"This same strict and most observant watch" (1.1.71): Gregory Doran's *Hamlet* as Surveillance Adaptation

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Abstract

In this paper, I focus on the specificity of Gregory Doran's adaptive system to argue that in his TV film of *Hamlet* (2009), surveillance provides a focal point. Doran treats surveillance as the main mechanism in an adaptation procedure that renews *Hamlet*'s investigation of the link between the scopic regime of reality and that of drama. To adapt this reflexive quality of the play and provide its *mise-en-abyme* pattern with new relevance, the film translates issues related to unmediated perception into the language of mediated perception. To this end, including surveillance is a major enhancement, which proves more efficient than the stereotyped use of film cameras within the diegesis. The play exposes the mechanisms of dramatic illusion in terms of direct perception. It relates the magic of the theater to the creation of a discrepancy between what the spectators watch and what they, more or less willingly, believe they see. Doran's adaptation reworks this discrepancy. As a result, the film produces a form of specularity adapted to screen societies. The director preserves the structure of *Hamlet*'s analysis of spectacular processes, but uses the ambiguity of watching in contemporary societies to provide the play with new topicality.

Introduction

A stage-to-television transposition of his 2008 Royal Shakespeare Company production, Gregory Doran's *Hamlet* aired on BBC Two in December 2009 and was released on DVD in the U.K. in January 2010. The main specificity of this TV-film adaptation is its surveillance look, noticeable at the very beginning through viewfinder marks in the film's shots. By focusing on surveillance, the director chooses one of the many options offered by a play that has been subjected to many different novel perspectives since the invention of film (Bevington 2011, 210). Yet even though this may seem an unoriginal option, especially given the increasing number of contemporary films and TV series that exploit surveillance as a theme or style, this choice is particularly appropriate to an adaptation of *Hamlet* for television. Strikingly, Doran does not limit his use of surveillance to the moments in the play when watching is used as a disciplinary

mechanism, as shown by Michel Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault 1979, 207-208). This evinces a radical decision: to turn the play's use of surveillance as a cog in the plot into the film's scopic regime.[1]

My argument in this paper is that, rather than merely seeking to apply his signature to the TV film's visuals, Doran uses surveillance as a means of appropriation by basing his adaptation strategy on a subtle understanding of *Hamlet* as a play about drama. Indeed, if, as Christy Desmet and Robert Sawyer have shown, appropriating Shakespeare's plays is necessary because "meaning changes with context" (Desmet and Sawyer 1999, 12), the presence of a surveillance subtext in *Hamlet* calls for appropriation for at least two reasons. The first is cultural. In the British society into which Doran's TV film was released, a debate around the installation of CCTV devices for safety had been going on for many years. In fact, the TV film was aired amidst a certain amount of political upheaval related to the controversy over surveillance in the United Kingdom. The 2007 publication of the United Kingdom Security and Counter-Terrorism Science and Innovation Strategy, which had led to the instigation of wide surveillance databases, officially "to aid the pursuit and disruption of terrorist organisations" (Coaffee 2009, 285), was then bringing criticism of surveillance to the foreground. Doran's adaptation of the play to current events thus emphasizes the way in which Shakespeare links "the oppressive practices of political performance and surveillance at Hamlet's Elsinore" to the condition of citizens in interventionist states (Hackett 2013, 11), thus engaging in a characterization of the surveillance society of twenty-first century Britain.

The second reason is aesthetic. Released as it was at the end of the first decade in the new millennium, Doran's TV film inserted itself into the British surveillance society, which was itself situated in a new optical context, challenging the meaning of the play's visual reflection on optical paradoxes (Ackerman 2011, 49). My starting hypothesis is that this new optical context is that of a visual culture extensively shaped by surveillance practices, a view that reinforces Burnett's remark that "in a terror-haunted world, film itself might constitute an optical disciplinary mechanism" (Burnett 2006, 32). Doran's strategy of adaptation continues a development initiated by earlier filmic versions, which Burnett calls "the process of mediating the connections binding surveillance and cinema" (32). Providing visual treatment for the references to surveillance in *Hamlet*, a "play of monitoring, watching, eavesdropping, and trap-setting" (Hawkes 2002, 70), and thus exploiting the natural resemblance between the cinematic apparatus and contemporary surveillance devices, has gradually turned into a cliché of *Hamlet* adaptations. The three films studied in Burnett's article explore various ways of situating the play in the current context by linking Hamlet's predicament of being constantly watched to the condition of human beings

in surveillance societies. Scott and Simonson's version (*Hamlet* 2000b), released in 2000, links surveillance to architecture and conveys the sense of a divine gaze encompassing the characters' actions. Almereyda's adaptation, released in the same year, relates surveillance practices to the condition of postmodern men and women, which the film defines as cinematic (*Hamlet* 2000a). Cavanagh's *Hamlet* (2005), finally, investigates the political implications of the play's surveillance space. To this list, one should add *Hamlet Goes Business* (Kaurismaki 1987). The film, which Burnett does not discuss in his article, shows Hamlet using a barely hidden microphone to spy on Klaus, a modern-day Claudius who is the CEO of a Finnish rubber-duck manufacturing company. Hamlet's uncle then uses an archaic CCTV device — a camera connected to a TV set in the next room — to spy on the conversation between his nephew and Lauri Polonius. In this film as in the other three, Elsinore's "walls have ears" type of surveillance is technologically updated to approach or match the current state of monitoring practices.

It is my contention that Doran's *Hamlet* exploits the reflexivity of the play's references to surveillance in a more complete and relevant way than the adaptations above, except for Almereyda's film, which, as I will show in this article, uses surveillance in a way that is quite similar to Doran's to produce a much different perspective on contemporary societies. Moreover, as a TV adaptation of the play, Doran's version benefits from a higher degree of similarity between the grain of surveillance pictures and that of television images. This may be the reason why Doran resorts to surveillance at the level of his TV film's visuals at least as much as by using it as a prop within his adaptation. I propose to call this process "surveillance adaptation," which means not only that the director adapts the surveillance content of the play, but also, and primarily, that he adapts the play to a contemporary scopic regime that derives part of its essence from the spread of surveillance practices in everyday life. The expansion of surveillance, from a diegetic to extradiegetic feature, is a way of reinvestigating the paradoxes of watching explored in *Hamlet* in light of twenty-first century visual culture.

To make this point, I will examine the play's references to surveillance in order to characterize the effect they induce. I will then analyze Doran's use of technological surveillance in renewing the scope of the play's surveillance elements. Finally, through a comparison with Almereyda's adaptation, I will show that Doran's TV film uses surveillance to appropriate *Hamlet* by applying the play's reflexive elements to contemporary societies.

Surveillance and Visual Reflexivity

This perspective on adaptation is based on the premise that *Hamlet* questions fundamentally the sense of sight, and that surveillance is, in turn, a key element in triggering this reflexive trait.

Because the interest in using surveillance as the core of Doran's adaptation strategy lies in its ability to rekindle the play's reflexive system, this point needs to be clarified at the outset. While analysts such as Benjamin Bertram have noted the importance of ocular proof in the play (Bertram 2004, 16), few have noted that surveillance turns this issue into a metatheatrical feature. As McMahon shows, surveillance is a given for the characters, and chiefly for Hamlet himself: his resorting to monitoring activities is a matter of when, rather than if (McMahon 2012, 102). At the beginning of the play, surveillance allows the sentinels to spot the ghost for the first time. It leads them to organize a watch with Horatio in order for him to determine, as a scholar, whether the presence of the ghost is actual or pure hallucination. For Claudius, surveillance fits into a plan designed to establish that Hamlet is mad with ambition and about to take revenge. For Polonius, it is supposed to confirm his theory that Hamlet is, in fact, madly in love with Ophelia. Finally, for Hamlet himself, spying on Claudius as he watches the performance of the mousetrap is meant to be a way of finding him guilty of his father's murder. Those cases show that, in the play *Hamlet*, surveillance does not merely fit into a disciplinary process. Since it magnifies direct perception, it supposedly has the potential to provide access to visual evidence. In all of the cases above, however, the practice provides a link to the truth that cannot be considered totally reliable. Paradoxically, in *Hamlet*, by expanding the human eye's abilities to watch, surveillance in fact denies its ability to actually *see*. Because of this double bind, surveillance becomes a reflexive feature enabling Shakespeare to investigate the trustworthiness of visual evidence and to conclude that sight is a poor witness to the truth.

The second defining feature of surveillance in the play is its ability to convey both this visual reflexivity and the methodical doubt that results from it to the whole performance rather than to a few specific moments. In 1.2, Claudius's advice that Hamlet should remain "in the cheer and comfort of our eye" (1.2.116), with its polysemous use of the royal plural, brings together the monarch's gaze on his nephew and the one cast by the audience on the central character. In 2.2, Polonius's observation to Claudius that "sometimes [Hamlet] walks four hours together / Here in the lobby" is immediately confirmed by Gertrude's reply that "So he does indeed" (2.2.158-59). The exchange expresses the intriguing fact that Hamlet is under constant watch not only by the King's counselor, but also by the Queen. It also suggests that the King himself spies on Hamlet for extensive periods in order to seek an explanation for his madness. All eyes, it seems, are turned to Hamlet, including those of the spectators, who also watch him "four hours together" — four hours being approximately the time of the play's traffic on stage.

The ghost of Hamlet's father, finally, plays a key role in implying that Hamlet is under watch, both diegetically and extradiegetically. The spirit enters the stage whenever he wants to

communicate with the characters. In 3.4, for instance, he intervenes when Hamlet begins to stray from the task the ghost has assigned him. The ghost's appearances signify that he continuously supervises the play's events. He is a liminal spectator concerned with the plot, who also influences the play's genre, since he is intent on watching a revenge tragedy. The ghost thus performs what George Banu calls "surveillance de parcours," a phrase Banu uses to describe a stage producer's supervision of his show during the performance (Banu 2006, 144-51).

Hamlet 3.4 studies visual evidence in transliminal terms. The ghost has an external view on events of the plot that can become internal at will. He is constantly breaking the invisible fourth wall and therefore "directing attention to [the] artificial conventional construct that forms the border between a work of art and those who perceive it" (Chambers 2010, 43). Rather than merely showing himself, the spirit intervenes as a presence whose actuality rests in his constant observation. In this scene, upon noticing that his son's fear of his divine supervision has faltered, the ghost has come to remind Hamlet that he is watching him. The ghost's intrusion, therefore, is mainly necessary as a reminder that he sees everything that Hamlet does or neglects to do. This memento is his best guarantee that, by feeling under watch, Hamlet will be under control, and that he will direct his course according to his father's vengeful wishes. The ghost's presence thus corresponds to the deterrent or incentive functions of surveillance that Michel Foucault describes (Foucault 1979, 201). His sole purpose is to direct Hamlet into wreaking the ghost's revenge, and he fulfils this aim in two stages. The first involves proving to Hamlet that the ghost is real and that, consequently, he will be watching to make sure Hamlet kills Claudius. In the first act, the ghost arranges to be seen by several other characters in order to convince his son that he exists. The spirit performs the second stage in 3.4, when he confirms to Hamlet that he is watching everything by intervening immediately when his son is about to misbehave.

The ghost, who monitors events from the outskirts of the stage, can cross at will the "ontological boundary" of drama (McHale 1987, 121), existing simultaneously as a character and as a spectator who sometimes gives stage directions to the play's main character (Tassi 2011, 86). However, because his existence is nonetheless illusory, the spirit generates a *verfremdungseffekt* ("alienation effect"). He reminds the audience that, in the context of dramatic performance, the intent eyes of spectators lurking in the darkness around the stage receive signs of existence that can hardly be interpreted as reliable since, like the ghost, the characters eventually prove to be mere spirits by melting into thin air. Doran exploits the naturally reflexive potential of surveillance in a dramatic context that Banu describes when he explains that "surveillance grants the spectator a status that is both Brechtian and Aristotelian" (Banu 2006, 27, my translation). By making surveillance an essential part of his TV film's narrative regime, he acknowledges its metadramatic

potential, applying the relativity of sight to the entire spectacle rather than to specific moments. To adapt this reflexive quality of the play, the TV film translates issues related to unmediated perception into the language of mediated perception, and treats the spirit as a ghostly presence that symbolizes the essence of audiovisual fiction.

The Ghost behind the Machine

Doran's TV film of *Hamlet* starts with what I propose to call a "primary surveillance shot." *(A film clip is available in the HTML version of this document.)* This phrase updates the terminology coined by Gaudreault and Jost to describe the various ways in which filmmakers construct subjectivity. In particular, it descends from "primary internal ocularization." To Gaudreault and Jost, with primary internal ocularization,

> the fact that a character is watching what is shown on-screen is suggested rather than directly shown. To that effect, the picture is structured as a clue or trace which allows the spectators to immediately connect what they are seeing with the reality-capturing instrument that has shot or reproduced the real world, through the construction of an analogy with their own perception. (Gaudreault and Jost 1990, 131, my translation)

In Doran's first shot, visible traces define the reality-capturing instrument under use as a CCTV (closed-circuit television) camera or similar surveillance appliance. The shot includes a different color pattern from the next shot in the TV film. It gives a high-angle point of view on a corridor in the castle of Elsinore and includes rectangular viewfinder marks at the corners of the screen, complete with a cross at the center.

This opening shot, however, differs from the way in which such shots usually feature in movies dealing with surveillance. As a rule, a primary surveillance shot merely suggests that what is on the screen reflects what a CCTV camera has captured. Consequently, the effect leaves unanswered the question of the subjectivity of the shot. A primary surveillance shot, in other words, may reflect nobody in particular's point of view, if there is nobody behind the control monitor to which the camera is linked (Niney 2004, 192). If someone watches a surveillance tape, the primary surveillance shot may also convey a delayed subjective point of view. Alternatively, it may reflect unidentified subjectivity, if the shot suggests that someone is controlling the CCTV unit without revealing their identity. Finally, including surveillance shots in a movie may be a merely stylistic choice, endowing the TV film's narrative regime with the supposed objectivity of CCTV (Niney 2004, 15).

Rarely, however, does including a primary surveillance shot construct such ambiguous subjectivity as the one featured at the beginning of Doran's TV film of *Hamlet*. When Francisco enters the field, the camera, which is located in a corner of the corridor, at first remains static. When he turns right around the corner, however, the camera pans left two times, then tilts up once to follow him in his course. Those camera movements can, of course, be ascribed to the usual visual regime of film, in which the need for the audience to see justifies tracking the characters. The appearance of the TV film's full title after a few seconds encourages this reading because it links the surveillance aspect to post-produced intervention into the pictures. Nevertheless, the surveillance traces are visible in the shot, and the camera movements are underlined by an electrical engine noise in the soundtrack. For those reasons, it is impossible to interpret the fact that the camera follows Francisco as merely a narrative decision. While the scopic regime of television remains, the noise made by the CCTV camera for each movement counters any suspension of disbelief in the spectators. The soundtrack reveals that a directorial entity activates and controls the camera. Because the sequence bears the marks of surveillance, however, this entity cannot just be the director of the TV film. The opening suggests that the CCTV camera is diegetic, as a character whose face remains unseen operates it. The presence behind the surveillance camera, therefore, draws its mysterious quality from being liminal, just like the ghost who, in the play, occupies threshold locations.

After a brief switch to a non-surveillance regime, characterized by color and by level camera angles, Doran introduces another primary surveillance shot that shows a different location along the corridor and thus seems to be taken by a different CCTV camera. This suggests that someone is switching from one camera to the next, using the surveillance apparatus to follow Francisco. When the ghost "appears" to the guards and to Horatio, the TV film elaborates his presence indirectly. *(A film clip is available in the HTML version of this document.)* The spirit becomes a subjectivity affecting the contents of the shot, which a hand-held camera moving towards the sentries seems to have captured. The ghost's presence is a reflection cast in the reaction shots of horrified looks on the characters' faces. For a while, however, the spectators do not see the ghost on screen. The sequence of the ghost's first visit to the characters in the play ends with the same kind of primary surveillance shot as the one opening the TV film. The three guards are now in the field of the CCTV camera, suggesting that the spirit of Hamlet senior, after intervening in the diegetic world as a filmic point of view, has returned to its more distant position behind a CCTV control panel.

To preserve the reflexive dynamics of liminality in the play, Doran chooses to transform the stage's fourth wall into a screen. He thus updates a metadramatic feature by making surveillance work as an interface between reality and its more or less fictionalized version on a CCTV

screen — a phenomenon that Gendelman, borrowing from Paul Virilio, calls "real-time reciprocal telesurveillance, 24 hours a day" (Gendelman 2012, 75). The ghost commands a capturing machine that is at once a TV camera and a surveillance instrument located within the fictional world of the TV film. Thanks to surveillance, Doran renews the meaning of the spirit's liminal gaze. According to McClure, "by creating a frame or liminal space, the theater allows a culture to look at itself" (McClure 1999, 19). In the TV film, however, the object reflected on now is twenty-first century visual culture, in which crossing the border between onscreen and offscreen spaces has become an easy operation. In keeping with this new permeability of the partition between mediated and unmediated spaces, and with the possibility for people to stage their onscreen appearances, Doran's adaptation of the first scene establishes the ghost as a visual presence without univocally making him a surveillant or a TV film director.

For the ghost's second intervention in the scene, the term "appearance" is even more appropriate than for the previous one. *(A film clip is available in the HTML version of this document.)* During his second incursion, the ghost finally features in shots that are not affected by a surveillance point of view. Nevertheless, here and there in this sequence, Doran includes primary surveillance shots in which the ghost does not appear. Those surveillance shots show Horatio and the guards, for no apparent reason, sawing the air and cringing in fear. Such a non sequitur is a way of illustrating the spirit's fantastical nature. The ghost, it seems, is not merely liminal but also polymorphous. He is, at the same time, behind the camera and within its field, watching and being watched.[2] This visual paradox complicates the viewing of the TV film. The creature is visible to TV cameras, yet the surveillance cameras are blind to its presence. Because those two perspectives contradict each other, Doran's introduction of two scopic regimes rather than one makes the ghost's presence uncanny.

By including surveillance at the very beginning of his adaptation and exploring the ambiguities it creates, Doran introduces an element that Shakespeare does not include until 3.4. The main visual conundrum in the closet scene is that Hamlet can see his father's ghost, while Gertrude cannot. This apparent visual inconsistency has more obvious metadramatic implications than the ghost's unexpected return, suggesting that he has been watching Hamlet all along. In the closet scene, Shakespeare relates the magic of the theater to the creation of a discrepancy between what the spectators watch and what they more or less willingly believe that they see. Doran's adaptation reworks this discrepancy, based on the observation that it does not apply as such to TV film spectacles. In this approach, the decision to translate the play's surveillance dimension into its technologically updated form plays an essential part. Surveillance condenses two types

of watching: the innocent watching of a show and the motivated watching of citizens for control purposes. The TV film's gradual shift from an extradiegetic surveillance regime to the diegetic surveillance operations that prolong the ghost's supervision and ultimately help perform his revenge illustrates the thinness of the divide between the former and the latter.

This surveillance ingredient in the TV film's scopic regime thus translates, in a nuanced way, the play's investigation of the conjunction of fiction and reality. Merely using filmic tools without pointing to their possible surveillance use would have flattened the play's reflexivity by insisting upon the difference between the degree of television's objectivity and that of direct perception. In that case, Doran would have tried to solve a problem whose topicality had gotten lost in a widespread awareness that TV film pictures, even documentary extracts, are at best a relatively objective representation of reality, and at worst a figment of imagination (Niney 2004, 230-52). This remark does not mean that willing suspension of disbelief no longer exists. Rather, it shows that issues of belief, in a filmic context, do not take unmediated perception as an absolute. Consistent with this observation, Doran translates one of the problems of *Hamlet* into the scopic regime of mediated perception. The question is no longer "Can I believe what I see?" It is, rather, "Can I believe the moving reproduction of reality I am watching is the best possible reflection of the scene I would see with my own eyes?"

To treat the visual riddle of *Hamlet*'s closet scene, Doran's TV film takes these new optical circumstances into account by exploring the correlation between the scopic regime of surveillance, which is supposedly objective, and that of audiovisual fiction, which evokes the ideas of deceit and illusion. In Shakespeare's play, the ghost thus turns watching into a selective operation: his presence is for Hamlet's eyes only. In Doran's TV film, the ghost's intervention in the events taking place at Elsinore involves mediated perception rather than direct sight. In the sequence adapting 3.4, the ghost reveals himself to Hamlet by resorting to the filmic construction of subjectivity. *(A film clip is available in the HTML version of this document.)* In one of the shots, Hamlet peers into the air. The back of his mother begging him to come to reason occupies half of the screen. Then comes a reverse shot, revealing the presence of the ghost next to Gertrude. The shot insists on the discrepancy between Hamlet's perception and his mother's by showing how Gertrude and Hamlet senior can look into each other's eyes without seeing one another. The succession of the two shots also hints that the ghost may have stepped into the field of the camera only in the subjective shot, so that only his son can see him. His presence demonstrates the ghost's ability to manipulate what the spectators see and to turn some of the characters into spectators. In 3.4, this ability takes a more subtle form than the rotating of a CCTV camera, as featured in the opening sequence, but it has not changed in its essence. By crossing the threshold between what the camera captures and what

it does not, the ghost creates a picture of himself that Hamlet will interpret as objective. For the spectators, this picture stands as the epitome of the ghostly nature of films, which, whether on the big screen or on TV, offer their audiences "spectral after-images of people that were presumably in front of the camera" (Ford 2008, 171). The shot recalls that audiovisual creations cannot exist without the eyes of the spectators, who can only make them real by seeing them in the right way. TV film presence, therefore, is presented as a miracle that rests on obtaining from the spectators the sort of believer's gaze that Hamlet casts at the ghost in this sequence, rather than the one Gertrude does. It is similar to theatrical presence in that it results from the distortion of visual perception to induce belief, yet different from it because creating the distortion involves other strategies.

Shifting Perspectives on Reality: Surveillance and Aesthetic Distance

In the play *Hamlet*, the ghost's existence relies on a theatrical trick from which one can spin out all the ropes of drama. In his treatment of 3.4, Doran translates the ghost's presence into a filmic illusion. The rest of the TV film consistently pulls more filmic ropes to adapt the play's metatheatricality, mainly by materializing and displacing the invisible fourth wall that separates fiction from reality. In fact, as Ackerman has shown, delving into "the relation of the ghost to [the] notion of the theatrical," the spirit helps Shakespeare "[thematize] the problem of [. . .] visual markers in the theatre." The ghost, because of his liminal presence, identifies drama as an art that "declares its subject by marking its spatial limits" (Ackerman 2011, 41-42). Yet as a character who embodies the partition between actual and fictional existence, the spirit necessarily makes this line shifting and unstable. According to Clément Rosset, this double perspective is the essence of illusion: "The one who is illusioned [. . .] turns the single event he or she perceives into two events that do not coincide, so that the thing he or she perceives is displaced and rendered unable to fuse with itself again. It is as if the event had split into two parts, or, more precisely, as if two aspects of one event had started existing autonomously" (Rosset 1976, 16, my translation). The question facing stage producers and film directors — to show or not to show the ghost — thus becomes arduous, as either option may damage the character's ambiguity, which is his most essential feature.

It is hardly possible to solve this quandary without resorting to the notion of double spectatorship. As Maus shows, in the Renaissance the problem of seeing someone as they are was solved by introducing diverse types of spectatorship: that of God who sees everything, as opposed to that of human beings, whose vision obviously is limited (Maus 1995, 167). Hamlet's perception of the ghost thus offers him a connection with a divine and omniscient gaze. When the ghost appears on stage, the audience immediately shares in this divine perspective. Nevertheless, with double spectatorship, "the requested naivete is followed by the admiration of the connoisseur over the

artistry itself" (Bussels and Oostveldt 2012, 147). The belief in the ghost, if it is religious in nature, is necessarily coupled with the suspicion that he may be a (devilish) figment, all the more so since, as a Protestant, Hamlet is not supposed to believe in Purgatory (Dover Wilson 1970, 61-62).

In the play, a seesaw movement occurs between those two extremes, paralleling the fluctuations of Hamlet's procrastination. The question of whether one should trust the sense of sight extends to the whole performance, as it becomes a vital factor for prolonging the plot. If Hamlet decides the ghost is an illusion, or if he changes his perspective to consider the spirit a demon, he will abort prematurely his revenge scheme. Hamlet's situation resembles that created by dramatic illusion, when the spectators willingly cast a distortive look upon the stage. The objectivity of the parts of reality that theater necessarily uses clashes with the subjective operation that makes them disappear, or appear other than they are. The possibility for Hamlet's perspective on the ghost to change at any moment thus recalls the point that dramatic illusion is a matter of focal length: finding the right viewing distance can make things be or not be. Changing that distance from the spectacle breaks the continuity of illusionism, which, as Robert Stam has shown, starts a reflection on the spectacle by the spectacle itself (Stam 1992, 7).

By multiplying centers of vision and placing them now within, now outside the spatial limits of dramatic illusion, Shakespeare generates aesthetic distance in an attempt to account for visual paradoxes that are both spectral and essentially theatrical. Varying the spectator's focal length on the show, which amounts to making the line between fiction and reality ebb and flow, is a crucial element in Shakespeare's characterization of the visual culture of his time, when many people still believed in ghosts (Davidson 2012, 1-3) and when theatergoers "saw, simultaneously, the real actor and the assumed role" (Mooney 1990, 2). Once again, Doran's use of surveillance efficiently preserves this reflexive feature in the play, and then applies it to a different context. Doran exploits surveillance to translate the mobility of the fourth wall that characterizes the play into the culture of mediated audiovisual fiction. Contemporary surveillance, as a natural junction between the diegetic and the extradiegetic worlds, is in keeping with Shakespeare's notion of liminal spectatorship, linked to the ghost's situation at the threshold between onstage and offstage spaces. Surveillance enacts the crossing of the threshold between the real and the fictional.

Doran's treatment of the ghost's first manifestation to Hamlet in act 1 exemplifies his use of surveillance as an interface. As in the beginning of the TV film, the ghost appears as a subjectivity superimposing itself on a shot depicting the bemused faces of Hamlet and Horatio. As they turn around to realize that the ghost has appeared where previously there was nothing, he appears as a dark shadow in one corner of the screen. Before he appears full-screen, the spirit is just a gaze cast on the other two characters and reflected in their reaction. In the next shot, however, the ghost

becomes a spectator who has just turned actor by entering the field of the camera, beyond which he was waiting. While he had remained invisible to them when he was behind the camera, the ghost shows himself to Hamlet and Horatio when he walks before the camera. His existence, therefore, springs from the scopic regime of fiction. When submitted to another scopic regime, such as that of surveillance in the opening sequence, the ghost remains invisible. Some of the next shots in the sequence confirm this relativity. As Marcellus and Horatio, with their back to the camera, look at the ghost talking to Hamlet in 1.5, proof of his existence only lies in the observation that they *all* see him.

From an extrafilmic perspective, the sequence includes many signs that the ghost is not a ghost. One of them occurs when Hamlet mentions that his father has been "cast up again." Although the accepted meaning of the phrase is that he has been thrown up from the underworld, the polysemy of the term "cast" also suggests that he has received another part to play. In *Hamlet*, the pun calls attention to the fact that theatrical existence depends solely on "casting" and that the ghost can exist again only by being "thrown up" once more on the stage (Wilson 2000, 166). In the TV film, Doran's casting adds another layer to the meaning of the phrase, as Patrick Stewart plays both the ghost and King Claudius, who has already appeared in 1.2. When the ghost appears to Hamlet, the choice of actors explicitly adds another reason for Hamlet to doubt that the visitor is a ghost. Barring the possibility that Claudius and the father of Hamlet were twins, the spirit could just be Claudius in disguise. From a diegetic standpoint, this interpretation would be farfetched. It would be absurd for Claudius to dress up as a ghost and denounce himself. Nevertheless, casting the same actor as Hamlet's father and as Claudius is an explicit trace of extradiegetic intervention. This sign links the presence of the ghost to an artificial operation by the production crew. The same analysis applies to the ghost's metallic voice when he talks to Hamlet, whose booming quality comes from an amplification effect. This effect reminds the spectators that they could not hear the spirit if he did not take advantage of a sound system.

Later in the sequence, the spirit orders Hamlet to swear that he will conduct his revenge scheme, which he does, and the other characters swear they will not give him away. At this moment, Doran directly associates the amplified nature of the voice to the ghost's presence in Elsinore's surveillance network. Rather than thundering from the attic to exact an oath from the characters, the spirit roars so loud that he causes the camera to shake. The shot, which displays from a high angle view Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus, seems to be taken by a CCTV camera. The viewfinder marks featured in the opening sequence, however, are no longer present. This implies that the cameras used to shoot the TV film now operate surveillance. The threatening voice, however, is an interesting addition to this primary surveillance shot. It suggests that the CCTV system featured in

the castle is complete with loudspeakers that can be activated at the slightest sign of misdemeanor, to remind the characters that they are under watch. At this point in the TV film, the ghost's invasion of the surveillance apparatus fulfils a new purpose. From within the machine, the spirit now directs the characters. The ghost has moved from the outside of the plot to the inside, but he repeats, by his very crossing, "the machinations of representational devices" (Miller 2003, 19). The fact the TV camera has become a tool for surveillance visually solidifies this transgression. From this moment on, the many occasions when Hamlet talks to the camera to address his father directly emphasize his awareness of a supervising look. With the switch to a different utilization of the camera, Doran translates the spirit's extradiegetic gaze into diegetic watching without interfering with the contents of the shot. The world circumscribed by the camera's gaze, however, is characterized differently than in Shakespeare's play because of this technological update. The sense of being watched by a superior entity that is able to dictate our fates, which is a key component in the traditional "world as stage" metaphor, thus receives appropriate treatment with regard to current screen and camera societies.

Ubiquitous Surveillance and the World Turned Film

In the play, the ghost comes to Hamlet to tell him a tale, the contents of which will dictate his future actions. He initiates a plot, the rest of which will be acted out in front of his eyes without his having to intervene constantly. In the ghost's scheme, Hamlet will take over from his father's actions in the diegetic world by becoming his acting pawn. The protagonist is thus to serve as an instrument of enactment. He will organize a performance of the initial revelation by directing a production of *The Murder of Gonzago*, which Falco calls "a rough simulacrum of the ghost's tale" (Falco 2007, 124). In the TV film, because the ghost watches through cameras, the unraveling of his plot becomes a TV production. Consistent with this trope, Hamlet's role in the performance is that of TV film director. Doran highlights the mediated nature of Hamlet's collaboration with the ghost when the prince starts using cameras. The mousetrap sequence then shows that this passion comes from the urge to act out his father's revenge in a filmic way, with direct consequences for the play's *mise-en-abyme* pattern in this scene and for its effect on the audience.

Before he launches into his "Now I am alone" speech, Hamlet creates a moment of intimacy for himself by tearing apart the surveillance camera gazing down at him. This move shows that he understands that just because all the other characters have left does not mean that he is alone. Being free from the ghost's control is crucial for this speech, in which Hamlet explains his plan to "catch the conscience of the King" (2.2.558). The scheme consists in spying on the spectators during a performance that is reminiscent of Claudius's supposed murder, in order to spot any sign of

guilt in his reaction. This surveillance protocol may lead to two conclusions. If Claudius responds significantly to the murder scene, there will be reason to believe he feels guilt or fear for the murder he has committed. If he does not budge, this will mean either that he has extreme self-control, or that the ghost's tale is a lie. As a result, the mousetrap is a test of the ghost's revelation at least as much as of Claudius's guilt (Miola 2000, 121). As a plan designed to prove the ghost right or wrong, the ploy clearly indicates that Hamlet does not take the ghost's story of assassination at face value. Such evidence of doubt culminates when Hamlet declares "The spirit that I have seen / may be a devil" (2.2.551-52). This is why Hamlet disconnects the surveillance unit, in order to free himself briefly from the ghost's control. The prince's practical wisdom about the ways of surveillance evinces his consciousness that the ghost's tale may have been designed to fool him. Hamlet considers the possibility that the tale's narrator — or author — has captivated and captured him into committing murder and corrupting his soul.

In Doran's adaptation, what is at stake in the mousetrap sequence is TV realism rather than dramatic verisimilitude. The surveillance ingredient translates the theatrical specularity of the scene into the visual language of television. The succession of shots that leads to the moment when Hamlet starts rehearsing *The Murder of Gonzago* with the players illustrates this use of surveillance as a transition. The sequence before the rehearsal scene ends with a close-up on the CCTV camera that Hamlet had broken previously, before his "Now I am alone" speech. A few seconds after this shot, the sequence in which Hamlet advises the players about how they should perform the mousetrap play opens with a shot of the actors. Then comes a shot of Hamlet with a camera in his hand, shooting the rehearsals. The succession of shots, however, points to surveillance as the motivation for his use of a camera. Hamlet eventually turns the appliance onto Claudius to focus on his reaction, thereby taking over from the ghost's watch with his own insider's point of view.

The complementarity between the two kinds of devices is even more noticeable since the primary surveillance shots that characterized the beginning of the TV film have been absent for some time. In the same sequence, the way in which Doran chooses to treat Hamlet's famous advice to "hold the mirror up to nature" (3.2.18-19) illustrates the transition from the ghost's extradiegetic surveillance to Hamlet's diegetic capturing of events. Hamlet borrows a mirror from one of the actors, then uses it childishly to reflect an intense source of light and project a ray onto the face of other players. Hamlet's mirror thus becomes a spotlight channeling the spectators' gaze to faces and to what they express. It acts as a metaphor for Hamlet's subsequent use of his camera to focus on Claudius's visage. At the sequence's climax, Hamlet takes a close-up shot of Claudius in key lighting, magnifying his reaction to the performance.

The mousetrap sequence is a mirror held up to Claudius (Shurgot 1998, 253). The show is an instrument forcing him to look at what he has done. It also places his reaction in full light, the better for Hamlet to observe it. To do so, he lies down on Ophelia's lap, his small-size camera in hand. They attend the scene from behind the players, who perform on a stage area marked out by a rug. *(A film clip is available in the HTML version of this document.)* This staging fits the production circumstances of the play in the Elizabethan age, as described by Philip Edwards in his editor's introduction to *Hamlet* (Shakespeare 2003, 51). The play within the play is performed directly in front of the King and Queen, with Hamlet on the other side looking at both the performance and the sovereigns. From this position, the prince has a clear view of Claudius and Gertrude facing him, looking at the performance in frontal view from the other side. Hamlet, however, merely pretends to use the camera to capture the performance. In fact, he points it at Claudius's face to observe his response as if through a magnifying lens. In so doing, he brings the King's attitude into sharp focus, and assists, from a diegetic perspective, the TV camera directing the spectator's gaze to this key feature in the sequence. One of the sequence's most meaningful shots epitomizes the collaboration between Hamlet's amateur film and Doran's narrative. The picture summarizes the surveillance function of Doran's camera. It shows, in extreme close-up, the climactic moment of the dumb show when a man pours poison into the sleeping King's ear. The actors perform this action against a blurred background, which the camera then brings into sharp focus, to reveal Claudius's face and allow the spectators to read the tension in his features.

When Lucianus pours poison into Gonzago's ear during the version of the pantomime with dialogue, Hamlet's camera captures the signs of panic on the King's face. This gives an alternative function to the performance. While it does not bring unequivocal evidence that Claudius killed Hamlet's father — the murderer in the mousetrap play being "nephew to the King," Claudius may interpret it as a threat — the prince's use of the camera undoubtedly shifts the focus from stage to the audience, and particularly to one of its members. Adding Hamlet's camera to the mousetrap sequence therefore emphasizes that the machine has revelatory capacities, since one can use it as a magnifying glass. The camera, as a prop, refers to the revelatory abilities of the reality-capturing devices that Turvey analyzes in his work on film and the revelationist tradition (Turvey 2008, 4). More important, the sequence uses the camera's power to bring the spectator's gaze to bear on a specific part of the show in ways that are almost impossible in a theatrical configuration. The audience of a theater can only be encouraged to focus on Claudius's reaction in verbal or indirect ways, through injunctions to "look" or pointed fingers. Comparatively, Hamlet's camera stands out for the ease with which it makes the audience focus on the spectators of the show rather than on the show itself.

This displacement from the performance to the audience, however, is disappointing. It provokes Hamlet's conviction that Claudius is guilty rather than bringing evidence of it. In the play, the equivocal nature of the visual evidence that Hamlet obtains by spying on Claudius unveils the purpose of the inset, which is to create a *mise-en-abyme* pattern. Indeed, "the play within the play [. . .] appears as a preferred field of self-reflexivity" (Fischer and Greiner 2007, xiii; see also Meier 1999, 184). For the specularity of the play within the play to work, therefore, the camera's ability to direct the spectators' eyes is undeniably an asset, provided that the specular pattern is adapted to the watching practices of our time. Doran makes Hamlet shoot a film of the spectators rather than making him shoot the mousetrap movie before showing it to the King, as was the case in Almereyda's adaptation which, for Rasmus, "tries to translate most of the play's self-referential quality to the new medium [of film]" (Rasmus 2001, 157). To adapt this central aspect of *Hamlet*, Almereyda places his diegetic spectators in front of a screen. He thus makes them mirror the condition of the audience in a movie theater, which conveys the notion that all spectators, like those of Hamlet's mousetrap film, are unwilling actors in a worldwide cinematic production. Metz describes the process of cinematic *mise-en-abyme* patterns, such as Almereyda's, as follows: "the film included in the film was an illusion, which necessarily means that the film including the other film (i.e., the movie we are watching) was not, or not that much after all" (Metz 1975, 51, my translation).

Doran adds an important line to this "all the world's a film" subtext, generating a more convincing angle on the play's *mise-en-abyme* framework. The director turns a destiny-oriented vision of life, triggered by the *theatrum mundi* cliché as a metaphor of fate, in which "individuals could be viewed as puppets in a drama of which they remained unaware" (Porter 1997, 77), into a reading of contemporary societies, which clearly focuses on how they turn individuals into TV film actors. In his adaptation of the mousetrap sequence, Hamlet captures with his camera both the performance and its audience, which hints that their filmic condition is a shared characteristic. The lens of Hamlet's camera thus brings two kinds of actors, the willing and the unwilling ones, together within the same frame. Doran's adaptation thus reflects the filmic condition of an audience made up of "merely actors." While they are both being shot, the performers and the spectators in Doran's TV film do not share exactly the same predicament. With Hamlet's use of his camera, only the latter are under watch, in the surveillance meaning of the term, for signs of misbehavior that will be held against them. Claudius's reaction to the performance strengthens this interpretation. Rather than interrupting the show by shouting for the lights to come back in the room, he walks up to Hamlet with a lamp in his hand, in order to blind the prince's camera with the light.

Doran's TV film therefore uses surveillance to produce a relevant translation of "Hamlet's extreme sense of theatre [which is] his ceaseless perception of theatre [. . .] as an inescapable or metaphysical mark of the human condition" (Cavell 2003, 187), into a perspective that defines the current condition of humankind as filmic. As a result, the TV film's renewed reflexivity apparently leads to a conclusion that is similar to Almereyda's. Nevertheless, the surveillance subtext to Doran's TV film undeniably gives more conviction to the idea that our life is a TV film-fiction than does Almereyda's film. Doran bases his adaptation on the shared feeling that we are being watched, that cameras are constantly capturing our lives. His premise therefore is that the entire world is literally being caught on film. As a result, the metaphorical vision of life as a movie, which Sarah Hatchuel, among others, has analyzed (Hatchuel 2004), seems less radical. In fact, if one considers the vehicle of the metaphor to be any film rather than specifically a fiction film, this vision is no longer metaphorical. Hamlet's shooting of diegetic fiction and diegetic nonfiction in the same TV film encourages this interpretation, which is even more appropriate to a TV context than it is to a cinematic one, TV being characterized by the succession, on the same screen, of documentary pictures — for instance, in the news broadcast — and fiction films.

One of the TV film's symbols, the shattered mirror that replaces the arras of 3.4, synthesizes the director's angle, using *Hamlet* to focus on the stakes of hypervision and transparency in contemporary societies. The mirror is a direct reference to a similar staging trick in *Hamlet Goes Business* and to Branagh's treatment of the "To be or not to be" sequence in his adaptation (*Hamlet* 1996). Nevertheless, the device, which corresponds to a Shakespearean metaphor and has often been used to translate the play's reflexivity, here evolves into a new version of itself, in keeping with the current state of people's relationship with their image. As the latest evolution of a device that stems from *Hamlet* but has been used very differently in successive productions or adaptations of the play, a fact Doran all but ignores, the mirror here produces a new image: Hamlet's fractured reflection used for the TV film's poster (Figure 1). In the broken mirror, Hamlet's face is split into pieces to convey the cubist notion that multiple perspectives on the self constitute modern identities. That the mirror is a two-way mirror further complicates this image of the human condition. The object is a looking glass in the full sense of the phrase. It enables someone to look at themselves while someone else is looking at them from the other side. Polonius used the mirror to spy on Hamlet, causing him to smash the mirror — and his own reflection — to smithereens. In Doran's TV film, the mirror's symbolism includes its use for surveillance, which ascribes the splintered character of contemporary identities to surveillance practices fitted to their "fragmented, tentative, experimental, and ever-changing nature" (Gabriel 2000, 130). The multiplication of surveillance centers looking at us from various perspectives splits our image. So do the webcams and TV

cameras we use as distorting mirrors, as clean slates with which to reconstruct identities (Danesi 2010, 221), to produce embellished and selective visions of ourselves for our Facebook page — images, that is, in which it will be easier for us to reflect ourselves.

Conclusion

As Jean I. Marsden suggested more than twenty years ago in an often-quoted text, Shakespearean appropriations "present a view of Shakespeare embedded not only in his own culture but in ours, forcing us to consider both the impact we have on the plays and the impact they have on us" (Marsden 1991, 8). Doran's TV film offers a good instance of this perspective: it acknowledges the importance of monitoring, of oneself or of others, in twenty-first century visual culture, analyzes the impact of this visual culture on what the play can be or should be today, and rekindles the play's influence on our awareness of the dubious nature of audiovisual fiction.

By using surveillance as the main mechanism in his adaptation procedure, however, Doran takes appropriation a step further. Rather than just adapting the play's meaning to a different context, Doran's adaptation of *Hamlet* analyzes this context. The TV film mediates the connections between diegetic and extradiegetic monitoring practices on a larger scale than its predecessors, and appropriates the play by reviving its reflexive dynamics. To do so, Doran borrows reflexive structures from *Hamlet* that are related primarily to surveillance practices. By adapting them to the circumstances of current surveillance societies, he appropriates the tragedy, and draws from it appropriate conclusions about the estate of humankind in a world that may be out of joint, but for different reasons than in the early modern age, when monitoring practices were merely instruments of control. The TV film of *Hamlet* thus generates powerful perspectives on contemporary societies, where identities are disseminated on various screens, where reflexivity seems bottomless, and where perception itself seems to have become a ghost. In Doran's *Hamlet*, surveillance creates this situation, as it impacts how we view ourselves and others, and displaces the dividing line between fiction and non-fiction. The screen thus becomes the new ontological boundary, as being increasingly depends on finding the camera that will make one feel and look real.

Notes

1. As Dallas G. Denery, II recalls, "Christian Metz [. . .] introduced the expression 'scopic regime' to name dominant and structuring relations between observer, image and object. The scopic regime of the cinema, for example, is defined by the absence of the seen object (which simply means when we see something on the silver screen, we really only see its projected image, not the thing itself)" (Denery 2005, 9). The reference is to Metz 1982, 61-63.

2. Patrick Stewart, who is cast as Claudius, also plays Hamlet's father. The surveillant gaze is thus shared between two personae who are both characterized by their watching activity.

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