



UNIVERSITY OF GOUR BANGA

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

A One-day National Seminar
on

Shakespeare: The Stage and the State

Date: November 26, 2016

Venue: Department of English, University of Gour Banga
Malda, West Bengal 732103

Introduction:

The Department of English, University of Gour Banga, Malda, has decided to organize a one-day National Seminar on “Shakespeare: The Stage and the State” on November 26, 2016. The seminar will be organized around plenary sessions and presentations by participants. Proposals for presentation at the conference are welcome from faculty members, research scholars and academicians engaged with research.

Concept Note:

The Renaissance, along with its cultural significance, did have important political dimensions. William Shakespeare, the most significant product of the English renaissance, too could hardly remain impervious to political issues, even though the word politics does not occur in his works and the word “politic” that does, connotes a base concern with appearances for the sake of political gain.

Today, four hundred years after the Bard’s death, we may not stress with the historian A. F. Pollard the apolitical nature of Shakespeare’s writing to the exclusion of all the public action round which his plays frequently revolved. In fact a significant number of Shakespeare critics from L. C. Knights through Hardin Craig to Alan Sinfield, Jonathan Dollimore and the ilk have pointed up Shakespeare’s myriad negotiations with the political issues in his works.

Besides, during the Renaissance the rise of the nation states like England, Spain etc., the questions of succession, religious bickering and nationalistic expansionism, and the widespread influence of Machiavelli as an ideologue left little room for Shakespeare to ignore politics. The political and social matrix in English society in the Elizabethan age is mirrored in its structures of patronage. Contemporary polity and Shakespeare’s popularity

with the laity apart, it is a common perception that stagecraft collaborates with statecraft for securing royal patronage.

To interrogate, and reinvent this new historicist position, the ‘service ideal’ needs to be recast in the backdrop of the novel idea of introducing payment into the contract; for the buying and selling of labour has none of the emotional appeal of idyllic mutuality. Conflict arises from a complex and changing relationship between theatre and the state. Thus the body politic necessitates the playwrights like Shakespeare to accommodate some kind of subversive logic based on a ‘structural position from which state ideology might be perceived critically’ (Alan Sinfield).

Since much of what Shakespeare writes on political matters are based on the ideas of kingship and polity, an in-depth look at his impressions and experiences of statecraft may help us in reconfiguring our response to this wonderful writer whose popularity continues to withstand the ravages of time and whose works still give birth to countless adaptations. That in brief is the purpose of the proposed seminar.

Sub-themes:

- Shakespeare and the state (stagecraft vis-à-vis statecraft)
- The roman plays and the state
- The tragedies and the state
- The comedies and the state
- The problem plays and the state
- The poems and the state
- The last plays and the state
- The state in Shakespeare adaptations

Organising Committee:

Convener:

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Abstract:

- The abstract body (Times New Roman, 12 font, left and right aligned) should be not more than 300 words.
- Biographical information (within 60 words) of the author(s) in the third person must be included at the end of the abstract.
- All abstracts should be mailed to ugbenglishseminar@gmail.com

Important Dates:

- Last date of submission of the abstract (300 words): November 02, 2016
- Notification of acceptance of abstract: November 08, 2016
- Last date for full paper submission: November 22, 2016
- Any query should be mailed to ugbenglishseminar@gmail.com

Registration Details:

- The Registration Fee includes lunch and refreshment for the day of the seminar, seminar kit and the certificate of participation.
- In case of seminar presentation made by joint authors, each of the authors should get registered separately.
- Registration Fee Details (On spot registration on the day of the seminar):
 - Delegates: ₹ 1000
 - Research scholar: ₹ 800*
 - Student: ₹ 300*

*Research Scholars and students should produce their identity cards with institutional affiliation at the time of registration

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