

## “Jumping O’er Times”: Diachronic Design in Olivier’s *Henry V*

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From the start Olivier’s film had vocal proponents, among them . . . Jean Mitry, who thought the stylized setting and *mise en scène* ‘exceptional solutions to the dilemma of a play adaptation for the cinema.’ . . . Mitry at once recognize[d] the subtlety in the shifts in spatio-temporal organization that allow for a cinematic representation of a world view of the Middle ages, one different from our own but one which Henry has to negotiate.<sup>1</sup>

Sandra Sugarman Singer, in her influential 1979 dissertation,<sup>2</sup> and others after her,<sup>3</sup> have written on the groundbreaking multiple diegeses in Olivier’s film, *Henry V*. Ace Pilkington observes that British scholar Graham Holderness, in his 1985 book *Shakespeare’s History*, “maintains that the film’s interpretation is more complex than it is often taken to be and that Olivier’s ‘aesthetic devices’ have been seriously underestimated.”<sup>4</sup> And in 2008, Anthony R. Guneratne wrote in his book, *Shakespeare, Film Studies, and the Visual Cultures of Modernity*, that *Henry V* was “Olivier’s most profound contribution to the cinematic visualization paradigm of seeing, no less indeed than to the pictorial transition from the medieval to the early modern.”<sup>5</sup>

I would like to suggest that movement through time found in Laurence Olivier’s film—its spatio-temporal organization, multiple diegeses, aesthetic devices, and cinematic visualization—is rooted in a couplet from Shakespeare’s text. Lines 28-29 of the prologue suggest the device:

For ‘tis your thoughts that must now deck our kings,  
Carry them here and there, *jumping o’er times*. (1.0.28-29;  
italics mine)<sup>6</sup>

*The Riverside Shakespeare* editor, G. Blakemore Evans, provides the following footnote for Shakespeare’s expression “jumping o’er

times”: “The play deals with the events between Henry’s preparations to invade France in 1414 and the Treaty of Troyes in 1420.”<sup>7</sup> In the text of play, the notion of jumping o’er times is largely “the telescoping of events between Agincourt and Troyes,”<sup>8</sup> which, as Shakespeare puts it, is “turning th’ accomplishments of many years / Into an hour-glass” (1.0.30-31).

Geoffrey Bullough, writing on Shakespeare’s use of his sources, notes that in *Henry V* “Shakespeare picks his way through Holingshed’s numerous details, limiting himself mainly to the French business, omitting happenings in England.”<sup>9</sup> Bullough argued that “by compressing the reign into what is virtually one campaign . . . and closely following Agincourt with the successful peace negotiations of five years afterward, he made [t]his play less fragmentary than”<sup>10</sup> previous histories.

As film moves from the verbal to the visual, it often opens up the visual elements of the narrative. In the written text, the parameters of jumping o’er the times are six years. In adapting Shakespeare’s play for the screen, Olivier has broadly expanded the scope from six years to several centuries. Likewise, he expands the spatio-temporal dimensions of carrying the king here and there. Olivier has carried his king from playhouse to soundstage to location, and jumped over the times—from the world of the playwright, to the world of the historical story, and at times even to his own day.

Olivier’s film is also a study in both period and style. Harry M. Deguld points out in his 1973 book, *Filmguide to “Henry V,”* that “much controversy has centered on the visual styles of *Henry V*. There is no critical agreement as to what the various styles are, whether they are integrated, or whether they are relevant to an adaptation of Shakespeare.”<sup>11</sup> Douglas A. Russell, in his book *Period Style for the Theatre*, comments that “the word *style* is frequently an obstacle when discussing period plays because to many theatre people it means a superficial composite of manners, movement and customs to be incorporated into a production. Admittedly, the term is a treacherous one—vague and meaning different things to different people.”<sup>12</sup>

While there may be some hyperbole in Russell’s use of the word “treacherous,” terms for styles cannot be depended upon to carry the same meaning (much less connotations) to all readers. In discussing *design*, most observers tend to favor the discussion of *period*. It has a more concrete vocabulary. The opening scenes of Olivier’s film are set in an Elizabethan playhouse. Eponymous period names, such as Elizabethan, are quite specific; Webster’s

defines it as “of or characteristic of the time when Elizabeth I was queen of England.”<sup>13</sup>

While a *period* is defined as an interval of time, *style*, because it seeks to describe aesthetics, is a more abstract idea to discuss. The style associated with Elizabethan England is Mannerism. Geoffrey Squire, in his book *Dress and Society*, begins a chapter on the Mannerist style with the sentence, “The complex of attitudes and tendencies which are indicated by the stylistic term Mannerism (a selective term not applicable to all works produced during a specific period) seemed to move like a wave across Europe in the sixteenth century.”<sup>14</sup> Though it will take a full chapter to describe or define Mannerism, this opening sentence gets across the key ideas about style: complex, attitude, tendency, selective, and a sense of being a movement.

Although words about style often mean different things to different groups and have different meanings in different times and places, style is the more integral issue in design. A change in style influences the interpretation of the text more than a change of period. For example, when costuming one of Shakespeare’s plays in his own time, many directors will opt for French or Italian styles for the female romantic characters—the softer lines of the continental styles are thought to be more flattering than the angular or boxy English fashions. Likewise, with men’s fashions, German Renaissance styles, particularly those of the soldiers of fortune or *landsknechts*, are often found to be more comical for vain or bombastic characters since the “panings and ‘pullings-out’ in Germany were carried to ridiculous extremes.”<sup>15</sup> In Olivier’s film, the costumes of the low-born, such as Pistol and Bardolph, display the bombast and excess of Mannerism.

Some of the visual elements in Olivier’s *Henry V* are seen in two guises—that simulating a piece of Elizabethan scenery and that simulating a contemporary cinematic rendering of the world of the story. At times we see the same scenic elements or the same clothing in two different periods. In this paper I will look at visual elements of the movie that move from one period to another as the story progresses. The shifts in period and style are not uniform throughout the design areas; therefore, scenery, props, costumes, and hair will each be examined separately.

**SCENERY.** Kenneth S. Rothwell, in his book *Shakespeare on Screen*, notes that “the lively realism of the Elizabethan playhouse is contrasted with the subsequent artifice of the sequences in France.”<sup>16</sup> Harry M. Deguld observes that “the scenery against which Charles and his court move helps to reinforce the impression

that the French are essentially out of touch with reality. The settings have fairy-tale-like quality and a frail elegance that is sharply contrasted with the more naturalistic scenery and real landscapes in which Henry and his army appear.”<sup>17</sup>

In Olivier’s film, the Boar’s Head tavern is presented in two guises and in two periods. In the screen rendering of Shakespeare’s act 2, scene 1, we see an Elizabethan stage representation of the tavern; but for act 2, scene 3, the same design is transformed into a cinematic simulation of the medieval tavern. As Michael Anderegg writes, “The [second] scene at the Boar’s Head tavern is no longer set at the Globe Theatre but is presented with a stylized cinematic realism, with a three-dimensional set for the tavern.”<sup>18</sup>

Even the Boar’s Head sign itself is more realistic in the second scene. Jack J. Jorgens, in his book *Shakespeare on Film*, writes, “The style [in the second Board’s Head scene] is somewhere between illusionist theatre and the ‘realism’ of studio sets of the 1940s.”<sup>19</sup> This observation brings up an important aspect of movement through periods when looking at cinema—the stagecraft or scenic conventions of the time that the film was made are present in the film and are increasingly apparent as time goes on.

The Boar’s Head sign has many levels of visual interpretation. At first it is a placard presented by the boy introducing the scenes. But it is a self-reflexive pun as he turns it to reveal the reverse side painted with a boar’s head. As the boy hangs it on the set, the perception of this prop has shifted from a sign for the Elizabethan playhouse audience to read into a pictorial sign that is a part of the Elizabethan scenic interpretation of a Gothic alehouse. The item projects self-awareness in naming itself, but it also marries the words “Boar’s head” to the image of a painted boar’s head. As a member of the film audience, I always laugh when the sign is flipped over, but the on-camera playhouse audience doesn’t; they simply applaud the start of the scene. The writing on the placard that the boy presents to the playhouse audience suggests that, for the most part, the Elizabethan playgoer was literate; however, the Boar’s Head sign when it hangs as a scenic element implies that its owners and clientele—the comic low-life characters in the play (Pistol, Nym, Bardolph, Quickly and the boy)—are illiterate.

The cinematic transition into the Boar’s Head scene is notable. Just before the first Boar’s Head scene, storm clouds gather and it starts to rain. Anthony Davies notes that the visual effect of “the violent downpour which suddenly drenches the both the players and the audience in the Globe [theatre] switches concentration from theatrical involvement into the area of cinematic realism.”<sup>20</sup>

This rendering of a storm is a cinematic effect, and as such it begins to take the viewer out of the world of watching a filmed stage production into a purely cinematic world. It has a thematic significance as well. Rain imagery has many overtones. If the storm clouds do indeed gather after the declaration of war, it is the little people—the underclass—who get rained on, not the nobility. This scene is, in a sense, the moment in the film that is most at odds with the patriotic spirit of the time.

The storm may also be viewed as a use of the pathetic fallacy—granting the heavens human emotions and misgivings over the declaration of war, knowing the toll that war takes on the common folk. Although the film omits or glosses over the deaths of the low-life characters, Pistol is the only one of the five who survives to act 5 of Shakespeare’s text. The rain is Olivier’s cinematic invention; it is not in Shakespeare’s text. Decades later Baz Luhrman will follow in Olivier’s footsteps and make use of the pathetic fallacy in a similar manner. He inserts an even more dramatic storm into his film adaptation of *Romeo + Juliet* shortly after the deaths of Mercutio and Tybalt. Like Olivier before him, Luhrman’s storm is not in Shakespeare’s text, but occurs at a pivotal plot point for a title character.

One last note on the scenery: Deborah Cartmell, in her book, *Interpreting Shakespeare on the Screen*, comments about the forward movement of the scenic elements as the film presents the Duke of Burgundy’s speech in act 5, scene 2: “Burgundy’s nostalgia for the past in his meditation on the cost of war is visually accompanied by . . . a landscape hitherto unfamiliar in the film. Almost imperceptibly we move forward in time—the rural scenes are close to a Constable landscape— . . . the film is concerned with transportations from one state to another—from theatre to film and from one moment in history to another.”<sup>21</sup>

**PROPS.** A different kind of movement between times occurs with certain props. Specifically, I’m going to address the props containing writing. To me, the presence of these written props serves to bring the language from the period of the writer to the contemporary viewer. In his article, “Redefining Originality: Pearce and Luhrman’s conceptualization of *Romeo and Juliet*,” Francisco Menendez writes on the use of putting the words from Shakespeare’s text on the screen in the opening montage of Luhrman’s *Romeo + Juliet*: “In the opening of the film, Luhrman departs from his and Pearce’s screenplay to create a cathartic montage that mixes images, title cards and Shakespearean dialogue. It . . . demonstrates how Luhrman . . . prepare[s] the audience for

his screenplay adaptation. The opening marries the word to the image and the image to the word, an approach that will be the key for the audience to be able to accept the language in this [contemporary film adaptation].”<sup>22</sup>

To a far lesser extent and in a much less bold style, Olivier’s *Henry V* is a precursor to Luhrman in picturing “words” on the screen. The archaic spelling in the floating playbill that opens the film puts early modern English visually on the screen before we hear it. Then we see and hear the hubbub of the theatre before the play is to begin. The music and the camera work extend the time between first seeing the archaic spelling and first hearing it spoken. We are given almost four and one-half minutes to acclimate to the sights and sounds of Elizabethan London before we encounter its spoken language. Just before the first speech of the Chorus, a young boy presents a placard to the playhouse audience. This placard duplicates the writing on the floating playbill of the film’s opening.

Bruce Eder, in his commentary on Olivier’s film, notes that to Olivier and his collaborator and text editor Alan Dent, “the biggest problem was the language. Shakespeare’s plays were written in what is officially referred to as Early Modern English, a form of English, especially in its grammar and meaning, just different enough from twentieth-century usage to repel mass audiences.”<sup>23</sup>

Eder’s commentary focuses on the many ways, particularly the comic staging of the opening scene, that the film makes the language more accessible to a modern filmgoer. The film uses sight and sound to make way for language. The recurrence of the same archaic spelling of *fift* and *battel* on the placards in the Elizabethan playhouse scene lets us see the unfamiliar spelling of the words shortly before we encounter the unfamiliar structure and meaning of the language. It also ties in with the idea of the dual identities of an Elizabethan production of the play *Henry V* being simultaneously presented with and within the Olivier film. The playbill, when presented cinemagraphically, introduces the film; and then, when presented by the boy according to stage tradition, it introduces the play within the film.

The music has a subtle yet tremendously effective way of drawing the viewer into the film. The score alternates between William Walton’s film music and period music. While the camera is showing the hustle and bustle of the Elizabethan playhouse, period music fleshes out the atmosphere. At other times, the familiar style of twentieth-century film music eases us through the more difficult verbal passages of Elizabethan verse. A notable example is the

underscoring during the narration of the Chorus’s opening monologue. The film music sets the tone for the speech and, as music has a notable emotional link with the filmgoer, it helps us understand the language of Shakespeare’s world.

Another instance of the presence of the written word in the staging of this story is passively present in the film’s opening sequence. The bespectacled stage manager holds a text of the script through the first scenes of the film. The visual presence of the script maintains the idea not only of words, but also of an old story, an old play within the picture frame. It is self-referencing as it reminds us that we are watching the same written dialogue being performed that the stage manager is following in his prompt book.

The prop papers pertaining to Salic Law, used to much comic effect by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Ely, also warrant discussion. They figure prominently in how Olivier starts to present the story, but they are not props required by the script. Unlike many props in Shakespeare, they are not mentioned in the dialogue. Nor are they indicated by the spare stage directions in the script. In her 1991 book on Shakespeare’s stage properties, Frances Teague does not include them in her “Property Lists For Shakespeare’s Plays,”<sup>24</sup> yet they figure prominently in the comic business of Olivier’s film. They also have a more subtle role in the film: Like the playbill, placards, and the prompter’s script, they present another example of a prop containing archaic words, and in this case archaic information, on the screen during the first scenes of the film.

Just as the text of *Henry V* is present as a promptbook in the first scene in the Elizabethan playhouse, a different kind of book, an illuminated manuscript is present in the first scene in the French court. This prop is self-referencing as well. Whereas the promptbook presents the source of the words of the film that we are watching as present in the film, the illuminated manuscript may be a conscious acknowledgement of the visual inspiration for the French scenes of the film—the twelve calendar images from the Duc de Berry’s illuminated manuscript, *Les Très Riches Heures* (also called a *Book of Hours*). Harry M. Deguld simply comments that the character of “the Duc de Berry scrutinizes an illuminated manuscript—presumably *Les Très Riches Heures*.”<sup>25</sup> Sandra Sugarman Singer writes more on this prop and the Duc de Berry as well: “It is not only that he is named, but the manner in which we see him that makes [Berry’s] presence notable . . . [Berry], magnifying glass in hand, is interrupted at a tall slender reading stand on which rests, of course, an illuminated manuscript. He turns at the mention of his name, his costume is distinguished by its trapezoidal hat,

exactly that of the January plate. To be sure, the moment reflects on Olivier's wit.<sup>226</sup>

**COSTUMES.** Much less is written on the costumes in this film than on the scenery. The practice of maintaining continuity in formal design elements (such as color, proportion and texture) through a shift in period is more apparent, and more extensive, in the costume design. It occurs for both the royalty and the comic low-life and is quite fascinating when considering the issue of period versus style. The costumes change periods when the film transitions from the Elizabethan stage to simulating the actual time of Henry's reign; however, the design elements remain the same. They wear what is essentially the same design, but the design takes the form of the earlier period. As Michael Anderegg notes in his 2004 book *Cinematic Shakespeare*, "The costuming, almost *imperceptibly* [italics mine], has changed—no longer pseudo-Elizabethan, as in the Globe scenes, but now pseudomedieval."<sup>27</sup>

Costume details specific to the artificial silhouette of Elizabethan times, such as the Boy's pumpkin hose and Pistol's ruff and wrist ruff, are gone. The men's breeches with their slashing and puffing have given way to the simpler lines of medieval *bosen*. Quickly's attifet is now a Gothic wimple, and the width of her bum roll is scaled down. Although the period has changed, the aesthetic attitude remains the same. The character delineation remains the same. Their social milieu is the same. The color palette remains the same. Quickly is still in an off-white headdress and chemise, a tan bodice, an olive green skirt and a brown apron. Pistol is still in the same shade of red. Nym is in the same shades of dark greens and dark reds.

Bruce Eder in his commentary on the Criterion Collection DVD of *Henry V* notes that this was the first of Shakespeare's plays to be filmed in color, and the dramatic use of color is a prominent part of the overall design. It would be a decade before another major film release of Shakespeare in color.<sup>28</sup> *Hamlet*, Olivier's next film adaptation of Shakespeare was in black and white; and the color in his *Richard III*, is muted and subdued, nothing like the vibrant color of *Henry V*.

In addition to the color in the costume design, almost all the formal design elements, such as proportions (e.g., Quickly's body is divided up into roughly the same sections of color in both periods, and the ratio of one area to another is basically unchanged) and homespun texture and pattern (e.g., Bardolph's striped sleeves), remain the same. The visual manifestation of the character relationships remains the same, yet the period has changed.



The same transformation of period occurs with some of the court costumes as well. Olivier’s regal dress is interpreted as both Elizabethan stage costume and as medieval court costume. The details, such as the shoulder crescents, lace collar and matching cuffs, and silhouette of Olivier’s playhouse costume (corresponding to Shakespeare’s act 1, scene 2 and the curtain call in the film) are Elizabethan. The details, such as the high collar and silhouette of his long Gothic gown in Southampton (act 2, scene 2), as well as his short Gothic tunic in the wooing scene at the French court (act 5, scene 2), are medieval. But what is important is how all three of these costumes are variations on the same image. In all three he wears a bright red wool garment ornamented with much gold decoration and his legs are in white. It is not surprising that the jewelry is slightly more stagy in the Elizabethan playhouse. The Elizabethan stage costume features an open robe worn over a doublet. The open robe is comparable to the long Gothic gown worn at Southampton; the Elizabethan doublet is comparable to the short tunic worn in the wooing scene. All three costumes use similar materials to create the same character image—a leading man whom the audience will find bold, virile and noble.

On stage this play could be costumed in Elizabethan costumes or costumed in the more historical medieval fashions. Both stage traditions exist and co-exist. But the movement from one period to another asynchronous period, particularly a backward move in fashion during the forward progression of the narrative, was novel.

As a side note, I find this example of movement between periods insightful. It shows that a design idea can take form in more than one period. It conveys the idea that period does not in and of itself make a design. Design is about creating character. The character can be designed and created independently of the period choice.

Apropos of the Chorus’s invocation for the audience that “’tis your thoughts that must now deck our kings” (1.0.28), I would like to broach the issue of whether our ability (or verbal facility) to more readily discuss period influences the convention of varying the period of these plays. Another way of looking at the costume design in this film is interesting: the question of whether the popularity of this film influenced (or opened up) the acceptance of shifting costume conventions concerning period pieces. The change of period is not text-based; it is a cinematic convention. As has been written elsewhere, this film broke the rules on narrative film. Its visual conventions for multiple time frames were novel and have been widely written about. However, it also broke costume

conventions in the presentation of narratives. As I mentioned earlier, the costumes move back in time as the narrative moves forward. This isn't a flashback. Older fashions are conventionally used to signal a flashback. But here the costume choices support a less conventional vision of storytelling. The film had an exceptionally wide distribution, and I wonder if it was influential in forging the public's ability to see and accept historical "period" narratives in multiple guises.

Fashion historian Edward Maeder writes about the influence of contemporary fashion on the adaptation of period fashions in contemporary films. The fit, cut, and fabric choices are very much influenced by the prevailing aesthetic of the decade when a film is made,<sup>29</sup> yet another manifestation of the movement of design between periods. We now see much 1940s styling in the cut of the Gothic gowns in Olivier's film. The center back closure on Renee Asherton's pink gown for her opening scene is done as a mid-twentieth-century costume, not as an actual medieval garment. Likewise, all the costumes are machine stitched with nicely turned linings (particularly on the scalloped edges). More important, the cut of the dress conforms to the contours of the contemporary full-foundation undergarment. The placement of bust line, waistline, and hipline reflect the aesthetics and curves of the 1940s figure. No attempt is made to alter the actress's body into a medieval shape or posture. The period pattern is adapted to go over a modern body. The dress has several touches that reflect 1940s fashions. The drape in the shoulder area is a 1940s touch. It gives the performer some freedom of movement and looks quite elegant to the modern audience, but is not characteristic of medieval garment construction. The four pleats under the bust, which open just below the waistline, use a popular 1940s cut to achieve fullness in the skirt. The stiffened blue faux collar is a variation on the boat neck, which was also popular during the middle of the twentieth century. These adjustments reflect the practice of blending modern and historical fashions in film costume.

The men's costumes as well reflect contemporary aesthetics. The form-fitting tights are modern. They are not the bias-cut *hosen* of medieval times. The strong shoulder line reflects contemporary taste rather than the sloping Gothic shoulder. And in general the fullness of the doublets reflects the fit of a contemporary suit, not the more form-fitting laced period doublet.

One final observation on the costumes: in his book *Laurence Olivier and the Art of Film Making*, Dale Silviria writes insightfully on the movement through time which occurs in the costumes as

Olivier returns the film from the French court to the Elizabethan playhouse at the wedding of Henry and the Princess Katherine:

Olivier begins the transformation considerably before the couple reaches the twin thrones . . . [B]eneath the white wedding robes Olivier and Asherton have already donned their Elizabethan apparel. The instant of the costume change occurs between the midshot in which the couple retires to their respective circles of attendants and the long shot that picks up the entire assembly as Katherine and Henry emerge from the circles. Thus, even as Olivier moves towards the approaching mystical climax, he is taking us away from it, back to the first reality of the film, the Globe.<sup>30</sup>

**HAIR.** Overall, the actor’s hair and makeup have a clear sense of stage versus cinematic traditions and correspond directly to the acting styles. The hair reflects the period shifts as well.

It is interesting to look at Olivier’s hair vis à vis Alicia Annas’s essay on hair and makeup in Maeder’s book, *Hollywood and History*.<sup>31</sup> The typical cinematic practice during the middle decades of the twentieth century was to keep the leading men’s hairstyles very close to the actor’s own hair. The character image yielded to the star’s image—particularly when viewed from the front. The duality of periods in this film is quite interesting in terms of Olivier’s hair. The hairstyle of Olivier as the actor playing Henry on the Elizabethan stage conforms to standard cinema practice. His hair looks rather like the popular hairstyles of his day. However, his hair for the medieval sections is quite striking and quite daring for an actor of his stature. For the lead in a major motion picture, it is surprisingly close to medieval styles.

The film makes an insightful use of a reappearing prop wig. Renee Asherson’s hair is covered by elaborate medieval headdresses during the French court scenes. However, after the film returns to the Elizabethan playhouse for the closing bows, she appears in the same red curly wig that the boy actors were playing with backstage at the Elizabethan playhouse (between act 1, scene 1, and act 2, scene 2). As Princess Katherine moves through time and appears in Elizabethan garb, she takes on the hair color and style of her descendant Elizabeth Tudor. Elizabeth I was the great-great-granddaughter of Katherine via Katherine’s second marriage to Owen Tudor.

One hairstyle in the film, that of the Duke of Burgundy, looks neither Elizabethan, medieval nor modern. It is late 18th century. I find it more interesting to regard this as a movement through time rather than a mistake. To me it suggests the vision of a voice

from the Age of Enlightenment speaking for reason. As Deborah Cartmell observes, “This speech is a plea for peace, not a celebration of the achievement of peace.”<sup>32</sup> It is interesting to wonder if Olivier’s film is also a plea for understanding and unity in the post World War II peace negotiations.

**DESIGN FOR OCCASION.** The last aspect of design in this film that I’m going to discuss is how the design visually supports Olivier’s use of *Henry V* as World War II propaganda. As a designer, I read Shakespeare’s script as indicating an economic disparity between the English and the French, and that the disparity would be reflected in the design of the English nobles and the French nobles in both their appearance and their surroundings. The initial textual basis for this comes from the dialogue between the prelates in act 1, scene 1, concerning the wealth of France. It is also present when the French boast of the quality of their armor and other accoutrements.

Fashion history also supports this approach to design. French fashions of the early fifteenth century were more colorful, opulent, ostentatious, frivolous and ornamented than those of the English. However, we find no economic disparity in costume design between French and English nobles in the costumes for this film. In Olivier’s presentation of *Henry V*, the English are as richly dressed as the French, though they tastefully forego the foppish excesses of French fashion. To me this is consistent with the propagandist objectives of this film. While the English are the underdogs, they are not seen as lacking in resources. So on to the scenery—their palaces and castles.

Olivier finesses the wealth and opulence issue with the scenic elements. Though the French court is pictured in beautiful sets suggestive of a well decorated, richly appointed palace, the English court scenes all take place on the “stage set” of the Elizabethan playhouse. The wealth of their castles cannot be compared; however, something more thematically significant emerges from this staging. He leaves the French in the art of the Duc du Berry’s *Book of Hours*—a static art form: art which is found in museums and libraries. But the English, the victors, at the opening and, more importantly, the close of the film are presented in the playhouse—a live art form: an art form that continues from one generation to the next. As we see here this summer at the Utah Shakespearean Festival, plays such as *Henry V* are still being performed in Elizabethan-style playhouses. In fact, there are more facsimiles of Elizabethan playhouses presenting live theatre today than in either

Shakespeare’s day or Olivier’s. Thematically, the cinematic effect of the shifting through periods and styles is not only interesting, but relates to the film’s wartime goal of boosting morale. This may be an old story (as evidenced by the Elizabethan playhouse) of an even older historical event (as evidenced by the stylized depiction of the medieval art); but the battle scene is shot on location. The battle is real and the victory is real. And the idea—that such a victory against seemingly overwhelming odds was real—had great appeal in wartime England: If it could be done once, it could be done again.

### Notes

1. Anthony R. Guncratne, *Shakespeare, Film Studies, and the Visual Cultures of Modernity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 56.
2. Sandra Sugarman Singer, *Laurence Olivier Directs Shakespeare: A Study in Film Authorship*, PhD diss., Northwestern University, 1979 (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1984), 66-67.
3. Anthony Davies, *Filming Shakespeare’s Plays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 34-35.
4. Ace G. Pilkington, *Screening Shakespeare from “Richard II” to “Henry V”* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1991), 110, citing Graham Holderness, *Shakespeare’s History* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1985). 190.
5. Guncratne, *Shakespeare, Film Studies, and the Visual Cultures of Modernity*, 130.
6. William Shakespeare, *Henry V*, in *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1974), 936. The lines appear at 1.0.28-29; all in-text line references are from this volume.
7. *Ibid.*, n. 29.
8. Herschel Baker, introduction to *Henry V*, in *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1974), 930.
9. Geoffrey Bullough, ed., *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare, Volume IV* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), 355.
10. *Ibid.*, 349.
11. Harry M. Deguld, *Filmguide to “Henry V”* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), 58.
12. Douglas A. Russell, *Period Style for the Theatre, Second Edition* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1987), xv.
13. *Webster’s New Twentieth-Century Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., s.v. “Elizabethan.”
14. Geoffrey Squire, *Dress and Society* (New York: The Viking Press, 1974), 45.
15. *Ibid.*, 48.
16. Kenneth S. Rothwell, *Shakespeare on Screen* (New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc., 1990), 94.
17. Deguld, *Filmguide to “Henry V,”* 61.
18. Michael Anderegg, *Cinematic Shakespeare* (Landham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004), 37.
19. Jack J. Jorgens, *Shakespeare on Film* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), 130.

20. Davies, *Filming Shakespeare's Plays*, 34.

21. Deborah Cartmell, *Interpreting Shakespeare on the Screen* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2000), 99-101.

22. Francisco Menendez, "Redefining Originality: Pearce and Luhrman's Conceptualization of *Romeo and Juliet*," *Creative Screenwriting* 5, no. 2. (1998): 39

23. Bruce Eder, "Commentaries," *Henry V*, special ed. DVD, directed by Laurence Olivier (1944; New York City: The Criterion Collection, 2006)

24. Frances Teague, *Shakespeare's Speaking Properties* (London: Associated University Presses, 1991), 177.

25. Deguld, *Filmguide to "Henry V,"* 35.

26. Singer, *Laurence Olivier Directs Shakespeare*, 88.

27. Anderegg, *Cinematic Shakespeare*, 37.

28. Eder, "Commentaries."

29. Edward Maeder, ed., *Hollywood and History—Costume Design in Film* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 9. Like most British films, *Henry V* followed similar conventions to those used in Hollywood. Olivier had been in Hollywood prior to filming *Henry V*.

30. Dale Silviria, *Laurence Olivier and the Art of Film Making* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1985), 138-39.

31. Alicia Annas, "The Photogenic Formula: Hairstyles and Makeup in Historical Films," in *Hollywood and History—Costume Design in Film*, ed. Maeder (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 58.

32. Cartmell, *Interpreting Shakespeare on the Screen*, 99.