

UNMASKING CLASS EXPLOITATION: A MARXIST ANALYSIS OF LEADERSHIP IN AHMED YERIMA'S *AN INSPECTOR CALLS*

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Abstract

*This study conducts a Marxist critique of leadership in Ahmed Yerima's *An Inspector Calls*, highlighting the playwright's condemnation of the bourgeois lifestyle and corrupt leadership. Through a close reading of the play, the research examines the capitalist society represented by Chief Badejo, which perpetuates the suffering and death of Nigerians living in poverty, as embodied by the character of Bisi Adejumo. The play's content and form lend themselves to a Marxist analysis, revealing class-based exploitation and oppression. The playwright critiques the leadership and economic systems that perpetuate poverty and inequality. The character of Bisi Adejumo represents the marginalized and oppressed citizenry, highlighting the need for revolution and social change. The study demonstrates the artistic richness of Yerima's play within a Marxist context, emphasizing the relevance of Marxist theory in understanding the play's themes and characters. By exploring the dynamics of revolution and class struggle, the play offers a powerful critique of capitalist systems and the need for social justice. The research concludes that *An Inspector Calls* is a powerful commentary on the social and economic realities of Nigerian society, highlighting the need for radical change and social reform. Through a Marxist lens, the play offers a nuanced analysis of class exploitation and the struggle for social justice.*

Key Words: Marxism, Leadership, Class, Exploitation, Revolution

Introduction

This study attempts to analyse the content and form of Ahmed Yerima's *An Inspector Calls* in the light of its leadership value. It also attempts to appraise the leadership and economic contexts of the play. It further aims to assess the dynamics of revolution which Ahmed Yerima proposes in this play for a new and orderly society using the materialist ideology. What this means in essence is that this study acknowledges the existence of two expansive philosophical systems, each with its own worldviews. One is the Marxist Ideology which is of the perspective, according to wa Thiong'o (1983):

Change is inherent in nature and society. In this view, nature and society are in perpetual motion; that nothing is really static, fixed, final. Life is motion and motion is life. In this view, no social system is really final and fixed but each contains the germs of a future society. But motion involves contradictions, for as Blake once stated without contrariness there could be no progression. This broadly is the worldview of the downtrodden, of the oppressed, of the dominated: change is inevitable even if it does not necessarily occur in a smooth line from one stage to the other (60).

And the other is the Capitalist (Idealist) aesthetics which arose as a product of capitalism built on the remains of feudalism. Buzuev (1987) notes the similarity between these two exploitative economic systems:

Capitalism sprang from the ruins of feudal society, after germinating within the entrails of the feudal system. As it developed, it eroded the feudal system from within and upturned the soil for the development of the new, capitalist social relations. It was no accident at all that the elements of capitalism first appeared within feudalism because feudalism and capitalism are akin to each other in that both are based on private property in the means of production and man's exploitation of man (15).

It should be noted that these camps, in the words of Uji (1989), are two "diametrically hostile philosophic-aesthetic systems" (14) and artists more often than not, knowingly and unknowingly, pitch tents with either of the camps in their artistic creations. This study, for example, observes that a lot of critical and theoretical studies have been carried out on the dramatic works of Ahmed Yerima. It also observed that these studies have, at different times, focused on the play in focus using different theories such as Formalism, Feminism, Psychological Criticism, and Postcolonialism to mention but a few. However, these studies have not paid adequate attention to the works of this dramatist, especially *An Inspector Calls* from the standpoint of Marxism. This study bridges this gap. Analyses of the select play of this dramatist from the standpoint of Marxism will advance knowledge on the further understanding of this play.

In *Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels (1969) identified class struggle as the driving force behind history and anticipated that it would lead to a revolution in which the proletariat would overturn capitalists, take control of economic production, and abolish private ownership of property by turning it over to the government to be disseminated justly amongst the citizenry. They saw history as progressive – from slavery to feudalism and then capitalism in the 18th Century which resulted in class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. They also predicted the inevitable fall of the bourgeoisie and victory of the proletariat. According to them:

all history has been a history of class struggles, of struggles between exploited and exploiting, between dominated and dominating classes at various stages of social evolution; that this struggle, however, has now reached a stage where the exploited and oppressed class (the proletariat) can no longer emancipate itself from the class which exploits and oppresses it (the bourgeoisie), without at the same time forever freeing the whole of society from exploitation, oppression, class struggles (6).

A lot of critics have come to associate with the principles of Marxism that sees inequitable economic relationships as the source of class conflict. One of such staunch critics was Paulo Freire. He was, in his days, a strong voice of resistance to this devastating socio-economic structure. In the early sixties, his native land of Brazil was engulfed in authoritarianism and violence. He was of the view that this miasma of authoritarianism and violence that characterized his native Brazil was as a result of bleakness occasioned by a manipulative system of division of labour based on the premise of capitalism. He was strongly of the view that dehumanization was a form of violence and a tool of the capitalist ideology to perpetuate man's domestication into docility and inferiority. He observed that "Dehumanization, although a concrete historical fact, is not a given destiny but

the result of an unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressors, which in turn dehumanizes the oppressed” (Freire, 2000:43).

Dale et al (2010), also maintained in a manner similar to, and supported Freire’s line of argument. In their postulation, they vehemently disapproved of the role that capitalism plays in the objectification of man. They averred that:

[...] people per se are not responsible for the violence, but rather capitalist ideology and its requisite exploitation of labor are entirely at fault. We will argue in a manner similar to Freire that ideologies impact and influence human consciousness that leads to dehumanization, objectification and protection of hegemonic interests through violence (57).

Ahmed Yerima, in like manner, follows this line of thought in his adaptation of *An Inspector Calls* where he heaps the blame of violence against the proletariat on capitalist ideology and its mistreatment of labour. It is noteworthy that Ahmed Yerima has written a lot of plays using different theoretical and critical approaches; he has however, demonstrated with this play, a strong penchant for a Marxist approach to issues as well as an equally strong detestation for man’s inhumanity to man in whatever guise and under the cloak of capitalism. He however, stops short at the door step of socialism and not the utopian classlessness as envisioned by Marx and Engels. This shall be analysed presently. It is important for now to pay attention to his focus on the leadership’s inhumanity to the lead. Chidi Amuta (cited in Olaniyan and Quayson, Eds., 2007) brings together this led group of persons marginalized, oppressed, exploited and suffering under the cover of capitalism. He urges them to come together and fight the menace of capitalism. According to him:

workers as a conscious minority align with other groups created by capitalism in its negating logic . . . the urban proletariat, urban poor students, progressive intellectuals, the peasantry, progressive army cadres, progressive women’s organizations, *marginalised, unwaged, overlooked, and repressed groups* etc. Taken together, this group constitutes, in a demographic and political sense, the “vital majority” who are carrying the burden of imperialist hegemony and capitalist exploitation... (509-510. my emphasis).

This exploitation arises mainly as a result of bad and selfish leadership which has deprived the nation of growth and development. This is because; history has shown that no nation in the world achieved growth and development without experiencing altruistic leadership. Chinua Achebe (1984) roots the cause of the gulf between the proletariat and bourgeoisie squarely at the door step of bad and selfish leadership. According to him, “The trouble with Nigeria” is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian character. ... The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to their responsibility, to the challenge of personal example, which is the hallmark of true leadership (1).

This position is correct to say the least. This is because any leadership that is selfishly enriching itself will have to contend with a hungry and dehumanized workforce. And when people are hungry, they have absolutely nothing to lose but their poverty-stricken state.

Conceptual Clarification

Some key concepts and terms are used in this study. It is, therefore, important especially for the purpose of clarity, to take a cursory look at these concepts and terms as used in the study. They include: political leadership, historical materialism, dialectical materialism, Interpellation, false consciousness, conspicuous consumption, commodification, bourgeoisie and proletariat.

Political leadership: This refers to leaders who directly or indirectly command, control and/or influence the government. Simply put, political leadership refers to the direct or indirect political influence and control that leaders have over the economic or social welfare of the citizenry. In this study, leadership is seen as altruism in whatever form of influence a person wields over others.

Historical Materialism: This is the sociological component of Marxism and refers to the theory of history and society that ideas and social institutions develop only as the superstructure of a material economic base.

Dialectical Materialism: This is the philosophical component of Marxism. It holds that history develops as a struggle between contradictions that are eventually synthesized. It simply means class conflict and emphasises the physical and ideological clash between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and maintains the priority of matter over mind.

Interpellation: It is used in this study to refer to the manipulation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie to accept its ideology.

False consciousness: This is the docile acceptance of status quo or existing condition of affairs. This can also come about as a result of interpellation over a period of time.

Conspicuous consumption: This is the extreme and selfish acquisition of things that possess sign value and exchange value. This was evident in the setting, costumes and props in the world of the play.

Commodification: This is the placement of value on things not for its usefulness but for its ability to attract the attention of others (show off).

Bourgeoisie: The capitalist class that owns and controls natural and human resources

Proletariat: Workers that supply the labour that enable the bourgeoisie make profit

Background of the Play

Ahmed Yerima's *An Inspector Calls*, which is a direct transplantation of John Boynton Priestley's of same title deals with five members of a bourgeois family, and the contributions of each toward the suicide of a young enterprising girl, Bisi Adejumo. The play, according to the playwright, was first adapted in the mid-1980s as a valediction play for Professor Wole Soyinka. The published version has its time setting in "the rainy season of 2002" (2008:101) and its geographical setting in the cosmopolitan city of Lagos, Nigeria. A cursory look at the

period of its adaptation, publication and the present time will reveal that nothing has changed in the polity of Nigeria. If anything, things have gone from bad to worse. Nigeria, with its abundant human and natural resources is ranked among the poorest and most corrupt nations of the world. It is 146 out of 159 nations according to the Corruption Perceptions Index; taking the 25th positions among the most corrupt nations in the world and the 2nd most corrupt nation in Africa, behind Chad. According to this survey index, corruption is viewed as “the abuse of public office for private gain” (www.transparency.org.). What this implies in essence is that a very few persons that make up the legislative, judicial and executive arms of government in Nigeria, as well as a few opulent Nigerians have plundered the resources of this endowed nation at the detriment of the majority living in abject poverty. The bane of this economy can be attributed to capitalism - an economic system based on the private ownership of the means of production and distribution of goods, characterized by a free competitive market and motivation by profit – a socioeconomic system that has placed too much value on wealth at the expense of the human being. The nation has been divided economically into two camps – the wealthy few and the poverty-stricken majority. The bourgeoisie and the proletariat are an apt description of these camps created by the evils associated with capitalism.

In this period in the nation’s history, politicians and business men alike blatantly looted the treasury of the nation with such reckless abandon. Public office holders corruptly enriched themselves; so much so that the corruption associated with the late twentieth century became a child’s play and the essence of governance has become synonymous with stealing of public funds with impunity. An Inspector General of Police, Tafa Balogun was even arrested and removed from office for corruptly enriching himself to the tune of billions of naira through money laundering, theft and other sources by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission. He was forcefully retired and over seventy fraud charges were formally brought against him covering the period between 2002 and 2004. “He made a plea bargain with the court in exchange for returning much of the property and money”; and was sentenced to six months in jail in 2006 (Wikipedia.org). Another case in point is the dramatic escape of a then sitting Governor, DSP Alamieyeseigha who was arrested in London and charged for allegedly laundering one million pounds found in his London home. He disguised as a woman and escaped to Nigeria before his trial. All of this and much more are the issues of systemic corruption that characterize the Nigerian socio-political-cum-economic domain in the early twenty first century that Yerima addresses in this play.

Bourgeois Leadership, Suicide, Poverty, Class Conflict, and Revolution intertwined

An Inspector Calls aptly reflects the socio-political cum economic power differences between the bourgeoisie, as represented by the Badejo’s family on the one hand and the proletariat represented by the deceased Bisi Adejumo whose life and times are revealed by Inspector Lawal. Inspector Lawal may not be a police officer after all, but a relative of the deceased Bisi Adejumo. This insight shall be examined and discussed presently. In the meantime, the time setting of the play, as earlier stated, is the beginning of the 21st Century in Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria. The play is a biting condemnation and attack of the bourgeois lifestyle of bad leadership, corruption, greed and apathy towards the proletariat that constitute the suffering citizenry. Furthermore, the play seems to suggest, with the remarks of Inspector Lawal, at the end of the play, that a true Marxist revolution is a sine qua non to ending class conflict. The play can, therefore, be best described as a struggle between two opposing forces –the exploited class and the exploiting class.

The play opens in the ostentatiously furnished *dining room of the BADEJOS' house in Victoria Island, Lagos* (p.101) as they celebrate, in a low-key fashion, the engagement of their daughter, Funke to Dele Orimoye, both of whom are of the same bourgeois class. The expensive imported wine at this party, the diamond engagement ring presented by Dele to Funke and described by Remi as “the most expensive in the whole of Victoria Island”, “the crystal stone lace (107-108)” clothing expected to go with the diamond ring, as well as the lavishly equipped dining room shows the *weltanschauung* or worldview of Chief Badejo and family as commoditized and by implication, victims of society’s emphasis on sign value. There is little doubt that this scene represents a practice of conspicuous consumption by the bourgeois class in the world of the play. This is because; this scene presents the Badejos attitude of valuing things not for their utility but for their power to impress others (sign value) in the extreme. In his bid to impress, for example, Chief Badejo spends a fortune erecting and furnishing an apartment – wherein, he cannot sleep in more than a room at a time and can only occupy a fraction of space at any given time. This show off attitude of chief Badejo is evident in Segun’s description of the house as a “citadel” and further stating that “It cost four hundred million, it is no longer a house, but a citadel *that is extravagantly furnished* (104, my emphasis).” Chief Badejo himself confirms this commoditized attitude of his to Dele; he states, as a matter of bluntness that “After building this house in Victoria Island and importing every single furniture, I had spent a fortune. It was all my attempt to meet up to your mother’s expectation” (111).

This statement directly implies that the reason for the movement to this magnificent mansion in Victoria Island from the house in Surulere was basically to create an impression on Chief, Honourable A.M.A. Orimoye, the Chairman of the ruling party and his wife, Chief Mrs. F. Orimoye. He hopes to use the opulent edifice, as well as the up-coming marriage of their daughter to Dele Orimoye to selfishly gain undue political favour from them. The engagement party with all its showiness, even though it is said to be low-keyed is however, cut short with the unexpected arrival of an inspector to interrogate every member of the Badejo’s family; including Funke’s fiancé, Dele Orimoye, on the why and how of the suicide of Bisi Adejumo. Although not seen or heard in the play, the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of Bisi’s death constitute the subject matter of a better part of the play. Every member of this bourgeois family is indicted and found culpable in her suicide at the play’s end.

Bisi Adejumo, as stated earlier, as well as her co-workers, represents the proletariat in the play. She is presented as a character that is cowed into a state of false consciousness and silenced by the bourgeoisie. She develops a false consciousness after her initial protest for a pay rise in her underpaid job which was met with brutal force by Chief Badejo. She consequently loses her job for protesting for a pay rise and thereafter, goes into a state of complete silence. She remains in this state of silence till she eventually ends her miserable life by committing suicide. This silence aptly demonstrates that she, till her death, fully underwent interpellation by the ruling class as represented by Chief Badejo. She accepts the oppressive class system that offers her no opportunity. She is consequently, with her sacking from the company, violently dehumanised into a state of docility. She chooses the life of silence and docility to protest against material inequalities and her right to exist. Therefore, her acceptance of the way things are represents her false consciousness and the loss of her humanity. Chief Badejo celebrates his oppression of the proletariat as “dynamic leadership”. According to him:

... Last month, just before pay day, my workers came out on strike, not one single box of matches came out of the production line... but we won in the end. Dynamic leadership, foresight and hard-headedness. I called the boys I trusted together, collected a few names and caput, I sacked them all on the spot (108-109).

And Bisi Adejumo, unfortunately, is among those that are sacked. They enter into a state of docility with their means of livelihood cut short. The exact reason for their sack is daring to protest for a pay rise in their underpaid job. Though the others, excepting Bisi Adejumo are not seen or heard of from this point of the story, their narrative is however known as Bisi is a representation of the entire proletariat who are repressed, suppressed, exploited and dehumanised. Chief Badejo who practices conspicuous consumption at the expense of the proletariat's labour, recounts blatantly why he had to sack Bisi Adejumo and others. He states:

The workers were all rather restless, and they suddenly decided to ask for more money. They were averaging about five hundred naira increase. They wanted a raise of overtime rates as Christmas was our next target when we stocked matches for the celebrations. I refused, of course ... Said I could not consider it. We were paying the usual rates and if they did not like those rates, they could go and work with Wakum, a rival company. It is a free country I told them ... Bisi Adejumo, was one of them. She had had a lot to say about me and the business – far too much. So, she had to go (119-120).

His conscience does not prick him. He is content with his dehumanization, exploitation and oppression of the workers. He knows very well that the owner of Wakum, the rival company, is also a member of the bourgeoisie. He is also aware that like him, Wakum is also engaged in underpayment of its workers – a strategy used by the bourgeoisie to keep the proletariat under perpetual oppression.

Upon unceremoniously leaving the employment of Chief Badejo, she gets another job as a sales girl at Kemby's Fashion. While there, she still suffers silently from the oppressive system of the bourgeoisie. She is content "being among pretty clothes, even if she could not afford them ..." and "felt she was making a good fresh start" (127) as she yet again gets underpaid to barely sustain herself. Even at that, this contented lifestyle of false consciousness is brief. Funke, in her intense jealousy compels the management to sack her. She uses her power as a customer and the daughter of a well-to-do and influential man to get her sacked for being angry with herself.

Bisi's life of false consciousness continues, as the story unfolds in the world of the play: She is next seen as victim of sexual assault from a serving Senator and then to Dele Orimoye who uses her to satisfy his sexual urge at the time. Next, she meets Segun who "used her for the end of a drunken evening, as if she were an animal, a thing, not a person" (p.162). Finally, in her pregnant state, she meets with Mrs Remi Badejo, a supposed mother, wife of the wealthy Chief Badejo and head of a charitable society; from the narrative one understands that Bisi "needed not only money but advice, sympathy, friendliness" from a woman who "have had children" herself and ought to "have known what she was feeling *and render the needed assistance* (My emphasis);" but rather than assist, she turns a blind eye and "slammed the door in her face (152)".

Her despicable refusal to assist the pregnant poverty stricken Bisi Adejumo for the very fact that she does not belong to her class, and for the flimsy excuse that she was falsely laying claim to the

name 'Badejo' (as if there is any big deal in a name) is nothing short of flagrant bourgeois imbecility in the society of the world of the play. It is also indicative of the height of the vileness of arrogance magnified into bourgeois tyranny, inhumaneness and indecency. One thing of note in the society of the world of this story is that all the above-mentioned names are members of the bourgeoisie and leaders in their right; capable to turn around the society for the better. However, rather than effect a positive societal change, they individually mete horrible, inhumane and idiotic treatment to humanity in dire need of assistance.

Bisi on the other hand, has been socially constructed by the leadership that made her pay dearly, direly and darkly for wanting a raise in her underpaid job. The loss of her job socially constructs her, as stated earlier, to the false consciousness of dumbly accepting the status quo of class relationship and social mobility only through the social system based upon inequality and irresolvable conflict. This state is comparable to the many Nigerians that have been tyrannically subjected to silence through oppression and deprivation. The consequence of such egocentric leadership, in extreme cases, is the production of armed banditry, Boko haram and other insurgent groups that are today threatening the nation's unity and sovereignty.

However, her oppression and dehumanization steer a revolt. Bisi's alter ego shows up and visits at the right moment. He arrives at a moment when all members of the Badejo's family, including Dele Orimoye, are present at an engagement party. He visits as a police inspector with the pseudonym, Inspector Lawal and revolts against a class system that oppresses the citizenry through the administration of bad leadership. One understands with his action, that it is only through confrontation of the bourgeois leadership that one can escape from inhuman treatment, system of conflict, poverty, and interpellation; and be able to prick the conscience of members of the socio-political-cum-economic leadership. In his bid to prick the conscience of the bourgeoisie, he states that "it would do us all a bit of good if sometimes we tried to put ourselves in the place of these destitute ... *men and women* counting their kobos in the little overshadowed bedrooms in either Ikeja or Ajegunle" (126. My emphasis).

Inspector Lawal, whose real name is Yomi Adejumo, as shall be explained presently, is able to capture correctly, the moment by moment, of the times Bisi spent with every member of the Badejo family and Dele Orimoye. He does it so well that no one is able to deny ever meeting her at one point or the other. One explainable reason to this knowledge of Bisi would be that they were either very close, possibly her twin or a close sibling that they confide much in each other. It could also be that he is a representation of the oppressed citizenry standing up against the oppressor. As her alter ego, he becomes that voice of revolt against interpellation, false consciousness and against an uncaring leadership. Just before departing, he uses revolutionary words to admonish them to change their ways or face the consequences of proletarian revolution. He comes out very strongly against the bourgeoisie. He states:

Bisi Adejumo is gone - but there are millions and millions and millions of Bisi Adejumos and Yomi Adejumos still left with us; with their lives, their hopes and fears, their suffering and chance of happiness, all intertwined with our lives, with what we think and say and do. We don't live alone. We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other. And I tell you that the time will soon come when, if men will not learn that lesson, then they will be taught it in fire and blood and anguish. For the rich and privileged

in Nigeria who live well like you, please shed a thought for the common man in the streets; see him as a human being. It could save somebody's life (163).

In the little over an hour that he spends with them to the point of his exit, he is able to create an impression in the hearts of this bourgeois family. He is able to make them feel a sense of remorse in their undignified leadership style, uncaring attitude, selfish acquisition and display of material wealth; and, in their practice of conspicuous consumption. Although this sense of remorse lasts momentarily in the hearts of Chief Badejo and wife, the children were, however, completely remorseful of their action. It is obvious that they are going to use their privileged positions to ensure a civilized society in the not-too-distant future. Funke, in reaction to her father's joke of the whole affair, tells him in a rather tense mood "I want to get out of here. It frightens me the way you talk (171)". This statement shows a shift from the initial high handedness that is characteristic of bourgeois leadership noticed at the beginning of the play. She states further on the discovery that Yomi Adejumo is not a police officer:

I tell you whoever that Inspector was, it was anything but a joke. You knew it then. You began to learn something. And you had stopped but now you are ready to go on in the same old way *of an oppressor and exploiter of humanity* (172 my emphasis).

Statements like the above, especially coming from the young generation of the bourgeoisie as represented in the person of Funke, is symptomatic of optimism for the dawn of a new and humane society where everyone will be treated like a human being. More so, Funke displayed, in this statement, a lesson learned from Yomi Adejumo that "We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other". Therefore, the revolution of violence with such a statement of enlightenment becomes absolutely needless by the proletariat. The generation of Chief Badejo and wife will pass away and the bourgeois generation of Funke and Segun Badejo will birth a new dawn of man's humanity to fellow man.

In the critique of this play, one is not advocating, like Marx and Engels predicted, for the overthrow of capitalism; one is not encouraging the kind of communism that was in operation in the then United Soviet Socialist Republic; one is not canvassing the variant of communism in Cuba; one is not in any way, crusading for the kind of communism in the People's Republic of China. One understands that Marxism has evolved and will continue to evolve. One also recognizes that Nigeria practices a mixed economy – capitalism and socialism and therefore, recommends that the leadership effectively and altruistically make use of the tax payers' money, as well as the nation's endowed natural resources to ensuring the provision of basic social amenities and welfare that would make life meaningful for all and sundry. This paper is of the view that until this is done, the nation, like in the world of the play, will continue to witness insurrections similar to the incessant labour strike actions and peaceful protests often embarked on by the vast majority of the citizenry living in abject poverty. The January, 2012 "Occupy Nigeria" and "Endsars (2020)" protests are examples of note. These protests may not have yielded the desired result, but the citizenry, again, like in the play, will continue to revolt against parochial and inhumane leadership.

Conclusion

An Inspector Calls is an assault on bourgeois manners as well as an outright disdain for the customs of commodification engaged in by the bourgeoisie. It is also an antagonism to a society hemmed in by selfish and corrupt practices; and presents a socio-political-cum-economic leadership system

that nurtures class conflict, unfairly deprives the working class of economic power and equality, and gives rise to the verbal revolution as confrontation against hegemony, oppression, marginalization and suppression of the citizenry. In this play, Yomi represents the true Marxist mind. Although, in his case, he is not an advocate of communism which is the final goal of Marxism; he however realizes that a substitute system is needed, one where Leadership becomes the act of looking out from oneself, away to that other whom one leads; to that other who is in need of food, shelter and care. Leadership then becomes not “I” but “we”, not “me” but “us”. It becomes everybody has to look out for everybody else, especially for the common good of everybody. The play envisions an alternate system where a leader should not be comfortable when those that s/he leads are living in abject poverty or suffering lack in any way. *An Inspector Calls* advocates a system of political and economic leadership that recognizes the humanity of all people; a different leadership system that understands that except the least of the proletariat is taken care of, the best of the bourgeoisie cannot survive, and calls for a leader to have the resolve to treat every human being as self. The play sufficiently demonstrates a raging struggle between the proletariat’s quest for decent living and the all-enveloping threat of petit-bourgeois barbarism. Finally, it portrays the revolutionary potential of the proletariat in bringing about a socialist state.

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