

International Conference Shakespeare Readings 2016: 400 years of immortality (September 26–29, 2016)

The Shakespeare Committee, Russian Academy of Sciences will be hosting an International Conference Shakespeare Readings 2016: 400 years of immortality (September 26–29, 2016).

Although Shakespeare himself never paid a visit to Russia (and most likely, never ventured abroad), there are quite a few references to the country in his writings. The history of Russian-English political and cultural relations goes back to just about his lifetime. English navigator and explorer Richard Chancellor arrived in Arkhangelsk in 1553. Two years later the Muscovy Company was chartered. Queen Mary I and especially Queen Elizabeth corresponded with the Russian monarch, Tsar Ivan IV the Terrible. Many of Shakespeare's contemporaries travelled to Russia, leaving a number of accounts on everyday life there. St. Andrew's Anglican Church and the Company headquarters (now known as the Old English Yard) were built not far from the Moscow Kremlin.

Russia is mentioned in *Love's Labour's Lost* as a distant and preposterous country and Moscovites as wild and vulgar people. In *Macbeth* and *Henry IV* they speak of fierce Russian bears, in *Measure for Measure* — of a long Russian night, in the melancholy *Winter's Tale* spectators encounter a daughter of a Russian Emperor.

The Russian Shakespearean experience, as an exposure to English culture in general, came later, but it was intense and no less artistically complex, from eighteenth-century Sumarokov's and Catherine the Great's writings to the early twenty-first-century art.

Shakespeare could never imagine that Russia might become a country which would consider his dramas its own treasure and develop such a deeply rooted tradition of literary influence. Russia thus provides an interesting, though by no means, the only case of intercultural exchange.

Shakespeare Readings have been held in Russia for more than half a century. The 2016 Shakespeare Conference in Moscow offers the following aspects for papers and discussions: Shakespeare and his contemporaries in intercultural exchange, including (but not limited to):

- theatre;
- translation;
- literary criticism and scholarship;
- Shakespeare and theology from Renaissance till now;
- artistic interpretations by poets and writers;
- music and arts;
- publishing and editorial history;
- teaching and curricula;
- politics and daily life;
- specific aspects of literary and cultural life of a region (Russia/Eastern Europe preferred, but any suggestions welcomed)

Proposals are invited for papers of up to 25 minutes. These may be made by e-mail and should include a 250-word abstract. The deadline for submission is 15 June, 2016.

Proposals should be addressed to:

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Shakespearian Projects in Digital Humanities:

Mir Shekspira/The World of Shakespeare: www.world-shake.ru/en/

Rusky Shekspir/Russian Shakespeare: www.rus-shake.ru

Sovremenniki Shekspira/Shakespeare's Contemporaries: www.around-shake.ru