

Shakespeare and Bengali Little Magazine: Indigenous Responses and Framing of an Alternative Discourse in Post-Independence Bengal

Abstract

This research study explores how Shakespeare has been interpreted and represented in Bengali little magazines beyond the bounds of traditional academic discourse. Little magazines, known for prioritizing experimental writing and promoting avant-garde voices, often function as platforms of literary rebellion. Their anti-establishment nature fosters alternative narratives that challenge dominant cultural and literary norms. In Bengal, Shakespeare's journey from a colonial icon to a figure embedded in diverse cultural expressions marks a significant transformation. Despite this evolution, the role of Bengali little magazines in shaping a non-mainstream, alternative discourse around Shakespeare remains insufficiently explored. This study also considers independent theatre magazines as part of the broader little magazine movement due to their similar ethos and editorial practices. Through qualitative content analysis of writings on Shakespeare published in little magazines from his quatercentenary in 1964 to his 450th anniversary in 2014, this research highlights how Shakespeare has been continuously reimagined in this alternative literary space over a span of fifty years.

Key-words: Shakespeare, Bengali Little Magazine, Responses, Post-Independence Bengal.