Fig. 1. Prospera's apparatus of articulated lenses

metadrama, Taymor reshuffles the play's stakes by foregrounding visual issues rather than verbal/oral ones.

1. Power and the Scopic Regime of Drama: Shakespeare's *Tempest*

In the wake of new historicism and post-colonialism, Shakespeare scholars have reexamined the reflexive system of *The Tempest* in relation to power. As a preliminary to the study of Taymor's adaptation, I propose to follow this approach by treating *The Tempest* as a comprehensive study of the scopic regime of drama, which includes a special focus on the kind of power it provides. The phrase "scopic regime" maps back a notion Christian Metz coined to "characterize the signifier of the cinema proper" (61) onto the theatrical configuration. According to Dallas G. Denery, II, the "scopic regime" refers to "dominant and structuring relations between observer, image and object" (9), a definition Metz does not clearly give, as he merely exploits the concept by comparing cinema, characterized by "the absence of the object seen" (61), and theater, where "actors and spectators are present at the same time and in the same location" (63). I plan to use Denery's transartistic definition of the concept as a tool to study the object of the play's reflexivity—the scopic regime of drama—in a way that will facilitate the analysis of how this reflexivity is adapted to film. Resorting to the concept should thus make it easier to answer a crucial question regarding the nature of Taymor's adaptation: Does the change to a cinematic scopic regime necessarily entail that the adaptation no longer reflects on drama, but studies the essence of film instead?

The first component of Shakespeare's methodical analysis of the scopic regime of drama in *The Tempest* is the play's pre-panoptic dimension. As Richard Wilson explains, "Prospero's circle [in which the characters 'stand charmed' (5.1, stage direction, page 191)] prefigures Bentham's Panopticon" (Wilson 154), which is his "1793 diagram for a new penitentiary whose architecture ensured the visibility of inmates to an unseen observer" (Lyon, *Surveillance Studies* 202-03). A concept popularized by Michel Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* to study forms of power created in the Enlightenment, the panopticon, because it dissociates seeing from being seen (202), is an apt description of the scopic regime of drama as it is analyzed in *The Tempest*. In fact, as Georges Banu states, playwrights often include surveillance patterns to facilitate distanciation effects and reflexivity, by underlining that the audience sees without being seen (27). By replicating the conditions of a "modern carceral universe" (Poulard 3), in which "Prospero's power operates by means of an 'observation strange' (3.3.87) that is both omniscient and 'invisible' (5.1.97)" (Wilson 155), Shakespeare shows that his surveillance-obtained knowledge of the characters' actions and whereabouts is the main lever of his control over the island. Because Prospero's panoptic power relies on Ariel's agency, and because he presents the creature as supernatural, the magus seems endowed with magical gifts. Prospero's surveillance, however, is mirrored in the audience, where it loses its mystical quality. Because surveillance is also an extradramatic fact, Prospero's apparently divine switch from "supervision to hypervision" (Poulard 10) is brought down to earth as a fact of early modern drama, which is also a fact of early modern politics.[1]

Nevertheless, Prospero is not exactly in the same position as a theatrical audience. The wizard does not just monitor the events occurring in different parts of the island. As Wilson shows, his subjection techniques include pre-panoptic forms of control based on theatrical displays. Wilson reads Prospero's final forswearing of power as the transfer of subjection to the subjects themselves (156), and as an adumbration of the historical switch from the "spectacle of the scaffold" (Foucault 57) to the panopticon, in which the few watch the many. The play's ending, however, reminds the audience that Prospero's power results *at once* from surveillance techniques and from the complementary deflection of gazes on selected objects—a pattern surveillance scholars describe as "synopticism" (Mathiesen 99). Shakespeare's analysis of the scopic regime of drama in *The Tempest* thus goes beyond the obvious surveillance element to encompass synoptic patterns, rather than presenting them as outdated.

In the play, power comes from showing as well as from watching. *The Tempest* was specifically designed for an indoor theater such as Blackfriars (Gurr 91-102), which gave Shakespeare the opportunity of showing the opening storm rather than having a character report it (Brennan 28). The extended impact of a more colorful performance, one that is less tied to the spectators' willingness to "compose themselves" into the ideal audience (Orgel 6), is reflected in Miranda's reception of the storm scene in 1.2. With such displays of power as the opening scene (Gish 232), Prospero does not only prove his ability "to control or harness that which exists in nature" (Gish 247). He also uses Miranda as his test spectator—as Jan Frans van Dijkhuizen notes, "her response to the shipwreck is a response to a tragedy" (N. pag.). He thus subjects her to his power by including her in what Etienne Poulard calls a "guinea pigs" pattern (11).

By focusing on Prospero's stagecraft as a complement to his panoptic control, Shakespeare investigates the various levels at which belief intervenes in theatrical creation. As Foucault notes, the panopticon relies on "the principle that power should be visible and unverifiable" (201). Similarly, Prospero induces belief in his ubiquity by "assuming the position of knowledgeable master" (McInnis 20). He does not just "blur the origin of power, so that the subjects can never really tell where authority is" (Poulard 4) but also, as a complement, he stages the outer signs of his demiurgic control over the island and over those who dwell on it. He becomes a Big Brother figure, whose power is credible due to the credulity of the islanders. From the audience room, however, his supremacy looks a mere illusion. The same is true for the "events in the dramatic narrative" that, as "the author of [the play's] action," Prospero "has the power to determine" (Gish 235).[2]

In *The Tempest*, Prospero tests the possibility of creating and controlling "a microcosm of mankind" (Brennan 29). The scale change from the microcosm to the macrocosm gives Prospero divine magnitude. A specificity in the scopic regime of early modern drama, summarized in the "All the world's a stage" topos that Shakespeare frequently uses, makes this Promethean act possible. Prospero exploits the transformability of the stage into a world at the scale of his island, but also in the masque of 4.1, which evinces that the "subordination

of the human, natural, and cosmic realms to his will" (Gish 239) is essentially dramatic. Yet by using a "great utopian laboratory," designed to "experiment with new ways of wielding power" (Poulard 2) to place Prospero under a globe and elicit his "acute paranoia about optics" (Poulard 2), Shakespeare debunks his own creation of a world as an optical illusion. Prospero eventually discovers the truth behind the figments he has created. Interestingly, in 4.1, his sudden change of scopic regime triggers this epiphany. His act of humility consists in seeing his production as a mere play (4.1.146-63). Prospero goes from embracing and utilizing the scopic regime of drama, as creator *and* as self-indulgent spectator of his own plays, to humbly choosing the scopic regime of reality. In this sense, the interrupted masque is "a crucial procedure of reflexive art" (Stam, *Reflexivity* 5), thanks to which Prospero stages his own renunciation of the scopic regime of drama. The magus realizes that "he must awaken to the world as it actually is" (Gish 244), which is why he sees and presents his stagings as mere fictions, as it were, grafted onto the real. The playwright-figure's farewell to his productions is also a spectator's goodbye to his illusions. Through Prospero, the artist's eye is present in the play, and participates in its reflexivity. As a whole, *The Tempest* thus produces an anatomy of the scopic regime of drama, which necessarily includes a reflection on how distorted our perception of reality can be. One by one, Prospero places all participants in the theatrical illusions under a "magnifying glass" (Poulard 11) designed to study the mechanics of theater: the refugees as unwilling actors; Miranda as a spectator; Ariel as "assistant director and stage manager" (van Dijkhuizen), and Prospero himself as orchestrator (van Dijkhuizen). By staging the various ways in which these participants interact with each other, Shakespeare characterizes the scopic regime of drama as a combination of surveillance—of the stage by the audience; of the stage by the producer in the context of "surveillance de parcours," a phrase Banu uses to describe a stage producer's supervision of his or her show during the performance (144-51); of the audience by the dramatist who monitors their reaction; of audience members by other audience members (Kernan 20)—and stagecraft skills that rely on the spectators' and the creator's decision to believe in the illusions of the stage.

2. Vision and Power in Contemporary Scopic Culture: Taymor's *Tempest*

Taymor manages to preserve the play's concern with the nature of the illusion it creates, and its focus on the discrepancies between what the creator shows and what the audience sees. Her innovation, however, comes from the awareness that a subtle handling of the scopic regime of drama is no longer considered a perfect way of distorting visual perception. This entails that, in the scopic culture of the twenty-first century, Shakespeare's analysis of the scopic regime of drama as a source of power may have become irrelevant, except as a study of *theatrical* illusion. Following from this observation, Taymor adapts Shakespeare's analysis of the relationship between vision and power to contemporary scopic culture, in which the conditions for creating the "dialectical struggle between realistic imitation and self-conscious artifice" on which "Shakespeare's theater thrives" (Stam, *Reflexivity* 3) have changed.

In the film, the play's experiment in subjection runs on new initial data. Taymor's adaptation foregrounds the visual component in power plays, and draws new results from Shakespeare's reflexive framework. Like Greenaway, Taymor takes a technological turn, to show that the Shakespearean corpus should now be analyzed by way of "a practice more attentive to the mundane specifics of the media that render performance capable of study" (Lanier 204-205). To her, however, the scope of the changes brought about by the advent of media societies extends beyond the possibility of studying performances more easily; what is at stake is the possibility for the play itself to study anything at all. In 2010, the first item in Shakespeare's reflexive arrangement, his analysis of panoptic surveillance as power, may have lost some of its relevance. It suffers from the likelihood for "surveillance and control" to take technological shape in "a society fully wired and connected" (Sonvilla-Weiss 10). To put it simply, Prospero's surveillance no longer has to rely on magic or on spectatorial suspension of disbelief to be ubiquitous.

Consequently, Taymor devises ways of renewing the impact of the play's panoptic subtext. In her film, the island's varied geography is ideally suited for Prospera's manipulation of its permanent and temporary inhabitants. After the shipwreck, Prospera applies the individualizing principle at work in the panopticon (Foucault 200) to create clusters of characters. She carefully separates the refugees from the residents of the island, lest the former should gather information from the latter. In those two groups, she creates subcategories, the members of which she sends to parts of the island that seem specifically chosen. Alonso, Gonzalo, Antonio, and Sebastian are often seen getting lost in maze-like tropical vegetation, while Trinculo, Caliban, and Stephano are sent to a deserted area, which is the one Trinculo describes when he says that the island has "neither bush nor shrub to bear off any weather at all" (2.2.18-19). Taymor translates this remark into extreme long shots of the island's deserted landscape, which Trinculo, Caliban, and Stephano later leave to cross the woods on their way to Prospera's cell, thus following a route similar to that of the courtiers. As for the inhabitants of the island, they are also differentiated according to the type of space they inhabit. While Ariel constantly appears as a mere image trapped in flat surfaces (Prospera summons him up from a reflecting pool), Caliban first emerges from a hole in the ground at the edge of a rocky cliff.

Yet despite this diversity in the geography of the island, overall the film's space is laid out in order to facilitate Prospera's control over the characters. The deserted areas allow a distant observer to watch the characters without being noticed. The forests provide natural screens behind which the characters hide and spy on each other. In the scenes located in the woods, trees or branches appear in the foreground, constructing primary internal ocularization, with which "the fact a character is watching what is shown on-screen is *suggested* rather than directly shown" (Gaudreault and Jost 131, my translation), without pointing to the subject of the watch. Finally, the island has several hilly or even craggy areas, which accounts for the frequent high-angle shots on the refugees, suggesting that someone is watching them from above. Nevertheless, Taymor seldom edits those shots with a view of

the character who is watching. The film's angles mimic the view from CCTV cameras that, as François Niney has shown, supposedly provide a perspective that is totally objective—in Niney's exact words, "nobody's point of view" (192). A few shots show Prospera keeping watch over the island, but those clearly subjective shots are rare. The film's treatment of subjectivity thus constructs a panoptic island that is sometimes monitored by Prospera, but also, and more constantly, supervised by the filmic narrator. Overall, the alternation of flat and empty areas on the one hand, and hilly or tree-covered areas on the other hand, is in keeping with Taymor's use of flatness and perpendicularity, often magnified by the appropriate camera angle, to express Prospera's rising or falling stronghold over the other characters. Typically, the idea of manipulation is conveyed in shots that pin the characters against a flat surface. This technique, especially if it comes with a high-angle shot if the flat surface is the ground or a pond, and with a low-angle shot if the flat surface is the sky or a canopy of trees, points to the characters' ephemeral nature as depthless filmic illusions (Ferdinand as Prospera's slave carrying wood; the beast formed by Trinculo and Caliban under a blanket; Alonso and Gonzalo lying asleep on the ground as they are about to be killed by Antonio and Sebastian; etc.). Conversely, whatever free will the characters retain or gain, as well as any act of rebellion against Prospera, is expressed through the motif of an elongated shape protruding or emerging from a flat area (the boat in the storm before it sinks down into the sea; Caliban emerging from a hole in the ground at the beginning of the film to debate Prospera's supremacy; Alonso and Sebastian's swords held vertically above Gonzalo and Alonso; Trinculo, Caliban, and Stephano as they are silhouetted against the sky in a moment of glee, as Caliban thinks he has broken free from Prospera's enslavement, in a shot that recalls a similar one in *The Seventh Seal*; etc.).

This alternation of surface as a sign of empowerment and perpendicularity as an attempt to break free from Prospera's dominion is condensed in the character of Ariel. In Ariel's case, however, the play of surface and depth does not just express that he is virtually Prospera's slave, but also characterizes the nature of his task in her schemes. In the film, Ariel becomes an essential part in a mediated surveillance network. Low-angle shots often include the spirit's image projected on a screen of branches above the characters, gazing down upon them. Taymor condenses Ariel's watching and showing abilities into one trait. The spirit is transparent, a mere image superimposed on the film's pictures. His flickering projection appears on the pools and the ponds, the sky and the clouds, the screens of branches, and tree trunks. His nature, however, is not just one of the film's distanciation effects pointing to the cinematic essence of its

Fig. 2. Projection and scale changes: Ariel playing at shipwreck

illusions. At the beginning, Ariel shows Prospera how he provoked the initial storm. The wrecking boat appears against the background of a perturbed sky, upon which three gigantic pictures of Ariel rise (Fig. 2). The spirit's change of size is a side effect of projecting his image onto the sky. His treble presence, which visually illustrates the character's ubiquity, is also a consequence of his nature as a projection. Because of his ability to project himself, Ariel can use the sky as a screen, which allows him to be seen by all and to see everything that is happening on the island. As a picture that can see, Ariel roots the play's surveillance into contemporary scopic culture, where the telescreens of Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* have become concrete.[3]

This technological change, which makes Prospero's once magical panoptic gaze a feature of everyday life, impairs the efficiency of Shakespeare's comparison of surveillance with the scopic regime of drama. To preserve this efficiency, Taymor refrains from anachronistic recontextualization, which would have been the case if she had included modern filmic technology in the plot. Rather than exploiting the fact that "the visual technologies associated with cinema are intimately connected with surveillance practice and the production of knowledge through visibility" (Zimmer 428), Taymor draws from the optical discoveries of Shakespeare's time to create a larger framework for Shakespeare's analysis of vision as a way to gain power, one in which drama and cinema may both fit. Besides equipping Prospera with such traditional or expected instruments of control as the magic staff she uses to provoke the initial storm or the alchemical tools that were brought from Milan onto the island, Taymor relocates the cradle of Prospera's power by including in her laboratory a kind of mobile hanging from the ceiling. Lenses are attached to the arms of the mobile, where they act as magnifying glasses, to allow Prospera to deflect sunrays and harness solar energy (Fig. 1). In *The Tempest*, Prospero takes his power from the scientific study of nature (Gish 234-35, 248). Taymor, however, updates the play's perspective on how to obtain knowledge and derive power from it. Including lenses is in keeping with the optical preoccupations of the Bard's time, which Vincent Ilardi describes as "a powerful impetus to develop improved vision aids through more advanced lens technology" (207). With this addition, Taymor makes it clear that Prospera collected knowledge through the "closer observations of nature" allowed by optical discoveries (Ilardi 207), rather than from her books.

Because it creates a network leading light from the outside into Prospera's cell, the system of lenses is a possible way of accounting for Prospera's control over the island. Since the lenses interact with each other, they constitute a closed-circuit network, and may act as a CCTV system covering the whole island, in a microcosmic version of what Lyon describes as the globalized surveillance network constructed in the wake of 9/11 (Lyon, *Surveillance after* 109-41). More importantly, this optical apparatus does not just paste technological surveillance over the play's subtle analysis of watching patterns, but is above all a projection instrument, which Prospera uses to generate the banquet of 3.3.

Yet unlike Greenaway, who shows that Prospero authors the fictional world of *The Tempest* and turns this universe into a cinematic product (Moser 53-56), Taymor does more than merely turn Prospero's performances into cinematic artefacts. Indeed, as Ilardi also explains, improving "the projection capabilities of the *camera obscura*" was a major concern in the Renaissance (219). Similarly, Prospera's arrangement of lenses is not only part of the Renaissance collective imagination regarding the connection between vision and knowledge. It is also a way of acknowledging the play's analysis of synoptic power by condensing, in a single apparatus, the power to capture reality and the power to display it. Like Greenaway, Taymor underlines that "our Shakespearean book" has become a "complex phenomenological palimpsest" (Lanier 205), one important layer of which consists of filmic versions of the plays. With Prospera's machine, however, Taymor locates the cinematic combination of watching and showing in the scientific culture of Shakespeare's time.

Renaissance scientific discoveries created a "crisis in epistemology" (McInnis 17), which the film also ascribes to Prospera's apparatus. As Jean-Louis and Monique Tassoul explain, "Galileo's telescopic observations ... were perhaps the most dramatic events in transforming heliocentricism ... into a most plausible physical description of our planetary system" (23). By dealing with the storm metonymically in the film's very first sequence, Taymor shows that Anthony Brennan's comparison of the tempest that opens the play with a filmic "establishing shot" (Brennan 29) is no longer necessary, but also locates the source of Prospera's control over the whole universe in her utilization of lenses to provoke scale changes. The first shot shows a fairy-tale castle against a blurred seashore background. A rain shower causes the building to crumble down, revealing it was a sand castle. The camera then pans left and down to include in the field Miranda's hand supporting the frail edifice (Fig. 3). A camera movement turns a long shot into a close-up. Interestingly, although this used to be an almost magical effect of the visual regime of drama, a cinematic trick now reduces the cosmos to island size, places it within Prospera's scope, and gives it for the spectators to contemplate. The film camera now produces the correspondences between the macrocosm and the microcosm traditionally ascribed to Shakespeare's *mise-en-abyme* patterns (Brawley 34). This opening shot shows that the scopic regime of film, because of its magnifying and dwindling capacity, gives Prospera divine control over the universe. Later in the film, however, Taymor links this scopic regime to the protocinematic apparatus Prospera owns.

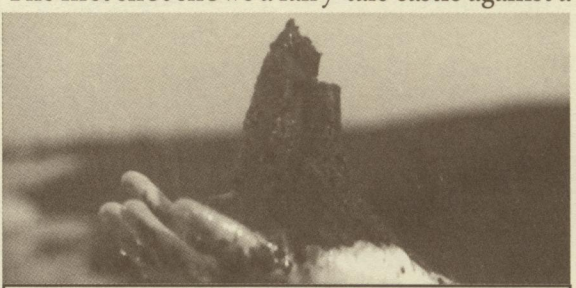

Fig. 3. Dissolving Miranda's sand castle

In 4.1, Taymor's adaptation of the wedding masque is an optical phenomenon produced by Prospera's technological artefacts. She raises her staff to the sky, and the stars appear on the dark background. White lines soon

connect some of them into constellations, like in a planetarium. The shot evokes the optical mobile concealed inside her cell, suggesting she once again centralizes light to project her illusions onto the sky. Kaleidoscopic effects then intervene, linking the visibility of the stars to the utilization of lenses, but also translating the fusion of life forces depicted in the play's masque; here, the optical effect makes a male figure, a female one, and a circle of doves literally merge on-screen. White shapes then appear, evoking the signs of the zodiac, which is consistent with the ambiguity that, as Sandra Sider states, often prevailed in the Renaissance, when "astrology was taken as seriously as the actual science of astronomy" (251).

About ten minutes further into the film after the marriage masque, Taymor once again exploits the field of optical science as a common ground shared by early modern playwrights and twenty-first-century filmmakers. For her treatment of the magic circle from 5.1.32, she has Prospera first draw the circle in the sand with her staff. A low-angle shot of the finishing stages of a solar eclipse is included, and Prospera holds her staff at arm's length then starts rotating as the instrument projects fire onto the circle she has drawn. Her circular movement is then underlined by a camera pan as the shot turns into an overhead shot. The shot ends in a bird's eye view of Prospera at the center of the circle of flames, creating a geometrical shape, a kind of sundial with Prospera herself for a gnomon (Fig. 4). This first representation expresses Prospera's control over the parallel temporality of the insular setting. Seconds later in the sequence, a medium close-up shot of Prospera reveals the magic circle's third dimension. An accelerating 360° camera pan makes the landscape around her turn faster and faster, until she seems surrounded by a cylinder of still pictures rotating around a central axis, due to the flattening out of the background behind Prospera provoked by the camera movement. Prospera's picture now stays fixed facing the camera while the vertical surfaces on which the background is projected spin out around her. This visual effect is somehow the opposite of the bullet-time shot, in which the camera circles around a fixed object; here, the central character stays still, as a 360° pan shot is projected on what looks like a cylindrical screen around her. The cylinder covered in pictures revolving around a central axis thus evokes the praxinoscope, a protocinematic contraption that features a "rotating drum," a "flexible strip," and a "prism of mirrors ... located at the centre of the apparatus" (Dulac and Gaudreault 237).

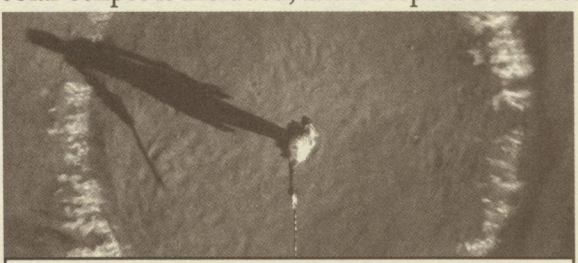

Fig. 4. Prospera's circle of fire as sundial

Through this visual reference, Prospera becomes the prism at the center of the apparatus. She is the one all eyes turn to at the end of the film, like Prospero at the end of the play. Yet in her version of the praxinoscope, Prospera also acts as a central mirror reflecting sunlight to project an island scenery on a cylindrical screen surrounding her. This screen, because of its

shape, represents the island itself, which is treated as an illusion Prospera projects around the characters to bewitch them. Prospera's manipulation over the characters is protocinematic. Her island-size praxinoscope gives her the same type of visual control as the one the play ascribes to the scopic regime of drama—one that is at once centripetal and centrifugal.

Several other shots in the film's finale prompt such a reading. The first one intervenes a few minutes after Taymor has drawn the magic circle in the sand. It shows, in a long shot, the refugees walking up and down small hills, chasing and being chased by several transparent Ariels at the same time (Fig. 5). Each time one of his avatars moves, it leaves full-size traces in its wake, decomposing Ariel's movement on-screen. Rather than being a gratuitous visual effect, Ariel's replicas evoke the assistance brought by protocinematic instruments in studying movement, for instance in the work of Etienne-Jules Marey. In similar vein, Prospera's ability to freeze the characters who have entered her magic circle with a hand movement is a freeze-frame—a cinematic effect made possible by the filmic cylinder surrounding the characters.

Fig. 5. Protocinematic instruments: decomposing Ariel's movements

Finally, the film's closing shots and end-credits sequence also illustrate the transitional status of the lens in the film. Prospera throws her magic staff off a precipitous cliff, causing it to shatter into glass smithereens upon hitting the rocks below. This final shot of broken glass then becomes blurred. It dissolves into the first shot of the end credits, in which bubbles rising in the sea are a visual echo of the glass splinters, until drowning books finally appear. The sequence of shots establishes continuity among the magical version of Prospera's power, the staff, and its Faustian origin, the book. Taymor, however, introduces optical breakthroughs as the necessary bridge from one to the other, thanks to the shattered glass that recalls Prospera's lenses and spheres, and that also echoes the breaking of the vial that liberates Ariel as a harpy, prior to his confrontation with the courtiers at the banquet table.

By treating Prospera's power as essentially scopic, Taymor thus endows Shakespeare's conclusive reflection on the magic of his art with new complexity. Including a scopic instrument elicits the importance of the connection between vision and power in the play. More importantly, Prospera's visual apparatus alludes to the later invention of film. The image of the projection cylinder summarizes Taymor's perspective on the play. It combines the abstract shape of the insular setting, the circle, with the expected translation of Shakespeare's *Theatrum Mundi* into a "life is a film" subtext. Like Greenaway, Taymor adapts Shakespeare's "world as stage" perspective (Moser 52-60). Yet unlike Greenaway, she does so without operating a radical translation from the metadramatic or metaliterary (Hotchkiss 96) to the metacinematic (Hotchkiss

101, 107). In Taymor's *Tempest*, the cylindrical cockpit of Elizabethan theater has become a surrounding screen on which the insular location, once projected, becomes an image of a world that filmic surfaces entrap. Consequently, Shakespeare's artistic power does not become that of film directors aping god by manipulating the lives of the actors playing in their movies. Much more interestingly, Taymor defines scopic power in the cinematic era as imprisonment in surrounding screens, whose encompassing visibility is complete with the ability to watch those they encircle. Like Taymor's *Titus*, in which, for Courtney Lehmann, "Young Lucius now recognizes that our machines and our screens *are* us" (Starks and Lehmann 60), *The Tempest* digests the changes in scopic cultures provoked by the replacement of the hegemony of the human eye by the hegemony of the mechanical eye, and by the subsequent multiplication of reality capturing tools. This evolution led to contemporary surveillance societies in which power results from a subtle alchemy between ubiquitous cameras and no less ubiquitous screens capturing our data traces, as an emerging online surveillance apparatus (Chamley 146), consisting in "data collection" (Chamley 145) and "the monitoring of emails and their contents" (Chamley 146), increasingly complements more explicit forms of surveillance such as that effected by CCTV.

Conclusion

Taymor's film includes all the main features of *The Tempest* as a reflexive construction. As a result, the film is more than just a case of "theater to film" adaptation. Taymor offers an analysis of the relationship between vision and artistic power that is akin to that of Shakespeare. Her adaptation, however, is innovative because it considers that Shakespeare's specular scheme has its roots in and depends on a specific scopic culture, and that this culture has changed. In the twenty-first century, visual control, whether it is artistic or not, is mediated rather than direct. In the visual arts, constructing realism or reflexivity used to rely on a few basic principles, such as keeping or breaking the "convention of the fourth wall" (Stam, *Reflexivity* 40) and concealing or emphasizing the traces of the creative process (Stam, *Literature* 291). Taymor's adaptation shows that, in twenty-first-century scopic culture, some of those principles are no longer stable enough as foundations of either realism or reflexivity. In screen societies, display surfaces are everywhere, and in some cases (mobile phones for instance), the same unit alternatively offers captures of reality (e.g., a video message) and works of fiction. This ambiguity makes it difficult for artists to master what happens on either side of a fourth wall, whose nature and location have become variable. In surveillance societies, reality-capturing devices multiply to disseminate avatars of the cinematic apparatus around the globe, which makes it difficult for filmmakers not to include references to their artistic process in their work. In a word, some of the former triggers of reflexivity are now part of the everyday. To study the issues of visual power of a different age, *The Tempest* must therefore be adapted to a different scopic culture, rather than just to the scopic regime of film. Following from this observation, Taymor rejects such options as "metatheater to film" or "metatheater to metacinema." The first adaptation pattern would have

resulted in a film about dramatic power, in the vein of *Anonymous* (Emmerich 2011). The second one would have transformed Shakespeare's anatomy of dramatic power into a study of filmic power. Taymor, on the contrary, builds her adaptation around a visual addition to the play that acts as a midway point between the scopic culture of Shakespeare's time and ours. While they are consistent with the scientific discoveries of Shakespeare's days, Prospera's protocinematic instruments adumbrate the era of ubiquitous CCTV units and display devices, and create a bridge between two eras. As a result, Taymor's adaptation relates *The Tempest* to the scopic culture of Shakespeare's time on the one hand, and to surveillance and screen societies on the other. It shows that *The Tempest* reflexively focuses on theatrical practice, but also on an early modern scopic culture based on surveillance practices and displays of authority that have a lot in common with drama. Through her decision not to include cinema as we know it, Taymor thus chooses not to emphasize exclusively the play's reflection on itself as art. Rather, the film preserves the other side of the play's reflexivity, reminding that Shakespeare used the scopic regime of his art to study the scopic culture of his time. Taymor's film is a "scopic adaptation," as it rekindles this facet of the play's reflexivity, using it to characterize twenty-first-century-visual culture. The film thus draws two main conclusions from Shakespeare's play: that power, while it still lies at the threshold of artistic and nonartistic practices, now exploits reality-capturing and display technology; and that, if it is erroneous to assert that "life is a film," our scopic culture is undeniably filmic.

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Author's Note

All images are from Taymor's 2010 version of *The Tempest*.

Notes

[1] Even though Wilson goes so far as to say that Prospero's state is "more modern than Renaissance" (Wilson 154), other authors have noted that surveillance practices were common and quite well known to people in the early modern era. For Poulard, "the late Renaissance was the panoptic era *par excellence*" (4), and Breight describes an "Elizabethan culture of surveillance" in which "widespread informers" formed part of a "recognizable system" with "a shifting mass of freebooters" at the bottom of its wide-ranging scale (102-03).

[2] In a less radical way, Brennan describes Prospero as "the unchallengeable source of information in the play" (30).

[3] Many specialists of contemporary surveillance schemes have noted that panoptic patterns, in which the few watch the many, are increasingly assisted by display devices, showing pictures that help justify the extensive implementation of surveillance systems. Lyon quotes as examples of this development the live pictures of 9/11 shown on TV, which "were used to justify panic regimes and stereotypes" ("9/11" 40) and the growing use of the computer screen as a surveillance interface, which employers use to "perform background checks on potential employees" (*Surveillance Studies* 42).

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