

Giving unto Caesar What is Caesar's : Major Barbara

" The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom."

Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

Controversy and Shaw courted each other. But even those who, raised on the Shavian diet, ceased to be shocked by his provocative nudges that consisted chiefly of calculated distortion of perspective were stunned by *Major Barbara*. Here the choice was not between prostitution and suicide, as in *Mrs Warren's Profession*, nor between cruelty masked as religion and pity in the garb of blasphemy, as in *The Devil's Disciple*, but between Christianity and anti-Christianity, between Christ and Dionysus. And Shaw seemed to have discovered greater morality in the arms-manufacturer than in the Salvation Army. The denunciation of poverty seemingly ended up in a litany to blackguardism. Taking note of the fact that the most compelling figure in the play is an earnest advocate of the cannons-for-salvation doctrine, William Archer wrote :

I cannot help thinking that there are two main lines, which eventually cross each other, so that the trains of thought which run on them collide, to their mutual destruction. We have on the one hand Mr Shaw's favourite idea (in which I heartily concur) that

poverty is the greatest evil in the world, and its extirpation our first duty. Following Samuel*Butler Mr Shaw prefers to call it a crime, and I am not disposed to quarrel about words. On that score then, he has me with him; but when he proceeds to lay down the Nietzschean doctrine of the Superman, and preach the gospel of high explosives, I cannot harmonize the two ideas.¹

Similarly G.K. Chesterton thought that *Major Barbara* stood for everything that Shaw had fought against all his life, it was "not only apart from his faith, but against his faith."² In the preface to the play Shaw added to the confusion of his critics by pretending to lionize Undershaft :

Undershaft, the hero of *Major Barbara*, is simply a man who, having grasped the fact that poverty is a crime, knows that when society offered him the alternative of poverty or a lucrative trade in death and destruction, it offered him, not a choice between opulent villainy and humble virtue, but between energetic enterprise and cowardly infamy.³

However this teasing preface should not be taken at face value. It is not a little strange that critics who have made much of the preface have chosen to disregard the following lines which gives a clearer picture of Shaw's frame of mind:

Like Froissart's medieval hero, who saw that "to rob and pill was a good life" he is not the dupe of that public sentiment against killing which is propagated and endowed by people who would otherwise be killed themselves, or of the mouth-honor paid to poverty and obedience by rich and insubordinate do nothings ... Froissart's Knight, in placing the achievement of a good life before all the other duties... behaved bravely, admirably. Medieval society, on the other hand, behaved very badly indeed in organizing itself so stupidly that a good life could be achieved by robbing and pilling. If the Knight's contemporaries had been all as resolute as he, robbing and pilling would have been the shortest way to the gallows, just as, if we were all as resolute and clearsighted as Undershaft an attempt to live by means of what is called "an independent income" would be the shortest way to the lethal chamber.⁴

It is clear that the doctrine propagated by Andrew Undershaft is not a Shavian doctrine. Undershaft can thrive only because society, in convincing itself that the meek shall inherit the earth, makes things that much easier for him who, not being the dupe of piety, makes hay while the sun shines; one who is not governed by Christian values finds these values indispensable in the maintenance of the status quo that works in his favour.⁵

Shaw believes Undershaft's choice to be moral because Undershaft satisfies the Kantian test of virtuous action: if everyone were to act like him, then Undershaft would soon be superseded. From the Shavian point of view the doctrine of Undershaft is a necessary step for its eventual abolition.

If one were to look for a model of *Major Barbara*, one would find it in Ibsen. Thematically *Major Barbara* is a mutant of the *Emperor and Galilean*. If the amount of space dedicated to a play is any indication of the critic's attention, then the reader of *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* is justified in supposing that no other play of Ibsen moved Shaw as much as the *Emperor and Galilean* since the discussion of this play takes up more space in Shaw's study of the Norwegian dramatist than any other of the latter's works. Shaw quotes a significant section of the play while commenting on Julian's persecution of the Christians :

Once on the throne Julian becomes a mere pedant-tyrant, trying to revive paganism ecumenically by cruel enforcement of external conformity to its rites... In this frame of mind Christ appears to him, not as the prototype of himself as Maximus would have him feel, but as a rival God over whom he must prevail at all costs. It galls him to think that the Galilean still reigns in the hearts of men whilst the emperor can only extort lip honour from them by brute force; for in his wildest excesses of egotism he never loses his saving

sense of the realities of things as to mistake the trophies of persecution for the fruits of faith."Tell me who shall conquer" he demands of Maximus : "the emperor or the Galilean ?"

"Both the emperor and the Galilean shall succumb... but you shall not therefore perish. Does not the child succumb in the youth and the youth in the man : yet neither child nor youth perishes. You know I have never approved of your policy as emperor. You have tried to make the youth a child again. The empire of the flesh is fallen a prey to the empire of the spirit. But the empire of the spirit is not final, any more than the youth is, you have tried to hinder the youth from growing : from becoming a man. Oh fool, who have drawn your sword against that which is to be : against the third empire, in which the twin-natured shall reign..."⁶

Major Barbara's resemblance to Ibsen's play becomes evident when one grasps the fact that in the changed circumstances of capitalistic democracy Julian's mantle is carried by the military-industrial complex. As the ablest representative of this class Undershaft clears any possible misapprehension about his role :

I am the government of your country : I and Lazarus. Do you suppose that you and half a dozen amateurs like

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you, sitting in a row in the foolish gabble shop, can govern Undershaft and Lazarus ? No, my friend : you will do what pays u s (sic). You will make war when it suits us, and keep peace when it doesnt.⁷

Undershaft is thus not merely an arms manufacturer but the wielder of the power that comes from the barrel of the gun. He is the new Julian, the lord of the first empire. The Galilean, who is Julian's antithesis, is represented in this allegory by Barbara, who resembles Christ so closely that to the reader who misses the allegory, her anguished cry, "My God : why hast thou forsaken me ? "⁸ sounds confusing and blasphemous. Barbara's army, the Salvation Army, is described by Cusins as "the army of joy, of love, of courage..."⁹ At the end of the second act when the Army deserts her, the play becomes a symbolic reenactment of Jesus's loneliness and his betrayal by Judas.¹⁰

Undershaft's intuition is more acute than Julian's in the anticipation of the third empire; while Julian failed to grasp the fact that his will was a part of the world will and by his persecution of the Christians he delayed historical progress, Undershaft is akin to Wotan, the god in Wagner's *Niblung's Ring*, in having an instinctive understanding of dialectics.

In *The Perfect Wagnerite* Shaw makes a distinction between Wotan's conscious intentions and his true will. The destruction of Wotan's spear by Siegfried's sword signals

the victory of Wotan's real will: "...the god, since his desire is toward a higher and fuller life, must long in his inmost soul for the advent of the greater power whose first work, though he does not see as yet, must be his own undoing ."¹¹

As Undershaft is the equivalent of Wotan in Shaw's play, *Major Barbara* is not an apotheosis of Undershaftism. The play merely insists that Undershaft is the catalyst of the supersession of the first empire. Just as the third empire cannot come into existence without a synthesis of the first and the second empires, so the Christian virtue of Barbara cannot bring about the transformation of the world governed by Undershaft's guns without appropriating Undershaft's power. In other words the author who insists in all his plays that love is not enough here avers that Christian love is not enough. Perhaps in no other play does Shaw show such acute awareness of the nature of political power. Every reader of the play sees for himself that power, like nature, abhors a vacuum, and that without temporal power spiritual power is impotent. As the Salvation Army has nothing but spiritual power, it must either wind up its shelter or tolerate the existence of Undershaft and Lazarus. Under the existing circumstances, it can only further degrade Peter Shirley, thrown out of his job at the age of forty-six, by making him a beggar living on alms. Under the present circumstances temporal power can only be tyrannical and

spiritual authority a pathetic rag-tag like Mrs Baines and the Salvation girls. Undershaft can update the technology of mass murder but Barbara can only offer prayer and admonition. The most telling symbol of the powerlessness of the Salvation Army is Jenny being dragged by the hair and hit across the face by Bill Walker.

Shaw finds Undershaft's methods more civilised than the Army's because his industry at least turns out well fed and well groomed men ; the Salvation Army's shelter produces wretched decrepits cursing themselves for having to beg. The Army can exist only by collaborating with Undershaft, its renunciation of power leads to the perpetuation of his oppressive power. Since the people the Army needs to convert, people like Lazarus and Undershaft, are precisely the people it fails to convert, by haranguing the powerless to abjure violence it unwittingly plays into the hands of Undershaft and Lazarus. An unashamed Undershaft, on the other hand, by preaching the gospel that poverty is a crime and killing for prosperity is an honourable profession, tolls the death knell of Undershaftism ; for the singleminded hatred of poverty by every living person is bound to abolish poverty. Though the way to heaven may lie through hell, the end of iniquity must come after a bloody civil war. Undershaft knows that "religious organizations exist by selling themselves to the rich."¹² By pretending that poverty is a blessing and humility a virtue,

they breed cowardice, and they breed, at least in practice, political conformism.

As a man of business, it is enough for Undershaft to know that the Salvation Army draws people's teeth. The following exchange between Undershaft and Cusins amply demonstrates why Shaw the pragmatist who, like Ibsen, protested "against the ordinary assumption that there are certain moral institutions which justify all means to maintain them"¹³ and measured the value of an idea by its effect on conduct, considered Undershaft's effect on society more beneficial than the Salvation Army's :

CUSINS I dont think you quite know what the Army does for the poor .

UNDERSHAFT Oh yes I do. It draws their teeth: that is enough for me— as a man of business—

CUSINS Nonsense ! It makes them sober —

UNDERSHAFT I prefer sober workmen. The profits are larger.

CUSINS — honest—

UNDERSHAFT Honest workmen are the most economical.

CUSINS — attached to their homes —

UNDERSHAFT So much the better : they will put up with anything sooner than change their shop.

CUSINS— happy—

UNDERSHAFT An invaluable safeguard against revolution.

CUSINS— Unselfish—

UNDERSHAFT Indifferent to their own interests, which suits me exactly.

CUSINS — With their thoughts on heavenly things.

UNDERSHAFT [RISING] And not on Trade Unionism nor Socialism. Excellent.¹⁴

It is evident that Shaw praises the revolutionary role of Undershaft just as Marx praised the revolutionary role of the bourgeois for tearing apart the fabric of human relationships existing under feudalism, though he knew that capitalism gives birth to a more impersonal, and hence more dehumanized, form of exploitation than feudalism. *Major Barbara* cannot be understood without keeping in mind Shaw's sense of dialectic.

Undershaft, then, cannot liberate the people. As an industrialist who manufactures weapons he can only be the catalyst of violence and warfare. Like Froissart's hero, with whom he has been compared by Shaw in the preface, he believes that to rob and to pill is a good life, and like Monsieur Verdoux in Chaplin's film he suffers from no illusions and knows that he has ushered in death for his own profit, but he also knows like him that those who are hailed as heroes by history went about their task of murder and plunder with similar thoroughness and singlemindedness.

It is not his action but the clarity of his vision that sets Undershaft apart from an ordinary death-merchant. He knows that if everyone did as he does his trade will be the

first casualty. In a society consisting exclusively of people who would sooner kill than be poor there can be no killing because such a society will organize itself to abolish poverty. Such a society will be forced to do away with exploitation and offer prosperity to each of its members merely for the sake of social equilibrium.

Shaw's play is sustained by an iron chain of dialectic from which it is not allowed to deviate. Here again he is not unlike Marx, whose predictions about political revolution were belied in reality because the categories of discourse did not always correspond to conditions on the ground. Shaw's generalisation about human nature forms the play's premise. For the dialectic to be a successful interpretation of the social process the premise must reflect reality. The logic of the play rules out the liberal solution in which humble piety of the Salvation Army can co-exist with egalitarianism, because in his dialectical scheme Shaw has simplified the immense complexity of nature: the world in which the action of *Major Barbara* takes place is essentially the Hobbesian world of the *Leviathan*. In *Man and Superman*, both in the Epistle Dedicatory and in the Revolutionist's Handbook, the great majority of men are considered to be political failures. In *Major Barbara* too, the average person is a selfish brute. Undershaft's employees help him to perpetuate his exploitation:

Practically, every man of them keeps the man just below

him in his place. I never meddle with them. I never bully them...The men snub the boys and order them about; the carmen snub the sweepers; the artisans snub the unskilled labourers; the foremen drive and bully both the laborers and artisans; the assistant engineers find fault with the foremen; the chief engineers drop on the assistants; the departmental managers worry the chiefs; and the clerks have tall hats and hymnbooks and keep up the social tone by refusing to associate on equal terms with anybody.¹⁵

It must be understood that Undershaft's factory is the microcosm of society, faithfully reflecting its character, to see why Shaw insists that Undershaft's religion of blood and iron is a necessary step for its eventual obsolescence.

Democratic methods of change are not feasible because conciliation and harmony between different classes of interest are not possible. Men cannot choose their good voluntarily, they change only when they are forced to change under duress. Thus a sane society cannot be chosen by the people, it will come only when each man is forced to behave with sanity because all other options are exhausted .

Kant thought that men are prompted by the irresistible voice of conscience, by what he called "the Categorical Imperative." If he made man's innate sense of morality the religious basis of society, Shaw reaches society from the other end. If man is the creature described in the

Leviathan, his wilfulness and single-minded pursuit of self-interest will one day force him to found a just society. When everyone becomes as ruthlessly self-centred as Undershaft and as clear-sighted, everyone will be forced to realize that the only society that can save the Undershafts from mutual destruction is a society that does not resort to the methods of Undershaft to suppress a section of the population. Here Shaw anticipates on a national scale a favourite doctrine of international relations--- the balance of terror. In the society anticipated by Shaw every person will behave like the nuclear superpowers of our times : each one's ability and preparedness to destroy the rest and the recognition by each of the ability and the intention of the others will be the surest guarantee of peace and justice. To pursue the analogy, no nuclear power dares to take liberties with another. In *Man and Superman* Shaw hoped that the world would be saved by a race of supermen, in *Major Barbara* he hopes that it will be saved by a community of Machiavellians. Since he has no faith in the common man's goodness and in the ability of goodness to deliver the goods, he now hopes that one day the majority of men will be terribly self-willed. Here Shaw seems to be in agreement with Nietzsche, who said that "the evillest is necessary for the Superman's best."¹⁶

The Shavian dialectic is of course as much of an abstraction as the dialectic of Hegel or of Marx. It would

be as difficult to make reality accord with Shaw's description as to expect the Prussian State of Fredrick William II to embody the virtue Hegel discovered in it or to find in Soviet Russia the Marxist dictatorship of the proleteriat. Thus when Shaw foresees in *Major Barbara* that the way to heaven lies through hell, we realize that in following the iron law of logic, Shaw is concerned with the purity of his terms rather than with reality, which is always muddled and mixed. I think that the play is a parlour-game, though not in the sense Francis Fergusson uses the term.¹⁷ The play is a perfect construction of dialectical logic though it is obvious to any reader of the play that every moment social change is taking place all over the world without conforming to the play's formula.

If Undershaft is the harbinger of misery and death, if he lives by thuggery, he is also Shaw's Wotan, the most clear-eyed critic of his role. In terms of the play's dialectics, he is his own antithesis, and thus not only the biological father of Barbara but also her—— and Adolphus Cusins's—— spiritual father: he lives in the present as a robber baron, but only a part of him lives in the present, the part that lives in the future wills, like Wotan, the supersession of his empire by something higher. When Shaw says of him that "there are the makings of ten Hamlets and six Othellos in his mere leavings"¹⁸ he probably wishes to draw the audience's attention to Undershaft's ability to

live simultaneously at two levels. A mere paranoid with his head filled with dreams of power and glory would not be arousing, nor would the simple soul that, more than two thousand years after Plato, rediscovers that the world cannot be saved unless philosophers are kings and kings philosophers be interesting. A person in whose leavings there are ten Hamlets has to be able to combine in himself two contrary roles : he has to be an actor and the critic of his part, he has to be in the midst of the action and yet must stand at a distance from himself. Over and above everything he must be convinced of the historical necessity of his role. He must know that the third empire cannot come by merely combining the first empire with the second. The first empire must succumb to the second as the second to the third. The beauty of Shaw's comedy is the beauty of its artifice. To ask whether the world cannot be changed by any other method except that of Undershaft, or to doubt the feasibility of Undershaftism as an instrument of change ——— to question the validity of Shaw's premise ——— is to deviate from the artifice to reality. As a description of the process of real change, the play is unconvincing because a world where everyone is an Undershaft is not the world of Nature but an artificial construct. But to appreciate the play one must accept the artifice and must not try to relate it to anything beyond it. The premises of Shaw are the rules of the game: one must accept the rules to judge how well

Shaw plays the game.

Major Barbara was Shaw's artificial comedy par excellence, before Adolphus Cusins broke the rules of the game and destroyed the beauty of the dialectics. The dialectics of the play, in closely following Ibsen's *the Emperor and Galilean*, leads to the third empire. Ibsen's—and Shaw's——— third empire is understood by Undershaft but not by Cusins.

Adolphus Cusins's notion of the third empire is as optimistic as it is unconvincing. He agrees to inherit Undershaft's empire but thinks that he can cut corners by selling arms to the underdog. In other words, he hopes to initiate an armorer's revolution by throwing economic prudence to the winds.

Such a solution is based on total ignorance of the laws of industrial organization ; unlike him Undershaft knows, for he laughs at Cusins's proposal, that the surest way of putting a sophisticated and capital-intensive industry in the red is to disregard the laws of the market and choose customers who are resourceless and therefore least likely to buy sophisticated arms. Besides, Cusins's simplistic faith destroys the dialectic structure of the play. If Undershaft cannot bring in social change now it is not because he lacks the will to do so and his replacement by Cusins will usher in the millenium ; it is because the people are not ready for a change. If power goes to the underdog he will merely

change his place with the person in power, because Lazarus and the sweeper of his factory have the same contempt for the powerless. The problem is more difficult than that of finding the right man in the right place.

It is obvious that Shaw did not share Cusins's faith in the common man. In *John Bull's Other Island* too the relation between one proletarian and another is one of animosity. In *Man and Superman* Shaw (in the Epistle Dedicatory) and Tanner (in the Revolutionist's Handbook) despair while talking of the possibility of progress in man as he is constituted.¹⁹ Cusins's ignorant wishfulness is contradicted even by himself when he wonders if " the way of life lies through the factory of death ".²⁰

These words become almost meaningless if they signify nothing more than the platitude that power must be wielded in defence of righteousness. The actual implication of his doubt is that the phoenix must die to be reborn and men must experience the ultimate limits of misery before they are forced to change. Cusins speaks of an ideal of brotherhood which is emphatically non-existent in Shaw's world, and Shaw can only hope for an ethically correct behaviour of one strong man when confronted with another.

Men can be strong only when, like Undershaft's master, they believe that "NOTHING IS EVER DONE IN THIS WORLD UNTIL MEN ARE PREPARED TO KILL ONE ANOTHER IF IT IS NOT DONE ."²¹

In the context of the conditions on the ground as

depicted in the play. Cusins's brave words about selling arms to the person of his choice is nothing but rhetoric and meet the contempt they deserve from Undershaft, who says: "From the moment when you become Andrew Undershaft you will never do as you please again."²² Yet Shaw finally allows Cusins to get away with his simplistic optimism and surprisingly, and somewhat incongruously, Undershaft thinks that Cusins will be able to make war on war, and the Professor of Greek, by making gunpowder, leaps into the final synthesis that culminates in the third empire. The dialogue glosses over the fact that Cusins has been appropriated by Undershaftism. Even if Cusins— Professor of Greek, collector of religions and Barbara's future husband— is seen as a part of her spiritual world, one is forced to admit that the marriage between temporal power and spiritual power is merely symbolic in this case, because Undershaft and Cusins as the next Undershaft must succumb before the end comes. The fact that both Undershaft and Cusins choose to overlook the fact and agree that Cusins ——— who by the terms of the contract is to lose his name and become the next Undershaft ——— can make war on war and can "make power for the world "²³ destroys the dialectic structure of the play.²⁴

It is a pity that Shaw allowed the play to be marred by Gilbert Murray's optimism. Murray, whose idea of art was as steeped in ethical considerations as Shaw's, suggested some

changes after reading the first draft because it suggested the triumph of Undershaft's principles over Barbara's, which he found undesirable.²⁵ The ethical judgments of the two men were different, Murray's mind being less convoluted and having fewer conflicts. In hindsight it is clear that Shaw harmed his play by letting Murray's abstract notions of right and wrong triumph over the mode in which reality presented itself to his own experience. What Shaw actually felt as an artist was different from the final version. He wrote to Murray :

As to the triumph of Undershaft, that is inevitable because I am in the mind that Undershaft is in the right, and that Barbara and Adolphus, with a great deal of his natural insight and cleverness, are very young, very romantic, very academic, very ignorant of the world, I think it would be unnatural if they were able to cope with him.²⁶

Yet it is this romantic and academic vision that he exchanged for his own vision that was presented in the first draft, according to which Cusins frankly sold his soul to Undershaft for his daughter and did not delude himself that his marriage with Barbara would succeed in restoring to health a sick and divided world.²⁷

The pseudo-comic ending, in which the apparent villain turns out to be a latter-day saint, the heroine, after

overcoming her initial despair, returns to her fold , the separated father is reconciled to the family and the romantic hero, when he seems certain to lose her, wins the heroine along with her father's millions by passing the foundling test almost miraculously , does not nullify the grim vision that sees that blood is to be shed and life is to be lost for an indefinite length of time before history turns the corner. The authentic vision of Shaw's third empire has no place for the shallow hope that with Cousins donning Undershaft's mantle, the conflict between Peter Shirley and Rummy Mitchens on the one hand and Bodger, Lazarus and Undershaft on the other will come to a happy resolution.

It is difficult, therefore, to agree with Joseph Frank that the three acts of *Major Barbara* constitute hell, purgatory and paradise.²⁸ The so-called paradise at the end of the play is a phoney synthesis that merely hides Shaw's inability to confront his own terrible vision. The happy resolution is possible only after hell is raised to heaven. We are, therefore, led to agree with Alfred J. Turco, who sees in the ending a forced sentimentality and argues that Shaw was not willing to recognize that "the breach between heaven and earth is absolute, that the resulting separation is the human condition."²⁹

Chapter 9: Notes and References

1. William Archer, *The Old Drama and the New*, pp.353-54.
2. G.K Chesterton. *George Bernard Shaw*, p.194.
3. CP III , p.27.
4. Ibid., pp.27-28.
5. For Indians it is probably easier to recognise the fact that the Shavian position is more than intellectual sophistry, because an analogous debate raged in India prior to Independence. Those who were opposed to the Gandhian method of Satyagraha, notably the Communists and other extremist groups, maintained that the Mahatma's unwavering commitment to non-violence and insistence on spiritual transformation of the adversary would come in handy for the rulers who would make use of the movement for their own end — the perpetuation of the British empire. Indeed, the cruder elements among his detractors accused Gandhi of working hand in glove with British imperialism. When India finally became Independent at the end of a virtual civil war and a blood-bathed partition, Gandhi was very close to the tragic realization that even in India Undershaftism had been defeated not by spiritual powers but by counter-Undershaftism. See, for instance, Pyarelal, *The Last Phase* and Sibnarayan Roy (ed.), *Gandhi. India and the World*.

6. *Major Critical Essays* , pp.55-56.
7. CP III , p.151.
8. Ibid., p.136.
9. CP III , p.116.
10. Though Margery Morgan does not notice the parallel between *Major Barbara* and the *Emperor and Galilean* she grasps the similarity between Christ and Barbara. See Margery Morgan, *The Shawian Playground*, pp.134 - 57.
11. *Major Critical Essays*, p.190.
12. CP III, p.121.
13. *Major Critical Essays* , p.122.
14. CP III, p.122.
15. Ibid., p. 155. The similarity between Trefusis's observation and Undershaft's is remarkable and shows that the picture of the common man remains essentially unchanged in Shaw's novels and plays.
16. " Thus Spake Zarathustra ", *The Philosophy of Nietzsche*, p.322.
17. Francis Fergusson, *The Idea of a Theater*, p.191. Fergusson believes that the play is full of paradoxes that are actually semantic tricks. I believe that the play is like a parlour game because Shaw allows logical constructs to simulate reality and then uses the logical terms, which do not attempt to describe reality but merely to replace it, rigorously to build up the argument of the play.
18. *Collected Letters* , vol. II , p. 542.

19. The subject is discussed more fully in the last chapter.
20. CP II , p.184.
21. Ibid., p.168.
22. Ibid., p.169.
23. Ibid., pp.178 , 181.
24. J.L.Wisenthal comments : " *Major Barbara* asserts the necessity of accepting and combining good and evil, heaven and hell ; and the best brief statement of its central idea is the aphorism from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* : "Without Contrariness is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence" Wisenthal, *The Marriage of Contraries*, p. 86.

I think this is a slightly mistaken reading of the play, induced partly by the happy ending, in which the Professor of Greek becomes the arms manufacturer. Shaw asserts the necessity not of combining good and evil, but of transcending evil through evil, which is a different matter altogether. There can be no genuine dialectics through a simple combination of opposite qualities. In 1907 Shaw added a chapter to *The Perfect Wagnerite* , in which he argued that the heroic Siegfried could not save the world unless he appropriated the temporal power of Alberic : "The end cannot come until Siegfried learns Alberic's trade, and shoulders Alberic's burden." *Major Critical Essays*, p.242. At that time he must have had in mind the example of the alliance

between Undershaft and Cusins : the latter decides to learn the former's trade and shoulder his responsibility, but when the essay is translated into the play, it tends to subvert the synthesis. In the play Cusins converts to Undershaftism. The end — the rule of Siegfried in the spirit of siegfried — lies in the future, outside the region of experience.

25. Sidney P. Albert , " In More Ways than One : *Major Barbara's* Debt to Gilbert Murray " , *Educational Theatre Journal* 20 (1968) : 123-140.

26. *Collected Letters*, vol. II , p.566.

27. See Bernad F. Dukore , " Revising *Major Barbara*" , *Shaw Review* 16 (1973) : 2-10.

28. Joseph Frank, "*Major Barbara* : Shaw's Divine Comedy," *PMLA* 71 (1956) : 61-74

29. Alfred J. Turco Jr., *Shaw's Moral Vision* , p. 228.