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MONOGRAPH

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Introduction

As a determined opposition to the officially established norms, ideas and values, dissent[1] had various forms of expression in the former Soviet Union, yet it was exceptionally prevalent in the cultural sphere, which allowed artists to voice their unorthodox views through Aesopian language, often overlooked by the Soviet censorship apparatus. Cinematic adaptations of canonical literary works offer an opportune artistic mode of self-expression for such delicate resistance, since they merge the line between the present and the past, thus allowing the adapter to speak on contemporary issues through the voice of the original author. It is hardly surprising that the universal dramatic language of Shakespeare was favoured as a tool for criticism aimed at the oppressive state power in various media throughout the turbulent times of the twentieth century. The aestheticisation of contemporary sociopolitics via Shakespeare's fictional narratives was prevalent in the Soviet period as well. Paradoxically, it

1   The term *dissent*, defined as "disagreement with an official or widely held view" (Waite, 2007, p. 293), as well as the expression of such disagreement, is used in the monograph to refer to the "moral opposition to Communism" (Boobbyer, 2005, p. 2) in the former Soviet Union, which was not manifested in a direct form of a political protest, but rather, encompassed a broad spectrum of activities, one of them being artistic expression. The authors of the paper focus on the double-layered literary and audiovisual works, in which "the need for people to speak out against injustice" and "to live according to the truth or conscience" (ibid.) was implied through subversive coded language. Although it is widely considered that the movement of Soviet dissidents developed in the 1960s "primarily as a response to the authoritarianism of the Brezhnev regime" (ibid.), indirect opposition was prevalent in the sociocultural sphere of the Soviet State throughout its existence (1922–1991). The strict censorship apparatus permeated the official public discourse, thus prohibiting all open demonstrations of discontent with the State's policies. For instance, Sarah Davies (1997, p. 9) investigates the "neglected body of dissonant opinion which distorted, subverted, rejected, or provided an alternative to the official discourse" during the most intense period of Stalin's rule (1934–1941). The author affirms that it was marked by mass persecutions and repressions of people accused of "anti-Soviet agitation" (ibid., p. 5), when a sarcastic remark or an anecdote aimed at the government were in some cases sufficient to receive a death sentence. The discussion of Grigori Kozintsev's biography presented in the second chapter of the paper also reveals that the methods developed by the regime to silence artists for expressing unorthodox views in their works was already common practice at the end of the 1920s (see pages 34–38).

was developed both into an effective tool for Communist propaganda, and a means of political dissent.

After the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, the oeuvre of the Elizabethan playwright occupied an obscure position in the Soviet literary sphere, instigating opposing reactions from cultural and political authorities. On the one hand, Shakespeare was considered by some influential literary figures, such as Maxim Gorky (1868–1936), as a writer of the masses rather than a representative of the bourgeoisie class and, therefore, suitable for the proletarian audience. On the other hand, his plays presented themselves as palimpsests addressing political violence, thus, they were also viewed as disruptive elements in the context of the Party's ideological line (Makaryk, 2015; Paterson, 2018). As a solution, the regulators of the official cultural sphere appropriated Shakespeare into a Soviet paradigm, re-establishing the Bard as an advocate for the monistic Communist ideology. The tragedy of *Hamlet* was transformed into a story of the positive Soviet hero, while *King Lear* lent itself conveniently to be interpreted as an anti-monarchist statement.

Initially, such established norms were challenged through various artistic attempts. A case in point is Nikolai Akimov's (1901–1968) controversial staging of *Hamlet* at the Vakhtangov theatre of Moscow in 1932, produced right before the establishment of the Socialist Realism aesthetic and considered as one of the most prominent instances of theatrical resistance against the Soviet censorship of Shakespeare's works (Assay, 2015). Yet, due to the intensifying sociopolitical climate during the repressive Stalinist rule, such revolutionary cultural acts were paralysed by the State's censorship mechanism. Artists were subjected to the harsh environment of persecutions and punishments, which they were unable to withstand. The tragic fate of the Soviet theatre director and producer Vsevolod Meyerhold (1874–1940) prevented him from achieving his life-long dream to stage *Hamlet*, as Stalin sentenced the artist to death for anti-Soviet proclamations in his theatrical works (Gladkov, 2004, p. 49). The director had turned to poet Boris Pasternak (1890–1960) for the translation of the play into Russian, when he planned its production in 1939 at the Pushkin Theatre in Leningrad. Unfortunately, the Communist regime's brutal treatment of the non-conformist artist made Meyerhold "an actor and director who never played and never staged *Hamlet*" (Meyerhold cited in Gladkov, 2004, p. 189), as stated prophetically by the director himself four years prior to his death.

Nonetheless, Meyerhold's literary request encouraged Pasternak to "become personally involved in the project [of *Hamlet*]" (King, 2014, p. 14), to which the poet eventually devoted a significant part of his literary and translation career.

It was not by chance that Pasternak's Russian rendition for the 1939 production of *Hamlet* was ultimately staged in 1954 by the Soviet theatre and film director Grigori Kozintsev (1905–1973) at the Pushkin Theatre, as originally intended by Meyerhold (Sokolyansky, 2000, p. 199). As a fellow artist of the avant-garde theatre, Kozintsev was greatly inspired by his contemporary and shared Meyerhold's fascination with Shakespeare's tragedy, often quoting his saying: "if all the plays ever written suddenly disappeared and only *Hamlet* miraculously survived, all the theatres in the world would be saved" (Meyerhold cited in Corrigan, 2012, p. 91). Against this background, it may be stated that Pasternak and Kozintsev were prescribed the sense that Shakespeare's dramatic texts were a refuge, where they could articulate their private thoughts in relation to the authoritarian Communist regime. Both dissenting artists continued Meyerhold's legacy in their quest to counter the false decorum of the brutal dictatorship with their literary and theatrical interpretations of Shakespeare, which were eventually accumulated into historical illuminations of the perilous Soviet times on the cinematic canvas.

The study presents the analysis of Grigori Kozintsev's cinematic adaptations *Hamlet* (*Гамлет*) (1964) [2] and *King Lear* (*Король Лир*) (1971), based on the Russian translations of William Shakespeare's tragedies by Boris Pasternak. The **aim** of the paper is to reveal the audiovisual means by which Shakespeare's dramatic texts are deconstructed into instruments of dissent against the Soviet regime during the course of their inter/intrasemiotic translation (*inter*semiotic – between two different sign systems, i.e. from word to image; *intra*semiotic – within the same sign system, i.e. from English into Russian, and *vice versa*)[3]. The authors focus on the dynamic modifications made by

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2   The date in the parentheses indicates the original release date of the film. It is noteworthy to remark that the DVD versions of Kozintsev's *Hamlet* and *King Lear* used for the adaptation and subtitle analysis were released in 2000 (see Shostak & Kozintsev) and 2007 (see Shostak, Eliseyev & Kozintsev) respectively.

3   The term *intersemiotic translation* was first distinguished by the Russian-American linguist Roman Jakobson (1896–1982) as "an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems" (1959, p. 233) and is referred to in the monograph as translation from the written word into the cinematic image. In his prominent essay *On Linguistic Aspects of Translation*,

Pasternak as the literary interpreter through the intrasemiotic translation, and by Kozintsev as the cinematic adapter through the intersemiotic translation, both of the procedures operating as major driving forces in the deconstructive process aimed at dissent. The two types of translation, viewed as highly dynamic transcultural events rather than individual acts of ordinary transcodification, operate unanimously. In the context of cinematic adaptation, it should be remarked that languages, whether literary or cinematic, are open systems allowing for inter-translatability, i.e. a transformational passage from one type of text[4] to another by balancing the internal and external tensions that occur depending on the aim of the translation and "the political, social and cultural needs of the audience" (Chesterman, 1997, p. 70).

The **object** of analysis in the monograph is twofold: the deconstruction on the level of adaptation is analysed by focusing on the narrative elements of the films, namely the plot, the characters, and the dialogue, as well as the mise-en-scene of Kozintsev's cinematic adaptations; the deconstruction on the level of translation proper is revealed by examining Boris Pasternak's Russian translations of *Hamlet* and *King Lear* used in the film dialogues of the two adaptations, as well as their English renditions presented in the subtitles of the films.

Each of the two adaptations is approached as a complex synthesis of texts, merging Shakespeare's original play, its literary translation into Russian, the cinematic version by Kozintsev, and, finally, the translation of the film's dialogic lines into English. The authors argue that in audiovisual translation

Jakobson also defines two other types of verbal sign interpretation: intralingual translation, i.e. "rewording" and interlingual translation, i.e. "translation proper" (ibid.). Meanwhile, the term *intrasemiotic translation*, referring to Pasternak's Russian renditions of Shakespeare's plays and the English subtitled film translations, is used as an umbrella term that encompasses Jakobson's intralingual and interlingual types of translation. Since the given work focuses on the shifts that occur during the transfer of a verbal text from one language into another and, subsequently, into another sign system, the authors of the monograph specifically distinguish intersemiotic and intrasemiotic translation as the two principal types manifested in Kozintsev's cinematic adaptations, with the intention to highlight the aspect of multimodality in the analysis.

4   In the paper, the concept of text refers not only to written discourse, but is also understood as a collection of signs that acts as a source of information and is "an object to be examined, explicated, or deconstructed" (*Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*), thus it includes visual discourse as well. When discussing visual art in the context of deconstruction, Mieke Bal (cited in Campbell, 2012, p. 120) describes text as being "not [neccessarily] verbal; images are also texts precisely in that they constitute a network of discursive practices, albeit visually shaped".

the awareness of such textual movement is vital in order to ensure a high-quality end product. Otherwise, the discrepancies between the source and the target texts may pose serious issues for the viewer experience, as is the case with the English subtitles of both films, in which the target audience is presented with the subtitled original Shakespearean blank verse, rather than an adequate translation of the Russian film dialogue lines. Such a decision, made either personally by the translator or the translation company, eliminates the possibility to constructively discuss the English subtitles within the paradigm of intrasemiotic translation, since in this case subtitling does not operate as an act of translation, but rather as a convenient, yet misleading replacement of the source cinematic dialogue with the original lines of the Elizabethan dramas.

The **research methodology** in the given work is based on deconstruction, a post-structuralist critical approach developed by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida (1930–2004). In its broadest sense, deconstruction questions the idea of a single governing truth, as proposed by Western logocentrism. Contrary to the logocentric thought model, which insists on one correct interpretation of a text, Derrida instead suggests that meaning is always context-dependent and, therefore, never stable. In his formulation deconstruction is defined not only as a strategy for the critical analysis of texts, but also as a form of writing. Hence, deconstruction can be pursued not only through the criticism of existing texts, but also through the process of constructing a new text.

In the study, Derridean deconstruction[5] is considered as a twofold approach applied to both literary and audiovisual texts. Firstly, it is treated as a structural transformation via inter/intrasemiotic translation, when the original text is dismantled and then reconstructed into a new autonomous entity. In this sense, the process of deconstruction is paradoxical, since initially it requires the construction of a text, which is then deconstructed. More precisely, (de)construction is impossible without construction, as implied by the term itself. Secondly, it is seen as a form of critique, where text interpretation becomes a means to subvert the established sociopolitical and sociocultural norms, thus confirming Derrida's (1999, p. 282) statement that "Justice is deconstructive". Deconstructionists are primarily concerned with having an object of criticism,

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5   Throughout the given paper, the term *deconstruction*, used in a Derridean paradigm, refers to the approach of textual analysis and interpretation, as well as an instance of its use.

since, unlike other approaches of literary criticism, deconstruction cannot exist without a negative, oppressive force to be deconstructed (Žukauskaitė, 2001, p. 25). Furthermore, it should be noted that Derrida's theory emerged during the times of social upheaval, such as the Prague Spring in 1968 and the protests against the Vietnam War in the 1960s, thus reflecting a global shift in social consciousness. It is from this perspective that parallels can be drawn between deconstruction and the Soviet dissident movements, which also sought to negate the previously unquestioned Communist discourse.

The authors of the monograph do not imply that Kozintsev was familiar with Derridean deconstruction and used it as a critical approach to texts. Rather, the analysis is aimed at offering a method of deconstructive reading and interpretation of his adaptations by employing elements of Derrida's theory. It is interesting to note that through such a deconstructive analysis, the linguistic and audiovisual elements of opposition against the Soviet sociopolitical system employed by the Soviet adapter in the two films are revealed as manifesting deconstructive qualities themselves, due to their tendency to question the established thought models of the Communist ideology. Obviously, logocentric Western thought is not his concern. Instead, the core of Kozintsev's deconstructive act becomes the Soviet authoritarian regime, which is criticised for eradicating alternative thought models. In addition, it should be highlighted that Kozintsev's films are not aimed at deconstructing Shakespeare's texts, but the Soviet establishment instead. The adapter does not destruct the plays, but remodels them according to his personal cinematic vision with the goal to subvert the policies of the Soviet State. During the adaptation process, the semiotic universe of Shakespeare's texts is deconstructed and their dramatic development is transposed into a new, cinematic discursive arrangement aiming at an aesthetic expression of dissent. As Seymour (Chatman, 1978, p. 20) claims, "narratives are indeed structures independent of any medium". However, their universal nature allows to place them in unlimited cultural, historical and political contexts as well. After all, the central process of cinematic translation is not replacement, but, on the contrary, addition and creation (Semenenko, 2011, p. 262).

The study follows the post-structuralist approach to text by employing Gerard Genette's (1997) concept of hypertextuality, whereby the Soviet cinematic adaptation is viewed as an accumulation of multiple texts, rather than

a two-text relationship, thus broadening its textual field and meaning potential. The adaptation analysis is largely based on the empirical studies by Barbara Stern (1996) and Norah Campbell (2012), who suggest in their research of image deconstruction to apply close reading to the essential narrative elements of a text and examine its rhetorical strategies. The authors of the study also rely on the insights of influential film adaptation scholars, such as Thomas Leitch (2007; 2016), Robert Stam (2000; 2005), as well as Alexander Burry (2016), who presents a volume of essays that discuss cinematic adaptations produced during the Cold War in an ideological context. The studies on Kozintsev's Shakespearean films, such as Alexander Etkind's (2011) article *Mourning the Soviet Victims in a Cosmopolitan Way: Hamlet from Kozintsev to Riazanov* and Tiffany Ann Conroy Moore's (2012) book *Kozintsev's Shakespeare Films – Russian Political Protest in "Hamlet" and "King Lear"* grant an in-depth look at the subversive cinematic language used by the filmmaker.

The given work offers an interdisciplinary perspective, as it incorporates both literary and audiovisual translation, as well as adaptation studies, simultaneously introducing a deconstructive paradigm into the analysis of the inter/intrasemiotic translation. The research is **novel** due to its deconstructionist approach, which "has not been systematically applied to examine rewritings of *Hamlet* or any other Shakespeare's drama" (Mancewicz, 2012, p. 135), especially in the realm of Soviet cinematic adaptations. Referring to Lithuanian scholarly research, deconstruction in the field of cinematography has not been sufficiently exploited, with very few academic papers published so far (see Venckus, 2009, 2014a, 2014b). In addition, the monograph seeks to broaden the scope of research topics in audiovisual translation by encompassing a sociopolitical dimension.

Chapter One, titled *Deconstruction: Approaches and Potential*, outlines the methodological framework of the paper. It is an overview of Derrida's deconstructionist approach to texts, which presents the possible strategies of applying deconstruction to the analysis of visual discourse, a discussion on film adaptation as a form of deconstruction, and considerations on the problem of equivalent translation in a deconstructive paradigm.

Chapter Two, titled *Censorship and Dissent in the Soviet Cultural Sphere*, describes the sociopolitical and sociocultural climate of the Soviet period. It elaborates on the Soviet filmmaking practices under the control of censors and

addresses the formation of the Soviet artistic canon through the promotion of Socialist Realism. The chapter also discusses Grigori Kozintsev's artistic journey towards the production of the two adaptations and offers an account of Boris Pasternak's literary and translation practices, which left a significant mark in the history of Soviet cultural resistance.

Chapter Three, titled *Deconstruction of Shakespeare's "Hamlet" and "King Lear" for the Soviet Audience: From Page to Screen*, develops the analysis of the films' narrative elements: the plot, characters and dialogue. Regarding Kozintsev's filmic renditions of Shakespeare's tragedies, the dialogue in particular is thoroughly discussed due to its pivotal role in both theatrical and cinematic discourse. The study approaches Boris Pasternak's (1890–1960) translations of *Hamlet*[6] and *King Lear*[7] used in the film dialogues as artistic revelations of the poet-translator, expressing his anti-Soviet views through the dialogic lines voiced by the depicted characters. The chapter also examines the mise-en-scène of Kozintsev's cinematic discourse as a form of rhetoric in order to reveal the deconstructive patterns on the visual level reflecting his social and political critique aimed at the Soviet State.

Lastly, chapter Four, titled *The Translation of Kozintsev's "Hamlet" and "King Lear" for the English-Speaking Audience: Subtitle Analysis*, departs from the field of cinematic adaptation into the realm of audiovisual translation, delving into the analysis of the discussed films' transposition from Russian back into English in the form of subtitles. The carried out research reveals the peculiar cases of pseudo-translations, when the Soviet adaptations are rendered back into Shakespeare's Elizabethan English.

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6   Шекспир, В. (1964). *Гамлет, Принц Датский*. Пер. Б. Пастернака. Москва: Художественная литература (see Shekspir, 1964). This version of Pasternak's translation eventually became one of the best known Russian renditions of *Hamlet* (Semenenko, 2007, p. 96), published posthumously in 1964, and in a number of later editions.

7   Шекспир, В. (1949). *Король Лир*. Пер. Б. Пастернака (see Shekspir, 1949).

Ši monografija, nagrinėjanti rusų kino režisieriaus Grigorijaus Kozincevo kino adaptacijas *Hamletas* (1964) ir *Karalius Lyras* (1971), sukurtas pagal Viljamo Šekspyro tragedijas, atstovauja grožinės literatūros ir kino sąveikos tyrimams bei Lietuvos vertimo studijų kontekste ypač aktualiai audiovizualinio vertimo sričiai. Pristatomas tyrimas vykdomas taikant dekonstrukcijos prieigą, retai pasirenkamą tiek audiovizualinio vertimo studijose, tiek Šekspyro dramų kūrybinėms perkūroms kita menine (šiuo atveju – kino) kalba analizuoti. Knygos autorės pasitelkia tarpdalykinę prieigą, jungiančią minėtas kino adaptacijos ir audiovizualinio vertimo sritis, taip pat literatūrinį vertimą ir sociopolitinę perspektyvą. Darbe aptariamos polisemiotinio diskurso kūrimui naudojamos priemonės, kurių pagrindu literatūriniai Šekspyro dramų tekstai dekonstruojami intrasemiotinio ir intersemiotinio vertimo procesų metu, juos paverčiant estetinio pasipriešinimo prieš sovietinį režimą įrankiais. Autorių dėmesio centre – dinamiškos pirminio teksto transformacijos, veikiančios kaip pagrindinė dekonstrukcijos, orientuotos į disidentinę raišką, varomoji jėga.

The monograph presents the analysis of Grigori Kozintsev's cinematic adaptations *Hamlet* (1964) and *King Lear* (1971), based on William Shakespeare's tragedies, which focuses on the interaction between fiction and cinema, also including audiovisual translation, the field that is particularly relevant in he context of Lithuanian translation studies. The research was carried out through a deconstruction approach that is rarely applied both to audiovisual translation studies and to the analysis of the creative transformations of Shakespeare's plays in another medium. The paper develops an interdisciplinary perspective, combining the aforementioned fields of film adaptation and audiovisual translation, as well as literary translation and socio-political dimension. It offers a discussion of the audiovisual means employed to create the polysemiotic discourse, on the basis of which Shakespeare's dramatic texts are deconstructed into the aesthetic instruments of dissent against the Soviet regime. The authors focus on the dynamic modifications of the source texts made through intra- and inter- semiotic translation, both of the procedures operating as a major driving force in the deconstructive process aimed at Soviet dissent.