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## **Love As Driving Force in Arms and the Man**

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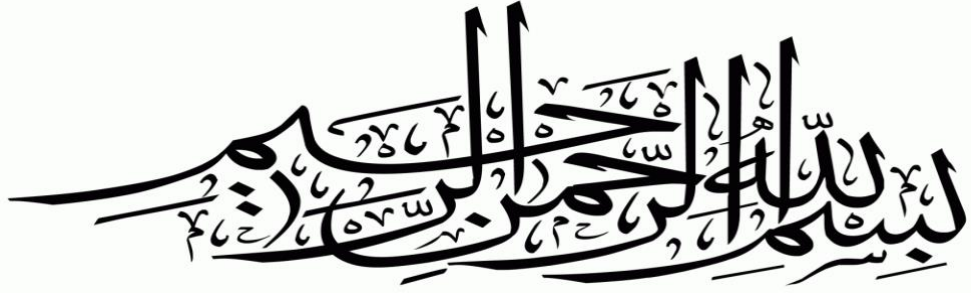
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(مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْفَدُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ ۗ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا  
كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ)

(النحل، ٩٦)

**"In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate"**

{ Whatever you have will end, but what Allah has is lasting.  
And We will surely give those who were patient their  
reward according to the best of what they used to do. }

(Al- Nahal, 96)

# Dedication

*To our beloved parents we dedicate this research.....*

## Acknowledgments

*We would like to present our thanks fist to our Almighty Allah, SWT, for giving us power, strength, and patience .*

*Secondly, Our supervisor, Asst. Inst. Fatima Mohammed Theyab, for her guidance and for giving us the golden notes . Without her help, this research would not be completed .*

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## **Abstract**

The interactions of characters are primarily driven by romantic love, or lack of it. Social conventions of love during Shaw's time period included public and formal courting, parental approval, and consideration of social status and wealth of each partner. However, the characters in this play defy the norms and each end up with a person that is best suited to them.

Characters slowly disabuse themselves of the features of romantic love they have most cherished all their lives, and realize that it is far more complex. For example, Raina does appear to love Sergius in the beginning of the play, but when she falls in love with Blunstshcli, she realizes her love for Sergius was superficial. Perhaps Raina only felt this way because Sergius was lauded as a hero and because Catherine and Petkoff supported the union to maintain the family's social status.

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# Chapter One

## 1. George Bernard Shaw Life and Works

An Irish playwright, critic, polemicist and political activist. His influence on Western theatre, culture and politics extended from the 1880s to his death and beyond. He wrote more than sixty plays, including major works such as *Man and Superman* (1902), *Pygmalion* (1913) and *Saint Joan* (1923). With a range incorporating both contemporary satire and historical allegory, Shaw became the leading dramatist of his generation, and in 1925 was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature (Berst, 1998: 56)

George Bernard Shaw was born July 26, 1856, in Dublin, Ireland. In 1876 he moved to London, where he wrote regularly but struggled financially. In 1895, he became a theater critic for the *Saturday Review* and began writing plays of his own. His play *Pygmalion* was later made into a film twice, and the screenplay he wrote for the first version of it won an Oscar. During his lifetime, he wrote more than 60 plays and won many other awards, among them the Nobel Prize (Broad, 1929: 204)

Playwright George Bernard Shaw was born in Dublin, Ireland, on July 26, 1856. The third child, Shaw's early education took the form of tutoring sessions provided by his clerical uncle. Early on, Shaw explored the worlds of the arts (music, art, literature) under his mother's guidance and through regular visits to the National Gallery of Ireland. In 1872, Shaw's mother left her husband and took Shaw's two sisters to London, and four years later Shaw followed (his younger sister had died in the meantime), deciding to become a writer. Shaw struggled financially, and

his mother essentially supported him while he spent time in the British Museum reading room, working on his first novels (Clare, 2016: 176)

Unfortunately, despite the time he spent writing them, his novels were dismal failures, widely rejected by publishers. Shaw soon turned his attention to politics and the activities of the British intelligentsia, joining the Fabian Society in 1884. The Fabian Society was a socialist group whose goal was nothing short of the transformation of England through a more vibrant political and intellectual base, and Shaw became heavily involved, even editing a famous tract the group published *Fabian Essays in Socialism, 1889* (Conolly, 2005: 286)

The year after he joined the Fabian Society, Shaw landed some writing work in the form of book reviews and art, music and theater criticism, and in 1895 he was brought aboard the Saturday Review as its theater critic. It was at this point that Shaw began writing plays of his own (Ervine, 1956: 106)

Shaw's first plays were published in volumes titled "Plays Unpleasant" (containing *Widowers' Houses*, *The Philanderer* and *Mrs. Warren's Profession*) and "Plays Pleasant" (which had *Arms and the Man*, *Candida*, *The Man of Destiny* and *You Never Can Tell*). The plays were filled with what would become Shaw's signature wit, accompanied by healthy doses of social criticism, which stemmed from his Fabian Society leanings. These plays would not go on to be his best remembered, or those



for which he had high regard, but they laid the groundwork for the oversized career to come (Griffith, 1993: 26)

Toward the end of the 19th century, beginning with *Caesar and Cleopatra* (written in 1898), Shaw's writing came into its own, the product of a mature writer hitting on all cylinders. In 1903, Shaw wrote *Man and Superman*, whose third act, "Don Juan in Hell," achieved a status larger than the play itself and is often staged as a separate play entirely. While Shaw would write plays for the next 50 years, the plays written in the 20 years after *Man and Superman* would become foundational plays in his oeuvre. Works such as *Major Barbara* (1905), *The Doctor's Dilemma* (1906), *Pygmalion* (1912), *Androcles and the Lion* (1912) and *Saint Joan* (1923) all firmly established Shaw as a leading dramatist of his time. In 1925, Shaw was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature (Holroyed, 1993: 128- 129)

*Pygmalion*, one of Shaw's most famous plays, was adapted to the big screen in 1938, earning Shaw an Academy Award for writing the screenplay. *Pygmalion* went on to further fame when it was adapted into a musical and became a hit, first on the Broadway stage (1956) with Rex Harrison and Julie Andrews, and later on the screen (1964) with Harrison and Audrey Hepburn. Shaw died in 1950 at age 94 while working on yet another play (Martin, 2007: 808) .

## Chapter Two

### Arms and the Man Play Summery and Analysis

All of Shaw's literary works in British culture are considered as a new movement in the 19th century, because all of them contain ideas about human's freedom. Shaw's plays are called drama of ideas, because his aim was usually not to tell a story but to convey ideas to people. Arms and the Man examines the faults of the society. Shaw from the first act tries to combine all the humanity problems and show them to the audience/readers (Baker, 2002: 28)

The time with the setting of the play goes back to the brief Serbian and Bulgarian war in 1885. Shaw's friend Sidney Webb arrived with the news of the war as the model of the situation. At that time Shaw was at the reading room in British Museum when he selected Serbia and Bulgarian war as the setting for his play Arms and the Man. The main character of the play is a Swiss Professional soldier named captain Bluntschli, The title of the play is derived from the ancient epic poem Virgil (ibid, 2002: 29).

The title of the play is ironic and it is contrary to that of Aeneid, because Aeneid in the epic is proud and glorified the hero, but Shaw in the play used the anti-hero or runaway soldiers or known as a "chocolate-cream soldier" in the play (Shaw, 1946. Act I p. 29). Arms and the Man depicts the historical events of the war between two-neighboring countries. The war happened in Slivnitsa near the Bulgarian capital in 1885. Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia, which was commonly Bulgarian, declared their unification in 1885, against the will of the Great European Powers,

particularly Austria. Serbia utilized the misrepresentation of a border to attack Bulgaria (Yeats, 1990: 58).

The Serbians had advanced weapons however as in Shaw's form, they had trouble with their gun. They also underestimated the Bulgarians and used mostly young staff. Bernard Shaw demonstrates them fleeing as Bluntschli did. The Russian officers permitted the Bulgarian officers like Sergius and Petkoff to direct the war. They were not as experienced as the Russians, but rather they had strong patriotism and morale. Shaw marks Petkoff's opinion that without the involvement of the Great Powers, the Serbs and Bulgarians would not know how to battle. In the past, the Serbs and Bulgarians struggled on the same side against their enemies, but the Serbian fighters were deceived into fighting against former partners. Austria interfered after Slivnitza, forbidding more battle. The Bulgarian victory established the unification question and increased the respect of Bulgaria, since the Serbs had not before known defeat.

Bernard Shaw used Bulgaria as a symbol of the backward state desire to connect with the family of the modern European nations. Shaw does, in any case, draw out the political difficulty of such a nation as Bulgaria, battling for its personality among the greater, modernized countries. Petkoffs and Sarnoff, needing to be thought progressed, embrace the way of life of remote nations that do not legitimately instruct the general population. Saranoff wastes his time attempting to be Byronic, and Catherine concentrates on having an electric bell. This same marvel is still seen today when poorer

countries imitate what is prominent in wealthier nations. (Stafford, 2013: 45).

The time and the plot of the play are attractive and easy to follow. The drama is in three Acts which all are located in Riana's house. The first movements are in Riana's bedchamber between her and the man, Bluntschli. Their conversation shows their opposite ideals about war. Bluntschli has different thoughts about war between countries; his own ideal is that each country and the army in the battle will fight for their powers. Raina soon knows that her ideal is wrong about war and moved to her fugitive soldier. Because before seeing the fugitive soldier she thought that her fiancée „Sergius“ was born with courage, especially her father Petkoff, who served his country and connected with the issue of nationalism. The time setting in the play is in good situation for gaining result to the viewer or readers. Shaw's *Arms and the Man* is a comedy about behavior and other Victorian traditions. *Arms and the Man* is the best example of Victorian literature (Stenlicht, 2005: 78)

The play was presented to the British people in 1894. It is one of the *Plays Pleasant Volume* with other Shaw's plays, such as *You Never Can Tell*, *Arms and the Man*, *Candida*, *The Man of Devils*. The most fascinating thing about *Arms and the Man* are the comic elements; it manages a few political and social issues privately. The class conflict is the top idea of *Arms and the Man*; however as opposed to making the reader or audience aware of them, he presents interesting things and makes one think about these issues after the laughing. Not like different plays of the time, *Arms and the Man* did not look to just engage a group of people with considerate cleverness. Instead, Shaw tried to uncover most problems

of the day that are begging to be addressed in an attractive configuration in the comic drama. This is a symbol of Shaw's creativity as he mentioned, what is the utilization of script plays, or composing anything, if there is not a will which at long last forms bedlam itself into a race of divine beings (Peters, 1996) .

Last point, is the play Arms and the Man shows the high standard of living between two idealistic couple in the bright time of the Bulgarian war. Riana acts as a queen, noble-woman, from the high class. However, Sergius appears as a brave, chivalric soldier in the battlefield (Hasim, 2015).

## Chapter Three

### 3.1 The Theme of Love in Arms and the Man

Arms and the Man is a witty play; describing wrong notions of both two themes. Especially, themes of love towards Riana, appears as a romantic girl right from the opening Act. In the first Act, when she stands on her balcony looking at the sky and admiring the brilliant stars around her country. She is joyful because of the hero Sergius and waiting him to return from battlefield to marry him, she describes Sergius: “Oh, I shall never be unworthy of you any more, my soul’s hero: never, never, never” (Act I, p.19). On Sergius’ return to Riana’s house, they called each other my hero and my queen, because Riana is an attractive Bulgarian woman, full of notions of love (Saner, 1995: 151)

When Riana hears about Sergius’ bravery in the battlefield she is joyful and happy. She is confused by the news she hears, she describes her fiancé as knight, and hero, and she keeps his photo and kisses him. She imagines that she is fit to marry him. Because at that time bravery is considered as a simple thing that a soldier can get in the battle. Sergius explains his love for her and says: “If you are away five minutes, it will seem five hours” (Act II, p.46). The characteristic of Riana towards love shows love in a great situations of society (Rao, 2004).

Arms and the Man is ironic play that attacks individuals who are proud cowards boasting about war. For that Riana’s thoughts towards love and war went to change after the arrival of Capitan Bluntschli. Before coming Bluntschli, Riana believes that soldiering is the duty of killing and fighting in battlefield and they do not have any fear of death. However,

Bluntschli explains the situation that happened in war field, he tells that all soldiers have fear of death and there is nothing about cowards in the war, and its bravery to save your life as long as you can. He presents a negative image of soldiers in war: “nine soldiers out of ten are born fools” (Act I, p.22). Bluntschli escapes from the war and enters Riana’s bedchamber through the window, and helps Riana to have a realistic picture of love and war (Saner, 1995: 153)

At the end of the play, Sergius’ relation with Riana moves to Louka, because he knows that his relationship is not built on realistic manners, he also thinks that Riana does not accept him as her hero, and now she is not looking at him as her future husband. Petkoff as the master of house thinks that there is a love between Louka and Nicola, but Nicola refuses to have any relationship with Louka. In the play, Shaw explains the realistic notion of love and marriage between Louka and Nicola. So, it is right to say that all of Shaw’s work is inspired by Ibsen’s work especially in struggle between reality and love (Singh and Arjun, 2013).

### **3.2 Romanticism of Love**

Shaw was a master flirt and he enjoyed the playful farce of romantic intrigues. But he recognized that playing a game differed from serious love, and he tried to convey as much in *Arms and the Man*, which is subtitled “An Anti-Romantic Comedy.” In the play, Riana and Sergius have paired themselves for all the wrong reasons: because their social status requires a mate from the same social level; and because Sergius plays the role of the type of hero that Riana has been taught to admire, and

Riana plays the role that Sergius expects from a woman of her station (Satan, 2008: 11)

The problem is that neither is portraying his/her real self, so their love is based on outward appearances, not on the true person beneath the facade. They are both acting out a romance according to their idealized standards for courtship rather than according to their innermost feelings. Just as the cheerleader is expected to fall for the star quarterback, Riana has fallen for her brave army officer who looks handsome in his uniform. When Bluntschli and Louka force Riana and Sergius to examine their true feelings, Riana and Sergius discover that they have the courage and desire to follow their hearts instead of seeking to meet social expectations (Ibid, 2008: 12)

As a socialist, Shaw believed in the equality of all people and he abhorred discrimination based on gender or social class. These beliefs are evident in the relationships portrayed in *Arms and the Man*. Shaw allows a maid to succeed in her ambitions to better herself by marrying Sergius, an officer and a gentleman. This match also means that Sergius has developed the courage to free himself from the expectations of his class and instead marry the woman he loves. The silliness of Catherine's character is used to show the illogical nature of class snobbery, as she clearly makes divisions between her family and the servants, even though, or perhaps because, the Petkoffs themselves have only recently climbed the social ladder. The play also attacks divisions of rank, as Captain Bluntschli has leadership abilities that the superior-ranking officers, Majors Petkoff and Saranoff, do not have, illustrating the fact that ability has little to do with rank. Ability also has little to do with class, as exemplified by the character of Nicola, who is



declared the ablest, and certainly the wiliest, character in the play (Singh and Arjun, 2013: 3)

Arms and the Man questions highly idealized expressions of love, just as it questions romanticized views of war; as David Satran points out, in the play Shaw “sets out to challenge conventional beliefs of sacrosanct subjects, love and war foremost among them”(Satran, 2008: 16). From the beginning of the play, Riana is constantly expressing her ‘pure’ and ‘sublime’ feelings for Sergius, addressing him as “my hero.” Riana even declares, “My relation to him is the one really beautiful and noble part of my life.” (Riana, left alone, goes to the chest of drawers, and adores the portrait there with feelings that are beyond all expression. She does not kiss it or press it to her breast, or shew it any mark of bodily affection; but she takes it in her hands and elevates it like a priestess.) (Shaw, 1898: 67)

Riana.(Looking up at the picture with worship.) Oh, I shall never be unworthy of you any more, my hero—never, never, never. She replaces it reverently. When Sergius returns after the battle, they greet each other rapturously:

Sergius.

(Hastening to her, but refraining from touching her without express permission). Am I forgiven?

Riana.

(Placing her hands on his shoulder as she looks up at him with admiration and worship). My hero! My king.

Sergius.

My queen! (He kisses her on the forehead with holy awe.)

Sauer (1995) says that when Riana speaks to Sergius of the higher love, she conforms to Shaw's definition of the "Womanly Woman" in *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*. Such a woman, says Shaw, deceives herself in the idealist fashion by denying that the love which her suitor offers her has any tinge of physical attraction. It is, she declares, "a beautiful, disinterested, pure, sublime devotion by which a man's life is exalted and purified, and a woman's rendered blest." (159).

The interactions between Riana and Sergius are entirely defined by such conventions:

Sergius.

Dearest, all my deeds have been yours. You inspired me. I have gone through the war like a knight in a tournament with his lady looking on at him!

Riana.

And you have never been absent from my thoughts for a moment. (Very solemnly.) Sergius: I think we two have found the higher love. When I think of you, I feel that I could never do a base deed, or think an ignoble thought.

Sergius.

My lady and my saint! (Clasping her reverently.)

Almost immediately after this exchange of sublime feelings, it is ironical that one finds Sergius flirting with the servant girl Louka and trying to embrace her.

Sergius: Louka, do you know what the higher love is?

Louka.

(Astonished). No, sir.

Sergius.

Very fatiguing thing to keep up for any length of time, Louka. One feels the need of some relief after it (Shaw, 1898: 69)

Sergius's words express his difficulty in maintaining the affected pose of 'higher love'. Sergius also seems to realize the emptiness of some of his cherished ideals and exclaims at the end: "Oh! War! War! The dream of patriots and heroes! A fraud Bluntschli, a hollow sham, like love." Later in the play, one finds Riana, asking herself, "Oh, what sort of god is this, that I have been worshipping?" when she finds out that Segius has been flirting with Louka. Now that Bluntschli has "found her out", she has discarded her affectation of a "noble attitude and a thrilling voice" (Shaw, 1989: 70)

She also gets rid of her romantic illusion of 'higher love', which like her views about war and soldiers, is probably derived from her reading of romances. Riana learns to shed such deceptions, and to be honest to herself. She changes and grows to adopt a more mature view of love based on honest, mutual understanding. The audience grows and matures with her and learns "that love requires honesty and respect more than romance; that soldiering is an awful and deadly business;" (Satran 30

## Conclusion

Through a bunch of cookie-cutter characters, Shaw exposes the fallacy of love in Arms and the Man. Love and its intricacies make the story quite contrastive to the one we see in A Farewell to Arms. Sergius and Riana both believe in the so-called „higher love“ in which there is no carnal desire. They promise each other that they will never do a base thing in each other's absence. Yet, they are quite irresponsible when it comes to keeping their words. So to speak, their higher love is a mere hoax. She gives shelter to Bluntschli, the Swiss-born Serbian fugitive, in her room at night because his life was at stake. This clearly shows how humane and kind Riana is to a random person whom she never met before. However, letting the man kiss her hand and allowing him to sleep on her bed creates a bit of confusion because she is about to marry Sergius in no time. “Lovely Riana is first appalled by his cowardice, then charmed and sympathetic, and then . . . well, that's the play” (Kennedy). What makes the whole episode so dramatic is when she calls him “a chocolate cream soldier” (Act I, 27) .

Bluntschli has major trust issues with her as he says, “I admire you; but I find it impossible to believe a single word you say ”(Act III, 69).

On the other hand, Sergius, without Riana's knowledge, indulges in even more loathsome behavior. He looks happy with Riana in their „Platonic love“ relationship. But at the very sight of Louka, he lets loose his libido without any qualms of conscience. This is the same Sergius who says to Riana, “If you are away five minutes, it will seem five hours” (Act II, 48). Surely lies and sham intertwine with love in a chimerical shape .In

a humbler stratum of society, Nicola helps Louka get a job at the Petkoff house and makes her what she is today – an ambitious and smart woman. He dreams of marrying her one day and having his own shop in the town. Ironically, Louka never cares about what Nicola has to say as she believes that she was not even born to live a low and rustic lifestyle. She says, “Sell your manhood for 30 levas ...You shall never be master in mine” (Act III, 74). She, who believes that “Service degrades the employer as much as the employed, is one of those fiercely independent spirits so beloved by Shaw” .

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