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## **Remaking, Redoing or Doing: The Case of Shakespeare's *Henry V***

### **I The status of the play**

In theory the theatre is not concerned by remakes. Plays are written, performed, and if successful, revived in new productions. There is no finished article that can be remade. The play-text, which is about the nearest thing we get to a finished article, can be reworked but, in the case of Shakespeare, the text itself can hardly be said to have a definitive status in any case and may exist in several versions, none of which can be considered definitive. It is possible to speak of the first performance of a play and its original production, but after that, plays lead their own lives and evolve over time and space in accordance with the evolution of trends in acting and performance styles which themselves evolve in accordance with the cultural tastes of audiences over the ages. Although it is clear that one production may well influence later productions, this phenomenon has until recently (in theatrical terms: the past hundred years or so) been restricted by the simple fact that virtually all theatrical productions left nothing behind, except for a few words in a newspaper review in most cases. Even in the case of the most famous English dramatist there is little evidence left for us to decide how his plays were first performed. For centuries, what audiences actually saw on stage was not what the First Folio would have led us to expect, but a rather strange beast. Shakespeare was rewritten: many lines taken out, some added, new characters, music, dance and spectacle provided and frequently a happy ending put in for good measure.

In fact, it is only over the past hundred years that audiences have been given the text more or less in its entirety without the additional dialogue, music, dance etc. it had picked up along the way. At the precise moment that theatre-goers were given the chance to hear (more or less) the whole text, technology was about to become involved too, leading to the play-text being adapted in different ways for the radio, television and of course, cinema. Once it became possible to capture a performance on tape or film, thinking about theatre could begin to change as performances became accessible to more and more people. Scholars gradually started to look at plays as theatre, as performance and not (or not only) as literature. Rather paradoxically, it was thanks to other media that the theatre could be studied as theatre. As we shall see, this is just one of the many paradoxes in the link between the stage and the screen.

### **II Shakespeare and the cinema**

The relationship between Shakespeare and the movies got off to an early start with many *silent* films based on the plays. "Silent Shakespeare films can even be seen as the

natural inheritors of the popular theatre of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that had so frequently and so insistently weighed the value of spectacle, narrative and star performance over the precise character of the text” (Buchanon 42). Judith Buchanan has two chapters on silent films adapted from Shakespeare both in English-speaking and other countries. Buchanon rightly notes that before the introduction of sound “the market offered a level playing field to all language communities” (50). These silent films included not just the plays which would later go on to be the most popular sources for films when sound was introduced, but also plays more rarely seen, like *Cymbeline* in 1913 (see description 43-44). The first version of a Shakespeare play to be filmed was *King John*, another of the less popular plays, in 1899. This involved the filming of Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s stage production of the play. These early silent films often combined the projection of recorded sequences with the physical presence of actors speaking their lines. They were not always, however, films of stage productions. I will not discuss the advantages, disadvantages and problems associated with putting Shakespeare on screen; my bibliography lists a few of the many books dealing with Shakespeare on film that have appeared over the past twenty years or so. Likewise, it is extremely difficult to give precise figures since new films are being made all the time all over the world, including offshoots and spin-offs. What we can affirm is that the links between the plays and other media are many and various to the point that it is sometimes difficult to separate the two. Certain plays, for reasons that I cannot develop here, have been made into movies countless times: *Hamlet* and *King Lear* lead the way for the tragedies, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* would seem to be in the lead as far as the comedies are concerned. Amongst the history plays, *Richard III* and *Henry V* have been made into films several times though less frequently than *Hamlet*.

### **III The Case of *Henry V***

According to Loehlin: “In eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England, the battle scenes were occasions for patriotic spectacle and stirring rhetoric, sometimes involving literal calls to arms against the persistent French foe” (Loehlin 2-3). This spectacle would make *Henry V* particularly suited for the cinema. *Henry V* in fact seems to offer all the ingredients for the perfect action movie: battles, (we can easily imagine armour-clad soldiers charging across the battle-field on their horses to the sound of a full orchestra), cities under siege, treason, courage and cowardice, war crimes, international politics seasoned with comic scenes and romance. It would also appear that Shakespeare’s play *needs* the technology of the big screen since it uses multiple locations, seems to require a large cast with many extras for some

scenes and shifts constantly between intimate indoor scenes and crowded outdoor scenes with an ease only readily available to film media. However, we know of course that this play was written for a small group of actors (10-12) on a virtually bare stage without a single horse in sight. A couple of instruments may have provided the music and the spectators may have been given a display of swordsmanship to compensate for the lack of full-scale battles.

It is in this play, more than in any other, that Shakespeare repeatedly draws the audience's attention to the limitations of the traditional Elizabethan stage. The deservedly famous prologues at the beginning of each act systematically underline what the stage *cannot* do and call on the audience to make up for this by using their imagination to supply what is missing: "Think, when we talk of horses, that you see them,/Printing their proud hoofs i' th' receiving earth" (1.0.26-27). *Henry V* is therefore a play with enormous cinema potential, yet this is apparently denied by the constant references to what the theatre audience cannot see (sea crossings, city walls, battlefields etc.) hereby underlining the highly theatrical status of the text. The prologue from Act 4 is particularly interesting in this respect since it includes both temporal references to the night and a vivid description of both the French and English camps before the battle:

Steed threatens steed in high and boastful neighs  
Piercing the night's dull ear, and from the tents  
The armourers, accomplishing the knights,  
With busy hammers closing rivets up,  
Give dreadful note of preparation. (4.0.10-13)

This contradiction has not daunted movie directors as we shall see, beginning with Laurence Olivier's 1944 film, followed by Kenneth Branagh's in 1989 and ending (for now) with BBC Television's miniseries in summer 2012 called *The Hollow Crown*, comprising the four plays written by Shakespeare covering the end of Richard II's reign up to and including the reign of Henry V (*Richard II*, *1 Henry IV*, *2 Henry IV* and *Henry V*). The broadcast of *The Hollow Crown* was accompanied by interviews with Shakespearean directors and actors, all of whom repeatedly referred to other productions of the plays, notably the film versions of *Henry V* by Laurence Olivier and Kenneth Branagh. The BBC seemed to be inviting the audience to consider their production in the light of these earlier films, without actually using the term "remake", leading me to the idea of analysing to what extent the concept of the remake has validity here. We shall therefore look at links between different film or other media versions as well as the links between stage productions and films.

It is worth indicating that in the volume of the series "Shakespeare in Performance", devoted to *Henry V*, (published by Manchester University Press), James Loehlin discusses six

major productions of the play. Of those analysed, two are films (Laurence Olivier's and Kenneth Branagh's) and a third is a stage production: that of the Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford in 1984, directed by Adrian Noble, starring Kenneth Branagh in the title role. (This performance obviously influenced Branagh when he came to make his film.) One is part of the BBC's Complete Shakespeare shown during the 80s (1979). I suspect that Loehlin would also have included the BBC's latest offering if it had been available at the time of writing (1997).

It could simply be argued that it is convenient for the reader to have access to the performances under discussion through video, DVD etc. Nevertheless, the fact of giving such importance to the film medium in discussing Shakespeare in performance is, I think, significant. Beyond the proportion of film versions included, what strikes me is the fact that the productions are discussed, and at times compared, with little attention being paid to the fact that a stage production is formally very different from a feature film. They are simply considered as different productions.

If we are to disregard the formal differences between film and theatre in this way, does it therefore follow that plays once they become movies have to be treated primarily as movies and that the concept of the remake becomes applicable not only to *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* but also to *Hamlet*? We need then consider the implications of how film affects other media productions (for example, television in the case of the BBC TV mini-series) and even stage productions. Is it legitimate to envisage films as remakes of stage productions or stage productions as remakes of films? These are the issues I propose to address although any answers will have to be tentative and temporary.

#### **IV Laurence Olivier's *Henry V* (1944)**

"This film is the most widely seen and influential performance of the century; virtually all the subsequent productions discussed in this book consciously positioned themselves against it" writes James Loehlin (25). In fact, my research suggests that no production since has escaped comparison with this film either in the director's statements of intention or in critical response. Much has been written about this film and critical reaction varies. Loehlin quotes André Bazin: "there is more cinema and great cinema at that, in *Henry V* than in 90% of original scripts" (27). Loehlin affirms that "its exploration of the theatrical and cinematic media makes it a fascinating and complex film as well as a rousing patriotic adventure story" (25) and then goes on to state that interest in the film is "divided between its use of the film medium and its ideological tendencies"(26). In the event, discussion of the first element is

essentially seen as a consequence of the second. Although most accounts of the film comment on the extraordinary theatricality of the opening sequences, most commentators soon revert to what is perceived as the main point of the film: the celebration of heroics and “jingoistic politics” (Jean-Michel Déprats in Hoenselaars 75) According to Judith Buchanon: “Olivier took *Henry V* partly as a vehicle through which to glamorise the processes of war—making it colourful, pageant-like, sunlit and based on moral certainties” (194). She then proceeds to compare the picture of London in Olivier’s film with a documentary picture released at the same time, *This Happy Breed*, which showed the grim reality of the bomb-damaged city and for which Olivier provided voice-over narration (195).

On the whole, the cuts made in the text by Olivier (he cuts half the lines) are seen as ways of making the play’s story more palatable to screen audiences. “What he leaves out is the sense of a man who has to make difficult decisions” says Loehlin (42) who explains that Olivier’s cuts of “the traitors, Bardolph’s death, the Harfleur threats, the prisoner massacre and the guilty prayer for undeserved victory” undermine the complexity of the characterization (43). Many scholars have discussed these cuts in detail, so I will not dwell on them. Suffice it to say, much time is taken up with the cuts which threatened to upset Britain’s French allies of 1944. However, when reading discussions of Olivier’s film it becomes increasingly difficult to reconcile the view that the film is basically propaganda (Hoenselaars 17), “the most glorious propaganda film ever made” (Crowl 9), with the claim that it “provided the seed that created the first flowering of great Shakespeare films” (Crowl 22). Further attention needs to be given to the way Olivier combines theatrical and cinematic languages. The notion of the replay provides an interesting way of comparing this film version with later ones.

Many critics have commented on Olivier’s use of space at the beginning of the film. The opening sequences are filmed in a re-creation of the Globe Theatre so that the playhouse audience is visible and audible to the cinema audience. We get a glimpse of Olivier as actor (Richard Burbage who probably played the part in the very first performance at the Globe) preparing to come on stage as if to warn us not to treat what is to come as “real”. The first comic sequence of the film is the last one shot in the Globe (2.1). This scene is played in an exaggerated style to the groundlings with a boy playing the part of Mistress Quickly. There follows the move to France: “a highly stylized landscape of painted sets” according to Crowl (23). Harfleur Castle, the scene of a long and desperate siege has “pop-up book walls” says Loehlin (38). This is also underlined by Carol Chillingham Rutter: “Olivier sets Katherine’s English lesson in a walled garden, conspicuously built of studio flats to achieve a deliberately

distorted scale and false perspective, an artificial space more like the backstage of the Globe in the film's opening sequence [...] than like the "real" spaces covered by Henry's military progress" (in Jackson 244). It is then that we are taken to a "real landscape" (Crowl, 23) or the "realistic location shooting of Agincourt" (Loehlin, 37). In fact, although the battle scene does not have the theatricality of the Globe sequences, it is not really any more realistic. "Olivier deliberately avoided any suggestion of wounds or blood, giving his battle a formal, storybook quality in its visual texture" (Loehlin 46). This scene, shot in Ireland, only on sunny days, led to Orson Welles, (who himself adapted several plays for the cinema including an adaptation of *Henry IV 1&2* called *Chimes at Midnight* 1966) making his famous comment about: "people riding out of the castle and suddenly they are on to a golf course somewhere charging each other." (Pamela Mason in Jackson 195). Surely, this is what Olivier wanted to achieve: a battle scene which did not resemble real-life butchery. In other words, Olivier is not using the film medium for more realism, but for another form of artifice. Furthermore, we should remember that we are not allowed to dwell too long on this sunny "golf course" for the film takes us back to the Globe (or forward in time almost 200 years to the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century) for its final moments. The heavy theatrical make-up along with the reversal to a male actor for the role of Katherine remind us that we have been watching a fiction.

HENRY V turns round on reaching the throne. He is wearing the crude Globe Theatre make-up.

Applause is heard as we pan to show a BOY made-up as KATHARINE.

Track back from KING HENRY and the boy playing KATHARINE to reveal the stage of the Globe Theatre.(Olivier screenplay 90-91)

Buchanon insists rightly on how Olivier has adapted the self-referentiality of the play to suit the medium of cinema: "The Globe setting has the advantage of explicitly reminding the audience of the Renaissance filter that constantly shapes and influences this dramatisation of a medieval past" (199) yet she only speaks of the film's being "initially" set in the Globe and does not discuss the implications of the return to the theatre at the end. The film comes full circle and this is a feature that will be found in subsequent versions, albeit in different ways. Mason underlines the way that Olivier chooses to convey the meaning of the Epilogue in a particularly apt fashion, by using setting to replace most of the lines of verse: "Olivier's [return to the frame of his Globe performance] as a means of accommodating the play's exploration of the theatrical process is a striking, yet under-rated, feature of his film" (Mason in Hattaway 192).

Most scholars underline the fact that this particular film made its mark not only because of the war but also because of the status of Laurence Olivier. Donald K. Hedrick (in Richard Burt & Lynda E. Boose) speaks of:

the charisma of the director-star, whose substantial reputation in both British and American films was intended to overcome the risk of producing yet another financially questionable Shakespeare film. (216)

All critics refer to Olivier's position as the leading Shakespearean actor of the era with experience in the theatre and cinema. In this film he surrounded himself with other well-known English actors, leading Buchanan to comment: "Olivier partially reclaimed Shakespeare from Hollywood for the British film industry" (185). This is another element to be taken into consideration. Likewise, Olivier's use of the camera and music also seems to have influenced later film productions.

*Henry V* set off a string of Shakespeare films, other films by Olivier and the films of Orson Welles (Crowl compares the two directors and how they reacted to each other's work in his book 29-35) over a period of years until there was a lull in production and television took over for a while. The reasons for this may partly be financial, a criterion not to be overlooked in the consideration of remakes. According to Crowl: "Welles's films were box-office poison and contributed to the collapse of Hollywood interest in the genre in the early 1970s" (35). Although *Henry V* and other films achieved critical recognition (Olivier's *Hamlet* won 4 Academy awards in 1948 including that for the Best Picture), they did not make much money. Jackson presents the figures in the introduction to the *Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Film*.

It is interesting to observe the role played by *Henry V* over the ages. It is probably this play that was performed when the original Globe was first opened in 1599. It was part of the original programme when the New Globe opened its doors in 1997 and it set off both Olivier's string of Shakespeare films and that of Kenneth Branagh forty-five years later in 1989.

### **V Kenneth Branagh's *Henry V* (1989)**

"Branagh's 1989 film helped to create the most intense explosion of English-language Shakespeare films in the century" (Crowl in Jackson, 222). Like Olivier, Branagh came to do the film of *Henry V* after having played the role in the theatre and, from the beginning, the later film was seen in relation to the earlier one. It should be noted at this point that in the intervening years, access to films became much easier through television and then through

the introduction of video-recorders. Constantin Verevis underlines the importance of : “an information storage technology [that] radically extends the kind of film literacy that was inaugurated by the age of television” (*Film Remakes* 8). Verevis also insists on the fact that for certain remakes, it is necessary to look at the triangular relationship that exists between the first film, second film and the literary source, in this case the play-text, although “viewers are not necessarily assumed to have, nor do they require any familiarity with” (145) the earlier version(s). However, “the audience is encouraged to recognise the original and its remake in a variety of textual and extra-textual ways” (86).

“Comparisons between Branagh’s film and Olivier’s are inevitable and Branagh’s film has thrived partly on the enhanced publicity that the prevalence of the comparison has brought in its wake” (Buchanon 193). This would suggest quite clearly that the Branagh film fits into what Verevis calls: “Remaking as Critical Category”. The only Shakespeare remake Verevis mentions is *Hamlet*, but Branagh’s film of *Henry V* seems to fit into category 3 of his taxonomy: “A film made by a director consciously drawing on elements and movies of another director” (28-30).

From the outset, Branagh’s project was presented in opposition to Olivier’s film, just as brash Branagh himself was opposed to the more aristocratic Olivier, through their social origins and status. This rivalry is clear in the reviews of the period, in interviews with Branagh and in all the scholarly criticism that has been written since. Many studies provide detailed comparisons of the two films (Buchanon, Crowl, Déprats in Hoenselaars, Hedrick in Burt, Jackson, Loehlin) with the main focus on Branagh’s vision of war best illustrated by the ironic title of Donald K. Hedrick’s chapter in Burt: “War is mud: Branagh’s *Dirty Harry V* and the types of political ambiguity” (213-230). We will also quote Buchanon on the specificity of the Branagh movie.

Whereas for the battle of Agincourt, Olivier stopped shooting whenever the sun went behind a cloud, Branagh stopped shooting whenever the sun came out. [...] He wanted his medieval warfare to be messy and grim, and stripped of the consolation of pleasing aesthetics. (195)

What is noticeable in the more recent appraisals however, is the sense that the two films probably have more in common than was originally suggested. For the most part, however, the similarity has been linked very clearly to the ideological position adopted by Branagh. This is explicit in the Hedrick piece, but also seems to lie behind Loehlin’s opposition between the “official” and the “secret” *Henry V*, the official version being a “nationalistic celebration of a great warrior hero” (Loehlin ), while the “secret” version is a denunciation of

ruthless expediency and cold-blooded slaughter (2). Just as discussion of the Olivier film focused on the way certain potentially disturbing scenes had been cut in order to argue that Olivier was glorifying war and military victory, the inclusion of such scenes (the threatened atrocity in Harfleur and hanging of a former drinking companion) was seen as proof of Branagh's more "realistic" view of war, which nevertheless did little to render the character of the king any less attractive.

If we leave aside the ideological issue and look at other aspects of Branagh's film as a "remake" other perspectives are possible. Beyond the notion that Branagh simply wants us to respond differently to war, we may also consider that Olivier's method of putting Shakespeare on screen in his first Shakespeare film influenced some of Branagh's choices. Just as Olivier has received credit for his use of the backtracking camera (Loehlin 34), Branagh's use of close-up is worth studying too. Likewise, Branagh seems to have noted what powerful effects the film score can have on the audience. Loehlin notes how Olivier combines music and image in the battle scene, with the arrows of the English archers being loosed to the music of William Walton (44), but we could equally note how the score builds up to a climax in Branagh's film in a scene which Loehlin considers "the most memorable of the film" (144) showing the soldiers gathering up the dead. Although it would seem that Branagh is perhaps using the music to undermine what is being shown on screen, contrary to Olivier: "The score romanticises the English victory in a way that the battle's images do not, opening the door for Branagh's detractors to accuse such moments in his film of being ideologically unstable and politically pernicious." (Jackson 228)

Branagh follows Olivier's lead in cutting much of the text, not just because of the commercial constraints of keeping the length of the film down to a couple of hours, but perhaps more importantly because the film medium renders many lines superfluous, most obviously in the prologues. (Branagh's 1996 Hamlet innovated by using a complete text.) Although Branagh does not use the Chorus exactly in the same way as Olivier, his decision to show Derek Jacobi walking around an empty sound recording studio perhaps "no longer serves as the explicit reminder that what we are watching is already a renaissance revisionist view of a glorious medieval past" (Buchanon 200), but does nevertheless draw attention to the fictional status of what we are to watch. It is Derek Jacobi as Chorus, who closes the door at the end of the film in a type of circularity which is not fundamentally different from Olivier's return to the Globe theatre set at the end of his film. We can also see how the use of voice-over for the Chorus is frequently similar, as is the decision to show scenes from the two camps during the prologue from Act 4. Finally, as far as diction is concerned, Branagh seems

to have taken note of the variety of ways of delivering a speech in the cinema, going further than Olivier by almost whispering some lines into camera. This is particularly effective in the scene when he receives the gift of tennis balls from the Dauphin. In a speech which runs for thirty-eight lines, the volume and tone of delivery change almost imperceptibly, an effect which would be very hard to achieve on a big stage (Act 1 scene 2 259-297).

In short, there are many and various ways in which Branagh's 1989 film can be considered as a remake of Olivier's film. The triangular relationship mentioned by Leitch between the film, the remake and the "original property on which both films are based" (quoted in Verevis 12)— ie. the play by Shakespeare— is certainly at work here although it is not absolutely clear if Branagh's film primarily gives priority to the earlier film or to the source text. There are other elements which need considering too before we can decide on the status of the Branagh film and these elements take us beyond the Shakespeare text and the Olivier film.

First of all, Branagh making his film forty-five years after Olivier is obviously working in a very different context and addressing a different audience. This in itself partly accounts for the overt lack of patriotic celebration. Not only is Branagh working in an era in which war itself has lost much of its heroic pretensions, but the representation of war and the "hero" has undergone a complete reversal. Branagh is therefore not just reacting against Olivier's "epic sweep" (Buchanon, 199), but responding to other representations of war notably those of the Vietnam war in the cinema. He is also drawing on other ways of filming Shakespeare (notably Orson Welles) and other types of film. This point is made most persuasively by Crawl: "Branagh not only achieved a synthesis of the best qualities of Welles's and Olivier's Shakespeare films, but he also imaginatively attempted to link the Shakespeare film to popular Hollywood models: the war-film in *Henry V*" (38). Burt writes "A much darker Henry [...] is constructed by drawing heavily from American crime and western films [...]. Of these films, Clint Eastwood's oeuvre, especially *Dirty Harry* (1971) stands out as a special impetus for the ambiguities of Branagh" (Burt 217). But even Olivier's Henry had Hollywood connections:

Olivier morally justifies the English victory by purely cinematic means familiar from Western films. The English are presented as the underdogs, outnumbered and steadfast, holding their ground as it were, behind the circled wagons, while the French horsemen appear in a strong and threatening position on the ridge of a hill. In the language of the western, the 'good guys' are clearly established. (Loehlin 45)

Olivier, too, would turn to Welles's style when he made his second Shakespeare film in 1948, *Hamlet*. Branagh, of course, is not the only one to have tried his hand at adapting *Henry V* after Olivier.

## **VI *The Hollow Crown* BBC TV (2012)**

This miniseries was shown on BBC Two over four weeks in summer 2012. (*Richard II* on June 30, *1 Henry IV* on July 7, *2 Henry IV* on July 14 and *Henry V* on July 21.) The second tetralogy is so-called because it was written after the first tetralogy but actually covers an earlier historical period. For BBC Two these plays constitute a cycle and were given a title as such: *The Hollow Crown*. It is nowadays quite common to perform the plays together in this way but there is no evidence that they were ever meant to be performed as a cycle.

As mentioned above, one episode (July 7) of the series of documentaries shown during the same period under the title "Shakespeare Uncovered" was devoted to "The Henrys" and was narrated by the famous English actor (of both film and stage) Jeremy Irons who played the role of Henry IV in the two middle parts, directed by Richard Eyre. (The plays and documentaries were part of the Cultural Olympiad, included in the celebration of British Culture to coincide with the Olympics Games in summer 2012.) The documentary featured extracts from several productions of the Henry plays and also an interview with the director Thea Sharrock. She categorically refused to consider her production as "either for or against war", which was considered as roughly equivalent to pro-Olivier or pro-Branagh. This documentary definitely suggests that any version of *Henry V* draws on previous versions in one way or another. The importance of audience knowledge and expectations is insisted on by Verevis (129). Although we cannot study this version of *Henry V* in any detail, we can notice how it draws on elements of the earlier film versions. It is worth noting that it is the *only* film version to feature King Henry ordering his troops to slash the throats of the French prisoners and to show the order being carried out. This action is clearly indicated in Shakespeare's text (4.6.37), but there has been a tendency either to drop the scene or to place it after the French troops have massacred the boys looking after the English army's belongings, so that it seems to be an act of retaliation on the part of the English. The reason for including such brutality may lie, at least in part, in the fact that this version of *Henry V* is part of a mini-series. Unlike Olivier and Branagh's portrayals of Henry, which have to work much harder to create the character, by the time we watch *Henry V* in the mini-series our knowledge of Henry as a character is much greater. We have seen various facets of his personality in the two middle parts (*1 Henry IV* and *2 Henry IV*) with his youthful exuberance countered by cynicism and

even cruelty at times. Hence, Sharrock can take the risk of revealing Henry's ruthless side, without losing some of the audience's affection for the character. The mini-series format has the advantage of allowing more time for the telling of the story.

Another difference can be noticed in the fact that Sharrock has completely given up the idea of showing us the Chorus, his words are given in voice-over. This choice is in line with the absence of visual reinforcement of the play's metatheatricity: no Globe or movie soundstage. Yet this film has adopted another visual way of creating structure, by linking the first Prologue to the Epilogue. The first shots we see are of a funeral. At first, because this is a mini-series, we may well think that this is a flashback to the end of *2 Henry IV* which ends with the death of Henry IV and the coronation of Henry V. However, we soon realise that the figure in the coffin is Henry V and that this opening sequence is actually a flash-forward, anticipating the Epilogue which recounts the early death of Henry V. This serves as a timely reminder of the limits of Henry's glorious reign just in case we were tempted to let patriotic enthusiasm run away with us. The final sequence of *Henry V* (and the final sequence of the mini-series) replays the funeral scene so that the sombre words of the Epilogue, although perhaps superfluous as far as the individual fate of Henry V is concerned, constitute a bleak reminder that the events of the tetralogy, spanning about twenty years, dwell on the unpredictability of the fortunes of individuals and nations.

The filming of the battle itself owes much to Branagh in its focus on soldiers marching through the mud and the use of slow motion. Mud, blood and looting soldiers suggest that war is grim rather than glorious. (Let us remember that the long battle sequences in all three films have no equivalent in the play-text. In the text there are one or two descriptions of certain stages of the battle but no continuous presentation of the fighting.) The "band of brothers" speech is also a much more low-key affair addressed to a "happy few" and not to the assembled army as in Olivier and Branagh.

We can note that all three films rely on the presence of recognised Shakespearean actors, a practise also followed by Orson Welles who used John Gielgud to play the role of Henry IV in *Chimes at Midnight*. Is *The Hollow Crown* a remake of Branagh, of Olivier? It corresponds to 6a in Verevis's list "a film remade as television film" (This list also includes a film based on a play then turned into a television film: *Sweet Bird of Youth* by Tennessee Williams), but could also be included in 6b "a film remade as a television miniseries".

Although it seems legitimate at this point to speak of "remakes" in the sense that these films both pay tribute to the earlier version(s) and call them into question (Horton 4), we can no longer speak of a triangular relationship between two films and a source since we now

have three films and a source. How are we then to bring in the stage productions which also make some kind of contribution? This point is raised by Buchanon:

Contemporary makers of a Shakespeare film therefore inherit not only the raw Shakespeare text(s) from which to develop their own performance interpretation, but also the history of earlier stage and screen performances of the same text. (121)

If we return to Olivier and Branagh we might remember that each of them made a film version after having played the role on stage. Olivier played Henry V in 1937 at the Old Vic under the direction of Tyrone Guthrie. Olivier himself claims that this stage role influenced his film (Loehlin 39). As for Branagh, he played the role at the age of twenty-three under the direction of Adrian Noble in Stratford with the Royal Shakespeare Company (1984). Loehlin's account of Branagh's stage performance suggests that it influenced his film by creating a very sombre vision of war. Instead of a neat linear progression from play-text to film to remake, we can note a disorderly interaction of stage productions and film performances. However, it is not just that films influence other films. It can be seen that films have a considerable influence on stage productions too. Hence when Michael Bogdanov and Michael Pennington staged their cycle of history plays, *The Wars of the Roses* for the English Shakespeare Company (1986) they followed Orson Welles's lead and linked parts 1 and 2 of *Henry IV* as Welles had done in *Chimes at Midnight* (Mason in Jackson 195) and explicitly gave Welles the credit.

We can also find clear evidence of the influence films have on stage productions in the case of the performance of *Henry V* at the Avignon Festival in 1999 under the direction of Jean-Louis Benoit with Philippe Torreton playing the title role. The actor stated in interviews how much he appreciated Branagh's film, considering that it "expressed an anti-war feeling directly opposed to Laurence Olivier's patriotic hymn" (Goy-Blanquet in Hoenselaars, 239). It is therefore ironical that the production gradually erased Henry's darker side and focused on his heroic stature, even resorting to modifying the order of events to reinforce this (Goy-Blanquet 240). In fact, the performance frequently echoes Olivier's film notably in the presentation of the French characters who frequently appear quite ridiculous, unlike Branagh's French characters. The French King is even dressed like Olivier's French King. The influence of the two films is likewise evident in the remarks made by Jean-Michel Déprats on the subject of both the French text of the dubbed version of the Branagh film and the French text of the Avignon Festival performance both of which he provided. This is also obvious in the full-page article in *Le Monde* devoted to the release in France of the Branagh movie (January 17, 1991). It seems quite clear that reactions to the Branagh film focused on

its *perceived* opposition to the Oliver film. It was seen primarily as a remake of the earlier film, a reinterpretation of the hero and his behaviour. However, once confronted with the text and the desire for a hero, the final result of the Benoit-Torreton collaboration turned out to be rather different.

The sombre side of Henry, so sensitively stressed in Torreton's early interviews was erased on stage, where the king was seen to believe in his own heroic speeches. The Crispin address was delivered not to an unwilling army of tired men, but in private to his brother. (Goy-Blanquet 240)

This example illustrates one of the problems in dealing with the relationship between stage and film in general and with remakes in particular. Film now has the advantage of being easily available for consultation and can therefore provide an interpretation of a play-text against which later interpretations position themselves. However, if a film version and its subsequent remake(s) receive much more attention (for all kinds of reasons) than other productions, there is the risk of focusing rather too much on what is perceived to be the position of the remake towards the original film version. This not only reduces the range of potential interpretations open to directors, but is also, as we have seen, quite reductive as a remake cannot only be read in the light of the earlier film. As Buchanon puts it: "Any classic work continues to accumulate new meanings as it is freshly encoded and decoded in successive generations" (119).

What is clear is that any attempt to dismiss "remakes" as easy ways of cashing in quickly on an earlier box-office success is unsatisfactory. It is much more useful to think of remakes as a form of open-ended transtextuality as Verevis does, in which it becomes necessary to take into account "modes and degrees of remaking: quotation, allusion, adaptation" (59). It is the coexistence of many types of transtextuality which characterises the different film versions of *Henry V* we have looked at. Let us not forget that Shakespeare's own play is itself a reworking of various sources (of chronicles, but also probably of other plays treating the same subject, according to Gary Taylor's introduction to the Oxford World's Classics edition 3-4). Just as Shakespeare's plays are constantly self-reflexive, it is not surprising to find cinematic references in the adaptations. Nor is this a recent phenomenon. Buchanon notes that as early as 1916 films based on Shakespeare plays already started to include parodic references to other films "suggesting that Shakespearean cinema already considered itself established enough to wish to interrogate and satirise its own processes" (35).

It is also obvious that technology will continue to blur the boundaries between the “original” and the “remake”. Even the question of what constitutes live theatre is under discussion with the development of collaboration between certain prestigious theatres and the cinema. In Britain it is the National Theatre which is leading the way. A recent article in *The Sunday Times* Culture supplement Stephen Armstrong asks the question: “Is the National Theatre turning into a film studio?” (6). “NT live is a digital experiment that is rapidly becoming a global player for British theatre. It beams live stage performances by satellite to roughly 700 cinemas across 25 countries” (6). This is just the latest in the long line of different forms of collaboration between the cinema and the theatre. We can suppose that we will witness more and more Shakespearean remakes of one sort or another in the coming years. It should come as no surprise that Branagh has already become involved in the project. His *Macbeth* was recently on offer at cinemas throughout the United Kingdom.

We began this paper by discussing the relevance of the term “remake” when applied to the theatre and went on to suggest that the concept allows us to look at the way film, TV and stage productions of Shakespeare’s plays influence each other. What the case of *Henry V* seems to suggest is not just that the theatre has come under the influence of the cinema and is thereby affected by the remake phenomenon, but also that the cinema has in its turn moved closer to the theatre insofar as certain films are redone, just as plays can constantly be revived in new productions. Economic factors may account for some but not all of the factors involved here. A new version of *Much Ado About Nothing* appeared in 2012, after Branagh’s own version in 1993. There is no reason to suppose that the director, Joss Whedon, hoped to make enormous sums of money from a film version of a play which is not particularly effective on film since it relies enormously on the witty dialogue of the two protagonists. It has become impossible to treat theatrical performance simply as a unique event which cannot be replicated. The various productions of the play show, on the contrary, that what we are watching is doing, redoing and remaking.

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