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In What Ways Was George Bernard Shaw's *Candida* a Pre-Raphaelite Drama?

Yuko Hori

Introduction

From the sixth to the eighth of October 1891, George Bernard Shaw was in Birmingham to hear William Morris's address at the exhibition of Pre-Raphaelite paintings (Shaw, *Letters* 313). Seven years later, during a trip to Florence, Italy in 1894, he was impressed by the religious art of the Middle Ages and remembered that exhibition in Birmingham, remarking that the works by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (hereafter PRB) created a "very remarkable collection" (Shaw, "Preface" 7). After that, he started writing *Candida,* openly calling this play a "modern Pre-Raphaelite" (Shaw, "Preface" 8).

A number of critics have attempted to explain the idea of *Candida* as a modern Pre-Raphaelite drama. However, there are quite few ways of comparing the art works of the PRB and Shaw's play *Candida*. This essay will suggest how and in which ways *Candida* might be seen as a "Pre-Raphaelite" work, focusing on naturalism, the portrayal of women, the representation of triangular relationship and the meticulous level of description.

1. Pre-Raphaelite naturalism

Like Shaw, the PRB challenged many of the contemporary conventions in art. Pre-Raphaelite painters objected to conventional painting for its unrealistic expression. In the Victorian period, David Wilkie, William Mulready and William Powel Frith, all of whom studied traditional Dutch art at the Royal Academy, were popular because of their sweetness and elegance. The PRB turned away from this mode and explored a new style. In particular, they disliked Raphael's *The Transfiguration*, arguing strongly that the representation of Jesus and other people was overdramatic and false (Jacobi 99). Like them, Shaw objected to the falsification of the conventional well-made play, filled with illusion and romance.

One of the most interesting points in common between the PRB and Shaw was their attitude to naturalism. As mentioned above, Morris made a speech in the long room of the art gallery in Birmingham Museum, built in 1884 and famous for its large collection of Pre-Raphaelite paintings. In the address, which Shaw attended, Morris introduces the "special and particular doctrine" of the PRB - "that of naturalism" ("Pre-Raphaelite Pictures at Birmingham"). He goes on to say that the naturalism of PRB is slightly different from what the audience assumes it to be. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, naturalism was considered to combine art with the exactness of science (Hauser 60). According to Morris, Pre-Raphaelite artists painted conscientious presentments of incidents which the spectator might have expected in naturalistic painting, but at the same time, they choose very carefully the incidents in order to make them into art works. He analysed the work of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Holman Hunt and Ford Madox Brown in their concern with the conscientious representation of "the due and proper" incidents. In addition, for PRB, no picture was thought

"to be complete unless it had definite, harmonious, regulated, and conscious beauty" ("Pre-Raphaelite Pictures at Birmingham"). From the point of view of accuracy in reference to the natural world, flowers painted by PRB and those by botanical artists might look similar[1]. However, Pre-Raphaelite painters do not just transfer random objects onto their canvases like botanical artists do. Instead, they choose carefully and try to express beauty itself. Among PRB, Morris states that John Everett Millais should be the representative of the pure naturalism of the school. Morris claims that his art might be called "dramatic art" or "epical art" ("Pre-Raphaelite Pictures at Birmingham"). Therefore, Pre-Raphaelite naturalism is the vehicle for unvarnished beauty.

There is no comment by Shaw on Morris' address, but after seeing the exhibition, Shaw sent a letter to Florence Farr[2], who was an actress and once his mistress (King 41), admiring her with words inspired by Pre-Raphaelite art:

> This is to certify that you are my best and dearest love, the regenerator of my heart, the holiest joy of my soul, my treasure, my salvation, my rest, my reward, my darling youngest child, my secret glimpse of heaven, my angel of the Annunciation, not yet herself awake, but rousing me from a long sleep with the beat of her unconscious wings, and shining upon me with her beautiful eyes that are till blind. (Shaw, *Collected Letters* 313. Letter dated 7th of October 1891)

This image of the blind beautiful woman possibly comes from *The Blind Girl* by Millais, which was on display in the exhibition. Obviously, Shaw was inspired by Pre-Raphaelite representations of women, and Shaw uses this Pre-Raphaelite imagery not only in his love letter to his mistress but later in Marchbanks' descriptions of Candida. Shaw's naturalism is also employed in his realistic descriptions of a clergyman, a woman, a triangular

relationship and in many of the stage directions in the play, all of which contain similar imagery found in the work of the PRB.

2. Realistic portrayals of Christ and Clergyman

The exhibition in Birmingham of 1891 contained many famous Pre-Raphaelite paintings: *The Proscribed Royalist, Mariana, The Blind Girl and John Ruskin, The Highland Lassie*, and *The Vale of Rest*, all by John Everett Millais; *Venus Verticordia* by Dante Gabriel Rossetti; *Strayed Sheep, The Scapegoat, The Shadow of Death* and *Isabella and the Pot of Basil*, all by William Holman Hunt; *Death of Chatterton* by Henry Wallis; *Flamma Vestailis* and *Wheel of Fortune* by Edward Corley Burne-Jones; and *The Last of England* by Madox Brown ("Pre-Raphaelite Pictures at Birmingham"). Shaw does not provide comment on details of each painting, but he had seen some of them on previous occasions when writing reviews in his capacity as a critic. For instance, in 1886, Shaw visited the Grosvenor Gallery in London to see another Pre-Raphaelite exhibition where he praised Hunt's talent, saying "I jealously preserve my normal attitude, and record how the exhibition strikes me" (Reprinted in Kalmar 150). Shaw states that Hunt "has obviously no standard, no stable common measure, no tabular index" (Kalmar 150).

According to this review, in *The Light of the World* (Fig. 1), Shaw was impressed by its childlike purity, saying that in front of this picture he become a child (Kalmar 151). He admired its universal religious conception, and its religious sentiments - sentiments which every English child was taught and has in his/her nonage: "It is astonishing that a grown-up man … should have painted that; but there it is" (Kalmar 151). In the same review, Shaw says that in *the Shadow of the Cross* there is a "destructive collision of realism with crude symbolism" and sense of vigour in *Isabella and the Pot*

of Basil, while the catalogue found nothing but melancholy (Kalmar 151). Shaw resisted this interpretation, saying that it was "nonsense!" For him, everything in *Isabella* says, "Away with melancholy" (Kalmar 151). In general, he admired Hunt's childlike, earnest attitude to art and the sense of pleasure in his art works.

When *The Light of the World* was shown at the Academy in 1854, it was criticised for its realism with some saying that Hunt spoiled its spiritual intensity (Robinson 60). The reason why this picture brought down a torrent of criticism was because it was so unlike other more conventional or traditional religious paintings. The motif of *The Light of the World* is based on the scene in Revelation 3:20 in the Bible: "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me." In the picture, Christ holds a lantern, which casts light on his white gown and the door of the garden. The spectators are able to recognize him as Jesus because of his halo. However, at the first glance, the aureole might look the full moon because it does not stand out like those in traditional paintings. Hunt questions painting the halo in such a way as to idealize Christ and the saints and tries instead to depict the figures more realistically (Gibelhausen 83–84)[3].

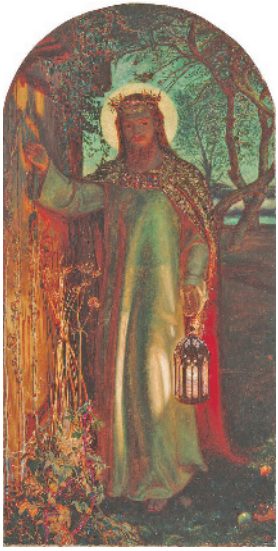

Fig. 1. William Holman Hunt, *The Light of the World,* 1851–3, oil on canvas, Wikimedia Commons.

In addition, his shadowed face is unemotional, and does not allow spectators to read his facial expression but forces

them to look at other elements that make up the picture. One of the most interesting are the plants which grow wild in front of the door. Many kinds of plants cover the wooden door, tangling with each other, and some of them climb up to the top of the frame. This suggests that the door has not been opened for a long time. Hunt signifies that people often refuse to open the door, that is the door of the heart, though Jesus continues to knock. By failing to idealize Jesus and painting plants in naturalistic detail, Hunt produces a new kind of religious picture.

Hunt's persistent refusal to exaggerate can be seen in his remarks on the Raphael's *The Transfiguration*[4]. As mentioned above, the PRB were highly critical of the painting. Among them, Hunt in particular objected to it for its "grandiose disregard of the simplicity of truth, the pompous posturing of the Apostles, and the unspiritual attitudinizing of the Saviour," and he condemned the action in *The Transfiguration* as "strained and meaningless" (Hunt, *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood* 100).

As Hunt resists idealising Christ, Shaw characterizes his venerable priests as unidealized. In the letter to Siegfried Trebitsch, he states that the whole point of *Candida* is "the revelation of the weakness of this strong and manly man (Morell) and the terrible strength of the febrile and effeminate one (Marchbanks)" (Shaw and Trebitsch 32). As Shaw says, as the play progresses, the weakness of James Mavor Morell, a minister of religion, is gradually exposed. At the beginning of the play, Morell is portrayed as a perfect clergyman of the Church of England. In the stage direction, Shaw describes him as a "first rate clergyman" and a "vigorous, genial, popular man of forty, robust and good looking, full of energy, with pleasant, hearty, considerate manners, and a sound unaffected voice, which he uses with the clean athletic articulation of a practiced orator, and with a wide range and perfect command of expression" (Shaw, *Candida* 95). Lexy, who is Morrel's

curate, is effusive in his praise for Morell: "What a good man! What a thorough loving soul he is!" (*Candida* 99). The name "Morell" obviously represents morality while he identifies himself as a person who has a talent to find "words for divine truth" (*Candida* 117). However, his infallible posture is destroyed by Marchbanks, an eighteen-year-old poet, who is fascinated with Candida. For Marchbanks, Morell's preaching, which, while it might excite the audience, is just "the gift of the gab, nothing more and nothing less" (*Candida* 117). Like a jealous man, Morell suspects the relationship between his wife and Marchbanks.

By portraying a clergyman not as a godly figure but as a commonplace one, Shaw makes *Candida* a more naturalistic drama. Needless to say, pictorial and theatrical naturalism are not exactly the same because pictorial naturalism is a protest against tawdry sentimental, didactic and academic art while theatrical naturalism is a reaction to well-made plays written primarily for the middle class. However, their motivations in challenging the conventions in art are quite similar. In addition, both the PRB and Shaw have their own special kind of naturalism, which is slightly different from the one more widely accepted in the nineteenth century. It can be said that Shaw was undoubtedly impressed by Pre-Raphaelite naturalism.

3. The representations of women: Accessible Virgin Mary and new beauty

Another Pre-Raphaelite feature of *Candida* is the way in which women are represented[5]. On the stage, there is a "large autotype of the chief figure in Titian's *Assumption of the Virgin*" and it is "very inviting" (*Candida* 94). The stage direction clearly points out that the image of the Virgin Mary in this picture can be associated with Candida herself. When she appears on stage for the first time, she wears an "amused maternal indulgence which is her characteristic expression" with the "double charm of youth and

motherhood" (*Candida* 107). Shaw refers the relationship between Candida and Titian's painting thus:

> A wise-hearted observer, looking at her, would at once guess that whoever had placed the *Virgin of the Assumption* over her hearth did so because he fancied some spiritual resemblance between them, and yet would not suspect either her husband or herself of any such idea, or indeed of any concern with the art of Titian. (*Candida* 107)

Soon after Candida appears on the stage for the first time. The audience quickly comes to understand that the person who gave the picture to Candida and hung it on the wall was Marchbanks, and Shaw insists that Marchbanks identifies her with Madonna.

Images of Virgin Mary in PRB work is noteworthy in terms of showing how Shaw identified *Candida* as a Pre-Raphaelite figure. Some of the most well-known pictures of the Virgin Mary are Rossetti's *Ecce Ancilla Domini*, *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*, and Millais' *Christ in the House of His Parents*. In common with these paintings, *Candida* possesses many of the characteristics of the Holy Mother. In all Pre-Raphaelite pictures, the Virgin is portrayed as an accessible person. Rossetti draws a young Mary, who is resistant and frightened by the angel Gabriel in *Ecce Ancilla Domini.* In *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*, she is working on an embroidery with her mother and in Millais's *Christ in the House of His Parent*, the Virgin Mary is shown as a commonplace mother complete with wrinkles on her forehead.

Shaw creates Candida as a beautiful, maternal woman like the Virgin Mary, but at the same time, he shows her human disposition. In the stage directions by which she is introduced, Shaw says that she might possibly become "matronly later on," and is "like any other pretty woman who is just clever enough to make the most of her sexual attraction for trivially selfish ends" (*Candida* 107). Candida is not a holy, untouchable saint but a normal

woman whom anyone might come across in his or her daily life.

Along with the image of Virgin Mary, the PRB produced many pictures of beautiful women. However, Pre-Raphaelite portrayals of women are different from the conventionally idealised women in Victorian era, women who, it was thought, as the angel in the house, should be subservient to men. The PRB female models are sometimes powerful, mysterious, even masculine. For instance, Lizzy Siddal is often depicted as mysterious and Jane Morris's strong eyes, waving dark hair, large hands, tall and sharp bodyline are offered as an image of beauty by Rossetti. The example of a strong woman who "rescues" her husband can be seen in Millais's *The Order of Release*. The PRB ideal woman does not fit with the kind of woman of which men dreamt in the Victorian era, but tend, instead, to be very proud "stunners" of an alternative mode.

For example, Rossetti wrote a sonnet called "The Portrait," offering an effusive outpouring of his praise to "my lady":

O Lord of all compassionate control,
O Love! let this my lady's picture glow
Under my hand to praise her name, and show
Even of her inner self the perfect whole:
That he who seeks her beauty's furthest goal,
Beyond the light that the sweet glances throw
And refluent wave of the sweet smile, may know
The very sky and sea-line of her soul.

Lo! it is done. Above the enthroning throat
The mouth's mould testifies of voice and kiss,
The shadowed eyes remember and foresee.
Her face is made her shrine. Let all men note

That in all years (O Love, thy gift is this!)

They that would look on her must come to me. (Emphasis mine, 25)

According to Ford Madox Brown, this can be identified with *Portrait of Mrs William Morris: aka The Blue Silk Dress* (Newman and Watkinson 155). In the poem, "my lady" (Jane Morris) is idealized and transformed into the "perfect" beauty. The poet thinks that only he understands her inner self and is able to identify her true beauty. In the poem, the lady's throat, mouth and eyes are highlighted as her physical beauty. In the *The Blue Silk Dress*, Rossetti paints her throat as heavy, mouth as small, red and full, her eyes as languorous, none of which identify her as the Victorian ideal woman. In the second half of the nineteenth century, beauty in women was associated with large deep blue eyes, pale skin, and a pink mouth (Pitts-Taylor 119). In an atmosphere that admired natural, childlike, innocent beauty, Jane Morris's sensual appearance was certainly not ideal. Thus, Rossetti builds a new image for female ideal based on the characteristics of Jane Morris. In spite of the fact that she was William Morris's wife, throughout the poem Rossetti employs the possessive "my" suggesting that Morris, like "all men" has no real understanding of her unique beauty.

The poet's understanding of both female beauty and the inner female self can also be found in the character of Marchbanks. In the scene of his quarrel with Morell, Marchbanks dismisses his wild statements. Like Nora's husband in Ibsen's *A Doll's House,* Morell still regards himself his wife's protector by means of which Marchbanks gets an insight into the true nature of Candida:

MORELL: Some fiddlestick! Oh, if she is mad enough to leave me for you, who will protect her? who will help her? who will work for her? who will be a father to her children? [*He sits down distractedly on the sofa, with his elbows on his knees and his*

head propped on his clenched fists.]

MARCHBANKS: [*Snapping his fingers wildly*] She does not ask those silly questions. It is she who wants somebody to protect, to help, to work for: somebody to give her children to protect, to help and to work for. Some grown up man who has become as a little child again. Oh, you fool, you fool, you triple fool! I am the man, Morell: I am the man. [*He dances about excitedly, crying*] You don't understand what a woman is. (*Candida* 148)

A Doll's House opened in London in 1889; *Candida* was written five years later in an atmosphere of controversy generated by Ibsen's work. The values of the "Angel in the House" were still ingrained in Victorian culture, but Shaw creates a new type of female, one who is attractive but regards males as her children in need of protection. Both the PRB and Shaw produced a kind of unusual "New Woman"[6] by describing women as perfectly beautiful.

4. The role of the triangular relationship

One of the most important themes in *Candida* is the triangular relationship between Morell, Candida and Marchbanks. This same love triangle motif is often found in the paintings of the PRB. Rossetti's *Arthur's Tomb, The Merciless Ladies*, *A Fight for a Woman*, William Shakespeare Burton's *the Wounded Cavalier* and Burne-Jones's *the Baleful Head*, *Tristram and Iseult* all exemplify relationships of three people. This section will focus on the relationship between groups of three in Pre-Raphaelite art and *Candida*, discussing the moral implications of this configuration and a role of the two men.

Rossetti's younger brother, William Michael Rossetti states that the PRB attached much weight to "moral and spiritual ideas" and offered four

rules by which they might infuse their paintings with spiritual or moral meaning:

> That the Pre-Raphaelites valued moral and spiritual ideas as an important section of the ideas germane to fine art is most true, and not one of them was in the least inclined to do any work of a gross, lascivious, or sensual description; but neither did they limit the province of art to the spiritual or the moral… the bond of union among the Members of the Brotherhood was really and simply this: 1, To have genuine ideas to express; 2, To study nature attentively, so as to know how to express them; 3, To sympathize with what is direct and serious and heartfelt in previous art, to the exclusion of what is conventional and self-parading and learned by rote; 4, and most indispensable of all, to produce thoroughly good pictures and statues. (quoted, Lang xxii)

Some Pre-Raphaelite paintings offer this kind of high-minded morality. William Shakespeare Burton's *the Wounded Cavalier* (Fig. 2) provides one example. In this, a female wearing the clothes of a Puritan treats the wounded cavalier. Beside them, another man, who is identified as a Puritan because of his black clothes, black hat, short white collar, stands a discreet distance away doing nothing and gazing them with a stony expression. Even though the Puritan has a Bible in his left hand, he does not read it in front of dying cavalier. There is clearly a suggestion of jealousy on his part as the woman tends a member from the ranks of the enemy. The picture stresses a higher morality and humanity than that designated by religious principles alone.

At the end of *Candida*, Candida stays with Morell at home instead of leaving with Marchbanks. It appears, then, that Shaw adopts conventional moral principles. Meena Sodhi declares that Candida does not go with Marchbanks because of "keeping with the morality of age" (*Candida* 68–69). However, she is a "Holy Mother," the mother of common people, as has

Fig. 2. (Left) William Shakespeare Burton, *The Wounded Cavalier,* 1856, oil on canvas, *Wikimedia Commons.*

Fig. 3. (Right) Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Fanny Cornforth and G P Boyce in Rossetti's Studio,* 1858, pen and ink on paper, *Wikimedia Commons.*

been discussed in the previous section, and she dares to choose the weaker child for protection. Candida never says she will stay with Morell because he is her husband, so instead Shaw deviates from Victorian middle-class moral conventions towards a more universal morality concerned with protecting the vulnerable.

Strangely, in the real lives of the painters of both the PRB and of Shaw himself, there were complicated triangular relationships[7]. For example, the relationship between Rossetti, Fanny Cornforth and George Price Boyce has something common with *Candida*, in that Rossetti shared Fanny with Boyce and their relationship was well balanced. In Rossetti's drawing *Fanny Cornforth and G P Boyce in Rossetti's Studio* (Fig. 3), there is no feeling of possession or jealousy. Rossetti watches the beautiful couple whose embrace he translates into his drawing. In the picture, Fanny wraps her arms around Boyce's shoulders and almost kisses his cheek. Her ample breasts rest on the chair on which Boyce sits, coming close to touching his back. In this

position, she sensually thrusts out her hip whilst Boyce sits still holding a paintbrush. These naturalistic details are registered as simply beautiful. Even though the lovers do not gaze into each other's eyes but look at a canvas in front of Boyce, the atmosphere is comfortable. The spectator can see Fanny's charming and young audacity and her calm look. Rossetti represents Fanny's attractiveness on his paper and uses Boyce's figure to emphasize her bodyline and her relaxed face.

In *Candida*, when Marchbanks realizes that Morell really loves Candida and is afraid that she will leave him, he feels a bond with the other man. He offers to help Morell in finding a "worthy lover" for her.

> MARCHBANKS: I'm not afraid now. I disliked you before: that was why I shrank from your touch. But I saw today– when she tortured you – that you love her. Since then I have been your friend: you may strangle me if you like. …. Oh, Morrell, let us both give her up. Why should she have to choose between a wretched little nervous disease like me, and a pig-headed parson like you? Let us go on a pilgrimage, you to the east and I to the west, in search of a worthy lover for her: some beautiful archangel with purple wings—. (*Candida* 147–48)

The easy relationship between Rossetti and Boyce and the male bonding between Marchbanks and Morell are not exactly the homosocial relationship made famous by the critic Eve Sedgwick. She states that the bonding between two males becomes stronger when they share or compete for one woman. According to Sedgwick, male bonding is "characterized by intense homophobia, fear and hatred of homosexuality" (1). However, in the triangular relationship in the PRB and again in *Candida*, such strong homosocial relationships are absent, instead the two men underscore the woman's enchantment.

5. Meticulous descriptions

Pre-Raphaelite aspects of *Candida* can be also discovered in the meticulous colourful descriptions of the characters and the setting. In the criticism of the paintings by the PRB at the Grosvenor Gallery, Shaw argues that Millais possesses an "intense desire for colour" and natural objects are chosen because of the rich colours ("GBS on the Pre-Raphaelites" 78–79). He also acknowledges a respect for the beauty and detailed depictions of Millais' work[8]. Something of the Pre-Raphaelite painters' love of colour, detail, and beauty echoes in Marchbanks' lines:

> MARCHBANKS: She [Candida] offered me all I chose to ask for: her shawl, her wings, the wreath of stars on her head, the lilies in her hand, the crescent moon beneath her feet—. (*Candida* 147)

This description of Candida resonates with Pre-Raphaelite imagery. The audience might be reminded of one of Rossetti's most popular pictures, *The Blessed Damozel* (Fig. 4). In this, a woman in a green dress and a white shawl leans over the golden fence, surrounded by roses and holding three lilies. On her head are stars, and her shawl flows behind her like a wing. Though there is no moon in the painting, in the much earlier verse, Rossetti mentions the crescent moon: "The sun was gone now; the curled moon/ Was

Fig.4. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *The Blessed Demozel,* 1875–8, oil on canvas, *Wikimedia Commons.*

like a little feather" ("The Blessed Damozel" 40). It is remarkable that all images of Candida as described by Marchbanks are Pre-Raphaelite, but Shaw sometimes uses the poet's excessively romantic mode of expression to induce laughter in his audience.

For example, when Marchbanks hears that Morell used Candida's scrubbing brush to black-lead the shoes, he feels shocked and shudders with distaste. He offers to buy a boat instead of a new luxury brush:

> MARCHBANKS [*softly and musically, but sadly and longingly*]: No, not a scrubbing brush, but a boat: a tiny shallop to sail away in, far from the world, where the marble floors are washed by the rain and dried by the sun; where the south wind dusts the beautiful green and purple carpets. Or a chariot! to carry us up into the sky, where the lamps are stars, and don't need to be filled with paraffin oil every day. (*Candida* 129)

The image of a beautiful woman on a boat can be found in one of the most popular Pre-Raphaelite paintings, John William Waterhouse's *The Lady of Shalott*. The combination of the elaborately decorated language and the mundane household task leads the audience's laughter. Here, Marchbanks' poetic imagination sounds childish and unrealistic. However, after Candida chooses Morell, his voice changes. It becomes mature and he stops using over dramatic phrases. Shaw adds a realistic element to the play by describing the process in which a romantic young man turns into a man.

Along with the characters' words, the portrayals of scenes and contexts are also similar to those employed by the PRB. Act One of *Candida* starts with a huge stage direction, three pages long. It is very detailed and conveys a great deal of information to the stage directors, the set designers and the readers. Shaw echoes John Ruskin's words that "every picture be painted with the earnest intention of impressing on the spectator some elevated

emotion, and exhibiting to him some one particular, but exalted beauty" (*Candida* 179). As can be seen in his stage directions, the Pre-Raphaelite ambition to paint "truth" and to represent minute detail clearly impressed Shaw.

In this particular stage direction, Shaw describes minutely the city in the north-east quarter of London, Victoria Park, St Dominic's Parsonage, and the study room where Morell is sitting. Shaw begins with a wide focus which he gradually narrows ending with the position of the protagonists on the stage. Because the play is set entirely in the parsonage the locations such as the north-east quarter and Victoria Park are somewhat redundant Shaw still chooses to portray them, paying attention to every element like a Pre-Raphaelite painter. For instance, the north-east quarter is described as a middle-class city:

> It is strong in unfashionable middle class life: wide-streeted; myriad populated; well served with ugly iron urinals, Radical clubs, and tram lines carrying a perpetual stream of yellow cars; enjoying in its main thoroughfares the luxury of grass-grown "front gardens" untrodden by the foot of man save as to the path from the gate to the hall doors blighted by a callously endured monotony of miles and miles of unlovely brick houses, black iron railings, stony pavements, slated roofs, and respectably ill dressed or disreputably worse dressed people, quite accustomed to the place, and mostly plodding uninterestedly about somebody else's work. (*Candida* 93)

The audience in the theatre cannot see the streets, cars, houses with gardens and people who walk around the city. However, he presents all details. In *Candida*, every depiction of the city, the park, the parsonage and the study is approximately a half page long allowing the readers to understand the complete setting. Even though the audience cannot see the detailed

background of the city or the Victorian Park, for Shaw it is necessary to depict the details because they are also elements of the settings. In Shaw's other plays, there are also many long stage directions like those in *Candida*. It is, however, unusual for him to explain scrupulously every scene suggesting that once again, Shaw is adopting Pre-Raphaelite principles.

Conclusion

We can see that *Candida* possesses several Pre-Raphaelite features: naturalism (especially realistic descriptions of a cleric), a beautiful woman, the role of triangular relationship and detailed depictions of scenery and characters. About the time Shaw, through his associations with William Morris, became familiar with Pre-Raphaelite paintings, he was also greatly influenced by Ibsen. In October in 1891, the same month of the Birmingham show, Shaw published *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*, dealing mainly with Ibsen's theatrical methods. Christopher Inns argues that Shaw picks up Ibsen's "brand of Naturalism" and tries to define modernism (2). In the 1890s, Shaw continued to admire new naturalistic plays such as those of the French playwright Eugène Brieux. Shaw's naturalism can be detected in his critique of the well-known writer William Archer:

> For him (Archer) there is illusion in the theatre: for me there is none. I can make imaginary assumptions readily enough; but for me the play is not the thing, but its thought, its purpose, its feeling and its execution… To me play is only the means, the end being the expression of feeling by the arts of the actor, the poet, the musician. (*Our Theatres* 95)

Shaw's decision, not to create illusions, but to describe the thought, purpose, feeling and execution of characters is remarkably similar to those of the PRB. Both Shaw and the Pre-Raphaelite artists attempted to represent beauty and shun the conventional in art. Furthermore, by depicting the

received ideas and sentiments of society and objecting to the romantic idealization of traditional dramatic practices, Shaw produced the realistic drama, *Candida*. Many critics note that the long friendship between Morris and Shaw sprang from similar political attitudes even though Morris was Marxist and Shaw a Fabian. It was probably through Morris that Shaw assimilated Pre-Raphaelite values and created what he himself called a "Pre-Raphaelite" play.

Notes

1) During the Victorian era, many scientific botanical illustrations were popular and being produced in England (Blunt 2).
2) Farr was also one of the friends of May Morris, a second daughter of Jane and William Morris. When she was nineteen years old, She, May and other friends posed for Burne-Jones' painting "The Golden Stairs." Shaw and May had also quite close relationship. Around Shaw, there are many people who are strongly linked to the Pre-Raphaelites.
3) Gibelhausen adduces instances that in *the Finding of the Savior in the Temple* the aureola is drawn as the sunlight of the East.
4) The replica of *The Transfiguration* had been displayed at the National Gallery of London in the 1840s. It means this picture was regarded as a must-see masterpiece.
5) It is also interesting that Candida is from the working class. Like the Pre-Raphaelite models such as Lizzie Siddal, Jane Morris (Burden) and Fanny Cornforth, she gets married to a middle-class man and learns social grace.
6) The term "New Woman" was invented in 1894. In the late nineteenth century, a new feminist ideal emerged as modeled in Nora in *A Doll's House*.
7) There were many triangular relationships in PRB: Millais, Effie and Ruskin; Rossetti, Jane Morris (Burden) and Morris; Rossetti, Fanny Cornforth and Boyce; Morris, Jane Morris (Burden), and Wilfrid Scawen Blunt; Georgiana, Burne-Jones and Maria Zambaco. Shaw also has love affairs with married women such as Mrs. Patrick Campbell.

8) At the same time, however, he criticizes the luck of unity of landscapes and the pictures, which Turner always has. For Shaw, the pictures by Millais are too colourful and less realistic than other PRB.

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