

**Shakespeare Lives 2016**  
**English Language Teachers Association of India**

**Report of the National Seminar on**  
**CONTEMPORARY SHAKESPEARE: CULTURE, LANGUAGE AND POLITICS**  
**in the School of Distance Education, University of Kerala on 6 & 7 September 2016**

Dr. C. A. Lal

The National Seminar on **Contemporary Shakespeare: Culture, Language and Politics** was organised by School of Distance Education (SDE), University of Kerala on 6 & 7 September 2016 at the Senate Chamber in the Main Campus of the University of Kerala. This was jointly organised with ELTAI and the British Council as part of a series of seminars in several major Indian cities to commemorate the 400<sup>th</sup> death anniversary of William Shakespeare. The National Seminar in Trivandrum was partly funded by the University of Kerala and had the academic support of the *Litcrit* journal and E-Prof, a forum for English professionals based in Trivandrum.

The inaugural session on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2016 began with the introductory remarks of Dr P.P. Ajayakumar, Professor of English, SDE and Chief Editor of *Litcrit*. The meeting was presided over by Dr Zeenath K.S, Director, SDE. Dr Lal C A, the Organising Secretary of the National Seminar welcomed the resource persons, delegates and other distinguished guests and participants. The Honourable Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Kerala, Dr. N Veeramanikandan inaugurated the two-day seminar. Mr Jalson Jacob, Secretary of ELTAI, Pathanamthitta Chapter proposed

the vote of thanks.

The first plenary session of the seminar was the keynote address by Dr Chitra Panikkar, Professor of English, Bangalore University. She enlightened the delegates on the topic *Unusually Open to the World: Shakespeare, Transformative Contexts*. The second plenary address in the forenoon by Dr Meena T Pillai, Associate Professor of English, University of Kerala was on *The Cultural Studies Avatars of William Shakespeare*. After lunch, delegates attended the various paper presentation parallel sessions in the School of Distance Education.

The second day began with paper presentations, followed by a plenary session by Dr Rajeev Nair, Faculty of English, University College, Trivandrum. He spoke on *Death in Shakespearean Tragedy*. The afternoon plenary talks were by Dr B Hariharan, Professor of English, University of Kerala on *Shakespeare and the City*, and by Dr C S Jayaraman, Professor of English, Amrita Viswa Vidyapeetham University on *Of Bodies and the Body Politic: History in Shakespeare*.

The two-day National Seminar came to an end on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2016, with the

valedictory session and award-giving ceremony. The two best paper awards sponsored by ELTAI and British Council were given away by the esteemed guest Dr Jameela Begum A, the former Head of the Department of English, University of Kerala and currently Chairperson of the Curriculum Committee, ASAP, Government of Kerala. The awardees were Mr. A. Balu Vijayaraghavan, Research Scholar , EFLU, Hyderabad, and Ms. Smithi Mohan, FDP Teacher Fellow, University of Kerala. In her valedictory address Dr Jameela Beegum commended the organisers and the participants for their invaluable contributions in truly bringing Shakespeare alive in the contemporary age. The participants also gave candid feedback on

the plenary sessions and the organising of the seminar.

One of the highlights of the seminar was a rare display organised by E-Prof. It was an elaborate display of events related to Shakespeare, his life and time and works unveiled through the pages of the newspaper *The Bard's Times*. The two-day National Seminar provided an excellent and unique opportunity for teachers and research scholars from all over India with a platform to deliberate and debate on the chosen theme. Over sixty papers presented at the seminar exposed the delegates to varied contemporary perspectives on Shakespeare thereby enriching their knowledge of the Bard and his works which still remain “not of an age but for all time”!

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