

# Generic Transgression of Tragicomedy in Anton Chekhov's *The Seagull* and George Bernard Shaw's *The Apple Cart*

Sadia Riaz

ICCS, University Of Management and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan

Farhan Ebadat Yar Khan

Higher Education Department Government of Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan

Naheed Ashfaq

ICCS, University Of Management and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan

This paper delves into Anton Chekhov's *The Seagull* and George Bernard Shaw's *The Apple Cart* to extensively analyze their infusion of certain comical elements in depicting ostensibly tragic concerns. The paper aims at exploring the use of the comic elements that is not without purpose. Instead through this incorporation of farce, linguistic humor, witty repartee and exaggeration, the holistic vision of life is obtained which was earlier compartmentalized by the Greeks and Roman playwrights. Comic elements including slapstick humor, the singing of songs, and certain character portrayal are discussed as techniques employed at the hands of the playwrights to reflect over the real historical milieu of their respective times, yet giving a boost to realism as a theory and a practice. This is a qualitative study based upon hermeneutic theory of textual analysis. The paper establishes the similarities in Bernard Shaw's and Anton Chekhov's employment of comical elements as well as the difference between their essential purposes in generic transgression. Although the two writers have their roots in different countries, their humorous portrayal of various issues is seen to be similar. From the microanalysis of these plays, the same comic strains can be traced out in modern drama at macro level that will enhance the implication of this research paper. This paper therefore concludes that comic and tragic elements are not antagonistic rather complimentary to each other.

*Keywords:* tragicomedy, realism, modern drama, farce, slapstick humor, generic transgression

## Introduction

No plays have often filled the eyes with tears and the breast with palpitation than those which are variegated with the interludes of mirth. (Foster, 2004, p. 117)

Tragedy underwent a process of evolution and transformation from the Greek times to the modern age. Every era in literature added some aspect to it or modified the older ones. Comedy like tragedy has a long history. Over time, tragedy and comedy, which were initially considered as two extremes, started coexisting by passing traits to each other and importing a radical varied attitude towards life and its conflicts. Initially,

---

Sadia Riaz, Ph.D. Scholar, Assistant Professor, ICCS, University Of Management and Technology.

Farhan Ebadat Yar Khan, Ph.D., Professor of English at Higher Education Department Govt of Punjab.

Naheed Ashfaq, M.Phil, Lecturer, ICCS, University Of Management and Technology.

tragedy was created according to rules of poetry prescribed by Aristotle. With the advent of realism as a movement to represent reality without betraying it through fabrication, dramaturgical contents and structure took a new and fresh attire. The new genre combined tragic elements with tempered laughter to bring purgation through the scenes provoking pity and sorrow juxtaposed with comic situations or lightened by touches of humor. The dawn of realism in art and literature and its emphasis on the ills and tribulations of society gave a tragic intensity to the ordinary, mundane and melodramatic reality. While relating human melancholy, writers of tragicomedies commenced elements and techniques of comedy, poetic images and symbolism into serious realistic action and heightened its tragic impact. Thus, the modern drama tends to be real at one level and metaphoric and symbolic at another level. Since life is a complex amalgamation of tears and laughter, the dramatic genre in which tragedy and comedy coexist gives a holistic vision of life by producing mixed tragic-comic responses from audience. There came a time when these two genres were mingled into each other to form a hybrid that resulted in the form of tragicomedy. However, the infiltration of comic elements in tragedy from the Greek to the modern playwrights was critically viewed by many critics. Possibly, we need not go as far as Schopenhauer and conclude that every individual life is a tragedy when seen from the point of view of the whole and a comedy if examined in its details. Philip Sidney called the incorporation of comedy into the tragedy as "mongrel". He wrote in his *An Apology for Poetry*:

But besides these gross absurdities, how all their plays be neither right tragedies nor right comedies, mingling kings and crowns ... with neither decency nor discretion; so as neither the admiration and commiseration, nor the right sportfulness, is by their mongrel tragic-comedy obtained. (Sidney, 1985, p. 82)

The concept of tragicomedy was alien to the Greek and Roman critics. Aristotle and Horace both defined tragedy and comedy as two different genres disapproving their mingling as well. Cicero (1913-21) in his *On the Best Style of Orators*, said: "In tragedy anything comic is a defeat and in comedy anything tragedy is unseemly" (p. 16). In the background of such divisions and criticism the permeation of comic elements in serious drama was rejected by many critics. However, Guarini in *Il Compendiodella Poesia Tragicomica* advocated the genre of Tragicomedy (a term that was coined by the Roman playwright Plautus in the prologue to his play *Amphytryon* as an excuse for mixing in it slaves and gods, since according to the tenets of classical drama gods and kings belonged to tragedy and ordinary people to comedy) and wrote:

He who composes tragicomedy takes from tragedy its great personages...art observes that tragedy and comedy are composed of heterogeneous parts, and therefore if an entire tragedy and an entire comedy should be mixed...because they do not have an intrinsic natural mixture...they may be able to exist together and, though mixed, produce a single form. (Guarini, 1914, p. 21)

Where this supports that tragicomedy mingles to produce a new hybrid product, its stance varies from that of the modern playwrights. Renaissance period witnessed the development of tragicomedy as a departure from the Greek classical tragedy and the term came to label the plays in which events move towards a climax through a tragic rising action and then takes an unanticipated twist to embark upon a happy ending. The 18th and the 19th century witnessed the expansion of number of mixed dramatic genres blurring the distinction between tragedy and comedy, such as serious drama, romantic drama, the problem play and melodrama. Melodrama provided a viaduct to modern tragicomedy. Raymond Williams (1996) in his book *Modern Tragedy* states that there is no tragedy possible in the modern society because tragedy in some of its older senses is rejected. Tragedy has its special nature and a condition, as in classical tragedy suffering arises out of certain

unavoidable action of the character. Another condition for tragedy is the belief in the metaphysical part of human life, in respect of certain representative character in the society. Schopenhauer also believed in the inevitable suffering of the individual, caused by the crime of existence. In the modern tragedy the characters do suffer but it is suffering that can be avoided, but is not avoided thus there is nothing inevitable or ennobling about this tragic sense. Raymond William quotes Schopenhauer's remarks, "No mere suffering or misfortune, no suffering that does not spring from human agency, and in some degree from the agency of the sufferer, is tragic, however pitiful or dreadful it maybe" (William, 1996, p. 21).

Modern era began with realism, where the playwrights and novelists combined both tragedy and comedy because life was amalgamation of both. Henrik Ibsen, Anton Chekhov, G. B. Shaw, Sean O'Casey pioneers of modern dramas combined the comic elements to the serious and tragic concerns. Since modern literature of the late nineteenth century brought about a new flavor in literature with the rise of new perspectives and issues that were brought to the attention of its readers and audience yet the question that arises is:

(1) How does generic transgression in Anton Chekhov's *The Seagull* and George Bernard Shaw's *The Apple Cart* provide a site for realism to reflect over the respective historical milieu of these playwrights?

This question of generic transgression of tragedy and comedy is addressed extensively in this research paper with reference to two modern playwrights: Anton Chekhov and George Bernard Shaw. Their experimentation in *The Seagull* and *The Apple Cart* respectively stepped away from the social norms and traditional conventions and presented for the purpose of illuminating the audience and for provoking them to critically contemplate and evaluate the various issues of life. It is during this time period that writers like, Anton Chekhov and George Bernard Shaw humorously depicted the social and political issues. Their plays, while dealing with tragic concerns, are not without a hint of a comic element. Although the two writers have their roots in different countries, their humorous portrayal of various issues is seen to be similar. A deeper analysis can be made with reference to some of their works in doing close textual analysis under the umbrella of hermeneutic theory. In this terrain of radical innovation in style and contents, this paper interrogates the rationale behind the infiltration of comic and tragic elements as one genre. Thus the second research question is:

(2) What is the purpose of the infiltration of comic elements in these tragedies and how does this comic-tragic infusion complement each other?

This fusion of two traditionally distinct genres was not to evoke laughter indeed but to emphasize the shortcoming around which man's life revolved through these comic elements. Moreover they were used to enhance the impact of tragic concerns around which man's life revolved. To dwell upon these seemingly simple questions, the research paper analyses the sample texts critically to resolve intricacies implied in these two research questions.

### **Research Methodology**

This academic research is a qualitative-exploratory study based upon hermeneutic theory of textual analysis. The primary source and the sample of study comprises of two plays including Anton Chekhov's *The Seagull* and George Bernard Shaw's *The Apple Cart*. Close textual analysis of these plays is done to revive the spirit of hermeneutic school of thought that emphasizes on the in-depth interpretation, understanding and exploration of focused strains within one's sample of study. Taking farce, linguistic humor, witty repartee, exaggeration, slapstick humor, the singing of songs, and certain character portrayal as writing mechanics and

technical tools at the hands of playwrights, the irony and misery of mankind are observed in these texts. It employs the American Psychological Association style of formatting which is an internationally approved format, generally followed in the field of social sciences.

The critical material for the research was collected from relevant avenues of literature, mainly, theoretical concepts and critics including Arthur Schopenhauer, Plautus, Guarini, Aristotle and Raymond William. In addition, numerous academic journals, online interviews available on writers' blogs and even video sources also made up the secondary sources of the research paper. Many solicited internet sites were referred too and online articles were read and quoted in order to enhance the validity of the arguments being presented and to enrich the quality of the research. In the course of this research, diverse perceptions and critical views were encountered regarding this infiltration of comic elements in depicting tragic concerns. While certain critics praised this art, other severely criticized it. This diversity of opinion enabled one to study these primary plays with an open perspective. Moreover, inter-textual and intra-textual references and inferences are developed to substantiate the arguments presented in order to promote an incisive understanding and to make it a plausible study.

### **Data Analysis**

What is tragic in human experience has found its aesthetic home in tragicomedy where it is simultaneously subverted, protected and rendered more painful by its peculiar with the comic. (Foster, 2004, p. 117)

Anton Chekhov, a Russian playwright, did not derive the subject of his plays from any large political concern. Rather his plays were the depiction of everyday life and thus Chekhov introduced both comedy and tragedy within these everyday life situations. He stated himself that in his plays he would "describe life to you truthfully, that is artistically, and you will see in it what you have not seen before, what you never noticed before: its divergence from the norms, its contradictions" (as cited in Latham, 1958, p. 21). He therefore awakens his audience to the everyday tragedy of life, but not without a comic element, as K. M. Newton writes in his book *Modern Literature and the Tragic* that "what appear to be tragic elements in (Chekhov's) writing interact with comedy, farce and social realism. The tragic is unable to dominate the others and may even be undermined by them" (2008). Such strains of comedy farce and social realism can be seen in *The Seagull*.

In *The Seagull* Chekhov denounces the magnitude of the tragic situation through infusion of comic elements. *The Seagull* brings to the audience's notice the failure of Konstantin's creative endeavors. His desire is to revolutionize the theatre, to introduce new techniques and concepts rather than to carry on the prevalent, traditional form of theatre. However, Konstantin is unable to communicate with the audience through his work. The impact he desires to attain remains thwarted, mostly at the hands of his mother who openly criticizes him. The play within the play that is staged by Konstantin in the first act is continuously criticized by his mother who does not refrain from adding her critical comments. After Nina's long speech at the very beginning, she states, "What decadent rubbish is this?" (Chekhov, 1997, p. 18) thereby alienating and distracting the audience from any meaning they might have derived from it. Her constant intrusions do not allow the audience to see any meaning in his play, for they too become caught in her humorous critiques. She denounces the play as "decadent rubbish" jests the use of sulphur as an attempt to create an impact and then also mocks Nina's long speech where she states: "The bodies of all living creatures have dropped to dust and eternal matter has transformed them into stones and water and clouds" (Chekhov, 1997, p. 18). She connects this idea with Dorn

taking off his hat, and states: "The doctor has taken off his hat to Satan father of eternal matter" (Chekhov, 1997, p. 19). It is only Dorn who later states that "there was something in it" (Chekhov, 1997, p. 20) that stirred him and desired him to view it till the end. However, by the time this statement is passed, it is too late for the characters or the audience to show any interest.

The mother who denounces all that Konstantin desires to deliver becomes a humorous character introduced by Chekhov in the midst of his tragic concerns. He shows Madame Arkadina as a self-obsessed woman who is not even able to empathize with her son and is lost in the fulfillment of her personal desires. While her brother tries to convince her to give some money to her son so that he could go abroad, she refuses on the account that she has little money which she must use on herself. "I have some money, but I am an actress and my expenses for dress alone are enough to bankrupt me" (Chekhov, 1997, p. 38). Her obsession with herself thus invokes laughter from the audience yet it also detaches her from the tragedy of her son's situation. Her indifferent attitude towards Konstantin is contrasted with his desire to be cherished and nursed. Her egotism is in fact talked about by K. M. Newton who says: "In Chekhov, human beings tend to be irretrievably egotistical and seldom achieve a sense of tragic insight that transcends their ingrained egotism" (2008, p. 115). Thus, while her self-obsessive character appeals as comical to the audience; her extreme detachment to the glaring tragic concerns within her household is at the same time tragic.

Furthermore, the character of Masha can be seen as a parallel of Varya of "*The Cherry Orchard*" in her unfulfilled desires. Masha is seen to dwell in her misfortunes, always wearing black to "match (her) life" (Chekhov, 1997, p. 5). Her unrequited love for Konstantin becomes comical when she still tries to gain some attention from him despite her marriage and her son. This concept of unrequited love is dealt with irony on the part of Chekhov. With reference to *The Seagull* Konstantin and Masha fail to win over the love they constantly pine for. Yet Nina, who marries Trigorin by choice, is soon seen to be over her infatuation for him and leading a miserable life. Thus, Chekhov shows that while unrequited love increases the intensity of the love, but requited love soon declines in its intensity after the ultimate fulfillment. This perpetual feeling of unfulfillment, treated ironically by Chekhov once again, arouses a sense of tragic empathy within the audience. Alluded to it is the reference to Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* that is also a poignant example of tragicomedy, but here the humor is created at the expense of tragic character *Peer Gynt*. His comedy lies in the fact that he is a day dreamer and tragedy lies in the point that he cannot get out of this. Thus, his daydreaming is tragic because it is perishing, comic because it goes on. By incorporating Kierkegaard's idea of comic, Ibsen uses comedy that has more philosophical stance.

In *The Seagull* exaggeration of characters' dispositions becomes pivotal for creating comedy out of a tragedy. Chekhov uses Masha's character as a tool for generating humor. Her character abounds in exaggeration. She is introduced to us wearing black and when Medvedenko asks her why she's dressed up in black, she says, "I'm in mourning for my life. I'm unhappy" (Chekhov, 1997, p. 5). Chekhov through these "high-strung" people is trying to mock the over exaggeration of their plight which makes them humorous characters. Not only Masha is complaining but Sorin also overstates about his health.

Another important technique employed by Chekhov in *The Seagull* is the parallel that he draws of Konstantin with Hamlet. While the two characters are seen to be familiar in many ways, yet through the death of Konstantin, Chekhov detaches the tragedy that one associates with Hamlet's demise. Konstantin's death is tragic but Arkadina's reaction to it undermines the gravity of the issue. Arkadina's majestic ways themselves are reflection on her insensitive character. For her playing cards is more important than her son. Oblivious to

her son's sufferings, when she hears the shot she reacts.

Arkadina: (Alarmed) What's that?

Dorn: nothing I think something exploded in my First aid kit. Don't worry... That's what it is. A vial of ether exploded.

Arkadina: (Sitting at the table) Phew, I was terrified. It reminded me of the time... (Hides her face in her hands) Things even went black before my eyes. (Chekhov, 1997, p. 57)

Chekhov with great subtlety combines two strands of comic and tragic in this dialogue. Taking the shot as an explosion of ether bottle is humorous yet this juxtaposing of two elements ironically accentuates the tragic death of her son. This light-hearted treatment and trivial comparison thereby diminishes the tragedy of his death. It is this characteristic light-hearted treatment on the part of Chekhov that makes him a writer who portrays tragedy but with a comic element. While, many critics regarded his plays as 'tragedies of frustration', few understood the relevance of the comic element within the tragedy. Dorothy Sayers, however, clearly explained the relevance in a letter where she states: "...the whole tragedy of futility is that it never succeeds in achieving tragedy. In its blackest moments it is inevitably doomed to the comic gesture" (as cited in Latham, 1958, p. 14). Thus, the comic elements infused by Chekhov go hand in hand with a sense of pathos that is also experienced by the audience. The tragic portrayal of everyday life as depicted by him is realized by the audience in the midst of the humor and the infusion of comical elements.

George Bernard Shaw can be seen as another playwright who comically brings forward certain tragic situations into the lime light. Whereas Chekhov's plays brought forward domestic or social issues encountered within a household, Shaw's concerns step out from the domestic and familial surroundings and step into larger concerns. He addresses certain political issues as seen in *The Apple Cart* and even in *Arms and the Man* where he criticizes the ideal notions of war. Moreover, Shaw's portrayal of these tragic concerns through the infiltration of comic elements also differs from Chekhov in the sense that his plays are full of wit and humor. While Chekhov's comedy is encountered mostly through the foolish behavior of the characters, and through physical/slapstick humor, Shaw's plays are full of ironical and witty comments.

Shaw's play, *The Apple Cart* is a humorous comment on the state of democracy in a capitalist state. This commentary on the political upheaval of his time makes his play stand in the spectrum of realism. The play's protagonist, King Magnus, is in fact the spokesperson of Bernard Shaw who humorously portrays his political criticisms through King Magnus's ironical and witty comments. In the course of the play he comments on the irrationality of certain institutions—the inheritance of kingship being one of them—and also sheds light on certain characteristics that contribute to the failure of a political party. In fact, the basic conflict in the play, between King Magnus and Proteus becomes the epitome of the absurd state of politics. The two conflict on the King's right of veto. While the King asserts this right over the political party, Proteus issues an ultimatum for the King to sign which would reduce him to a mere idol figure, with no rights or power to assert. He states: "If we are to carry on your government we cannot have you making speeches that express your own opinions and not ours" (Shaw, 1930, p. 49). He also goes on to elaborate upon this absurdity stating "I mean that when you disagree with us you are to keep your disagreements to yourself" (Shaw, 1930, p. 49).

His determination to reduce the King as a mere idol figure or a "dumb king" (Shaw, 1930, p. 57) echoes the power hungry politicians who rule the country, and fail to bring any order or progress in a political party. Proteus is largely caught up in securing power for himself rather than organizing his political party and contributing towards bringing a positive progression in the country. He is portrayed as a politician who satisfies

his personal needs rather than the needs of the political party or even the people of the country. Lysistrata lays bare this fact when she states: "In this Cabinet there is no such thing as a policy. Every man plays for his own hand" (Shaw, 1930, p. 58). While his character is humorously portrayed by Shaw through the irrational and absurd propositions posed by Proteus himself, and also by the characters who comment on his laughable tactics that assure the fulfillment of his preferences, Shaw subtly lays bare the tragedy of the political state that is ruled by such characters. Proteus, undoubtedly reduces the audience to laughter, but his character also impresses upon the tragedy of such a political state where no promise of progression is evident. Even the end of the play, where King Magnus convinces Proteus to tear the ultimatum by proposing to step down and ascend the throne through elections, depicts a tragic concern. While it resolves the current issue, yet the play ends exactly at the point from where it had begun. King Magnus has stood by his power of veto while Proteus convinced to tear the ultimatum proposing alternative propositions to assert his power over the King. Thus, Shaw depicts the circular movement of these political parties who try to find ways of increasing their power rather than bringing a positive change to the country.

Shaw, like Chekhov, also denounces the tragic moment of the play through the infusion of certain techniques. Whereas the tragic moments in Chekhov are suddenly denounced by the infusion of songs or slapstick humor, in *The Apple Cart* too, Amanda is seen too often begin singing a song. Where the political party is shown to be in total disarray, Amanda begins to sing a song, thereby reducing the seriousness of the situation. This technique used by Shaw, while reducing the seriousness of the situation, nevertheless impresses upon the audience a tragic feeling concerning the chaos depicted in the political party. While the sudden outbreak of song will evoke laughter, it nevertheless will also leave a lingering sense of tragedy among the audience.

Moreover, Shaw also uses minor characters in the play to unveil certain political hypocrisies. The two secretaries of the King, Pamphilius and Sempronius, begin the play and voice the entire political phenomenon as a play of appearances. Even the character of Boanerges deconstructs the entire idea of politics when he appears on stage in his ridiculous Russian blouse. Proud of his promotion in the political arena, he fails to make an impression on the audience or even the characters in the play, having no originality of his own and merely presenting the King's ideas in front of the party as his own. Thus, Shaw's use of wit, humour and farce combine to provide the audience with a humorous portrayal of the chaos and struggle of power within a political party. Gareth Griffith comments on *The Apple Cart* stating that "it was a dialogue on the ritualistic world of politics, with its sham imagery and false scenes, the realm of appearances, set against the underlying realities" (1993, p. 258).

Like Shaw, Sean O'Casey brings forward an amalgamation of the tragic with the comic to highlight the prevalent political scenario of Ireland at that time when it had political upheavals like Irish Civil War. Sean O'Casey's *Juno and the Paycock* is one example where comic elements like farce, music hall comedy and repetition are infiltrated, and humor is generated through the dialogues. The play begins on a very serious note where the Boyle's household, their poverty, trade Union and important issues like Johnny's betrayal of Tancred have been mentioned, the atmosphere is tense, but with the arrival of Captain Boyle and his friend Joxer, the music hall comedy element is introduced to reflect over domestic and national tragedy. Through this cross reference from another Irish playwright, O'Casey, Bernard Shaw's *The Apple Cart* can be established as reflection of Ireland's political upheavals by making extensive use of humor, wit and farce with some underlying tragic concern.

The importance of comic elements in Anton Chekhov's *The Seagull* and George Bernard Shaw's *The Apple Cart* therefore serves a twofold purpose. This permeation evokes sympathy for the people inflicted with social conflicts and tragedies and also deals with them critically and satirically. Realism in these plays helped the audience to identify with the characters and feel their suffering, while their comic qualities, antics and foolishness elicit a complex emotional response of laughter, annoyance, sympathy and moral detachment. Hence, the infiltration of the comic in the depiction of the prevalent tragic concerns brought forward not only the irony and misery of mankind but also the shortcomings of humans as well.

### Conclusion

Nothing is funnier than unhappiness; I grant you that ... it's the most comical thing in the world. And we laugh... Yes, it's like a funny story we have heard so often, we still find it funny, but we don't laugh anymore. (Beckett, 1958, p. 19)

Anton Chekhov's *The Seagull* and George Bernard Shaw's *The Apple Cart* did not develop dichotomies between tragic and comic, rather joined these two to make a complete whole. Chekhov created comedy of characters where he mocked their so called miserable plight. His every single character was shown to be suffering from the habit of exaggerating their problems. And Chekhov at the expense of these characters called *The Seagull* "A Comedy in Four Acts". While Chekhov's humor is comparatively subtle, Bernard Shaw's plays are full of ironical and witty comments. Anton Chekhov in his portrayal of tragic concerns deals with everyday issues of domestic and social life. However, Bernard Shaw expounds upon larger concerns and portrays them with sharp wit and humor. While his plays are purely comical, the audience is not made to leave the theatre without an understanding of the grave concerns that Shaw had brought to their attention. Therefore, the two playwrights can be established as Modern Dramatists who infiltrate the issues presented in their plays with comic elements and thereby contribute towards giving a new perspective and flavor to the theatre. The use of the comic elements was not without purpose instead through this incorporation of farce, linguistic humor, witty repartee and exaggeration the holistic vision of life was obtained which was earlier compartmentalized by the Greeks and Roman playwrights. The individual division of the tragedy and comedy deprived life of its totality giving out the segregated vision, but George Bernard Shaw and Anton Chekhov gave tragedy a new form by introducing the farce and humor with the heart rending tragic situations. In short, they in actuality portrayed the realistic aspect of life by not dividing the plays as tragedies and comedies but uniting them into tragicomedy.

### References

- Beckett, S. (1958). *Endgame*. New York: Grove Press.
- Chekhov, A. (1997). *The Seagull*. London: Nick Hern Books Limited.
- Cicero, M. T. (1913-21). *The Orations of Marcus Tullius Cicero* (C. D. Yonge, Trans., Vol. 4). London: G. Bell and Sons.  
Retrieved 8/31/2016 from <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/734>
- Dutton, R. (1986). *Modern Tragicomedy and the British Tradition*. Great Britain: Biddle Books.
- Foster, A. (2004). *The Name and Nature of Tragicomedy*. New York: Doubleday Anchor.
- Gareth, G. (1993). *Socialism and Superior Brains: The Political Thought of Bernard Shaw*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Latham, J. E. M. (March, 1958). The Cherry Orchard as Comedy. *Educational Theatre Journal*, 10(1), 21-29. Baltimore, Maryland: The John Hopkins University Press. Retrieved 8th May 2016 from <http://www.jstore.org/stable/3204230>
- Guarini, B. (1914). *Il Pastor Fido E Il Compendio Della Poesia Tragicomic* (Compendium of tragicomic poetry). Bari: G. Laterza.
- Newton, K. M. (2008). Chekhov and the Tragic. In *Modern Literature and the Tragic*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Shaw, G. B. (1930). *The Apple Cart*. London: Constable and Company Ltd.



Sidney, P. (1985). *An Apology for Poetry*. Great Britain: Penguin Books.

Williams, R. (1996). *Modern Tragedy*. London: Chatto and Windus.