

DOI 10.17805/zpu.2018.4.20

## Sergei Yutkevich's Othello Revisited: A View from the 21st Century\*

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*The article summarizes and compares various opinions on Sergei Yutkevich's 1955 film "Othello" expressed both behind and beyond the Iron Curtain and after the collapse of the USSR. The author looks at these views through the prism of Yutkevich's own conception of the film he described in his book "Shakespeare and Cinema" (1973) and other publications. The author proposes a possible reason why Western Shakespearean scholars and film experts have not paid much attention to the work of the Soviet director, compared to "Hamlet" and "King Lear" directed by Grigori Kozintsev.*

*The main points of the article were presented at the panel "Shakespeare on the Soviet Screen" at the 9th European Shakespeare Research Association Congress "Shakespeare and European Theatrical Cultures: AnAtomizing Text and Stage" (July 27–30, Gdańsk, Poland).*

*Keywords: S. I. Yutkevich; "Othello"; film adaptations of "Othello"; W. Shakespeare; Shakespearean sphere; Shakespeare in contemporary cinema; Shakespeare in Russian culture; contemporary cinematography; Soviet cinema*

### INTRODUCTION

As is well-known, the only Russian filmmaker who is usually counted among the classic Shakespearean film directors along with Lawrence Olivier, Akira Kurosawa and Orson Welles is Grigory Kozintsev. He was certainly an erudite scholar. Otherwise, he would have hardly been able to shoot his famous Hamlet with Innokenty Smoktunovsky in the title role and to give full rein to his masterly skill so as to make a film that would later become a classic of the world cinematography.

It is not widely known that one of Kozintsev's friends since his adolescent years in Kiev<sup>1</sup> was another Soviet director and artist Sergei Iosifovich Yutkevich. He was an avid Shakespearean too and knew Shakespeare's legacy as well as the history of its reception in the

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\* The article was prepared within the framework of the project "Shakespeare in Contemporary Russian Culture: The National and Global" with support from the Council for Grants of the President of Russian Federation (МК-1182.2017.6).

Статья подготовлена в рамках проекта «Шекспир в современной русской культуре: национальное и глобальное», осуществляемого при поддержке Совета по грантам Президента РФ (МК-1182.2017.6).

The Russian version of this article was published in *Nauchnye trudy Moskovskogo gumanitarnogo universiteta* journal in 2017 (Gaydin / Гайдин, 2017). The English version was substantially extended and amended.

world theatre and cinema quite well. In 1955, he filmed *Othello* with Sergei Bondarchuk as the Moor.

S. I. Yutkevich was no doubt a talented cinema artist with his original style as a film director. He is the author of a number of articles where he proposed his own understanding of Shakespeare's plays and his vision of how Shakespeare's works can be cinematized. In this article, I will highlight the main points of the Soviet director's understanding of Shakespeare's *Othello* and try to evaluate the possible impact of his predecessors on him (Dimitri Buchowetzki's *Othello* with Emil Jannings in the title role, 1922; Orson Welles' *Othello*, where the American director played the Moor himself, 1951).

S. I. YUTKEVICH'S NOTES ON HIS FILM VERSION OF "OTHELLO"

In his article "My Way with Shakespeare" published in *Films and Filming* magazine in October 1957<sup>2</sup>, S. I. Yutkevich writes that there is no doubt that Shakespeare's plays could be cinematized, but it was important "to find a way to transfer the plays to the screen without coarsening, distorting, vulgarising or reducing them to triviality" (Yutkevich, 1957: 8). In his opinion, "every attempt merely to present the *spectacular* aspect of his plays by turning them into costume-melodrama or fantasy, as well as efforts to use only the 'subject' of the plays have failed" (ibid; emphasis in original. — B. G.). The director argues that the strength of Shakespeare's works consists "not in the intricacies of the plots, but in what he added to them, in the consistent and powerful world outlook..." (Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1973a: 194; hereafter all translations from Russian are mine. — B. G.).

The intention of filming *Othello* occurred to the director when he saw a stage production of this play at a provincial theatre (ibid: 193). The script of the film was written in 1937, but the director got an opportunity to embody his ideason screen only in 17 years (Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1991: 334–335; see also, for example: Lipkov / Липков, 1975: 138)<sup>3</sup>.

The secret of "emotional appeal" of Shakespeare's "tragedy of love and jealousy", in his opinion, is that it implies "struggle for truth", "the search for and loss of a tranquil spirit". The director argues that *Othello* is not only "a tragedy of love and revenge", but "the tragedy of faith, the tragedy of trust and treachery" (Yutkevich, 1957: 8). So, the climax of the play is the moment when Othello finds out that Iago, his closest friend and nearest companion, has been scheming against him.

S. I. Yutkevich tried to preserve the sequence of scenes of the original, not only the dynamics of the Shakespearean text, but also all main soliloquies, "retaining all the aphorisms and forms of Shakespeare's language which comprise his main beauty and strength" (ibid). According to the director's opinion, he only took the liberty of adding depictions of nature to emphasize a significant role it played in Shakespeare's oeuvre. It is very difficult to do in a theatre production, while cinematography, of course, gives more opportunities to show nature's beauty and power and, thus, "enlarge the scope of action" (ibid). In Anatoly Vystorobets's view, "the landscape in S. Yutkevich's films is a kind of companion of the action. Its emotionality is conditioned by dramaturgy and tightly connected with the state of the characters and events" (Vystorobetz / Высторобец, 1981: 125). Then the movie scholar notes that "S. Yutkevich and E. Andrikanis avoid spectacular, but artificial designing in *Othello*. Andrikanis' colour compositions are utterly realistic. The tone value and the general principle of visual planes help to achieve expressive colour combinations that do not affect the ethnographic veracity and dramaturgical essence of the colour being used" (ibid).

Anthony Davies also mentioned the significance of nature in the movie: "Yutkevich gives us a film of blue skies, open sea and spaciousness" (Davies, 1994: 201). In his opinion, in this

version of Shakespeare's *Othello* there is "the deployment of the natural world as a dramatic chorus" (ibid: 202). Yutkevich managed to show "an integrated dramatization of nature", as well as "an ironic relationship between exterior and interior (psychological) action" (ibid).

Before the start of the shooting session, the actors had been rehearsing for six weeks with a special attention to the culminating episodes. S. I. Yutkevich did not demand that actors should play at the "peak" of their capabilities at once. The director, at least he said so, gave them time to focus on their roles, single out the major and the minor, and develop a vision. In his view, the task was somewhat simplified because the work was carried out sequentially, i.e. in the same order as it was in Shakespeare's play. Only the final scene when Othello carried the body of Desdemona to the top of the tower was shot earlier than the scene of the murder in the bedroom (Yutkevich, 1957: 8).

In Yutkevich's opinion, "an almost insoluble problem" was to weave the poetic lines of Shakespeare's characters "with the realistic simplicity" of cinematography. What he wanted was that the film did not have any traits of theatrical convention, the acting was not too bombastic and high-flown, but at the same time he thought that the magic of Shakespeare's poetic language should not be lost. The director emphasized that one should use all achievements and possibilities of cinematography in order to create "the unity of the atmosphere with the burning passions of the tragedy", "an image in keeping with the ideas and style of the author" (ibid). He aspired "to find the rhythmical, musical, lucid and colourful *equivalent* of Shakespeare's flow of passions..." (ibid; emphasis in original. — B. G.). The filmmaker deemed that there was no necessity to add anything to Shakespeare, but it was obligatory to show what was interwoven in the lines of the playwright's characters without misrepresenting the original.

S. I. Yutkevich connected "the theme of the tragedy" with Desdemona's handkerchief — "a symbol of trust and love" that would then become "a tragic sign of infidelity" (ibid: 8, 32). For this reason, the handkerchief appears at the very beginning of the film and plays a significant role in the unravelling of the plot. The other important point in the film is "the theme of the hands": Othello's black hands on a globe, playful and caring hands of Desdemona, her handkerchief in Emilia's hands, etc. (ibid: 32).

The director also grasped the possibilities provided by colour film. The main colours in Yutkevich's *Othello* are crimson as the colour of tragedy and mischief (we first can see it in the prologue accompanying Othello, and how it passes on Desdemona and Emilia in the finale); white as the colour of chastity (it follows Desdemona; in the course of the action, it is diluted with pink and in the end with pale green); and black as "the colour of Othello's Venetian costume, Desdemona's evening gowns and Othello's cloak in the taking of the oath scene" (ibid). That said, the moviemakers made the background neutral intentionally (soft tones of grey and brown turning into white) in order to intensify the effect of the main characters' costumes.

Yutkevich sought to use authentic architecture, because, from his perspective, the decorations should have played an important role in the development of the action and helped the actors to find ways to trigger new feelings and associations in the viewers' minds. It is known that Famagusta was a prospering and wealthy city, its architecture was influenced by the classical, Byzantine and other traditions. Thus, the film shooting took place in the 16th-century fortress situated in the estuary of the Dniester River, in the town of Bilhorod-Dnistrovskiyi (Odessa Oblast, Ukraine), as well as on the debris of the Genoese Fortress in Sudak (Crimea) (Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1973а: 215). Nevertheless, because the budget of the film was limited, they had to resort to cunning and use the potential of montage. For instance, Yutkevich did not have much money to build a full-size copy of the grand Giants'

Staircase of the Doge's Palace in Venice, so the scene was shot at the Khimki (Northern) Riverside Station on the bank of the Moscow Canal, now part of Moscow. All Venetian scenes were filmed in the studio with the use of the water reflection effect, because there were neither opportunity nor money to find appropriate locations. The filmmaker did not pursue the objectives of authenticity; one can find even anachronisms (e.g., a fresco by the Florentine painter Paolo Uccello in the Senate of Venice) (ibid: 217).

S. I. Yutkevich paid much attention to the choice of foreshortening ratios and camera movement (Yutkevich, 1957: 32). He used the principle of “pars pro toto”, i.e. “a part instead of the whole”: “...the number of people taking part in the crowd scenes was modest and did not exceed fifty, but a threefold or fourfold quantity of spears with flags were creating a festive teeming atmosphere of Othello's arrival or the night's camp” (Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1973a: 218). The scene of the celebration was shot without too many extra actors involved, so the film crew used sound editing: dubbed crowd noise, overlapped music in the sequence of bonfires and fireworks. The director relied on an expressionistic mise-en-scène device. The cameraman Evgenii Andrikanis took advantage of a wide angle lens “18”, following the principle, according to which the camera was moving only when it was necessary, using pauses to emphasize the main dramatic moments (ibid: 220–221).

The film's score is by the prominent Soviet composer Aram Khachaturian<sup>4</sup>. According to Yutkevich, the musician applied the same principles as he did. The main topics of Khachaturian's music in the film are the following: “the heroic theme of Othello, the love theme of Othello and Desdemona, themes of the handkerchief, celebrations, tragic themes of despair, soldiers' songs, Desdemona's aria, the song of the willow and the final requiem” (Yutkevich, 1957: 32). Also, sound effects were widely used along with music (cicadas' singing, silence, the noise of whooshing waves, the whisper of the sea, etc.).

#### RECEPTION OF S. I. YUTKEVICH'S “OTHELLO”

Yutkevich's *Othello* achieved some success in the USSR and abroad, however, in my opinion, for some reasons it did not become a “cult Shakespeare film”. It was, “in fact, the first serious rendition of Shakespeare in Soviet cinema” (Kratkaia istoriia sovetskogo kino / Краткая история советского кино, 1969: 435), but even in Russia this film is not as well-known today as Kozintsev's *Hamlet* and *King Lear* (at least, most of my friends and relatives I asked told me that they had never watched and even heard of this version of *Othello* before).

In 1956, Sergei Yutkevich won the Best Director Award at the 9th Cannes Film Festival. His *Othello* was awarded the Golden Prize at the International Film Festival in Damascus (Syria), the Silver Prize (“Silver Eagle”) at the International Film Festival in Mexico City (Mexico), the Silver Medal as the best foreign film at the International Film Festival in Tokyo (Japan). It also received the award of the Finnish Critics' Association (SARV) in the category Best Foreign Film and the Award of the Higher Technical Committee of French Cinematography for the best colour film in Cannes (see: Moldavskii / Молдавский, 1975: 274; Andrikanis / Андриканис, 1987: 148).

Interestingly, according to the data provided at KinoPoisk, a Russian website about cinematography, 24.1million people watched the film in the USSR (*Otello* (1955) / *Отелло* (1955): Web resource). So, its audience was even wider than that of Kozintsev's *Hamlet* — 21.4 million viewers (*Gamlet* (1964) / *Гамлет* (1964): Web resource). Nevertheless, the success and impact of Kozintsev's *Hamlet* 8 years later was much greater, at least in the West. Afterwards, Kozintsev's work gained much more attention of film historians and especially of Shakespearean scholars.

In the USSR Yutkevich's *Othello* received both positive and negative reviews. The director recalled that the film was appreciated by the higher authorities (otherwise they would hardly have selected it to represent the Soviet Union at the Cannes Film Festival). So, there were reviews in *Pravda* and *Literaturnaya gazeta* and the critics at large were guardedly benevolent (Ліпков / Липков, 1975: 139–140).

Nevertheless, at the All-Union Shakespeare conference in 1956 the participants harshly criticized the director for “distortion of Shakespeare” (Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1991: 357). The theatre director and researcher, ballet historian Boris L'vov-Anokhin declared that the film was feeble, because of “the poverty of intention, the poverty of philosophy while there's a claim to a singularity and originality in the resolution of every episode” (cited by: Zingerman / Зингерман, 1956: 123). His colleague Boris Zakhava also chastised the movie and noticed that “the way of visualization of Shakespeare[’s play]” chosen by the director turned out to be “false” (ibid: 122). In his opinion, “the film is based on a sugary prettyism, picturesqueness and all kinds of amusements that were intended not to enhance Shakespeare, but to distract attention from him” (ibid). As the result, the conference attendees sent a telegram to the Ministry of Culture, in which they officially demanded to ban the distribution of the film. So, it is unknown how this story would have ended if Yutkevich had not won the Best Director Award in Cannes (Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1991: 357).

During the discussion of the film in the House of Cinema in Moscow the director argued against the “academic approach” to Shakespeare's creative works and the “academic canonization of Shakespeare” and asserted that artists had a right to interpret the playwright's heritage in their own way consistent with the requirements of time: “And that artist will be right who discovers him (Shakespeare. — B. G.), not only respectfully bows and scrapes to him, but loves him. I streamlined Shakespeare's text, I shifted some scenes and added what I considered to be necessary, but I did that not to show my originality, but foremost in favour of Shakespeare, my contemporary and a passionate, ardent artist” (The verbatim record of the discussion in the House of Cinema. Typescript, p. 42. Cited by: Moldavskii / Молдавский, 1975: 262).

With good reason, we can say that the film resonated with audiences in the USSR and in some other countries of the world. Indeed, the film was screened in more than 70 countries (ibid: 274) and a number of reviews on the film appeared in Great Britain, Spain, Mexico<sup>5</sup>, Poland, Portugal, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Japan<sup>6</sup> and other countries (ibid).

The director and actors received congratulatory letters from prominent cultural figures. For instance, Lawrence Olivier expressed his excitement about the work of the Soviet filmmakers and considered it to be shrewder than O. Welles' *Othello* (see: Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1991: 357). The French poet Jean Cocteau published an open letter in *Les Lettres françaises*<sup>7</sup>, where he declared that the director “enjoined us to forget Shakespeare's play and... made us see it as if we had never known it before” (cited by: Moldavskii / Молдавский, 1975: 274).

Nevertheless, the fame of Yutkevich's *Othello* afterwards, in my opinion, faded away, especially after the release of *Hamlet* directed by Kozintsev. The former has attracted comparatively little attention of Western film experts and Shakespearean scholars over recent 60 years. Maybe it is not only because of the awful English overdubbing (Weiler, 1960: Web resource; see also: Pregelj, 2011: Web resource)<sup>8</sup> and the poor quality of the colour prints used in the West<sup>9</sup>. I assume that many ideas Yutkevich tried to convey were in many respects strange and obscure for foreign viewers.

S. I. Yutkevich used to espouse communist views. At least, it is hard to suspect him of disloyalty or a hidden dissidence, if we read his works on Shakespeare's legacy. He managed to

live through the troubled times of the Great Purges, although some of his works were censored and banned from distribution. Nevertheless, as the movie scholar and historian of cinematography Petr Bagrov has noted, Yutkevich is “probably the only one in the Soviet cinema [who] thoroughly fulfilled himself. He did all what he wanted” (Bagrov / Барров, 2005: Web resource).

The director emphasized that “interpretation of the tragedy by Shakespeare became a robust weapon for the propaganda of the ideology by bourgeois theorists; the struggle was around Shakespeare and for him” (Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1973а: 194). Indeed, his *Othello* was to a large extent a reflection of this ideological battle between the Western and Eastern block of states. He noted that Western idealists consider *Othello* as a symbolic struggle between the good and the evil, the high and the low, striving to “affirm the eternity, inalterability, immanence of the nature of human feelings” (ibid).

The director disagreed that Shakespeare had made Othello a black Moor in order to create “a contrast between his black body and the white soul” (ibid: 195). He called for abandoning the histrionic *cliché* when the passion of the hero was explained only by his national character. In his opinion, Shakespeare made his character not only a foreigner, but also a rootless man who would seek a recognition by his feats of arms. The “infidelity” of Desdemona plunges his world into chaos: “Oh, now forever / Farewell the tranquil mind! Farewell content! (III, 3). Thus, “the whole tragedy of Othello is the search for and loss of this ‘tranquil mind’, a great yearning and hope for a harmony of the human personality when only a creative, productive life is possible” (ibid: 196). In Yutkevich’s opinion, Othello dreams not of a happy life of a successful Philistine, but about a fate of a soldier, “an active organizer of life” (ibid).

The filmmaker considered Othello to be “the humanists’ ideal that Shakespeare desired and sought” (ibid). He argued that, for the Moor, Desdemona’s love was “the peak of his life path... the last proof of the correctness of his view of life” (ibid). The loss of this love “means, for him, the collapse of his world outlook, the end of his belief in the higher purpose and significance of man” (ibid).

Also, the director mentioned an opinion of the poet, translator, critic and literary scholar Ivan Aksenov who reckoned that the main motive in Shakespeare’s works was the search for harmony, man’s creation of a new world. However, “his (Shakespeare’s. — B. G.) ideals were not destined to come to life, because the forthcoming new world — the world of capitalism — was in its own way not less disharmonious than the feudal world” (Aksenov / Аксенов, 1937: 253–254).

Thus, S. I. Yutkevich saw his film as a critique of feudalism and capitalism, because both systems were based on exploitation of ordinary people. In David Gillespie’s opinion, the “film follows standard Soviet practice in dealing with Shakespeare’s tragedies as it highlights the socio-political dimension of the conflict. Thus, the emphasis is on conquest and violence from the outset, with Venetian society shown as beset by bigotry and racism, a feudal way of life based on primitive passions and intrigue, avarice, venality and debauchery. Still, its theme of honour, love and beauty destroyed by an implacable evil had a clear contemporary resonance in the immediate post-Stalin years” (Gillespie, 2004: 50). I do not think that Yutkevich did not know that the Soviet system had quite a lot of shortcomings too. It is notorious that after Stalin’s death in 1953 many people (especially among the intelligentsia) got a feeling that life would take a turn for the better soon. And I agree that Yutkevich’s *Othello* is one of early harbingers of Khrushchev’s Thaw (Osborne, 1995: 327; see also, for example: Woll, 2000; Bulgakowa, 2014).

S. I. YUTKEVICH'S "OTHELLO" AND PREVIOUS FILM VERSIONS  
OF SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGEDY

In his book *Shakespeare and Cinema* (1973), there is a Shakespearean filmography that Yutkevich prepared himself. It contains films from 1899 till 1972 (Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1973b). So, it is clear that he knew about film versions and adaptations of *Othello* directed by Mario Caserini (1907, 1909, 1914), Franz Porten (1907/1908), William V. Ranous (1908), Gerolamo Lo Savio (1909), Enrico Novelli (as Yambo; 1909), August Blom (1910/1911), Charles M. Seay (1913), Ubaldo Maria Del Colle and Ernesto Maria Pasquali (1913), Arrigo Frusta (1914), Martinius Nielsen (1916), Max Mack (1918), Harley Knoles (1921), Camillo De Riso (1920/1921), Dimitri Buchowetzki (1922), Walter Reisch (1936), David MacKane (1946), George Cukor (1947), Orson Welles (1951) et al. However, it is still hard to say for sure which of them (except Welles' film) he could have seen before he began to shoot his own version.

The Soviet filmmaker considered Dimitri Buchowetzki's version very feeble. In his opinion, the director "filmed the worst *Othello* that did not stand the test of time at all" (Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1973c: 12). In his article, the director provided no details, but it is clear that Yutkevich was sure that if a director had no theatrical experience it was very hard for him/her to make a successful film. Thus, I do not think we can say that Buchowetzki's film version of Shakespeare's *Othello* had a significant influence on the Soviet film.

In the majority of articles on S. I. Yutkevich's *Othello* that I have read, the authors note the originality of the Soviet film version. Of course, more often, they compare it to Orson Welles' film. The director wrote several critical articles on his American colleague's motion pictures. He rendered homage to Welles' mastery, who, as far as it was known, often had to shoot his films within the shortest possible time because of lack of money<sup>10</sup>.

S. I. Yutkevich pointed out that the only episode of his *Othello* that made his film similar to Welles' version was the scene of the marriage ceremony of Othello and Desdemona, which was missing in Shakespeare's play (Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1973a: 212).

The influence of Welles was quite significant. Yutkevich wrote: "I followed in Orson Welles' footsteps in order to unearth the mystery of his method of working with actor" (Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1973d: 100). But in many respects Yutkevich's *Othello* is a peculiar response to Welles. For instance, he criticized the American director for the extreme intensity and impetuosity of the action: "The action of his *Othello* develops in such a rush that even if you know Shakespeare's text, you hardly catch the sequence of plot devices" (ibid: 97).

Yutkevich did not deny that any director had a right to digress from the text of Shakespeare's play in some details (for instance, Iago in a cage). But in his opinion, Welles took too much liberty working with the text, because the American filmmaker rearranged Shakespeare's lines. In his film there are too many abridgements (especially in Desdemona's lines and Yago's soliloquies). That is why, in Yutkevich's view, "the poetical and philosophical frame of the play is crippled" (ibid: 99).

In Welles' film, there is an "existential rebellion", "a tragedy of the estrangement of a strong, but helpless personality" of Welles. Yutkevich called his American colleague "the White negro" (ibid: 105) who was struggling with "the whole contemporary world, which he rejected and hated, being unable to explain and change it" (ibid: 106). Finally, when a reporter from *The Times* newspaper asked the Soviet director what the main difference between the two interpretations was, Yutkevich answered: "He begins with death, I begin with life!"<sup>11</sup>.

In the chapter "Filming *Othello*" Anthony Davies concludes "that Yutkevich's film is dramatically less complex than Welles's. Where Welles tends to juxtapose images and allow the composite effect to mature in the mind of the viewer, Yutkevich seeks, perhaps, to make

too many issues explicit. However, the colour in his film presents us with some unforgettable images in which natural elements — stone, sky and sea — do become a chorus to the dramatic development” (Davies, 1994: 208).

It appears that it would be rather interesting to examine previously unnoticed examples of possible influence of Yutkevich’s movie on the subsequent film versions of Shakespeare’s play<sup>12</sup>, although I do not think that there are many examples of such influence. Of course, we can try to find some similarities in particular episodes, but, in my view, it is quite evident that “world views” shown by the directors are quite different.

For instance, Patricia Tatzpaugh argues that the films directed by Orson Welles (1951), Sergei Yutkevich (1956) and Oliver Parker (1995) “may share traits, but most of the apparent similarities stem from the common source and especially Shakespeare’s imagery and the locations of Venice and Cyprus. Resonating with other images in the film, the apparent borrowings assume a singularity” (Tatzpaugh, 2007: 150). She also noted that it is possible to find the influences of both Welles and Yutkevich in Parker’s film, but the director tended to follow the realistic approach of Franco Zeffirelli. Parker was aimed at highest possible realism and shot his *Othello* in Venice and Cyprus as well as cast younger actors following the theatrical tendencies of his time (see: Ibid: 153–154).

In my opinion, Western film experts and Shakespearean scholars usually consider S. I. Yutkevich’s *Othello* as a film that deserves attention only in some aspects (e.g., shooting of the forces of nature, application of the possibilities of colour celluloid, some other director’s professional discoveries). The director’s main message and cultural and philosophical content of the motion picture are rarely discussed in detail.

#### CONCLUSION

I reckon that one of the reasons why G. M. Kozintsev’s *Hamlet* became quite popular in the West is that it contains many references to a totalitarian state (see, for example: Conroy Moore, 2012), while S. I. Yutkevich’s film, in my opinion, does not have obvious socio-political allusions to the Soviet regime. On the contrary, it seems that the film director tried to level criticism at feudal and capitalist societies and inspire hope that Soviet society can get rid of its imperfections and build a “new brave world”. Kozintsev’s black and white *Hamlet* can also be considered as a response to Yutkevich’s colour *Othello*, i.e. his complete disillusion with the Soviet system.

S. I. Yutkevich’s *Othello* is the first colour film version of the tragedy of the Venetian Moor in the world and, no doubt, it deserves a thorough consideration as an original work of art. Nonetheless, in my view, it is possible to draw a conclusion that the Soviet screen adaptation of *Othello* turned out to be in many respects “obscure” and even “improper” for foreign (especially Western) viewers, critics and film scholars. And I argue that, by and large, it is the same for the majority of contemporary Russian cinema audience members.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> In an interview, Alexander Kozintsev, Grigory Kozintsev’s son, noted that their close friendship lasted till the end of the 1940s: “My father’s relations with Sergei Iosifovich were intimate up to the late 40s, he used to write letters to him, in particular in times of trouble. Then a cooling in relations took place — his boyhood friend was attracted to Lenin when my father had already been disappointed with the ideals of his adolescence. But he liked Yutkevich’s *Bania* (‘Bath-house’) — one of the harbingers of the Thaw — very much as well as *Siuzhet dlia nebol’ sbogo rasskaza* (‘A Plot for a Short Tale’). See: Khazan / Хазан, 2013: Web resource.



<sup>2</sup> Many thanks to Ronan Paterson (Head of Performing Arts at the University of Teesside, United Kingdom) for the full text. Actually, it is an abridged English version of Yutkevich's article "*Othello*", *How I Saw It* («*Otello*», kakim ia ego uvidel»).

<sup>3</sup> In 1941, S. I. Yutkevich was the director and scriptwriter of a graduation work prepared by students of the All-Union State Institute of Cinematography (VGIK). It features a few scenes from Shakespeare's *Othello*. Cameramen: V. Golovnya, A. Koloshin. In the short film they used music by Ferenc Liszt. See: Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1973b: 253.

<sup>4</sup> Initially, the director had been going to use music from Giuseppe Verdi's opera *Othello* (1887), but afterwards he dropped this idea. See: Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1991: 338.

<sup>5</sup> See: Cervantes, Zhatkin, 2018. We can evaluate the film's success in Mexico if we consider the following funny accident, which was described by the director himself. In 1959, he was travelling with his wife in this country and they decided to go to a big film house in Mexico City in order to watch the movie *Some Like It Hot* starring Marilyn Monroe in one of the title roles. There was a long ticket line, so S. I. Yutkevich asked the owner if it was possible to buy tickets and avoid waiting in the queue, but was refused. Then he introduced himself. The attitude to the foreigners instantly changed: the Mexican was very happy to let them in for free, because the Soviet *Othello* had been running there for nine weeks, it was very popular and successful at the box office. See: Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1991: 359.

<sup>6</sup> Japanese critics compared Sergei Bondarchuk's dramatic qualities with those of the best masters of the kabuki theatre. See: Moldavskii / Молдавский, 1975: 266.

<sup>7</sup> Les Lettres françaises. 1956. 3 mai.

<sup>8</sup> As D. M. Moldavskii notes, it was the first Soviet motion picture that was dubbed into English. See: Moldavskii / Молдавский, 1975: 273. For example, in Mexico the film was screened with subtitles and received mainly positive reviews in the local mass media. See: Cervantes, Zhatkin, 2018: 59–60.

<sup>9</sup> Thanks again to Ronan Paterson for this information.

<sup>10</sup> For instance, O. Welles shot his *Othello* within 21 days, although the film production took three years (see, for example: Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1973d: 91). The film shoots began in 1949 and a dubbed version premiered in Rome on November 29, 1951 (Anile, 2013: 245). The original English version was presented at Cannes Film Festival on May 10, 1952 (Welles, Bogdanovich, 1992: 410). Welles recalled the following: "...the picture was made in pieces. Three different times I had to close it and go away and earn money and come back, which meant you'd see me looking off-camera left, and when you'd cut over my shoulder, it would be another continent — a year later. And so the picture had many more cuts than I would have liked; it wasn't written that way, but had them because I never had a full cast together. Now, for *that* shot we had the entire cast — Iago and Othello — and a great long place where we could do it all in one. So, for once in the picture, we could do a single sustained scene. Just as simple as that" (ibid: 231; emphasize in original. — B. G.).

<sup>11</sup> The Times. 1956. May 4. Cited by: Howard, 2010: 93. See also: Moldavskii / Молдавский, 1975: 262.

<sup>12</sup> For instance, S. I. Yutkevich was the first who theoretically substantiated that Shakespearean soliloquies can be voiced-over. Lawrence Olivier discovered the device of internal monologue himself (see, for instance: Yutkevich / Юткевич, 1973e: 47; Crowl, 2014: 45), but the Soviet director did it earlier, although he managed to fulfill this idea on screen only in 17 years after his article on *Othello* was published. See: Lipkov / Липков, 1975: 139.

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*Submission date: 25.09.2018.*

ПЕРЕСМАТРИВАЯ «ОТЕЛЛО» С. И. ЮТКЕВИЧА: ВЗГЛЯД ИЗ XXI ВЕКА

Б. Н. ГАЙДИН

МОСКОВСКИЙ ГУМАНИТАРНЫЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ

В статье обобщаются и сравниваются различные оригинальные точки зрения о фильме С. И. Юткевича «Отелло» (1955), которые возникли как внутри, так и за пределами «железного занавеса», а также после распада СССР. Автор рассматривает их сквозь призму режиссерской концепции фильма, которую Юткевич сформулировал в книге «Шекспир и кино» (1973) и других публикациях.

Предлагается авторская версия того, почему работа советского режиссера не так часто попадает в поле исследований западных шекспироведов и киноведов в отличие от «Гамлета» и «Короля Лира» Г. М. Козинцева.

Статья подготовлена на основе доклада автора на круглом столе «Шекспир на советском экране» в рамках IX конференции Европейской шекспировской исследовательской ассоциации «Шекспир и европейские театральные культуры: (ан)атомизация текста и сцены» (Shakespeare and European Theatrical Cultures: AnAtomizing Text and Stage; 27–30 июля 2017 г., Гданьск, Польша).

Ключевые слова: С. И. Юткевич; «Отелло»; экранизации «Отелло»; У. Шекспир; шекспирсфера; Шекспир в современном кино; Шекспир в русской культуре; современный кинематограф; советское кино

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*Дата поступления: 25.09.2018 г.*

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