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# “How this World is Given to Lying!”: Orson Welles’s Deconstruction of Traditional Historiographies in *Chimes at Midnight*

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**F**ew Shakespearean films were so underappreciated at their release as Orson Welles’s *Chimes at Midnight*.<sup>1</sup> Compared to Laurence Olivier’s morale boosting 1944 version of *Henry V*, Orson Welles’s adaptation has never reached a wide audience, partly because of its long history of being in copyright limbo.<sup>2</sup> Since the film’s debut, a critical tendency has been to read it as a lament for “Merrie England.” In an interview, Welles claimed: “It is more than Falstaff who is dying. It’s the old England, dying and betrayed” (qtd. in Hoffman 88). Keith Baxter, the actor who plays Prince Hal, expressed the sentiment that Hal was the principal character: Welles “always saw it as a triangle basically, a love story of a Prince lost between two father figures. Who is the boy going to choose?” (qtd. in Lyons 268). Samuel Crowl later modified these differing assessments by adding his own interpretation of Falstaff as the central character: “it is Falstaff’s winter which dominates the texture of the film, not Hal’s summer of self-realization” (“The Long Good-bye” 373). Michael Anderegg concurs with the assessment of Falstaff as the central figure when he historicizes the film by noting the film’s “conflict between rhetoric and history” on the one hand and “the immediacy of a prelinguistic, prelapsarian, timeless physical world, on the other” (126). By placing the focus on Falstaff and cutting a great deal of text, Welles, Anderegg argues, deconstructs Shakespeare’s world by moving “away from history and toward satire” (127).

To continue the critical conversation advocating for Falstaff’s centrality in the film, I turn to a historical lens by re-examining the historiography shaping readings of the history plays in the middle of the century, namely E.M.W Tillyard’s book *Shakespeare’s History Plays* and Laurence Olivier’s 1944 film *Henry V*, which came out of the same cultural moment as Tillyard’s study, World War II. Although Welles’s film predates the Vietnam conflict, the two World Wars themselves deflated the mystique of war with the rise of greater military technology. It is an understood premise among modernist studies that the cheapening

of human life by trench warfare influenced texts and ideas like T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Sigmund Freud's death drive.

Welles exemplifies a similar intellectual tendency by centering his film on Falstaff's domineering personality. Falstaff's dominant presence contrasts with Welles's barren, bleak mise-en-scenes to frame him as a comic truth teller in an uncaring world. Welles frames the truth of Falstaff's speeches, such as his catechism on honour, by placing the character within bleak landscapes and intense war sequences to question Tillyard's notion of Shakespeare's vision of an epic and progressive history of England brought forth by the great deeds of Henry V. While no evidence exists that Welles read Tillyard, he was critical of the nature of Olivier's clean handling of Henry's character as an idealistic king along with his valor in war. Welles's film directly contrasts with Olivier because of Falstaff, who, unlike Olivier's inspiring Hal, suggests that great men do not shape history as much as the victors who write it. By leaving a broken Falstaff alone in a waste land after his rejection by Henry V, Welles removes the positive ideology of Tillyard and Olivier to accent that history is merely the enforced ideology of those who maintain political power.

E.M.W. Tillyard's *Shakespeare's History Plays* shaped readings from an entire generation of scholars. In his comparative study of Olivier and Tillyard, Michael Manheim argues that one did not necessarily reflect the other but both people interpreted Shakespeare out of the same cultural moment, with the "impetus being the desire for order, system, hierarchy, strong leadership, and the demonstrated superiority of Anglo-Saxon values in the Europe of World War II" (179). Tillyard saw the second tetralogy as an epic, nationalistic history in a time of great patriotism following the English defeat of the Spanish Armada: "It was correct to make your country's history the theme of your epic; and by achieving an epic in your own tongue you glorified that tongue and hence the land where it was spoken" (242). In a progressive sense of history, Tillyard saw England advancing from the last absolute medieval king in Richard II to the descriptions of Hal in the *Henry IV* plays that recall "the art of the high Renaissance with fused colours and subtle transitions" (257). Tillyard extends his argument further when he suggests that even the early Hal was the "abstract Renaissance conception of the perfect ruler" (277), and concludes that the "picture of England would fittingly be connected with the typical English monarch" (299).

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Tillyard’s book invites a near Whig reading of history as a linear path towards a greater good. The audience should sympathize with Hal’s rejection of Falstaff, for example, because Hal is the ideal king and Falstaff only acts as a Lord of Misrule in the midst of Hal’s bildungsroman. This progressive Shakespearean historiography made sense for an England fighting a battle against fascism as it looked back to its literature in an attempt to define itself. If one accepts the New Historicist premise that literature is a product of its time and place, then literary criticism and historiography can be viewed from the same frame. Welles’s film, like a landmark book, thus provided a paradigm shift from the optimistic view of Tillyard as part of its own unique reflection on Shakespeare following the destruction of World War II and the first decade of the Cold War.

Laurence Olivier’s *Henry V* recalls the progressive history from E.M.W. Tillyard with its idealistic war sequences and its impeccable protagonist. Although Olivier adapts *Henry V* rather than the two *Henry IV* plays as Welles mainly does, the films invite contrast in how they portray a sense of history through mise-en-scene. Olivier’s film, produced in bright Technicolor, begins with a storybook title page followed by a sky shot covering an immense model of the Early Modern London metropolis. The viewer witnesses green fields and blue waters; London is full of life, and the bright colors suggest that this film will be an epic story from a distant past. Olivier’s Technicolor, Samuel Crowl argues, exemplifies a:

...bright, bold celebration of Shakespeare and the living legacy of his Elizabethan theater. He solved the problem of creating a film environment appropriate for Shakespeare’s language, proudly rhetorical and trumpet-like in *Henry V*, by beginning his film in a re-creation of the Globe Theater, then moving out of the Globe, for the scenes set in France, into a highly stylized landscape of painted sets based on an illuminated medieval storybook, *Les Très Riches Heures*, and ultimately ending up in a real landscape (Powerscourt in Ireland) for the Battle of Agincourt, where the language of film eclipses Shakespeare’s. (23)

Crowl’s discussion of mise-en-scene focuses on the importance of transferring the poetry of Shakespeare’s verse into film, a problem unique to Olivier in 1944 especially in transferring Shakespeare from the stage.

To extend Crowl's discussion on the film's choices, Olivier's usage of bright colors and trumpet-like sounds also echoes the epic history of Tillyard. The film features two primary mise-en-scenes, the medieval past with the painted sets to the sprawling overhead shot of Shakespeare's London. These primary mise-en-scenes reflect the themes from Tillyard's work of the progression of England as it advanced from Richard II to Henry V. The soundtrack in the opening shot of Shakespeare's London also features an epic feel as it emphasizes that this London represents an epoch of human history, a Golden Age for the English. While the film's medieval settings are also extraordinary, the opening shot suggests a progressive history akin to Tillyard's views that Henry V was the model king to lead England to prosperity. For a war film in 1944, this progressive history showcasing London in the Renaissance allowed Olivier to accent the importance of English values, especially against fascism. Franco Zeffirelli described his own reaction to the film based on nationality: "[Olivier] was the flag bearer of so many things we did not have. I'd been educated and brought up in a fascist country. He was the emblematic personality of a great free democracy" (qtd in Davies 171). From the opening shots, the film thus echoes an epic, progressive history brought forth by Shakespeare about England and its great ruler Henry V to invoke a sense of English exceptionalism and nationalism.

In addition to the epic portrait of London, Olivier also delivers a heroic vision of war that suggests history is made by the valor of great men. Olivier rides a white horse, symbolizing Henry V's purity of purpose, while the French ride black horses, and the respective knights on both sides charge at one another and joust over a bright green field. Henry motivates his troops as they fight, and troops on both sides engage in combat like aristocratic knights, culminating in the climactic duel between Olivier's Henry and the Constable of France. As aforementioned, skeptical critics, including Welles, had much to say on Olivier's idealistic handling of war; Welles quipped that Olivier's people ride "out of the castle and suddenly they are on a golf course somewhere charging each other" (qtd in Mason 199). This witty remark against the cleanliness of Olivier's battle sequence suggests that Olivier's film must be taken as a product of its time and place. Olivier represents battle as clean and noble to motivate the English in their war effort. Olivier also removes the darker side of Henry, the one who in Shakespeare's text threatens that

English soldiers will “[d]efile the locks of your shrill-shrieking daughters, / Your fathers taken by the silver beards, / And their most reverend heads dashed to the walls” (*H5* 3.3.35-37), because that side of Henry’s character would not have been appropriate in a World War II propaganda film. While Olivier’s film still leaves hints of ambiguity in the text about Henry’s character,<sup>3</sup> he nonetheless removes the most significant passages in order to glorify Henry as the ideal great figure who through his will defeated the enemy and in doing so created a strong English nation.

Orson Welles’s 1965 film *Chimes at Midnight* has a much darker tone compared to Olivier’s 1944 film. Compressing the second tetralogy into one picture lasting about two hours, Welles centers his film on the end of Falstaff’s life, from the beginning shot where he laments of bygone days with Robert Shallow that “We have heard the Chimes at Midnight, Master Robert Shallow” to concluding with his death. The film’s opening long shot of Falstaff and Shallow walking across a barren, seasonal landscape thus suggests that the film centers on “Falstaff’s winter which dominates the texture of the film, not Hal’s summer of self-realization” (Crowl 372). I wish to build on this point by examining Falstaff from the perspective of historiography. By placing his critical emphasis on Falstaff, Welles thus shifts the film’s critical focus away from Olivier’s conceptualization of history as a struggle achieved by individual valor and instead centers it on the seasons of Falstaff’s vitality and death. This shift of emphasis from the summer of Falstaff’s content toward the winter of his rejection also lends itself toward a cyclical view of history, for Hal’s immersion within the tavern world, his *locus amoenus*, and friendship with Falstaff is only illusory; power and order must be restored and Falstaff must be punished in order to restore the chronicle history as a convenient fiction over the suppressed truth of the cyclical view.

The opening scene has been frequently discussed because by beginning the drama near the end of *2 Henry IV* with Falstaff and Shallow’s speech, Welles locates his drama’s tone within the pessimistic world of *2 Henry IV* rather than within *1 Henry IV*. In the text, the two friends reminisce about old times, but afterwards, Falstaff soliloquizes that “If the young dace be a bait for the old pike, I see no reason in the law of nature but I may snap at him: let time shape, and there an end” (*2H4* 3.2.325-27). Although Welles does not include this dialogue in his first scene, Falstaff’s proto Social-Darwinism in exploiting Shallow in the text

suggests a more pessimistic view of history which locates power based on crass individualism and selfishness rather than heroism; therefore, if the viewer knows about the text before seeing the film, that viewer will examine the film's opening from a more critical perspective and immediately notice a darker tone than that radiating from Olivier's grandiose opening. Welles cuts this dialogue to illustrate Falstaff's and Shallow's version of history that they share together, a tale obviously embellished by Shallow as suggested by Falstaff's sardonic facial expression.

After Falstaff and Shallow lament the olden days, the opening credits roll, and the camera takes a long shot showing armies traveling over a vast desert waste land, and in one shot, the camera surveys soldiers standing with dead corpses hanging behind them while the film's festive, adventurous score plays. The contrast between the score and the effects of war recalls the epic music at the start of Olivier's film, which accents the great history of England being presented with the shot of the London landscape. The score's lighthearted feel in juxtaposition with the images of death instantly suggests that war is not as romantic as it appears. It also suggests that among conflicts between great men like Henry V, the common soldier gets left behind in the aftermath of war. The opening credits do not feature the great men like Hal or Hotspur but rather the common soldiers who are alone in a barren world of violence.

The lifeless *mise-en-scene* in the opening shot repeats itself in three crucial moments in the film: the opening, the battle of Shrewsbury, and the concluding scene following Falstaff's death. Although the tavern and the castle have been noted as creating a dual landscape in the film (Crowl 373), Welles also gives the viewer a third landscape—a broad shot of the waste land ravaged by war, which in turn deflates the heroic history of Olivier's colorful presentation of London. Andrew McClean acknowledges this analysis of the landscape by noting: “[Welles] provides a cultural commentary on the helplessness of modern man to combat, change, or alter the inevitable sweep of history” (198). Welles's fragmented image of brutality within the midst of a vast desert thus begins with Falstaff in the midst of a literal waste land. By beginning the film with Falstaff and Shallow's discussion about days long past just before Henry IV's death, Welles locates the film in the middle of Falstaff's

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metaphorical winter, and by showing bleak images of death in the opening credits, he prepares the viewer for Hal’s rejection of Falstaff.

The barren mise-en-scene recalls T.S. Eliot’s high modernist text *The Waste Land*. While no evidence exists that Welles read the poem, Eliot’s text does recall the sense of disconnect and lament following the catastrophe of World War I. The opening credits in particular recall the opening of Eliot’s second stanza:

What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow  
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,  
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only  
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,  
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,  
And the dry stone no sound of water. (I.19-24)

The opening long shot shows Falstaff and Shallow walking in the middle of a bleak, snowy landscape as a large dead tree towers over them. Then with the opening credits the viewer gets a desert waste land that subsumes the people traveling within it as the camera also focuses on the hanged corpses. These images are nothing but broken when compared to the epic score playing behind it. By beginning the film with Falstaff and Shallow’s discussion about days long past and right before Henry IV’s death at the castle, Welles thus locates the film in Falstaff’s personal metaphorical winter, and by showing bleak images of death in the opening credits, he prepares the viewer for the “shadow at evening rising to meet you” (I.30)—in this case, the Machiavellian shadow of Hal rising to reject Falstaff and the history he plans to create upon taking power.

After the opening sequence, the waste land appears midway through the film at Shrewsbury. Unlike Olivier’s heroic depiction of war, Welles delivers a shocking five-minute sequence full of fragmented images accenting its horror. Both before and during this scene, the camera focuses on Falstaff. Giving his catechism on honour right before the battle just as in Shakespeare’s text, Falstaff prepares the viewer for the absurdity of war. Falstaff reduces traditional medieval ideals of honour to absurdity in the text; he notes that honor is merely “a word” or “air” and concludes his speech by noting that “Honour is a mere scutcheon. And so ends my catechism” (*1H4* 5.1.133-34, 135, 139-40). Depending on which interpretation an adaptation takes, Falstaff’s catechism can be interpreted as mere cowardice on Falstaff’s part, or, as in this case, comic wisdom.

This adaptation has Falstaff delivering his catechism to Hal rather than as soliloquy before the infamous battle at Shrewsbury. Despite Falstaff's best efforts to educate Hal, the older man cannot alter the course of history. Randy Rasmussen explains the truth of Falstaff's sentiments:

He [Falstaff] believes what he says, at least on this occasion. And the fact that Hal has no glib retort suggests that Falstaff's little arrow finds its target. But a direct cut to the next scene makes it clear that mobilization for war continues unabated. Words could not save peace. (244)

Through words, Welles's Falstaff reduces the concept of honour and the purpose of war as portrayed in Olivier's film, and Tillyard's historiography, to meaninglessness. The former, heroic depiction of war is thus only full of words, color, air, and romance. By portraying this speech right before the intense war sequence, Welles, through Falstaff, suggests the hopelessness of modern man to change the outcome of history. Despite Falstaff's best efforts to force Hal into realizing the absurdity of their situation, war continues unabated. However, by reducing fictitious notions of Great Man theories of historiography to mere social categories, Welles's Falstaff at least deconstructs this notion by reducing history to a primitive power struggle disguised by empty concepts like "honour."

When the battle begins, two sides stand at opposite poles of the barren fields and survey one another with an ominous fog looming over them, a sharp contrast to Olivier's storybook battlefield. As the troops charge at one another, the adventurous score plays while Falstaff takes refuge behind a dead tree. At once, the score stops as the troops collide; Rasmussen describes the subsequent action as follows:

The moment blows are exchanged and men start to die, the music changes from heroic to apocalyptic. Brutal hammer blows of sound meld with eerie, melancholy, other-worldly vocalizations by a women's chorus. They could be the abstracted lamentations of the wives, mothers, and daughters of the men being slaughtered. This is a battle far removed from anything envisioned by the men who instigated, pontificated about, and hope to profit by it. (245)

At once, Welles turns Olivier's heroic notion of warfare upside down, and Falstaff's catechism against war and honor suddenly strikes true. Welles's war sequence does not feature a gentlemanly code of warfare; instead, it



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depicts the horror of war by immersing the viewer within a lengthy narrative of the brutality of man. So many men fill the scene that the viewer feels a sense of claustrophobia, and with the fragmented editing, the sequence loses track of whether the combatants are loyalists or rebels.

Through the rapid editing and the oppressive atmosphere, Welles depicts a modern, fragmented view of warfare in the wake of England completing two World Wars. The claustrophobic setting in a waste land may remind viewers of the useless brutality of trench warfare from the First World War and the subsequent readings by Freud as exhibiting man’s inner death drive, that drive lurking within our subconscious minds that is a “residual of a pre-organic, chaotic past” which “attempts to undo the organic whole” (Faulkner 154). Honour does not exist on this battlefield, just a conglomeration of corpses. In particular, Welles’s camera exemplifies this Freudian idea by examining “the entwined legs, but not the faces, of killer and victim, forming a grotesque parody of lovers. Which is not inappropriate considering the sexual passion that Hotspur diverted into his enthusiasm for war” (Rasmussen 246). Freud arrived at his conclusions following the catastrophe of World War I in not only witnessing widespread death but also in handling his own patients and their dreams. Compared to the clean warfare in Olivier, Welles delivers a nightmarish sequence of deaths with rapid editing to disconnect common men from the history they attempt to define. Welles’s soldiers lose their identity not only in a drive toward their death but also because they must fight for the causes of leaders in power. The war sequence thus accents a modern disconnect between life and death, free will and determinism, and personal identity within a larger government.

By deflating the romanticism of violence through fragmented images of warfare along with the Freudian nature of man’s death instinct over a vast desert wasteland, Welles shocks the viewer over five minutes of relentless bloodshed, and his vision also suggests that because of Falstaff, the viewer should reject the Great Man view of history as identity itself is lost among the violence. Samuel Crowl argues of Welles’s camera work that the viewer should sympathize with Falstaff as he “scurries in and out of harm’s way looking like a giant armadillo in his ill-fitting armor” (“The Long Good-Bye” 378). Falstaff understands war better than anyone else, and the camera’s trajectory lends credence to his

interpretation. Although Falstaff's words deconstruct heroic notions of history, the camera's survey of the depravity of war confirms the validity of his words, allowing them to hold greater worth over the viewer's imagination. His catechism is thus not reduced to being just "mere air" and foolery; instead, it is a depressing truth about the nature of war and the shaping of history by interested parties.

After this unique war sequence, Welles depicts the climactic event of *1 Henry IV*, the inevitable confrontation between Hal and Hotspur. Unlike Olivier's chivalric duel with the Constable in his *Henry V*, Hal and Hotspur engage in heavy and awkward sword fighting. "Both men," Crowl describes, "are exhausted, their swords as heavy to their arms as a boxer's fists become in the fifteenth round of a title fight, and Hal outlasts his spirited rival because he has husbanded his energies more resourcefully than Hotspur" (378). Hotspur, the representation of medieval codes of honour, dies to be replaced by Hal, the historical victor, whose thunder Falstaff steals by momentarily taking credit for killing Hotspur in front of King Henry. By shifting this battle after the main war sequence, Welles suggests that the victors write history. Hotspur loses in this primal rite of destruction, leaving Hal to write the chronicle history and to proclaim his valour for endless ages. Falstaff parodies this chronicling tendency by taking credit for defeating Hotspur in front of the King, who leers at Hal angrily. In the text, when Hal claims the kill, Falstaff proclaims, "Didst thou? Lord, Lord, how this world is given to lying!" yet Hal takes Falstaff's proclamations light-heartedly, arguing that "For my part, if a lie may do thee grace / I'll gild it with the happiest terms I have" (*1H4* 5.4. 145-6, 157-58). Shakespeare's Hal suggests that history is something which he controls; he can construct Falstaff's image just as he paints his own. Welles's Falstaff, however, parodies this idea by stealing credit for murdering Hotspur in front of the King rather than Prince John.

After his honour is questioned by Falstaff, Hal leaves Falstaff alone in the waste land of war to soliloquize about sack. Falstaff, Crowl describes, is thus "left to search for an audience and a reaction in an empty landscape" (Crowl "The Long Good-Bye" 379). Upon parodying the notion of power, Falstaff's being left alone in the vast waste land suggests that his friendship with Hal has degenerated. The "Merrie Old England" which Falstaff personifies has lost its pragmatic purpose in this

new world order. Considering Falstaff is left alone, and considering that Hal exemplifies a degree of Machiavellianism that he doesn’t exude in the text by leaving Falstaff when his claim to fame is thwarted, Welles implies that history has been written by the victors; although Hal kills Hotspur, words alone cannot prove it after the camera’s presentation of fragmented images of war and depravity that could not even differentiate between rebels and loyalists. With this lack of available evidence, the victor thus writes history, yet through Falstaff’s parody of this historical view, Hal cannot locate his claim to this truth because Falstaff has reduced the notion of truth itself to a mere societal distinction.

The film’s barren mise-en-scene comes full circle with the opening shot following Falstaff’s funeral procession. After being rejected by Hal for the final time once he gains the throne, Falstaff loses his will to live. Bardolph, Mistress Quickly, and others lament and speak of their memories, their own chimes at midnight, as Falstaff still hovers over their discussion with his massive coffin in the small tavern, and the viewer still sees the castle in the background. In a remarkable shot, as Falstaff’s coffin is being pushed into the distance, the camera withdraws from the action, accenting the barren waste land between the tavern and the castle, a landscape devoid of life in which even the trees are dead. Despite the girth of Falstaff’s coffin, nature subsumes it as the shot grows wider. In an ironic twist, the narrator reads a passage from Raphael Holinshed’s *Chronicles*:

This Henry was a captain of such prudence and such policy that he never enterprised anything before it forecast the main chances that it might happen. So humane withal, he left no offense unpunished nor friendship unrewarded. For conclusion, a majesty was he that both lived and died a pattern in princehood, a lodestar in honour, and famous to the world alway. (qtd in Lyons 254)

The irony of this ending shot is astounding. After Falstaff dominates the film and deflates the consequences of a progressive and Great Man history with his catechisms, the viewer witnesses a scene in which the tavern world is silenced. After Welles’s last speech to Master Shallow, an almost Gestapo-like police force drags away Doll Tearsheet and other tavern members. Henry V now assumes power from his father, and he redefines his unwieldy character by preparing to fight France and crushing his old friends. The victor defines history. Although Falstaff

emphasizes the relativity of history with the way he constructs it, power has been restored anew. Henry V gains power and keeps it through political manipulation, not through the sense of his own valor or honesty as Holinshed's Tudor history suggests. Welles thus places this chronicle history into the final moment to satirize previous idealistic historiographical notions. Falstaff has already proven that his culture constructs history fictitiously; therefore, the conclusion implies that history continues based on conveniently constructed truths from those in power that happens to make a good story. Prince Hal must reject Falstaff not because he is the ideal king as Tillyard suggested but because Falstaff, unlike any other character, understands the fine veneer shaping the legacy of Hal and the nature of history.

*Chimes at Midnight* revises Tillyard's wartime interpretation of the second tetralogy as an epic, progressive history of England leading up to the ideal king in Henry V; at the same time, the film interrogates Olivier's similar take on not only Henry V's shaping of history but also the idealistic portrait painted by his landscapes and his war sequences. Welles's Falstaff dominates most every scene he is involved in and his speeches strike a chord against the film's barren mise-en-scene and presentation of the depravity of war. This Falstaff deflates notions of honour made prominent in Olivier's film and suggests that, in the shaping of history, the common soldiers are subsumed by war, played out on a barren wasteland that disconnects the common men from the ideals for which they fight. Falstaff realizes that individual valor does not shape history, only conveniently constructed truths, and thus parodies it, but Henry V crushes him, knowing that Falstaff realizes too much and has no place within the history he attempts to write. By choosing to have Falstaff buried in the midst of a desolate waste land while reminding the viewer of the "established" chronicle history, Welles forces the viewer to acknowledge especially after the destruction of two World Wars that history is merely another ideology to control power for those who write it.

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Notes

1. Bosley Crowther, the *New York Times* critic, delivered a particularly harsh, initial judgment when he quipped that “Mr. Welles has always wanted to play Falstaff. Now he’s had his chance. Those who are interested may see him at the Little Carnegie” (qtd in Lyons 290). Penelope Cruz likewise gave a negative review when she called it “a film which seems to turn its back on brilliance” (296).
2. The film had been in copyright limbo for many years due to court battles over distribution rights following Welles selling his rights away to James Bond producer Harry Saltzman, except in Spain, where the rights belonged to Emiliano Piedra. As recently as 2005, the film was pulled at a film festival due to copyright claims; however, Piedra’s widow, Dolores, recently authorized a DVD re-release. A limited quantity of DVDs were available up until May 2012, when an all-regions DVD was re-released that retails for around \$20. See MacNab for more information.
3. On this issue, Michael Manheim argues that Olivier left many of the political stratagems of Henry ambiguous, including the way Henry uses Christianity to further his ends by praying before battle along with the political sophistication Olivier shows as he woos Katherine.

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