

The objective of this thesis was to provide a detailed analysis of three modern Irish plays which share one common feature – the portrayal of the conflict in Northern Ireland. Apart from the common background of the Troubles, the plays focus on different aspects of the conflict which also demands different theatrical design. Furthermore, each play was analysed from three social perspectives – religion, gender and locale – in order to examine the ways in which these notions were influenced by the conflict as well as on the ways in which this influence is manifested on individual people. Attached to each play are short conclusions to their respective analyses.

Despite their difference, the analyses of the plays also revealed several interesting similarities. Firstly, in the issue of gender, there is a certain discrepancy between the officially proclaimed and recognised division of gender roles and the reality of everyday life. Whereas officially the women are in an inferior position to men, and are expected to be an element of passivity, the three plays suggest that it is rather the men who represent passivity. The plays also point out how the position of men and women in society is further determined by the sectarian conflict. In all three plays, women prove to have stronger characters than men: in *Tea in a China Cup*, the male characters are mostly reduced to pictures hanging on the walls. They are susceptible to drink and hazard and do not participate in the life of the family. The female responsibility is not limited to household matters, in Reid's play women also actively participate in the keeping of the community tradition, in the manifestation of loyalty, in the demonstration of community awareness.