SUMMING UP

This thesis is set out to explore the principal Aural and Visual Elements in Sean O’Casey’s Dublin Trilogy. Considerable attention has been paid to deal with most of these elements, and also with the most provocative theatrical elements side by side.

It is the firm belief of this scholar that the said elements form the sine qua non of most of O’Casey’s plays, and in particular the Dublin Trilogy. Probably because the historical background of these plays is part of the history of Ireland, these plays will continue to hold their sway in theatre for a long time to come. It may be observed that in the later plays, particularly the ones written away from Ireland (Dublin), the content does not form an integral part resulting in the craft holding a symbiotic relationship. One may be able to observe the spirit of O’Casey willing to strike new forms but the flesh is too weak to hold its own or go along with it. It is also true that there was not a living theatre which was interested in putting up his plays, as the Abbey Theatre did for the Dublin Trilogy and The Silver Tassie. The later plays were written for a theatre at large, thereby losing their focus, and context, and immediacy.
This thesis concerns itself mainly with the Dublin Trilogy and their relevance now. The fact that *The Shadow of the Gunman* and *Juno and the Paycock* continue to be in the repertory of even the contemporary German Theatre speaks volumes of their inner strength and vitality, transcending geographical barriers and language barriers. *Juno and the Paycock* was performed in Bombay a little more than three decades ago.

By now the Dublin Trilogy has attained the status of 'Classics' and it becomes a privilege for the producers and artists to produce and perform them. As long as terrorism exists, the plays will last, though not necessarily on the same equation. With IRA's activities in England, the Khalistan activities in Punjab, the LTTE in Sri Lanka and India, the Pakistani activities in Kashmir, the plays are bound to give greater dimensions of political, social and domestic realities.

Sean O'Casey in a way envisaged the 'Black Comedy', and he is a torch-bearer for later playwrights like Brendan Behan and Harold Pinter.

He was far in advance of his time, and it is not his fault. It must be mentioned that Synge was his healthy and
challenging contemporary, but after them, Ireland has not produced one playwright who can measure up to their work and impact. Heinz Kosok has summed up O'Casey's achievement very beautifully. "It is a measure of O'Casey's success that his play is so much more convincing, unified, life-like, moving and universal than its successors and will be remembered when all the others are forgotten". This can be said of the remaining two plays of the Dublin Trilogy also. It is easy to agree with Kevin Sullivan, "If he (O'Casey) is not profound, he is important and plays a significant role in the history of Twentieth Century Drama and the Story of Modern Irish Literature". (2)

1. Heinz Kosak, O'Casey the Dramatist, Barnes and Noble Books, New Jersey, 1985:


The work of a genius can never be exhausted by any number of research scholars. In fact, the richness of the work of a genius will keep yielding new avenues and vistas to explore, discover and, perhaps, understand the working of a unique creative mind. This holds true in the case of Sean
O’Casey as well.

If he is primarily associated with his Dublin Trilogy, it is because of the monumental nature of the work, the war background giving it the strength, vitality and cohesion.

The sources of O’Casey are an area where not adequate work has been done. They are dismissed at the levels of the Bible and Shakespeare, and, perhaps, Bouccicault. This is to put O’Casey in a Procrustean bed. The Irish mythology with which he was most familiar, the evidence of which is seen in every other line, in some character or the other in each play, demands a thorough investigation. It may be done alongside with folk music and folk tradition which he draws upon, rather liberally.

Again O’Casey’s sense of the comic and the realization of comedy in terms of situation and characters is yet another area for probing. Was it his own, did he imitate any one else, or is it an amalgam, a beautiful blend of all that he saw and read?

The disturbing plays, viz., The silver Tassie, The Bishop’s Bonfire and The Purple Dust created storms in society. Are they set in a period and for a period; and do they hold any relevance now? This subject offers fresh avenues
for research. The Bishop's Bonfire created a furore in America.

The future holds a good prospect for O'Casey Research Scholars. O'Casey's horizon never fades but only moves farther away when one reaches towards it.
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY


