

Translations, Brian Friel

History : Set in Ireland

Takes place in a

Spoken in Gaelic but translated in English

Irish speaking community in Donegal

History characterized by brutal oppression of Irish by English

Question of identity → heavy link to language you speak.

All characters part of a dramatic metaphore, represent something.

Manus : damaged by cultural intervention in the past

Twins : kill horse in the beginning; most likely have killed Yolland in the end. Sort of resistance fighters who employ violent means to resist the colonizers (IRA).

Yolland : benevolent colonizer

Lancey : less benevolent

What does Hugh represent ?

What does baby without father represent who dies soon after? (illegitimate and dies soon after → failed rebellions or failure of Irish to establish their culture).

Each character as representing something else.

Sarah : "my name is Sarah" → declares her identity

Act I :

- Characters defined often by their physical capacities.

- Importance of Sarah as an observer of the scene ; seems very attached to Manus as he is the only one who seems to help her and care for her. Very sensible to the way Manus reacts

- Manus seems to have wanted to marry Maire.

- Jimmy as prodigy

Comic aspect with Hugh and his pauses to quiz his students with "too slow" → comic relief.

Also comic relief with Doalty and his interventions.

- Very rural ; do not speak English and heavy reliance on agriculture (specifically corn).

- Owen admired by all as he has succeeded → has gone to the city and is relatively wealthy (owns 9 businesses).

- Arrival of English Lancey and Yolland as element of perturbation ; difference between English intentions and translation made by Owen to the Irish.

Act II :

- Comic difficulty in communication : Maire attempting to talk with Yolland ends up in funny translation cycle with Owen involved