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# “Anthropocentric Signatures”: Writing Nature in *Doctor Faustus*

MCKENNA ROSE

In the final scene of Christopher Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus* (B-Text, 1616), Faustus’s friends rush into his Wittenberg apartment to ascertain if he has survived the “dreadful night” (B 5.3.2) that has just passed.<sup>1</sup> The First Scholar urges the other two to investigate with a description of an event so extreme that he measures it on a geological scale:

Come, gentlemen, let us go visit Faustus,  
For such a dreadful night was never seen  
Since first the world’s creation did begin.  
Such fearful shrieks and cries were never heard.  
Pray heaven the doctor have escaped the danger. (B 5.3.1-5)<sup>2</sup>

Faustus has not “escaped the danger” (B 5.3.1-5) that the First Scholar worries he might have suffered. Instead, a grisly scene confronts the Scholars when they enter: Faustus’s body has been torn apart, and the pieces have been scattered about his study. The Scholars survey the scene and conclude that what they thought may have been a storm was actually Faustus being ripped limb from limb in fulfillment of the pact he made with the Devil. The Third Scholar, for instance, reads the scene before him and surmises, “The Devils whom Faustus served have torn him thus/For, twixt the hours of twelve and one, methought/I heard him shriek and call aloud for help,/At which self time the house seemed all on fire” (B 5.3.7-11). Faustus’s brutal murder confirms for the three friends what he told them the night before: he paid Lucifer for twenty-four years of “cunning” (B 5.2.65) with his body and soul. Faced with the evidence of his dead body, what first sounded like a storm appears to the Scholars to have been manmade.

The Scholars attribute Faustus’s death to the Devils he served, but the mystery of the underlying cause of the event that the three friends investigate persists. The “shrieks and cries” (B 5.3.4) the First Scholar heard are likely, as the Third Scholar surmises, Faustus howling in pain. And yet, he did not witness Faustus scream as he was torn to pieces by the Devils, so there is no way for the First Scholar to know for certain that Faustus is the source of the sounds he heard the night before. Furthermore, the final act of the B-Text features other moments in which it is difficult to discern the difference between Devils and the weather. Each time the Devils enter during the fifth act, the B-Text marks their entrance with a stage direction for “*Thunder*” (B 5.2.1 and B 5.3.186) and also “*Thunder and*

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*lightning*” (B 5.1.1). These sound cues align the Devils with meteorological events. While Faustus can see the Devils because of his compact with Lucifer, other characters cannot; they only hear the thunder. Beyond marking for the audience the providential differences between Faustus and the other Scholars, the alignment of the storm with the Devils suggests that the weather is something conjured by man. The “shrieks and cries” (B 5.3.4) of Faustus’s death even rival the creation of the world. To get to the bottom of the entanglement of storms with Devils, natural events with the speech acts of man, these scenes of meteorological and linguistic entanglement require interpretation. The final scene offers an example of the confusion that surrounds the causes of events which appear at once meteorological and manmade. Not only do Faustus’s friends lack the terms necessary to describe the event because it is both climatological and manmade, they also struggle to interpret an event that Faustus makes and that also unmakes him. After all, the event leaves the subject of the play literally in pieces. In an effort to understand Marlow’s unruly conflation of climate and man, this essay argues that *Doctor Faustus*’s final scene heralds the arrival—perhaps without knowing it—of the Anthropocene, a term that names the age in which man is the greatest climatological force on earth.

### Part I. *Doctor Faustus* and the Anthropocene

Faustus’s bloody end is a warning to those who expect that nature can be controlled or altered without repercussions. Though rooted in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century in which it was written, performed, and published, *Doctor Faustus* anticipates the mechanistic concept of nature that has come to define contemporary attitudes toward the nonhuman. As is well known, *Doctor Faustus* stages the destruction that early imperial and proto-scientific ideology visited on the environment. Emily Bartels, for example, argues that all of Marlowe’s published plays are “deeply invested in supporting or subverting the idea of English supremacy, and with it, England’s right to the world’s resources.”<sup>3</sup> Similarly, William Tate, explains that the play’s obsession with the accumulation of wealth signifies in the context of “the exploitation of New World resources.”<sup>4</sup> Like Tate, Sarah Hogan finds in Faustus’s project the stirrings of “the relatively novel seventeenth-century ideal of nature as raw material.”<sup>5</sup> Not only does *Doctor Faustus* stage the ways in which early imperialist ideology authorizes the exploitation of natural resources, but the play also dramatizes a concept of nature pliant to human will. Downing Cless, for instance, argues that the rise of science shapes Faustus’s understanding of the natural world as inexhaustible and easily subdued.<sup>6</sup> Both the proto-imperial and proto-scientific contexts, which Marlowe encodes in his play, anticipate a view of nature as remote in space and time. The play figures both the Early Modern and contemporary environmental crisis through Faustus’s violent excesses in which he assumes that natural resources are endlessly exploitable and distinct from humans. Despite Faustus’s own assumptions about his relationship to the natural world, the confusion that

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permeates the distinction between man and the weather, which the final scene dramatizes, suggests the impossibility of such a distinction.

Since *Doctor Faustus* was first published in 1604, again in 1616, and likely performed from approximately 1588-1640, the play provides an exemplary instance of the human becoming a geological force. Geologists Simon L. Lewis and Mark A. Maslin mark the start of the Anthropocene, the age in which humans exert the greatest geological force on the environment, to 1610. In their article, “Defining the Anthropocene,” Lewis and Maslin “review the historical genesis of the idea and assess anthropogenic signatures in the geological record against the formal requirements for the recognition of a new epoch.”<sup>7</sup> They suggest that the geological record, specifically “the appearance of New World plant species in Old World sediments,” shows that European expansion, which inaugurated an unprecedented exchange of species across continents, as well as the decimation of human life and community through disease, pushed the world into a new geological era.<sup>8</sup> Though scientists read changes at geological scale in “stratigraphic material, such as rock, glacier ice, or marine sediments,” Lewis and Maslin appreciate that the growing recognition of humans as a climatological force is “an act with consequences beyond geology.”<sup>9</sup> Not only do their findings invite scholars of all disciplines to engage in an investigation of the shifting perimeters of periodization, their understanding of Anthropocene also redefines the human in relationship to the natural world. Faustus provides an example of ways Early Modern practices—colonial expansion, trade, resource extraction—helped to make the ecologies we presently inhabit. Because he satisfies his appetite for luxury goods, exotic fruits, and building materials at the expense of the environment he inhabits, Faustus leaves his own signature in the historical/geological record that has helped to forge what we call the Anthropocene. He trades his body and soul for magic powers so that he may mine gold from India, acquire pearl from the ransacked ocean, and obtain fruit out of season from far-flung corners of the world. The powers for which Faustus loses his soul represent the historical forces that led to the expansion, extermination, and extinction of plants, animals, and people, which Lewis and Maslin find recorded in the stratigraphic record. And it is precisely this manmade become geological which invites and defies interpretation because sedimentary layers conflate cultural and natural production.

The final scene of *Doctor Faustus* suggests that there really is no way to tell where nature ends and culture begins, and Anthropocene helps describe this lack of distinction. If humans are most responsible for shaping climate, then nature is not remote or separate from humans. According to Timothy Clark, one consequence of the Anthropocene is that “Natural events may now take on an opaque or debatable element of ‘meaning.’”<sup>10</sup> That the Scholars are able to interpret the scene of Faustus’s death in relation to its cause reflects such Anthropocentric opacities. The Scholars assume that they can interpret the meaning and causes of the event that kills Faustus. Even though at the thematic level the play imagines that nature is remote in ways that allow Faustus to exploit the world around him, that nature is something that calls for interpretation in the final scene suggests that the boundaries between nature and culture are blurred. The scholars ask of Faustus’s last night on earth, as Clark asks of the

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Anthropocene in general, “Is this a ‘cultural’ or ‘natural’ phenomenon?”<sup>11</sup> Or rather, the Scholars and the play more broadly rely on sets of cultural signifiers to describe a potentially “natural” weather event because the event is itself a cultural production.

Even while *Doctor Faustus* is a play about a magus who lands himself in hell because he uses his great gifts for himself and not the glory of God, the play also suggests that describing the natural world according to religious iconography is another failed project. That is, a progressive narrative gets applied to the history of the way humans understand nature, and *Doctor Faustus* represents a paradigm shift in the story. So here you have represented a group of sixteenth century scholars who attribute a climatological event to the Devil, while at the same time Faustus himself eschews theology and theological explanations of the natural world for one of dominion. For Faustus, the natural world and its events are not the result of divine intervention, but rather humans acting on inert material. Faustus represents a move toward natural philosophy, a move in which the natural is not a set of signifiers for humans to decipher, but a set of materials for humans to appropriate. That turn from the Great Chain of Being to a New Scientific model shuts down a theory of the universe in which geological events are an expression of God’s will. The New Science, for which many critics argue Faustus stands, rejects the notion that the natural world, like God’s will, is something that calls for interpretation.<sup>12</sup> Ironically, the period of Early Modern history in which Faustus was written also disentangled itself from a discourse that understood natural events as divine and legible symbols of heavenly intent. The divestment, the turn from God to man, from heavenly intent to an inert natural world, ushered in an age of exploitation and unfettered resource extraction. Such exploitations are contiguous with climate change in our contemporary moment in which human consumption, combustion, and extraction causes and accelerates “natural” disasters such as wild fires and hurricanes. Anthropocene not only names the epoch in which human activity effects the nonhuman world, but the term also describes ways the weather humans have helped to make has meanings to which we must be attentive now more than ever. So while Early Modern audiences may have recognized Faustus’s friends’ attribution of the bad weather to the will of supernatural forces, the scene is worth recalling in our present moment, a moment in which the consequences of human force on the environment is keenly felt, because it describes the Early Modern beginnings of contemporary climatological crises, which, like the play itself, repeats in the historical and geological record.

The three Scholars may interpret the forensic evidence laid out before them, i.e. the mangled corpse, thunder, and lightening, as the result of divine intervention, but the series of events that produced the body parts, the sound effects, and the flashes of light, are not directly traceable. Instead Faustus’s exploitation of the natural world, both real and imagined, results in the final grisly scene in much the same the way that unchecked carbon emissions now conclude in super storms and the acceleration of coastal flooding. That said, Faustus is more than an allegory to caution audiences against excessive exploitation and the dangers of assuming that nature and culture are split. *Doctor Faustus* contributes to the terminal effects of resource exploitation with which the world presently

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contends. The play was played at the earliest London theaters, the Belsavage, the Theater, and the Rose, and the timber required to build these theaters likely strained Early Modern London's already depleted timber stores.<sup>13</sup> In addition to the trees felled to build the theaters in which *Doctor Faustus* was performed, the play's enduring popularity with Early Modern audiences was due in part to the addition of increasingly spectacular scenes and special effects. *Doctor Faustus* was one of the Early Modern period's most popular plays, so the play was in repertory almost every season from at least 1589, when the Belsavage closed, to approximately 1640, when the play was performed by Prince Charles's Men at the Fortune.<sup>14</sup> In order to draw audiences back to see the play over and over, Henslowe and his company added costly firework displays, extra devils, and spectacular scenes to the version of the play that the A-Text records.<sup>15</sup> The final act of the B-Text, for instance, may have rendered Faustus's bloody corpse in chunks of meat and stage blood amid the tableau of books and papers as a surprise ending for an audience familiar with the earlier version of the play.<sup>16</sup> Ensuring the continued popularity and success of *Doctor Faustus* was itself an ever-increasing drain on resources, as well as a project that assumed that those resources were available in unlimited supply. The drive to keep the play fresh and in repertory is an example of Anthropocentric practices that convert nature into culture and in so doing result in shortage on the one hand and accumulation on the other. But since the mass storehouse that *Doctor Faustus* eventually becomes is itself always growing and changing it takes on organic potentials, which render the whole manmade constellation—all the printed play texts, stage properties, and the materials that constitute the theater—difficult to distinguish from the resources out of which it is constituted.

### Part II. Anthropocentric Constellations

Reading *Doctor Faustus* as project which exploits and accumulates nature not only accounts for how it is a key text in the origin of the Anthropocene, but also shows how humans are incorporated into the material they exploit. Because *Doctor Faustus* stages the ecological context of the late sixteenth century in which it was written and initially performed, scenes of expansion and extraction, such as Mephistopheles's fetching of the grapes from the southern hemisphere, Faustus's conjuring of the trees into a bulwark, and Faustus's signing of the deed in blood, encode the origin of the Anthropocene. These moments are freighted with the first disastrous effects that humans have on the natural world, as they point toward the modern crisis of warming and extinction. In other words, the play stages the inevitable extinction that is the consequence of the inchoate imperialism, which Faustus's fantasies of accumulation represent.

Though Faustus's appetite for extraction makes it difficult to discern the ways in which he is enmeshed in the larger ecologies of the play, I suggest that reading Faustus as a character who is always included within larger material systems puts pressure on the very definition of the human both at the start of the

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Anthropocene and in its current iterations. Near the end of their European travels, for example, Faustus sends Mephistopheles to fetch “a dish of ripe grapes” (B 4.6.19) from a “far country” (B 4.6.23) to satisfy the food cravings of the Duchess of Vanholt. Mephistopheles’s nearly instantaneous retrieval of the grapes from the southern hemisphere, the “contrary circle . . . where they have fruit twice a year” (B 4.6.29-31), marks a fulfillment of the conditions laid out in the first deed of gift that Faustus makes with Lucifer. In the deed, Faustus agrees to give his body and soul to Lucifer, so long as “Mephistopheles shall do for him and bring him whatsoever” (2.1.100). Not only does the fetching of the ripe grapes satisfy the terms of the bargain, but the action also provides, as many critics argue, a concrete example of the exploitation of natural resources.<sup>17</sup> The way that Faustus frames the Duchess’s desire for the grapes also recalls his own predilection for accumulation when he explains, “I have heard that great-bellied women do long for things are rare and dainty” (B 4.6.10-12). The fetching of the grapes out of season anticipates contemporary food production, which strains resources through a global supply chain and also reinforces hierarchical, imperialist divisions all of which have dire environmental consequences. Furthermore, the grapes, or the stage properties that represented the grapes on the Early Modern stage, are not remote in space and time, but rather a part of the local ecosystems that the playing of *Doctor Faustus* initially strained.

Faustus, along with his colleagues in the magical arts, Cornelius and Valdes, begin the play by engaging in fantasies of resource stripping. Valdes imagines controlling the “spirits of every element” (1.1.122) so that “From Venice shall they drag huge argosies,/And from America the golden fleece / That yearly stuff old Philip’s treasury” (1.1.131-34). Not to be outdone, Cornelius expects: “The spirits tell me they can dry the sea/And fetch the treasure of all foreign wrecks— /Ay, all the wealth that our forefathers hid/Within the massy entrails of the earth” (1.1.145-49). Their machinations are a response to Faustus’s initial fantasy:

How I am glutted with conceit of this!  
Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please,  
Resolve me of all ambiguities,  
Perform what desperate enterprise I will?  
I’ll have them fly to India for gold,  
Ransack the ocean for orient pearl,  
And search all corners of the new-found world  
For pleasant fruits and princely delicacies. (1.1.80-86)

As the lines above indicate, Faustus hazards his body and soul for the sort of power that would allow him to “ransack” (1.1.84) the natural world, and Mephistopheles entering “*again with the grapes*” (B SD 4.6.22) is the most direct fulfillment of Faustus’s initial resource extracting desires. The fetching of the grapes can also be read as indication of Faustus’s failure. Faustus suffers an eternity of torture in hell for what amounts to a fleeting moment, a conjurer’s trick that falls far short of his grandiose initial expectations. Still, if we consider Faustus’s

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potentially terraforming desires within the context of the Anthropocene, then we may see the out-of-season grapes not as a parlor trick, but as the issue of a huge infrastructure. While the play never stages the sort of environmental devastation that Faustus, Valdes, and Cornelius dream of visiting on it, fetching grapes out of season is a massive project that entangles the government, the church, and the academy, while also possessing the power to “dry the sea” (1.1.149). The grapes are not so much an example of the smallness of Faustus’s art, rather they are cultural objects that present as natural and in so doing invite the interpretation of ecocritics in much the same way that the final event of the B-text invites the interpretation of the Scholars.

In addition to the grapes, pearls, gold, and other unnamed delicacies, Faustus composes a bulwark out of what he perceives as the raw materials of the natural world. For instance, in the B-text, when the soldiers ambush Faustus and Mephistopheles on the road to Wittenberg from the Emperor Alexander’s court, Faustus commands the trees to move, and they produce a fortification that protects him and Mephistopheles. He issues the command, which conflates trees with people, “Base peasants, stand!” (B 4.2.100), and then the stage directions explain that “[*Trees come between Faustus and the Soldiers*]” (SD B 4.2.101.1). After he realizes that the trick works, Faustus laughs and says,

For lo, these trees remove at my command  
And stand as bulwarks ‘twixt yourselves and me  
To shield me from your hated treachery.  
Yet to encounter this your weak attempt,  
Behold an army comes incontinent. (B 4.2.101-105)

Faustus imagines himself to be wholly separate from nature in this moment. While deforestation is one consequence of such imagining, his tragic ending, which is indecipherable from a meteorological event, also comes about, however indirectly, because he commands the trees and ransacks the Earth. And yet for all his authority over the natural world, for all his ability to exploit natural resources and convert them into self-serving compositions, Faustus is incorporated into the ecosystem of the play. The bit with the moving trees is at once a citation of Marlowe’s source text, the *Damnable Life*, in which, “suddenly all the bushes were turned into horsemen” as well as a further example of anthropocentric illegibility in which fire and thunder are the consequence of human action.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, the trees that seem to move of their own accord also provide a metatheatrical commentary on the wood that was cut and processed to create the theaters in which *Doctor Faustus* was initially staged. Similar to the fetching of the grapes and his desire to “ransack the oceans” (1.1.84), the moving of the trees, both within the fiction of the play and in terms of the theater itself, is only possible through dense networks of resource exploitation. Though Faustus conceives of himself as divided from the trees he commands, his conjuring is contingent on his own materiality. After all, through the deed of gift, which makes the actions above possible, Lucifer extracts Faustus’s body and soul.

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That Faustus is a victim of a storm of his own making presages the dangers of our own climatological moment. *Doctor Faustus* helps us understand that to live in the Anthropocene is to live in a time in which we are beset not only by the crisis of super storms, but also by a crisis of how to interpret those storms. As Faustus’s fellow Scholars show, when man makes the weather, the weather can signify in all sorts of unexpected ways. And while the deep contentions surrounding man-made environmental crisis troubles scientists and humanists alike, the event in which *Doctor Faustus* culminates has reparative potential. Storms that are both man-made and meteorological force us all to work together to make sense of their meaning.

### Part III: Anthropocentric Signatures

In order to fulfill his initial fantasies of accumulation, fantasies that result in fetching grapes from the southern hemisphere and moving trees at his command, Faustus signs his name in blood to a deed of gift. Just as he starts to write the deed of gift in blood to Lucifer, the blood spills on the stage, and Faustus exclaims to Mephistopheles, “My blood congeals, and I can write no more” (2.2.61). The two characters have very different reactions to the interruption caused by the blood’s transformation from liquid to solid. Mephistopheles regards the transformation as an elemental process. The blood’s congealing is of no more concern for him than water freezing into ice, so he exits to “fetch [Faustus] fire to dissolve it straight” (2.1.63). Unlike Mephistopheles, Faustus regards the “staying of the blood” (2.1.59) as an event that requires a close textual analysis to understand:

What might the staying of my blood portend?  
Is it unwilling I should write this bill?  
Why streams it not, that I may write afresh?  
‘Faustus gives to thee his soul’—Ah, there it stayed!  
Why shouldst thou not? Is not thy soul thine own?  
Then write again: ‘Faustus gives to thee his soul.’ (2.1.59-69)

Because the blood seems to congeal each time he attempts sign his soul away, this scene challenges Faustus’s status as a bounded subject, who is separate from nature. The staying of the blood suggests, instead, that Faustus is a collection of material parts even prior to the signing of the deed. From the moment when Mephistopheles orders Faustus to “Stab thine arm courageously” (2.1.49), and he notes, “this blood trickles from mine arm” (2.1.56), the blood has the potential to signify in unintended ways as it spills out onto the stage staining everything it comes into contact with. As Lowell Gallagher explains, “The blood appears charged with an incipient meaningfulness that arrives in advance of the text he is poised to write. In other words, the very matter used to produce the document is already a text, sort of.”<sup>19</sup> Blood is a figure that signifies in a variety of prior contexts in the play, for example Faustus daydreams about making Beelzebub an offering

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of the “blood of new born-babies” (2.114). The blood in which Faustus inscribes his deed of gift is itself a text in advance of his writing with it in both the fiction of the play and at the level of its staging. Faustus’s treatment of the stage blood as a text reflects on the very processes by which the play text is transmitted, and also shows how the natural world, the elements Faustus wants to exploit, are indecipherable from his own material body.

Ultimately Faustus is able to sign the deed “By me, John Faustus” (2.1.114) in his blood, but the trace of this weird moment of the blood’s resistance remains. The signature is ironic, of course, because at the same time that Faustus is proving that he is a unique signatory present at the time of signing, he is both citing the *Faustusbook* and acting the whole scene out in a play, which can be repeated indefinitely. So while the stage signature is supposed to emphasize Faustus’s singularity, the scene shows how the origin points of human dominion can repeat indefinitely in the absence of the signatory. That the bargain can and does make meaning without Faustus, is just one example of extra human agency in this scene. At the same time, the recalcitrant blood shows how the very material of Faustus’s own body writes itself into this exemplary instance of anthropogenic signature. The signing of the deed provides an instance of cooperative agency that challenges definitions of Renaissance subjectivity that Faustus initially embodies and also suggests the human of the Anthropocene has been in pieces since its inception.

Faustus’s famous signature is itself a sedimentary layer in the literary and geological archive. *Doctor Faustus* ends where it began, with Faustus in his study in what at first glance seems like an indisputable conclusion that looks back at the fantasy of endings with which the play opens. And yet, to the extent that the play dramatizes “writing” with body parts, what seems like Faustus’s inevitable conclusion is really a beginning. Here he is, “torn asunder” (B 5.3.7) and dispersed among the books in his study. The stage properties that depict the limbs and books sit side by side on stage to suggest ways in which Faustus was always an assemblage of objects and body parts. From the very first, Faustus is an exemplary figure of exploitation: he is “swoll’n” (Prologue 20) and later “glutted” (1.1.80) by a fantasy of accumulation that includes, but is not limited to, pearl, gold, silk, fruits, all the secrets of foreign kings, war machines, and Germany. The things he keeps and stores up, the texts and objects that have survived previous contexts only to accumulate in his study, form an ecosystem into which he is literally incorporated in the finale. Because Faustus both represents the first flush of world-conquering humans and is always a network of material across which agency is diffuse, he offers some insight into the geological shift, which is as consequential as the First Scholar suggests when he compares the “dreadful night” (B 5.3.2) of Faustus’s death to the “first creation of man” (B 5.3.2). When *Doctor Faustus* concludes with a scene in which scholars collaborate with one another to read mysterious events in the natural world written through the legacy of resource exploitation, the play stages for contemporary ecocritics a method for approaching not only Early Modern drama but also the human-become geological of the Anthropocene.

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### Notes

1. *Doctor Faustus* survives in two printed editions: the 1604 A-text and the 1616 B-text. While the final scene of the B-Text is likely one of several “adicyones in doctor faustus,” for which Philip Henslowe notes in his Diary that he paid to William Byrd and Samuel Rowley, this essay assumes that the two texts of *Doctor Faustus* are interlaced despite the B-Text’s collaborative authorship and substantial variants. See Philip Henslowe, *Henslowe’s Diary*, ed. W.W. Greg (London: A.H. Bullen, 1904), 174. Given that the two texts are inextricable, all quotations follow Christopher Marlowe, *Dr. Faustus: The A-and B-texts (1604, 1616)*, A Parallel-Text Edition, Revels Student Edition. eds. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014). For more on the shifting critical consensus of the relative authority of the two texts of *Doctor Faustus*, see Leah Marcus, “Textual Indeterminacy and Ideological Difference: The Case of *Doctor Faustus*” in *Critical Essays on Christopher Marlowe*. ed. Emily C. Bartels (London: G.K. Hall & Co., 1997), 15-38. Marcus highlights some contentious moments in the debate over the two texts of *Doctor Faustus*, a debate that ranges from W.W. Greg, who prefers the B-Text and derides the A-text’s “feebleness,” ‘gibberish,’ and ‘inappropriate rant,’” to Constance Brown Kuriyaam, who argues the B-Text is “an aesthetic monstrosity and critical nightmare,” (qtd. Marcus 18-19). This essay concurs with Paul Menzer’s suggestion that *Doctor Faustus* “may have more closely resembled a deck of cards, liable to cutting, shuffling, and reshuffling” (224), than two discrete texts, the one more authoritative than the other. See Paul Menzer, “Fractional *Faustus*,” *Christopher Marlowe the Craftsman: Lives, Stage, and Page*, eds. Sarah K. Scott and M.L. Stapleton (Surrey: Ashgate, 2010), 215-225.

2. Unless otherwise noted, citations of *Doctor Faustus* presume no variation between the two texts.

3. Emily Bartels, *Spectacles of Strangeness: Imperialism, Alienation, and Marlowe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), xiv.

4. William Tate, “Solomon, Gender, and Empire in Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus*,” *Studies in English Literature* 37, no. 2 (1997): 257-76, 259.

5. Sarah Hogan, “Of Islands and Bridges: Figures of Uneven Development in Bacon’s *New Atlantis*,” *Journal of Early Modern Culture* 12, no. 3(2012): 28-59, 53.

6. Downing Cless, “Ecologically Conjuring *Doctor Faustus*” *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* 20, no.2 (2006): 145-167.

7. Simon L. Lewis and Mark A. Maslin, “Defining the Anthropocene,” *Nature* 519, no. 7542 (2015): 171-180, 171.

8. Lewis and Maslin, 175.

9. Lewis and Maslin, 175.

10. Timothy Clark, “Nature, Post Nature,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Literature and the Environment*, ed. Louise Westling (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 75-89, 79.

11. Clark, 80.

12. For more on *Doctor Faustus* and the rise of science see Tobias Döring, “Magic, Necromancy, and Performance: Uses of Renaissance Knowledge in Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus*,” *Magic, Science, Technology and Literature*, eds. Jarmila Mildorf et. al. (Hamburg: Lit Verlag, 2008); and Christa Knellwolf King, *Faustus and the Promises of the New Science, c. 1580-1730: From the Chapbooks to the Harlequin Faustus* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing LTD., 2008).

13. That Philip Henslowe’s father Edmund was Master of Ashdown forest, leads Vin Nardizzi to wonder if the forest might be “the source of (some of) the wood and timber needed for the Rose playhouse?” in *Wooden O’s: Shakespeare’s Theatres and England’s Trees* (University of Toronto Press, 2013), 144.

14. David Bevington, “The Performance History,” in *Doctor Faustus: A Critical Guide* (London: Continuum, 2010), 41-71, 43.

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15. For more on the famous contemporaneous, eye-witness accounts of extra devils magically appearing onstage during performances of *Doctor Faustus* see E.K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, vol. 3 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), 3:423-424.

16. For more on the quantity of butchered animals the Early Modern theater used to stage blood, guts, and severed limbs see Lucy Munro, “‘They Eat Each Other’s Arms’: Stage Blood and Body Parts,” in *Shakespeare’s Theater and the Effects of Performance*, Eds. Farah Karim-Cooper and Tiffany Stern (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 73-94; and Andrew Gurr, “Comments on Staging Blood,” in *Stage Blood: A Roundtable* (Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre History Seminar, Proceedings and Conclusions, 2006), 10-17.

17. See Toni Francis, “Imperialism as Devilry: A postcolonial Reading of *Doctor Faustus*,” *Doctor Faustus a Critical Guide* (London: Continuum Press, 2010), 111-123. Francis reads the fetching of the grapes out of season as an example of Faustus’s “imperial power and dominion over the earth” (120). See also Jane Hwang Degenhardt, who explains that the access and acquisition of grapes in winter suggest that “the magic for which Faustus has sold his soul to the devil is, in this instance, that of effortless global commerce—or, rather the ability to attain a foreign commodity while by passing the means of production and the contingencies of exchange.” “The Reformation, Inter-imperial World History, and Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus*,” *PMLA* 130, no. 2 (2015): 402.

18. William Rose, ed., *History of the Damnable Life and Deserved Death of Doctor John Faustus*, 1592 (Whitefish: Kessinger Publishing, 2003), 155.

19. Lowell Gallagher, “Faustus’s Blood and the (Messianic) Question of Ethics,” *English Literary History* 73, no.1 (2006): 1-29, 43.

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