

Contemporary Literature.
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Module No. # 01
Lecture No. # 15
Tom Stoppard Contd...

Good morning. So, we were on page 186 when the play gets rudely interrupted by the inspector and while the play Macbeth is in progress and inspector happens to know that most of these are banned play rights and play actors and they are not supposed to stage a play. And while all this is going on, he is, you know, throwing his flash light or search light on the audience and he wants to know who are the people who are attending and the people who are supporting this kind of, what is the term? You remember? Good, LRT - the living room theater in Prague flex.

So, he recognizes the famous actor Pavel landovsky and he says Macbeth is being played by Pavel landovsky, who is the real life character who was indeed an actor who was a prevented from acting during the communist regime, Czechoslovakia. So, Landovsky, inspector, the actor Macbeth, the floor cleaner in a boiler factory - what do you understand by this?

He is a well-known actor Lando pavel landovsky and **he is** inspector says, so, your name is Landovsky; rings a bell; **you are a** you are an actor and he says the floor cleaner from boiler company - a factory; what does it mean?

Not exactly.

See, when they were prevented from doing their, from pursuing their profession. What other choice did they have? Do you remember the bearable lightness of being villain Kundera? Does it mean **mean** anything to you? **yeah** Are you familiar with the bed-drop?

Its again about the communist regime in Czechoslovakia and the revolution and the attempt to over throw the communist regime, and what happened to professionals and

intellectuals during that particular regime and the **the** protagonist, the hero of the novel, Thomas.

He is a doctor; he is a practicing surgeon, but because of his so called liberal inclinations he is suspended; he **he he** his no longer permitted or allowed to pursue his profession. So, what other choice does he have? So, he becomes a window cleaner and we are told that there are many such highly qualified people who are pursuing such jobs because they are no other way for them. So, this could be, one of this could be an explanation for this. So, he is not really lying, but because his an actor, that is **is** profession, but he is denied to pursue it. So, now, he is **a boiler he he is** a floor cleaner in a boiler factory. That is what he is doing.

That is him. I am a graced minor of yours. You know, I followed your career for years. I have not worked for years. What are you talking about? I saw you last season; my wife was with me. The newspaper kiosk at the tram terminus and you were wonderful or you are also selling newspapers at one point of time; **at one point and** I said to my wife - that is Landovsky, the actor; is not he great? What a character, wonderful voice. No strain; every syllable given its value. So, now, you are sweeping floor.

So, in between, I hear you were also I saw you selling newspapers. Now, you are cleaning floors; good. I remember you when you were a night watchman in the Builders yard and before that, when you were the trolley porter at the Mortuary and before that you are the button molder in peer Gynt ; peer Gynt is play by Epson .

So, you know, before doing all these jobs, you know before cleaning floors, before being a trolley pusher and selling newspapers, you were playing may be peer Gynt ; I remember that. So, it has been quite a while since Landovsky has been out of job and he is forced to take **take** up these very ordinary kind of work just to survive and that was the real condition in Czechoslovakia which is the fact. So, this is just a commentary on that. Actually Pavel, you have had a funny sort of carrier; It is not my business of course, but do you know what you want? It is my opinion. Then the public is utterly confused about your intentions. Is this where you saw it all leading to where, when you started off so bravely all those years ago? I remember you in your first job. You were a messenger at post office. Now, he is again being sarcastic saying this; this is the character from Antony and Cleopatra.

So, you were working at the post office. I remember, actually he was playing a character - the character of a messenger in Antony and Cleopatra, but the inspector being what he is, he says - that was your first job; you were working as a postman. That was no, then I was actually acting then in Antony and Cleopatra. You see, I am actually confused myself what are you exactly. So, are you... you are so many things; tell me Pavel, why did you give it all up?

You were a star. I saw your hamlet; of course, you are a Stanley Kowalski. You know this character Stanley Kowalski? Yes. Stanley Kowalski, your hamlet; Stanley Kowalski is a character, is a **is a** memorable character. Good. Street can name desire **ok**. Marlin Brando popularized it on broad way and, of course, it is a Tennessee Williams play, if you remember the animal cries Estella, Estella. **yeah** I saw your Romeo with what is her name? Wonderful girl; whatever happened to her. Could I have your autograph? It is not for me; it is for your daughter. Now, he is addressing the female actor here.

Lady Macbeth, I would rather not; the last time was signed something, I did not work for two years. So, you never know what these people make you sign and then get you or estate for trumped up charges. Now, look, do not blame us if the parts just stop coming; maybe you got over exposed. See, this is what actors are usually told. You were doing all sort of bit jobs and not really worthwhile work. So, therefore, you did not get the right kinds of plays; it is not. Actually what was happening, that people were forced producers were forced not to give any work to these people. Therefore, they went out of it.

So, how else? So, it was just very well state controlled machinery, but however, here they do not even take responsibility for doing **(())** perhaps **you know you were** you just did not work well and you got over exposed. So, therefore, the part stopped coming. I was working in a restaurant at that time. There you are. You see the public's very funny about that sort of things; they do not want to get dressed up and arrange a babysitter only to find that they have paid good money to see had a gabbler done by a waitress.

Who wrote, had a gabbler? Epsom ; again, a lot of references to Epsom , here. Can you tell me why, so much of inter textuality happening here? Peer Gynt , had a gobbler, who met that famous presentation on - Epsom . Yes, all fingers point at you and what was Epsom here? the dramatist of...

Breaking or in social.

Questioning interrogations, social accesses, moral codes, establish moral codes as you have seen in A doll's house. Peer Gynt is again an extremely... Peer Gynt along with her ghosts yeah, you know, extremely controversial plays and the Epton had to face a lot of trouble. So, perhaps what Epton went through during his times in Norway, that could perhaps be a commentary that. So, that could be the intertextual reference here because Epton too, was not very well received during his times because of his unconventional ideas. They may not look all that unconventional today, but, during those times, they were because, you see, he came at the turn of the 19th century yeah. So, those times things were different.

And now, inspector asks these people have owned to. He is squarely laying the blame on her that you know after all you have been working as a waitress in restaurant; who would pay and come to see you playing lady Macbeth? So, although reality is something different, I am beginning to understand why are audiences confined to your circle of acquaintances; to audience - do not move; It gives one cause, does not it? Tonight Macbeth will be played by Mister. Landovsky, who last season scored a personal success in the newspaper kiosk at the tram terminus and has recently been seen washing the floors in number three boiler factory, the role of lady Macbeth is in the capable hands of bearer from the dirty spoon; it sounds like a rough night.

So, now, this is a very a sarcastic and very cruel observation on their situation. See, after all you are you you you know this is what you are; you are a floor sweeper and you are a newspaper seller and then why bother, who would bother to come and see you, but they are not. Actually, that is not their identity; they are actors who are denied rightful profession.

We will move on to now page 190 Please, page 190. Here, you know, they are coming to the end here a Macduff. So, Macduff - he is already named and gone to scorn to be invested fanfare; they leave the stage, Macbeth his clove crowns himself standing above a screen. The inspector applauds and steps forward into the play.

Inspector - very good. So, what scene are they enacting from Hamlet? Macbeth in clove crowns himself standing above screen; that is, king Duncan has already been murdered

and now Macbeth has been crowned the rightful... they you know the the he is not actually the rightful heir, but now, he has been crowned by the ministers as the king of a Scotland and inspector is quite happy with the situation. He says, very good very good; so nice to have a play with a happy ending, for a change. He thinks this is how the play ends, but this is just the beginning. Other actors come on stage in general light;

To lady Macbeth – darling, you are marvelous; it is just like you know very theatrical pleasantries; all those darlings and social etiquettes and all, and you are marvelous; this is just a convention in the theatrical society. Lady Macbeth, she is quite indignant and she is already put off by this man. I am not your darling. I know and you want marvelous, but when in a Rome Paleo has the natives do. So, now, since we are in Paleo, you talk the way a Roman. So, this is a proverb right. So, see how Stoppard uses language. He is a set arising the theatrical etiquettes as well.

And then, he is you know because then perhaps this is commentary on the actually state of affairs in theater where people are always complimenting each other, however bad they may be because they are supposed to do. So, may be you are you are not really all that great end actors. We know that we have to say when in Rome, do as the Romans do and parley with this is also interesting; you are saying Rome and you are using a French term.

To the general audience the inspector says - please do not leave the building; you may use the lavatory, but leave the door open; so, this kind of surveillance; you are not supposed to leave; yeah you are being watched all the time. Stunning, incredible, absolutely fair to meddling, Macbeth you were rubbish. So, now, you know, they are a just there is faceoff between them. Inspector, look, just because I did not laugh out loud, it does not mean I was not enjoying. To hostess - which were you? Which one were you? Hostess - I am not in it. You are in it. Up to here you are part of this entire setup. It is pretty clear to me that this flat is being used for entertaining men. There is a law about that you know.

So, now, he is accusing her so that you know he can shut the place down. He is accusing her indirectly of running a brothaling, but see you are doing this which is something absolutely illegal; say, they are trying to survive; they are trying to protect their theater, theatrical heritage; anyhow, there is struggling. So, perhaps this, this is exactly what they

went through when during those times and stoppard. **So, there was** at this stage, let me tell you there is a site; you can go to this particular site and look for this topic charter 77.

This was when the communist government was at its peak and when there were **when they were** lot of violation of human rights. Some liberal minded people, they developed a document; they took that initiative to come up with a charter; it was called **called** charter 77. And Pavel Kohout was one of the architects of this particular charter and the idea was to spread the message of that charter; it is all about civic rights, human rights etcetera to spread the contents of the charter to as many people as possible; that is what they were trying to do and the government was doing its best to suppress this charter.

Now, it was believed that, through their theatrical expressions because see, many people who **who** were the architects of this charter, they belonged to the artistic world; drama theater films etcetera. So, backler (()), we have been talking about, he himself was a dramatist. So, it was believed that they were using theater as means to propagate their ideas; especially the contents of the charter 77. **So, that was**. So, it was not like Macbeth being staged. It should be prevented; I mean what is so harmful? What is so dangerous about acting out Macbeth? The government there, it **it** was so paranoid; they actually believed that perhaps there are **they are** certain encoded messages which are being spread about and about charter 77. So, therefore, this urge to control whatever was being played and **you know** the six excessive surveillance, bugging the houses, all that.

Any questions at this time, at this point? No. All right. We will skip to page 190; sorry 192. 192 - There is a lengthy dialogue by the inspector. Abhay, can you read it out please? Page 192 - the inspector's part.

I do not want you to spend on taking statements and striking on what worth you can do in three years maximum. I know you been having a lot of bad luck all around; jobs loss, failing in exams, letters are delivered, driving license withdrawn, passports indefinitely post poned and nothing on paper.

It is as if the system had the **mind** of its own. So, why do not you give it a chance and I give you one. I am really glad I got to you before you close. So, I can just leave this and I can make one line if this is Shakespeare or the **(O)** us you call it the force. It is not the popular choice, you might see; if quite those popularity with the public or as we call it is

the force within. The fact is when you get universally entitled like Shakespeare, this is strong feeling that he could be spitting in the eyes of the holder when he should be keeping his mind on Verona hanging around the gents. You know what I mean? (()). There is no use doing it; at least we could not prove with it; It is what makes a chief so prejudiced against him.

The chief says you rather you stood up and said, there is no freedom in this country. Then there is nothing under hand and we all know where we stand. You get your latch together, we can all get our latch together and then it is all over; one of us in power and you all in the jail; that is view of action but what we do not like is a lot of people being cheeky and saying that there are only (()) otherwise, we are going to start treating them as the same as the ones who say they are Napoleon.

Can you comment on this particular passage? Now, why why this prejudice against Shakespeare? I think we touched up on this briefly yesterday. Do you remember? Krishna? Go through the lines, look at the lines; again, the fact is when you get a universal and timeless writer like Shakespeare, there is a strong feeling that he could be spitting in the eyes of the beholder when he should be keeping his mind on Verona hanging around the gents. If a play, this this is a clever fun on which play of Shakespeare?

Where? Who is Verona in merchant of Venice? Shreya, tell me. Good. Two gentlemen of Verona; there is a play called two gentlemen of Verona. So, he should keep his mind on Verona who is hanging around the gents; do you see, but you know, being the universal play write, he talks about so many universal predicaments, and therefore we do not like him. Under the guise of saying something, Shakespeare always say something else and he is quite ambiguous. So, very difficult to understand the moral complexities, they you know the meaning implicit, the subtext in Shakespeare.

And so, you you can use Shakespeare to say whatever you want. So, when you say Julious ceaser, because Julious ceasert happens to be political play; partially, you know, you can praise it for its aesthetic value, but also it says the it is also politically relevant play.

Yeah Then, you also have a play like Macbeth. Like Rehan was saying yesterday, when I asked you guys that what is Macbeth all about? The first thing she said - it is a political play. There is also lot of... and Macbeth can also be contextualized in several different ways. We have seen in own country what how Macbeth has been used? **maqbool** and recently there is a Hollywood flick called Macbeth with that and it is all about a gang war in a New York. So, you have the same story all most like Maqbool. So, it has... .

What is his What is his name? Sam Waddington, playing Macbeth **yeah**. So, you know **shakespeare can be** Shakespeare can be universalized and he can be made very contemporary and he is timeless. See, he here to use (()) he redefines the boundaries and pushes the boundaries of time and space.

So, therefore, we do not like Shakespeare; do anything else; I mean come out and say it in the open that the government is oppressive and we are denied freedom of speech. So, here, you have lot of dialectics going on now. So, it is no longer a comedy, of course, it is a satire, but then, again like most plays it turns into some kind of you know a place of dialectics where there **there** is lot of exchange; intellectual exchange about what is what is moral after all and what is freedom? How do you define it?

And therefore, so, you see, if you say that you are a Julius Caesar or Macbeth or a Coriolanus, then we will say that we are Napoleon and what did Napoleon do to all his opponents and that is what we are going to do to you. We obey the law and we ask no more of you. The law I have got the penal code tattooed on my whistle. Do you know I keep the law in my pocket. I understand now Landovsky and there is lot about you in it; section 98 - subversion anyone acting out of hostility to their state; section 100 - incitement anyone acting out of hostility to their state.

I could nick you just for acting and the sentence is double for an organize group which I can make stick on Robinson crusoe and his man any day of the week. So, do not tell me about the laws. We are protected by the constitution. Dear god and we call you intellectuals. Personally, I cannot read that stuff constitution. What I say, you know there is no such thing; nobody talks like that. So, it is not reasonable to expect them to live like it the way I see it; life is lived the off the record.

It is all together too human for the written word. It happens in pictures, metaphors. A few years ago, you suddenly had it on toast, but when they gave you an inch, you over played your hand and rocked the boat. So, they pull the rug from and... Now, look at all the proverbs and idioms he is using. You give an inch and they pull the rug and the rock the boat and they do all sort. So, this is again Tom Stoppard and his burnings I mean that is pure act.

Metaphorically speaking, it describes what happen to you in a way that anybody can understand. Now, banquo hansford kahout. So, that this is Kahout's Macbeth howls like a dog, barks, falls silent on his hands and knees. Sit here boy; what is his name? Kahout the social parasite and slander of the state; the writer that is him; you are a great favorite down at nick. You know, we are thinking of making you writer in residence for a couple of years like we are going to make tie your around like a dog.

So, this is what you are. So, writers, that was the situation or the condition of the writers that you should be on all force, for if you are a member of recognized school which I can make stick on a chimpanzee with a box of alphabet bricks. Would you care to make a statement thou hast it now king (()) all the weird sisters promised. Kindly leave my wife's family out of this. Now, he is the Banquo; the character of Banquo has played by Kahout; Kahout who was actually an actor, one of the architects of charter 77. So, he starts reciting the lines and ugly sisters and the witch is from here. And inspector - so, fine, I think you are referring to my wife's family; all right.

Will he skip a bit and go to page 197 where we have another character who we are already familiar with. So, as the play is in progress, yes Macbeth - it is concluded Banquo that soles light, if it fine heaven, you must find it tonight. The murderers take a position to ambush Banquo; easy appears and window at window and says (()) all most nothing turned spa. Now, this is the spillover from dog's Hamlet and how does he come here and why does he come because from England, now he is in Prague driving his lorry with all the stage material; how come? Can you give me some explanation? Now, easy is used as, you know, as a kind of device to suggest some kind of a link between the two places, but what link is it? These places, do you find any thematic link between the two place of why why is easy introduced at this juncture? Yes, Adithi.

Cannot guess? Easy appears at that the window and says the murderers are surprised to see him; murderers - the actors and they have just killed Banquo at the behest of Macbeth. Macbeth has instructed these people to kill Banquo and then soon you will have that scene Bbanquo's ghost is sited at the stage dinner and all kind; I mean then that starts the downward spiral of Macbeth, emotionally and mentally.

But here, at this point, the ease makes an entry and he says that, this is what he says; that in the beginning, when he is introduced in dog's hamlet as well he represents this company Bukston (()) for that this his lorry in all cake hops first murder, but who did bid thee join with us? Are you one of the actors and who asked you to join us? (()) second murder with misgiving, he need not or mistress since he delivers.

He is delivering something. So, let us not mistress him or officers and what we have to do to the direction guests then he stay with us the west (()) glimmers with some streaks of the... all these are original authentic lines from Macbeth and they are going on with the performance.

We will go to again page 198 - Ease's lines, page 198 top. Easy remains looking bewildered; the hostess appears from the audience again; Buggsters cake hops almost Lamington spa; the hostess leads him off stage light and music for Macbeth's feast; Macbeth enters with Lady Macbeth and guess in attendance very pretends to expect Banquo, who he knows has already been murdered. You know your own degrees; sit down at first and last a hearty welcome. Our self will mingle with society and play the humble host. The guests have brought their own stools and goblets. Lady Macbeth enters; likewise, first murder enters with Easy remaining at the edge of stage. The Macbeth sees first murder and goes to him. There is blood up on their face; its (()) there. Is he dispatched? My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him; thanks for that; get the gone; tomorrow, we will hear ourselves again; exit murderers followed by easy during the scene; is he is hovering at the fringes hoping to care someone size; his entrance and exit coincide with those for (()) ghost who is invisible and he only appears in Macbeth's island. Macbeth does his best to ignore him. My royal lord, you do not give the cheer, sweet remembrances.

Now, good digestion, wait on appetite and health - on both here had we now our countries honor roved were the grace person of our Banqo present; his absenter Lisa

blame upon his promise. Please stay, your highness to grace us with your royal company; here is a place reserved. Easy enters a door stage right were here my good lord what is that moves your highness, which of you have done this?

What my good lord, thou cost not say either, never shake the gory locks at me. Sit worthy friends, my lord often does; fit is momentary upon a thought; he will again be well; she crosses to Macbeth - are you a man I and a bold one that dare look on that which might up all the devil? Easy appears at window.

Preethi, see their behold look low ((no audio from 31:37 to 47:56))

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