Shakespeare en devenir
ISSN électronique : 1958-9476
Courriel : shakespeareendevenir@univ-poitiers.fr

Screen Shakespeare and French Theory: Bazin, Metz, Deleuze, From Realism to "Dream-Cinema"

Par Anne-Marie Costantini-Cornède

Publication en ligne le 18 février 2022

Résumé

Cet article analyse différents modes de représentation dans les adaptations de Shakespeare à l'écran au regard de notions développées par la critique française. Nous verrons 'abord le réalisme cinématographique, analysé par André Bazin et précisé par Metz, Aumont ou Vernet à partir d'exemples dans l'adaptation de *The Merchant of Venice* de Michael Radford (2004) ou *Macbeth* de Mark Brozel (2005), tendant également vers le thriller. Les notions d'image-temps ou d'image onirique développées par Gilles Deleuze sont propres à définir un cinéma métaphorique et symbolique (Welles, Abela, Kurosawa) ou conceptuel. Enfin, *Che cosa sono le nuvole* de Pasolini, fable poétique et transposition radicale d'*Othello* est envisagé comme exemple de film d'essai essentiellement shakespearien. Il s'agira de voir comment la critique française met en valeur ce qui reste essentiellement shakespearien au-delà de toute liberté d'adaptation et en quoi les

problématiques esthétiques permettent d'éclairer les styles, mais également les enjeux idéologiques spécifiques.

Mots-Clés

réalisme, effets de réel, image–mouvement, image-temps, image onirique, symbolisme.

Table des matières

Texte intégral

This paper aims at exploring the way French theory concepts may shed new light on the interpretations of big-screen Shakespeare adaptations. The

names of theorists like André Bazin, Christian Metz, Jacques Aumont, or Gilles Deleuze are now well-known, and notions such as cinematic realism or 'movement-image' and 'time-image' are increasingly resorted to in the field of international Shakespeare studies. What can this bring to the study of film in terms of new readings of the plays or new visions of Renaissance worlds? Is such theoretical criticism always relevant, and if so, for which kinds of adaptations? This paper seeks to identify different trends through various examples and assess how these concepts may help define specific styles, provided classification may be considered as relevant. It is indeed hard to establish clear-cut categories, each film working on a specific system and constructing its own diegetic universe. Yet major trends do exist, and often intermingle. There are also points of critical convergence. Jack Jorgens's notions of the "realistic mode of representation" [1] may be analogized with Bazin's notion of realism and his notion of a "filmic mode" with Deleuze's concept of time-image. Critics have long sensed conceptual similarities. Christian Metz basically defines two types of films, the "diegetic (narrative-representational)" [2] films, which show and tell recognizable stories, and films which may not tell a story at all or multiply discontinuous, "dysnarrative" [3] or meta-artistic effects that deconstruct narrative fluidity and enhance the cinematic process. But there is no clear-cut divide between the two, Metz adds, this pair being "connected by a particularly impressive gradation of specific or mixed positions". [4] For all the diversions in 'free' adaptations, Shakespeare films are classical and narrative representational. They are 'Shakespeare-based', their scripts essentially following the play-plots.

We will first define concepts and consider the question of realism in keeping with the tenets of the Founding Father of French criticism, André Bazin, who defended a cinema of realism, transparency, and narrative fluidity. For Bazin, "whatever the film, its aim is to give us the illusion of being present at real events unfolding before us as in everyday reality". [5] Michael Radford's historical *The Merchant of Venice* (2004) draws on realistic motifs to establish an authentic context. So does Mark Brozel's *Macbeth* (BBC Retold, 2005), where this mode is also combined with thriller

or noir genre effects. If the realistic mode is prevalent within a large corpus of over four hundred films, whether they be set in the Renaissance context, modernised or 'foreign' films, this is not to say that this mode is unilateral. Stylistic variations may appear within films displaying motifs introducing visual uncertainties and questioning the real, such as prone to define a "thought cinema" (*cinéma de la pensée*). Deleuze's concepts of time-image or dream-image, which he defines as "an image where a movement of world replaces action" [6] (one that makes the film verge on the symbolic and the mythical), will help us find examples of a metaphorical cinema in Welles's, Kurosawa's or Abela's adaptations of *Macbeth*. Such motifs create suggestive effects that coalesce with the play's metaphysical issues. Third, Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Che cosa sono le nuvole*, a twenty-minute episode in the omnibus film *Capriccio all' italiana* (1968), will be addressed as an example of essay film and a fantasy rewriting of *Othello* displaced on a Marionettes stage where the interweaving of realism, poetry, meta-artistic and subversive issues leads to the oblique but effective restitution of the Shakespearean vein. The more oblique, the more the adaptation subsumes universal themes.

I. Cinematic realism

1. Bazin and Eisenstein: transparency versus materialistic cinema

Bazin defended the dominant model of realism, which inflected full decades of cinematic production from the 1940s onwards. The very phrase 'cinematic realism' evokes Bazin's name and his theories, amply taken up by a line of theorists: the French (Metz, Aumont, Vernet, Marie) and others — be they critics or directors. Bazin's well-known and oft quoted formula is that the screen image is like "a mask" or "a window onto the world", [7] a phrase borrowed from Leon-Battista Alberti the great Renaissance

theoretician. Aumont explains: “For Bazin, what is primary is in fact the event as it appears in the real world or in an imaginary world analogous to the real one”. [8] The film should thus be true to the real world and the events represented which are not incoherent with credible situations. Vernet, along Bazin’s lines, defines two sub-categories regarding subject-matter realism: “poetic realism” concerning some 1930s French films and “Italian neorealism” including films from the liberation era, featured by a cluster of specific traits like location shooting in natural settings rather than studios or showing concern for simple characters’ lives and popular contexts. There are, among others, Roberto Rossellini’s *Rome Open City* or *Paisà* (1946), Vittorio DeSica’s *Shoeshine* (1946) or *Il Ladro de biciclette/ The Bicycle Thief* (1948) or Luchino Visconti’s *La Terra Trema* [9] and socio-politically oriented followers as well like Pasolini, who are fully committed to this stance. Today, the author adds, the theoretical model is applied to a relatively limited number of films. Beyond stylistic differences, these films indeed reflect a strong anchorage to the everyday world and social realities of the times.

But if realism is seen as a necessary prerequisite, Bazin’s concepts (and those of his followers) should not be simplified and misunderstood from the outset. When Bazin asserts, “What is imaginary on the screen must have the spatial density of something real”, [10] this means that cinematic vocation is the representation of reality with “as much ambiguity as exists in reality itself”, in other terms, what Bazin calls “the immanent ambiguity of reality” or “the illusion of the real”. [11] Films should not aim at reproducing reality exactly as it is, but rather, in a plausible way. A film is not a blunt interpretation of Aristotle’s *mimesis*, or any documentary form of reproduction, it is an imitation of the real reviewed in the light of personal creativity.

Bazin, in another oft-quoted statement, distinguishes “those directors who put their faith in the image and those who put their faith in reality”. [12] Basically this means that ‘Bazinians’ or champions of classical narrative cinema (‘faith in reality’ directors) believe in the construction of fluid

narratives, stories seamlessly unfolding without the spectators even being aware of 'editing' or *découpage* (shot splicing) devices as well as in the 'transparency' — or immediacy — of film discourse. This trend, Aumont explains, represents a "specific (though widespread and dominant) film aesthetic according to which a film's essential function is to present the represented events to be seen [*donner à voir les évènements représentés*], rather than presenting itself as a film". [13] Contrariwise, Russian formalists, Eisenstein or Pudovkin, are the 'image-filmmakers' who defend a dialectical, materialistic cinema and consider montage as an essential tool to convey articulated ideological discourses. A film has to reflect reality and its potential meaning while simultaneously making an ideological judgment. Formalists and *montage-roi* adepts thus tend to resort to intellectual editing devices such as jump cuts, "discontinuous transitions" that cause "jarring or even shocking shifts in space and time", [14] disruptive mismatches rather than soft or invisible matches (on action or on movement), systematic alternations of viewpoints and deconstructive or meta-artistic devices. These are all kinds of hyperbolical or second level of meaning-producing effects that sustain a self-conscious dialectical and ideological cinema.

Given these various perspectives, it is not surprising that Bazin's 'Realism-and-ambiguity' stance should prevail in Shakespeare films *a priori* following play-plots with recognisable stories (and that should remain so). But discontinuities and Eisenstein-based montage effects may also be traced out in films or parts of our films within overall realistic narratives. They build up the innovative, poetic or filmic mode dear to Jorgens. One may think of Baz Luhrmann's 1996 *Romeo+Juliet*'s zoomed-haunted and speed edited opening sequence, a spectacular shock and dizziness throughout, that fully serves the satire of a fifties materialistic America turned into a modern dystopia. [15] Self-conscious montage effects like visible, disruptive mismatches are used for parody or deconstructive purposes. Of this, New Wave anti-bourgeois Jean-Luc Godard is a specialist, amply doing so in all his films and in his so well and probably meta-artistically entitled *Breathless* no less so. Yet there is no clear-cut divide

between Bazin's realism and Eisenstein's dialectical cinema. As a matter of fact, the two trends may indefinitely intermingle. The neo-realists quoted above, Visconti, DeSica or Pasolini follow such a two-fold, realism-*cum*-ideology track, using the make-true stance to sustain their own ideological discourses precisely nurtured by such verisimilitude. In Shakespeare films, interwoven stylistic variations or genre effects create manifold complexities to represent the *auteur* filmmaker's diegetic universe with *innovatio*. This is all a matter of choice and equilibrium.

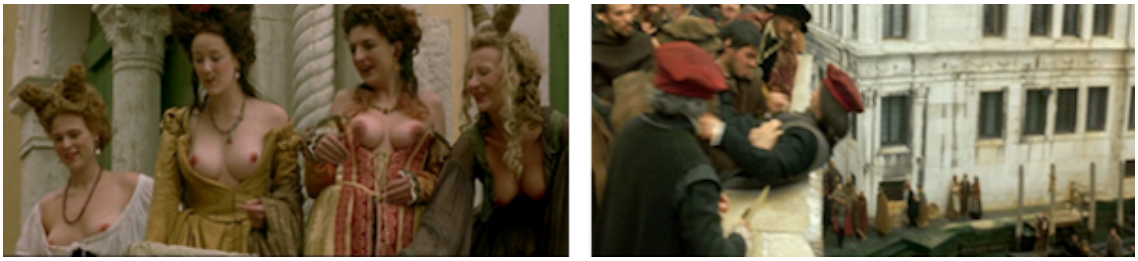
2. Constructing the impression of reality

The sense of the real admitted as a prerequisite, how to construct the 'impression of reality'? For Vernet, this means to arouse in the spectator the feeling that the story unfolds in conformity with a common *doxa* or else follows the "systematic economy of the plausible" [16] or the foreseeable.

Michael Radford's *The Merchant of Venice* openly recreates an authentic, credible context. There is no framing device encompassing the plot-based narrative by which directors usually mark their personal territory. But as the film's establishing shot explicitly announces the place and date, "Venice 1596", the sight of the grim, brown-gowned monks standing on a Venetian gondola coming straight towards us and holding a huge, ominous, and sight-obstructing Christian cross operates effective realistic contextualisation and also serves to introduce the critical discourse against the religious intolerance prevailing at the time. Explanatory scrolls and intertitles interspersing the narrative will make this explicit throughout, bringing clarity and historical verisimilitude with a series of textual *vignettes* echoing the cinematic visualisation. The long "historicist-inspired scroll" which opens the film, Crowl remarks, provides us with all due "details of anti-Semitism, usury and sumptuary laws in Renaissance Venice": [17]

> Intolerance of the Jews was a fact of 16th century life, even in Venice, the most powerful and liberal city-state in Europe. […] In the daytime any man leaving the ghetto had to wear a red hat to mark him as a Jew. […] The Jews were forbidden to own property. So they practised usury, the lending of money at interest. This was against Christian law. […] The sophisticated Venetians would turn a blind eye to it, but for religious fanatics, who hated the Jews, it was another matter.

And so do the other scrolls that directly illustrate the tense atmosphere at a time when Jews or even Christian usurers, although they played an essential role in society, were despised and condemned.



"What news on the Rialto?" (I.3.33): Realism cum ideology or Bazin and Eisenstein in one

Crédits : Michael Radford, William Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice

The infamous red hats, the persecution scenes (the Jew threatened to be thrown from the Rialto into the Grand Canal) and the textual additions are all shock visualisations that cinematically respond to the tropes of the "comedy of cruelty" and the logic of a sombre comedy, Venet argues. [18] The scenes of intolerance intermingled with sights of open licentiousness (the Rialto prostitutes) also reflect the prismatic ambivalences building up the play's texture. Yet, if the didactic purpose is achieved, such a superimposition of devices may create a redundant and flattening effect. This is also an oblique confession that cinematic image cannot explain it all.

Picturesque, painterly *effets de réalité* and psychological *effets de réel* also construct verisimilitude. Drawing on Jean-Pierre Oudart's theories, Aumont

and Marie explain that the former, *effets de réalité,* the realistic, pictorial effects so to speak, represent "historically determined, analogical or conventionally coded clues/indexes". [19] The latter*, effets de réel* are essentially psychological devices applied to characters in action, by means of which the spectator believes that what he can see has existed in reality. [20] Directors may for instance opt for location settings rather than studios, show painterly landscapes (*effets de réalité*) and operate effective, authentic reconstitutions indoors with carefully chosen décors and props. This is here an obvious option. This make-true stance is of course not new. It was initiated as early as the fifties, for instance in Renato Castellani's *Romeo and Juliet* where the director, backed by architecture specialist Gastone Simonetti, asserts an unfailing commitment to picturesque realism. Jackson speaks of a film claiming a "level of authenticity", and a "wealth of atmosphere that could never have been secured inside studio walls", and of Castellani "as a (partly) neo-realist filmmaker". [21] The mise en scène may remain theatrical, not so effective as the cinematography, this partly due to Laurence Harvey's affected playacting as Romeo. Conversely, Franco Zeffirelli's version combines the picturesque and verisimilitude via a mise-en scène hinging on authentic costumes, make up and manners that duly evoke the social realities of the times.

Radford draws on psychological *effets de réel* and contrasted motifs to transpose the play's ambivalences and convey the satirical discourse. On the essential place of the protagonist, Crowl remarks, "Interestingly, both Greenblatt and Radford, in their treatments of the play, attempt to historicize it, but end to provide an essentialist's takes on its central troubling character, Shylock". He argues further that Radford, beyond effective historical contextualisation, enlarges perspectives and imparts a modern vision of sectarian fanaticism, thus making the protagonist "understandable to a modern mass audience". [22] This, precisely, is also achieved via mise en scène *effets de réel*. The "Has not a Jew eyes?" scene is rendered by means of dark blue filters, which confers a serious tonality fit to reflect the protagonist's dark musings. The extreme close up on Shylock's face, as an intimate camera fully captures and enhances the

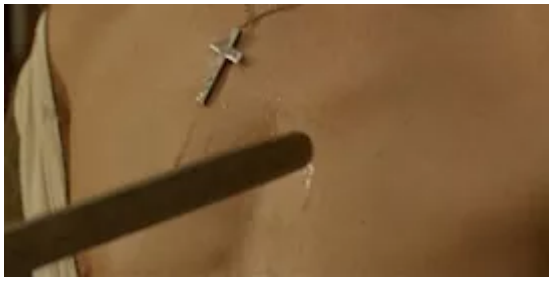
protagonist's emotions, tends to victimize the protagonist even more and arouse the spectator's empathy, creating what Metz defines as the spectator-character "secondary cinematic identification". [23] Alain Bergala further comments on Metz's notion:

> If it is true that secondary identification in the cinema is fundamentally an identification with a character as a figure of our likeness or as a fellow human being, or as a locus for affective investments by the spectator, we would nonetheless be wrong to consider identification as an effect of the sympathy we might feel for a certain character […]. [S]ympathy is the effect and not the cause of identification. [24]

Effets de réel achieve psychological realism and construct the satirical discourse, superimposing an ideological sub-text on mere realism to illustrate subtle, by no means Manichean truths.

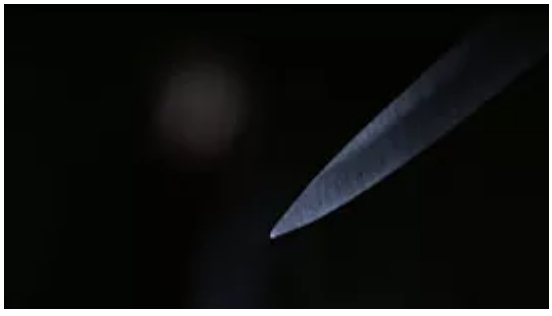
Later, Shylock, unable to show mercy, is himself turned into the epitome of cruelty and sectarian rigidity: "I'll have my bond, speak not against my bond" (III.3.4) — the Christian now the victim and the Jew the executioner. Shifts from sheer realism to a suggestive or symbolic mode enhancing dramatic intensity are frequent even in most classical films. In the pound of flesh scene, this is achieved by tight framings and the regular alternation of shots and reverse shots that create a dialogical system within. Strong contrasts between high-key and low-key lighting on both characters' faces delineate two clearly divided, symbolic spaces: light (the tormented Christian) and darkness (the Jew and torturer). In the same scene, the spectator's gaze is made to focus on the knife and cross shot in extreme close-up, the entire background erased. Such minimalist visual motifs or 'visual synecdoches' bear the features of "synsigns". A "synsign", Deleuze argues, represents "a set of qualities and powers as actualised in a state of things, a situation in relation to a subject", [25] or else a central point around which the action-image unfolds. Such motifs tend to turn the protagonists into essential, almost allegorical principles.

In Brozel's *Macbeth,* the knife is also an essential motif, a realistic object integrated in a familiar environment, which displaces the play's air-drawn or "dagger-of-the-mind" images (II.1.38). It is here used as an ordinary, suspense-creating device in pure thriller style, as when it is shown firmly held by Joe (James McAvoy), the talented, but envious cook on his way to kill his two-star restaurant boss and employer Docherty/Duncan, or when an extreme close-up enhances the ominous gleam of the blade. The narrative is structured around a series of visual leitmotivs that create an obsessive rhythm: the knives seen swiftly slipped off from the set or the Chef sharpening them before cutting the pig's head. The element of a friendly ritual in a cheerful kitchen soon becomes a grim symbol of death as when the six knives are seen in the dartboard-set ominously placed so as to point at Joe's head, which *de facto* becomes their edges' central target. The knife, here also a "synsign" or central focal point, [26] in fact, propels the narrative forward, linking the various climactic moments to establish a meaningful and logical chain of events. After the murder, as Ella drops the knife into the dustbin to get another clean one from the kitchen, the oblique allusion to the garbage men offers a convincing cluster of images symbolic of evil.



The knife and the cross

Crédits : Michael Radford, William Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice



Mark Brozel's knife motif in thriller style

Crédits : Mark Brozel, Macbeth

3. Modern displacements

Brozel's modernisation is an interesting case merging realism and thriller or noir genres. Unlike his predecessors, the director avoids mists and haziness in the opening sequence, showing a familiar context made slightly uncanny from the outset. The establishing shot's huge landfill, where the red truck sheltering the three garbage men (modern witches) is seen looming amidst heaps of garbage, suggests the vision of a dystopian modern world, which also serves a satirical discourse. The landfill, Joe's kitchen and the dark 'back alley' behind the restaurant, where evil transactions are conducted, are all realistic places represented in neat contours. After Docherty's murder, Joe is haunted by blood-obsessed visions represented in realistic sharp focus again, as when he sees blood suddenly flowing all over his wife Ella's body behind the shower glass. Seen through Joe's imagination, this becomes a subjective image objectified or turned tangible, a thriller-style device that creates a willing suspension of disbelief effect. But if the unusual is made frightening, it remains realistic and credible. The objectified visions are similar to such real-looking hallucinations possessing past-haunted minds, or, as Oliver Sacks explains: "positive phenomena conjured up out of thin air, […] looking powerfully real, but always felt as being unreal". [27] The interpretive consequence is that it tends to suggest evil as stemming from the character within and seemingly excludes the possibility of supernatural mystery.

This way of mixing reality and fantasy hinges on classic film noir genre, featured here by some of its most usual tropes like dystopian settings, low-key lighting or expressionistic techniques, as well as marked *effets de réel* displaying complex characters moved by ambivalent motives (ambition, greed or cruelty) and displaying embittered or depressed moods (Joe's envy, Ella's suicide). Such a style that mixes oddities and improbable events

depicted in a realistic mode may also evoke the paradoxes of magic realism: “a style in which occasional improbable or implausible events are included in an otherwise realistic story”, [28] as in *Like Water for Chocolate* (1991) or *Trainspotting* (1996). For such films, the audience duly accepts the incongruous as a set of internal and playful conventions. This mode of representation merging realism and fantasy, prevalent in classical films, works effectively. But it may tend to objectify the situation too much. For all the innovation, the deliberate commitment to down-to-earth realistic representation may flatten perspectives and turn potential mysteries into most ordinary realities. All ambiguity is erased, which entails a loss of the tragic tonality.

Modern witches in an urban, dystopian context
Establishing shot: the garbage truck

Crédits : Mark Brozel, Macbeth

Joe Macbeth (James McAvoy)’s kitchen and the knife motif

Crédits : Mark Brozel, Macbeth

Hallucinatory fantasies
Ella (Keeley Hawes) in the shower

Crédits : Mark Brozel, Macbeth

The make-true stance was amply popularised in 80s-90s films and has remained popular ever since in action or war films operating on Hollywood conventions and movement-image dynamics. Gilles Deleuze defines the movement-image (perception, affection, and action-image) as one creating direct, action-sustaining effects. Movement is built by means of a mobile camera. The multiplication of viewpoints thus entailed conveys a sense of action that helps reproduce the illusion of the real and real movement rather than *stasis when* time-images would introduce uncertainties and disruptive discontinuities. In fact, movement effectively links the different objects in the frame. The movement-image is often resorted to in classical Hollywood cinema, hinging on explicit effects and action to create impetus and rhythm within fluid narratives. With tight framings that allow emotions to be plainly visible and entail spectator-character identification, the author argues, these techniques create psychological realism: “The action-image inspires a cinema of behaviour (behaviourism)”. [29] Deleuze then comments on the “crisis of the action image” (“*mise en crise de la vérité*”) and refers to Peirce’s concept of “thirdness” [30] to define time-images (recollection-images, dream-images or “onirosigns”, and world-images) as third or else mental, subjective images that create meta-artistic or second level of meaning effects estranging the spectator from first level narrative to point out implicit discourses. The dream-image verges on abstraction, creating oblique effects to represent complex or ambiguous realities. Its omnipresence leads to the creation of a dialectical cinema questioning

classical transparency or a metaphorical cinema, as in Welles' *Macbeth* (1948) or Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* (1957), which Deleuze precisely takes as examples to define his concept. Indeed, if the films show substantial stylistic differences, each in its own way depicts an uncertain universe to construct the metaphysical dimension. Suggestive haziness and soft focus effects here suggest the presence of supernatural, immemorial evil.

II. Dream-images and metaphorical cinema

1. Mists in "originary" worlds

Throne of Blood opens on to imaginary, unreal spaces where sense-confusing mists seem to have annihilated the real world. Rain-drenched Cobweb Forest haunted by mad laughter and unnatural light piercing through its dark intricacies (a visual web), the bleached skies and thick mists where Washizu/Macbeth (Toshiro Mifune) and Miki/Banquo (Minoru Chiaki) are seen riding in endless circles, losing all sense of orientation, and metaphorically reason, represent such "deterriolised", "emptied" and "disconnected" spaces, [31] not so much visible as to be perceived, not so much shown as suggested, prone to depict unreal worlds. Deleuze, quoting Jean-Louis Schefer, here speaks of a "de-realized" universe featuring the cinema of a metaphysician: "the grey, the steam and the mist constitute 'a whole this side of the image', which is not a blurred veil put in front of things, but 'a thought without body and without image'", [32] and, quoting Bazin, the author adds that this was also the stance in Welles's *Macbeth*, where physical limits are blurred in an all-elemental, indefinable space: "where the indiscernibility [*sic*] of earth and water, sky and land, good and evil constituted a 'prehistory of consciousness (Bazin) which produced the thought of its own impossibility". [33] As Deleuze, defines such impossible, imaginary worlds by means of a concept-image itself born from a poetic

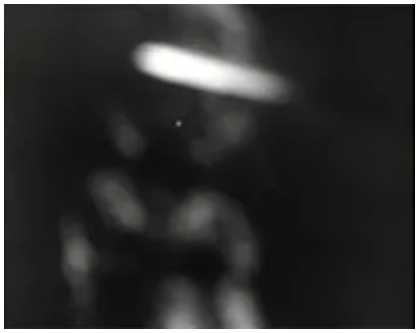
insight, “the suspension of the world, rather than movement, which gives the visible to thought”, [34] he means to show the essential quality of these film openings as a cluster of time-images suggestive of subjective mindscapes.

The representation of dream worlds is an aesthetic challenge for a medium primarily meant to show and implies the prevalence of cinematography. For the spectator, this leads to an *agnosia* experience or a sense of loss of perception. Constant oscillations between the visible and the invisible feature a visionary “cinema of the seer” where “we no longer know what is imaginary or real, physical or mental […]. It is as if the real and the imaginary were running after each other, as if each was being reflected in the other, around a point of indiscernibility”. [35]

In both versions, the supernatural is suggested by means of an overall fuzziness and soft-focus (or shallow focus), or else blurred contours, rather than the sharp focus or neat contours featuring classical cinema realism. Such effects echo the play’s ontological uncertainties or the metaphysic of evil logic, built up by the obsessive questioning within, as when Banquo first discovers the creatures: “What are these, / so wither’d, and so wild in their attire, […] / Live you, or are you aught / That man may question? (I.3.39-43).

Metaphysical opening: “What are these?” (I.3.39)
Soft focus and visual agnosia

Crédits : Orson Welles, Macbeth



“Is this a dagger which I see before me?” (II.1.33)
False creation of the mind

Crédits : Orson Welles, Macbeth

“Where the place?” (I.1.6): mists and dysgnosia

Crédits : Akira Kurosawa, Throne of Blood (Wild Side Films Toho)

Weird woman (Chieko Naniwa) weaving man’s fate and supernatural haziness

Crédits : Akira Kurosawa, Throne of Blood (Wild Side Films Toho)

Soft-focus and oneiric mists are not merely formal effects. They entail ideological interpretations. “Soft-focus art shots”, Aumont explains, bear an “expressive” value recalling the techniques of Renaissance painters, who

tried “to codify the ties between sharpness and proximity”. [36] Leonardo da Vinci, for instance, constructed an atmospheric perspective by treating distant objects as slightly hazy to convey a sense of the metaphysical. As these effects suggest the presence of unidentified and all-pervading, world-around forces of evil rather than focusing on individualistic evil stemming from within (as in Brozel), they entail a wider, ontological interpretation and impart the sense of man’s universal tragedy. This is how time-images or dream-images may define a dialectical “thought-cinema”.

2. From contextualisation to timelessness

The “oneiric” may be defined in different ways. One may establish a distinction between merely poetic images, constructing a realistic context from dream-images or metaphysical time-images so to speak, where “a movement of world replaces action” or else prone to convey a sense of timelessness. Alexander Abela *‘s Makibefo* (1999) resorts to a minimalist mode of representation and stylized cinematography both to localize the action in Madagascar’s beautiful sights and impart a sense of the universal. Angle perspectives and lighting play a key role. One single low-angle shot suffices to “essentialise” Makibefo’s abrupt rise in power. Conversely, the extreme high-angle shot combined with an alienating, long-distance viewpoint showing traitor Kidoure/Cawdor as a mere tiny spot fleeing in the sun-scorched desert, imparts the meaning of an all-vulnerable man crushed by fate. Here both a sense of time (the flight duration) and timelessness or a sense of man’s tragedy are conveyed.

The essentials of power

Crédits : Alexander Abela, Makibefo

Welles's *Othello* (1952) displays many such dream-images that construct the metaphorical cinema of a 'seer'. Othello's dark death-mask, seen from an extreme high-angle shot in the funeral opening sequence, introduces the tragic tonality in a highly stylized, almost abstract way. The monochromatic stance and strong lighting contrasts also create abstraction. The film constructs a sophisticated network of symbolic images operating like a sustained visual metaphor via a series of visual leitmotiv of gratings, sight-obstructing intricacies or labyrinthine motifs of all kinds meant to echo the play's manifold web-net-trap images: "as little a web as this will ensnare as great a fly as Cassio" (II.1.164-165). The suspended cage where the villain Iago (Micheál Mac Liammóir) is made to watch the funeral, his void and inexpressive gaze suggestive of incomprehensible evil seen behind the gratings, and the same cage ominously hanging from the Mogador fortress walls, suggest both physical and mental alienation. [37] The Cyprus palace's treacherous arches, where human shadows are furtively passing, evoke secrecy and dissimulation, or the wild mazes of the green-eyed monster.

Wilson Knight sees the play as marked by two essential styles, the Othello music, displaying the protagonist's "faith in creation's values of love and war" and Iago's, "a spirit of negation, colourless and undefined", [38] synonymous with chaos. Jorgens remarks that Welles's film fully responds to these opposed perspectives, "the film's grandeur, hyperbole, and simplicity are the Moor's", and Iago's spirit featured by "dizzying perspectives and camera movements, grotesque shadows, tortured compositions and insane distortions". [39] Anamorphic representations sustained by a playful camera show caped Iago reflected on the Grand Canal's troubled waters to suggest both dissimulation and *agnosia*. Oneiric images, especially in their reiterative aspect, convey the sense of man's flaws and tragic fate. The climactic ocular proof scene (III, 3) is ridden with symbols of mental entrapment, as when Othello, infuriated by Iago's poisonous remarks, is seen revolving under wooden intricacies spreading

close above his head, as if crushed and yielding under the joke of heavy, “spleen-skies” *à la Baudelaire*. Such excruciating anxiety culminates in the fit of epilepsy scene as, in a long moment of stasis — a striking visual extrapolation — Othello experiences the vision of a topsy-turvy world and the impressive fortress is now turned upside-down, almost unreal. The distorted perception of an uncanny world is allowed by the spectacular effect. Dream-images here also blur all ontological limits: “[W]hat would enter into relations would be the real and the imaginary, the physical and the mental, the objective and the subjective, description and narration, *the actual and the virtual*”. [40] Beyond the hallucinatory experience, the extreme example of a subjective camera suggests a dizzying suspension of time, the passage to an indefinable state between life and death or ultimately timelessness. As the image verges on abstraction, space loses its tangible reality to become an undefined “any-space-whatever” or a no-man’s-land where facts and acts escape reason. There remains, here merely imparted, an acute sense of impending doom.

Time-image: Othello’s leaden, crushing skies

Crédits : Orson Welles, Othello

Time-image: Upside-down worlds

Crédits : Orson Welles, Othello

Mist-in-war Shrewsbury battle sequence

Crédits : Orson Welles, Chimes at Midnight

Cordoba's vertical obstructions

Crédits : Orson Welles, Chimes at Midnight

Chimes at Midnight also shows such examples of intellectualised dream-images. The blurred, fuzzy and phantom-image of the monstrous-armoured Falstaff, running and hiding from the Shrewsbury battle, and the final sequence displaying the same sight-barring motifs as in *Othello* (but this time vertical ones) are visual obstacles that also symbolise social impediments. If the mist and spear-laden battle sequences suggest the horrors of war with the same alienating long shots as in *Throne of Blood's* sequences, the final Cordoba Cathedral sequence, showing Falstaff optimistically trying to elbow his way among the spear-carrying soldiers to reach his "Jove and Jupiter", prefigures the shock and deadly pain at the king's abrupt betrayal. The cathedral is the castle-church that becomes the essential space of power, a cold, unfamiliar world to Falstaff, signifying estrangement and separation. [41] The sight-obstructing motifs then acquire

a timeless, extra-narrative dimension, which obliquely signify, rather than directly show, the tragedy to come or the fate of the low — born doomed to die in forlorn solitude. As Georg Lukács has it, it is the tragic perspective that here allows objective time to apprehend timelessness. [42] Dream-images suggest such universal timelessness. Beyond contextualisation and objective time, they become powerful genre markers and signifiers of tragedy.

Che cosa sono le nuvole? (*What Are the Clouds*?), our next example, is a twenty-minute long essay, one of the six episodes included in *Capriccio all' italiana*. Pier Paolo Pasolini [43] is well-known both as the champion of a local, "picaresque" neo-realism and as a multivalent artist, at once a film director, a screenwriter (he wrote the Roman dialogues for Fellini's *Le notti di Cabiria* and *La dolce vita*), an actor, novelist, poet, writer, subversive essayist and former member of the Communist Party satirizing Christian democracy, the western civilisation or a shallow, TV-alienated consumer society. His first films, *Accatone* (1961) and *Mamma Roma* (1962), give voice to popular characters fully anchored on marginal Roman quarters and enacted by real-to-life actors like Anna Magnani.

Poetic-philosophical interwoven trends inflect this highly stylized, brisk and swift essay, which reverberates the Shakespearean vein. The action crystallizes the domestic tragedy into an anamorphic and ultimately essential *Othello* remediated within the confines of a Marionettes theatre turned into an ideal world microcosm. Here, we wish to argue that stylization and self-conscious artificiality lead to humanistic realism.

III. Pasolini's poetic realism

1. Such real puppets: all the stage's a world

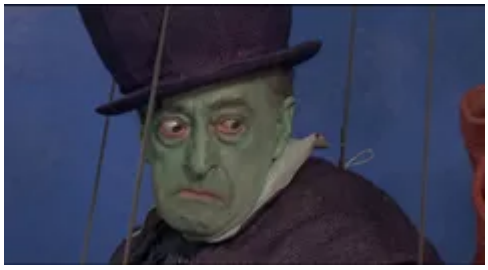
Maybe young Ninetto Davoli (Othello), Pasolini's companion, muse and favourite actor, here the essence of naivety, motivated the very choice of a play about naïve gulls. He is the first essential piece in creating an Italianate-popularised domestic tragedy turned upside down where all genres and conventions are subverted. The Marionettes' is a hierarchical world led by the off-stage but almighty intra-diegetic master-puppeteer seen performing multi-layered roles, fabricating puppet Othello by screwing his wooden head onto a stiff body, ostensibly manipulating puppets by pulling their all too visible strings off-stage and further making comments on the story. Another essential piece is Iago, enacted by the famous Neapolitan Totò, here playing his own social role as the Italian comic actor *per se* and essential representative of popular culture, and as such epitomising the film's sustained meta-artistic stance. The larger-than-life, all-Italian Iago appears as a paradoxical tragi-comic villain trampling the ground with anger or jubilantly fustigating "*quell porco*" ('that pig') or "*questo Mauro maldetto"* ('that cursed Moor'). All characters are infused by an Italianate popular stance. Cassio (Franco Franchi) is turned into a grimacing puppet. A plump Laura Betti playing with cherries enacts a somehow masochistic Desdemona, who enjoys being slapped and would even "enjoy to be murdered", as the impish puppeteer-narrator suggests to young Othello.

Critics have commented on the film's ostentatious self-reflexivity, as asserted in the establishing shot and credits alluding to Velasquez's paintings. The *Las Meninas* reflexive mode is sustained throughout by a series of *mise en abyme* effects, reflecting the artistic process, and amply reverberated via the puppeteer-narrator's wise (or cynical?) comments. Massai comments on socio-political aspects, arguing that this is a "reflective and self-conscious art that would promote the constructive resistance to the values of a bourgeois, post-capitalist society", [44] and, as she remarks that this reframing of *Othello* as a play-within-a-film is inspired by various sources, French films like Carné's *Les Enfants du paradis* (1945) concerned by meta-artistic stances, "where the main characters obsessively replicate in 'real' life the tragic plot they re-enact or watch in stage

performances of Shakespeare's tragedy", as well as the local, "popular theatrical tradition, *L'Opera dei Pupi* (Sicilian Marionettes)". [45] The author also comments on the dual nature of "all-too human" puppets: "If fashioned by the Shakespearean script while on stage, they are endowed with agency, stoic strength and self-awareness while in the strings". [46]

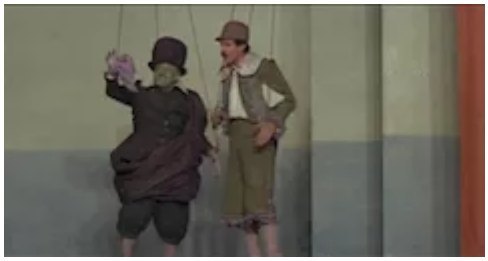
Such a twilight characterisation, we may argue, enhances the film's purpose to address several layers of reality or the potential ambiguities of the real, thus reflecting a Bazin-based stance. The puppets are indeed wavering between two opposed worlds, the world of things within, protected and safe yet enclosed and limited — to the creator's whims — and the real world with clouds, free but powerfully challenging. In a place so deliberately displaying its own artificiality, they represent everyday reality. Making realistic puppets voice human emotions equates to a philosophical chiasm by which Pasolini obliquely highlights the puppet-like or death-in-life realities of human life. The puppets become stylized metaphors for mankind.

The self-reflexive technique also operates on narration, as with the embedding of several story layers within the general narrative, the last level set in the outer, real world, showing the Caretaker coming and going on and off stage, bridging the real and artificial world. He is the poet-musician-singer enacted by Domenico Modugno, a well-known singer playing his own social role, a way for Pasolini to celebrate the arts, but also a cynical nod since, like the mystical soul passer ("the one who sings and passes"), he is in charge of throwing away the broken puppets into the landfill after the spectators' rebellion. The association of the high-brow (elevated poetry, beautiful music) and the low-brow, or coarse reality (garbage), reveals an anti-conventional, subversive stance, which may highlight the inherent parts of a complex human reality - a neo-realistic stance made poetry.



Totò ‘il cattivo’ as backstage, plotting Iago

Crédits : Pier Paolo Pasolini, Che cosa sono le nuvole?



Iago and Roderigo (Ciccio Ingrassia): The handkerchief ‘comi-tragic’ manipulation

Crédits : Pier Paolo Pasolini, Che cosa sono le nuvole?

Heaven-in-garbage, dystopia or rebirth: the puppets’ poetic trajectory

Crédits : Pier Paolo Pasolini, Che cosa sono le nuvole?

2. From disruption to sense of illusion recreated

Stage and spectacle conventions are turned upside down, both parodied and highlighted, mingling with popular Italianisms or humanistic

considerations. Othello, offstage, is oddly made to witness Iago's evil ploys — without this interfering in any way with the rest of the fiction and plot — and makes comments in strongly dialectical terms: "Ti credevo cosi buono, un pezzo di pane, ma invece, quanto sei cattivo" ("I thought you were so good, a piece of bread, but instead, how nasty you are"). Iago's fatalistic reply "Eh figlio mio, siamo un sogno dentro un sogno" ("We are a dream within a dream") reverberates the film's central *mise en abyme* process, the play-within-a-film device itself remediated into a puppet show. This also serves the ideological stance as it sheds an oblique light on life enigma and man's elusive nature.

The popular audience rebels against the story, evil characters and author '*pêle-mêle'*. Not the least anxious to respect conventions, they eventually rush onto the stage to destroy the two plotters and rescue Desdemona, who is about to be strangled by Othello. The 'chao-comic' rebellion that shows a conventionally passive audience suddenly turned creator, now fully taking the story's fate into their own hands, echoes (or ironically subverts) the play's tragic image, "[…] and when I love thee not/ Chaos is come again" (III.3.92-93). This goes beyond mere meta-artistic playfulness to signify a general questioning of conventions. Guneratne argues, "*Clouds* is an act of faith in human resistance to the tyranny of foregone conclusions to the authority vested in authorship". [47] As the Lords of misrule and wise Fools of the day scrupulously desecrate representation conventions in a Brecht-like stance, mingling the spectacular and ideology, this, we could argue, does not reflect mere aesthetic or formal research, but what Rancière calls "*aesthesis*", [48] or else an ontological vision of the world. This also subverts the initial tragic model to echo a more diffuse and baroque Shakespearean vein.

3. Truth-searching puppets or the poetic trajectory

These are truth-searching puppets, above all Othello, who wonders what to believe in the many contradictory truths he is assailed with, “Ma quale è la verità?” (‘But what is the truth?’). This is but another Pirandello-like variation on the initial “What are the clouds” questioning. Forever naïve Othello is torn between the cynical assertions of the puppeteer, maybe the director’s own voice, and the existential ponderings of so “buono” and hypocritical spiritual guide Iago: “La verità, non bisogna nominarla, perché à pena la nome, non ce più” (“The truth must not be told, for once it is told, it is no longer here”), an all too elusive answer or way to suspend the philosophical matter and leave it fully open. The puppets lying on their backs amidst garbage are dead to the artificial world, but fully freed from the theatre confines and their master-manipulator, now opening to the beauties of the real world. This is like a mystical rebirth. As a paternalistic Iago is left to explain the new mysteries to a new-born babe and beatifically blissful Othello lost in perplexities (“But what are these?”) and breaking into ecstatic exclamations: “Como so belli!” (“How beautiful they are!”), Iago’s cryptic reply, “Ah meraviglia beatificata della creazione!” (“Beatified marvel of the creation!”), sounds like the ultimate tragi-comic transgression. The paradoxical *anagnorisis*, which shows the “nihilistic” villain and epitome of gratuitous evil [49] so unexpectedly turned a saint, could be read as a chiasmic, satirical blow to Christian democracy (turned evil). But, above all, no clear-cut answer is given to the initial question that remains suspended, forever lost in poetry. The last dialogue imposes a final poetic drift to the narrative, as if poetry, sketched in straight and brisk (“*ligne claire*”) traits, ultimately prevailed over concept. For Pasolini, poetry was the closest art to cinema.

The director responds to Godard, in his famous essay “The end of the Avant-Garde” in *Heretical Empiricism* (1972), to assert, along with Bazin, that cinema is necessarily the language of reality. Yet, like other neo-realists, Deleuze argues, he is concerned by both social content and form as well as “an always ambiguous, to be deciphered real”. [50] Deleuze comments on the director’s trend to merge the ordinary and the mystical, seeing in his work “the permutation of the trivial and the noble, the

communication between the excremental and the beautiful, the projection into myth", [51] and he shows how the director analogizes Antonioni's *cinéma de la vérité* (as in *L'Amore in città*) with Godard's systematic self-conscious style better to explain the potential proximity of realism and conceptual artifice:

> For what characterises Pasolini's cinema is a poetic consciousness, which is not strictly aestheticist [*sic*] or technicist [*sic*], but rather mystical or 'sacred'. This allows Pasolini to bring the perception-image or the neurosis of his characters, on to a level of level of vulgarity and bestiality in the lowest subject-matter, while reflecting them in a pure poetic consciousness, animated by the mythical or sacralising element. [52]

This playful *Othello* is neither "excremental" nor as provocative as the controversial, Sade-based *Salò or the 120 Days of Sodom* (1975), which put off critics and audiences. It remains beautiful or at least poetically distanced throughout. But if this is self-conscious art, this is no parody desecration. The director opts for the happy choice of an oblique restitution of Shakespeare's poetry, here slightly displaced in the final reunion of the Iago/Othello — father and son — primary couple (after all, what need is there of any Desdemona in Pasolini's world?). Ultimately, there may be a point here - harmony may stem from the paradoxical association of dirt (death-in-garbage) and the sublime (rebirth-in-clouds), whereas in Brozel or Luhrmann this trope would mainly signal dystopia, decay, or chaos.

Could one possibly evoke here Bazin's views on "pure cinema"? As Bazin argues that DeSica succeeds in discovering the cinematographic dialectic "capable of transcending the contradiction between the action of a 'spectacle' and of an 'event'", he asserts his most radical and idealistic commitment to realism: "For this reason, *Ladri di bicicletta* is one of the examples of pure cinema. No more actors, no more story, which is to say that in the perfect aesthetic illusion of reality there is no more cinema". [53] Such a "no-more-cinema" stance suggests a cinema prone to efface all marks of enunciation, a possibility seemingly excluded here. Yet, one may argue, this is "pure cinema" precisely *because* of such highly self-conscious

stylisation, the sense of illusion or of a "real to be deciphered" *de facto* reconstructed via back and forth shifts from artificial worlds to the real world, as well as from ostentatiously de-conventionalised to re-conventionalized artistic forms.

Reception: what happens to 'denarratized' Shakespeare [54]

Pasolini combines story and discourse, operating on both form and content in the neo-realistic, "art of encounters" mode, stitching parody and the serious mode to bridge the gap between comedy and universal tragedy. The piece may equally be read as an entertaining life-tale inspired by the vital breath of local Italianisms *à la Bazin* and showing the same dialogue-merging techniques (verbal minimalism, meaning contractions), as in foreign Shakespeare films, or, as a subversive extrapolation subsuming universal themes while still fully anchored on the real. As Bazin asserted: "I am prepared to see the fundamental humanism of the current Italian films as their chief merit". [55] Such humanistic stances, one could contend, are precisely Shakespearean, prone to echo, *Hamlet*-like, "holding a mirror to life" images.

If timeless dream-images (Welles, Kurosawa) may conjure up the sense of the supernatural and tragedy, they do not jeopardize narration. Pasolini's stylized fable does not sacrifice it either to deconstructive parody as does Godard's *King Lear* (1987), a film praised in France as always — a 'must' — but also seen as a contrived and inappropriately non-narrative "anti-movie": [56] "Why is Godard's *Lear* so bad? […] Godard himself dispenses with the basic courtesies of story-telling". [57] When Pasolini's essay operates on a tight merging and coalescence of the realistic and the poetic, *Lear* appears like a self-indulgent film — Godard forever Godard doing some Shakespeare or so — denying its own status as an adaptation. One may ultimately wonder whatever happened to Shakespeare or the

Shakespearean at all. Could this mean, to put it bluntly, that a Shakespeare film without a good old story, and a recognisable one at that, is bound to be a ‘flop’?

Filmography

William Shakespeare’s The Merchant of Venice, Michael Radford, DVD 2005 MGM.

Makibefo, DVD 1999, courtesy of Alexander Abela.

Macbeth, Orson Welles, DVD 2010 Wild Side Films.

Throne of Blood, Akira Kurosawa, DVD 1957 Wild Side Films, Toho.

Macbeth, Mark Brozel, DVD 2007 BBC.

Othello, Orson Welles, DVD 1971 MCMLXXI.

Chimes at Midnight, Orson Welles, DVD 1966 Suevia Films.

Che cosa sono le nuvole, Pier Paolo Pasolini, DVD 1968 Dino de Laurentiis Cinematografica.

Bibliographie

AUMONT, Jacques, Alain Bergala, Michel Marie and Marc Vernet, *Aesthetics of Film*, translated and revised by Richard Neupert (from *Esthétique du film,* Paris, Éditions Nathan, 1983; see also 4th edition, 2016), Austin, University of Texas Press, 1992.

AUMONT, Jacques, and Michel MARIE, *Dictionnaire théorique et critique du cinéma*, Paris, Nathan, 2002.

BAZIN, André, *Orson Welles* [1972], translation by Jonathan Rosenbaum, New York, Harper & Row, 1978.

BAZIN, André, *Jean Renoir*, New York, Delta, 1973.

BAZIN, André, *What is Cinema*? 2 vols., vol. 1 [1967], forewords by Jean Renoir and Dudley Andrew, essays selected and translated by Hugh Gray (from *Qu'est-ce que le cinema* ?, Paris, Éditions du Cerf, 2000), Berkeley/Los Angeles/London, University of California Press, 2005.

BAZIN, André, *What is Cinema*? 2 vols., vol. 2, foreword by François Truffaut, essays selected and translated by Hugh Gray, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London, University of California Press, 1971.

BLADEN, Victoria, "Weird space in *Macbeth* on screen", in Sarah Hatchuel, Nathalie Vienne-Guerrin and Victoria Bladen (eds.), *Shakespeare on Screen*: '*Macbeth*', Rouen, Publications des Universités de Rouen et du Havre, 2013, p. 81-106.

COSTANTINI-CORNÈDE, Anne-Marie, "'[M]ethought/ The wood began to move' (5.5.32-33) or Whatever Happened to Witches, Daggers and Woods in Akira Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* (1957), Alexander Abela's *Makibefo* (1999) and Mark Brozel's *Macbeth* (2005): Film Style or the Poetics of Displacement," in Sarah Hatchuel, Nathalie Vienne-Guerrin and Victoria Bladen (eds.), *Shakespeare on Screen*: '*Macbeth*', Rouen, Publications des Universités de Rouen et du Havre, 2013, p. 227-259.

COSTANTINI-CORNÈDE, Anne-Marie, "La représentation de la violence dans William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* de Michael Radford (2004), réalisme, ostension et brouillages : style, effets, figures", in Pascale Drouet (éd.), *Shakespeare en devenir - Les Cahiers de La Licorne - L' Œil du Spectateur | N°4 - Saison 2011-2012 | Adaptations filmiques*, online since 3 February 2012. URL.

COSTANTINI-CORNÈDE, Anne-Marie, "Young Violence versus Institutional Duress. Questions of Authority and Challenge in *Romeo and Juliet* on

Screen", in Lisanna Calvi (ed.), *Authority, Resistance and Woe: 'Romeo and Juliet' and Its Afterlife*, Pisa, Edizioni ETS, 2018, p. 135-152.

CROWL, Samuel, "Looking for Shylock: Stephen Greenblatt, Michael Radford and Al Pacino", in Mark Thornton Burnett & Ramona Wray (eds.), *Screening Shakespeare in the Twenty-First Century*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2006, chapter 6, p. 113-126.

DAVIES, Anthony, *Filming Shakespeare's Plays*: *The Adaptations of Laurence Olivier, Orson Welles, Peter Brook, Akira Kurosawa*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988.

DELEUZE, Gilles, *Cinema 1 - The Movement-Image*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson & Barbara Habberjam (from *Cinéma I - L'Image-Mouvement*, Paris, Éditions de Minuit, 1983), London, The Athlone Press, 1986.

DELEUZE, Gilles, *Cinema 2 - The Time-Image*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson & Robert Galeta (from *Cinéma 2 - L'Image-Temps*, Paris, Éditions de Minuit, 1985), London, The Athlone Press, 1989.

DONALDSON, Peter S., *Shakespearean Films/Shakespearean Directors*, Boston, Unwin Hyman, 1990.

DROUET, Pascale, "Look how our partner's rapt": Externalizing rapture in Orson Welles's *Macbeth* (1948, 1950)", in Sarah Hatchuel, Nathalie Vienne-Guerrin and Victoria Bladen (eds.), *Shakespeare on Screen*: '*Macbeth*', Rouen, Publications des Universités de Rouen et du Havre, 2013, p. 107-119.

DROUET, Pascale, "*Othello* et les miroirs de Welles", *Palette pour Marie-Madeleine Martinet*, 2017, halshs-02125708. URL.

GUNERATNE, Anthony R., *Shakespeare, Film Studies, and the Visual Cultures of Modernity*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

HATCHUEL, Sarah, "Prithee, see there! Behold! Look! (3.4.69): The Gift or the Denial of Sight in Screen Adaptations of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*", *Borrowers and Lenders, The Journal of Shakespeare and Appropriations*

1.2.2005, <htpp://www.borrowers.uga.edu/cocoon/borrowers/request?id=781443>. Consulted on 20 September 2019.

IMPASTATO, David, “Godard’s *Lear*. Why Is It So Bad?”, *Shakespeare Bulletin* 12.3 (summer 1994), p. 41.

ISHAGHPOUR, Youssef, *Orson Welles cinéaste : une caméra visible (III). Les films de la période nomade*, Paris, Éditions de la Différence, 2001.

JACKSON, Russell, *Shakespeare Films in the Making: Vision, Production and Reception*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

JORGENS, Jack J., *Shakespeare on Film* [1977], 2nd edition, Laham, University Press of America, 1991.

LANIER, Douglas M., “Shakespeare Rhizomatics: Adaptation, Ethics, Value”, in Alexa Huang & Elizabeth Rivlin (eds.), *Shakespeare and the Ethics of Appropriation*, 2014, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, p. 21-40.

LUKÁCS, Georg, “La métaphysique de la tragédie”, in *L’Âme et les formes*, translated by G. Haarscher, Paris, Gallimard, 1974.

MARIENSTRAS, Richard, *Le Proche et le lointain : sur Shakespeare, le drame élisabéthain et l’idéologie anglaise aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles*, Paris, Éditions de Minuit, 1981.

MASSAI, Sonia (ed.), “Subjection and Redemption in Pasolini’s *Othello*”, in *World-Wide Shakespeares: Local Appropriations in Film and Performance*, London & New York, Routledge, 2005, p. 95-103.

METZ, Christian, *Film Language. A Semiotics of the Cinema* [1971], translated by Michel Taylor, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1991.

METZ, Christian*, Psychoanalysis and Cinema*: *The Imaginary Signifier* [1977], translated by Celia Britton, Anwyll Williams, Ben Brewster and Alfred Guzzetti, London and Basingstoke, Macmillan Palgrave, 1982.

PASOLINI, Pier Paolo, “The End of the Avant-Garde”, in *Heretical Empiricism* [1972], translated by Ben Lawton and Louise K. Barnett, Washington DC, New Academia Publishing, 2005.

PHILLIPS, William H., *Film*: *an Introduction*, 2nd edition, Boston & New York, Bedford’s/St Martins, 2002.

RANCIÈRE, Jacques, *Aesthetics and Its Discontents*, translated by Stephen Corcoran, Cambridge, Polity, 2009.

ROTHWELL, Kenneth S., *A History of Shakespeare on Screen: A Century of Film and Television*, 2nd edition, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004.

SACKS, Oliver, *Hallucinations*, Detroit & New York, Gale /Cengage Learning, 2013.

SHAKESPEARE, William, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet* and *Othello*, in *Tragédies, Œuvres complètes I and II*, Jean-Michel Déprats & Gisèle Venet (éds.), Paris, Gallimard, “Bibliothèque de la Pléiade”, 2002.

SHAKESPEARE, William, *The Merchant of Venice*, in *Comédies I, Œuvres complètes*, Jean-Michel Déprats & Gisèle Venet (éds.), Paris, Gallimard, “Bibliothèque de la Pléiade”, 2013.

VANOYE, Francis, *Cinéma et récit I : Récit écrit, récit filmique*, Paris, Éditions Nathan, 1989.

VENET, Gisèle, “Notice” and “notes” (for *The Most Excellent History of The Merchant of Venice*), in *Comédies I, Œuvres complètes (V)*, Jean-Michel Déprats & Gisèle Venet (éd.), Paris, Gallimard, “Bibliothèque de la Pléiade”, 2013, p. 1397-1436 and p. 1436-1449.

WILSON KNIGHT, George, *The Wheel of Fire*: *Interpretations of Shakespearian Tragedy* [1930], London and New York, Routledge, 1993.

Notes

[1] Jack J. Jorgens, in *Shakespeare on Film* (2nd edition [1977], Lanham, University Press of America, 1991, p. 7-12), defines four modes of representation in Shakespeare films: the theatrical mode, mainly static or stagy (but not continuously so), resorting to a still camera and focusing on mise en scène and actors, the realistic mode enhancing authenticity, the filmic or poetic, innovative mode amply using cinematography or multiplying deceptive devices, and the period or foreign film merging contexts.

[2] Christian Metz, *Psychoanalysis and Cinema*: *The Imaginary Signifie*r [1977], translated by Celia Britton, Annwyl Williams, Ben Brewster and Alfred Guzzetti, London & Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 1983, p. 38.

[3] Francis Vanoye, in *Cinéma et récit 1*: *Récit écrit*, *récit filmique* (Paris, Éditions Nathan, 1989, p. 199-200), defines "dysnarration" as a series of "deceptive" devices by which the film self-consciously questions its own narration and its status as film: "*une opération de contestation volontaire du récit par lui-même*", p. 199.

[4] Christian Metz, *op. cit.* p. 38.

[5] André Bazin, *Orson Welles* [1972], translation by Jonathan Rosenbaum, New York, Harper & Row, 1978, p. 77.

[6] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2*: *The Time-Image*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson & Robert Galeta, London, The Athlone Press, 1989, p. 325.

[7] André Bazin, *Jean Renoir*, New York, Delta, 1973, p. 87.

[8] Jacques Aumont, in Jacques Aumont, Alain Bergala, Michel Marie and Marc Vernet, *Aesthetics of Film*, translated and revised by Richard Neupert, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1992, p. 55.

[9] Marc Vernet, *Aesthetics of Film*, *op. cit.*, p. 109, and p. 110 about examples of films.

[10] André Bazin, *What Is Cinema*?, vol. 1 [1967], essays selected and translated by Hugh Gray, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, 2005, p. 48.

[11] Jacques Aumont, (on Bazin), *op. cit.*, p. 54.

[12] André Bazin, *What Is Cinema*?, vol. 2., Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, 1971, p. 24.

[13] Jacques Aumont, *op. cit.*, p. 55, and p. 66 on different views on montage.

[14] William H. Phillips, *Film*: *an Introduction*, 2nd edition, Boston, New York, Bedford's/ St Martins, 2002, p. 109 and p. 548.

[15] This radically differs from previous, realistic interpretations. See my article "Young Violence versus Institutional Duress. Questions of Authority and Challenge in *Romeo and Juliet* on Screen", in Lisanna Calvi (ed.), *Authority, Resistance and Woe: 'Romeo and Juliet' and Its Afterlife*, Pisa, Edizioni ETS, 2018, p. 135-152.

[16] Marc Vernet, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

[17] Samuel Crowl, "Looking for Shylock: Stephen Greenblatt, Michael Radford and Al Pacino", in Mark Thornton Burnett & Ramona Wray (eds.), *Screening Shakespeare in the Twenty-First Century*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2006, p. 113. See also p. 113-116 about Greenblatt's analysis of the historical context and Jews' persecutions.

[18] Gisèle Venet, "Notice" for "The Most Excellent History of *The Merchant of Venice*", in Jean-Michel Déprats & Gisèle Venet (éd.), *Shakespeare Comédies I; Œuvres complètes (V)*, Paris, Gallimard, "Bibliothèque de la Pléiade", 2013, p. 1407. All the quotes from the play are taken from this edition. The "Bibliothèque de la Pléiade" (same editors, *Tragédies I & II*,

2002) is also used for quotes from *Macbeth*, *Hamlet* and *Othello*. All uncommented quotes are taken from the DVDs mentioned.

[19] Jacques Aumont & Michel Marie, *Dictionnaire théorique et critique du cinéma*, Paris, Nathan, 2002, p. 65. My translation from: "*indices d'analogie historiquement déterminés*, […] *conventionnels et 'codés'*".

[20] *Id.* "*Le spectateur croit que ce qu'il voit a existé dans le réel.*"

[21] Russell Jackson, *Shakespeare Films in the Making: Vision, Production and Reception*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 161-162 and p. 163.

[22] Samuel Crowl, *op. cit.*, p. 113 and p. 115.

[23] Christian Metz, *op. cit.*, p. 56, and p. 54-57 for secondary identification.

[24] Alain Bergala, *Aesthetics of Film*, *op. cit.*, p. 220, and on secondary identification, see also chapter 5, p. 203-236.

[25] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1*: *The Movement-Image*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson & Barbara Habberjam, London, The Athlone Press, 1986, p. 222.

[26] *Id.* On the question of the knife as a "synsign" or "index" of death, see my article: "'[M]ethought / The wood began to move' (V.5.32-33) or Whatever Happened to Witches, Daggers and Woods in Akira Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* (1957), Alexander Abela's *Makibefo* (1999) and Mark Brozel's *Macbeth* (2005): Film Style or the Poetics of Displacement," in Sarah Hatchuel, Nathalie Vienne-Guerrin and Victoria Bladen (eds.), *Shakespeare on Screen*: '*Macbeth*', Rouen, Publications des Universités de Rouen et du Havre, 2013, p. 254.

[27] Oliver Sacks, *Hallucinations*, Detroit/New York, Gale/Cengage Learning, 2013, p. 12-13. See also p. 12-16 on visual disorders like "*agnosia*", the abnormal inability to recognize common objects, people, or sounds, or "*dysgnosia*" or disorientation in the relation of oneself to one's environment.

[28] William H. Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 549 and p. 292-293. On film noir tropes, see also p. 545.

[29] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 201.

[31] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 163.

[33] *Id.*

[34] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

[36] Jacques Aumont, *op. cit.*, p. 20-21.

[37] About mirror effects and entrapment motifs, see Pascale Drouet, "*Othello* et les miroirs de Welles", *Palette pour Marie-Madeleine Martinet*, 2017, halshs-02125708. URL.

[38] George Wilson Knight, *The Wheel of Fire*: *Interpretations of Shakespearian Tragedy*, (1930), London and New York, Routledge, 1993, p. 116 and p. 119. See also p. 15 on the "metaphysic of evil".

[39] Jack Jorgens, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

[40] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, *op. cit.*, p. 44. The italics are Deleuze's.

[41] Youssef Ishaghpour, *Orson Welles cinéaste*: *une caméra visible (III). Les films de la période nomade*, Paris, Éditions de la Différence, 2001, p. 674: "Tout ce monde de pierre entre murs, piliers et lances, à l'éclairage rasant ou plongé dans l'obscurité, n'est pas le sien*".*

[42] "La tragédie est une accession du temps à l'intemporalité du temps", in Georg Lukács, "La métaphysique de la tragédie", in *L'Âme et les formes*, Paris, Gallimard, 1974, p. 254 (my translation).

[43] Pasolini directed twelve feature films from 1961 to 1975, and five episodes in omnibus films as of 1963 “La ricotta” in *RoGoPaG*.

[44] Sonia Massai (ed.), “Subjection and redemption in Pasolini’s *Othello*”, in *World-Wide Shakespeares: Local Appropriations in Films and Performance*, London and New York, Routledge, 2005, p. 96.

[45] *Ibid.*, p. 98.

[46] *Ibid.*, p. 102.

[47] Anthony Guneratne, *Shakespeare, Film Studies, and the Visual Cultures of Modernity*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, p. 231.

[48] Jacques Rancière, *Aesthetics and Its Discontent*, Cambridge, Polity, p. 9.

[49] Richard Marienstras, *Le Proche et le lointain: sur Shakespeare, le drame élisabéthain et l’idéologie anglaise aux XVI^e^ et XVII^e^ siècles*, Paris, Les Éditions de Minuit, 1981, p. 208.

[50] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, *op. cit.*, p. 1. The author comments on neo-realism as “an art of encounters” operating on both form and content.

[51] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

[52] *Id.*

[53] André Bazin, *What Is Cinema*?, vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

[54] On this question and films interpretations, see the other articles in this issue.

[55] André Bazin, *What Is Cinema*, vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

[56] Kenneth Rothwell, *A History of Shakespeare on Screen: A Century of Film and Television*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 202-

205. See also Peter Donaldson, *Shakespearean Films/ Shakespearean Directors*, Boston, Unwin Hyman, 1990, p. 189-225.

[57] David Impastato, “Godard’s *Lear*. Why Is It So Bad?”, *Shakespeare Bulletin* 12.3 (summer 1994), p. 41, quoted in Kenneth Rothwell, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

Pour citer ce document

Par Anne-Marie Costantini-Cornède , «Screen Shakespeare and French Theory: Bazin, Metz, Deleuze, From Realism to “Dream-Cinema”», *Shakespeare en devenir* [En ligne], N°15 - 2020, Shakespeare en devenir, mis à jour le : 18/02/2022, URL : https://shakespeare.edel.univ-poitiers.fr:443/shakespeare/index.php?id=2506.

Quelques mots à propos de : Anne-Marie Costantini-Cornède

Anne-Marie Costantini-Cornède est membre de PRISMES (Paris 3 - Sorbonne Nouvelle) et Maître de Conférences à l’Université de Paris (5). Elle a soutenu une thèse sur les esthétiques de la représentation dans les films shakespeariens et publié de nombreux articles et chapitres d’ouvrage sur les films classiques et les modernisations (Olivier, Branagh, Luhrmann, Rohmer), les liens entre peinture et cinéma (Jarman, Greenaway), les adaptations historiques ou transnationales (Hytner, Kaurismäki, Kuros ...

Droits d'auteur