



On Socialism and Realism Foresight Affecting Bernard Shaw's Religion Ideas

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Abstract

Bernard Shaw's cognition and attitude towards socialism is very complicated and tangled, which is like the Chinese idiom "false respect". He looks forward to socialism and communism but he is a non-actionist facing the changing ways and manners of social status. Influenced and bound by the religious thought, he won't fight against the government by himself, neither disobeying the Lord's laws nor the real state's laws. Therefore Bernard Shaw's socialism ideas are expressed in the articles and oral speeches, without employing the manner of striking and war to get rid of and overthrow the existing government and the state system. So Bernard Shaw's socialism thoughts are only his own ideas. But eventually he abandoned socialism and he did not like revolution. He returned to capitalism and his own religious world.

Key words: Socialism; Religion; Foresight; Realism

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INTRODUCTION

Bernard Shaw remains in people's memory with critical realism and bright style. He is the greatest dramatist and writer of modern Britain, an excellent commenter influencing British modern drama, who is versatile in arts. In music he is good at opera and symphony and he can play the piano well. Once he served as the music

commenter of the world journal. In painting he had the high appreciation ability and served as the painting commenter of the world journal. He is a tireless social speaker introducing all kinds of advanced thoughts and theories to the society with acute thoughts and feelings, broadcasting socialism for twelve years. In 1933 when Bernard Shaw visited China, Chinese advanced writer like Luxun welcomed him warmly. Like so many ambitious Irish the young Bernard Shaw abandoned the stable job in Dublin, going to London to look for his own dream. He was also like the other modern persons full of vigor and unusual wisdom to change the world that he liked with the strong wish and prospect. The world view will affect each individual's social life deeply. Therefore Bernard Shaw who has the strong religious sense of mission is doomed to be an unusual quiet common person.

1. BERNARD SHAW BEING ATTACHED TO MARXISM

In London he began his road to changing the world with the debate and speech, he took part in the debating competition frequently speaking and debating as to broaden his vision. *Progress and Poverty* written by Harry•Jorge made Bernard Shaw's thought have the important transition. Recommended by others, he read Marx's works translated by Derwer. Remarkable Marx attracts Bernard Shaw deeply. By means of Marx's eyes Bernard Shaw saw the true essence of the civilization of capitalist class which is deceptive and exploited. The book *On Capital* is the scientific bases for Bernard Shaw to fight against the civilization of capitalist class and offers the strong ideas. Bernard Shaw was eager to tell his feelings to the whole world. So Robert•Bana who was a socialist of Scotland controlled a club making a speech about "Bandits". He gave a simile saying that the proletariat was nailed in the cross between the landlord and the capitalist. According to the Bible, because the

flame of Judaism and Farison within Israel could not accept Jesus' criticism, even they could not accept Jesus' theory spreading in the folk. Therefore Jesus' power of influence in public gradually threatened the governors' benefits and they strongly required the Roman leaders stationed in Israel to get rid of Jesus whose accusation is groundless. Biladuo was forced to sentence Jesus to death in crossing in order to make the government stable. At the same time there were two true bandits who were nailed on the two sides of Jesus, one on the right side, the other on the left side. Bernard Shaw vividly expressed that the proletariat was killed like Jesus with this simile. These robbers would be nailed in the cross by history. In the speech of socialism Bernard Shaw would not forget to be related to *The Bible*.

Bernard Shaw continuously declared socialism in different ways in various situations including the platform of the church in the following twelve years. From the bishop to worker he widely made a contact with the people of different rank. These experiences were the first-hand material for his future creation.

Although at that time the British social democratic alliance was calling the slogan of socialism, Bernard Shaw thought they did not really understand Marxism. So he did not choose the social democratic alliance but join the Feibian Community which was founded in 1884 proposing to realize socialism with the gradual manners. In fact it represents an advancing idea of capitalist class. Bernard Shaw coldly criticized the capitalist class and showed his deep sympathy for workers. But in essence this is an overlooked sympathy. Please pay attention to it. It's so important. Bernard Shaw is a realist who is very clear about British government's attitude towards socialism. He disagreed that workers were against police and army. He himself even would not like to sacrifice his life for socialism. Therefore he wrote a passage named *Non-Government Can Not Be Realized* proclaiming that if there were not an official land force and a navy, he would not like to proceed socialism greatly.

Therefore Bernard Shaw's socialism only limited within his ideas and speeches. He would not kill capitalism with knife by himself. Since Bernard Shaw would not like to carry out socialism revolution with force power, why was he keen on the publicity of socialism? The reason was that the scene of socialism and communism depicted by Marx was so terrific. Compared with the heaven in *The Bible*, they are quite the same, even communism is the heaven in the true world. So communism is popular and expected by Bernard Shaw who is compassionate with the poor public and shows his universal love to them. If the true heaven had realized, it would be nice. Bernard Shaw said, "the states of socialism will become the ones which are strong and right-centered." Bernard Shaw looked forward to the future full of confidence: "The study of *On Capitalism* enables him to build an enterprise in the world."

very subjective and incorrect. 这是不是丢东西了? Helisi made a joke saying after the first world war, Bernard Shaw himself visited the Soviet Union. After he returned to Britain, he declared Lie Ning was a member of Feibian community. The route carried out by Sidalin was the plans put forward by the member of Feibian community, Xini. Weibu. from the above example, Bernard Shaw's understanding about socialism was that Bernard Shaw was a social revolutionist. Bernard Shaw thought that if there existed the income inequality, there was no civilization. He considered the social questions as the distribution questions of the state income. What Bernard Shaw plans is only to allocate equally. The ideas of Bernard Shaw's equality derives from the idea of *The Bible*: "There are two coats, one of which is distributed to the person who has no clothes. The same is to the food." (Luke, 3:11) As a result Bernard Shaw combined his socialism with the economic theory only to write the book named *The Guideline of the Wise Women's Socialism and Capitalism*. In felling Bernard Shaw appreciated socialism and communism; in sense he still stood in the position of the capitalists. In the beginning he was attracted by Marxism but after twelve years he did not support Marx's economics for he knew the parliament system in Britain was not allowed Marxism to survive under the British flag.

On Feibiancong compiled by Bernard Shaw later, in the book Marxism was not mentioned. He substituted Marxism with the theory of Jewenzi gradually.

When the Italian dictator Mosolini considered freedom as the rotten body, Bernard Shaw praised him. Bernard Shaw even objected to strike and challenged to the labor party, requiring the labor party to force all the able-bodied citizens to work regardless of how much pay they will get, with this method to cancel the right of strike. Bernard Shaw's thoughts are still connected with the Bible. The power of monarch was bestowed by the lord and the God's sons should obey the power-owner in the earth for all the powers are from God. Therefore the idea of objecting strike and arms against police and government army is united with the opinion of God's request their sons to be obedient with the principle of the world's power. Bernard Shaw thought if socialism can be realized just as Marx said, social system and social form can be replaced automatically with the development of productive forces. When capitalism falls apart the system of socialism will naturally substitute it. Since Bernard Shaw believed creative revolution was the religion of the twentieth century, which was propelled by a mighty power, so he quietly waited the natural realization of socialism. In the times of Bernard Shaw's living days, there were so many people who both had Christianity theology and the philosophy of socialism. Bernard Shaw is such a person. In the record of Flank•Helisi there was a person who both was a pastor and a socialist. For example, Bluke, a British pastor, once joined in the social movement with Bernard Shaw. Bernard Shaw's wife, Shoclet is a Christian and a

socialist, who also joined the social movement with her husband. Another new believer of Christian, Werde, even wrote the book *the Human Soul Under the Socialism* to response to Bernard Shaw's socialism speech, influenced by Bernard Shaw. Marx's politics and economics affected Bernard Shaw greatly making him understand social problems not only in a new vision for writing but also analyze the characters in the Bible with the point view of politics and economics. In the letter from Bernard Shaw to Frank•Helisi, Bernard Shaw put forward the main points that the modern sociology and politics are proving Jesus's special economic and theology step by step. Bernard Shaw also worshiped Jesus as a communism revolutionist.

2. BERNARD SHAW TRYING TO IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVING STANDARDS AND SOCIAL SYSTEM CRYING OUT FOR SOCIALISM.

Bernard Shaw is eager to the heaven's beautiful scenery but he pays more attention to

the people's living states in the real life. He went through poverty from his childhood

spending his days of juvenile and youth in poverty. So he hated poverty: "Poverty is crime; poverty is the result of the organized robbery and oppression." In the novel *the Widower's House Estates*, through the mouth of likes the harm of poverty was said: "Because I'm a poor man, that makes me become a bastard." Poverty can deprive human's dignity, safety, health and moral, which is the most terrifying thing in the world. Poverty may make madam Hualun exchange the woman's holiest morals for money. When Bernard Shaw worked in a real estate company in Dublin he saw the common people's wretched living situation in the slum with his own eyes. He also knew the hypocrisy and cruelty of the rank and fashion from the king of Britain to the government officials. Faced with the social state of that time, Bernard Shaw wanted to explore a path to improve the real livelihood with a compassionated heart. When he read Marx's works, it seemed as if he got wealth.

He believed that the study of *on Capital* could make him build up a cause. Marxism depicted and displayed a vivid blueprint of the human heaven for him. Bernard Shaw kept a watchful eye on livelihood without limiting the narrow Ireland patriotism, nor only paying close attention to the British people. International socialism was the field that he was concentrated on. He declared that he was the only person who knew socialism in Great Britain. In his opinion socialism was based on the socialization of the means of production and with the purpose of exchange by means of state operation or market operation. He regarded all the possible distribution plans as the unreasonable distributions and he thought the only

feasible plan was to distribute equally. He took advantage of all opportunities to give a public speech introducing socialism ideas to people. He cried out for socialism for twelve years and also the coming of human heaven in his dream. Bernard Shaw's socialism publicity only limited in his excited speech. He as well as his friends of Feibian Community was striving to improve British society. They would not like to plan to choose socialism revolution so they gave the ideas permeation with the purpose of education to propel the society advance under the cover of British constitution.

With the effort of members in Feibian community represented by Bernard Shaw, the state guaranteed the lowest living standards, the resources social management, to reduce the difference between the poor and the rich, rectifying education and many other measures, passing many bills, all these being practicable in the state laws.

Although British socialism was replaced by the bourgeoisie's improvement, Bernard Shaw was warm-hearted for the common people to explore the happy road. All this is just derived from Bernard Shaw's nature.

3. THE FORESIGHT OF BERNARD SHAW'S REALISM

Bernard Shaw once said the creation style adopted by him in the period of Augustus (the new classic period of British literary history) was 150 later than the times, but his thought was 150 years more progressive than the times. Frank•Helisi said that Bernard Shaw's works were written before the forehead of the future. He thought that Bernard Shaw was the person of foresight of socialism, who treated all the women and men in the world in the manner and standard of no affection. He hoped that people also evaluated him down to ground. Werd also said, "Bernard Shaw has no friends in the world, but his friends all dislike him." A person who declared his thought was 150 years more advanced than times was only a person of foresight, walking very far before times.

In the Bible many persons of foresight were recorded. The person of foresight was a person accepting a special task set by the Lord. The person of foresight accepted the task enlightened by God, the task usually being about the God's recent or future prophecy; about the arrangement of people's affairs mainly for Israel and its people including the abolition of Israel monarch and the advance and warning for Israel monarch and common people.

The person of foresight is like the lighthouse for navigation, also like a watcher for the nation, to adjust course for Israel nation and point out the mistakes of monarch and common people. If the person of foresight can not point out these mistakes, he must undertake the sin of dereliction of duty before the lord. The common points of these persons of foresight are to shoulder God's important task, to love Israel people sincerely, to criticize

the realistic questions fearlessly and ruthlessly. So the person of foresight was alone.

Bernard Shaw was well-known to the Bible, growing up in Ireland where it was full of religious atmosphere from his childhood. Knowing the principles of the Bible, seeing the ugly deeds in the religious field, the images of God embodied from these people were greatly discounted. From the psychology rule of love me, love my dog, Bernard Shaw was disgusted to the unqualified Christians, so it was natural for him not to like the Lord advocated by them. Therefore propelled by this disgusted psychology, the early young Bernard Shaw decorated his room with the representative of the devil Meifeistufphallus' advertising publicity picture. In his mind those wicked clergymen were worse than devil, even worse than Meifeistufphallus.

Jesus said to his disciples

you are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5: 13-16)

Jesus emphasized the importance of behavior. Because behavior embodies thought directly. Salt is both condiment and antiseptic. If Christians lost the function of salt in the world, they would be abandoned by Jesus. The people of the world can recognize Jesus' disciples from Christians' behavior. In fact Bernard Shaw respected God from his heart so he paid special attention to the Christian church which carried out the task of respecting the Lord and taught people. Just because of deep love and severe blame, he criticized and blamed the church very severely and sharply. It was so shocked for Bernard Shaw to see morbidity and emptiness of their belief reflected from the behavior of the churches, clergymen and the common people in his age. Bernard Shaw detested their behavior and their hypocrisy ideas, feeling depressed about their coaxing the Lord in the manner of formalism and dogmatism. Therefore his sense of mission in his potential consciousness was always urging him to punish the churches and believers in the world throughout his whole life. Hence seventy years later he said, "the person who has no religion is a coward in morality while when he is clear in mind he is a coward in the body." The above words were the summary of Bernard Shaw's true beliefs and were expressed clearly and thoroughly throughout his drama *the Devil's Disciple* and *the Holy Virgin Joan*.

4. THE REFORM IMPULSE OF BERNARD SHAW'S REALISM

In the process of Jesus's preaching, from the beginning people didn't understand or accept him as the Savior

only to see him as a person of foresight. He intentionally avoided the upper ten represented by the rank of flamen and Pharisees. He preached in the poor fishermen and laborers even to the prostitutes and tax officials deserted by the Israel nation. Hence when more Jesus badly scolded dogmatism of flamen and Pharisees who pretended to be kind, the more they hate Jesus regarding him as the devil and wanting to kill him.

For Israel people's rotten belief, Jesus's behavior and speech swept their pretending spiritual tomb open like a sharp sword. What Jesus would do to be to lead the correct course. Bernard Shaw knew Jesus's mission quite well, so he understood deeply he should have the responsibility as the person of foresight about realism. He followed Jesus' behavior principles criticizing the church ruthlessly and even proposing to get rid of the church, for the corrupted church and clergymen are the stumbling block for the world people to believe Christianity. In the new testament in Luke (17: 1-2) Jesus said to the disciples, "Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they came! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung round his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin."

Getting rid of the accumulated fraud in the religious world is Bernard Shaw's great wish. Except in his works he exposed the clergymen's evil nature, in the real life how to lead people to have the right religious belief is to set an example for people. So *the Devil's Disciple* and *the Virgin Joan* are the examples like the lighthouse, which were carved and mould before the world by Bernard Shaw. The evil disciples' souls were stationed in the Bernard Shaw's heart when he was young. He decorated his room with the portrait of Meiphis Tphelis in his childhood. He delivered the speech blaspheming the Bible to capture his father's heart. He declared publicly that he was an atheist scolding the church even calling on to cancel the church. All this shows that Bernard Shaw is a pure anti-christian devil. At the age of 24 Bernard Shaw wore his beard. When he found his beard grew longer and longer, which was more like the mode of the opera advertisement picture, or the beard shape of Meiphis Tphelis, which made him very happy. "Bernard Shaw has a power which is thought controlling feeling, spirit controlling flesh. He has a rooted preference towards thoughts and concepts. He despises feelings even emotions. These features make Bernard Shaw's individuality possess the color of Meiphis Tphelis". He likes to hold the different opinions with others despising all the traditional customs and liking to satirize and mocking. He learns a lot from the debate with others. Faced with Bernard Shaw who possessed the devil's character from appearance to behavior, who can really understand his heart which is deeply hidden and anxious under the surface of revolt?

The Devil's Disciple is a true Christian image which was made up by Bernard Shaw with the background of the American Independence War. From Richard the shadow of

Bernard Shaw can be seen in his juvenile and youth times. Richard also did not accept God in his mother's mind, madam Archlute, for she arbitrarily subdued and insulted Richard without showing mother's affection and glory as a Christian. Richard looked down on the noble and holy religious deportment and decent society position pursued by the Puritan represented by his mother. He connected with Gypsies on purpose for this nation roaming about was deserted by the European main society. Richard's behavior was like Jesus Christ's deliberate preaching among the prostitutes and tax officials in that year. The prostitutes are unclear sinners and the tax officials are the persons who collect taxes for the Roman empire. They all belong to the nation's scum, deserted by the society. Richard also joined the smuggling activity against British army. All in all his tracks are completely anti-traditional and corrupt disciples of the devils.

When the First World War broke out, Frank•Herries commented the British enemies in an impartial attitude which made English writers extremely angry who criticized Frank• Herries' motive being means. Only Bernard Shaw stood up to defend him, therefore Frank• Herries compared Bernard Shaw to an angel who was loyal to the God and brave enough to fight against Satan in Milton's *The Lost Paradise*. "He is faithful among the non-believers and honest in countless hypocrisies." And another time was that Werleke was dismissed by a certain writer alliance of America, but Bernard Shaw immediately stood up to help him. Bernard Shaw pointed that if an art troupe fired a member just because of the different political disagreement, it would not be an art group. On the contrary it became a political party. Bernard Shaw thought that he himself once paid tax to America so he had right to express his opinions about American national affairs. Bernard Shaw's action for Werleke is rather like the devil's disciple Richard who defended the devil publicly

From the beginning I knew that the devil is my born owner, chief and friend. While the people in the world bow to the God who conquered them only because of the fear. I prayed towards the devil secretly and he comforted me in order not to make me depressed in the room where the children were crying. I promised to entrust my soul to him. That promise made me become a real man." (The lines in *the Devil's Disciple*)

Richard thought he himself took a pity on the devil and he had the responsibility to defend and protect it supporting it and fighting against the whole world. In the process of Richard replacing Anderson to meet death Bernard Shaw's religious ideal of realism came true. Richard, a person who really possessed the spirit of Christian, got rid of the disguise of all the devil's disciples shinning the light of Jesus. The light is both Richard's and

also the Bernard Shaw's ideal. Richard also followed the obstinate character of the ancient prophets who lost life to get righteousness.

In this way Bernard Shaw created a real version of the Christian's specific model for us, that is to say to do something according to Jesus's behavior for the country, the nation, family, friends in life.

In writing the novel *the Virgin Joan* Bernard Shaw chose the real ancient person, asking them to conjure the brilliance of realism. He found the court record about the trial of Joan from the history material. As material he showed us the image of a lively peasant girl in a realistic writing way. She was chosen as an angle—a prophet going into the world of that times and coming into the mind of the readers. That made us feel that the ancient person Joan stood before us vividly. There was no abstract notion and empty preaching just an image of Christian in real life. The virgin Joan also chose the consistent behavior principle of the ancient prophets: martyrdom for God.

CONCLUSION

Bernard Shaw, who is the prophet of the era, launched the fierce attack on the church about its corruption, cruelty and hypocrisy. This is the duty of the prophet. He just did the things that Jesus did at that time stripping off hypocrites of the churches and revealing their truth just like whitewashing the tomb. He also directed a belief road for the common people in the real life. The most important thing to implement the doctrine of Jesus Christ. For Jesus Christ said in Luke "the person who follows the God's remarks is my mother or brother." At the same time Bernard Shaw vividly explained his own belief according to Richard and the virgin Joan created by him. A person without religious belief is the coward in moral and when he is awake he is for the most part a physical coward. Richard and the virgin Joan are indeed the lighthouse which the christian should look up to show the nobility and bravery in moral and behavior for their own belief. That is what Bernard Shaw expected.

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