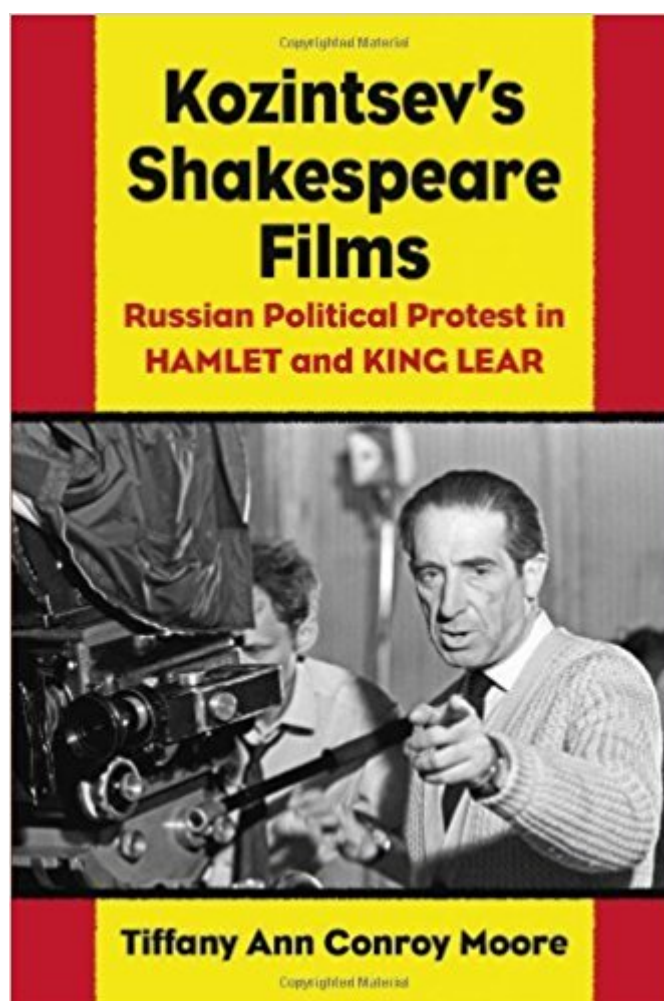


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# Kozintsev's Shakespeare Films: Russian Political Protest In Hamlet And King Lear



## Synopsis

This book is a study of Grigory Kozintsev's two cinematic Shakespeare adaptations, *Hamlet* (1964), and *King Lear* (1970). The films are considered in relation to the historical, artistic and cultural contexts in which they appear, and in relation to the contributions of Dmitri Shostakovich, who wrote the films' scores; and Boris Pasternak, whose translations Kozintsev used. The films are analyzed respective to their place in the translation and performance history of *Hamlet* and *King Lear* from their first appearances in Tsarist Russian arts and letters. In particular, this study is concerned with the ways in which these plays have been used as a means to critique the government and the country's problems in an age in which official censorship was commonplace. Kozintsev's films (as well as his theatrical productions of *Hamlet* and *Lear*) continue along this trajectory of protest by providing a vehicle for him and his collaborators to address the oppression, violence and corruption of Soviet society. It was just this sort of covert political protest that finally effected the dissolution and fall of the USSR.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Tiffany Conroy's book is an excellent introduction to the political contexts of these superb and

Shakespeare films, and in particular of the ways in which Christian imagery and ideas intertwine with dissident aesthetics in *King Lear* and *Hamlet*. Kozintsev's *Hamlet*, in particular, has been widely influential throughout the world and is a core film for understanding Global Shakespeare. The book is accessible, and will be very helpful in teaching these films as well as in prompting further scholarly research.

A fascinating look into brilliant director Kozintsev's use of the Bard as a tool for political and social dissent. Moore's choice of Kozintsev's *Hamlet* and *King Lear* clearly demonstrated how Shakespeare's plots mirrored the political and cultural issues from the 18th through 20th centuries. In her examination of Kozintsev's Shakespeare films, the tyranny and oppressive aspects of soviet life is clearly voiced by the covert actions of prominent artists and musicians of the times. Following Moore's objectives, the range of scholarship reflected in the bibliography is clear and precise. Academics and students alike will find this book an excellent tool for further study. Her style is authoritative, but not boring. (I particularly enjoyed the section on *King Lear*).

Moore takes a scholarly view of Kozintsev's work, but never neglects the readers need to connect with the ideas and propositions she puts forth. It's an immersive look at the Shakespeare films by this man, examining the overarching meaning and implications of their presentation. This is written in an academic but accessible style, and anyone who loves film, theater, politics and/or Shakespeare will find this read enlightening and time well-spent.

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