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Kenneth Branagh's Multicultural and Multi-ethnic Filmed Shakespeare(s)

One of the most striking features of Kenneth Branagh's approach to Shakespeare on screen is multicultural diversity most notably manifest in three dimensions: choice of the actors with differing ethnic backgrounds, choice of the place of action for his films, and choice of the time of action. Branagh has long been recognised as a director who carefully selects the temporal and spatial frame for the particular plays he chooses to film, one which he finds most fit in terms of the plays' filmic equivalents and cinematic conventions. For this reason he "travels" across time and place, introducing even such exotic locations, exotic in the eyes of the Western (multi-ethnic) viewers, as the 19th century Japan (*As You Like It*, 2006). On top of it, he does not hesitate to employ actors whose ethnicity may look, at first glance, rather odd when it comes to representing Shakespearean 16th-17th century Early Modern characters.¹ The aim of the article will be thus an attempt to find reasons and rationale for Branagh's strategies; the search will centre around such issues as colour-blind casting, the cross-over between stage and screen, filmic realism and theatrical convention.

Political Correctness / Colourblindness?

Kenneth Branagh himself and in the eyes of critics and scholars is linked with especially two names of stage/film actors/directors: Laurence Olivier and Orson Welles. As Samuel Crowl (*Shakespeare and Film*, 39-40) adequately notes his indebtedness to Olivier and Welles: "Branagh linked Olivier's theatricality and Welles's cinematic bravado with his own ripe *romanticism* to lead to the revival of the Shakespeare film in the 1990s." Earlier on, Crowl (*Shakespeare and Film*, 35) also combines the specific nature of the Branagh movies with his predecessor director-cum-actor Laurence Olivier: "in casting, the flair for the theatrically dramatic, and attention to Shakespeare's language, Branagh revealed

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¹ I do not refer to such figures as Othello or Aaron, of course.

his debt to Olivier.” Crowl emphasises, and rightly so, the respect Branagh and Olivier share for the Shakespearean line, which—in Crowl’s opinion—is more of the domain of the theatre rather than film. In this way, Crowl, too, makes us aware of how much theatrically informed Branagh’s films are. As a result, Branagh shares with his artistic masters, Laurence Olivier and Orson Welles, his theatrical and film experience and that of an actor/director (who can be called a stage/screen artist).² But Branagh directed his films in a different period in a different culture: no longer had Moors to be rendered by blackened white actors, but black actors could perform these parts. Branagh took a step further: he decided to ignore this “cultural possibility” and employ actors who in his opinion fit the role they are to play and belong to the multicultural landscape of both Britain and especially the U.S.³ Less clear is Crowl’s remark about Branagh’s casting reflecting that of Olivier’s since, apparently, I seem to argue otherwise. What perhaps was meant by Crowl is that Branagh chooses to cast in his film *British* actors who command a great experience of the stage.

However, the director himself (*Much Ado About Nothing by William Shakespeare*, x) explains the rationale behind his casting choices: “In crude terms, the challenge was to find experienced Shakespearean actors who were unpracticed on screen and team them with highly experienced film actors who were much less familiar with Shakespeare. Different accents, different looks.” Branagh (*Much Ado About Nothing by William Shakespeare*, x) further claims:

I was also interested in one or two Italian and French actors. My aim was to be as international as possible [...] In the end the choices became simple [...] In all cases I explained accents, and that they must be prepared to study the text technically, as well as carry out their absolute obligation to be truthful.⁴

Neil Taylor, while discussing the cast for *Hamlet* notes that “Branagh manages to assemble international ‘names’, particularly Americans” (264). Arguably, this sounds like the policy of meritocracy, which Ayanna Thompson, in her works

² It is worth observing that on a different occasion Crowl (“Flamboyant realist: Kenneth Branagh”, 224) adds yet another model for Branagh’s unique filming: Franco Zeffirelli—“Branagh is, in fact, the first director of Shakespeare films to mix Olivier’s attention to the spoken word with Welles’s fascination with camera angle and editing and Zeffirelli’s visual and musical romanticism”. Zeffirelli’s “romanticism” can, perhaps, be associated with Branagh’s propensity to seek “romantic” (or exotic, fairy-tale like) locations for his films, which I discuss below.

³ Andrzej Wajda, when casting the actress Teresa Budzisz-Krzyzanowska as Hamlet in his 1989 production, was allegedly not interested in raising gender issues, but in finding an actor/actress, irrespective of their gender, whom he considered most suitable to play the part in 1988/89.

⁴ Elsewhere, Branagh (*Hamlet by William Shakespeare*, vii) speaks about his “style [being] a development of [his] other [i.e. shot before *Hamlet*] Shakespearean films. Among [the] principles [of which is] a commitment to international casting”.

on Shakespeare, theatre and race, associates with the potent idea of colourblindness: she (77) discusses the nature of colourblind casting which

assumes [that] one can and should be blind to race. It also assumes that theatre is a location that can enable a society to change long-held views of race. As a model that prides itself on its meritocratic roots (the best actor for the best part [in other words, competence matters]), colorblind casting also assumes that an actor's color has no semantic value onstage unless it is invested with one by the director.

From a Polish perspective, ethnicity in Great Britain is more complex than in, for example, Poland.⁵ The British colonial past in a way naturally accounts for it: members of nations and tribes that belonged to the British Empire, after its fall came to live in England. Social variety has always been an issue in Britain: class stratification⁶ and geographical stratification were and are also encoded in language, its different dialects. Furthermore, the United Kingdom consists, after all, of three nations (the English, the Welsh, the Scots, with their own national identities) and possibly—here another problem arises—the inhabitants of Northern Ireland, who—in an overgeneralised manner—either consider themselves English (if they sympathise with the Crown) or Irish (if their sympathies tend towards the Republic). As is well known, Branagh himself, raised in Belfast,⁷ has been only forcefully aware of the national varieties in the U.K. As a result, he had to work hard to get rid of the accent of Belfast to be admitted in the mainstream theatre. As L. Monique Pittman (40-41) reminds us, scholars attempted to explain Branagh's stunt-casting and colourblind casting: Courtney Lehmann, "grounding her discussion of ethnic identity and the Branagh oeuvre in the actor-director's Northern Irish heritage [...] argues that as a postcolonial subject Branagh exorcises anxieties about his own outsider status through figures of otherness in his films." This is how Lehmann (69) herself puts it:

⁵ This strongly affects my critical perspective: the over-forty-year rule of the communist government in Poland, which attempted to create a homogenous image of the Polish nation, with no room for ethnic or religious (sic!) minorities, and cleanse the nation of any deviation from the party's hard-liner policy, so visible in e.g. the nationalist fallacy represented by Władysław Gomułka, the communist party gensec in 1968 when one of the greatest ethnic/religious minorities in post-war Poland, Polish Jews, were forced to leave Poland. Those who stayed for obvious reasons did not manifest their origin. Many of them did not consider themselves "Jew" but simply "Pole" (especially in view of the fact that *any* religion was contested by the authorities), others preferred to maintain a low profile.

⁶ Again, in my opinion, quite successfully and radically relegated from the official social life in the communist regime.

⁷ As he himself defines his origins: "Irish, Protestant, working class" (*Hamlet by William Shakespeare*, iv).

Kenneth Branagh has long prided himself on his colorblind approach to casting, for this approach is central to his broader mission of re-creating Shakespeare as a “crossover” phenomenon—indeed, as a screen persona capable of appealing to a mass audience. Appropriately for a British subject, Branagh initially focused his crossover on a classless Shakespeare.

Classless, yes, but ideally class does not need to be combined with colour, or perhaps it should in the British (and especially American) context.

Having that in mind, it comes as no surprise that the actor-turned-director makes sure that in his films he provides the viewer with ethnic/national variety. That explains, too, why there is no need to employ ethnically different actors in his Shakespearean film debut, *Henry V*, as Shakespeare himself already provides nationally-specific characters in the figures of the four captains: Fluellen (from Wales), Gower (from England), Jamy (from Scotland) and MacMorris (from Ireland). This should be combined with Branagh’s effort to change his accent mentioned above. According to Courtney Lehmann (71): “Hence, the most subtle demonstration of this process occurs in relation to Branagh’s construction of British regional identities, which demands not a colorblind reading out but a *colordeaf* hearing.” Of course, in my considerations *colourdeaf* hearing refers to specifically *Henry V* in that in the latter films accent becomes less significant as the visual plane comes to the fore. Yet, in both cases (*viz. Henry V* vs. the other Shakespearean films by Branagh) “colour”-distance, whatever it may be, is treated rather metaphorically, employing—as Lehmann observes—“othering processes”. To my mind, however, these are inclusive, and not exclusive, as the term “othering” would suggest, practices. Colour-blind approach may be irrespective of political agenda, whereas political correctness would emphasise affirmative action. Yet, one should remember that Branagh distances himself from such strategies, to a degree of course. Perhaps, Branagh does the opposite of “othering”: inclusion. If, as Ania Loomba (9-10) argues, Englishness in the Early Modern period was defined in contrast to otherness (the Moors, the Jews, the Irish, the natives of the New World, non-Christians, non-Protestants, etc.) and colonialism helped shape European nationhood (11-17), Branagh, having experienced a multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-racial society, might define Englishness understood in terms of Shakespeare-ness as inclusive whereby Shakespeare belongs to everybody who speaks English (a narrowing assumption) or even to those who do not speak the language (a broadening one). This speculation may be corroborated by a more general statement offered by Neil Taylor (262): “[a]ctors, designers, directors, screenplay writers, producers—even audiences—they all have their own ideas and their own cultural perspectives. And Shakespeare is a global community, performed and read, produced and consumed around the world”.

With figures denoting British-ness absent in the other plays that Branagh directed (*Much Ado About Nothing* (1993), *Hamlet* (1996), *Love's Labour's Lost* (1999) and *As You Like It* (2006)), the director did not hesitate to introduce multi-ethnicity/multi-raciality in his films. As critics note this turned out to be a gradual process:

Released during the peak of the political-correctness wars, *Much Ado About Nothing* places the *utopian* burden of a Shakespearean film "for the world" entirely on Washington's shoulders, as his character becomes a synecdoche for all the *other* nonwhite "others" whom Branagh's ostensibly colorblind vision fails to accommodate. (Lehmann 69) [my emphasis]

As a result, in *Much Ado* Branagh brings onto the set just one AfroAmerican actor; in the next Shakespearean film he shot, there are more, yet less significant; again, Courtney Lehmann (70) soberly remarks:

Perhaps seeking to avoid the charge of tokenism, Branagh employed a less heavy-handed approach to colorblind casting in *Hamlet* (1996), in which actors of West Indian, South Asian, and African descent are sprinkled throughout the ensemble scenes, as well as cast in minor roles as messengers and members of the guard.

"Less heavy-handed" means casting black actors who are less famous than Denzel Washington and allocating them cameo roles, at the same time multiplying the number of characters performed by black actors. Also, Neil Taylor (271) discusses the issue of casting black actors in the two films in the context of colour-blindness: "In Kenneth Branagh's *Hamlet* the first actor on screen is black (Ray Fearon, playing Francisco) and his *Much Ado About Nothing* has a black, American Hollywood star (Denzil [sic!] Washington) as Don Pedro. Here is a statement about colour blindness, but it is also an attempt to move into a world where, if there are stereotypes, they are neither national nor racial."

In the case of the latter two films, *Love's Labour's Lost* and *As You Like It*, Branagh takes another step further: he introduces what Pittman (40) calls "interracial couplings": "In his musical comedy, Branagh casts two couples out of the four as inter-ethnic couples: Longaville (Matthew Lillard) and Maria (Carmen Ejogo) and Dumaine (Adrian Lester) and Katherine (Emily Mortimer)." Likewise, in *As You Like It*, Branagh also resorts to "the inter-ethnic couplings of Rosalind and Orlando (David Oyelowo) and Celia and Oliver (Adrian Lester) [which] do[es] continue Branagh's effort at inclusivity" (Pittman 41-42).

Since the issue of colourblindness has been raised on several occasions above, it is necessary to discuss its cultural and theoretical ramifications. Ayanna

Thompson discusses it most thoroughly. She (28) notes that colourblind casting has aroused extremely polarised responses in the US. On the one hand, she quotes the opinion of the black American playwright, Angus Wilson, who found this concept and practice “an aberrant idea that has never had any validity other than as a tool of the Cultural Imperialists who view their American culture, rooted in the icons of European culture, as beyond reproach in its perfection”. On the other, she observes (28), developing Wilson’s argumentation, that ““Cultural Imperialists’ claim that their cultural and artistic traditions are *universal*, and, thus, they advocate for productions with nontraditional casting in the form of colorblinding casting” [my emphasis]. In other words, one of the reasons for colourblindness is universalism. Furthermore, the quotes above introduce one more manner of referring to this practice: “non-traditional casting”. Thompson looks carefully at the different ideologies behind colourblind casting and the variety of terms which may seem synonymous, but in fact—as she clearly demonstrates—refer to semantically and semiotically different practices. Thus, in her search for the justification of colourblindness, she presents the opinion of Robert Brustein, the Founding Director of the American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge, Massachusetts, who combines colourblind casting with the ideology of multiculturalism.

As signalled above, Thompson meticulously analyses both the theoretical assumptions and practical repercussions of nontraditional casting. She (76-81) scrutinises the types of nontraditional casting as they were formulated by the Non-Traditional Casting Project: colorblind casting, societal casting, conceptual casting and cross-cultural casting. These she (77) calls collectively “alternative casting models” and poses significant questions about

the semiotic meaning of racial difference onstage. When [she] refer[s] to the semiotic significance of the race, [she] mean[s] if and how an actor’s race is endowed with any meaning within a performance—whether realist, symbolic, or otherwise. That is: What does the audience see with regard to race? How does the audience make sense of it? And how does the audience interpret it within the larger scope of the theatrical visit when an actor of color is employed in a Shakespearean production?

Naturally, the latter remark is especially pertinent to my discussion as it clearly describes the case of Branagh. Hers, however, is a different perspective: since Thompson et consortes employ a sociological and cultural prism, which I find rather difficult to challenge (because I do embrace their arguments), I am more interested in formal aspects of introducing colourblind casting in Branagh’s films. Thompson (77) voices dangers in a non-reflexive approach to the “various models of nontraditional casting [which] can actually replicate racist stereotypes *because* we have not addressed the unstable semiotics of race (when we see race;

how we see race; how we make sense of what race means within a specific production).”

Furthermore, Thompson (80) explores the notions of “race-braced” and “race-blind casting”. Her conclusion is that “It is rare for theatre companies to identify in either their mission statements or programs notes the exact type of nontraditional casting they employ in general or for a particular production” (81). Thompson (82) also adds to the repertory of names for colourblind casting such terms as “new-traditional” and “inclusive casting”. In my discussion, particularly the former reference will be of use: since my claim is that Branagh creates new cinema on the basis of theatrical practice, it consequently becomes “new-traditional”. In the words of Neil Taylor (271), “[i]t has now become possible, *on stage and on film*, to cut across racial and national stereotypes almost at will” [my emphasis]; the mix of the theatrical and the cinematic is visible also in this respect.

This approach appears to govern Branagh's (*Much Ado About Nothing* by William Shakespeare, x) casting choices discussed above whereby competence prevails over filmic realism and its requirements; furthermore it also fulfils the prerequisites for colourblind casting, so well complemented by Branagh's comments on multicultural casting. Let us note that the director signals here the middle-of-the-Atlantic approach to filming Shakespeare which not only depends on accents, but also, perhaps primarily, on the interface between the theatre and film. As a result, “The film presented a rare opportunity to utilise the skills of marvellous film actors who would embrace this naturalistic challenge. I was determined, however, not to cast only British actors. I wanted a combination of elements that would exploit the novelty of doing Shakespeare on film” (Branagh *Much Ado About Nothing* by William Shakespeare, ix). I would like to draw one's attention to the adjective “rare”, employed by a variety of scholars.

“Winter Tales”/“Belmont-like Places”

This should be linked with yet another aspect of adapting these plays to the screen: the spatial and temporal transposition. All these dramas are set outside England, in imaginary, sometimes exotic (from an Elizabethan standpoint) places: Italy, Denmark, Navarre and the border between France and what today is Belgium, respectively. Branagh goes further than Shakespeare by carefully choosing locations which have a fairy-tale like nature: far, far away in the mystic Italian Tuscany, whose oneiric atmosphere is evoked in the opening of the movie in the somewhat impressionistic painting of the Italian villa; in the snowy winterland of northern Europe, which may remind one of Elizabethan “winter tale”; in the artificially theatrical Navarre, where the director does his best to

make the viewer aware of the studio-based scenography⁸; and, finally, in the most surprising milieu perhaps, which is both spatially and temporarily distant as well as most exotic: Japan. The temporal distance also adds to the fairy-tale atmosphere. In as many as three films: *Much Ado*, *Hamlet* and *As You Like It*, the action is set in the 19th century and in *Love's Labour's Lost*: in the late 1930s. It is worth noting that the temporal dimension in each case is linked with the idea of an irreparable loss: the great empires of the 19th century or colonial expansions of Europeans belong to a world long-gone, one that may be idealised with nostalgia; this idea is even more visible in *Love's Labour's Lost*, which shows a world crushed as a result of World War II. The temporal distance then does, too, serve the fairy-tale convention.

The comparison of Branagh's cinematic worlds to a fairy-tale has been made by, among others, Sarah Hatchuel (120), who has observed: "Branagh seems to place his movies in an *in-between*. He favours the creation of a realistic and coherent diegesis, but on some occasions he does not hesitate to subordinate the text to a general vision based on code recycling [...]. The diegesis is, therefore, turned into *a kind of a fairy tale* in which anything can happen if the situation requires it" [my emphasis]. Indeed, the in-betweenness and fairy-tale nature of the fictitious worlds which allows for "anything [to] happen" widely broadens the recipient's horizon of expectations and certainly affects the kind of filmic realism that the director introduces into his productions.

Other critics approached the issue in a similar vein. Samuel Crowl (*Shakespeare and Film*, 38) spoke about the director's "romanticism" (which, I suppose, is the opposite of realism): "Branagh's films are distinguished by their sustained momentum, their *visual romanticism*, the spoken quality of Shakespeare's verse and prose, the importance of Patrick Doyle's scores, and the core company of actors the director has managed to employ over his five Shakespeare films" [my emphasis]. Courtney Lehmann (69) found the director's spatial and temporal choices "utopian". She (73) also referred to Branagh's filming as "fantasies" and discussing *Love's Labour's Lost* called (74) his setting "Ruritanian":

Tracing its origins to nineteenth-century operettas, the fairy tale musical is defined first and foremost by its setting in some distant, storybook kingdom, which fosters the sense of escapism central to the genre. The tiny walled principality of Navarre featured in *Love's Labour's Lost*, which is located within the larger kingdom of France, is thus perfectly suited to the creation of *Ruritanian* setting. [my emphasis]

⁸ Which, naturally, is concordant with the filmic practice of the 1930s and 1940s, and which so well underscores the conventionality of the musical.

On top of it, the director employs a variety of filmic genres and codes to adequately represent the dramatic genres. Thus, filmic conventions, similarly to the theatrical ones, may allow for the introduction of characters who appear counter-realistic: the highly codified musical where dialogues are turned into songs is a good case in point. Since singing is treated as everyday spoken language, then the pretence that the late 1930s Navarre (which, by the way, was at that time a part of Spain and France, not an independent state) is ethnically a uniform nation can be easily challenged, indeed ignored. It becomes on the screen a rather exotic and mysterious place.

Interestingly enough, Branagh in his film located in mid-1990s, *In the Bleak Midwinter* (1995; a Shakespeare spin-off) in contemporary England, does not resort to multi-ethnicity (although we do have characters who are not English, but are branded, for example, "Scots"). Perhaps a reason for this different policy in a film is that the action of the movie is set in provincial England. Furthermore, the actors performing a *Christmas* production of *Hamlet* should ideally include figures who are well versed in English Christmas traditions, which—stereotypically—would suggest that the British of non-Christian origin would not fit in both the cast and the spectators. Such an assumption would not exclude, however, Black English who very often profess themselves as Christians. It seems, however, that apart from the stratifications signalled above, one more layering comes into play: the city vs. the country; the former is a space for accepting manifold nationalities and ethnicities, the latter for relying on the locals, i.e. people who can prove their right to be considered local, or—at best—ones who in many ways would not differ, ethnically-wise and language-wise, from the local standard.

Realism vs. Convention

Sarah Hatchuel (66-67) argues for filmic realism and theatrical conventionalism:

Theatre seems naturally inclined to establish a distance between the audience and the play. Complete illusion is difficult to create because of the actual presence of the players on stage. This presence in the flesh requires a strong and active will from the spectator to abstract the actors and to institute the illusion of fiction.

Of course, another reason for freely reaching for a multi-ethnic/racial cast resulted from the fact that Branagh had had the theatrical experience (both as an actor and director) before he turned to film. This is how the director himself (*Much Ado About Nothing* by William Shakespeare, viii) describes his vision of a *Shakespearean* film: "My continued desire in *Much Ado* was for an absolute

clarity that would enable a modern audience to respond to Shakespeare on film, in the same way that they would respond to any other movie”.

Branagh, like Welles, combines theatrical convention and filmic realism in his Shakespearean films as a new/old approach to film. If we assume that theatre relies on conventionality, then it allows for less realistic elements in its representation of the real world, ones whose meaning depends on what the author and the recipient agree upon in the process of encoding and decoding meaning. Thus, if characters in the fictitious world communicate speaking in verse, it is treated by the spectator as a “natural” way of communicating in this world, one which equals the everyday prose of the real world (a more extreme example of stage discourse would be operatic arias). If poetry or aria can become acceptable ways of communication, then character representations can also be negotiable. A good case in point would be the long tradition of having a white actor play in blackface the part of Othello (cf. Laurence Olivier’s 1965 rendering of this role at the National Theatre).⁹

A paradox emerges here, though: actors impersonating characters in the same physical space and the same time are certainly more real than actors/figures mediated by the camera. However, it requires more effort on the part of the recipient to *believe* that s/he faces a character not a real person impersonating them; but, it is a matter of conventions. Paradox 2: film, employing the past tense (like the novel) becomes less direct than the theatre. Hence, its realistic grounding may be questioned. The fact that film uses the past tense creates distance, which allows Branagh to explore the liminal space between film and theatre. One of the aspects of this exploration is the introduction of racially different actors in his film renderings of Shakespeare’s plays. Branagh is well aware of how to shoot movies (cf. his non-Shakespearean films), which likens him to, again, Orson Welles. Furthermore, experimenting with the borderline between theatre and film aligns him with both Welles and, perhaps more significantly, with Laurence Olivier, who in the three Shakespearean films he directed experimented with: 1. Elizabethan drama/theatre on screen; 2. Medieval manuscripts; 3. location shots (all in *Henry V*); 4. theatricality and film noir in *Hamlet*; finally, 5. Medieval illumination-cum-comic-book in *Richard III*. His films can hardly be called fully realist. On the other hand, Branagh—as signalled above—adds to the Olivier repertoire: by combining the literary/textual/dramatic/theatrical codes with fine-tuned filmic ones. In other words, he no longer asks the question of what theatre can do for the cinema, but what cinema can do for the theatre.

The opening scene of *Much Ado About Nothing* is in the eyes of many scholars a reference to a scene in the classic western *Magnificent Seven*, which

⁹ Krystyna Kujawińska Courtney reminds us, though, of the career of Ira Aldridge in the 19th century Poland, but that was rather exceptional.

evokes the codes of the western genre for Branagh's film. In this genre, Black characters do not belong, unless in a parody—cf. Mel Brook's *Blazing Saddles* (1974). The Wild West is associated with white heroes only. Certainly, Branagh must have been aware of that association; if so, then he consciously decided to challenge the stereotype. Ever since *Much Ado* he has systematically and consistently been redefining the treatment of the Bard in modern cinema. He assumed, it seems, that it was impossible to film Shakespeare's plays in a strictly Hollywood manner; references to Welles and Olivier have not been accidental. Both actors-turned-directors are associated with anti-Hollywood, artistic, auteur cinema, whereby filmic realism has been challenged and, indeed, subverted.

Conclusions

Branagh's Shakespearean filming is heavily steeped in theatre (a commonplace as it is the case with many of Shakespeare on screen productions, which first began as theatrical performances). Branagh treats it as an advantage; he produces films which explore the usefulness of theatre/theatricality on screen. If that is the case, a question may be posed here why the actor/director would resort to theatricality in his Shakespearean movies. 1. Because he thus stresses the significance of the Bard in film industry. 2. because Branagh boldly explores the film-to-theatre fit, thus adapting Shakespeare in a novel/old context, with a twist, or turn: at a time when so much stress was put on the filmic quality of drama adaptations, Branagh decided to go, as it were, against the grain. He was interested in how much theatrical aesthetics can inform an otherwise fully-fledged film. 3. The result is new cinema/NEW CINEMA, which paves way for and draws upon self-reflective films of the post-modern era (ranging from Woody Allen to Quentin Tarantino) in which the theatrical conventionalism is blended with filmic realism, thanks to part-modern formal practices (not only postcolonial, as claimed by Thompson and Lehmann).

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