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The Shakespeare Films of Orson Welles

The Shakespeareana of Orson Welles (1915–1985) range across media to include radio and gramophone productions, stage realisations, performance-attentive editions for readers, television adaptations, numerous unfinished stage and film projects, and an extensive body of self-conscious commentary, from interviews to documentaries, that reflects on his Shakespearean career. Many of these productions cross-fertilise, as Welles recycles sets, scripts and governing paradigms across stage, screen, audio and publicity. He appeared on American television as King Lear in a production directed by Peter Brook, and one of the projects left unfinished at his death was a cinema adaptation of *The Merchant of Venice*.[1] In this chapter I will focus on his three completed films: *Macbeth* (1948), *Othello* (1952) and *Chimes at Midnight* (1965), with a particular emphasis on the critical and interpretive framework they bring to bear on their plays. While these films share a certain cinematic language with each other and with Welles' canon of non-Shakespearean films, and while they have been expertly interpreted as a collective biography of Welles himself,[2] I am most concerned here with their creative relation to the Shakespeare plays they reimagine, argued through close analysis of selected sequences. Welles' particular cinematic genius translated and transformed the linguistic and thematic qualities of the texts. The result is new film art, and, most importantly for this chapter, visually dynamic Shakespeare criticism.

In the welter of commentary, interviews and reflection on his career, Welles never discussed his wider reading of Shakespearean criticism or the source of his views on Shakespeare's art. There is no further reading listed with the three plays published as *Everybody's Shakespeare* in 1934, unsurprisingly, since their explicit aim was to get young readers to think about the plays theatrically. Nevertheless, one overarching theme emerges from his three Shakespearean films: Welles's abiding sense that Shakespeare's works

anthropomorphise the poignant shift from a medieval or communal or pagan past to an individualistic, brutal or pragmatic present. That Shakespeare stood at the threshold of modernity was, for Welles, the source of his perennial applicability. In discussion with Peter Bogdanovich, he noted that Shakespeare 'was very close, you understand, to quite another epoch, and yet he stood in the doorway of our "modern" world. His lyricism, his comic zest, his humanity, came from these ties with the past. The pessimism, of course, is closer to our modern condition.'[3]

This crucial idea of a transitional historical period is repeated frequently in prefaces and interviews. It appears to derive from Johan Huizinga's influential work translated into English in 1924 as *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, in which 'the expiring Middle Ages' was identified with 'a tone of extravagant passion that never appears again', when 'every event, every action, was still embodied in expressive and solemn forms, which raised them to the dignity of a ritual'.[4] That this transition and its tensions were expressed in the noble, sacrificial body of its divided hero further aligned Welles' Shakespeare with nineteenth-century theories of tragedy. Hegel's emphasis on tragic conflict resonates with the arc of Welles' Shakespeare films:

> the true development of the action consists solely in the cancellation of conflicts *as conflicts,* in the reconciliation of the powers animating action which struggled to destroy one another in their mutual conflict. Only in that case does finality lie not in misfortune and suffering but in the satisfaction of the spirit, because only with such a conclusion can the necessity of what happens to the individuals appear as absolute rationality, and only then can our hearts be morally at peace: shattered by the fate of the heroes but reconciled fundamentally.[5]

Welles' three completed Shakespeare films all depict a melancholic resolution of temporal and psychological conflict in the sacrifice of the central protagonist, played, in each case, by Welles himself. Even *Chimes at Midnight*, organised around the ostensibly comic figure of Falstaff (and released in the UK with the title *Falstaff: Chimes at Midnight*), emerges as a mournful tragedy of transition, its belated hero stranded in a wintry landscape representing inhospitable historical change.

Macbeth (1948)

One of Welles' most celebrated theatrical productions was his Haitian *Macbeth*, a Federal Theater Project in 1936–1937. The stage production, with an African American cast, stressed the primitivism of Haitian society.

In many ways the production influenced Welles' 1948 film, although the racial – and racist – dimension of the theatre production was obscured by the depiction of Macbeth's Scotland as the foggily barbaric location of the clash between pagan and Christian religions. Welles' *Macbeth* has often been identified as theatrical in style: the director economised on an epically abbreviated shooting schedule (often claimed as the standard twenty-one days for the studio's films) by blocking and rehearsing the film via a stage production in Salt Lake City in May–June 1947, and its characteristic long takes emphasise the dramatic scene, rather than the cinematic shot, as the primary unit of composition. But there are clear filmic influences too. Michael Anderegg calls *Macbeth* a 'Shakespearean Western', and, certainly, the studio Republic Pictures was best known for this genre, producing more than twenty B-movie Westerns in 1948, the year of *Macbeth*'s release.[6]

But a closer cinematic parallel to Welles' tragedy is actually *film noir*, as a contemporary account of the genre made clear: 'deep shadows, clutching hands, exploding revolvers, sadistic villains and heroines tormented with deeply rooted diseases of the mind flashed across the screen in a panting display of psychoneurosis, unsublimated sex, and murder most foul'.[7] Replace revolvers with daggers, and this is a recognisable account of Welles' psychologically and visually extreme *Macbeth*. *Noir*'s characteristic shadow and low-key lighting, its preference for unbalanced compositions, extreme high-angle shots, claustrophobic framing, and a *mise en scène* 'designed to unsettle, jar and disorient the viewer in correlation with the disorientation felt by the noir heroes', are also keynotes of the Shakespeare film.[8] And the film's juxtaposition of Lady Macbeth and Lady Macduff corresponds to the binary visual and moral archetypes of spider woman and nurturing woman traced in feminist analyses of women's manipulative, sexualised roles in *film noir*.[9] Welles' *Macbeth* thus combines its theatrical genesis and shooting style with a generic transformation that owes everything to contemporary cinematic tastes.

The play's gothic prologue sequence explores these divergent influences. Swirling clouds part to reveal shadowy figures silhouetted on a contorted craggy outcrop, reciting 'double, double, toil and trouble': the camera focuses into their bubbling cauldron as they list their ingredients and plunge their hands into the thick, steaming potion. They produce a clay figurine at the ominous line 'there to meet with Macbeth'. Welles cuts the entirety of Shakespeare's 1.1, thus giving no political explanation for Macbeth's promotion to Thane of Cawdor, nor any larger social context for the protagonist's ethical struggle. Instead, he opens the film proper after

the credits, with the gallop of horses' hooves (the Western influence), watched by the strange figures intoning 'by the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes'. Macbeth and Banquo ride across a desolate studio landscape of blasted trees, backlit by lightning, oppressed by a lowering sky (François Truffaut noted that 'everything is savage in this film whose strength is that it doesn't contain a single shot filmed in natural locations').[10] The camera angles of the ensuing dialogue are unsettling in their disruption of the expected shot-reverse-shot editing that would show the alternating points of view of speakers. We look down on the horsemen from a high angle from behind the weird sisters, but as Macbeth speaks, the camera adopts a low angle looking up from the ground in front of their horses. We see the witches from behind, placing first a chain of office and then a crown on their clay idol. When they respond to Banquo, the shot places them in the left of the frame, looking right, disrupting the spatial continuities established by the previous sequence. Enter Welles' major interpolation into the play, a figure named 'Holy Father', whose entrance is signalled by a cross intruding on the frame from the bottom right. Macbeth follows the vanishing figures into swirling mists, with an extreme low-angle shot framing him, alone, against the turmoil into which the prophecies have forever pitched him. We watch his encounter with the king's messengers from a high angle, as if from the witches' craggy outpost, and they re-emerge to watch him as the captains gallop off together. The final frame of the sequence shows the witches standing on their rock, holding forked sticks that are a visual echo and challenge to the long cross brandished by the Holy Father.

Macbeth, caught between two worlds, has exited left with the forces of Christianity, but his soliloquy drew him right towards the witches. He will increasingly occupy the right hand part of the frame for the rest of the film. 'The main point' of *Macbeth*, Welles discussed with Peter Bogdanovich, 'is the struggle between the old and new religions. I saw the witches as representatives of a Druidical pagan religion suppressed by Christianity.'[11] The spatial cinematography of the encounter reveals that Macbeth is wavering, just as the juxtaposition of high- and low-angle shots alternately diminish his agency and grotesquely emphasise it. This Macbeth is both puppet and agent. That the next scene opens with a close-up of flickering flames before increased light reveals Macbeth dictating to the Holy Father his letter to Lady Macbeth further emphasises his visual association with the iconography of the mysterious witches.

The film's most dazzling expressionist sequence is the series of cuts that capture the play's own nervy splicing of scenes around the murder of Duncan. A high-angle shot shows Macbeth's soliloquy 'If it were done',

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as Lady Macbeth returns down the stone staircase having delivered a poisoned cup to Duncan's guards. As the couple embrace, a potentially clichéd romantic shot is undermined by ominous heavy shadow. Her face is entirely obscured, and a low-angle shot of the two of them in deep darkness highlighted against the damp wall of the castle indicates that their conspiracy has dwarfed their moral authority. Banquo and Fleance are originally tiny in the background on the castle battlements, and as Banquo moves downstairs in the frame, he is still much smaller than the massy dark silhouette of Macbeth on the right. The visuals ironically undermine the dialogue, revealing the menace behind Macbeth's answer to Banquo's 'who's there?': 'a friend' (2.1.9–10). A brief shot shows Lady Macbeth's shadow falling menacingly across the sleeping Duncan, followed by a sequence in which Macbeth hallucinates a dagger. The combination of low-angle shots against a murky background and some blurred images suggests that we are both inside and outside of Macbeth's point of view. An extreme blurred close-up of his face captures this paradox: we are losing our empathic connection to him as he is losing his mind. A sharply focused, miniature Lady Macbeth in the back of the frame traces the shifting power dynamic of their relationship: alternate shots first establish her in a conventional diminutive position, but at her encouragement 'We'll not fail' (1.7.61), Macbeth moves into the background and she takes up the dominant position.

What is so compelling about this claustrophobic, chiaroscuro sequence is the way editing redraws the dynamic between husband and wife, alternately casting the partners as dominant in a powerful visual correlative of their shifting conversation. Welles' own verdict on the film was that 'our second half worked better, after the first murder. The second half is the study of the decay of a tyrant. Nobody can play the first *and* second half. An actor who can do one can't do the other.' The oppressive shadows and distorted angles that construct the murder of Duncan form the expressionist hinge between these two halves.[12] Here, Macbeth, and *Macbeth*, take an irrevocable step into moral darkness.

Othello (1952)

Welles' *Othello* was famously marked by production problems. In his later documentary for German television, *Filming Othello*, Welles described again, with some pride, the scramble for money, locations and costumes that has left its mark on a finished film 'made on the instalment plan'.[13] For some commentators and reviewers, these contingencies register as

handicaps. For example, the necessity of producing a soundtrack almost entirely post-production, including dubbing Welles' own voice onto minor characters, results in problems of synchronisation and audibility (these were somewhat ameliorated by the 1992 restoration and rerelease). On the other hand, these accidents of production are often cited as spurs to particular creative ingenuity: the description of the delayed costumes that prompted the reimagining of Roderigo's murder in a visually arresting Turkish bath scene is proudly retold by Welles in numerous contexts. Production contingencies have become an inseparable part of the myth of the film.

Sometimes the unintended consequences of pragmatic filming decisions are suggestive. The much-discussed problems of sound in the film, together with Welles' dense collage of quotations from different scenes of the play that results in a script not always altogether comprehensible, have the joint effect of minimising language as a primary tool of communication. This boldly cuts through one of Shakespearean film's abiding problems – what to do with all those words. As Anderegg suggests, 'we are forced to pay close attention to the primarily visual clues for the meaning of this verbal structure'.[14] For Jack Jorgens producing his influential taxonomy of filmed Shakespeare in 1977, Welles' *Othello* occupied the highest aesthetic category of 'filmic': Welles quoted this judgement approvingly in *Filming Othello*.[15] We might go further to say that Welles' great contribution to the Shakespeare on film is decisively – if in part by accident – to replace a verbal structure with a visual one. And the film's restless short takes, what André Bazin called the 'extreme fragmentation of the *decoupage*', are thus the cinematographic equivalent of the broken verbal phrases, those 'goats and monkeys' to which Iago brings his formerly eloquent general.[16] Welles' film has little stylistic affinity with the play's lyrical mode – what the mid-century critic G. Wilson Knight famously called 'the Othello music' – and more immediately aligns itself with the disruptive, improvisatory bricolage of Iago.[17]

This juxtaposition of styles is evident in the striking visual and aural threnody of the film's opening. The film opens to black, with a face revealed, upside down, eyes closed. Light enters horizontally, as if curtains were being drawn, against a heavy drum beat. The camera zooms back to show the hands crossed over the body, then swoops down again, behind the bier as it is raised on the shoulders of bearers. A new shot shows the funeral bier darkly silhouetted in the bottom left of the frame against a large bright sky, with a tiny row of soldiers holding spears on the low horizon. The choral music in close harmony rises on the soundtrack. The funeral procession moves into mid-shot, silhouetted against

the sky, angled uphill with a party of dark-clad monks behind. The camera shifts to put this scene into the distance, with another religious figure, dressed in pale robes and bearing a cross, leading a second procession in mid-shot. The two processions run in temporary parallel and a close-up shows a gauzy covering over a female body, against the outlines of the other funeral procession also in sight. The two processions seem to converge physically, and an overlayered shot brings them together, the transparent cloth of the female procession shrouding the dark outline of the male procession in a double exposure-effect.

A change in the musical tempo and a flurry of activity cutting across the screen from right to left is immediately disruptive of the ritual solemnity built over the sequence. We see the outline of a man dragged by a rope attached to his neck, and then a rapid sequence of giddy shots, with an unsteady, hand-held pan round the onlookers as if from the point of view of the captive, dragged into a yard filled with people. A high-angle shot shows the crowds gathering around him, held back by soldiers, as he is pushed into a cage. A momentary point-of-view shot shows the bars and his taunting captors, and the funeral procession in dark outline beyond. The cage is hoisted from the battlement walls, but instead of the expected high-angle point-of-view shot we expect, we get an extreme low-angle shot of a solemn onlooker. The sequence cuts between a low-angle shot of onlookers crossing themselves, the cage and the wheeling high-angle shot of the proceedings. The funerals continue on the battlements as the camera drops down the wall to black and thence to the film's playbook-like title. The whole sequence, drawing on the traditions of Eisenstein and European art cinema rather than Hollywood, takes almost five minutes, without a word of the text being spoken.

Marguerite Rippy reads the opening as 'a civilisation in decline, visually conjuring a funeral procession in which monks, heroes and villains move among and through each other like figures on a chessboard, all dwarfed by ominously towering yet insubstantial stick-like crosses that again evoke Welles' *Macbeth*'.[18] In *Filming Othello*, Welles explained: 'the grandeur and simplicity are the Moor's, the dizzying camera movements, the tortured compositions, the grotesque shadows and insane distortions, they are Iago, for he is the agent of chaos'.[19] This reading of the film suggests Iago's complete control over events from the start, when his cinematic language of distortion and fragmentation interrupts the solemn ritual of the protagonists' joint funeral. Just as the play pulls its characters away from Venice to Cyprus, so the film tugs its visual language into splinters and shadows.

Welles' prologue also powerfully conveys the inevitability of the tragedy. Beginning with the end – a favourite narrative technique for Welles, used most famously in *Citizen Kane* (1941) – means the question for the film is how or why, not what. The tragic telos is overdetermined because it has already completed its destructive arc at the point when the film begins: Welles' *Othello* renovates Shakespeare's play by beginning where the drama ended.

Chimes at Midnight (1965)

In taking on the character of Falstaff in *Chimes at Midnight*, Welles entered into an ongoing critical debate that was already at least two centuries old. In his simultaneous, contradictory affection for both Hal and Falstaff, Welles seems to draw on A. C. Bradley's influential essay 'The Rejection of Falstaff' (1902). Bradley proposed that with Falstaff, Shakespeare 'overshot his mark. He created so extraordinary a being, and fixed him so firmly on his intellectual throne, that when he sought to dethrone him he could not.' For Bradley the new king's ultimate 'rejection' of his former companion was a necessary part of his maturation into an 'ideal man of action': the problem was that Falstaff was too large and compelling a personality to play along with this narrative of reformation.[20] In Welles' hands this misalignment takes on tragic colouring, as the entire narrative is structured to catalyse this final incompatibility. Samuel Crowl notes that the film's 'overriding visual and structural emphasis is to signal farewell, to say a long goodbye to Falstaff'.[21] As the director told Juan Cobos and Miguel Rubio in 1966, 'I directed everything, and played everything, with a view of preparing for the last scene. The relationship between Falstaff and the Prince is not a simple comic relationship … but always a preparation for the end. And as you see the farewell is performed about four times during the movie, foreshadowed four times.' The reason for this stress on the scene of Falstaff's rejection was its symbolic weight: 'the film was not intended as a lament for Falstaff, but for the death of Merrie England … It is more than Falstaff who is dying. It is the old England, dying and betrayed.'[22] In patching together scenes and lines from three Shakespearean plays, *1* and *2 Henry IV* and *Henry V* (Welles discarded a sequence with Richard II's coffin which would have further extended the historical reach),[23] *Chimes at Midnight* emphasises the teleological reading of Shakespeare's history plays popular in the mid-twentieth century.[24] Here, though, the telos is structured less around Prince Hal's reformation than Falstaff's rejection: like Harold Bloom, Welles sees these plays less as a Henriad than a Falstaffiad.[25]

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The film's final sequence is thus its defining moment, by bringing out the pathos and the ambivalence of Falstaff's fall from favour. Welles' direction, and his clever incorporation of lines from *Henry V*, allows for the king's harsh banishment to be mitigated, even as Falstaff's death curtails any possibility of reconciliation. Henry's triumphant entry as king is shot from an alienating distance through an unruly crowd of onlookers and soldiers, and the dense obscuring verticals of spears and banners. The low-angle camera position emphasises the emotional and hierarchical difference between the crowd and the mounted monarch: reverse shots from a high angle suggest his newly elevated position, looking down on his people. The soundtrack of cheers and fanfares, and the continued extreme long shot of the royal procession, shows clearly that our – and Falstaff's – privileged access to Hal and the intimacies of the Boar's Head Tavern are over.

As the procession moves indoors to the austerely perpendicular ecclesiastical architecture associated with John Gielgud's aloof Henry IV, the music becomes more sombre. The procession takes on a religious character, with white-robed priests swinging thuribles led by a mitred bishop. The cut to Falstaff eagerly ushering in Shallow with the confident 'I will make the king do thee grace' (5.5.5–6), makes clear how out of place his cheery self-interest, 'sweating with desire to see him' (24–5), is in this new, chillily ritual world. A shot from Falstaff's point of view follows a distant Henry who is oblivious to onlookers, and the accompanying shot, as the camera tracks Falstaff's attempt to push through the guards, captures his transgressive energies. At his interruption the procession stops, with the king, resplendent in heavy robes and crown and bearing the sceptre, back to the camera. A high-angle shot shows Falstaff kneeling in the foreground, and Henry's unyielding back at the rear of the frame. Henry's slow, deliberate reply to Falstaff's greeting is 'I know thee not old man.' An extreme low-angle shot shows him turning to face Falstaff, distorted by the angles into a tyrant king: 'how ill white hairs become a fool and jester' (47–8). The next few shots allow for a slight softening of this rejection: Henry bids Falstaff to his prayers and his mortality in an eye-level close-up, but when the knight approaches him again, the distance between them is reinstated with an extreme low-angle shot of the king, towering again over the supplicant.

But the shifting emotional dynamic of the scene continues. Henry speaks the words of banishment publicly, and then, in a lowered voice as if privately, the softer version allowing him 'competence of life'. Falstaff watches him shrewdly, a slight smile of understanding on his lips, as Henry turns and leaves. It is as if they understand one another and the exigencies of the public position in which

Henry now finds himself. The procession moves on, leaving Falstaff and Shallow, alone, dwarfed in the shadowy precincts of the cathedral, moving slowly and sparsely after the pomp of the crowds Falstaff's final appearance in the film is in a lighted archway, tiny, in an empty, forbidding castle wall, dwarfed by the impersonal scale of the environment: He turns to look at the camera: 'I shall be sent for soon . . . at night' (87–8), and then continues, leaning heavily on a stick, to move through the opening. After a short sequence of noblemen reviewing events, the young page pushes through the crowd to announce that Falstaff is sick. Bardolph makes clear the compromised cause and effect: 'The King is a good King, but it must be as it may' (*Henry V*, 2.1.120).

The dissolve to a bright outdoor shot with the king and his nobles, amid flags and armed men, declaring the campaign in France, is a jolt to the rhythm of the sequence: Henry is moving onwards; Falstaff is in retreat. But Welles' screenplay repurposes lines in *Henry V* when Henry orders clemency for an arrested man, arguing that it was 'excess of wine that set him on' (2.2.42). By making these about Falstaff, the film endorses the knight's own sense that the king is performing, rather than inhabiting, his newly harsh discipline. But it is too late. The scene cuts to the yard of the Boar's Head Tavern and a large coffin: 'Falstaff is dead.' Mistress Quickly's eulogy is straight, poignant, without the innuendo sometimes found in her account (Welles admitted that the film was less funny than he anticipated, and allowed that perhaps 'some scenes should be much more hilarious');[26] the tavern is quiet and still. Bardolph and Peto wheel the coffin out of the gate into the landscape – watched by Mistress Quickly, with a voice-over narration: 'The new king, even at first appointing, determined to put on him the shape of a new man. This Henry was a captain of such prudence and such policy, that he never enterprised anything before he had forecast the main chances that it might happen. So humane withal, he left no crime unpunished, nor friendship unrewarded. For conclusion, a majesty was he that lived and died a pattern in princehood, a lodestar in honour and famous to the world all way'. Ralph Richardson's clipped tones, a patchwork from Holinshed's *Chronicles*, are ironised by the melancholy movement of the cart bearing Falstaff's coffin away, watched by Mistress Quickly and by the looming cold walls of the castle. The tone of the film's 'sad, still ending', and its sympathies for Falstaff are clear: the final credits run against a loop of soldiers and citizens at Henry's coronation, replaying the ceremony as brute triumphalism now that Falstaff is gone.[27] Welles' claim that Falstaff was a 'good pure man' is, like other of his comments on his work, less complex than the film itself.[28] *Chimes at Midnight* captures not the decline of a heroic individual but instead the inevitability that Falstaff needs must succumb to the processes of history.

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Shakespeare on Film: 'You Can't Put a Play on the Screen'

A cameo appearance on television's *I Love Lucy* in 1956 captured Welles' Shakespearean competitiveness. 'I think you're the greatest Shakespearean actor in the whole world', gushes Lucy. 'I think you're better than John Gielgud, I think you're better than Maurice Evans, I think you're better than, than Sir Ralph Richardson.' Welles cut in: 'You left out Laurence Olivier.'[29] The exchange is revealing, but Welles is a significant Shakespearean not as an actor, but as a director. His distinctive gift is to translate verbal into visual poetry, and the techniques by which he achieves this remediation respond to the same close analysis we might usually apply to linguistic shapes and figures. His Shakespeare is not naturalistic but expressionist, externalising personal and social psychologies, and using a distinctively cinematic idiom to disrupt rather than reify notions of character, continuity and location. And although Olivier's Shakespeare films *Henry V* (1944) and *Hamlet* (1948) were much more commercially and critically acclaimed than Welles', they now look like period acting pieces compared with the rangy, edgy poetry of *Macbeth*, *Othello* and *Chimes at Midnight*. Welles' cinematic chutzpah, based on the conviction that 'you can't put a play on the screen. I don't believe in that – I don't think Shakespeare would have believed in it. He would have made a great movie writer', produced three extraordinary critical interpretations of Shakespeare.[30] Like the best interpretations, in criticism as in creative adaptations, these films are selective, partial and sometimes contradictory. Nevertheless, in their bold originality, they decisively unsettle the orders of aesthetic and imaginative priority that still govern analyses of Shakespeare on film. Welles' Shakespeare canon contributes to postmodern theories of adaptation that figure the 'play as process' rather than fixed original.[31] Although Welles always denied that his films were accurate representations of their plays – '*Othello* the movie, I hope, is first and foremost a motion picture'[32] – nevertheless, the value of his films for readers and students of the plays is in their intensely and inventively visual poetry of alienation and decline. All Shakespearean films cut large swathes of the text: only Welles reinstates the plays' densely, lyrically ambiguous language within the syntax of cinema.

Notes

1. On Welles's television performance in *King Lear*, see Simon Callow, *Orson Welles. One Man Band* (London, Jonathan Cape, 2015), 138–41. Scenes and speeches for *The Merchant of Venice* were shot at various times during Welles's peripatetic career: they are referred to in his conversations with

Peter Bogdanovich, and some have been included in documentaries about Welles. See Orson Welles, Peter Bogdanovich and Jonathan Rosenbaum, *This is Orson Welles* (London, HarperCollins, 1993), 23, 30 and 34.

2. See, for example, Peter Conrad, *Orson Welles: the Stories of his Life* (London, Faber, 2003).

3. Welles, Bogdanovich and Rosenbaum, *This is Orson Welles*, 212.

4. Johan Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages: A Study of the Forms of Life, Thought and Art in France and the Netherlands in the XIVth and XVth Centuries*, translated by F. J. Hopman (London: Edward Arnold, 1924), 28 and 9.

5. G. W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art* (Vol. 2), translated by T. M. Knox (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1975), 1215.

6. Michael Anderegg, *Orson Welles, Shakespeare, and Popular Culture* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1999), 97.

7. From *Life* magazine in 1947, quoted in Thomas Schatz, *Hollywood Genres* (New York, Random House, 1981), 111.

8. J. A. Place and L. S. Peterson, 'Some visual motifs of film noir', *Film Comment*, 10 (1974), 31.

9. See E. Ann Kaplan, 'Introduction', in E. Ann Kaplan, ed., *Women in Film Noir*, new edition (London, British Film Institute, 1998), 5–8.

10. François Truffaut, in André Bazin, ed., *Orson Welles: A Critical View* (London: Elm Tree Books, 1978), 16.

11. Welles *et al.*, *This is Orson Welles*, 214.

12. Ibid., 216–17.

13. *Filming 'Othello'* dir. Orson Welles (1978), included in the Criterion Collection Blu-ray, 2018.

14. Anderegg, *Orson Welles, Shakespeare, and Popular Culture*, 103.

15. Jack Jorgens, *Shakespeare on Film* (Bloomington and London, Indiana University Press, 1977), 11: a still from *Othello* illustrates the filmic mode.

16. Bazin, *Orson Welles: A Critical View*, 109.

17. G. Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire: Essays in Interpretation of Shakespeare's Sombre Tragedies* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1930). On Iago and improvisation, see Stephen Greenblatt's important essay 'The improvisation of power', in his *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 1980).

18. Marguerite H. Rippy, 'Orson Welles', in Mark Thornton Burnett, Courtney Lehmann, Marguerite H. Rippy and Ramona Wray, eds., *Welles, Kurosawa, Kozintsev, Zeffirelli: Great Shakespeareans Volume XVII* (London, Bloomsbury, 2013), 30.

19. *Filming* Othello (1978).

20. A. C. Bradley, 'The rejection of Falstaff', *Oxford Lectures on Poetry* (London, Macmillan, 1920), 259 and 256.

21. Samuel Crowl, 'The long goodbye: Welles and Falstaff', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 31 (1980), 373.

22. Juan Cobos and Miguel Rubio, 'Welles and Falstaff', *Sight and Sound*, 35 (1966), 159.

23. Interview with Keith Baxter, in Bridget Gellert Lyons, ed., *Chimes at Midnight* (New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1988), 269.

24. See, for instance, E. M. W. Tillyard, *Shakespeare's History Plays* (London, Chatto and Windus, 1944).
25. Harold Bloom, *The Anatomy of Influence: Literature as a Way of Life* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2011), 67.
26. Cobos and Rubio, 'Welles and Falstaff', 159.
27. Jorgens, *Shakespeare on Film,* 121.
28. Cobos and Rubio, 'Welles and Falstaff', 159.
29. Quoted by Anderegg, *Orson Welles, Shakespeare, and Popular Culture,* 3.
30. Welles *et al.*, *This is Orson Welles*, 228.
31. M. J. Kidnie, *Shakespeare and the Problem of Adaptation* (London, Routledge, 2009), 5.
32. Quoted in Bazin, *Orson Welles: A Critical View*, 114.