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# Dream, Truthfulness, and Reality

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## ABSTRACT

An essay on a play by George Bernard Shaw called *Too True to be Good* (1932).

"As I walked through the wilderness of this world I lighted on a certain place where there was a den, and laid me down in that place to sleep; and, as I slept, I dreamed a dream".<sup>1</sup>

**Dream, Truthfulness, and Reality** are controversial when speaking of a performance in the theatre because the division between what is real and unreal has no precise boundary. Even if George Bernard Shaw's 1932 play *Too True to be Good* contains the abrupt changes and jumps in logic of dream states, **dream** as applied to Acts II and III does need qualification. Shaw may have borrowed from his childhood reading of John Bunyan's Puritan classic *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) in using the idea of a dream awakening the sleeper, Christian, to a vision of truthfulness to God's will. (The Sergeant in *Too True* in Act III will quote from it somewhat skeptically.) Yet there is an obvious difference. The abrupt awakening that takes place in *Too True* is a conscious experience, not a dream precisely because its characters are grounded in the reality of 1930s European civilization. Being removed to a desolate outpost of the empire would cause a serious dis-orientation of an individual's sense of reality. The point of the play is made repeatedly by Shaw's characters' urgent need to communicate what had normally gone unsaid. *Too True* has often been described as expressionist, but Shaw's description of it was "a political extravaganza". "Political" adds the satirical edge to the play.<sup>2</sup>

**Truthfulness** in *Too True to be Good* is about telling the truth even if it hurts. Shaw's Wildean inversion of the popular cliché speaks of a Puritan consciousness at work. Shaw once wrote of Bunyan: "The world to him was a more terrible place than it was to Shakespear [sic]; but he saw through it a path at the end of which a man might not look only forward to the Celestial City but back on his life ..." The phrase "true heroic" is used by Shaw in the context of Bunyan's writing, and informs that refusal to look away from the human condition in *Too True*.<sup>3</sup> **Reality** is, in Shaw's terms, no more than what is humanly constructed. Tradition and learning are shown to have no answer for the new realities of post-war European society in *Too True*. Shaw is making an appeal to start all over again; in place of the certainties of religion and science, Shaw puts his only hope on a return to basic human relationships, as noted in the pairing of individual characters at the end of the play in the

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manner of a Victorian comedy. The outward realities that contribute to all that is perceived as wrong in *Too True* are the materialism, social hierarchy and European colonialism of the 1930s, and the First World War.

*Too True to be Good* opening was first performed by the Theatre Guild at the Colonial Theatre in Boston on 29 February 1932. Performances later took place at Malvern Festival on August 6, followed in London on September 3. Shaw's biographer A.M. Gibbs notes that the London run "survives for only 47 performances".<sup>4</sup> The play is divided fairly neatly into three acts. Unlike Shaw's later extravaganza comedy *The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles* (1935), the first impression is given of a structural discipline that will carry its more diffuse elements. Yet *Too True* is a very tricky play by reason of Shaw's mode of characterization and the looseness of the play's internal structure. The play ends with each character doing the fairly obvious – reducing Shaw's ending to one of practical possibility.

*Too True* is one of the few British plays during the 1920s and 30s to deal with the aftermath of the First World War. In Act III Shaw will evoke memories of the First War, and explain the war as a formative influence on his characterizations. Both Acts II and III take place near a beach with a background of a mountainous region somewhere in the Empire. Colonial rule in Act II, with the British army waging a defensive war, is far less salient as a critique than it is in *The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles* (1935), except in one important respect. The sheer pointlessness of trying to keep down native tribespeople is implied in their complete invisibility.

## ACT I

The play's text begins with a description of the Patient's bedroom somewhere in England. At first sight it is as though Shaw were writing an orthodox naturalistic play with the contents of the room making the point for him. "[A] *Louis Quinze writing table and chair with inkstand, blotter, and a cabinet of stationery, a magnificent wardrobe, a luxurious couch and a tall screen of Chinese workmanship ... and everything else in the room, proclaims that the owner has money enough to buy the best things at the best shops in the best purchaseable [sic] state.*" (SD) Shaw does not rely simply on a static visual statement about this grossly over-furnished room; for he has given this unhealthy atmosphere, the form of a jelly-like human character: the Monster. He behaves like the hypochondriac spirit of the house, cured empathetically once the Patient is free from her mental paralysis at the end of Act I. The Monster will announce at the end of Act I: "the play is now virtually over; but the characters will discuss it at great length for two acts more. The exit doors are all in order. Goodnight". Shaw is of course teasing his audience with how exactly to take his play. How do we understand *Too True* – as a rather odd kind of discussion play?

In the English phase of *Too True*, a satire emerges from the behavior of the Nurse, the Burglar and the Patient by which Shaw develops an imagery of the crass materialism of the 1930s. The Burglar (later revealed as the Honorable Aubrey Bagot) is the quick brain who seizes the opportunity to involve the Patient in the theft of her own pearls and to ransom her mother's life, the Elderly Lady (Mrs Mopply). "Mopsie" – the nursery name for the Patient – is only too willing to escape from the atmosphere of the sick-room. "I'm going to make the most of this dream", she says, and that line resonates through the next act. The Burglar takes her far beyond her suburban bedroom, on a pilgrimage into a world that has been stripped of all its pretenses. Inasmuch as the characters speak without inhibition, there is a dream-like quality that hangs over the play.

The Burglar/Aubrey Bagot is an example of role-splitting in this materialistic society. For he is neither fish nor fowl. He is the Burglar who speaks as *half auctioneer; half clergyman* (SD). The Burglar comments, like a street-wise priest, on the state of human values as found in the expensive clothes that the Patient tears out of her wardrobe. "Fur coat. Seal. Old fashioned but worth forty-five guineas. Hat. Quiet and ladylike. Tailor made frock. Combination: silk and wool. Real silk stockings without ladders. Knickers: how daringly modern! Shoes: heels only two inches but no use for the mountain ..." Shaw has parodied the contents of a fashionable woman's magazine to identify the narcissism and self-indulgence of this society. Things have replaced ideas; things have no need of utilitarian purpose. Things have only to please. What will make this society more real to itself?

## ACT II

The Stage Direction tells of [a] *sea beach in a mountainous country* (SD). This is a military outpost with *the British colonel in a deckchair, peacefully reading the weekly edition of The Times, but with a revolver in his equipment* (SD). The image is precise: summoning up the complacency and the professional urgency of this senior officer, gun at the ready, whose name is Tallboys. Shaw has first to establish that the military order is based on a hierarchy that has no basis in ordinary reality; and much of Act II is about sorting out the truth from what is the socially accepted view. This Shaw does by the use of Napoleon Alexander Trotsky Meek, who dismounts from his motorbike and delivers a letter to Tallboys. (Any member of the original audiences would have recognized T.E. Lawrence – the last great hero of the Empire.)<sup>5</sup> Meek, as is his Bunyan-like naming, counterpoints the arrogance of Colonel Tallboys. Shaw's description of Meek tells of a natural superiority. *His figure is that of a boy of seventeen; but he seems to have borrowed a long head and Wellingtonian nose and chin ... for the express purpose of annoying the colonel* (SD). Meek is dramatically limited when he becomes Shaw's argument too repetitively. He can do everything that the Colonel cannot, and Meek should be in charge if society was established on the basis of merit. By contrast, Tallboys' speech to the Countess would have been a statement well understood (even if disagreed with) by the audiences in the 1930s: "... [If] you treat

a private soldier as a human being the result is disastrous to himself …" The natural instinct of an authoritarian society (as a military organization has to be) is to deny anything which threatens its fragile integrity, and lying becomes systemic.

Appearance is everything in Shaw's fugitive world. The characters from Act I make their entrances, in disguise. Here Shaw is exploiting the gambit of exchanging title, name and appearance, as so often used in the farce. So, the Nurse becomes the "Countess" and the once introverted sickly Patient now appears as narcissistically and fashionably suntanned in wildly exotic dress. Social role is displayed as elastic and self-referential. Shaw is playing a difficult game here: for the Nurse and the Patient are held responsible for their newly acquired self-images. And their transformation at first amounts to pure hedonism. (As the Countess says "Excitement: that's what I get out of [life].") The Countess's amorality will be revisited in Act III; as Shaw is remorselessly puritanical in his pinpointing of the false and the self-deluding.

Aubrey is the one character who can speak for Shaw in *Too True*. He is a truth-teller when he is not telling self-serving lies. He will tell the Countess that the world will always refuse to be told the truth (which is part of the dilemma facing the young lover in Shaw's one-act play *How He Lied to her Husband* (1904).<sup>6</sup> "The first truth, darling, is that nothing succeeds like lying. Make any statement that it is so true that it has been staring us in the face all our lives, and the whole world will rise up and passionately contradict you." The measure of his cynicism is with the very notion of truth, he is: "a born preacher, not a pleader. The theory of legal procedure is that if you set two liars to expose one another, the truth will emerge." What truth telling actually is, is never defined in the play; it comes as a sudden inner prompting to speak, but it is not a religious confession.

The play clarifies itself more when Shaw's characters are shown dealing with the world as it is - as a way of testing out the character's particular worth. To take the encounter between the Countess and Meek. The Countess, we know to be an imposter and why she is lying about herself. In compensation Meek needs to be seen as worldly and calculating as the Countess, in his own understated manner. When the Countess borrows a large sum of money from Meek who *hands her a roll of notes* (SD), this reconfigures any too saintly image the audience may have of him. He is simply doing what is necessary without fuss. When Meek steals firecrackers from Tallboys in order to repel an attack by local tribespeople, he is exemplifying a new kind of warrior whose skill is to cause the least harm. He tells Tallboys that there were "no British casualties" and "the enemy was routed". His efficiency reflects ironically on the mass slaughter of the First War battlefields. As a character he is without precedent and unrepeatable; Shaw is at his most optimistic in holding out the possibility of an austere, self-effacing figure like Meek going against his psychological type, and doing practical good in the world without having to lie - anyway, very little.

The truth telling of the play has a therapeutic consequence which we will understand more clearly in Act III. The first example of the need to talk is the unlikely figure of the Colonel who speaks the closing lines of Act II. His passion (he tells the Countess) is "sketching in watercolors"; besides, he will never "waste a moment doing anything that can be delegated to a subordinate". The Colonel is defensive about Meek's obvious superiority; or he is ill-at-ease with or unsuited for his military role, as his artistic self suggests. To the Countess, "I paint pictures to make me feel sane. Dealing with men and women makes me feel mad. Humanity always fails me: Nature never." In Act III, Tallboys is still capable of lying as befits his role, but less mechanically – and he will be seen to be more authentically himself in relation to the other characters.

### Act III

In 1907 Shaw published an essay, entitled "The Sanity of Art" in which he wrote of Swift: "though he afterwards died in a mad house, he was too sane to be the dupe of his own logic."<sup>7</sup> A dramatist like Shaw, who is given to sudden intuitive jumps, always has problems with his intellectual design. By the end of Act III we see how Shaw has written a hyperactive version of a Victorian comedy, for deeply serious reasons. *Too True* belongs to a very theatrical tradition: with undisciplined, highly charged emotional characters who are unplayable as voices in any scheme of argument. Shaw's "extravaganza" depends on its characters behaving 'out of character' or outrageously: so that the audience can at last hear the unspoken trauma of the First World War.

Act III begins with an altered stage appearance. We still face the beach but [n]atural grottoes are now mentioned in Shaw's Stage Direction. He is pointing out an initiative on the part of the soldiers to bring some element of religious symbolism to what is the barren face of the cliff. [They have] *amused themselves by hewing [the grottoes] into a rude architecture and giving them fancy names* (SD). Rock shrines of the kind seen all over Catholic Europe have been carved, but these are not described as Christian. In one case, there is an inscription in Greek written by *some scholarly soldier* (SD); a teasing reference to T.E. Lawrence (alias Meek in the play) who was a scholar of the Classics. In *The Abode of Love* (SD) the Sergeant is shown *completely absorbed in two books, comparing them with rapt attention* (SD). The other grotto is ironically described as *St Pauls* (SD) since the occupant is an avowed atheist. The Elder is far from being the wise old man of tradition, his championship of atheism and rationalism is just another form of zealotry. These two characters are indicative of an alternative consciousness that is neither Christian nor particularly atheist; but Shaw is interested in how, by means of rational and emotional encounters, the characters begin to understand how they can be true to themselves.

Shaw's strategy in Act III is to restore what can be called, ordinary thinking and expression. Common sense is always more effective than any form of received wisdom in *Too True*. The Sergeant

is observed by Sweetie (the Countess now reverting to her original role in Act I) referring to both the Bible and *The Pilgrim's Progress*, but the audience's first sight of him as a true believer is quite misleading. When the Sergeant speaks as a moral teacher to Sweetie, his speech is couched in the language not of moral prescriptiveness, but of simple down-to-earth psychology. "You must learn to exercise your mind: what is a woman without an active mind to a man but a mere convenience?" The Sergeant is Shaw's ideal reasoner: a skeptic even if schooled in traditional Christian teaching, and as an old soldier steeped in the realities of the world. He will surprise Sweetie by telling her he has rejected the teaching of the Bible, and specifically Moses' claim on the "spoils of Egypt".<sup>8</sup> Sweetie's justification for the ransoming of the Patient's mother, Mrs. Mopply, by non-existent brigands has been torn away from her, along with its misuse of scriptural authority.

The Elder stands for the intellectual laziness of theory as opposed to a simple observation of the world. He has spent his entire life in thinking about what he no longer believes in. And now he has reached the stage of utter disillusionment. As he says to the Sergeant: "Yes, sir: the universe of Isaac Newton, which has been an impregnable citadel of modern civilization for three hundred years, has crumbled like the words of Jericho before the criticism of Einstein". And later: "Determinism is gone ... The science I pinned my faith to is bankrupt..." and even more damningly: its "counsels ... have led straight to European suicide". This gives the play its cue to focus on the First World War.

Only the memory of the First War can bring sufficient urgency to *Too True*. The play has a marked tendency to being like a confessional; but it requires a thematic continuity to bring together these outpourings of trapped memories. Aubrey's father (now revealed as the Elder) will call him his "prodigal son", to which Aubrey replies. "I am not ruined: I am rolling in money. I am a model son" Of course he has succeeded by means of theft and criminality in the corrupt society of England. The bitterness lies in his father's ideological objection to his being "a clergyman" which he saw as his "manifest destiny". The audience has to face up to the wrongness of war and, most uncomfortably, the ordinary soldier's moral culpability. When Aubrey was "military chaplain" during the war, he discovered that playing the role of priest meant "being obliged to tell mortally wounded men that they were dying in a state of grace and were going straight to heaven when as a matter of fact they were dying of mortal sin and going elsewhere."

Before becoming a chaplain, Aubrey had had a brief period as "a sky pilot". "I was hardly more than a boy when I first dropped a bomb on a sleeping village. ... Later on I sent machine gun bullets into a crowd of civilians: women, children and all." Then he rounds on his father who knows nothing of war: "And now you preach to me about stealing a pearl necklace! Doesn't that seem a little ridiculous?" The Sergeant's response gives voice to the standard truism of his society: "That was war, sir."

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Aubrey's reply to the Sergeant belongs to the conscientious objectors of the First World War. He faces the Sergeant up with the most dangerous argument of the play. "You cannot divide my conscience into a war department and a peace department. " War has sanctioned amorality, we are asked to believe. "Do you suppose that a man who will commit murder for political ends will hesitate to commit theft for personal ends?" This must have shocked some in the first audiences, as Aubrey's question sounds like a moral judgment on the young men who killed out of patriotism. It is, equally, a self-serving statement on the part of Aubrey. Shaw does not disguise the air of dishonesty that creates his ambiguity: Aubrey is quite as tricky as the play itself.

Shaw focuses on the morality of war itself. The Sergeant in conversation with the Patient will make a distinction between the army of peacetime and the army at war. The Patient – now moving towards religion – tells the Sergeant that "I have been wanting to join the army like Joan of Arc". To which the old soldier agrees: "... there used to be a peace of mind in the army that you could find nowhere else. But the war made an end of that." The satire of Shaw's intention comes when the Sergeant argues by use of the truism once again: "... the world is kept going by the people who want the right thing killing the people who want the wrong thing." War was morally difficult when British and German soldiers were killing each other. "It was innocent people killing one another" is a statement of the blindingly obvious. The Sergeant, in direct contrast, rationalizes the British army in peace time as doing the honorable job of policing the Empire. The scene acts as a cutting rebuke to that idea.

The subtlety of Shaw's argument about how society relies on truisms and false generalities is given further illustration. This time Shaw's context is domestic. How adult lying or ill-conceived home truths can distort the very hold a child has on her reality – does partly explain how individuals can be convinced by a nation's belief in the morality of colonial rule. Mrs. Mopply's emotional outburst traces her weak hold on reality back to a repressive Victorian childhood. How the autonomy of the child is placed in danger by the power of adults is given the insight of psychoanalysis. She was told by her mother, nurse and governess: "Everybody told me lies. I wasn't a bit like what they said I ought to be. I thought I had to pretend. And I needn't have pretended at all." The death of two of her children, after following a doctor's dietary advice, is yet one more reason for her disorientation. Her refusal to accept her daughter – the Patient – as her own is both pathological, and oddly truthful. The bond of parent and child was quite impossible to sustain; but now they can be free to be together as adults independent of each other. Shaw is introducing a secondary plotline that will remove his now slightly more enlightened characters from the stage.

They are to be released into the world to start all over again. Mother and daughter are re-united on the understanding that they are not related, creating an awkward twist to what could have been

a simple reconciliation. This jarring note may be related to Shaw's current fascination with the Soviet Union: where, ideally, the collective life of a revolutionary society would replace the need for the family unit. The former mother and daughter's plan to immigrate to the Union of Federated Sensible Societies in the end never happens. (The UFSS is obviously a reference to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.) He creates the simple pretext that Meek, as the play's fixer, cannot get them visas to enter the UFSS; only the Colonel is eligible because of his knowledge of English water color painting. ("Damned impudent" is how this establishment figure reacts to Shaw's brave new world.) The play would have been compromised by such an improbable ending; far better from Shaw's point of view was to tear down any final illusions about how a fictional representation can make the impossible, seem humanly possible.

*Too True* parodies the resolution of a Victorian comedy, with the difference that Shaw's characters are dispatched unceremoniously and without the usual fake sentimentality. There is a mock nod to sanctity with the former daughter "like Saint Theresa" founding an "unladylike sisterhood" with her former mother. Aubrey's father is conventionally forgiving: "Preach, son, preach to your heart's content"; but then mercilessly reminding Aubrey of his capacity for dishonesty and self-deception: "Do anything rather than steal and make your military crimes an excuse for your civil ones." *Too True* like a mildly racy Victorian comedy looks at marriage - especially for the middle-aged - as useful or just about endurable: the Sergeant will get married to Sweetie, and Tallboys will go back to his role as the browbeaten husband in England. The ever efficient Meek has obtained the (illegal?) passports for the cast to leave the stage.

Aubrey, now speaking in his new role as a messianic leader, will make an appeal to his audience for a new order of living. "But how are we to bear this dreadful new nakedness: the nakedness of the souls who until now have always disguised themselves from one another in beautiful idealisms to enable them to bear one another's company. The iron lightning of war has burnt great rents in these angelic veils, just as it has smashed great holes in our cathedral roofs and torn great gashes in our hillsides." This is the Armageddon of Shaw's generation - a kind of redemption has to be held out for the play to resolve itself. But we should be wary at the conclusion of Aubrey's speech because it borders on the delusional. He calls upon "the Spirit [who] will descend on me and inspire me with a message the sound whereof shall go out unto all the lands and realize for us at last the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory for ever and ever. Amen". The ambiguity of the play's closing lines has one clear message, however: that only the individual can decide, not Aubrey, not even Shaw himself.

Shaw's brief aside to the reader (after Aubrey's prayer) remains faithful to his play: [a] *few of the choicer spirits will know that the Pentecostal flame is always alight at the service of those strong enough to bear its terrible intensity* (SD). It is hardly likely Shaw is engaging in Christian theology; that unbearable

light of understanding belongs to nobody and everybody: Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Muslim, non-believer – alike.

## Concluding remarks

*Too True to be Good* has two quite distinct roles to play. But really they are the same; for the strongly psychological aspect of the play is about what effect the First World War has had upon the characters in Shaw's play. Colonel Tallboys is essential to this argument, as representing an army officer of an instantly recognizable type: rigid, over-concerned with his professional dignity, and supercilious. His sense of authority is quite fragile, as it turns out – as Shaw illustrates, when Tallboys is awarded a medal for routing the attack by native tribespeople, actually repelled by Meek's firecrackers, and for rescuing Mrs. Mopply, although, as Tallboys knows full well, she never left the cantonment. He will lie or rather say nothing, and accept the "K.C.B".<sup>9</sup> That he paints water colors is just one more example of the soldier-poet; in Tallboys' case, he prefers to paint pictures "to make me sane" and because "humanity always fails me" (Act II). A dramatically ironic statement, since the audience can understand that he is as much responsible for the society we see on Shaw's stage as any other character. No character is exonerated, except perhaps Meek. The war is the unspeakable presence that has arisen like the ghost at the banquet to get the characters to tell the truth.

The post-war London theatre was largely silent about the First World War. The cinema had the greater advantage over the theatre in providing graphic documentary images of the battlefields as *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930) demonstrates. R.C. Sherriff's *Journey's End* (1928), later to be made into a film, exploits the physical limitations of the theatre to re-create the experience of war by focusing on a group of British officers who are waiting in their trench-bunker for the order to be given to attack. Group dependency, occasional panic, and a constant sense of death – are examined in detail. The play that impressed Shaw most was by the Irish writer, Sean O'Casey's expressionist play about the war, *The Silver Tassie* (1929).<sup>10</sup> Though a non-combatant (unlike Sherriff who had been a serving officer), O'Casey was able to suggest the inexpressible horror of the battlefields of northern France.

*Too True to be Good* can be classified as a play about suppressed memory and social causation. Act III is at its most powerful when it is directly pointing at the war for the distortion of truth and moral intelligence in the post-war world it portrays. Act I of *Too True* can be placed with a play like Noel Coward's *The Vortex* (1924) which shocked audiences by introducing the drug-taking of the wealthy young in the 1920s, but (unlike Shaw's play) never really asks why the post-war generation was so very different from previous generations. The First World War was politically controversial because it could not be explained in simple patriotic terms. With the result that all that was awkward and

unpleasant about the war was kept off the stage. Shaw, fortunately, was too well-known a playwright to be ignored even if *Too True* was never expected to make a profit (it ran for only 47 performances in London (Endnote 4)). The most powerful scenes of the play are when the war is finally evoked, and these dreadful memories are spoken out loud in the theatre. Even though Mrs. Mopply's speech is about being lied to during childhood, her passive acceptance of those lies and half-truths is very much germane to Shaw's political insight. The ultimate cause of war lies with the attitude of ordinary human beings – the two are entirely related.

### Endnotes

All quotations from *Too True to be Good*, Penguin Bernard Shaw Library, *Plays Extravagant*, (ed. Dan H. Laurence) , Harmondsworth, England, UK (1981) :7-123

1. *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Opening lines. (Collins, UK, 1964) :25
2. *Too True to be Good*, Title Page, (Penguin, 1981) :No Page Number
3. Ibid. Hugh Ross Williamson quotes Shaw's "great essay" on *The Pilgrim's Progress* in his Introduction, without giving its source (1964) :9 and 10
4. A.M Gibbs, *A Bernard Shaw Chronology* (Palgrave, NY, USA, 2001) :286, 288. (Which London theatre was *Too True to be Good* first performed in?)
5. Thomas Edward Lawrence (1888–1935), "Lawrence of Arabia", was a friend of GBS and Charlotte Shaw after the First World War. Lawrence actually saw the first production of *Too True to be Good* and is said to have been pleased with his portrayal as Meek [Wikipedia entry].
6. In Shaw's one-act play *How He Lied to Her Husband* (1904) the young lover is forced to lie about his affair with a married woman to her husband. The lie is quite socially acceptable, as he wants to save his lover from the threat of divorce; but the husband actually wants evidence of his wife's attractiveness to young men.
7. "The Sanity of Art" (1907), Shaw's response to Max Nordau's essay on how artists were essentially degenerate. (*Major Critical Essays* Penguin, UK, 1986:354)
8. "The spoils of Egypt": In this story from the time of Moses, God favors the Israelites and allows them to take from the Egyptians what they will need for their journey. (Exodus 12:36)
9. Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath – a title of medieval origin that Shaw mischievously chooses to decorate Colonel Tallboys with.
10. The Wikipedia entry on *The Silver Tassie* mentions Shaw's attendance with Lady Gregory at the first London production at the Apollo theatre in 1929. (An earlier attempt to stage O'Casey's play at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, had failed.)

### Articles on *Too True to be Good*

1. David Rabey, "Power, Culture, and the Politics of Absolute Play: *Heartbreak House* and *Too True to be Good* as Existential Expressionism", *The Journal of Shaw Studies* vol. 12 (1992) :199–212

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2. Rodelle Weintraub, "*Too True to be Good: The Bottomless Abyss Following World War I*", *The Journal of Shaw Studies* vol. 19 (1999) :119-127
  3. Tracey C. Davis, "Shaw's Interstices of Empire", *Cambridge Companion to Shaw*, (ed. Christopher Innes (1998) :229-233
  4. Ibid. T.F.Evans, "The Later Shaw" (1998) :244, 245

