



ARTISTIC CREATION OF JOAN OF ARC: TAKING ROLES OF THE EPILOGUE IN GEORGE BERNARD SHAW'S *SAINT JOAN* AS AN EXAMPLE

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Abstract

In the recent century, researchers have become increasingly focused on the famous English writer George Bernard Shaw's historical play *Saint Joan*. It is generally accepted that *Saint Joan* is one of Shaw's best works and seems to illustrate Mr. Shaw's mind more clearly than anything he has written before. Most of these researchers have discussed general features of the French military figure Joan of Arc. While this point of view has been very productive, particularly in portraying personalities of the historical prototype and enriching readers' cognition about Shaw's comments on Joan and background knowledge in understanding that piece of history, this initial perception fails to take into account Shaw's fundamental differences from other cultural depictions: that Shaw has his special views of the miserable condition of Joan, which is mainly shown in the last Epilogue of this book.

To date, it has been universally acknowledged that among all the "Joans" in previous works, Shaw's is simultaneously "the most intriguing", "the most ambivalent", "the most dramatically round" and "the most revealingly relevant to leadership". As Herbert indicates in his *George Bernard Shaw: Saint Joan* (1988), *Saint Joan* is "a tremendous success" and "the humor, fantasy, and anachronisms" that the critics have found in *Saint Joan* become "accepted characteristics of the new genre of historical drama". Besides, some critics such as Michael Holroyd has characterized the play as Shaw's "only tragedy" and they tend to study Shaw's thought by analyzing the long Preface included in the text of the published play.

Generally speaking, Shaw's play *Saint Joan* has much to say about characteristics of Joan of Arc and it has become public property. However, there has been scant systematic investigation of *Saint Joan's* special arrangement. This study will address the overall problem of the role of the epilogue.

Keywords

Joan of Arc; George Bernard Shaw; *Saint Joan*; the Epilogue

Introduction

George Bernard Shaw (July 26, 1856-November 2, 1950), one of the most prolific playwrights of genius with numerous highly acclaimed dramas in literary history, is the recipient of the Nobel Prize for literature in 1925. In his total sixteen-paragraph Nobel Prize announcement, merely *Saint Joan* has won the high praise of two paragraphs. Nobody can deny that this great work contributes a lot to his winning the prize. Definitely, *Saint Joan* has a substantial footprint in Shaw's drama kingdom.

While for those woefully innocent of Shaw's creative ideas, the magic of *Saint Joan* is not easily perceived. For this reason, studying *Saint Joan* requires a certain understanding of the gifted author's writing philosophy. Adverse to Oscar Wilde's "Art for art's sake", Shaw shows solicitude for practical importance of literature and uses the stage to criticize ills of society in his time. As a matter of fact, Shaw has always taken "an active part in the socialist movement" (Liu 365). He practices what he preaches and maps his thoughts with his pen. Published 53 plays, including *Saint Joan*, Shaw exposes the extreme injustice and inhumanity of bourgeois society. It is easy to notice that when readers glance at some background knowledge of *Saint Joan*.

Premiering in 1923, three years after the heroine of France, Joan of Arc's canonization by the Roman Catholic Church, *Saint Joan: a Chronicle Play in Six Scenes and an Epilogue* portrays Joan's life established on the general records of her trial. It is a historical play dedicated entirely to the great daughter of the French people, Joan

of Arc. As an untutored and uneducated girl from a peasant family in the Vosges of northeast France, she conceives and performs a mysterious belief during the Hundred Years' War, that is, God instructs her to be His representative to lead Prince Charles to the throne of France, to drive the British and Burgundy invaders out of French territory, to fight for the liberty of France and to save the French people. But the heroine finally gets fired due to English invaders' hatred, Catholic Church's fear and King Charles's cowardice. Although the Court of Appeal declared her to be innocent on 7 July 1456 and the Roman Catholic Church canonized her as a saint on 16 May 1920, the heroine has lost her life forever. The first six scenes of *Saint Joan* are basically the reappearance of Joan of Arc's own experience, and only the last epilogue is Bernard Shaw's magical realism creation.

Comparatively speaking, studies of Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan* in the west is earlier than that in China. Critics study the play from different perspectives and in a broad sense can be divided into the following categories: historical study, feminist study, and literary study.

Authors of historical studies prefer using plenty of length to illustrate historical events in this play. One representative of this kind is *Mr. Shaw and "The Maid"* edited by Robertson who is best known as an advocate of the Christ myth theory. In this book, he responds to the play by discoursing that it was "highly inaccurate, especially in its depiction of medieval society" (85). Other scholars try to interpret *Saint Joan* from feminist perspectives, which usually involve a careful study of feminist criticism. In 2004, Karma Waltonen published an article titled *From Renaissance Witch to New Woman* and argues that "Joan is created in Shaw's image, and only era and gender prevent him from being labeled for his own transgressions" (Waltonen 201). Literary criticism of *Saint Joan* never stops since the publication of it. As the most famous and popular literary work about Joan, *Saint Joan* has emitted heated arguments in Western critical field. The research varies from structure to theme, from characterization to theatrical arts. A notable article titled *Shavian Romance in "Saint Joan": Satire as Anti-tragedy* was written by Nicole Coonrad. In this article, Coonrad considers the play as an anti-tragedy and Joan as "a sensible young woman caught up in a nonsensical series of events" (Coonrad 102). In his opinion, one tragic hero should have a character flaw and thus, is called tragic, while Shaw portrays Joan as a person of no flaw.

In China, because of Shaw's good relationship with Chinese scholars, *Saint Joan* is well received like his other works. But strictly speaking, the study of *Saint Joan* does not appear until 1980s. The first two are *On Shaw's Historical Play "Saint Joan"* written by Huang Jiade and *Shaw's Famous Historical Play "Saint Joan"* created by Liu Bingshan. Both Huang and Liu are translators of *Saint Joan*. In their articles, they review the play's contents and make comments on the arguable epilogue. According to them, the epilogue is Shaw's unique technique of exaggeration. Besides, other scholars like He Chengzhou, Li Yuhua and Qin Wen analyze Shaw's portrait gallery of New Woman. While Wu JinWen places special emphasis on the satirical theme of *Saint Joan* in his thesis. In general, domestic research focuses on the same direction as western scholars in addition to mentioning Shaw's historical limitations.

Fruit of previous research are extremely abundant, but seldom have scholars analyze the epilogue in detail. On the basis of previous studies, this paper is aimed to give a deep analysis of the epilogue in *Saint Joan* and to excavate its roles about the creation of believable characters and its thematic features as well as its contribution to the stage performance. The author aspires to lead readers to notice elements of drama text and this may guide to the eventual improvement of our aesthetic ability, thinking ability and criterion ability.

Chapter One: An Elaboration of the Epilogue

Before proceeding with the literary criticism, it is quite perceptive for researchers to bring the general meaning and usage of an epilogue out so as to prove the necessity of studying epilogue in literary work and set the framework for this paper. This chapter will list the literary definition and function of a general epilogue through some classical examples in famous works, and then we will give a brief review of the content of *Saint Joan's* epilogue.

1.1 Literary Definition and Function of an Epilogue

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's English-Chinese Dictionary, meanings of the word "epilogue" differentiate into two types. The former can be "a speech or piece of writing that is added to the end of a film, book or play and discusses or explains the ending" (688). The other one is applied as written English used when "something that happens at the end of a series of events" (688). What should be mentioned is that the epilogue in *Saint Joan* can be highly appropriate for the former's functionality. In fiction writing's case, an epilogue is a literary technique that occurs at the end of the play and serves as a supplemental, but separate and sequential part of the whole story. A good epilogue is a good way to provide a sense of closure and reveal the fates of the characters by telling readers what happened after the main story has ended. And almost more critical than satisfying reader's curiosity is reiterating the central themes and reminding readers of views that the author intends to convey.

Lots of popular works employ the epilogue as a nice way to finish their splendid narrative. Without the "glooming peace" after the tragedy, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* might have been less haunting about the two ardent lovers (794). Without the description of a time that "no one" remembers "the old days before the Rebellion", we will not notice that animals in Orwell's *Animal Farm* are back exactly their initial state (110). In the same way,

without Henry Kissinger's reinterpretation of the Crowe Memorandum, we may have trouble in understanding his thesis in his *On China*, that is, "relations between China and the United States need not and should not become a zero-sum game" (523).

After dealing with some basic science of an epilogue, our specific analytical research of *Saint Joan's* epilogue grows totally allowed. Another source of our confidence is from Bernard Shaw, the writer of *Saint Joan*. Different from his readers, Shaw enjoys calling the play *Saint Joan: A chronicle Play in six Scenes and an Epilogue*, translating to that the latter parallels all the other scenes. In this way, he prompts us that reading this play requests a certain degree of attention to the epilogue. Just as Jack Crawford's point of view, readers who plan to "find something too obvious and interesting in the play", they "should choose the epilogue". In Shaw's own comments in the preface of *Saint Joan*, "the epilogue must stand" after Joan "getting canonized" (59). Since we have so many logical reasons to continue our subject, we still need to have a brief review of what the epilogue of *Saint Joan* has told in case readers who are not familiar with the work get confused.

1.2 A Brief Review of Saint Joan's Epilogue

As the speaker has explained above, the action and characters of the epilogue in *Saint Joan* are to be presented in this part; after a brief summary and analysis of the plot, we will get down to business. There is no doubt that an overview of these elements will contribute to the understanding of the epilogue and provides the source of strength for the ongoing effort.

After Joan's execution, all the characters transcend the limitations of time and space and come to Charles VII's room. Actually, it is a dream of the King, where Joan converses cheerfully with everyone, including her enemies who has killed her. After the appearance of a gentlemen in 1920s, who announces the canonization ceremony of Joan of Arc 500 years after her execution, everyone seems to praise and apologize sincerely. However, when Joan requests for resurrection, they refuse her for various reasons and quickly disappear. Joan cries out her indignation, that is, when will the beautiful earth be ready to receive their saints.

Knowing the main content of the epilogue in *Saint Joan* surely redounds to the analysis of this epilogue's roles in contribution to the fullness of characters, deep revelation of themes and enhancement of the stage performance, which are the main body of the following passage.

Chapter Two: Contribution to the Fullness of Characters

Compared with the previous six chapters, the epilogue in *Saint Joan* is not limited by the plot, environment and historical facts. Shaw can freely write his words to depict the characters. Therefore, the characters are not only related to the previous performance, but also their hypocritical nature can be more thoroughly exposed. Besides, we have more knowledge about some characters' fates. To verify this opinion, this part will focus on the main characters and analyze their performance in the epilogue.

2.1 Joan of Arc

Different from the previous scenes that Joan of arc acts as the absolute protagonist. In the epilogue, she changes into a foil figure. However, her great glory can still be easily explored. One is her determination to be herself. When Charles informs her that the Church will stand a "beautiful cross" for her "perpetual memory", Joan claims that "it is the memory and the salvation that sanctify the cross, not the cross that sanctifies the memory and the salvation" (103). Obviously, such observation convinces her confidence and self-assurance she has sustained throughout the whole play, but what is more important is her contempt for empty, symbolic and external gestures. Besides, she has an ardent love for her nation. For instance, she is anxious to know whether all the English has "gone" and whether Dunois fights for "France free and French" (104). In addition to her invariable virtues, we can find something new in the epilogue, that is her despair exhibiting when all the other characters refuse her proposal to revive. A doughty soldier has no idea but to cry hopelessly when society rejects her membership. Such behavior avoids the fattening of the image and depicts a Joan who has the same hunger as other people, which will remind readers of her initial identity, an ordinary country girl living in a peaceful life.

2.2 The Dauphin

With Shaw's description of "a poor creature physically", the Dauphin is an adept conversationalist, preferring to stay at home and not be disturbed by political trivia or military matters. The first six verses of the drama emphasize a particular aspect of the cowardly and passive side of his character while the epilogue affords a panoramic view of his true ideas which are the strong evidence of his selfishness. The Dauphin, later known as King Charles VII feels relieved when Ladvenu informs him of Joan's rehabilitation. Because others can no longer say that he is "crowned by a witch and a heretic" so many years before (100). Therefore, nobody can challenge his "consecration" (100). As long as this goal achieved, he shall not "fuss about how the trick has been done" (100). Although it is Joan that forces and helps Charles to assume a more authoritative role. He does not take Joan's reputation to his heart. All he

cares about is his legitimacy. If readers do not read the epilogue, hypocrisy and selfishness of Charles will be concealed perfectly.

2.3 Peter Cauchon

As the Bishop of Beauvais, Cauchon is a complete Catholic and he targets to maintain the authority of the Church. Thus, when Joan claims that she has been sent by God to raise the siege of Orleans, meaning that she can communicate with God directly without help from the Church, Cauchon inevitably stands on Joan's opposite side worrying the power the Church holds over its people will be threatened. Broadly speaking, he sincerely wishes to save Joan's soul from damnation. On the other hand, Cauchon has ulterior needs for wanting Joan captured and convicted in order to maintain Church's institutional power. We can deduce his motivation from the first six scenes but we have no idea what will happen to the religious leader after Joan is burned to death. Now fortunately, the answer could be easily found from the epilogue. In the epilogue, he says personally that people pursue him "beyond the grave" and excommunicates his dead body and they even dig his dead body up and "flung it into the common sewer" (103). Even though, he still sticks to his creed, saying this thing that they have done against him "hurts justice" and "destroys faith" and "saps the foundation of the Church" (103). Thus, the epilogue not only explains the Bishop's fate, but further strengthens his religious identity.

Generally speaking, twelve figures appear in this epilogue: Charles, Ladvenu, Joan, Cauchon, Dunois, the Soldier, John de Stogumber, the Executioner, the Earl of Warwick, the Gentleman, the Archbishop and the Inquisitor. No one is new except the Gentleman. Nevertheless, some old characters such as Charles show their new characteristics while others display more clues about themselves and the whole story. From this point, the epilogue contributes a lot to the fullness of characters in this play.

Chapter Three: Deep Revelation of Themes

Shaw creates such an epilogue in great length after deliberation, not just for satisfying readers' curiosity about characters. As we have mentioned above, Shaw's word is his weapon to criticize the illness of his time. Therefore, the epilogue must play an important role in the expression of themes. This chapter will explore thematic roles and features of the epilogue, including its deep revelation of moral integrity versus corrupt hypocrisy, the individual versus the institution and Shaw's thinking of the attitude of society towards virtuous people.

3.1 Moral Integrity Versus Corrupt Hypocrisy

At a superficial glance, one of the most obvious themes of the play is moral integrity versus corrupt hypocrisy and the epilogue succeed to this case. Reset in a new background, Shaw has endowed Joan with multiple new contents, such as "the first apostles of Nationism" and "martyr of Protestantism" (Shaw 4). In spite of the unjust treatment, she still bears "no malice" (109). She always occurs as the embodiment of moral integrity. While others inevitably slide to the other extreme. Although Shaw arranges so out of some deeper reasons, which we will mention below, readers can still strongly feel the hypocrisy of figures except Joan in the epilogue. One good and the strongest evidence of their massive contrast: characters in the room keel and praise Joan one by one but they rise rapidly to their feet with nervous and hasty excuses when Joan proposes that she should rise from the dead and join them. Another proof is that the Soldier relates that "tip top company" such as "emperors and pops and kings" fill with the hell. (107) By doing so, Shaw's naked satire on the hypocritical elites remains visible and unmistakable. However, we must remember that pure sort of good and evil does not host a dominant part of this play and Shaw's real consideration of such arrangement will be discussed in the next part.

3.2 The Individual Versus the Institution

It is acknowledged that Joan serves as the undeniable heroine and her accusers and murderers as incontestable villains. But to Shaw, such kind of interpretation fails to touch up the essence of the event. Shaw relates characters' actions to their institutional identity and their choices are framed by their status. In this instance, the first six chapters are just hinting while the epilogue straightens it out. In Ladvenu's words, people do "their duty according to their lights" (99). That is why he gives a comment that "no wrong" is done at the trial which sends "a saint to the stake as a heretic and a sorceress" (99).

That is why Joan's primary enemy in the secular world, Earl of Warwick, a person who insists Joan should be punished because of his political philosophies, can "assure" Joan that "the burning" is "purely political" and there is "no personal feeling against" Joan (109). Even the ordinary Executioner says he has to "consider its interests" as a master in his profession (113). The Gentleman's actions comply with Roman Catholic Church's "instruction" and thus, he refuses Joan's request for resurrection because it is "not contemplated in the recent proceedings" (113). Such basic setup impels all authority figures pull the trigger established on what will make it possible for their institutions to remain in power rather than on the ethical consideration to promote their institutions. These figures themselves may not be constitutionally villainous, but their duty to defend institutional power push them to move against Joan. Or, we can say it is Joan that becomes out of the institutional world,

insisting on the creed in her heart with contempt and fearlessness, ignoring the mundane shackles and activating the shabby backwater full of oppressive rules and limitations. As an independent individual, she never yields to the church and government because of their brutal punishment before her death, nor does she bound by the honor after passing away. Her observations that she “shall outlast the cross” used to memory her stretches her wings and fully shows her contempt for institutional symbols (103).

3.3 Inducement to Revisit Attitude Towards Saints

The epilogue ends up with Joan’s final plea to God when will the beautiful earth “be ready to receive” its saints (114). As a matter of fact, Shaw raises the question more than once in the epilogue and he seems not optimistic about the answer. For example, Charles alleges that if Joan brings back to life, she would be burned again “within six months” (100). Cauchon has doubt that every age must need a “Christ perish in torment” to save “those that have no imagination” (108). Therefore, Joan’s plea in the end reinforces Shaw’s point of view that the world always rejects “saints” (114). Holy figures in human history, just like Joan of Arc, are often persecuted as heretics in their lifetime, and then pursued as saints after their death. Moreover, people solemnly “ratify the old saints on the one hand, and still persecute the new saints on the other” (Du, 73).

In China, we have one proverb saying that “A nation without national hero is doomed to be slaves, a nation who do not respect their national hero are hopeless creatures”. To some extent, Shaw's description of people's dramatic transition serves as a favorable demonstration of this philosophy. In such case, the epilogue, which Shaw sums up real life in a mixed and highly hyperbolic way and he calls it “Political Extravaganza”, is “a wonderful stroke of genius” (Liu,81).

Chapter Four: Enhancement of the Stage Performance

The criticism of a drama must not stagnate in its textual function but should shift from “script center to theater center” (Wu 83). In other words, apart from the text, the whole life of a drama also includes the stage. Thus, taking the stage as its center, sometimes penetrating into correlative stage theory and logic is the unique feature of drama. Because stage is the place where the whole event takes place, when the audience enjoys a play, what they will accept is the art complex in the middle of the theater rather than the pure literary words between the lines. Based on this view, this chapter will incline to excavate the epilogue’s role on stage, which can be tentatively assumed as the dramatic role.

4.1 Change of Performance Mood

It seems that Shaw intends to reverse its previous routine and be humorous, a good way to improve the audience’s view experience. From the very beginning of this epilogue, we are put in an insinuating stage direction as a wonderful “humored joke at the expense of the foolish Charles” (Nforbin 268). And so, for example, the king is depicted as an “self-centered”, immature individual”, hard “in certain matters” and has “limited intellectual capacity” (268). To further explain this idea, Charles is glamoured by the immoral paintings lain in Joan Foaquet’s *Boccaccio*. The key here is that his insensitivity to art is coherent with his response to request to resurrect but does not match his noble status. Besides, Shaw’s magnificent imagination also helps with the element of amusing surprise. Such illustration can be seen when the soldier says he has a day of vacation in the hell or when those old-fashioned characters living in Joan’s time “burst into uncontrollable laughter” and congratulate the man “in the fashion of the year 1920” invent what they call “most extraordinarily comic dress” or when all the other characters suddenly change a face as Joan proposes to “rise from the dead” and “come back” to them “a living woman” (109-112). Full of wit and humor, the epilogue will successfully alleviate the audience’s pain resulted from Joan’s death in scene six and the whole atmosphere of viewing will liven up.

4.2 Review of the Story Line

Performance is different from reading. People can reread chapters they have glanced over but they have no way to do the same thing when appreciating a play. However, the audience will be hard to comprehend the scene they are seeing if they miss the previous plot. While the epilogue in *Saint Joan* occupies no such problem. It can be considered as a high summary and relatively independent part of the whole event. Even though its audience do not see the previous performance, they are capable to deduce by the epilogue. This is because the latter retell the story accidentally. From actors’ lines, we have every reason to know Joan’s complete experience: she is sent to the stake as a heretic and a sorceress, rehabilitated after a fashion and finally canonized in 1920. And not only that, almost everyone gets a part in the epilogue and provides multiple clues about themselves. On the one hand, such pattern of retelling is available to help the audience to go over the plot in case they forget what have happened. Familiarity can effectively reduce people’s anxiety and review will create a sense of security, which is sure propitious to retain its viewers. On the other hand, this arrangement can be regarded as a kind of group photo so that all actors gather together in the end, which is definitely benevolent and friendly design.

4.3 Rich of the Performance Piece

Some western scholars point out that Shaw always depends on discussion to relate characters' actions and put the plot forward. We cannot refute all allegations of this nature when we realize the fact that almost all the main plots in *Saint Joan* are skillfully displayed through the conversation of the characters and few changes can be seen in the first scenes. We have to admit such monotonous way will bore the audience easily, although fans of the playwrights of genius may hardly approve. However, thankfully, innovations are contained in the epilogue.

First of all, Shaw models conversion of shadow and light many times. Starting with "a restless fitfully windy night", garnishing with "candles of painted wax" and "a flash of summer lightning", the audience is gradually absorbed into the mysterious setting. Next, the dead heroine meets the audience again in the form of ghost against "a pallid greenish light". When all "the candles relighting themselves", other characters appear on stage one by one. And finally, as the whole additional story comes to an end, the darkness "envelops" the room and only "the last remaining rays of light gather into a white radiance descending on Joan". Through the above analysis, it is not difficult to see that the transformation of light and shadow is determined by and also serves the direction of the development of the storyline. More importantly, the transformation is a visual feast for viewers and effectively reduce their sense of fatigue. Such arrangement is in complete conformity with modern performance theory.

In addition, apart from the abundant change of light and shadow, the epilogue also has wonderfully variable sounds including the ringing of "a distant clock", the "deafening clatter" of the rattle beside the bed, thunder, Charles's panic noise, laughter, "a long gentle knocking" and the most importantly, the Soldier's rough tune.

Sounds of the combination of previous scenes are no match that of the epilogue or not a single scene can match to say the least. Varied voices instead of babbling dialogues supply a kind of aural delight for those watching the play, because these voices have already turned into a wonderful symphony unconsciously. And each kind of sound plays its special role in the ensemble. For example, the ringing of "a distant clock" strikes at important time points, which is good to remind its audience something essential will go to happen while thunder is crucial in creating atmosphere. Among all the sounds, Shaw spills enough ink to introduce the soldier's improvised song. "Rum tum", "Bacon fat" "Old Saint", "Pull his tail" and other meaningless syllable continuously repeating form the tune. Shaw's ostensible purpose is to insert a doggerel in the middle of the performance to modify the mood, but his real goal is for the theme. As the soldier's words, "music straight out of the heart of the people". Maybe ordinary people are powerless when a saint is tormented, but they will commemorate the heroes in their own way and pass them on generation after generation. In a word, these voices are an indispensable part of the whole drama in the stage presentation.

Conclusion

George Bernard Shaw is considered as one of the most influential playwrights in literature history and his Joan is the most well-known and popular version of the original model. Such achievement partly because his unique ingenuity of creating the epilogue. Not only does it demonstrate Shaw's subtle and delicate imagination and his gift for vivid expression, but also it plays an essential role for both characters and themes and theatrics as a thematic matrix that corresponds the whole play. Such dream sequence is highly significant in the course of reinterpretation of Joan's history. Because it is the existence of epilogue that makes *Saint Joan* different from some of Bernard Shaw's plays, which are slack at the beginning and speed up towards the end. Therefore, the author claims the epilogue is absolutely necessary instead of being superfluous, ideas of some western critics.

From the perspective of text analysis and stage performance, this paper illustrates several main roles of the epilogue including its contribution to portrayal of characters, expression of themes and performance effect.

Through characters' dialogues and actions in the epilogue, we have more recognition of Joan's admirable quality, such as her courage, kindness and independence. At the same time, we cannot refrain sighing for Charles's cowardice and Cauchon's hypocrisy. Besides, our curiosity has been satisfied perfectly for the explanation of Cauchon's fate and his ending urges us to rethink what we should really do, because the man is just a scapegoat rather than the prime culprit.

And it has equal function in the discussion of themes. The opposition between good and evil is just a superficial aspect. The true code is the striking battle between the individual and institution. Therefore, Joan of arc is excluded, burned just because she is in pursuit of freedom and destruction of secular chains. For the same reason, she is refused to revive. And people's attitude to her proposal reflects Shaw's point of view about how the sages are treated in history and what correct measures people should take.

In addition to the text analysis, this paper also pays more attention to the epilogue's effect on stage performance. Perfect use of light and shadow, blessing of plentiful voices and Shaw's humorous language shape this great play and we can image how successful it should be on stage.

To sum up, as the full name reveals, the epilogue in *Saint Joan: A Chronicle Play in Six Scenes and an Epilogue* does play critical roles in many aspects. It is a wonderful scene where Shaw expresses his evolutionary

creed and unusual equipment of writing skill. It explains how “the inferior rate dramatist always starts at the beginning of his play; the first rate starts in the middle and the genius starts at the end” in a perfect way.

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