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Resumo

O objetivo deste trabalho é estudar o feminismo de Bernard Shaw tal como se revela em suas crenças, teorias e peças dramáticas.

Os dois primeiros capítulos dizem respeito às teorias de Shaw sobre a arte dramática e às suas idéias feministas.

O feminismo expresso nas duas peças - The Philanderer e Mrs Warren's Profession - é discutido em termos de personagens, situações e resoluções do conflito, nos dois capítulos seguintes.

Observa-se que Shaw advoga a liberação da mulher de atitudes convencionais que a afetam de forma adversa. Ele assinala o modelo duplo, com a sátira e ironia que o caracterizam. A crença de Shaw na igualdade dos sexos e sua fé nas habilidades das mulheres são salientadas nas suas peças. Em ambas as peças Shaw retrata algumas mulheres fortes que desafiam as convenções sociais como uma forma de protesto contra a exploração das mulheres. As peças tambem mostram o egoismo masculino e o cavalherismo condescendente em relação ás mulheres. Além das mulheres fortes que têm sucesso em sua rebelião contra as práticas sociais injustas Shaw tambem mostra algumas mulheres que sofrem privações, tanto física como emocionalmente. As mulheres fortes e rebeldes também sofrem tais carências apesar de sua vitória em algumas áreas. Shaw torna as peças "desagradáveis" para fazer com que a audiência reconheça os males sociais,

especialmente a forma com que as mulheres são mutiladas em sua luta contra o sistema predominante. O elemento positivo nestas peças está no respeito e admiração que as mulheres fortes inspiram apesar de seus fracassos e perdas. O irredutível auto-respeito e a solidaridade dessas mulheres notáveis transmitem uma nota de esperança.

O feminismo de Shaw é louvável e é transmitido com o apelo especial de Shaw nas duas peças.

Abstract

It is the aim of this work to study Bernard Shaw's feminism, as revealed in his beliefs, theories and dramatic works.

The first two chapters deal with Shaw's theories of dramatic art and his feministic ideas.

The feminism expressed in the two plays The Philanderer and Mrs Warren's Profession is discussed in terms of the characters, situations and resolution of the conflict, in the next two chapters.

It is seen that Shaw argues for Woman's liberation from conventional attitudes which affect her adversely. He points out the double standard, with his characteristic satire and irony. Shaw's belief in the equality of sexes and his faith in the abilities of women are brought out in the two plays. In both the plays Shaw has portrayed some strong women who defy the conventions of society as a protest against the exploitation of women. The plays also show male selfishness and condescending chivalry towards women. In addition to the strong women who succeed in their rebellion against society's unfair practices, Shaw also shows some women who suffer deprivations - both physical and emotional. The strong, rebellious women also suffer such deprivations despite their victory in some areas. Shaw makes the plays "unpleasant" to make the audience recognize the social

evils, especially the way women are mutilated in their struggle agaist the prevailing system. The positive element in these plays is the respect and admiration which the strong women inspire despite their failings and losses. The unshakeable self-respect and the solidarity of these remarkable women sound a note of hope.

Shaw's feminism is laudable and it comes through with the special appeal of Shaw's art in the two plays.

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A playwright who confines himself to popular plays is like a blind man's dog who goes wherever the blind man pulls him, on the ground that both of them want to go the same place.

Bernard Shaw

A dramatist may have two ends in view: one, to please the public, the other to satisfy himself. I have chosen to satisfy myself.

Henry Becque

The work of art is to dominate the spectator; the spectator is not to dominate the work of art.

Oscar Wilde

INTRODUCTION

The plays of George Bernard Shaw and the characters in his plays have always fascinated me. His women characters have been of particular interest to me because of their refreshing vitality, sense of independence, strength, and feminism.

There are many Shavian plays which show delightful courtships between men and women ending in happy marriages. However, it is the plays which do not end in the expected marriages that show the more feministic, independent and strong women. It is these plays that aroused my interest in Shaw's feminism. I have chosen two such plays from Shaw's early playwrighting career: *The Philanderer* and *Mrs Warren's Profession*.

It is the purpose of this work to give an idea of Shaw's feminism and to see how his feminism gets translated in the above mentioned plays.

The first chapter focusses on Shaw as a playwright, and studies his dramatic theory and practice, attempting to glean some coherent patterns and techniques that make his plays at once delightful and thought-provoking. It also makes a brief note of

some significant trends in the early plays, middle period plays and the later plays of this playwright who lived to be a nonagerian.

The second chapter discusses Shaw's ideas on Woman, her status in society and home, his views on love, marriage,sex and related subjects, which together make up his feministic views. An attempt has been made to collect the relevant information from available material from the staggering variety of his writings - ranging from his earliest writing to his later critical works, socialist articles, public speeches, letters and the impressive array of his dazzling plays.

The next two chapters discuss the concepts related to feminism in the two plays chosen for this study, with special reference to the women characters.

The last chapter recapitulates the arguments presented in the previous chapters to give a concise idea of Shaw's feminism as revealed in his two early plays The_Philanderer and Mrs_Warren's_Profession.

CHAPTER I

SHAW, THE PLAYWRIGHT

"In the born writer the style is the man; and with the born dramatist the play is the subject," declares Shaw [1]. Shaw is both a born writer and born dramatist. A knowledge of Shaw as a man and as a playwright and an idea of his style and dramaturgy are desirable before undertaking a study of his plays.

Shaw lived for almost a century - from 1856 to 1950. During his long life he was very active and highly productive in many areas. Though considered by many as the greatest English playwright since Shakespeare, Shaw did not confine his energy to playwrighting alone. His interests, careers and contributions reach far beyond the field of drama. Arriving in London as a young, shy, provincial Irishman from Dublin, he spent his first seven years in London writing novels which were all rejected by publishers. But such repeated rejections of his writings did not succeed in dissuading him from writing. Having started to work at the age of fifteen, he did not have any formal university education. He compensated for this by educating himself at the British Museum, making it his second home. He joined several

study groups and debating societies thereby broadening his intellectual horizon. Overcoming his excruciating shyness, provincial accent and manners, he became one of the brilliant platform speakers in London by sheer will and unrelenting effort. He gained entrance into most of the avant-garde intellectual and social circles in London. Soon he became an active socialist, joined the Fabian Society and became its star speaker, indispensable committeeman, and pamphleteer. In addition to taking part in all such activities, most of which he did without any pay, he also worked as a journalist-critic of books, paintings, music and drama. He made a reputation as a critic in the columns of The Pall Mall Gazette, The World, The Star, and The Saturday Review. Amidst all these demanding activities he found time to write his first major critical work, The Quintessence of Ibsenism. He also served as a borough councillor for the St.Pancras vestry. It was not until 1892 that he finished his first play, at the age of 36. The public and the critics found his early plays very unconventional and even shocking. After his third play, Mrs Warren's Profession, which was banned, Shaw somewhat changed his tactics and gradually gained a grudging acceptance. In about twelve years, with his delightful humour, wit and facility for dialogue, he established himself as an irresistible force in the English theater.

Even after becoming a successful playwright, Shaw continued to write on a variety of subjects. Titles of some of his writings

attest to his prolific interests : Essays in Fabian Socialism, The Case for Equality, Common Sense about the War, How to Settle the Irish Question, 'What is to be done with doctors?', 'School and Schoolmasters', Imprisonment, Ruskin's politics, The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism, The Political Madhouse in America and Nearer Home and many other works. Collections of his letters, which are highly enjoyable, form many volumes. His prefaces, which in many cases were written long after the play and have apparently little to do with the plays, make up a formidable volume in themselves. They form a series of lively, interesting and often provocative essays on a variety of subjects.

Shaw's dramatic writing alone comprises more than fifty plays. They vary from romantic comedy to melodrama, farce, courtesan play, domestic drama, historical play, religious drama, discussion play, futuristic play, political extravaganza and so on. Many of his plays defy categorization. Often elements of different genres are present within the same play. Many of Shaw's plays are tragi-comedies.

When Shaw first started as a playwright in the 1890s, his works met with a lot of opposition. Critics acknowledged the wit, the lively and delightful dialogue, the interesting characters, the brilliancy of the work as a whole and so on, but they declared that Shaw's plays were not plays at all, whatever else they might be. Shaw's defiance of the conventional rules of plot,

structure, characterization and so on no doubt contributed to the adverse criticism of his plays. Shaw-the playwright's rebellion against dramatic conventions was the result of Shaw-the drama critic's reaction against the drama of his time.

Shaw's main complaint against the late 19th century drama was that it endorsed, without any critical enquiry, the conventional morality that was handed down to it. Shaw believed that the purpose of drama - or any great literature - was to "force the public to reconsider its morals."[2]. Even the great Bard does not escape from Shaw's criticism in this respect. Shaw, more than anyone else, recognized and appreciated Shakespeare's genius. But he deplored Shakespeare's lack of interest and passion in social and moral reforms. In Shaw's view, the most important works of art are those which, as instruments of evolution, "dare to criticize public opinion and existing institutions."[3].

Shaw found such a questioning attitude in Ibsen's drama, and he welcomed such plays with enthusiasm. In such plays he saw a conflict of unsettled ideals: "The conflict is not between clear right and wrong."[4]. The villain is as conscientious, if not more, as the hero. The most interesting question in the play is to decide who is the hero and who is the villain. In fact there is no villain and no hero. If the conflict is between unmistakable good and unmistakable evil, the result would be a crude drama of villain and hero. A dramatist who believes in an

absolute morality of clear right and wrong, valid for all times, places and occasions, would piously glorify the hero and indignantly vilify the villain. Shaw declared that he did not want to deal in such "cheap wares".[5]. In Shaw's own plays it is often very difficult to decide who is the protagonist and who is the antagonist. As Eric Bentley points out, one of the attractive features in Shaw's plays is that the antagonist engages as much of the attention and emotion as the protagonist. Sometimes Shaw "toppled over and came out in favour of the antagonist."[6].

Shaw, like Shakespeare, is able to empathize with all the characters. Because of such a facility, he presents all points of view, including diametrically opposite points of view, with equal passion. The result is that the reader is often left with a momentary conviction of each view. Eric Bentley praises Shaw's "unequalled gift of sympathizing with both sides" and his ability to confront spokesmen of different outlooks.

Shaw wanted the theater to show a new morality in which conventional, existing morals and ideals are not seen as absolute and permanent. In his opinion, morals and ideals, like clothing, have to be changed, discarded and replaced by new ones periodically. Values have to be tested, endorsed and continually renewed according to the changing conditions of life. In The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism Shaw explains that his business, as a professional original thinker, is to "question and test all the established creeds and codes to

see how far they are still valid and how far worn out or superseded, and even to draft new creeds and codes."[7].

What Shaw values most in Ibsen's plays is such a critical examination of existing and conventional morality, and the search for a new, more satisfactory morality through discussion. It is no wonder that in Shaw's own plays such discussion comes to take the primary place. Shaw wrote that he was a moral revolutionary interested in the "struggle between human vitality and the artificial system of morality."[8]. The human vitality Shaw calls variously as the "Will", the "Force of Creative Evolution", "Life Force" and so on. It is akin to the soul. The artificial system of morality is the artificial conscience imposed on the individual by the misguided belief in the validity of moral codes and social institutions. Many a Shavian play revolves around the conflict between "human vitality" and the "artificial systems", and the characters who embody these opposing forces clash with verbal fire and emotional intensity.

Shaw had started questioning conventional values and morality long before reading Ibsen. In his very first book My Dear Dorothea, written in 1878, and in his novels written before 1884, he defies traditional morality. In The Quintessence of Ibsenism Shaw explains Ibsen's moral views - or what he supposes and understands to be Ibsen's views. But they are very much Shaw's own ethical codes. In his study of Ibsenism Shaw explains and describes three types of human beings: idealist, realist and

Philistine. These three terms need special explanation because Shaw has his own definitions of them. Shaw asserts that human beings in general are repelled by reality which is disagreeable to them, and are attracted by illusions, which, like masks, hide the reality. These illusions come to be exalted as "ideals." Thus, in the Shavian terminology the word "ideal" is used mostly with sarcasm to mean a pretense, a lie, an illusion, a convention and so on. Shaw justifies this use by pointing out Ibsen's habit of harping on conventions and conventionalists as ideals and idealists.[9] Since such ideals start from the lack and fear of self-knowledge, they encourage self-deception and abuses committed in the name of ideals. Further, wicked persons are able to exploit others by advocating ideals such as "duty", "self-sacrifice", "obedience" and so on. Ideals thus become idols, which demand idolatry and human sacrifices to maintain their illusions. Idealism, like primitive religion, arises out of fear.[10].

The "realist", according to Shaw, is the rare man who has the courage to face reality without any masks and he dares to tear the masks to expose the reality behind. He is denounced by the idealist, who fears reality and anyone who shows it. The realist does not conform to the ideals of others in order to be seen as a good and moral person by others; he is one who "has come to have a deep respect for himself and faith in the validity of his own will."[11]. By this Shaw does not mean that any man

who follows his will is a realist or a benefactor. To Shaw, the final objective of Will is power over self. Thus the realist is one who demands a lot of self-control from himself. He does not merely rely on externally imposed norms but on his own critical thinking; his ethical search is the genuine conscience. His wilfulness and self-assertion are made safe by self-control and reason. Shaw is optimistic that the realist's will and the welfare of the society are not in opposition but work in the same direction.

The Philistine is one who himself neither erects masks nor tears them but is quite satisfied with the existing conditions and institutions. He does not attack and punish the realist with the fear, hatred and passion of the idealist. In a community of a thousand persons, seven hundred, according to Shaw, are Philistines; two hundred and ninety-nine will be idealists; the remaining one will be a realist.

It has to be stressed is that Shaw's classification of persons into idealists, realists and Philistines is not meant to be a rigid compartmentalization of human beings into exclusive categories. One can see that he sees them as a continuous spectrum of increasing self-knowledge, awareness, courage and mastery. The Philistine and idealists are potential realists, while realists are on the highest level of evolution. Furthermore, the same person can be idealist in one aspect or area, realist in another, and Philistine in yet another area.

Shaw warns his readers that the fact that a person is eminent in one specific department does not mean that he is even passably good in any other.[14]. He declares that "no specific virtue or vice in a man implies the existence of any other specific virtue or vice".[15]. As Alfred Turco,Jr. observes, labelling a person or a Shavian character strictly as an idealist or a realist or a Philistine would be exactly the same kind of uncritical idealization that Shaw deplored.

What Shaw urges is an ability to respond resourcefully, without prejudices and preconceptions arising from conventions. What he advocates is not the mere substitution of one formula for another but an alert and vigilant open-mindedness. Thus his relativism as against absolutism is not a refusal to have values but an ability to judge without preconceptions. He does not advocate that any conduct is permissible but that conduct should justify itself and be judged "by its effect upon life and not by its conformity to any rule or ideal."[12]. Ideals should not be considered so absolute as to justify all the means that are used to maitain them and attain them. There is no test of the morality of an act except "the test of its effect on human welfare."[13].

Shaw is aware that "ideals" normally mean goals for the future and that the world needs such ideals which are visions of a better future. But such ideals or goals are not masks to hide or avoid reality. In "The Illusions of Socialism" Shaw admits

that if one takes away from the activity of mankind that part of it which consists in the pursuit of illusions, one takes out the world's mainspring.[16]. Thus ideals in the negative sense mean self-deception while in the positive sense they denote cheerful incentives to strive after better realities.[17]. In other words, there is a progressive idealism and a conventional, reactionary idealism. Shaw admires the former and attacks the latter.

The above discussion of the Shavian terms "idealist", "realist" and "Philistine" is necessary to understand Shavian drama. In many of Shaw's plays, the conflict can be seen as a clash between idealism and realism.

In his first three plays, which he later called Plays Unpleasant, Shaw not only attacks social, political, economical and moral "ideals", but declares that his intention is to use dramatic power to "force the spectator to face unpleasant facts."[18]. Shaw's strategy is to make the audience feel uncomfortable and guilty for the social evils so that the audience will be moved to take some steps against such evils. After his third play Mrs Warren's Profession, which was banned, Shaw changed his strategy slightly. He did not stop being critical of social and moral codes, but he changed the focus of his attack, "dealing less with the crimes of society , and more with its romantic follies and with the struggles of individuals against those follies, [which] may be called , by contrast, Pleasant."[19].

One can see from Shaw's various remarks that he considers great art to be didactic and utilitarian rather than merely amusing and beautiful. He wants drama to cultivate, sensitize and civilize the consciousness of the audience : "Art should refine our sense of character and conduct, of justice and sympathy, greatly heightening our self-knowledge, self-control, precision of action, and considerateness, and making us intolerant of baseness, cruelty, injustice, and intellectual superficiality or vulgarity."[20]. Though Shaw does not believe in "Art for Art's Sake", he does not minimize the importance and necessity of aesthetic considerations. He declares that the "great dramatic poets, who are all incorrigible moralists and preachers, are forced to produce plays of extraordinary interest in order to induce our audience of shirkers and dreamers to swallow the pill."[21,22]. But Egon Friedell has remarked that though Shaw shrewdly coated his pill with chocolate in prescribing for the public, the public was shrewder than Shaw and licked off the chocolate without swallowing the pill.[23]. However, one sees that in Shaw's own plays, the aesthetic features are not mere sugar coatings for the moral message and preaching, but are the testimonies to the artist in Shaw.

Despite his avowed didactic and utilitarian philosophy, Shaw is an artist first and foremost in his plays. His works have been increasingly valued and enjoyed for their artistic merit rather than for their social message only.

Critics like Eric Bentley[24], Jacques Barzun[25] , Charles Berst[26], Margery Morgan[27] and A. M. Gibbs[28] have amply demonstrated that Shaw's plays are artistic achievements of remarkable strength and beauty. Shaw himself, in his mid-career, wrote exasperatedly that though his plays do show an understanding of economic principles, "would anyone but a buffleheaded idiot of a university professor, half crazy with correcting examination papers, infer that all my plays were written as economic essays, and not as plays of life, character, and human destiny like those of Shakespeare or Euripides?"[29]. He often expressed irritation that purely dramatic passages in his plays were taken to be his interpolations of his political views.[30]. It is possible that his works were seen more as propaganda than as art because of his own oft-repeated declaration that art should be didactic and utilitarian.

Starting from his early career, Shaw had to deal with critics who felt that his plays had no plot, characters, structure or emotion. The critics declared that Shaw's plays had too much talk, too much intellectualization, too little action and too little emotion. To the critics' complaint that his plays were "all talk", Shaw replied: "it is quite true that my plays are all talk, just as Raphael's pictures are all paint, Michaelangelo's statues all marble, Beethoven's symphonies all noise."[31].

Later critics like Eric Bentley, Jacques Barzun, Martin Meisel, Charles Berst, Margery Morgan and A.M.Gibbs have established the artistic value of Shavian plays and have amply demonstrated that Shavian dramas have action (external action and more importantly, inner and psychological action), emotion, plot, structure and everything that makes a good drama.

Critics like Martin Meisel[32] and Charles A. Carpenter[33] see some distinct phases and trends in Shaw's plays, progressing with time. Margery Morgan also observes that Shaw's art changed direction many times.[34]. Meisel sees Shaw's early plays as the more emotional type of drama. Romantic comedies, farce,.and melodrama are more common among them. Mrs_Warren's_Profession, Arms_and__the_Man, The_Philanderer, You_Never_Can_Tell, Candida, The_Devil's_Disciple, Captain_Brassbound's_Conversion and others are some examples. In the second phase, discussion becomes more important. According to Shaw himself, Man_and_Superman marks the beginning of the second or middle phase in his playwriting career.[35]. Other such discursive plays are John_Bull's_Other Island, Major__Barbara, Getting__Married, Misalliance, Fanny's First_Play, and Heartbreak__House. The last phase, as Meisel points out, is characterized by philosophical and political extravaganzas like Back_to_Methuselah,_The__Apple_Cart, Too_True To__Be__Good, On__The__Rocks, The__Simpleton__of_the_Unexpected Islands, Geneva and Farfetched__Fables. The extravaganzas of the later period are more freely conceived and are often fantastic

vehicles for ideas. The extravaganzas are close to science fiction and utopian-dystopian fables.

All of Shaw's plays are drama of ideas. But Meisel points out that they differ in the relation between the action-plot and idea-plot and in the source of dramatic interest. In the early plays action-plot and idea-plot are equally important, but the "emotional fabric of the action-plot was treated as the source of dramatic interest."[34]. Shaw uses emotion to engage the attention of the audience. In the later discursive plays, according to Shaw's contemporary, friend, colleague and drama critic A. B. Walkley, the action-plot is warped and maimed in being made to serve as the vehicle "for the idea-plot".[36]. The action-plot is completely subordinated to the idea-plot and the dialectic is treated as the source of dramatic interest. In the still later extravaganzas, the action-plot <u>is</u> the idea plot; the spectacle of ideas working themselves out in action becomes the source of dramatic interest.

Regarding the relation between emotion and thought in Shavian drama, Desmond MacCarthy observes that Shaw's audience are "lifted on waves of emotion and dashed on thought."[37]. In Eric Bentley's view, Shaw destroyed the traditional dichotomy between thought and emotion by making thought itself an emotion. [38].

Martin Meisel points out that Shaw is an advocate of moral and political realism in his early plays and an advocate of

creative Evolution in his later plays; that Shaw is an attacker of the illusions and orthodoxies of the past in the early phase, while he is a visionary giving shape to the myths and orthodoxies of the future in the later phase.[39].

A distinct feature of Shaw's plays is the vein of humour and wit which runs throughout the plays, even in the midst of emotional turbulence. Many of Shaw's plays have hilarious anti-climaxes. Shaw's own explanation of his method is interesting and revealing: "In order to gain a hearing it was necessary for me to attain the footing of a privileged lunatic with the licence of a jester. My method is to take the utmost trouble to find the right thing to say and then say it with the utmost levity."[40].

Another related quality of Shavian drama is its irony and satire, especially directed at social evils, and at repressive, hypocritical traditions. Shaw has often been accused of a lack of seriousness, lack of feeling and a lack of a sense of the tragic. But his humour, jokes, irony, and satire have also been seen as his way of coping with despair and anger over injustice and evils. Humour has its therapeutic values and comedies have been traditionally used to make the audience laugh at themselves and correct their follies. Shaw wants to make his audience laugh at their own mistakes and declares that his aim is to chasten their morals with ridicule.[41].

Paradox is another inevitable element of Shavian drama. Shaw has often been called the archparadoxist. G.K.Chesterton is said

to have defined a Shavian play as an expanded paradox.[42]. Eric Bentley's appropriately observes that Shaw saw life itself as a mass of paradoxes.[43]. Shaw's paradoxes are not merely amusing; they bring out the neglected aspects of facts and reveal the relativity and complexity of all truth.

Another distinctive feature of Shavian drama is the extraordinary eloquence, self-knowledge and insights of the characters. Classical drama often used such devices to make the play intelligible and to define the characters to the audience. Regarding this feature of his drama, Shaw observes: "my sort of play would be impossible unless I endowed my characters with powers of self-consciousness and self-expression which they would not possess in real life. You could not have Esop's fables unless the animals talked."[44].

Commenting on Shavian plays and Shavian characters, W. H. Auden says: "His plays are a joy to watch, . . . because the energy shown by any of his characers is so wildly in excess of what their situation practically requires that if it were to be devoted to anything 'worthwhile', they would wreck the world in five minutes."[45].

Shavian plays do not have pat solutions at the end. One does not see traditional happy endings in many of Shaw's plays. As in real life, in the Shavian drama one does not have neat solutions or a panacea for allproblems and conflicts. Shaw often leaves the play open-ended. The reader has to think, feel and wrestle out

some viable solution to satisfy his quest. Shavian plays are like intellectual games. They force the reader to take an active role and to engage in a battle of wits with the author.

One can see the impact of the different talents and abilities of Shaw in his plays. The lively dialogues and the skillful arguments of the Shavian characters no doubt derive their energy from Shaw's own skill as orator and debater. The questioning of morality, the attention to stage directions, and the skillful use of dramatic traditions and devices are those of Shaw, the drama-critic. Shaw's knowledge and love of music, imbibed from childhood, have imparted a unique musical quality to his plays. Shaw said that he learnt the art of playwriting from the masters of the universal language of music - Handel, Mozart, Rossini, Verdi, Haydn, Beethoven, and Wagner. The musicians, he claimed, taught him as much as Shakespeare and Ibsen. According to W.H.Auden, Shaw's writing has "an effect nearer to that of music than the work of any of the so called pure writers."[46]. Edmund Wilson notes that Einstein compared Shaw's plays to Mozart's music.[47]. "My method, my system, my tradition, is founded upon music. It is not founded upon literature at all... If you study operas and symphonies, you will find a useful clue to my particular type of writing", says Shaw.[48].

One also sees the inevitable influences of Shaw's political, economical and moral views in his plays, expressed through the words of the characters. All his biographers and many critics

have pointed out that Karl Marx, Henry George, John Stuart Mill, William Morris, Shelley, Wagner, Ibsen and others have influenced and stimulated Shaw's thinking and left their mark on his works.[49].

Shaw never claims originality in his art; he even takes trouble to deny it when praised for originality. "I am a crow who have followed many ploughs" says Shaw. He points out that his stories are old stories and adds: "My characters are the familiar harlequin and columbine, clown and pantaloon . . . my stage tricks and suspenses and thrills and jests are the ones in vogue when I was a boy, by which time my grandfather was tired of them."[50]. However, one cannot take Shaw's self-deprecating words too seriously. He does create something new, namely the questioning of conventional morality and defiance of conventional romantic logic of the contemporary theater. Furthermore, as Margery Morgan reminds, "whatever he borrowed was transformed in an imagination so extravagantly individual that it takes a strict dialectical framework to hold its anarchic energies."[51]. Martin Meisel points out that though Shaw uses many elements from conventional theater, he uses them in such a way as to change them, to ridicule them and to invert them; Eric Bentley also points out that Shaw surprises his audience by giving a naturalistic twist to stereotypes of characters and situations.[52].

In conclusion one can say with John Palmer that "if Bernard Shaw is a genius, he is a genius for the same reason that Shakespeare is a genius. He is a genius not because he has anything new to say, but because he has a passionate and a personal way of saying it."[53].

Having an idea of Bernard Shaw the playwright, and a knowledge of his views on drama and his practice from the above study, one can proceed to a study of his feminism. The next chapter is an attempt to collect Shaw's views on Woman and related subjects, and to explore his feminism.

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CHAPTER II

SHAW'S FEMINISM

Among Shaw's fiction and non-fiction one finds ample evidence of his feministic views. There is also evidence that he he was feministic not only in his theories but also in practice.

Shaw's very first book, *My Dear Dorothea*, written when he was 22, advises a young girl to reject conventional ideals. Here one already sees the beginnings of a budding feminist who urges woman to liberate herself. His five novels, written before he was twenty-seven, have very unconventional, self-willed and feministic women characters. *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* written in 1891 exposes the not-so-noble motives underlying the images of "Womanly woman" and "Manly man" and argues vehemently that women should liberate themselves from the restricting and tyrannical image of "womanly woman." In the numerous Shavian plays one finds many women who show remarkable self-reliance, self-respect and independence. Many Shavian women value their self-respect as the top-most priority in their lives. As to their independence, it is not just in one area but in all the important areas of human life, such as economical, sexual, emotional and intellectual.

A statement that Shaw made in 1895 shows that he considered the improvement of the relations between men and women to be of paramount importance: ". . . no change that has taken place in this century has been more obviously a change for the better than the change in the relations between men and women."[1] Shaw argued that woman is not very different from man in most areas and theefore she should not be treated very differently from men. He was a vigorous supporter of the equality of both sexes. And he consistently fought for the rights of women throughout his life. As Barbara Bellow Watson points out in her book, A Shavian Guide to the Intelligent Woman, he stood for woman's right to exercise her intellect and will, without any fuss about her gender; he urged woman to have self-respect, self-love, and self-direction, "as far as her spirits will carry her."[2]

Many of Shaw's ideas about women, and the relations between men and women are taken for granted today, but at the time he expressed them they seemed shocking and paradoxical. Though many of his feministic ideas have been fulfilled, it is also true that many other feministic ideas of Shaw have not yet come true and are forgotten and ignored. Rodelle Weintraub points out that the very fact that Shaw looks somewhat outdated in some respects shows how successful he and his like-minded contemporaries have been in their fight for reforms; "Yet much of Shaw is not only still fresh but can be seen in the banners and goals of the contemporary feminist movement", declares Rodelle Weintraub.[3]

Shaw is not the first or only author of his time in England to portray spirited and strong willed women. Women authors like the Brontes, George Eliot and Jane Austen had already created intelligent and strong women characters in their novels. As Carolyn Heilbrun points out, at the turn of the century, from about 1880 for about fifty years, many male authors like Wilkie Collins, George Meredith, Thomas Hardy, George Gissing, Ibsen and Henry James also created magnificent and courageous women in their works.[4] Among English playwrights, Shaw was prominent for creating remarkable women. Barbara Bellow Watson observes that the temper of the time was ripe for change and that Shaw was the change for which his time was ripe.[5]

In My Dear Dorothea (1878), Shaw advises a little girl to be as selfish as she can.[6] A little girl, as Watson points out, combines the two "sacred and misprized groups, woman and child."[7] Thus Shaw undertakes to urge that group of humanity which is, paradxically, oppressed by the worship and condescendence of others. The advice of selfishness is just the opposite of the advice of self-sacrifice that was traditionally given to women, as a quality suitable and natural for women. Even twelve years after Shaw wrote My Dear Dorothea, society saw a woman expressing self-love as an unnatural and indecorous phenomenon. In 1890, even a socialist like William T.Stead expressed his shocked reaction to Marie Bashkirtseff's statement "I love myself." Such open admission of self-love by a woman was

so contrary to the ideal of womanliness that Stead expressed his doubt that Marie Bashkirtseff could be a woman: "Of the distinctively womanly, there is in her but little trace. She was the very antithesis of a true woman. . . . Marie was artist, musician, wit, philosopher, student, anything you like but a natural woman with a heart to love, and a soul to find its supreme satisfaction in sacrifice for lover or for child. . . . she was very clever, no doubt; but woman she was not."[8]

The above quote shows that love and self-sacrifice were the prominent traits of the "ideal" woman of the romantic convention, or the "womanly woman" as Shaw mischievously calls her, parodying Stead. Shaw vehemently denounces the idealism which forces self-sacrifice on a woman under the pretence that she likes it and condemns her as unwomanly if she ventures to contradict the pretence, as "the meanest abominations of idealists".[9] In the Preface to Getting Married Shaw again asserts that under the contemporary marriage laws and conditions of society, women are called "womanly" only when they regard themselves as existing solely for the use of men.[10]

He also draws attention to the double standard, according to which a man who pretends that his soul finds supreme satisfaction in self-sacrifice is seen as a coward and a weakling. Society considers a man as a "manly" man who takes the Bashkirtseff view of himself and who loves himself. Men are not the less loved for being self-assertive and self-loving.

In contrast to the praise of self-sacrifice in a woman Shaw points out the negative aspects of a self-sacrificer. Such a person, he declares, is "always a drag, a responsibility, a reproach, an everlasting and unnatural trouble with whom no really strong soul can live." [11]

Shaw shows that self-sacrifice can be used in destructive ways. In the Shavian play The Devil's Disciple, Mrs Dudgeon is self-sacrificing to the extent of denying herself love and happiness. Such self-denial eventually makes her bitter and hard. She expects such extreme self-sacrifice and self-denial from everybdy else and, when they disppoint her, she becomes hard and cruel. She uses her self-sacrifice to tyrannize others. Mrs Collins in Getting Married is another kind of self-sacrificing woman who cannot be anything except an out-and out wife and mother; all her children run away from her; her husband does not tell her anything at all for fear of hurting such a womanly woman's feelings. She is such a helpless self-sacrificing being that she becomes a dependent and a burden to others. She is "like a bird born in a cage, that would die if you let it loose in the woods."[24]

Shaw detests uncritical submission on the part of women and domineering authority on the part of men. Lise Pedersen, for instance, points out Shaw's criticism of Shakespeare for portraying the subdual of woman and the brutal, domineering attitudes of men in The Taming of the Shrew. Pedersen compares

Shaw's Pygmalion and Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew.[12] Shaw criticizes Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew in a letter to the Pall Mall Gazette in 1888. In this lettr Shaw asks "all men and women who respect one another" to boycott the play. He condemns Petruchio as a "coarse, thick-skinned money hunter, who sets to work to tame his wife exactly as brutal people tame animals or children - that is, by breaking their spirit by domineering cruelty." Shaw does not stop with condemning Pertuchio's macho attitudes but proceeds to condemn Katherine also for her speech in which she says a woman's husband is her lord, her life, her keeper, her head, her soverign and so on. Such a speech, Shaw declares, is degrading and acceptable only to an audience of bullies in an age when woman was a mere chattel. He asserts that such a speech should be intolerable to modern audience.[13]. It is clear that Shaw denounces and despises a mentality of seeing men as the lords and masters and the women as the subservient subjects.

Pedersen points out that in Pygmalion, Shaw takes situations and even some aspects of the characters similar to those in Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew, and treats them in such a way as to "repudiate the male chauvinism of his day and Shakespeare's and to support women's liberation, a cause for which he was an early pioneer."[14] In Pygmalion, the former flowergirl of the slums succeeds in rebelling against the bullying professor of phonetics. And the bully himself admits

that he likes and admires the self-respecting rebel in his former female student while he despises a submissive and slavish woman.

In The Quintessence of Ibsenism Shaw expresses the core of his feminism:

> our society, being directly dominated by men, comes to regard Woman, not as an end in herself like Man, but solely as a means of ministering to his appetite. The ideal wife is one who does everything that the ideal husband likes, and nothing else. Now to treat a person as a means instead of an end is to deny that person's right to live. Woman, if she dares face the fact that she is being so treated, must either loathe herself or else rebel. [15] (emphasis mine)

Shaw asserts that it is an idealistic illusion to believe that women have a natural vocation and taste for domestic life, the care of children and self-sacrifice; Shaw argues that society's ideas of what is "natural" for women are arbitrary: "The domestic career is no more natural to all women than the military career is natural to all men; . . . If we have come to think that the nursery and the kitchen are the natural sphere of a woman, we have done so exactly as English children come to think that a cage is the natural sphere of a parrot: because they have never seen one anywhere else."[16]

Shaw asserts that an exclusively domestic life has a narrowing effect on a woman's mind. He declares that most women who are thoroughly home-bred become unfit for human society.[13] Allowing for Shaw's habitual and deliberate overstatement, it is

true that a woman's potentials are stunted by an exclusively domestic upbringing and training. He points out that so little is expected of women in other areas that they do not have opportunity or incentive to learn other things. Shaw impatiently rejects Dickens's "attempts to manufacture admirable heroines by idealizations of home-bred womanhood."[17] In Shaw's opinion, women are improved by the escape from home provided by colleges.[18] "The revolt of one intelligent daughter in the middle class to achieve an independent working life humanizes her whole family in an astonishingly short time",declares Shaw.[19]

The selfishness that Shaw preaches to women Though Shaw preaches "selfishness" to women as an antidote for the traditional advice of self-sacrifice is not the ordinary selfishness of uncontrolled indulgence; nor is it the pursuit of personal happiness without regard to the consequences of one's acts; nor is it a lack of consideration for others. The Shavian definition of selfishness is a grand selfishness of self-respect. "Always have the highest respect for yourself, and you will be too proud to act badly", he says.[20]

The selfishness which he urges women to adopt is a rehabilitation or revaluation of the idea of the self. It is the opposite of undue meekness, humility, self-sacrifice and a blind conformity to imposed ideals. It is the best expression of the self, including self-esteem, self-assertion, self-discipline and honesty. It is not just the pursuit of happiness as an end in

itself. Shaw points out that to go after happiness is a self-indulgent, self-defeating folly because happiness can be attained only in the effort to achieve something else. [21]

Contrary to the tradition of exalting self-sacrifice, Shaw points out that self-love is also necessary since it is a prerequisite to develop love for others. He declares that one who sacrifices oneself will not hesitate to sacrifice others. This is why Jack Tanner in the Shavian play Man_and_Superman declares that it is the self-sacrificing woman who will sacrifice others most recklessly. In the same play one also sees the warning: "If you begin by sacrificing yourself to those you love, you will end by hating those to whom you have sacrificed yourself." [22] Shaw also draws attention to the fact that though self-surrender is considered to be an indispensable element in true womanly love, its repulsive effect is well known and feared in practice by both sexes.[23]

Another advice that Shaw gives Woman is to repudiate what is traditionally exalted as her "duty". As Margaret Dalziel in Popular_Fiction_100_Years_Ago points out, in the popular fiction of about a hundred and thirty years ago, the ideal heroine's "primary obligation, established by the law of God and nature, and fundamental to the social order, was submissiveness to authority. This was her duty and her joy."[25]

Like Shaw, John Stuart Mill also believed that "woman's nature" and her "duty" are actually society's artificial constructions:

> "All women are brought up from the very earliest years in the belief that their ideal of character is the very opposite to that of man; not self-will, and government by self-control, but submission, and yielding to the control of others. All the moralities tell them that it is the duty of women, and all he current sentimentalities that it is their nature, to live for others; to make complete abnegations of themselves, and to have no life but in their affections."[26].

Shaw no doubt found John Stuart Mill's ideas very congenial to his own. In The Quintessence of Ibsenism Shaw mounts a powerful argument for Man's repudiation of duty in the chapter called 'The Two Pioneers' and he goes on to prove the even more pressing need for Woman to repudiate her "duty" - that is, the concept of conventional duty, which she has accepted and internalized without critical examination.[27]. Elsewhere, Shaw urges Woman to undertake another kind of duty, which he defines as "the consideration for the consequences of one's acts."[28]. Being responsible for one's acts requires intelligence and reflection. Since these qualities are not stressed in the conventional ideal of Woman, Shaw advises Woman to be unconventional and to educate herself to be intelligent, reflective, rational and responsible. When he preaches repudiation of duty, he is not preaching thoughtless anarchy. More than anybody else Shaw is aware of the paradox that freedom can be achieved only through some form of restraint. He advocates

self-control in place of external control. He praises Marie Bashkirtseff for her self-control as much as he praises her for her self-love.

He takes Woman as the metaphor for all human beings who are suppressed from self-expression by the codes of convention. In arguing for Woman's struggle to liberate herself, he is arguing for the struggle of all people against repressive conventions.

Shaw argues that just as Man's duty to himself (which is assessed by himself) is more important than his duty to God (assessed by the priest), and his duty to his neighbours (assessed by society), Woman's duty to herself is more important than her duty to others. With his customary subversive enthusiasm he declares that Woman cannot emancipate herself unless she repudiates her womanliness, her duty to her husband, her children, to society, to the law, and to every one but herself. [29] He points out that once the idea of "duty" is internalized by Woman, she does not need an external victimizer. Woman becomes not directly the slave of Man, but of duty, and thus her freedom lies in the repudiation of duty. Just as "man's path to freedom is strewn with the wreckage of the duties and ideals he has trampled on", so must woman's be. Shaw realizes that many of the supposedly sacred ideals are actually instrumental in tyrannizing women, and predicts that a " whole basketful of ideals of the most sacred quality will be smashed by the achievement of equality for women and men."[30]

Shaw also draws attention to the fact - risking the anger of his fellowmen - that the cultured, gifted man of the modern times is just as selfish as the primitive paleolithic man. The modern woman's soul, Shaw asserts, is wasted to "gratify the imagination and stimulate the genius of the modern artist, poet, and philosopher."[31]

Another service Shaw does to Woman is to think of her and portray her as a fellow human being rather than as a paragon. When Woman is worshipped as a paragon on a pedestal, she is also imprisoned on the pedestal. Unrealistic expectations of virtues in a woman actually become a form of tyranny. Shaw insists that woman is a human being just like man and that it is unreasonable "to have one conception of humanity for the woman and another for the man, or one law for the woman and another for the man, or one artistic convention for woman and another for man." Such a practice, Shaw declares, is unnatural and unworkable.[32] Shaw points out that according to the conventional, romantic tradition woman was not considered as a fellow human being but as the "incarnation divinity of sex" and adds that regrettably women themselves "liked being worshipped on false pretences first."[33]

Shaw takes upon himself to dethrone Woman from the pedestal and put her on the ground. He rightfully claims that no male author born in the nineteenth- century outside Norway and Sweden "did more to knock Woman off her pedestal and plant her on the solid earth" than himself.[34] Yet Shaw has sufficient self-

knowledge to admit that, like all reactionaries, he was steeped in the tendency against which he was reacting, and that it was part of his conventional manners to concede a pedestal to every woman - that it was a relic of the tradition he inherited.[35]

Shaw explains that men's tendency to idealize Woman is a result of their dissatisfaction with themselves; that men want something to adore, something to worship, something to lift them up. And men got the "curious notion that if they took the women and denied that they were human beings; if they dressed them up in an extraordinary manner which entirely concealed the fact that they were human beings; if they set up a morality and a convention that women were angels; then they would succeed in making them angels."[36] As Barbara Bellow Watson observes, "Shaw's insistence that women are not angels but ordinary creatures, subject to temper tantrums, sexual infatuation and other lapses from decorum, is really a kindness, and certainly a step in preparing men to accept women as their equals."[37] Shaw created in his plays many fascinating women who have remarkable energy, intelligence and charm, but none of them are the paragons of the Victorian ideal.

Shaw brings out the defect in the conception of the ideal wife with his characteristic irony: "she is one who does everything that the ideal husband likes, and nothing else."[38] A Shavian character in the play Geneva contemptuously describes a woman character in the play as one who would have been "a most

comfortable wife . . . able to see everything within six inches of her nose and nothing beyond. A domestic paragon: a political idiot. In short, an ideal wife."[39]

Andrina Gilmartin draws attention to the fact that while the Victorian morality extolled "the home", "the wife", and "the mother", Shaw "spent his writing life impishly pricking these unrealistic bubbles, clowning his despair at what he considered dangerous illusions."[40] The many wives and mothers that Shaw created in his plays are illustrative of the fact that women are human beings and as such, they are not perfect people. Mrs Warren in Mrs Warren's Profession, Mrs Dudgeon in The Devil's Disciple, Catherine Petkoff in Arms and the Man, Candida in Candida, Mrs Clandon in You Never Can Tell, Mrs Whitefield in Man and Superman, Lady Britomart in Major Barbara, Mrs Higgins in Pygmalion, Mrs Tarleton in Misalliance, Mrs O'Flaherty in O'Flaherty, V.C. - these are all different kinds of mothers and they explode the Victorian myth that women, especially in the role of mothers, are all angels of goodness, purity, and wisdom. Many of these mothers are intelligent, shrewd and good but they are by no means angels without human frailties. Similarly, the wives in Shavian plays are not faultless paragons.

In his non-fictional, discursive writings Shaw expresses his feministic ideas on woman's position as wife and mother even more clearly. As a Fabian Socialist he crusaded to make motherhood a vocation and not an unpaid and often severely

penalized occupation. He urges society to "place the work of wife and mother on the same footing as other work: that is, on the footing of labour worthy of its hire; and provide for unemployment in it exactly as for unemployment in shipbuilding."[41] One has to be a woman to appreciate fully Shaw's sympathy for and understanding of woman's problems. In a letter he explains that the really hard position is that of the domestic woman "whose enormously valuable services, both to society and to her own household are accepted and even exacted as a matter of course, as if they were the least she could do in return for the privilege of being fed and clothed and housed and protected. . . . it is very hard to convince [the husband] that his wife is a productive worker; and the woman, unfortunately, is harder to convince than he is, no doubt because she does so many things, and does them in such an amateur way (not being directly and avowedly paid for them) that she does nothing well, and therefore has no belief in herself."[42]

Shaw is sensitive to the fact that it is infinitely more difficult for the domestic woman to maintain her own individuality than for a career woman who has escaped from domestic servitude as men escape from unskilled labour. He also points out to the career woman that her emancipation is actually made possible by the domestic woman's "ill paid, ill organized, ill recognized and consequently ill executed" labour and he urges the emancipated, undomestic woman to fight for the domestic

woman.[43] Such an advocacy for the solidarity of women is very much needed because, as Doris Stenton points out in The English Woman in History, the fight for enlarging the opportunities for women is often met with the indifference of their own sex; the "very success of some outstanding women made them singularly obtuse when it came to considering the position of women in general."[44]

Shaw argues for legitimizing the children of women who are not married to the fathers and declares that woman's right to have a child should not be saddled with the obligation to marry a man and thereby become his servant.[45] Lesbia Grantham in Getting Married is too independent and too fastidious to have a man clutter up her house. She wants to have children but does not want to be burdened with a husband: "If I am to be a mother, I really cannot have a man bothering me to be a wife at the same time."[46]

Shaw champions women's right to have the "freedom to breed the race without being hampered by the mass of irrelevant conditions implied in the institution of marriage." He declares that people who have never seen each other before and never intend to see one another again should have the freedom to produce children without loss of honor.[47] Shaw argues that marriage should not be obligatory for having children because a physical attraction may arise irresistibly between persons who cannot live together endurably for a week but can produce

excellent children.[48]

Some of Shaw's views on marriage are similar to those of many other socialists. Norbert Greiner points out that Shaw's ideas on the subjects of marriage and woman's position can be traced to the intellectual traditions of John Stuart Mill, Karl Marx, Friedric Engels and August Bebel.[49] Mill, for instance, criticized marriage because though man has the "nearest and dearest intimacies" with woman, he is the absolute master of woman and in such a system no "genuine or Christian love of freedom" can exist in man.[50] Socialists like Marx, Engel, Bebel and Belfort Bax view marriage and family as capitalistic institutions based on private property. Shaw also expresses such a view: he declares that a person who attacks marriage is hated because an attack on marriage is an attack on property.[51] In the socialists' view, marriage and family are idealized to mask the not-so-pleasant reality. Marriage and prostitution, according to the socialists, are very much alike, marriage being merely a kind of legal prostitution, a view also shared by Shaw.[52] While the socialist Belfort Bax compares marriage and prostitution to "purchase" and "hire"[53], Shaw declares that the difference between marriage and prostitution is the difference between Trade Unionism and unorganized casual labour."[54]

Shaw deplores the abuses of marriage and condemns the unfair laws, economics, personal relationships and assumptions involved in marriage. He sees contemporary marriage as sex slavery and

economic slavery. Family life, he declares, will not be decent until the dependence of women on men is abolished. Shaw draws attention to the fact that the economic dependence of a married woman is at its worst in the middle class; because the woman of the working class can turn to and support herself, however poorly; and a woman of the upper class usually has some property.[55] But the middle class woman, in Shaw's time had neither property nor any training or experience to earn her own living.

Shaw insists that marriage should not annul the constitutional rights of either party. He points out that contemporary marriage laws and conditions of society leave women neither politically nor personally free.

The commercial attitude of viewing woman as a commodity comes under severe attack in Shaw's works. He views the emphasis on the virginity and chastity of the bride as the relics of the custom of selling women to men, or the commercial habit of differentiating between a new article and a secondhand one. [56]

The economical arrangements implied in marriage, as Shaw points out, also affect the spiritual and contemplative lives of the husband and wife. Shaw tells us that Jesus saw "that the effect of marriage . . . was to make the couples sacrifice every higher consideration until they had fed and pleased one another."[57] In Shaw's view, "the greatest sacrifice in marriage is the sacrifice of the adventurous attidude towards

life: the being settled . . . it is a form of suicide."[58] He compares the settling down of men and women in marriage to the settling down of balloons that have lost their lifting margin of gas [59]. He observes that if marriage is incompatible with both the contemplative and adventurous life, "all the moralizings . . . cannot reconcile our souls to its slavery."[58]

However, Shaw does not advocate celibacy or abolition of marriage as a solution to the abuses of marriage. He recognizes that marriage is practically inevitable for most people and wants to reform the institution rather than avoid it or abolish it. One of the reforms that he urges is to make the individual economically independent of marriage and family.[59] This will liberate not only the woman but also the husband who otherwise carries the burden alone. Just as he speaks for the economic independence of the wife, Shaw also reminds that the husband should not depend on the wife economically.

Shaw draws attention to other defects in marriage, such as the double standard of morality for men and women. "In this morality female adultery is malversion by the woman and theft by the man, whilst male adultery with an unmarried woman is not an offence at all."[60]

Another closely connected issue is divorce. Shaw advocates that divorce should be made as easy, as inexpensive and as private as marriage; that it should be granted at the request of either party whether the other consents or not; and that no other

ground should be admitted other than the request which should be made without stating the reasons.[61] Shaw's version of divorce does not carry any social stigma with it. He advocates easy divorce to dissolve unhappy and incompatible marriages and declares that divorce is a "duty" when the marriage has lost the inward and spiritual grace of which the marriage ceremony is the outward and visible sign.[62]

In Getting__Married Shaw has expressed, through the various characters, in a very enjoyable, witty and yet instructive manner, everything that is wrong with marriage under the existing laws of his time.

In addition to easy divorce, another reform that Shaw suggests is that society must accept many widely differing forms of marriage.[58] Shaw's own marriage was very unconventional because it eschewed sex and children, at his wife's request. Shaw explains that all marriages are different; that "a marriage between two young people followed by parentage cannot be lumped in with a childless partnership between two middle-aged people who have passed the age at which it is safe to bear a first child."[63] Shaw's own marriage belonged to the second kind. He was 42 when he married and his wife Charlotte Payne-Townshend was 41. Rodelle Weintraub observes that in his own marriage, Shaw demonstrated the sincerity of his convictions about marriage. He did not share his rich wife's income, did not enforce marital sex on his wife against her wishes, nor did he force his

idiosyncratic habits such as vegetarianism and teetoalism on her.[64]

Since Shaw's marriage is unusual and different from the majority of marriages, his pronouncements on marriage have to be taken with some reservation. Marriage without sex and children or sex and children outside marriage are not likely to be appealing to many. However, he is right in saying that a human institution like marriage should be adapted to human nature rather than be responsible for forcing human nature into the moulds of existing abuses and corrupt interests. He warns that such forcing of human nature will produce in the long run explosive forces which could wreck civilization.[65]

Shaw's portrayals of marriage in his plays are not so grim as one might expect from his discursive writings. Many of his plays project a joyous and delightful picture of marriage, spiced with a war of wits between the man and woman. Arms and the Man, You Never Can Tell, Man and Superman, Major Barbara, Getting Married, Misalliance and The Millionairess are such plays. He also shows some loveless marriages as in the case of Mrs Clandon's in You Never Can Tell and Mrs Dudgeon's in The Devil's Disciple. In some other plays such as The Apple Cart, In Good King Charles's Golden Days and Getting Married, he shows some older marriages that are seasoned with more of companionship, affection and indulgent tolerance than of passionate love. In these last mentioned plays the peace and happiness of the

marriages are not spoiled even by infidelity or jealousy.

Shaw observes that healthy marriages are partnerships of companionable and affectionate friendship.[66] He points out that the most disastrous marriages are those founded exclusively on sexual attraction and the most successful marriages are those in which the decisive considerations have been others that have nothing to do with sex - such as liking, money, congeniality of tastes, similarity of habits, suitability of class and so on.[67] Sexual passion is not a suitable basis for a durable marriage, in Shaw's view. He considers marriage as a "unique and intensely personal and permanent" relation and the sex relation as impersonal and impermanent.[68]

Barbara Bellow Watson, comparing the man-woman relationships in the fictional works of authors like H.G.Wells and D.H.Lawrence with those in Shavian plays, observes: "Shaw's idea of domestic marriage contains more kindness and more realism. Its stability is greater because it is not founded on passionate love alone; and yet it is neither loveless nor sexless."[69] An element of maternal, protective and indulgently tolerant love is seen in many couples in Shavian plays. But this does not exclude a co-existing husband-wife type of love.

In his artistic works Shaw does not adhere to the tradition of seeing marriage between the hero and heroine as a happy and romantic ending. He does not show marriage as a panacea to all problems. In Mrs_Warren's__Profession, The__Philanderer, Captain

Brassbound's Conversion, Androcles and the Lion, Pygmalion and Getting Married one does not see the expected marriages. Both men and women in many Shavian plays reject marriage and do not regret their decision. Barbara Bellow Watson points out that in a sense the ending with no marriage can be considered as a more romantic ending than the one with marriage, since marriage is sometimes seen as the end of romance. [70]

On the subject of sexual attraction and sexual relationships Shaw has expressed his views quite frankly. In addition to seeing sexual attraction as something impermanent and impersonal, Shaw points out that even hatred, cruelty, and contempt are not incompatible with sexual attraction; that jealousy and murder are as near to it as affectionate friendship.[71] Shaw also draws attention to the fact that impersonality and promiscuity are not the same.[72] In rebelling against the exaltation of sexual chastity in women he does not fly to the other extreme of glorifying licentiousness and promiscuity. While condemnig repressive restraints on sexuality he does not minimize the importance of temperance and self-control.[73]

There are many Shavian characters, both male and female, who transgress the conventional sexual codes. But Shaw does not condemn them unequivocally or punish them. In the literary tradition of Shaw's time, the women characters were usually punished for their sexual transgressions. But it is a mark of

Shaw's feminism that his unconventional women are not punished and left to die like Tolstoy's Anna Karenina or Thomas Hardy's Tess or Pinero's Paula Tanqueray.

Shaw is quite liberal in his sexual attitudes. Though D.H.Lawrence speaks of Shaw mostly disparagingly in his works such as the A_Propos_of_Lady_Chatterley's_Lover, Shaw defends Lawrence's frank discussion of sex in Lady_Chattrley's_Lover and suggests that budding girls should be required to read the book because they could learn something from the book which will prepare them for marriage.[74] He urges sex education for children and points out the disadvantages of not giving children good sex education.[75] The fact that he defended the publication of Havelock Ellis's The_Psychology_of_Sex in England in 1898 is an evidence of his liberal attitudes.[76]

Shaw shows tolerance for deviations from the sexual norms even if they are alien to his nature. He was one of the few to stand by Oscar Wilde though he admitted having "all the normal violent repugnance to homosexuality - if it is really normal, which nowadays one is sometimes provoked to doubt."[77]

He defends the poor woman who resorts to prostitution in order to avoid miserable poverty and starvation wages in other jobs.[78] But he points out that a life of prostitution and promiscuity can become habits and persist long after the necessity for them has disappeared. Mrs_Warren's_Profession and Too_True_To_Be_Good depict such cases.

Shaw asserts that he is free from the ancient belief that there is something inherently sinful and dirty about sex.[79] It is true that his writings at times show a fastidiousness and delicacy on the subject of sex.[80] Though he talks about the amazing power of sex in producing a "celestial flood of emotion and exaltation of existence", he adds that it is only a sample of "what may one day be the normal state of being for mankind in intellectual ecstasy."[81] There are indications in Shaw's works which hint at an inability to reconcile the mind and the body, the spiritual and the physical. St.Joan says posthumously "I was not in my right mind until I was free of the body."[82] King Charles in In_Good_King_Charles's_Golden_Days, after many amorous relations says: "I am done with all bodies. They are all alike. . . . It is the souls and the brains that are different" and adds that "in the end one learns to leave the body out."[83] The hermaphrodite in Farfetched_Fables insists: "I dont want to be a body: I want to be a mind and nothing but mind."[84] In Back_to Methuselah, sex is not necessary or comfortable for the futuristic human beings.

One gets the feeling from Shaw's later plays that the attempt to bridge the gap between flesh and spirit, body and mind, is given up in the belief that the dichotomy can be avoided only by canceling out one of its elements, namely, the body. Rodelle Weintraub observes that with advancing time, physical sex became more and more "an inconvenience and less and less of any

importance" in Shaw's plays.[85]

But one also sees Shaw stressing the importance of sex . He asserts that every person has an absolute right to sexual experience.[86] He considers that the experiences of sex and marriage are indispensable in the education of the complete man or woman and laments the incomplete experience of the priest or nun.[87] Even in Back to Methuselah, the young people discard sex and art only after experiencing and outgrowing them.

However, one can see his views about the relative importance of sex in one's life from the following quote: "I was never duped by sex as a basis for permanent relations, nor dreamt of marriage in connection with it. I put everything else before it, and never refused or broke an engagement to speak on Socialism to pass a gallant evening."[88]

Shaw differentiates between physical love and spiritual affinity and warns that neither can be ignored or suppressed. The Shavian character Aubrey in Too True To Be Good says: "We all have . . . our lower centres and our higher centres. Our lower centres act: they act with a terrible power that destroys us; . . . Since the war the lower centres have become vocal. . . . they speak truths that have never been spoken before - truths that the makers of our domestic institutions have tried to ignore.. . . And now . . . the institutions are rocking and splittig and sundering."[89] The necessity of combining physical and spiritual love and the inadequacy of just one of them is

expressed by another character in the same play: "when men and women pick one another up just for a bit of fun, they find theyve picked up more than they bargained for, because men and women have a top storey as well as a ground floor; and you cant have the one without the other. Theyre always trying to; but it doesnt work."[90] In Back to Methuselah, Lilith speaks of fording the last stream that lies between flesh and spirit and yet she also talks of the "goal of redemption from the flesh" and of pure intelligence, free from "matter".[91] As Alfred Turco,Jr. observes, it seems to be a retreat from the challenge of achieving a harmonious interrelationship between spirit and matter.[92]

Shaw's conflicting feelings about sex are evident in one of his prefaces:

> Sex is an exceedingly subtle and complicated instinct; and the mass of mankind neither know nor care much about freedom of conscience. . . and are concerned almost to obsession with sex. . . In our sexual natures we are torn by an irresistible attraction and an overwhelming repugnance and disgust. We have two tyrannous physical passions: Concupiscence and chastity. We become mad in pursuit of sex; we become equally mad in the persecution of that pursuit. Unless we gratify our desire the race is lost; unless we restrain it we destroy ourselves. [93]

Regarding love, Shaw declares that he is an anti-romantic. He ridicules the assumption that love conquers all and ennobles all. He points out that love "in the real active life [is] the

abject slave of every trifling habit, prejudice and cowardice, easily stifled by shyness, class feelings, and pecuniary prudence, or diverted from what is theatrically assumed to be its hurricane course, by such obstacles as a thick ankle, a cockney accent, or an unfashionable hat."[94] He also points out that the many murders that are claimed to be committed out of love, are proof against the belief that love makes one noble.[95]

Barbara Bellow Watson sees in Shaw's attitude to love something of the seventeenth-century self-possession rather than the nineteenth-century sentiment of Tristan-Isold type of tragic love.[96] Shaw objects to making sexual infatuation a tragic theme because "experience proves that it is only effective in the comic spirit. We can bear to see Mrs Quickly pawning her plate for love of Falstaff, but not Antony running away from the battle of Actium for love of Cleopatra."[97] Shaw asserts that people who sacrifice every other consideration to love are as hopelessly unheroic on the stage as lunatics or drunkards; "Hector and Hamlet are the world's heroes; not Paris and Antony."[98] Shaw's impatience with the idealization of love and sex can be seen in the following excerpt: " . . . cases of chronic lifelong love, whether sentimental or sensual, ought to be sent to the doctor, if not to the executioner."[99]

Many Shavian characters do not deem love as the most important element in life. When faced with the necessity of choosing between love and other important considerations, they do

not hesitate to renounce love. It is a mark of Shaw's view of man and woman as equal and similar human beings that he portays many women in his plays who renounce love in order to retain other important values. Grace Tranfield in The Philanderer chooses to give up love rather than lose her self-respect and respect of her lover. Vivie Warren in Mrs Warren's Profession declines love and marriage to keep her integrity and self-respect. Barbara in Major Barbara is prepared to forget love for a greater ideal. Lavinia in Androcles and the Lion is not won over by the love of a handsome young man and wants to continue her spiritual and religious quest. Eliza in Pygmalion considers self-respect, independence and self-reliance more important than her love and affection for her teacher, and more important than the financial security which he offers.

Nevertheless, Shaw also believes that men and women generally differ in their attitude towards love and sex. He remarks that men often have a habit of being frivolous in matters of sex, often to the extent of being silly and vulgar, while women usually take love and sex more seriously and are astonished by men's attitudes. In a letter Shaw admits: "Love costs a man so little, and brings him so much, that his lightheartedness on the subject degenerates into comic mischievousness. I cannot escape altogether from the vulgarity of my sex in that matter, though I make an effort now and then to shew that I know better." [100]

On the whole, Shaw spends more time in stressing the similarities between the two sexes; this is because the differences are pointed out often enough and Shaw is the acknowledged champion of the neglected aspects. In asserting that men and women are equals as human beings Shaw asserts that human personality is androgynous. In a characteristic hyperbole he declares: "a woman is really only a man in petticoats, or, if you like,. . . a man is a woman without petticoats."[101] His remarks about Dickensian women are interesting and illuminating. He agrees with George Gissing that most of Dicken's women characters are quite detestable. Even those Dickensian women that are amiable, adds Shaw, are, "silly and sometimes disastrous. When the few good ones are agreeable they are not specifically feminine: they are the Dickensian good man in petticoats." Shaw remarks that even such likeable Dickensian women lack that strength which they would have had if Dickens had seen clearly that woman is not an entirely different being from man. Shaw explains his favourite Dickensian woman as follows: "Betsy Trotwood is a dear because she is an old bachelor in petticoats: a manly woman, like all good women: good men being equally all womanly men."[102] Explaining his extraordinary knowledge of women displayed in his plays, which many readers find enchanting, Shaw declares: "I always assumed that a woman was a person exactly like myself, and that is how the trick is done."[103]

Shaw asserts that the two sexes "wear different boots and bonnets, not different souls."[104] Barbara Bellow Watson[105], Wilson Knight[144], Margery Morgan[106] and Eric Bentley[137] point out that Shaw's works reveal his fascination for an androgynous human personality.

However, Shaw recognizes the importance of and need of Woman to keep her own identity. Even in dress and outward appearance he deplores the "masculine affectations" of women and urges that what women have to do is "not to repudiate their femininity but to assert its social value; not to ape masculinity, but to demonstrate its insufficiency."[107]

Since men and women are similar in many ways in Shaw's view, he created many women characters who show strengths and abilities that are traditionally associated with males. Vivie Warren and Mrs Warren in Mrs_Warren's_Profession, Lina Szczpanowska and Hypatia in Misalliance, Amanda and Lysistrata in The_Apple_Cart, Lavinia in Androcles_and_the_Lion, Eliza in Pygmalion, Leo and Lesbia in Getting_Married, Mrs Lunn and Mrs Juno in Overruled, and Epifania in The_Millionairess are some examples of women who have qualities and strengths usually associated with men.

Many of the above Shavian women are career women. They demonstrate Shaw's belief that women have other roles than the traditional roles of lover, wife and mother. The Shavian career women appear from the time of his early novels and many of them are successful, intelligent, hardworking and disciplined. More

importantly, their toughness does not make them unattractive. On the contrary, they are quite attractive and delightful. Despite their idiosyncrasies and bossiness, they are not presented as ridiculous or repulsive. Having a career does not make a Shavian woman unfeminine.

The Shavian modern woman, as Barbara Bellow Watson points out, represents many characteristics traditionally deplored in women, characteristics for which Shaw sought to establish respect and even relish. The qualities that one admires in many a Shavian woman haveis her strong sense of her individuality; her keen sense of self-respect and independence; the way she expresses herself in a direct, frank manner as opposed to the devious manner of speech expected of the Victorian woman; her physical strength instead of fragility and weakness; her pride, confidence, and ability to manage people; her pragmatism which controls her romanticism; her self assertion rather than self-effacing humility and modesty. All the above mentioned qualities were not generally liked and tolerated in a woman in the Victorian tradition which exalted self-effacing submissiveness in woman. It is a mark of Shaw's feminism that he makes strong women attractive and likeable. He shows that such strong women succeed by means of their will and wit and not by feminine wiles. What Shaw says about Lady Cicely (of Captain Brassbound's Conversion) is true of many a Shavian woman: there is no "suspicion of trading a little on the softness of her contours."[108]

Just as many Shavian women show traditionally male qualities, many male characters in Shaw's plays show some womanly qualities and are not "manly" in the conventional sense. The great Caesar in Shaw's Caesar and Cleopatra is not ashamed to admit that there is an element of woman in him, nor does he hesitate to disclaim anything of the conventional "man" in him. He declares to the Egyptian sphinx: "I am he of whose genius you are a symbol: part brute, part woman, and part god - nothing of man in me at all."[110] Caesar is also feministic in making women "his friends and counsellors".[109] George Fox in In Good King Charles's Golden Days admits that he can know of women only to the extent of what the woman in him teaches him.[111] The male character "A" in Village Wooing also seems to feel that though he is a man he has sufficient understanding of human nature to call himself a woman as well. When the woman character "Z" says "If you were a woman youd know", he answers her: "I am a woman; and you are a man, with a slight difference that doesnt matter except on special occasions."[112] Here one sees the oft-repeated Shavian idea that men and women are not very different, except for a few differences. Barbara Bellow Watson observes that the Shavian men who are a match for the strong Shavian women are those "who have given up the old illusions about the relations between sexes."[113] As mentioned earlier, Shaw believed that the ideal man is a woman and vice versa.[114] It follows that only "male" qualities or only "womanly" qualities are not

sufficient to make a complete, balanced and therefore ideal human being; only a harmonious blend of both type of qualities can produce such a person. Shaw's ideas are similar to the Jungian concepts of the "Anima" and "Animus" - the feminine side of the male psyche and the masculine aspect of the female psyche respectively, which must be fully developed and allowed to express themselves in consciousness and behavior.

Shaw has no illusion that either sex can be generalized as having a monopoly of some virtues or vices. He portrays both sexes as a mixed bag of strengths and weaknesses. Hesione Hushabye in Heartbreak House says: "People dont have their virtues and vices in sets: they have them anyhow: all mixed." [115] There are all kinds of women and men in Shavian plays, as in real life. As Barbara Bellow Watson says, if Shaw has shown us some female Houyhnhnms, he has also shown us some female Yahoos. "The women are subjected to the same critical and comic scrutiny as the men" in Shaw's literary works.[116] If Shaw has created some of the most charming women in his plays, he has also created "charming rascals, sweet old fools and unsentimental altruists" in his male characters.[116] More importantly, he shows that in the same character (whether male or female), vices and virtues, strengths and weaknesses, are all mixed and the conflict within a person is often more dramatic than the external conflict.

When discussing woman's situation Shaw always remembers the political-economical side and his creation of the "New Woman" in

his plays strikes one as a rebellion against the cultural and intellectual patterns that repress women. As early as 1889 Shaw advocated "suffrage for woman on exactly on the same terms as for men."[117] Shaw fought to include women's suffrage in the Basis of the Fabian Society and reproved the government for dealing with the suffragists in a harsh way. [118]

However, Shaw is not so unrealistic and naive as to believe that getting the right to vote will solve all of women's problems or emancipate women. In his opinion, the political emancipation of women will be complete only when the elected representative body consists of men and women in equal numbers. To ensure this he advocates that every vote must be for a man and a woman. He points out that humanity can be represented only by men and women.

Shaw recognized the irony that women often will not vote for candidates of their own sex.[119] He points out that those women who have indirect power and consequent advantages under the existing political inequality of men and women will actually hinder the emancipation of their own sex in order to retain their special advantages.[120]

In 1884 Shaw was already championing equal political rights for men and women. In his characteristic tongue-in-cheek manner he asserts in Fabian Tract Number Two: "... Men no longer need special political privileges to protect them against Women, and ... the sexes should henceforth enjoy equal political

rights."[121] His words at once point out the existing inequality in the political rights of men and women, the masculine fear of women's liberation and the myth of masculine strength.

In insisting that a governing body should be made up of equal number of men and women, Shaw explains that it is commendable for two practical reasons. One is that the rare inborn capacity for political thinking and administration is distributed among the whole humanity of roughly equal number of men and women. If women are excluded from political positions "half of that natural supply is cut off." Shaw declares that in such an arrangement, the places of competent women are filled by incompetent men. He asserts that there is no Cabinet in Europe that would not be vitally improved by having its "male tail cut off and female heads substituted."[122] Shaw not only stands up for the intellectual capacity of women but admits that he likes to see the combative spirit in them.[123]

The second reason that Shaw gives for including equal number of women in any governing body is his conviction that the presence of women and the contribution of their point of view will greatly improve the quality of government.[124] He points out that a conference of men on the subject of marriage failed because it excluded women.[125] The presence of women, Shaw declares, will make men behave themselves. In Shaw's view, it is not so much women's kind-heartedness that is needed in official

bodies as their realism and tough-mindedness. The average man, Shaw avers, is a silly sentimental gossip where women are concerned, and will not keep women up to the mark unless women are present to keep him up to the mark. "The influence of women on public bodies is anti-sentimental, and much needed to correct the tendency of men to exceed in the opposite direction."[126]

Shaw is perceptive enough to emphasize a connection between women's private lives and public issues: "I strongly suspect that, though we never mention it, the cry for the vote is often really a cry for the key of one's bedroom."[127] When asked to name the greatest single obstacle to the emancipation of women, Shaw answered in one word: "Lust." [128] He believes that advances made by women in getting their rights will hinder sexual exploitations of women by men. Recognizing the marked difference between men and women in their approach to sexual matters, Shaw feels that the political emancipation of women will lead to a better legal enforcement of sexual morality and adds: "that is why so many of us dread it."[129]

He points out that woman's right to take the initiative in sexual matters is politically the most important of all initiatives because it decides the quality of future citizens. And the political system of democracy will ruin us if our citizens are ill bred.[130] In many of Shaw's plays one sees women taking the initiative in love and sex. It is not just for the sake of comic reversal of roles that Shaw creates such women.

Beneath the comedy there are serious implications.

Shaw chides women for not speaking against the First World War and asks whether they have all become childish and unreasonable, or villainous and cowardly, or romantic and impossible, "like the other sex."[131] Shaw reminds that women have to go through considerable pain and work to bring forth and nurture every male that is killed in wars and he advises them to refuse to make any more men if the war is not stopped.[132]

Shaw's concern for women's lot is not merely all talk. As a vestryman of the Borough of St. Pancras, Shaw was appalled by the lack of sanitary accomodations for women in public places and fought to make the accomodations partly free. As a Fabian Socialist, Shaw worked to make women eligible as county and borough councillors and to increase the number of women members in the poor law authorities.[133] When an English literary academy was formed, Shaw proposed that it should contain a sufficient number of women of letters to make it clear that no sex disqualificatons were to be allowed to become traditional in the body.[ibid.] He also campaigned for the admission of women to the Dramatists' Club. [134]

As already noted, Shaw did not think that woman should have only the domestic and sexual roles of wife and mother. He strongly advocated other non-sexual roles for women, and one sees many charming, successful and memorable career women in his numerous plays. He has little patience with the concept of

thoroughly home-bred women. He scoffs at Dickens's "attempts to manufacture admirable heroines by idealizations of home-bred womanhood."[135] But Shaw also sees the danger in insisting on a woman's going into the world when she is not yet changed inwardly:

> "people cannot be freed from their failings from without. They must free themselves. When Nora is strong enough to live out of the doll's house, she will go out of it of her own accord if the door stands open; but if before that period you take her by the scruff of the neck and thrust her out, she will only take refuge in the next establishment of the kind that offers to receive her. Woman has thus two enemies to deal with: the old-fashioned one who wants to keep the door locked, and the new-fashioned one who wants to thrust her into the street before she is ready to go."[136]

Thus Shaw gives woman the right to both liberty and protection, to the benefits in both the old and new ways.

As Eric Bentley points out, the rebellious Shavian women, from Vivie Warren to Joan of Arc, reflect Shaw's own youthful rebelliousness. The strength to break away from one's youth in order to become a grown-up, independent ego, not relying on authority or on the other sex, is the strength that Shaw admires most and depicts in his women characters. "He would often make the rebel female because women were then the dependent sex."[137] The rebelliousness and apparently arrogant manner of many Shavian women can be explained in the words of Mrs Clandon in <u>You Never Can Tell</u>: "you must excuse us all. Women have to unlearn the false good manners of their slavery before they acquire the genuine good manners of their freedom." [138]

Bentley also observes that Shaw is very good at writing

roles for women, possibly better than at writing roles for men, because Shaw has a great identification with the feminine side; that Shaw usually identifies himself with the heroine, because usually the males are "victims of the ghastly self-deceptions that society encourages. If there is a symbol of freedom, it's usually female. . . . Here Shaw is a feminist."[139]

Barbara Bellow Watson[140] points out a similar fact: the titles of many Shavian plays and other works reflect the importance of women in Shaw's works. Mrs Warren's Profession, Candida, Major Barbara, Fanny's First Play, Saint Joan, The Millionairess, Why She Would Not, The Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God, The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism - all these works show the importance of woman in their very titles. Even when the titles do not refer to woman, the heroines attract as much attention as the heroes (if not more), as in The Philanderer, Captain Brassbound's Conversion, Getting Married, Misalliance, Pygmalion, Man and Superman and other works.

Shaw boasts in a letter that he is a first class ladies tailor, meaning that he can create very good roles for women in his plays.[141] Barbara Bellow Watson points out that like a good tailor Shaw avoids unrealistic idealization of Woman - which would produce uncomfortable and unpractical outfits(roles) and the other extreme of merely emphasizing Woman's worst points.[142]

In conclusion, considering Shaw's views on women, their status as wives and mothers, marriage, sex, love and other related subjects, along with the facts of his life, one sees a feminist, not only in his theories but in his actions. One sees a champion who worked consistently and untiringly for the emancipation of Woman, in all his diverse capacities - as a socialist, public speaker, pamphleteer, discursive writer, playwright and as a humane individual.

However, one cannot omit or forget some points which check one's unqualified admiration and praise of Shaw as a faultless feminist. For instance, there are his numerous love affairs which make one wonder whether this feminist, after all, did not cause much pain to many women. There are also Shaw's somewhat contradictory pronouncements on the subjects of love, sex, marriage, traditional roles of women and so on. As for Shaw's conflicting views, one can accept Eric Bentley's explanation: That Shaw was acutely aware of the paradoxes in life and this made him take a paradoxical stand on many issues.[143] One also has to allow for Shaw's ironical vein which makes it difficult to know when he is mocking and when serious. But despite such inconsistencies and failings, on the whole, Shaw still stands as an active and enthusiastic feminist.

In the next two chapters, the two early Shavian plays The Philanderer and Mrs Warren's Profession are studied with reference to the feministic ideas expressed by the way of the

various characters, situations and the resolution of the conflict.

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CHAPTER III

THE PHILANDERER

The Philanderer is Bernard Shaw's second play. It was written in 1893, a time when "not only dramatic literature but life itself was staggering from the impact of Ibsen's plays", to quote Shaw.[1]. Ibsen's plays had reached London just a few years before in 1889. In 1893 it was still a time when "discussion about Ibsenism, 'the New Womanism', and the like, was at its height".[2]. Thus it is not surprising that Shaw, who greatly admired Ibsen's plays, decided to write a play about Ibsenism and the New Woman.

Like all topical plays, The Philanderer soon suffered the reputation of obsolescence. Shaw himself called the play a topical comedy in 1898.[3]. By 1907 many critics like Desmond MacCarthy[4], Max Beerbohm[5], and A.B.Walkley[6] declared that the play had dated and become old-fashioned.

In a prefatory note written for the 1930 edition, Shaw admitted that the play had dated, but he also added: "The human nature in it [The Philanderer] is still in the latest fashion: indeed I am far from sure that its ideas, instead of being 36

years behind the times, are not for a considerable section of the community 36 years ahead of them. My picture of the past may be for many people a picture of the future."[7].

Shaw's prediction has come true. The play which was declared to be old-fashioned in 1907 is seen to be quite modern in its ideas in the 1980s. As Julius Novick observes, the New Woman, who had "vanished" and was "utterly forgotten" according to critics like Beerbohm[5] and Walkley[6] in 1907, is now back with us again in the 1980s as the "liberated woman".[8].

The Philanderer is not one of Shaw's well-known plays. It received mostly negative criticism until the 1970s[9]. It was hardly performed. But in recent years the play has been performed more frequently in Canada, U.S.A., and England. Recent productions of the play are seen as artistic as well as commercial successes[10]. As Julius Novick points out, one of the reasons for the more favourable reception of the play in recent years is that many of the ideas in the play are similar to the modern beliefs and therefore appeal to the modern audience.[11].

The Philanderer is one of Shaw's first three plays which he later published as Plays Unpleasant. The three plays are Unpleasant in the sense that they force the reader to face unpleasant facts about society. Shaw explained in a letter written in 1896 that the unpleasant reality that The Philanderer exposed was the morally corrupt and selfish basis of the middle class society. In "the fashionable cult of Ibsenism and 'New

Womanism'" Shaw saw the real basis of clandestine sensuality.[12]

The plot of the play shows how the incorrigible philanderer Leonard Charteris tries to exploit the two women - Julia Craven and Grace Tranfield - who are in love with him. The two women are a contrast to each other, Julia being a "womanly woman" and Grace being a "New Woman". Both women suffer by Charteris's intrigues, but Charteris himself is quite unaffected by the pain he causes the women. Charteris is tired of the passionate and fiercely jealous Julia and proposes marriage to his new love, Grace, in order to escape from Julia. The self-respecting Grace refuses Charteris's marriage offer when she comes to know of his abuses of women. Charteris hatches an alternative plan to get rid of Julia - he encourages Paramore, who is in love with Julia, to propose to her. At the same time he provokes Julia's jealousy over the friendship between Paramore and Grace. The "womanly" Julia falls into Charteris's trap through her own jealousy. At the end of the play, she is exhausted by anguish and rage over the whole affair and ends up accepting Paramore's hand though she does not love him. The play ends in an unexpected note of sorrow, with Julia collapsing in the arms of Grace.

As Alfred Turco,Jr. points out, the play is of interest from many view points - as a Shavian biography, as a comparison to Restoration Comedies, and as a study of Ibsenism in England.[13]. However, in the present work attention will be restricted to the feminism expressed in the play.

The Ibsen club in the play is a good starting point as it provides a fine example of feminism. In this club, every candidate for membership must be nominated by a man and a woman, who both guarantee that the candidate, if female, is not womanly, and if male, not manly. One sees that the club not only opens its doors to women as human beings equal to men, but also gives them equal power to nominate members and equal responsibility to guarantee for the members. The club rule shows disapproval and contempt for conventional concepts such as "womanly" and "manly" behavior. As Julius Novick points out, the club rule echoes the "very modern belief that conventional assumptions about the proper roles of the sexes are no longer adequate."[14].

Charteris explains why the club is against womanly women. The founders of the club feel that womanly women are the cause of quarrels and scandals which break up most of the clubs open to both men and women. "The unwomanly women who work for their living, and know how to take care of themselves, never give any trouble."[15, Act I, p.119]. By corollary, one understands that womanly women do not earn their living but are dependent and that incapable of taking care of themselves. One sees the truth of this inference in the case of the womanly Julia. She is dependent in a more serious sense - psychologically - and she is too childish and irresponsible to take care of herself.

Another rule of the club is against coddling women in any way. Women are neither treated as the weaker sex nor as a very

delicate species that requires special privileges and chivalry. There is no gallant escorting: "Whoever is nearest the door goes first".[15, Act II, p.134]

The club sees women as quite capable persons and encourages them to solve their differences among themselves, without appealing to men. Grace reminds Julia, during their quarrel, that when two ladies quarrel in the club, "it is against the rules to settle it when there are gentlemen present: especially the gentlemen they are quarrelling about."[15, Act II, p.155]. The Ibsen club encourages feminism by insisting that women solve their quarrels among themselves without the help, interference or intervention of men. The Ibsen club thereby discourages women's dependency on men, women's lack of solidarity and jealousy among themselves. Men's presence is apt to provoke the above mentioned qualities. By forbidding men to meddle in women's quarrels, the club encourages women to develop self-reliance, self-confidence, cooperation and a sense of solidarity.

While the Ibsen club is an example of feministic concepts in the play, the different characters in the play show different aspects and degrees of feminism and anti-feminism. The older characters like Grace's father Cuthbertson and Julia's father Colonel Craven show very conventional attitudes towards women and men. Since conventional attitudes are generally a paradoxical combination of idealization of woman and unfair, contemptuous, condescending and indulgent attitudes, they are often anti-

feministic in practice.

Cuthbertson, who is a drama critic, likes to believe what he sees on the stage as real and noble. He praises the womanly women who willingly render sacrifices and the manly men who nobly endure sufferings. He strongly speaks against the advanced ideas of the modern movement in the younger generation. He asserts that he detests Ibsen and Ibsenism. (nevertheless he is a member of the Ibsen club and he spends most of his time in the club.) He explains that though he joined the club on Grace's account, "thinking that her father's presence there would be a protection and a - a sort of sanction, as it were", he never approved of it".[15, Act I, p.118]. His protective and authoritative attitude towards Grace is actually comical because Grace is a very able and self-dependent woman who not only needs no protection from her father but is the one who, as we learn from Charteris, actually bosses her father's household.

Cuthbertson admits that there is really nothing to complain about the club and that it is certainly convenient, but he declares: "of course the usual tone of the club is low, because the women smoke, and earn their living, and all that."[15, Act II, p.129]. Cuthbertson's prejudice against women's smoking and earning their living is another blatant instance of an unthinking conventionalism bordering on anti-feminism. Cuthbertson himself likes to smoke and does not see anything wrong with men's smoking, but he condemns the women who smoke. "There is not a

room in this club where I can enjoy a pipe quietly without a woman coming in and beginning to roll a cigaret. It's a disgusting habit in a woman: it's not natural to her sex".[15, Act II, p.128]. His double standard is not only ridiculous and comical but hints at a double standard at deeper levels: a habit or behavior which is considered acceptable for men is deemed as something disgusting and unnatural in women.

Cuthbertson is irritated by the self-assertive and feministic Sylvia Craven. When she expresses her objection to his talking with Paramore in the Ibsen club library, he sees it as an impertinence and tells her with emphatic dignity: "No gentleman would have dreamt of objecting to our exchanging a few words, madam."[15, Act II, p.125]. He seems to have definite ideas of gentlemanly behavior though it is doubtful whether he is realistic. He implies that only a woman could be so rude as to object to people's talking in the library.

When Paramore contemptuously calls Sylvia's objections to vivisection as mere "ignorance, superstition, sentimentality", Cuthbertson bursts out with his own indignant complaints against the women in the Ibsen club: "It's not ignorance nor superstition, Paramore; it's sheer downright Ibsenism; thats what it is. Ive been wanting to sit comfortably at that fire the whole morning; but Ive never had a chance with that girl there. I couldnt go and plump myself on a seat beside her; goodness knows what she'd think I wanted! Thats one of the delights of having

women in the club: when they come in here they all want to sit at the fire and adore that bust."[15, Act II, p.126]. One can see that Cuthbertson likes to blame everything on modern attitudes and Ibsenism. What he is really irritated about is that he has to share the benefits of the club with the women in the club. And he is too old-fashioned to treat women in a casual and easy manner as he would treat men. He assumes that Sylvia would misinterpret his intention if he went and sat on a seat next to her. He does not see that it is his own conventional attitudes that stand in his way and that Sylvia is too modern to misinterpret his intentions.

Cuthbertson greatly admires the "womanly" Julia, because she conforms to his idea of a woman. His eyes light up at the mention of Julia and he exclaims with enthusiasm: "Ah, Julia! . . . A splendid fine creature: every inch a woman. No Ibsenism about her!"[15, Act II, p.126]. Given the outrageous, stupid and infantile behavior of Julia in the first Act, Cuthbertson's praise of Julia is absurdly comical and serves as a pointedly satirical attack on conventional concepts about Woman. Cuthbertson's use of the word "creature" recalls Julia's complaint in the last Act: that all the men view her only as a beautiful pet or animal and not as a person with character, intellect and moral qualities.

Another quality that marks Cuthbertson is his unrealistic idealism. Despite his experiences that prove the contrary,

Cuthbertson likes to cling to romantic, unrealistic and idealistic notions of love, marriage, family, womanly women, manly men and so on. As Charles A. Carpenter observes, Cuthbertson has formed his convictions from idealistic plays rather than from life and he exhibits nothing but stock responses to love alliances, despite his own failed marriage.[22]. He had married for love but his marriage had ended in separation because of mutual incompatibilities of both partners. He admits to his friend Craven: "I couldnt stand her relations: all the men were roaring cads; and she couldnt get on with my mother. And then she hated being in town; and of course I couldnt live in the country on account of my work." Yet Cuthbertson likes to believe that it was not his fault at all, but mostly his wife's fault that they separated. He says sentimentally, in the tone of an injured and martyred husband: "It was not my fault, Dan. Some day the world will know how I loved that woman. But she was incapable of valuing a true man's affection."[15, Act II,p.128]. Cuthbertson has an idealized version of his own love for his wife but sees his wife as someone incapable of appreciating his love. Cuthbertson is an example of the men who are not necessarily unkind or consciously selfish anti-feminists, but whose idealistic and unrealistic expectations amount to anti-feminism in practice.

Towards his daughter Grace, Cuthbertson behaves as a conventional father, though Grace is an adult, a widow and a

modern independent woman. He assumes that he can speak for her and make decisions for her without consulting her. In the last Act, he assumes that Grace will marry Charteris after Julia becomes engaged to Paramore. Cuthbertson does not bother to ask Grace whether she has changed her mind about her refusal to marry Charteris. He simply announces to the group that Grace and Charteris are engaged, only to find that Grace is firm in her decision to break off her engagement to Charteris. Cuthbertson does not seem to understand or believe in Grace's priority for self-respect. Nor does he seem to understand her solidarity with her own sex.

Julia's father, Colonel Craven is another character with very conventional ideas about men and women. Like his friend Cuthbertson, Craven ardently subscribes to the idea of womanly woman and manly man. He is outraged that his daughter Julia had to be guaranteed as an unwomanly woman so that she could become a member of the Ibsen club. When he hears that a manly man such as Cuthbertson also had to be guaranteed as an unmanly man, Craven does not take it so seriously. He declares that being called unmanly did not do Cuthbertson any harm, but being called unwomanly has taken away Julia's "character". [15, Act I, p.119] Craven accepts the conventional double standard without the slightest hesitation or thought.

Craven shows a tendency for male chauvinism in his open preference for men-only clubs and his contempt for the "cock-and-

hen" clubs. He considers the Ibsen club as a laughable organization and reveals his preconceptions when he asks his friend Cuthbertson about the club: "But dont they carry on here, rather?"[15, Act II, p.129]. He assumes that the Ibsen club members will behave indiscreetly because they are a mixture of men and women and because the club encourages Ibsenism. His prejudices against women and modern, Ibsenistic views are comical in the context, but they are a sample of the anti-feministic assumptions and generalizations that mark chauvinistic males.

Craven, like Cuthbertson, likes women who are emotional and quite sentimental. He is hurt when his younger daughter Sylvia refuses to be sentimental over the news that his supposedly fatal illness is only a false alarm. He is also hurt when the womanly Julia, to his surprise, criticizes him. He cannot accept the idea that his daughter can thus be frankly critical of his self-sacrificing, magnanimous, self-righteous and virtuous pose. It is a shock to him to see Julia, whom he sees and treats as a child, thinking on her own and questioning his stand.

One can also see his conventionally parental attitude towards his daughter, when he exclaims to Charteris: "Do you mean to say that I am expected to treat my daughter the same as I would any other girl?"[15, Act III, p.173]. He is surprised by the idea that one should treat one's grown-up daughter like any other grown-up woman.

Craven is ambivalent in his attitude towards his daughter

Julia. He takes pride that his Julia is a very womanly woman; he is very upset that she had to be declared as an unwomanly woman, so that she could become a member of the Ibsen club. He indignantly asks: "Do you mean to say that somebody had the audacity to guarantee that my Julia is not a womanly woman?"[15, Act I, p.118]. He condones and encourages Julia's "womanly" behavior - her over-sensitive and over-emotional reactions. When Julia reacts with anguish at the mention of his illness, he immediately apologizes for mentioning such a sad subject in front of her. When Julia behaves in a childish and irresponsible manner by bolting from Cuthbertson's flat without taking leave of the hosts, he is annoyed by her lack of manners but nevertheless tries to find excuses for her. He is angry about her conduct, yet he is too soft and indulgent towards her to correct her: "I'm excessively vexed about Julia's conduct: I am indeed. She cant bear to be crossed in the slightest thing, poor child. I'll have to apologize for her, you know: her going away is a downright slap in the face for these people here."[15, Act I, p.121]. His protective and indulgent attitude towards Julia does not help her in the long run and it does not help her to confront the world outside. As Sylvia points out, "All the world cant be expected to know that she's the family baby."[15, p.173]. By treating Julia like a baby Craven encourages her childish behavior and attitudes. His indulgence and protectiveness prevent Julia from growing up. In the last scene, even Julia complains bitterly that

her father treats her only as a pet.

Craven is too old-fashioned to accept the idea that women too can be forward and take the initiative in love affairs. When Charteris mentions that Julia wants to marry him, Craven is scandalized. After his initial shock, he flares up with the authority of a conventional father: "How dare you tell me my daughter wants to marry you? Who are you, pray, that she should have any such ambition?"[15, Act II, p.131]. When Charteris reads Julia's passionate letter to him, Craven declares that no woman would write such a letter to a man unless he has made advances to her. To Craven it is an inconceivable and unacceptable idea that a woman can take the initiative in the matters of love, just like a man.

Craven excuses Julia's lapses in behavior because she is a woman but he urges Charteris and Paramore to face disppointments in a manly way with self-control and civility. Expecting too little from women is also a form of anti-feminism. Not only does it imply a low opinion of women and lack of confidence in their ability, but it keeps women at the level of children and keeps them from growing and developing their potentials.

However, in the last scene, Craven shows some signs that at last he has come to realize that he should treat women as responsible adults, just as he would treat men. When Julia threatens to start another quarrel with Grace in the last Act, Craven is firm and tells Julia: "The test of a man's or woman's

breeding is how they behave in a quarrel. Anybody can behave well when things are going smoothly. Now you said today, at that inequitous club, that you were not a womanly woman. Very well: I dont mind. But if you are not going to behave like a lady when Mrs Tranfield comes into this room, youve got to behave like a gentleman; or fond as I am of you, I'll cut you dead exactly as I would if you were my son."[15, Act III, p.174].

At last Craven realizes that it is not important for Julia to be "womanly" but that she should learn to have self-control and civilized behavior even amidst quarrels and disppointments, just as a man is expected to learn. Craven gives up his conventional chivalry towards women when he promises to punish her for misbehavior, just as he would punish a man for misbehavior. When Julia tries to excuse herself with tears, Craven is firm: "Stop snivelling. I'm not speaking as your Daddy now: I'm speaking as your commanding officer."[15, Act III, p.174]. When Paramore tries to intervene to protect Julia, Craven silences him. Though old-fashioned and conventional by training and habit, Craven is sensible and practical when other methods fail. It is notable that he gives up his romantic ideas about love and marriage when the woman he loves chooses to marry another man. He does not mope around like the disppointed lover in a romantic fiction. He goes and marries a rich woman and has a happy marriage.

Paramore is another character who shows quite conventional

tastes in women. He admits that he prefers Julia to the self-assertive and feministic Sylvia. He enthusiastically agrees with Cuthbertson that Julia is a very fine creature, a very womanly woman without any nonsense such as Ibsenism. He is helplessly in love with Julia and can see nothing but her beauty. When Julia childishly bursts into tears and sobs, Paramore can only exclaim: "How beautiful she is!"[15, Act III, p.173]. However, when Julia bitterly complains that everybody admires her only for her beauty, and treats her only as a pet, Paramore declares that it is not merely her beauty that attracts him but her heart, her sincerity and her potential for great gifts of character. Either Paramore really believes in such an idealized picture of Julia or he cleverly flatters her to win her hand.

For Paramore it is enough that he loves Julia, in order to marry her. The fact that she does not love him does not seem to weigh much in his opinion. He seems to assume that Julia's passionate nature will eventually make her love him. Once again there is a subtle double standard here.

Despite his love for Julia, Paramore does not want to give up everything for that love. Paramore declares that his self-respect is dearer to him than even Julia; that he cannot trifle with scientific questions for the sake of gaining his love. His attitude is in keeping with the conventional belief that a manly man does not sacrifice anything that is very important to him for the sake of love. Paramore's reaction though comical still

provides a contrast with Julia's willingness to do anything to gain Charteris's love.

The minor character Sylvia is a keen feminist in the play. She is quite young, somewhat gauche and comical, but she seems to represent an ideal of the balance between Woman and Man. She wears men's clothing but keeps a detachable skirt at hand. She puts on her skirt and removes it according to her need and comfort. Sylvia insists that she be called by her surname in the club, though she is Sylvia at home. Margery Morgan observes that Sylvia suggests the ideal of the androgyne, an image of the perfect balance of male and female qualities in human nature.[16].

Sylvia is very self-assertive. She is the opposite of the self-effacing, self-sacrificing, passive and submissive woman of the Victorian ideal. Hence she is not "womanly" in the traditional sense. When Paramore and Cuthbertson start talking in the Ibsen club library, Sylvia impatiently calls their attention to their lack of consideration for others in the library and tells them: "You may talk as much as you like if you will have the common consideration to ask first whether the other people object. What I protest against is your assumption, that my presence doesnt matter because I'm only a female member. Thats all. Now go on, pray: you dont disturb me in the least."[Act II, p.125]. Though Sylvia seems to be comically aggressive, there is some truth in her feministic complaint.

When she protests against Paramore's vivisection, the latter dismisses her objection as mere ignorance, superstition and sentimentality. But Sylvia's behavior points to just the opposite of these charges. She is intelligent, intuitive, modern in her outlook and quite unsentimental. In fact her father is hurt that she is not sentimental about his supposed escape from death. But her unsentimentality is only a refusal to be over-emotional and not a refusal to be affectionate. She does show tenderness towards her father. Conventional men do not like Sylvia because of her unconventional attitudes and behavior and they frankly prefer her womanly sister, Julia.

Sylvia is on easy terms with Charteris, but unlike Grace and Julia, she is not in love with him. She sees him as he is and correctly judges that he does not care "a bit more for one woman than for another".[Act II, p.136]. She also guesses the secret of Charteris's success with women. She tells him: "you never bother about their being only women: you talk to them just as you do to me or any other fellow. Thats the secret of your success. You cant think how sick they get of being treated with the respect due to their sex."[Act II, p.136]. Sylvia seems to think of herself more as a fellow being to Charteris than as a woman. Her words also hint that the "respect" with which men treat women is not always pleasing because it is often based on unflattering preconceptions about women.

Sylvia invalidates the general belief that women are

sentimental by nature. She shows herself to be a very unsentimental person on many occasions. She judges women as correctly as she judges men. She sees her sister Julia's defects as clearly as she sees Charteris's philandering and Paramore's stupidity and weaknesses. She does not condone Julia's womanly habit of overemphasizing emotions. She declares quite unsentimentally that Julia will get over her heartbreaks and little tragedies. Sylvia is a contrast to the over-sentimental Julia. Sylvia shows a bonding with Grace, who is also feministic. In Sylvia one sees not only youthful brashness and an almost comical frankness but also the valuable qualities of intelligence, a fighting spirit, an intuition into people's character and a sensible and unsentimental behavior.

Charteris is a difficult case. As Charles Carpenter notes, Charteris's qualities are enigmatic and his personality poses an unsolved problem, because on the whole he is <u>both</u> deplorable and likeable.[22]. The qualities which make him attractive are his frankness, his wit, intelligence and his charming personality. His facility for getting into and out of trouble provides comic relief. As Julius Novick points out, Charteris is never idealized as a hero in <u>The Philanderer</u>, but "a sensitive production might make strong ironies out of Charteris, 'amused and untouched,' unpunished and impenitent and perversely charming to the end, amidst the indictments of the two women with whom he has philandered."[42].

Charteris seems to be a feminist in many ways. Cuthbertson calls Charteris "the famous Ibsenist philosopher."[Act I, p.115]. Charteris speaks for the liberated woman and against the womanly women. He praises the unwomanly women who earn their own living, who know how to take care of themselves and who do not give any trouble. In such modern views about women he provides a contrast to the conventional men in the play.

Charteris scoffs at Craven for his preference for men-only club: "Do you call that a club? Why, they darent let a woman cross the doorstep!"[15, Act I, p.117]. When Craven is upset by Julia's frank criticism of his behavior and attitudes, Charteris reminds him: "You forget the revolt of the daughters, Craven. And you certainly wouldnt have gone on like that to any grown-up woman who was <u>not</u> your daughter."[Act III, p.173].

Charteris agrees with Grace that a woman is not the property of a man, that a woman belongs to herself and to nobody else. But he is cunning enough to justify his conduct with the same argument applied to men. "If the Ibsen sauce is good for the goose, it's good for the gander as well."[Act I, p.103].

In order to get rid of Julia he reminds her of all the modern and feministic arguments against marriage: that an advanced woman should be free; that according to the advanced views, marriage is a degrading bargain by which a woman sells herself to a man for the social status of a wife and the right to be supported and pensioned in old age out of his income; that

according to the rational view, marriage is a big risk for a woman because if the husband turns out to be a bad man she cannot easily get out of the marriage; that since according to the Ibsenist view a woman should be able to leave a man if his companionship is incompatible with her full development as a human being, she should avoid marriage.

Charteris insists on his right to remain free. He tells Julia that he will not marry her because she has become a jealous termagant, and because he finds her intellectually incompatible with him. He points out with contempt that Julia behaves like a spoiled child and "talks like a sentimental novel." He declares that she is not fit to be a companion for a man of any sense or character.[ActI, p.113]. Yet he had been infatuated with her at one time. Charteris is ashamed of himself for loving such a woman as Julia and invents justifications for his behavior: "From the conventional point of view, theres nothing to be said for you, Julia: nothing. Thats why I have to find some other point of view to save my self-respect when I remember how I have loved you. Oh, what I have learnt from you! from you! who could learn nothing from me! I made a fool of you; and you brought me wisdom: I broke your heart; and you brought me joy; I made you curse your womanhood; and you revealed my manhood to me".[Act III, p.169]. Charteris uses his intelligence and wit to make funof Julia and to hurt her.

Julia correctly intuits Charteris's feelings and behavior when

she tells him: "You made me pay dearly for every moment of happiness. You revenged yourself on me for the humiliation of being the slave of your passion for me. . . . I was your plaything, not your companion."[Act I, p.108]. Despite his scorn for Julia, Charteris goes back to Julia after some "tremendous philanderings" with other women.[Act I, p.103]. He goes back to her when he needs her but abandons her when he does not want her. In his callous attitudes and conduct Charteris reveals himself to be a man who apparently has liberal and advanced views about women but who in practice is quite a selfish exploiter of women. Charteris uses the "advanced", "rational", and "Ibsenist" views against marriage to get rid of Julia after he gets tired of her. On the other hand, like a conventional man he proposes marriage to Grace, because it will prevent Julia from pursuing him. Charteris admits that the first duty of marriage is fidelity. And he is incapable of fidelity due to his incorrigible philandering habit. Yet he proposes to Grace, knowing that he would make her unhappy in marriage.

Charteris accuses Julia of trying to use both advanced views and conventional views according to her advantage. And he is right. But Charteris himself uses both the advanced views and conventional views unscrupulously. Similarly Charteris scoffs at Cuthbertson for mixing up ideas of New Woman with his own "old Adam", but Charteris himself does the same thing. As Alfred Turco,Jr. notes, one can see in Charteris an unscrupulous

Restoration rake posing as a modern thinker.[17]. As mentioned earlier, Shaw himself declares in his preface to Plays Unpleasant that many people use Ibsenism for clandestine sensuality. Charteris uses Ibsenism to philander with women without becoming committed to any of them.

Many critics, ranging from the early ones like G.K.Chesterton[18], Desmond MacCarthy[19] and Archibald Henderson[20], to the later critics like Arthur Nethercot[21], Charles A.Carpenter[22], Charles A.Berst[23], Margery Morgan[24], Margo Peters[25], Julius Novick[26] and Alfred Turco,Jr.[27], have commented on Charteris's selfishness and cruelty. Julia, in the last scene, calls Charteris a vivisector - "a far crueller, more wanton vivisector" than Paramore.[Act III, p.168]. Paramore experiments with animals and causes them physical suffering while Charteris experiments with women, causing them mental suffering. Charteris agrees with Julia's opinion of him but claims that he is morally superior to Paramore because he and his victims learn so much more than Paramore and his animal victims. Charteris reveals himself as a vain idealist who values knowledge without caring about the suffering he causes to his victims in the process of gaining that knowledge.

Charteris's cruelty towards Julia has been noted by many critics, but his cruelty to Grace has not attracted much attention simply because Grace is a tough victim. Charteris tells Grace that he can love any pretty woman and that he has had many

affairs. Giving the impression of frankness and honesty, Charteris callously describes to Grace his intimacy with Julia: "I have sat alone with her just as I am sitting with you - . . . Just exactly. She has put her hands in mine, and laid her cheek against mine, and listened to me saying all sorts of silly things."[Act I, p.101]. After telling Grace that he has been as intimate and loving with Julia as he has been with Grace, Charteris has the brazenness to assure Grace that his affair with Julia was "nothing but a philander."[ActI, p.103]. He also admits that he wants to marry Grace mainly to escape from Julia. In his frankness he shows a callous indifference to the feelings of others. Similarly he is brutally frank and explicit with Julia when he wants to be rid of her. But he does not want to hear the truth from others; he is afraid that truth will be painful. When Grace offers to tell him the truth, he panics and pleads: "No, please. Dont. As a philosopher, it's my business to tell other people the truth; but it's not their busines to to tell it to me. I dont like it: it hurts."[Act II, pp.140-41].

Charteris reveals that like the old-fashioned Cuthbertson and Craven whom he mocks, he also has double standards for men and women, especially in his own affairs. When Grace tells him that she is an advanced New woman and that she quite agrees with all his ideas, Charteris stares at her in consternation, scandalized. He reproaches her for uttering such a disreputable attitude: "Thats a nice thing for a respectable woman to say !

You ought to be ashamed of yourself".[Act II, p.141]. The advanced views look commendable in a man like himself; but in Grace, the same advanced views look scandalous.

Charteris's attitude towards love is flippant. He talks of love as if it were only physical attraction. He tells Grace that it is because he likes her that he wants to marry her and not because he loves her. He declares that he can love any pretty woman. Thus "love" is something quite impersonal and impermanent in his eyes, while "liking" someone is more difficult, and more important for marriage. Charteris's light attitude towards love illustrates Shaw's view that many men do not take love and sex seriously. Charteris's flippant attitude to love may be real or it may be a device to avoid emotion in himself and in others. Margery Morgan, for instance, sees Charteris not only as an irresponsible man in his private relationships, but also as one who is "out of touch with his buried emotions and afraid of emotion in others."[28]. Charteris also seems to be wary of emotional dependence on others. He boasts to Grace that his happiness does not depend on anybody else except himself and that he can do without her. While the older men and Paramore overvalue emotion in women, Charteris shows the other side of a conventional view: that men have the strength to do without love.

Charteris fits Shaw's definition of the word "philanderer":

> "A philanderer is a man who is strongly attracted by women. He flirts with them, falls half in love with them, makes them fall in love with him, but will not commit himself to any permanent relation with them, and

> often retreats at the last moment if his suit is successful - loves them but loves himself more - is too cautious, too fastidious, ever to give himself away."[29].

It is notable that Charteris reverses role with women in a sense. He is not the pursuer of women but the pursued. When Julia chases him, he is quite scared, and when she seizes his wrists, he warns her: "Unhand me Julia. . . . If you dont let me go, I'll scream for help".[Act II, p.135]. Charteris admits using tactics similar to what are usually considered as "feminine wiles". He tells Grace that he pretended to be coy and fled from Grace only to make her pursue him. It seems that Charteris pursues women in a manner opposite to the conventional manner, though he claims not to pursue women. Charteris is not gallant to women and treats them like ordinary people. In fact his lack of gallantry and treatment of women as ordinary people seem to attract women, as Sylvia points out.

Charteris is perhaps amoral rather than immoral. In the preface to a later play Too_True_To_Be_Good Shaw declares that the most hopeless kind of scoundrel is the one who has no conscience at all rather than the one who has any positive vices.[30]. Like an amoral scientist Charteris seems to be indifferent to the suffering of his victims rather than cruel. He seems to view the women who fall in love with him merely as experimental objects. Charteris does not change at all. He is the same incorrigible, lighthearted, callous philanderer from beginning to end.

Julia is Shaw's satirical picture of "womanly" woman. All the other characters in the play see Julia as a very womanly woman. Cuthbertson, Craven and Paramore commend "womanly woman", while Charteris, Sylvia and Grace consider conventional "womanliness" as a defect and handicap.

Julia overvalues emotions and neglects other aspects which also have to be developed for a healthy, balanced human personality. When Charteris no longer loves her and refuses to marry her, Julia goes practically berserk. She is so tortured by her own jealousy and insecurity that she stoops to childish and despicable tactics to get back Charteris. She abuses the women friends of Charteris as old, ugly and vicious; she invades his privacy by stealing and reading his letters; she attacks Grace verbally and physically; she declares that Charteris belongs to her and that he has no right to be with Grace; she threatens to kill heself by jumping out of the window if Charteris does not come back to her; she tries to get back Charteris by wiles and insistence; she pleads with him pathetically to marry her. She admits that she had been wicked, odious, bad but adds that it was because of her fear of losing Charteris. Her desperateness is seen in her pathetic words:

> "I say nothing in defence of myself. But dont be hard on me. I was distracted by the thought of losing you. I cant face life without you, Leonard. . . . Dont cast me off without a thought of all I have at stake. I could be a friend to you if you would only let me; if you would only tell me your plans; give me a share in your work; treat me as something more than the amusement of an idle hour. Oh, Leonard, Leonard, youve never given me a chance: indeed you havnt.

> I'll take pains; I'll read; I'll try to think; I'll conquer my jealousy; . . . Oh, I'm mad: I'm mad: youll kill me if you desert me."[Act I, p.111].

Julia's desperate need for Charteris reminds us of the words of George Eliot and Florence Nightingale regarding the danger involved in women's over-emphasis of love and emotions:

> We women are always in danger of living too exclusively in the affections; and though our affections are perhaps the best gifts we have, we ought also to have our share of the more independent life - some joy in things for their own sake. It is piteous to see the helplessness of some sweet women when their affections are disappointed - because all their teaching has been that they can only delight in study of any kind for the sake of a personal love. They have never contemplated an independent delight in ideas as an experience which they could confess without being laughed at. Yet surely women need this sort of defence against passionate affliction even more than men.
>
> George Eliot [31]

> Women must have no passions ... the system dooms some minds to incurable infancy, others to silent misery ... marriage being their only outlet in life, many women spend their lives in asking men to marry them, in a refined way ...
>
> Florence Nightingale [32]

Julia is a perfect example of the kind of women George Eliot and Florence Nightingale write about. She promises to read, think and make an attempt to curb her insane jealousy - all only to regain Charteris's love and not for the sake of the activities themselves and forer own development. The intellectual activities do not seem to have any pleasure or value of their own for her. Her attitudes are infantile, and she does not seem to have any defence against her own passionate love and possible

disappointment in her love.

Julia is an example of the woman who is so self-surrendering in her love that her love becomes repulsive to her lover. Her reckless self-abandonment, passionate desire and infatuation seem to make Charteris shrink from her. In The Quintessence of Ibsenism Shaw talks about the "Womanly Woman", whose self-surrendering love and infatuation become so compulsive as to become tiresome to the lover: "Love loses its charm when it is not free; whether the compulsion is that of custom and law, or of infatuation, the effect is the same: it becomes valueless and even abhorrent, like the caresses of a maniac. The desire to give inspires no affection unless there is also the power to withhold."[33].

Julia certainly has no power to withhold her love when Charteris shows himself to be an unworthy lover. She accepts him every time he comes back to her after philandering with other women, thereby encouraging Charteris's philanderings and his victimization of her. She becomes an accomplice in Charteris's exploitation of herself and other women. By being a willing and acquiescing victim, she helps the victimizer.

Julia is a conventional woman or "womanly woman" by disposition and training but she poses as an advanced woman. Charteris claims that her advanced views are merely a fashion picked up and followed like any other fashion, and that Julia does not understand or mean a word of her advanced views. He

blames her for pretending to have advanced, rational and Ibsenist views in the beginning of their friendship; for being more jealous and possessive than even the most jealous wife; for insisting on conventional marriage with him; for denying his right and freedom to leave her while she had reserved her own right to leave him in the beginning of their relationship. Charteris bluntly and succinctly makes his point: "you cannot be an advanced woman when you want to bring a man to your feet, and a conventional woman when you want to hold him there against his will."[Act I, p.110].

It is true that Julia claims the benefits of both the advanced views and conventional views according to her selfish needs. Like an advanced woman, she takes the initiative to make a declaration of love to Charteris. Like an advanced woman, she reserves her freedom not to marry him. But after falling in love with him, she wants a conventional marriage and she abuses her lover and his women friends out of her excessive jealousy. Like an advanced woman she excuses herself from Cuthbertson who offers his arm to take her to the dining room of the club, because she wants to pursue Charteris in the library. She tells Cuthbertson: "you know it is against the rules of the club to coddle women in any way. Whoever is nearest the door goes first."[Act II, p.134]. Like a New Woman she pursues Charteris without any reserve when they are alone. She declares that she is not a womanly woman in order to remain as a member of the Ibsen

club. But at heart she is a very conventional, "womanly" woman.

Like a conventional woman she tells Charteris: "We are engaged in the eye of - the eye of - ", and cannot finish the sentence because as an advanced woman she is not supposed to believe in God. And she tries to assert the claims of a wife though she is not married to Charteris. Even when Charteris tells her with brutal frankness that he does not love her anymore and does not want to marry her, Julia does not accept the reality like an advanced woman. She cries, pleads, begs, threatens, and makes a scene, like a woman whose only goal and interest in life is love.

Another "womanly" characteristic of Julia is her dependence on men. Whenever she gets into trouble, she appeals to the men around, trying to arouse their sympathy by her tears and pathetic poses. When Grace takes her to task for her misbehavior in the club, Julia appeals to Charteris: "You will not leave me to be insulted by this woman, Mr Charteris."[Act II, p.155]. Though Julia cites the club rules to get rid of Cuthbertson, she conveniently forgets the club rules when she wants Charteris's help in her quarrel with Grace. She tearfully appeals to her father also to intervene in her quarrel with Grace. And she appeals to Charteris to support her before the club committee. At last, she runs to Paramore to get his help against Grace's complaints.

As Grace points out, Julia scorns and devalues women when

there are men around. When she is alone with Grace, she starts begging, kneeling and crying. Julia's lack of solidarity with women is seen on many occasions. She attacks Grace violently and calls her names like "villain", "serpent-tongue[d]", "coldblooded, cowardly creature", "creature with no figure" and so on. She declares that she will create a scandalous scene and defame Grace. She rages that she would like to kill Grace. She directs her anger and hatred towards the other women and against herself rather than against Charteris when she is maddened by his philanderings. She threatens to kill herself in the first Act, wants to kill Grace in the second Act, and only in the final Act wishes that she had the courage to kill Charteris. Julia's lack of solidarity with her own sex is also seen in her abuse of Charteris's women friends and in her acceptance of Charteris after his philanderings, without any thought about the other woman's position. Even with Paramore, whom she does not love, Julia is jealous of other women. She encourages him just enough "to keep any other woman from getting him", to quote Sylvia.[Act II, p.138]. She intrudes rudely and foolishly between Paramore and Grace, though she is not in love with Paramore. She is jealous of her sister Sylvia also for the attention of their father, though only very rarely Craven pets Sylvia.

During her confrontation with Grace, Julia boasts about the power of her beauty - the effect it has on men. But in the last scene, Julia comes to hate the fact that all the men admire her

only for her beauty, as if she were only a beautiful pet animal. She is bitterly hurt that nobody considers her admirable for her character or moral qualities. In the last Act Julia shows signs of an awakened sense of self-respect. Seeing Charteris's intrigue to pass her off to Paramore, she asks bitterly: "Must I stand to be bargained for by two men - passed from one to the other like a slave in the market, and not say a word in my own defence?"[Act III, p.172-73]. It is true that Julia falls into Charteris's trap mostly through her own fault; nevertheless, she evokes pity for the tragic waste of her energy and passion.

Critics like Margery Morgan and A.M.Gibbs have pointed out that Julia's defects are partly created by society's attitude and treatment of women. Society keeps the women at the level of children by not letting them have freedom and responsibility. Consequently women do not learn how to handle freedom and responsibility. As Morgan observes, "Julia's rages of frustration and jealousy and despair are the signs of a childish helplessness and fear of rejection, the insecurity of a creature who has never learnt independence of others. Like the spoilt child, Julia has acquired the cunning to use the appeal of her helplessness as a weapon of tyranny over others. . . . Julia's emotions - neurotic, hysterical and violent - are the results of a frustrated and consequently destructive vitality."[34]. A.M.Gibbs observes, in a similar vein, that Julia's words in the last Act show that her image as a child and impersonal sex object is partly created by

male attitudes towards her.[35].

Grace Tranfield is the genuine feminist in the play. Her character seems to be a fusion of male and female strengths. But she is not a caricature of a masculine woman. In her dress, habits and behavior Grace does not imitate men. Nor does she lack the sensitivity and elegance associated with femininity. However, Grace does have some qualities which are traditionally seen as masculine virtues: a strong sense of self-respect and determination.

The very first stage directions about Grace are revealing: she is "delicate of feature, and sensitive in expression." She is given up to the emotion of the moment in the company of her lover; but her "well closed mouth, proudly set brows, firm chin, and elegant carriage shew plenty of determination and self-respect."[Act I, p.99]. She dresses in a convenient and businesslike manner "to please herself and serve her own purposes without the slightest regard to fashion, though by no means without a careful concern for her personal elegance."[Act II, p.139]. She moves briskly, like a habitually busy woman. Her independent thinking and her habit of keeping herself busy by taking interest in many areas are a contrast to Julia's personality and lack of interest in areas other than love and emotions.

Grace is a contrast to both Charteris and Julia in her manner of loving. Her "sincere tenderness and dignified

quietness" contrast with Charteris's "clever, imaginative and humorous ways" and his lighthearted attitude towards love.[Act I, p. 100] Grace's quiet and dignified manner is also a contrast to Julia's passionate and turbulent way of loving.

Grace is a widow and knows by her experience that husband and wife may not love each other in the same manner. She tells Charteris: "I never was in love with Tranfield, though I only found that out when I fell in love with you. But I used to like him for being in love with me. . . . I hope, now that I am in love with you, you will like me for it just as I liked Tranfield."[Act I, p.100]. Grace is more realistic than romantic in her expectations of love. However she is taken aback when Charteris tells her that he can love any pretty woman. When Charteris callously tells her of his previous intimacy with Julia, Grace shrinks from him and is "chilled to the soul."[Act I, p.101]. She is hurt by the knowledge that her lover has loved many other women in the same way that he loves her and that she is not someone very special for him. Despite her deeply hurt feelings, Grace controls herself and does her best to find out the truth about Charteris's relation with Julia. She is not satisfied with Charteris's explanation that he wants to end his affair with Julia. It is not enough for Grace that Charteris does not want Julia any more. She wants to know whether Julia also had agreed to end the affair. When Charteris complains that Julia simply refuses to face the situation, Grace correctly observes

that Charteris probably did not treat the subject with enough seriousness. Grace's relentless questioning brings out the fact that Charteris wants to marry her only to escape from Julia. Charteris tells Grace with his usual flippancy that it is her mission to save him from Julia. Grace immediately replies that she does not want to be "made use of for any such purpose."[Act I, p.103]. This is Grace's first feministic rebellion and it forms the gist of her whole philosophy. As mentioned in the previous chapter, to regard and treat woman as a means rather than as an end in herself, is equivalent to denying her right to live, because it violates her human dignity.[36]. And this is what Grace rebels against. It is true that Grace deeply loves Charteris, but that does not make her forget her self-respect or solidarity with women. Love does not take priority over her sense of self-respect and fairness towards other women.

When Charteris purposely asks Grace whether Julia belongs to him, whether he is her owner and master, Grace replies as a true feminist: "Certainly not. No woman is the property of a man. A woman belongs to herself and to nobody else."[Act I, p.103].

When Charteris tries to pacify and coax Grace by assuring that his affair with Julia was "nothing but a philander", Grace is not pleased. On the contrary she is more offended. She breaks away from Charteris and tells him: "So much the worse! I hate your philanderings: they make me ashamed of you and of myself." [Act I, p.103]. Grace is repelled by Charteris's flippant

attitude towards love and his callousness towards his former lovers. Her reaction contrasts with Julia's reaction of pleasure and hope on hearing of Grace's break up with Charteris.

Grace's decision to break off her engagement with Charteris is reinforced after Julia makes a scene abusing Grace verbally and physically. Grace tells Charteris about her decision in a brief note: "My dear Leonard: Nothing could make it worth my while to be exposed to such scenes as last night's. You had better go back to Julia, and forget me. Yours sincerely, Grace Tranfield."[Act II, p.132]. She makes it clear that love is not so all-important to her as to be worth any price. Nor are marriage and the benefits of married life. To Grace, the assault on her sensibilities by Julia's rage and violence is so unpleasant that even love, marriage and the pleasures of family cannot compensate for it.

Grace does not wallow in regrets or self-pity after making the decision not to marry her lover. When Chaerteris asks her timidly whether she hates him after the horrible scene with Julia, Grace calmly answers him in the negative. Charteris's lamentation about the previous night's scene only elicits a placid assurance from Grace: "I am not at all miserable. I'm sorry; but I shant break my heart."[Act II, p.140]. Charteris praises Grace's "thoroughbred heart" because she does not make a big scene everytime her heart is pinched. He tries to woo her with praise of her composure. "Thats why you are the only

possible woman for me."[ActI,p.140]. But Grace is not shaken from her decision by such compliments.

Nor is Grace won back by Charteris's sentimental pleas such as "Ah yes: you have my heart in your hands. Break it. Throw my happiness out of the window."[Act II, p.140]. Grace had already divined that Charteris does not like to be loved too much. She asks Charteris, presumably with scepticism, whether his happiness really depends on her. But when Charteris tenderly - and unexpectedly - answers her in the affirmative, she "beams with delight." Grace, like any other person, is pleased to hear that she is someone very special to her lover. But Charteris recoils on seeing her reaction and corrects himself: "Ah, no: why should I lie to you? My happiness depends on nobody but myself. I can do without you." Grace is hurt that Charteris does not really need her or love her very much, but she nerves herself and tells him: "So you shall. Thank you for the truth."[ibid].

Grace is hurt by the fact that her love ends in disppointment. But she prefers to face the unpleasant reality than a pleasant illusion, in the manner of a "realist". She admits her love for Charteris but makes it clear that she will not marry him or be his lover. In fact, she reasons that she will not marry him because she loves him too much. She reminds Charteris that she is one who really believes in advanced views and not a phony advanced Ibsenist like him. She declares: "Thats why I will never marry a man I love too much. It would give him a

terrible advantage over me: I should be utterly in his power. Thats what the New Woman is like. Isnt she right, Mr Philosopher?"[Act II, p.141].

Grace's rational explanation is reasonable when the man involved is a frivolous philanderer like Charteris, but it is a too rigid and constricting rationalization to be valid for the majority of people. Alfred Turco,Jr. for instance, points out that Grace's argument, though a "sound intellectual point", is not only bizarre but very constricting.[37]. A.M.Gibbs also points out that Grace arrives at a mainly negative solution of suppressing passion and that she is trapped in a position of sterile neutrality, unwilling to accept the attitude of the philanderer and all the risks of entering into a fully committed, passionate relationship.[38]. Margery Morgan also is of the opinion that the character of Grace is impoverished because she brings in reason and the instinct of self-preservation to subdue emotion.[39].

Though the above criticisms against Grace are true, it is also true that love, passion, emotion and marriage with Charteris can only bring suffering to Grace; and possibly satiety and boredom to Charteris, given his incorrigible philandering habits. Charteris himself agrees that Grace's reasoning is right. He admits to Julia that if Grace had agreed to marry him, he would have made Grace unhappy. Considering the probable consequences of Grace's agreeing to marry Charteris or be his lover, there is

no doubt that she makes the right decision. Only her explanation to Charteris seems unsatisfactory. On the other hand, an over-rational and insensitive man like Charteris can understand and appreciate only such rationalistic and emotionless reason.

One can see Grace's feminism in the way she deals with Julia in the Ibsen club. Grace does not excuse Julia's misbehavior as the men do. When Charteris tries to take the blame on himself for Julia's stupid and rude conduct, Grace firmly stops him. She sends the two chivalrous men - Charteris and Paramore - on errands so that Julia is forced to stand on her own legs. She teaches Julia that one should take the responsibility for one's actions. By insisting on the club rule according to which quarrels between women should be settled in the absence of men, Grace not only paves the way for a frank interchange between herself and Julia, but also avoids humiliating Julia in front of the men.

When Julia throws herself tragically on her knees at Grace's feet and pleads with her to give back Charteris, Grace is not taken in. It is just one of Julia's tricks to evoke sympathy and to sidestep the issue under consideration. Grace firmly tells Julia to get up and shows her contempt for such foolish and ridiculous behavior. When Julia declares in a theatrical manner that she is too miserable to know or care about what she is doing. Grace retorts with biting sarcasm: "Do you suppose I am a man, to be imposed on by this sort of rubbish?"[Act II, p.155].

One can see Grace's contempt for women who use such excuses and for the men who are gullible enough to believe such womanly excuses. When Julia tries "her theatrical method in a milder form: reasonable and impulsively goodnatured instead of tragic", Grace once again shows that she is too intelligent to be fooled by such excuses. Her retort shows her keen insight into Julia's behavior: "You calculated to an inch how far you could go. When [Charteris] is present to stand between us and play out the scene with you, I count for nothing. When we are alone, you fall back on your natural way of getting anything you want: crying for it like a baby until it is given to you."[Act I, p.155]. Grace not only points out Julia's lack of solidarity with her own sex and childish tactics, but also hints that men tend to "stand between" women and aggravate the quarrels between them.

Grace is angry and ashamed towards her own sex when she sees Julia's childish tactics. She lectures Julia with scathing contempt to startle her into self-awareness:

> How I hate to be a woman when I see, by you, what wretched childish creatures we are! Those two men would cut you dead and have you turned out of the club if you were a man, and had behaved in such a way before them. But because you are only a woman, they are forbearing! sympathetic! gallant! Oh, if you had a scrap of self-respect, their indulgence would make you creep all over. I understand now why Charteris has no respect for women.
>
> [Act II, p.156]

Grace makes Julia realize that the chivalrous and

sympathetic attitude of men towards her childish behavior and towards women in general is in reality a humiliating condescendence. Grace is very hard on Julia, but being soft will not teach Julia a lesson in self-respect. All the male characters in the play are soft-hearted towards Julia despite her deplorable behavior and even try to help her to get out of difficulties created by her own stupidity and jealousy. But such tolerance and help only keep her at the level of a child. Grace is the only one who makes Julia grow into self-awareness. Grace's lecture seems to instil a sense of self-respect in Julia as seen from her words and behavior in the last Act, when she comes to hate being admired and "loved" for her beauty only. Julia gathers enough strength to give up Charteris, though she had earlier declared that she could not live without him.

Even when Julia stops pursuing Charteris and becomes engaged to Paramore, Grace does not want to marry Charteris. Her objection to marrying Charteris is not simply Julia; it is the humiliating fact that Charteis uses her as a means for his ends. Hence Julia's engagement to another man does not solve the problem for Grace. It is Charteris's attitude towards women that makes Grace refuse him. She is determined not to give herself to any man who has learnt to treat women with contempt because of his experience with Julia and women like her. She declares: "I can do without his love, but not without his respect." Given Charteris's habit of seeing women as means, Grace cannot hope to

have both his love and respect. And she decides to retain her self-respect rather than sacrifice it for her love.

In the last Act, when Julia accepts Paramore's proposal, Grace is the only one who realizes Julia's pain and anguish over her unreciprocated love for Charteris. When Cuthbertson asks Grace to congratulate Julia, Grace speaks to Julia in a low voice alone. She congratulates Julia, not for becoming engaged to Paramore, but for showing Charteris that she can do without him:

> "So you have shewn him that you can do without him! Now I take back everything I said. Will you shake hands with me? [Julia gives her hand painfully, with her face averted]. They think this a happy ending, Julia, these men: our lords and masters!"
> The two stand silent hand in hand.
>
> [Act III, p.175].

As G.K.Chesterton observes, there is a sense of tragedy in the words of Grace, who has refused to marry the man she loves, to Julia, who is marrying the man she does not love.[40]. The picture of the two women, who were seen as opposite poles so far, now standing silent hand in hand, is poignant. Their bond is one of sympathy, common suffering and solidarity. At the end of the play, Julia collapses after telling Charteris: "You are right. I am a worthless woman . . . Because I am not brave enough to kill you."[Act III, p.177]. Grace is the only one who divines Julia's state - mental and physical - and it is she who takes Julia in her arms as the latter sinks, almost fainting, away from Charteris. It is not Julia's former lover, future husband, father, admirer or sister who support her in her moment of

emotional exhaustion. It is her supposed rival and former enemy, Grace, who guesses Julia's state of suffering and "softly rises and gets close to Julia" to support her in her moment of need. As Alfred Turco,Jr. observes, the play does not leave much room for hope; only in the suggestion of the tenuous sisterhood between the two former antagonists, Grace and Julia, is there any suggestion of hope.[41].

The title of the play refers to Charteris. But he is not the hero of the play. As Julius Novick observes, "the very significant last words of _The Philanderer_ are spoken by Grace Tranfield, its true _raisonneur_, the only person in it who deserves to be taken quite seriously. She says: `Never make a hero of a philanderer.'".[42]. Shaw, in all likelihood, tells us through the words of Grace not to take Charteris as the hero just because of the title, but to see the strong feministic woman character as the true hero of the play.

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CHAPTER IV

Mrs Warren's Profession

Mrs Warren's Profession is Shaw's third play. Written in 1893, it is the last and the most powerful of the three Unpleasant Plays. Margot Peters, in the Introduction to the Facsimile of the Holograph Manuscript, reminds that Shaw himself rated the play high among his works: "Looking back in 1897 at his early career when he had dared to be unpleasant, he commended Mrs Warren's Profession to Ellen Terry: 'It's much my best play; but it makes my blood run cold: I can hardly bear the most appalling parts of it. Ah, when I wrote that, I had some nerve.'".[1]. Many critics, including Eric Bentley[2], William Irvine[3], St.John Ervine[4], T.R.Henn[5], and Margot Peters[1] consider the play a masterpiece.

The play created an uproar because of its controversial subject and the unconventional and daring way in which it treated the subject. It was banned by the censor in England and its performances in U.S.A. were violently opposed. The play is of interest from different points of view, as various critics point

out: as an attack on capitalism;[6,7]; as a rationalistic criticism of conventional morality;[8]; as an attack on the Victorian ideals of chastity and greed;[9]; as a portrayal of the struggle between human vitality and the artificial system of morality; as an emotional depiction of the archetype of a child rejecting the parent;[10]; as an anti-genre of the conventional courtesan play;[11]; as an economic exposure of the white slave traffic;[12]; as a drama of a personal crisis, of disillusionment, of a conversion, of the birth of a soul.[13]. However, in this study, attention will be restricted to the feminism in the play, as was done in the previous chapter.

The plot involves Mrs Warren, who in her youth decides to become a prostitute in order to escape from miserable poverty. In time she becomes a prosperous brothel owner who pays others to raise her daughter Vivie in respectable surroundings. She gives Vivie the best education in England while she herself spends most of her time in Vienna and Brussels running her brothels. Vivie graduates from Cambridge, and is quite ignorant of her mother's profession. When she comes to know that her mother chose prostitution because of degrading poverty and starvation wages, Vivie praises her mother for her courage and unconventional thinking. However, when Vivie finds out that her mother continues her "business" even when there is no excuse of poverty, she rejects her mother.

The various characters, situations and resolution of the

conflict in the play serve to explore feminism and to point out the anti-feminism of society - including the anti-feminism of women themselves.

Praed, an old friend of Mrs Warren, an artistic type of gentleman who thinks of himself as a "born anarchist", is delighted by Vivie's frank manner.[14, Act I, p.215]. He praises modern young ladies as "perfectly splendid" and tells Vivie: "When I was your age, young men and women were afraid of each other: there was no good fellowship. Nothing real. Only gallantry copied out of novels, and as vulgar and affected as it could be. Maidenly reserve! gentlemanly chivalry! always saying no when you meant yes! simple purgatory for shy and sincere souls."[Act I, p. 216]. In his dislike of artificial and hypocritical relations between men and women, Praed seems quite liberal-minded. However, despite such modern ideas, Praed cannot help being somewhat old-fashionedly chivalrous towards women. He does not let Vivie carry the chairs though she has left his hand numb by her vigorous handshake. He wants to take the hard chair for himself and give the better one for Vivie. Though he is excited and full of admiration for Vivie for winning the mathematical contest at Cambridge, he is appalled that she did it for money. His enthusiasm is much dampened on knowing that Vivie has a "very practical way of looking at it" and that she does not care much for the culture that such contests are supposed to bring.[Act I, p.217]. He is revolted and indignant when Vivie explains to him

that the contest means just grinding work at mathematics and nothing else and her education has left her a quite ignorant barbarian except in "mathematics, lawn-tennis, eating, sleeping, cycling, and walking." He vehemently denounces that such an educational system is a "monstrous, wicked, rascally system" because it destroys "all that makes womanhood beautiful."[Act I, p.217]. Praed shows himself to be quite conventional in his expectations of "womanhood". He is thoroughly upset on hearing that Vivie does not care for romance or beauty.

However, Praed shows his liberal and feministic views when he points out to Mrs Warren and Crofts that Vivie is a grown-up woman and that they should not treat her as a "little girl". He urges that they treat Vivie with respect. However, coexisting with his awareness that Vivie should be treated as a grown-up woman, there is a chivalrous, gentlemanly attitude toward her. He suggests to Crofts that they regard Vivie in a parental way, as a young girl whom they are bound "to protect andhelp."[ActI,p.225]. Similarly, Praed shows his chivalrous attitude towards Vivie when Frank decides not to marry Vivie. Praed indignantly and sternly tells Frank: "If you desert her now you will behave very despicably."[Act IV, p.277]. Praed does not understand that Vivie does not need Frank to support her in any way; and that there is no question of Frank's deserting Vivie since she has already rejected him as a lover and future husband.

Praed, nevertheless, is very perceptive and free of thepreconception that young people are necessarily less mature mentally than older people. He tells Mrs Warren that though Vivie is younger than all of them, she may be more mature than any of them in many ways. When Crofts declares that he does not know how he ought to feel towards Vivie unless he knows the identity of Vivie's father, Praed rightly counters: "What difference can that make? We take her on her own merits. What does it matter who her father was?"[Act I, p. 223]. Here Praed shows himself to be a feminist and humanist. He is the only one who does not disapprove of Vivie's being alone with Frank in the adjacent room while the others dine in the kitchen. He is a contrast to the over-protective, possessive Mrs Warren, the jealous and mean Crofts and the snobbish and hypocritically conventional Rev.Samuel Gardner, all of whom disapprove of Vivie's intimacy with Frank for different reasons.

Praed is always considerate and acts like a perfect gentleman towards Mrs Warren and Vivie. He is sufficiently enlightened to see that a woman cannot be content with only physical relations. He tells Crofts that "a handsome woman needs some friends who are not - well, not on that footing with her. The effect of her beauty would become a torment to her if she could not escape from it occasionally."[Act I, p.224]. Again Praed shows a sensitivity towards women in perceiving that to be recognized only for beauty and sexual appeal is not pleasant for

any woman.

He knows nothing about Mrs Warren's "profession" or "business" and he believes that Vivie is prejudiced against her mother because of the latter's unmarried motherhood. He chides Vivie for such an old-fashioned prejudice and staunchly supports Mrs Warren: ". . . The most intimate human relationships are far beyond and above the scope of law, . . . though I know your mother is an unmarried woman, I do not respect her the less on that account. I respect her more."[Act III, p.275]. Like Vivie, Praed admires Mrs Warren's courage in defying conventions that are not compatible with her own convictions.

Though his pleasant personality and virtues make him endearing, his tendency to be idealistic and sentimental rather than realistic detracts from his appeal. Some of his compliments to Vivie sound hollow, such as his praise of Vivie as "the most splendidly courageous woman" that he has ever met, though Vivie does not have the courage to say aloud what her mother really is.

Though Praed is a very likeable character because of his "very amiable and considerate manners" and artistic temperament [Act I, p.213], he is in essence a "drifter" - one who goes along life without any commendable aim or goal. He idealizes beauty, romance, womanhood and so on. Such a sentimental, soft and unrealistically idealistic man is not likely to be a real help to women.

Frank is another character who shows some promising signs in

the beginning in his attitudes towards Vivie. He seems to be more enamoured of Vivie's character and intelligence than of her physical attractiveness. But soon he discloses that he wants to marry Vivie because she has both brains and money. And he makes no secret that he intends to use his good looks to get an intelligent and wealthy wife. He is a philanderer, who instinctly gauges Mrs Warren. Though he despises Mrs Warren as a bad woman, he starts to flirt with her, despite their age difference.

He wants to marry Vivie mostly for her money. But he poses as a romantic idealist. When Crofts points out that Frank does not have any profession or patrimony to support a wife, Frank brazenly complains: "This is ever so mercenary. Do you suppose Miss Warren's going to marry for money? If we love one another----"[Act I, p.235]. He is too confident that Vivie will not refuse to marry him. He asks Vivie's opinion of his father and wonders how she will get on with his father. Vivie, however, answers him that her future life is not likely to be much concerned with Frank's father. It is another mark of Frank's macho attitude that he does not take Vivie's refusal seriously. When he decides not to marry Vivie because of Mrs Warren's source of money, he tells Praed that he cannot marry Vivie. He makes it appear as if it is he who is giving up Vivie instead of the other way round, though Vivie had already refused to marry him.

Similarly, Frank has different standards for his father and for Vivie's mother. Though the Rev.Samuel Gardner is a despicable

snob, Frank argues that his father "means well".[Act II, p.238]. Mrs Warren also "means well", despite her defects, but Frank does not take it into consideration.

Frank, nevertheless, has some commendable qualities. He is quite realistic and realizes that when two people live together, regardless of whether they are father and son or husband and wife or brother and sister, they cannot "keep up the polite humbug thats so easy for ten minutes on an afternoon call." This is why he tells Vivie that regardless of the justifications for Mrs Warren's being what she is, Vivie will not be able to stand her mother. He implies that, just because Mrs Warren and Vivie are mother and daughter, they will not be able to put up with each other and that Vivie should not force herself to do so.

He talks of a secret bond between "thouroughly immoral people" and frankly admits that <u>that is</u> the bond between him and Mrs Warren; and that is why he says that he knows Mrs Warren better than Vivie knows her mother. While both he and Mrs Warren are very immoral, by his own admission, Frank urges Vivie to marry him and live with him, but is vehemently against Vivie's living with her mother.

Along with his realistic attitudes, paradoxically there seems to be a streak of romantic escapism in Frank. He woos Vivie by inviting her to forget the real world in a make-believe, innocent world of the "babes in the wood". Vivie and "little Frank", the "wise little girl and her silly little boy" can go

and get covered up with leaves and be "ever so peaceful". They can be "relieved from the imbecility of the little boy's father and the questionableness" of the little girl's mother.[Act II, p 259]. Frank, in effect, tempts Vivie to take the easy way out, instead of helping her to face reality.

Frank does not seem to have the sensitivity to understand Vivie's mood of disillusionment and rejection in the last Act. He assumes that she rejects him because she has found a new lover. In other words, he assumes that what is true of himself is true of Vivie also. However, Frank's insight into people and his evaluation are usually correct. He detects Vivie's "strong natural propensity" for sentimentality behind her pose of unsentimenal hardness. In the last scene, seeing Vivie's bitterness and revulsion, Frank notes that there is a "touch of poetry" about Vivie that had not been there before. Vivie's "conversion" and the birth of a new soul that Eric Bentley[13] refers to, does not escape Frank.

Frank withdraws his intention of marrying Vivie apparently out of a chivalrous consideration for her. He explains to Praed that he cannot marry Vivie, not because of moral considerations of her mother, but because of the money aspect. He explains that he cannot bring himself to touch Mrs Warren's money after knowing how she earned the money. Frank argues that if he married Vivie, she would have to support him, since he has no money "nor the smallest turn for making it."[Act III, p.277]. And he declares

that he would cost Vivie more than he is worth. He does not want Vivie to live on his short allowance from his father. Frank does not like to work even to support himself, and there is no question of his working hard to support a wife. He reverses the traditional male-female roles in looking for a wealthy spouse who can support him.

Frank's father, the Reverend Samuel Gardner had advised his son that he had better use his good looks to marry a woman who has both brains and money. And Frank follows his father's advice. Both father and son do not see anything degrading in this kind of male prostitution which uses good looks to get a wealthy wife. But they condemn women like Mrs Warren, who uses her good looks to get a wealthy man to provide for her, though she cannot hope for marriage with a rich man. Charles A.Carpenter aptly observes that the play not only shows Mrs Warren, in her youth, selling herself to men in order to have a life of reasonable comfort, but also Frank Gardner, in his youth, trying to sell himself to Vivie, consciously using his good looks as a bait, because his only way to security is to become a paid husband. Carpenter adds: "To Shaw, the differnce is one of degree, not of kind."[15]. Bernard Dukore[16] and Margot Peters[17] also express similar opinions.

Frank and Vivie are quite different in their philosophy of life and in their attitudes. While Vivie takes the romantic and chivalrous attitudes of Praed as a sign of weakness on Praed's

part, Frank shows "romantic admiration" for Praed's gentlemanly chivalrous behavior towards women. While Vivie hates her mother's set for their idle, aimless life, Frank condemns them only for their poor "form". While Vivie is determined to work and earn her own living, Frank wants to avoid work and be a parasite on others. Vivie is intellectually advanced, has a Cambridge degree, is preparing for her career, is hard, practical and mostly unsentimental while Frank is a good-for-nothing idler, with a tendency to look for escape in romantic, make-believe worlds, who views marriage as a solution to his financial security. Vivie and Frank show a reversal of traditional male and female qualities.

Crofts is a quite anti-feministic character. He is old enough to be Vivie's father, but he tries his best to buy Vivie as his wife. He does not see anything wrong in the practice that a man of fifty like himself wants to marry a young woman of 22 like Vivie. But he is quick to object that Frank is younger than Vivie and so not suitable as a husband. (Frank is "not long turned 20") Crofts's preconceptions that it is all right for the husband to be very much older than the wife, but not all right for the wife to be even slightly older than the husband, show a typical macho double standard. He bullies and tempts Mrs Warren in order to get Vivie: ". . . A baronet isnt to be picked up every day. No other man in my position would put up with you for a mother-in-law. Why shouldnt she marry me? . . . we three could live together quite comfortably: I'd die before her and leave her

a bouncing widow with plenty of money. . . . I'll settle the whole property on her; and if you want a cheque for yourself on the wedding day, you can name any figure you like - in reason."[Act II, p.240].

In a similar manner he dangles the bribes of money, position and the title of "Lady Crofts" before Vivie to win her. When this does not work, he tries a different approach: "I'm a good deal older than you. Twenty-five years: quarter of a century. I shant live for ever; and I'll take care that you shall be well off when I'm gone."[Act II, p.262]. When even this bribe is ineffective, he tries to make Vivie feel obligated to him by pointing out that without his advice, help and loan of 40,000 pounds, Mrs Warren would not have made the money to pay for Vivie's maintenance and education. Though he does not tell Vivie the real nature of his joint business with Mrs Warren, he takes care to point out that Vivie had always lived on the money from their "business".[ActII, pp.262-63]. Vivie correctly guesses that Crofts would have told her the truth after marrying her, using it as a "convenient weapon" to break her in with.[Act II, p. 264]. While Mrs Warren had the excuse of her poverty and the lack of decently paying jobs, Crofts has no valid excuse for making profit from brothels. It is just greed. Crofts, who as a rich man has so many other options of business, chooses brothels-running, because it pays "35 per cent in the worst years."[Act II, p.262].

Crofts cites that everybody from the aristocracy such as Dukes, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Members of Parliament get the interest from the capital invested in immoral enterprises. He tells Vivie that Newnham college where she studied has a scholarship founded by his brother, who gets 22 per cent out of a factory which employs 600 girls at starvation wages. Sensible men, Crofts declares, do not turn their back on such income but pocket what they can.

Vivie expresses her opinion of Crofts in no uncertain terms: "My mother was a very poor woman who had no reasonable choice but to do as she did. You were a rich gentleman; and you did the same for the sake of 35 per cent. You are a pretty common sort of scoundrel, I think. That is my opinion of you."[Act II, p. 264]. When Crofts brazenly asks her whether she thinks better of him after his explanations, she answers with bitter quietness: "I hardly find you worth thinking about at all now. When I think of the society that tolerates you, and the laws that protect you! when I think of how helpless nine out of ten young girls would be in the hands of you and my mother! the unmentionable woman and her capitalist bully - " [Act II, p.266].

Among the women characters in the play, Mrs Warren's elder sister Liz is a strong, successful woman who manages to rise out of her poverty. She is a minor character who does not appear in the play, but who serves as a contrast to Mrs Warren and also as a comparison to Vivie. Liz, as a young woman, has too much spirit

to suffer in poverty, obeying the moralistic advice of the clergyman. She runs away from school one night, and contrary to the clergyman's prediction that one day she will commit suicide, she becomes a prosperous prostitute and brothel owner. She advises her younger sister - the young Mrs warren - against slaving in the bar and wearing out her health and good looks for the benefit of the bar owner. She lends some money to Mrs Warren and helps her to start her profession as a prostitute and then later become a partner in the business of international brothels. "She was a first rate business woman - saved money from the beginning - never let herself look too like what she was - never lost her head or threw away a chance."[Act II, p. 248]. Liz is a "perfect lady" by instinct, while Mrs Warren admits that she is a vulgarian. Mrs Warren is very happy that Vivie resembles Liz in having "ladylike, determined" ways.[ActII, p.251]. The important difference between Liz and Mrs Warren is that Liz gives up her profession and business once she can afford to do so.

She settles in Winchester, "close to the cathedral", and becomes so respectable as to chaperone girls at the county ball.[Act II, p.248]. When Vivie asks Mrs Warren why she does not give up her business like aunt Liz, Mrs Wareen explains: "Oh, it's all very easy for Liz: she likes good society, and has the air of being a lady. Imagine me in a cathedral town! Why, the very rooks in the trees would find me out even if I could stand the dulness of it." [Act IV, p.283]. Mrs Warren reveals that Liz did not like Mrs

Warren's "plumping the truth" about Woman's situation in society. "She used to say that when every woman could learn enough from what was going on in the world before her eyes, there was no need to talk about it to her." Liz seems to have a ladylike reticence and reluctance to talk frankly about Woman's situation to women. Mrs Warren tells Vivie ruefully: "I always got the worst of it from Liz; and now I suppose it'll be the same with you." [Act II, p.252]. Liz and Vivie differ from the vulgar Mrs Warren in their tastes and manners. Vivie declares that if she had been in the same circumstances as her aunt Liz, she would have done exactly what she did. This seems to imply not only that Vivie would have chosen to become a prostitute in order to escape poverty, but also that she would have left that profession later like Liz, once she became affluent. On the whole Liz seems to be a winner, both in her initial choice and later choice, while Mrs Warren loses her daughter through her later choice.

Mrs Warren is perhaps the most compelling woman character in the play. She is described, on her first appearance, as a "rather spoilt and domineering, and decidedly vulgar, but, on the whole, a genial and fairly presentable old blackguard of a woman."[ActI, p.220]. Mrs Warren tries to exert her authority on her daughter Vivie in many ways. She thinks of her 22 year old daughter still as her little girl. She plans Vivie's life without bothering to consult Vivie. Praed observes that Mrs Warren is likely to be disappointed in Vivie because the latter does not fit Mrs

Warren's ideal of a daughter. When Praed warns her that she should treat Vivie with every respect and stop thinking of her as a little girl, Mrs Warren expresses her genuine amazement: "Respect! Treat my own daughter with respect! What next, pray!" [Act I, p.223].

She is alarmed when Frank tells her that he and Vivie are "chums". She warns Frank: "I wont have any young scamp tampering with my little girl. Do you hear? I wont have it."[Act II, p.232] She realizes that if Vivie wants to get married, no good can come out of keeping her unmarried, but she is quick to decide that Frank cannot marry Vivie if he does not have money. When Frank protests that Vivie is not going to marry him for money, and that he and Vivie love each other, Mrs warren brusquely tells him: "Your love's a pretty cheap commodity, my lad. If you have no means of keeping a wife, that settles it: you cant have Vivie."[Act II, p.235]. Mrs Warren decides in a similar authoritative manner that Crofts cannot marry Vivie, though for different reasons.

The stage directions about Mrs Warren convey the impression that she mostly affects the behavior expected of a mother. For instance, she tries to "impose on" Crofts "in the character of a theatrically devoted mother". She tells him: "My girl's little finger is more to me than your whole body and soul."[Act II, p.239]. But Crofts seems to know her too well to be daunted by her words. When she suddenly breaks out vehemently in her slum

dialect, provoked by Vivie's cool behavior, "all her affectations of maternal authority and conventional manners" are gone.[Act II, p.245-46].

Mrs Warren seems to be anxious to keep her hold on her daughter. Crofts complains to Praed that Mrs Warren is so determined to "keep the child all to herself that she would deny that it ever had a father if she could."[Act I, pp.224-25]. Her behavior cetainly smacks of over-protectiveness, possessiveness and domineering authoritativeness in the early scenes.

She does not seem to like Crofts. One sees her contempt and disgust for him in her words. Yet, paradoxically, she is upset when Vivie talks of Crofts in a disparaging manner. She warns Vivie: "Youll have to make up your mind to see a good deal of Sir George Crofts, as he's a friend of mine."[Act II, p. 243]. It is possible that Mrs Warren wants to keep up an appearance of respect for Crofts because of his money; he is her business partner and has invested his money in her "business".

Mrs Warren cannot tolerate the idea that her daughter wants to have an independent life of her own choice. She is outraged that Vivie presumes to talk of her own way of life and angrily declares: "Your way of life will be what I please, so it will."[Act II, p.243]. One sees the same kind of attitude, though softened into pleadings, when Mrs Warren later urges Vivie to adopt a life of idleness and luxury, which according to <u>her</u>, as Vivie's mother, is the best life.

However, Mrs Warren expresses quite a few feministic and unconventional ideas when she tells Vivie about her youth. She asks Vivie with anger and scorn: "Do you think I was brought up like you? able to pick and choose my own way of life? do you think I did what I did because I liked it, or thought it right, or wouldnt rather have gone to college and been a lady if I'd the chance?"[Act II, p.246]. Mrs Warren describes her mother's and her two "respectable" step sisters's lives with bitter sarcasm: "Well, what did they get by their respectability? I'll tell you. One of them worked in a whitelead factory twelve hours a day for nine shillings a week until she died of lead poisoning. She only expected to get her hands a little paralyzed; but she died. The other was always held up to us as a model because she married a government laborer in the Deptford victualling yard, and kept his room and the three children neat and tidy on eighteen shillings a week - until he took to drink. That was worth being respectable, wasnt it?" [Act I, p.247]. Mrs Warren's words bring out with poignancy the injustices towards poor working women.

Mrs Warren sarcastically mentions how the passive and self-sacrificing sister was praised and held up to the girls as a model. Mrs Warren's words echo Shaw's tirade against the concept of "Womanly Woman" in The Quintessence of Ibsenism, mentioned in the second chapter.

Mrs Warren also describes how her spirited sister Liz rebelled against such teaching and became a rich prostitute; and

how she stopped Mrs Warren from foolishly wearing out of her health and her appearance for other people's profit; and how they both decided to use their good looks and knack for pleasing men to get all the profits for themselves instead of letting their employers get the profit.

Mrs Warren indignantly summarizes the plight of women who have no other way of supporting themselves except by marriage: "What is any respectable girl brought up to do but to catch some rich man's fancy and get the benefit of his money by marrying him? - as if a marriage ceremony could make any difference in the right or wrong of the thing! Oh, the hypocrisy of the world makes me sick!"[Act II, p. 249] Mrs Warren sees marriage as a legal, socially accepted and respectable form of prostitution. Echoing the ideas of Shaw and other socialists like Marx, Engels, Bebel, Belfort Bax[18], Mrs Warren bitterly declares: "The only way for a woman to provide for herself decently is for her to be good to some man that can afford to be good to her. If she's in his own station of life, let her make him marry her; but if she's far beneath him she cant expect it: why should she? it wouldnt be for her own happiness. Ask any lady in London society that has daughters; and she'll tell you the same, except that I tell you straight and she'll tell you crooked. Thats all the difference." [ActII, p.251]. Mrs Warren's words underline the fact that in the past women had no training for any profession to earn their own living and had to be on the look out for a man to provide for

them, either legally by marriage, or illegally by prostitution if the woman was poor. The jobs open to women were very few and ill paying.

Mrs Warren points out to Vivie that in her times a poor woman could not save money to start a business of her own except in the business of prostitution. She asserts with the conviction of her own experience: "It's far better than any other employment open to her.--I always thought that oughtnt to be. --It cant be right, Vivie, that there shouldnt be better opportunities for women. I stick to that: it's wrong."[Act II, p.250]. Mrs Warreen thus unequivocally condemns the society in which prostitution pays a poor, untrained woman better than the few jobs open to her - such as work in a whitelead factory, in the scullery of restaurants or in the bars. But society being what it is, argues Mrs Warren, a poor girl is better off as a prostitute: "How could you keep your self-respect in such starvation and slavery? And whats a woman worth? whats life worth? without self-respect!" [ibid.]

Mrs Warren also points out that prostitution is hard work like any other profession: "Ive often pitied a poor girl, tired out and in low spirits, having to try to please some man that she doesnt care two straws for - some half-drunken fool that thinks he's making himself agreeable when he's teasing and worrying and disgusting a woman so that hardly any money could pay her for putting up with it. But she has to bear with disagreeables and

take the rough with the smooth, just like a nurse in a hospital or anyone else. It's not work that any woman would do for pleasure, goodness knows; though to hear the pious people talk you would suppose it was a bed of roses."[Act II, p.249-250].

Mrs Warren declares that she is not ashamed of herself for her profession. She asserts: "If people arrange the world that way for women, theres no good pretending it's arranged the other way. No: I never was a bit ashamed really." Mrs Warren also observes that society expects women to be ashamed of prostitution and many other things while practically forcing them to choose and practise such things: "of course, . . . it's only good manners to be ashamed of it: it's expected from a woman. Women have to pretend to feel a great deal that they dont feel. . . . Whats the use in such hypocrisy?" [Act II, p.251].

In fact she declares that she has a right to be proud of the way in which the girls were "so well taken care of." She asserts that the brothel in Brussels where she worked was a much better place for a woman to be than the factory in which her step sister got poisoned; that none of the girls in her brothels were treated so badly as a poor girl was treated as a maid in the scullery, as a waitress in a bar or at home. Mrs Warren speaks proudly of her hard work, thrift and clever investment. She talks contemptuously of women who do not work hard and save and invest to attain financial independence: "Liz and I had to work and save and calculate just like other people; elseways we should be as poor

as any good-for-nothing drunken waster of a woman that thinks her luck will last for ever.[With great energy] I despise such people: theve no character; and if theres a thing I hate in a woman, its want of character."[Act II, p.249]. For Mrs Warren, character is not simply sexual chastity and conformity to conventional morality, but a determination to have decent living conditions. She despises women who are losers either due to conformity to society's moral code or due to their own carelessness in not saving and investing.

She also argues, paradoxically, that she was able to keep her self-respect only when she took to the dishonorable profession of prostitution and not in her "respectable", honest work as a waitress: "How could you keep your self-respect in such starvation and slavery?" She points out that her independence and Vivie's education were the fruits of her self-respect, self-control and her choice of prostitution as a profession: "Why am I independent and able to give my daughter a first rate education, when other women that had just as good opportunities are in the gutter? Because I always knew how to respect myself and control myself. Why is Liz looked up to in a cathedral town? The same reason. Where would we be now if we'd minded the clergyman's foolishness? Scrubbing floors for one and sixpence a day and nothing to look forward to but the workhouse infirmary." [Act II, p.250]. Mrs Warren has no regrets that she chose an immoral profession in order to escape degrading poverty.

However, it is a tragedy that a woman of such energy, spirits, intelligence and courage as Mrs Warren ends up wasting her potential in a profession such as prostitution and becomes so inured to her business that she comes to feel that she is fit only for that and not for anything else. The work, excitement, the money, all these things which her business gives her make her say: "I cant give it up - not for anybody."[Act III, p.284].

Mrs Warren's attitudes towards Vivie are ambivalent. She affects maternal authority and anxious protectiveness towards Vivie on many occasions. She tries to ignore and evade the fact that Vivie is a mature and very independent person. When Vivie points out that she has her own way of life like other people, and that it is not likely to suit her mother, Mrs Warren impatiently retorts: "What nonsense is this youre trying to talk? Do you want to shew your independence, now that youre a great little person at school? Dont be a fool, child." [Act II, p.243]. She resents Vivie's contemptuous attitude towards her and demands: "What right have you to set yourself up above me like this? You boast of what you are to me - to me, who gave you the chance of being what you are. What chance had I? Shame on you for a bad daughter and a stuck-up prude."[Act II, p.246].

But she is also afraid of Vivie. She is vulgar but she seems to look up to people like Vivie and Liz who have the "true instinct" of a lady.[Act II, p.251]. She realizes that Vivie is a woman of great determination, who hates signs of weakness and

sentimentality such as tears and crying. Mrs Warren's attempts to hide her tears are pathetic: "She'll be so angry if she sees Ive been crying. . . . Dont tell her I was crying."[Act III, p.279].

But Mrs Warren tries everything to win Vivie. She tempts Vivie with money, all sorts of comforts and luxury. Like Crofts, she declares: all "the big people, the clever people, the managing people . . . do as I do, and think what I think." She asks Vivie desperately: "Havnt I told you that I want you to be respectable? Havnt I brought you up to be respectable? And how can you keep it up without my money and my influence and Lizzie's friends?"[Act III, p.282]. The irony that outward respectability in society is acheived mainly through disrespectable means is poignant. Mrs Warren has come to see respectability only in terms of prosperity and fashionable life.

While she despises women without self-respect or character, Mrs Warren fails to see that the life that she offers to Vivie is opposed to self-respect and character. She wants Vivie to live a life of comfort and luxury, as a parasite on the money derived from Mrs Warren's profession. A life without any aim or goal. Mrs Warren mistakenly believes that by providing a comfortable life, which is opposite to her own life in her youth, she can make Vivie "respectable". She is right if one takes "respectable" to mean fashionable and affluent. But no one can be "respectable" in a genuine sense while living like a parasite without any aim in life.

Mrs Warren is quite unconventional in some of her views, such as her bold justification for her profession and her ideas on marriage, but she also shows a very conventional attitude towards her daughter. She wants Vivie to lead a life which she, as her mother, has chosen. She does not see that Vivie has a right to choose her own way of life. When Vivie declares that her way of life is very different from and incompatible with that of Mrs Warren and so they must part, Mrs Warren is furious. She asserts her right as a mother and denies Vivie's right to live her own life: "We're mother and daughter. I want my daughter. Ive a right to you. Who is to care for me when I'm old? . . . I kept myself lonely for you. Youve no right to turn on me now and refuse to do your duty as a daughter."[Act III, p. 284].

Mrs Warren accuses Vivie as a heartless, hard, selfish woman. Perhaps she is partly right in her accusations. But Mrs Warren herself is perhaps partly responsible for the fact that Vivie has grown into a hard egoist who lacks emotions and sympathy. Marlie Parker Wasserman[27] points out that the psychological work of Anna Freud and Dorothy Burlingham have shown that a child who is brought up in the absence of family ties and personal ties misses the opportunity to learn and practise the ability to love; that the failure to fulfill the basic emotional needs of a child may result in the blunting of the emotional needs and in a failure to develop "all the more highly organized forms of love which should be modelled on the

first pattern"; that, in such people, "all later relationships will develop weakly, and will remain shallow. The opposite of this ability to love is not hate, but egoism."[28] Wasserman also cites the work of William Goldfarb to point out that a child who is not raised by the mother, but is occasionally visited by her, shows a hostile reaction to the mother and an apathetic withdrawal from all emotional tanglement.[29] Vivie has been brought up away from her mother from childhood and she shows all the effects cited by the above mentioned psychologists. Frank Gardner, with his usual insight, hints at the possible cause of Vivie's hard nature: ". . . all the most advanced thinkers are agreed that half the diseases of modern civilization are due to starvation of the affections in the young."[Act II, p. 238].

Mrs Warren's circumstances did not help her to be a normal mother and bring up her daughter in her own home. She paid others to raise her daughter respectably and in that process has lost her daughter. Vivie explains to Praed that she hardly knows her mother, and there is a note of bitterness, regret, and perhaps even self-pity and resentment in her words: "Since I was a child I have lived in England, at school or college, or with people paid to take charge of me. I have been boarded out all my life. My mother has lived in Brussels or Vienna and never let me go to her. I only see her when she visits England for a few days." [ActI, p.219]. Under such circumstances Mrs Warren's insistence that Vivie should do her "duty" as a daughter does not carry much

weight. Though she is probably truthful when she tells Vivie that she meant to have been more with her daughter, her intentions alone are not sufficient. She cannot undo the past. She cannot make up for the emotional deprivation and lack of family ties that Vivie felt as a child. Mrs Warren insists on Vivie's "duty", but does not see that her "duty" was not just providing for a comfortable life and education for her child, but also included providing emotional bonds.

At the end of the second Act, when Vivie is reconciled with her, Mrs Warren blesses her in a sentimental manner. But at the end of the third Act Mrs Warren screams at Vivie and curses her because she refuses to live according to Mrs Warren's wishes. It is true that Vivie seems to be hard and unfeeling towards her mother, but one can sense Vivie's turmoil from her words to Praed before confronting Mrs Warren: "I shall need much more courage . . . when I tell my mother that we have come to the parting of the ways." [Act III, p.276]. The irony and tragedy in Vivie's rejection of her mother turns Mrs Warren more defiant than ever:

> "Oh, the injustice of it! the injustice! the injustice! I always wanted to be a good woman. I tried honest work; and I was slave-driven until I cursed the day I ever heard of honest work. I was a good mother; and because I made my daughter a good woman she turns me out as if I was a leper. Oh, if I only had my life to live over again! . . . From this time forth, so help me Heaven in my last hour, I'll do wrong and nothing but wrong. And I'll prosper on it."
> [Act III,p.285].

Mrs Warren is in a way the precursor of the modern, independent and liberated woman. She acheives economical independence through her psychological independence, hard work, thrift and business acumen. But Vivie Warren is the fully liberated New Woman of the 1890s in the play. While her mother is not strong enough to give up her lucrative business with its excitements and comforts, Vivie has the strength of character to resist all temptations in her determination to be independent, self-respecting and true to herself.

The very first stage directions about Vivie describe her as an "attractive", "sensible, able, highly-educated young middle-class Englishwoman" who is "prompt, strong, confident, self-possessed."[Act I, p.214]. Though Mrs Warren easily captures the readers' attention and sympathy with her energy, emotional intensity, indignant anger and pathetic needs and fears, it is Vivie who is the tragi-comic heroine of the play. As Margot Peters observes, Vivie is the solar figure of the play, like Ibsen's strong heroines.[19]. Critics like St.John Ervine[20] and Sonja Loricks[21] have poined out that Shaw intended Vivie to be a violent contrast to the conventional heroines of contemporary drama. Vivie is the strong, hard girl in contrast to the soft, yielding heroine of the Victorian model who has no opinions or will of her own. Many critics find Vivie unpleasing, cold, self-centered and even repellent.[22]. Ervine has pointed out that though "unpleasing", Vivie is the forerunner of real women of the

later decades.[23]. Loricks sees Vivie as the ideal modern woman who was intended to inspire the young women of Shaw's time for an independent career. Critics like Irvine[24], Nethercot[25] and Elsie Adams[26] have commented on the comical aspects in Vivie's characterization. When we first see her, Vivie is lying in a hammock reading law books and taking notes, with a pile of serious-looking books and a supply of writing paper beside her. She wears a plain business-like dress, but it is not dowdy. When the middleaged gentleman Praed comes on the road and asks some information, she hardly stops in her work except for glancing up and answering briefly. She does not bother to get up from her hammock. She shakes hands with men with such a "resolute and hearty grip" that the men are left with numb fingers. She shuts doors with a vigorous slam, moves chairs with a swing, she cycles, goes for long walks, plays lawn tennis and in short resembles more an athletic young man than a young lady. She hates holidays, prefers to work at actuarial calculations and law books for her future career. She declares: "I like working and getting paid for it. When I'm tired of working, I like a comfortable chair, a cigar, a little whisky, and a novel with a good detective story in it."[Act I, p.218]. All this is slightly comical, emphasizing Vivie's man-like habits, strengths and qualities. Nevertheless, Vivie is very attractive and excites the admiration of Praed, Frank and Crofts.

Vivie wins the mathematical contest at Cambridge, showing

her capacity in a traditionally male area. She is not a bit romantic or idealistic. She declares that she won the contest for a very practical motive - money. Considering the work involved in the contest, which she feels is not useful for her future career, she pragmatically decides that it is not worth her while. However, she makes a deal with her mother that if she is to win the contest and fulfill her mother's wish, she should be paid fifty pounds. Vivie explains to the romantic Praed that the contest does not bring any "culture" to the participant as he imagines. She frankly admits that she is an ignorant barbarian in other areas except in mathematics, lawn tennis, eating, sleeping, cycling and walking. But she is not sorry that she is without "culture". She does not care when Praed declares that such an educational system destroys "all that makes womanhood beautiful." She does not care for the conventional concepts of beautiful womanhood. She plans to use the knowledge of mathematics gained from the contest for her future career.

Vivie declares that she does not care for romance or beauty. She frankly expresses her distaste for art galleries, operas and concerts, proving the invalidity of the general idea that women are by nature interested in the fine arts.

In the very first scene one sees Vivie's spirit of independence. She is "not at all pleased" by her mother's interference in her plans. She declares to Praed: "My mother has rather a trick of taking me by surprise - to see how I behave

myself when she's away, I suppose. I fancy I shall take my mother very much by surprise one of these days, if she makes arrangements that concern me without consulting me beforehand." [Act I,p.214]. When Praed talks of the hypocritical and reserved interrelations between men and women in his times, Vivie asserts in the manner of a true feminist: "I imagine there must have been a frightful waste of time. Especially women's time."[Act I,p.216].

Vivie has plans to support herself by her own career despite having a wealthy mother. She suspects that her mother will not like the idea and anticipates a ""battle royal". But she is confident of winning.[Act I, p.220]. She knows her advantages and her mother's disadvantages and has no scruples to use them, if necessary, to win the battle. She has no false sense of solidarity with her sex to inhibit her from being tough with women adversaries. One does see her solidarity with her sex from the fact that she spends her holidays helping her lawyer friend Honoria Fraser. Later Vivie starts her career in a partnership with Honoria Fraser. In her vehement denouncement of Crofts and Mrs Warren one can sense Vivie's solidarity with the unfortunate poor girls who are drawn into prostitution.

Vivie is not a weak, soft woman depending on others to take care of her. When Mrs Warren warns Frank not to tamper with her "little girl", he calms her: "your little girl is jolly well able to take care of herself. She dont need looking after half so much as her mother."[Act II, p.232] She is "quite unmoved", acts with

"cool decision", talks to her mother "determinedly", "ruthlessly", and "coolly". In contrast, her mother shows anger, puzzlement, helpless fear and fury and emotional outbursts. [ActII, pp.243-245]. When Mrs Warren discloses that she does not know who Vivie's father is, Vivie digests the news "slowly and thoughtfully." And then she asks her mother to stop feigning shame. She stops the discussion about her father and abruptly changes the subject to mundane matters such as breakfast. Mrs Warren is shocked and provoked by Vivie's subdued reaction which she takes to be lack of feeling: "My God, what sort of woman are you?" Mrs Warren seems to think that strong emotions show themselves in a transparent manner. Vivie, on the other hand, seems to hate any display of emotions. She answers her mother coolly: "The sort the world is mostly made of, I hope. Otherwise I dont understand how it gets its business done."[ActII, p. 245].

When Mrs Warren describes that unlike Vivie, she had no chances in her youth to study or to pick and choose her own way of life, and accuses Vivie for being a bad daughter and a prude, Vivie's confidence wanes. Her replies, "which have sounded sensible and strong to her so far, now begin to ring rather woodenly and even priggish against the new tone of her mother."[Act II, p.246]. She is "impressed in spite of herself", is "thoughtfully attentive" to her mother's story, gets "intensely interested", "more and more deeply moved" and "fascinated" as her mother proceeds in her story. And she finally

declares: "My dear mother: you are a wonderful woman: you are stronger than all England."[Act II, pp.247-251]. Vivie admits that her mother has won in the battle, though she had intended to win. She becomes reconciled to her mother and shows kindness and tenderness towards her mother.

Vivie justifies her initial attitude towards her mother as self-defence: "Dont think for a moment that I set myself above you in any way. You attacked me with the conventional authority of a mother: I defended myself with the conventional superiority of a respectable woman. Frankly, I am not going to stand any of your nonsense; and when you drop it I shall not expect you to stand any of mine. I shall always respect your right to your own opinions and your own way of life."[Act II, p.246]. Vivie's strength is her respect for each person's right to have their own opinions and way of life. And she expects others to have the same respect for her rights.

When Mrs Warren declares that she had no opportunity to choose her own way of life, Vivie expresses her militant philosophy which scorns passivity and the habit of blaming circumstances: "Everybody has some choice, mother. The poorest girl alive may not be able to choose between being Queen of England or Principal of Newnham; but she can choose between ragpicking and flowerselling, according to her taste. People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I dont believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are

the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they cant find them, make them."[Act II, p.246]. Vivie believes that one can win despite the circumstances, while Mrs Warren convincingly explains to her how impossible it is for a poor girl to win a decent life with honour. Mrs Warren's powerful arguments convince Vivie that her mother made the right choice.

But Vivie assumes that her mother has wound up her business of brothels after becoming financially independent. She thinks that Mrs Warren, like her sister Liz, has left "all that behind her" and invested the money in other ways. She softens enough to be kind, affectionate and tender to her mother. Her behavior even makes Frank think that Vivie has gone sentimental. Vivie resents Frank's sarcastic compliment to Mrs Warren and warns him not to do it again. She asks him to treat her mother with as much respect as he gives his own mother.

Initially Vivie has great contempt for her mother and her friends, seeing them as wasters, "shifting along from one meal to another with no purpose, and no character, and no grit".[Act II, p.238]. But after knowing about her mother's story, Vivie defends her mother. When Frank protests against her new attitude of affection towards her mother, she asks him: "Must I choose between dropping your acquaintance and dropping my mother's? . . . Is she to be deserted by all the world because she's what you call a bad lot? Has she no right to live?"[Act III, p.259]. It is interesting that Vivie calls her relationship with both Frank and

her mother as "acquaintance." She seems to see both relations as yet superficial.

However, even after her reconciliation with her mother, Vivie's feelings towards her mother are ambivalent. Despite her pride in her mother's courage and strength, Vivie seems to feel pain and shame over her mother's past. She tries to find refuge, though only momentarily, in Frank's make-believe world of babes in the woods. She admits that she wants to forget all about her mother. Despite her apparent toughness and openness, Vivie seems to be vulnerable to certain conditioning and prejudices in her middle-class upbringing.

Vivie justifies Mrs Warren's choice to Crofts: "My mother was a very poor woman who had no reasonable choice but to do as she did." [Act III, p. 264] But she also condemns her mother when she comes to know that Mrs Warren still runs brothels. She is infuriated when she thinks of the poor young girls in the hands of her mother and Crofts - "the unmentionable woman and her capitalist bully."[Act III, p.266]. She is tortured by the fact that she had unwittingly lived on the profits from the brothels of her mother and Crofts. She is so disgusted by the revelations of Crofts that she comes to distrust, dislike and avoid love, sex and all sentiments. And she takes refuge in her work, and declares: "once for all, there is no beauty and no romance in life for me. Life is what it is; and I am prepared to take it as it is."[Act IV, p.273]. She does not want to hear anything about

love, romance and beauty. She declares that she has no illusions left on these subjects. She asks Praed and Frank to treat her as "a woman of business, permanently single and permanently unromantic."[Act IV, p.274]. Critics like Margot Peters and Margery Morgan have pointed out that Vivie's flight from love, sex and all attachments and her finding refuge in her work is like the retreat of a recluse from life. Morgan calls it "the puritan's retreat from life into abstractions."[31]. Margot Peters observes that in Vivie, "Shaw has condemned his modern woman to a celibate and solitary life of actuarial calculations."[30].

Vivie sees her work as a support, a way to forget her shock, pain and all unpleasant memories. She immerses herself in work and declares that two days of work have given her back all her strength and self-possession. She seems to be afraid to leave the refuge of her work: "I will never take a holiday again as long as I live." She also tells Frank: "I think brother and sister would be a very suitable relation for us. . . . It's the only relation I care for, even if we could afford any other." [Act IV, p.271]. Critics like Margot Peters see in Vivie's declaration a fear and dislike of sex that is neither healthy nor balanced.[32]. It seems that the revelation of Mrs Warren's addiction to her business of prostitution has tainted sexual relation for ever in the mind of Vivie. She equates all love, beauty and romance to prostitution.

Vivie sees that one can use ideals like "energy, thrift, foresight, self-respect, character" and so on, for selfish and immoral purposes as well. Mrs Warren and Crofts pride themselves on such virtues in their immoral business. Vivie wishes she had the courage to tell everybody about her mother's profession and business - so that everyone will come to know of the social crimes and their part in them. But Vivie cannot overcome her shame to do so. She, like her aunt Liz, is too squeamish to expose reality, despite her toughness and courage in many other areas: "I am sure that if I had the courage I should spend the rest of my life in telling everybody - stamping and branding it into them until they all felt their part in its abomination as I feel mine. There is nothing I despise more than the wicked convention that protects these things by forbidding a woman to mention them. And yet I cant tell you. The two infamous words that describe what my mother is are ringing in my ears and struggling on my tongue; but I cant utter them: the shame of them is too horrible for me."[Act IV, pp.275-76].

Mrs Warren's bribes of new dresses every day, theatres and balls every night, the company of the pick of all the gentlemen in Europe, a lovely house, servants, choicest food and drinks- all these do not tempt Vivie. She correctly though cruelly observes that Mrs Warren must have used the same kind of argument and bribes to persuade many a girl to take to prostitution in her brothels. Vivie is immune to Mrs Warren's other argument, similar

to that of Crofts, that all the big, important people are involved with immoral incomes in some way or other and so one should not feel guilty for such practices. Vivie reveals that she declines her mother's money and offer of a fashionable life, not because of others' concept of morality, but because she does not want to be a worthless person.

All her mother's arguments do not make Vivie change her mind. Vivie tells her mother: "I am my mother's daughter. I am like you: I must have work, and must make more money than I spend. But my work is not your work, and my way not your way. We must part. It will not make much difference to us: instead of meeting one another for perhaps a few months in twenty years, we shall never meet: thats all." She points out that what Mrs Warren is asking her is "the peace and quietness " of her whole life. She asks realistically though apparently heartlessly: "What use would my company be to you if you could get it? What have we two in common that could make either of us happy together?"[Act IV, p.284]. What Vivie says is true because Vivie and Mrs Warren have very different tastes and habits and are not likely to enjoy each other's company.

When every other tactic fails, Mrs Warren desperately tries to assert her right as a mother and claim that Vivie should do her duty as a daughter; that she should take care of Mrs Warren in her old age. Vivie is infuriated by the cant of "duty" and she tells her mother ruthlessly: "My duty as a daughter! I thought we

should come to that presently. Now once for all, mother, you want a daughter and Frank wants a wife. I dont want a mother; and I dont want a husband. I have spared neither Frank nor myself in sending him about his business. Do you think I will spare you?"[Act IV, p.285].

Vivie declares that her mother is a conventional woman at heart because she had lived one life and believed in another. She argues that she is right to get rid of her mother because of this. Vivie's reasoning seems very cold and even naive since conventionality and unconventionality are standards that are fallible like any other human standard and variable according to time, custom and circumstances. The only standard by which an act can be judged, according to Shaw, is its effect on life and not its conformity to any rule or ideal.[33]. By this standard, Mrs Warren's actions have resulted in one good thing at least- namely that of making Vivie a self-supporting woman by a profession other than prostitution, as Mrs Warren herself had to do. But it is also true that what Mrs Warren wants Vivie to do- namely to live on her mother's money, without working to earn her living - is a demoralizing way of life. Mrs Warren would be undoing all the good she had done to Vivie if Vivie were to turn into an idle, dependent but fashionable woman. Vivie is right to reject her mother's money and the fashionable parasitic life, but she seems to be devoid of sympathy for her mother in rejecting her for life. Vivie shows her sympathy for the poor young women

exploited by her mother and Crofts, but she is not able to empathize with Mrs Warren's feelings. It seems a cruel justice that the daughter denies the mother in her old age the love and sympathy which she did not get from her mother as a child.

At the end of the play Vivie is not sad or heartbroken for having rejected her lover and her mother. After Mrs Warren leaves, "the strain on Vivie's face relaxes; her grave expression breaks up into one of joyous content; her breath goes out in a half sob, half laugh of intense relief."[Act IV, p.286]. She goes back buoyantly to her table to resume her work. She sees Frank's note on the ink bottle, reads it unconcernedly, tears it up and tosses it into the wastepaper basket without a second thought. Then she goes at her work with a plunge and soon becomes absorbed in her work. As Barbara Bellow Watson observes, at the end of the play Vivie is not overcome with grief, "sheds no tears" and "bites no pillows" and goes to work in a "flare of relief after sending her mother and suitors packing."[34].

Despite her failings Vivie strikes one as a remarkably strong emancipated woman. As Barbara Bellow Watson observes, Vivie Warren is an example of the women who "would exchange the fripperies of femininity for the armor of feminism.[35]. Gladys Crane sees Vivie as a fully liberated Shavian woman among the many emancipated Shavian women. Vivie chooses her career unrestrained by social conventions; she declines the roles which society assigns to Woman - role of a wife, lover and dutiful

daughter. Contrary to the expectations of a feminine image, Vivie is very straightforward in her speech and manners. There is nothing of the subtle and devious "womanly" manner in her. Nor does she adhere to the notion that a woman should appreciate beauty, romance, art and music and the like. She frankly discloses her lack of interest in such areas. As Gladys M. Crane notes, Vivie is one of the two remarkable Shavian women, who "very definitely and unequivocally win in their struggles against society's repressive demands on women." One of the reasons for the success of such women, to quote Gladys M. Crane, is their clarity of purpose, their strong sense of identity in a world that creates confusion for the woman who does not fit society's mold". In addition, Vivie has "unusual strength arising from strong moral and ethical convictions". One can agree with Gladys Crane that Vivie, with her economic, social and psychological independence, her moral and ethical consistency, her dignity and self-respect, exemplifies the ideal for modern free woman.[36].

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CONCLUSION

The foregoing chapters have made an attempt to see Shaw's feministic ideas in his works, with special reference to the two early plays *The Philanderer* and *Mrs Warren's Profession*. Many of the feministic ideas that Shaw expressed in his non-fictional writings find their way in his plays through the characters, situations and the way in which the conflict is resolved.

The Philanderer for example, emphasizes that the modern woman rebels against man when he uses her as a *means* rather than as an end in herself, even if he happens to be her lover. In *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* Shaw had declared that patriarcal society regards Woman, not as an end in herself like Man, but solely as a means of ministering to Man's needs. Shaw had asserted that to treat a person as a means is equivalent to denying that person's right to live. He had pointed out that when Woman dares to face the unpleasant fact that she is being used as a means by Man, she must either loathe herself or rebel. Grace Tranfield in *The Philanderer* rebels; Julia Craven loathes herself. Shaw has shown how the two women, who differ in their personalities and emotional nature, react to the fact that their common lover *uses* them as a *means* for his selfish *ends*.

Through Grace Shaw shows how difficult it is for Woman to reconcile love and self-respect in marriage. He shows Grace giving up love and marriage when she finds them incompatible with her self-respect. In showing such attitudes and behavior in a woman, Shaw defies the traditional view that Woman considers love and marriage as the most important goals in her life. He has shown that Woman can be as hard, as rationalistic and as practical as Man and that she is not always romantically idealistic about love and marriage. Nor is she heartbroken because of disappointed love. Such a resolution is consistent with Shaw's view that women are not very different from men in many respects. It is true that Shaw also admitted that women, in general, take love, sex and marriage much more seriously than men. This view is also reflected in his depiction of Grace and Julia's attitudes towards love and marriage, which contrast with Charteris's flippant attitude. However, despite her sincere and deep love - or because of it, as she claims - Grace refuses to marry Charteris. She has other priorities such as self-respect which supersede considerations of love and marriage, though love and marriage are, by tradition, the most important goals in a woman's life. There is a note of tragedy in such renunciation of love, both in the case of Julia and Grace, but given the male selfishness depicted in the play there is no better alternative for Grace. Shaw has underlined Woman's dilemma poignantly in The Philanderer.

Grace expresses the feministic view that men's chivalry and indulgent attitude towards women, in reality, reflects men's contempt and condescension towards women. However, Grace also points out that women themselves are partly to be blamed for such a situation: It is women's own childish attitudes and behavior, manipulative tactics, show of weakness, tears and so on that compound men's contempt for women.

Shaw has also shown the need for solidarity among women in The Philanderer. Grace teaches Julia to give up the philanderer by her own example. She makes Julia realize the value of self-respect. Though she is scornful of Julia in the beginning, Grace offers her hand to Julia at the end, in a gesture of friendship, sympathy and support. She is the only person to understand Julia's pain while the male characters are mostly insensitive to Julia's plight.

Even Sylvia in a sense shows solidarity with Julia though she seems only to quarrel with Julia and work against her. She wants Julia to give up her childish and "womanly" behavior, since all the world cannot expect to know that Julia is the family baby and agree to treat her indulgently.

Shaw attacks the image of "womanly" woman through the characterization of Julia. In Julia one sees the stunted development of Woman's personality due to the excessive emphasis on emotions and lack of emphasis on other interests. Shaw depicts such a situation as a tragedy, for which men are mostly to be

blamed: it is men like Cuthbertson, Craven and Paramore who encourage the "womanliness". They praise and admire the childish and over-emotional women, though Shaw, using his comical genius, makes sure to show how such womanly behavior is often a nuisance.

Through the characters of Cuthbertson, Craven, Paramore and Charteris, Shaw exposes the double standard - the unwritten codes of society which favour men and give them more freedom and advantages. Though his method is often comical, the point is not lost; after the laughter comes the reflection on the incongruity which provoked laughter in the first place.

Shaw hints at the defects in the institution of marriage- as it was in his times - through the "advanced views" of the Ibsen club. Charteris cites various arguments to show that an advanced woman should avoid marriage: that marriage is a commercial bargain in which the woman sells herself in order to be supported by the husband; that marriage is a very risky arrangement for a woman because she cannot free herself from the marriage easily if the husband turns out to be bad; that marriage is often incompatible with the development of the woman's potentials.

Shaw also shows his stand against the romantic and idealistic view of marriage. He shows Cuthbertson's love marriage ending in separation because the spouses could not overcome their incompatibilities in daily life. Craven, who loses to Cuthbertson

in the contest of love, marries later for money and yet his marriage turns out to be a happy one. Shaw's depiction of marriages in The Philanderer is consistent with his view that in real life love is not all-powerful as it is shown in romantic tales.

In the idea of the Ibsen club, Shaw expresses his ideal of equality for men and women. The rules of the club show that members of both sexes have equal power, rights and responsibility; both men and women have to nominate and guarantee each new member; both men and women have to discard the traditional ideas of manliness and womanliness. The club encourages "unwomanly" women who work and earn to support themselves and who know how to take care of themselves.

Shaw's depiction of a modern, liberal man such as Charteris as a man who cannot be free from age-old male selfishness and double standard shows not only Shaw's insight and observation but his honesty and fairness towards the opposite sex.

Shaw does not provide any happy ending or pat solutions to the problems of man-woman relationships in The Philanderer. His approach is realistic. In real life one does not find a panacea for such problems in marriage or romantic love. Shaw ends the play on an uncomfortable note, and he wants the audience to think about such problems and work out a reasonable solution. He believes that only public opinion, public action and public contribution can change the state of society and succeed in

remedying the situation.

In Mrs Warren's Profession Shaw praises the improved relations between men and women - a frank fellowship instead of the artificial gallantry of men towards women and the maidenly reserve of women towards men. Praed deplores the old-fashioned ways of "always saying no when you meant yes" and praises Vivie's modern, frank approach. One is reminded of Shaw's observation-noted in the second chapter - that the change in the relations between men and women at the end of the nineteenth century is a very significant change for the better.[1].

Praed also expresses other feminstic views. He asserts that straining one's authority as a parent spoils the relation between mother and daughter. He advises Mrs Warren to stop thinking of Vivie as a little girl and start treating her with every respect. He tells Crofts that they should take Vivie on her own merits and not let considerations of her parentage affect their feelings towards her. He also expresses the idea that it is not pleasant for a woman to have male friends on the physical or sexual basis only; that a woman needs some friends on other levels as well. He declares that a handsome woman needs an escape from the effect of her beauty occasionally. He defends Mrs Warren for being an unmarried mother and declares that the most intimate relations between man and woman cannot be dictated by law.

However, Shaw shows Praed as a man who cannot free himself from traditional expectations of "womanhood". Praed is very much

disppointed that Vivie is very practical and not romantic; that she does not enjoy and appreciate art, music, romance, beauty and so on. Praed cannot help being chivalrous and protective towards Vivie, even after seeing how tough and independent she is. Shaw shows again, as in the case of Charteris in The Philanderer, how difficult it is to throw off age-old attitudes, despite one's liberal and modern outlooks.

In Crofts Shaw shows a brutal man of the upper class who does not hesitate to profit by the exploitation of poor girls. His brother is another anti-feminist in the manner in which he gets profit from his investment. He, a Member of Parliament, takes his profit from a factory which employs 600 girls at starvation wages; but this aristrocrat gets credit for supporting women by setting up a scholarship in his name in women's colleges. Crofts, a worn-out man of fifty wants to marry Vivie who is a quarter century younger than he. He does not take her refusal seriously because he thinks that an initial refusal is part of courtship and part of feminine tactics. He insists, dangling before Vivie all kinds of bribes. When wealth, title, and the promise of a rich widowhood does not win Vivie, he tries to make her feel obligated to him by revealing his business partnership with her mother. As Vivie says, it is greed that makes the rich Crofts invest his money in brothels. While his brother profits from a factory which exploits poor girls, Crofts profits by the exploitation of poor girls in brothels. When Vivie

expresses her contempt and disgust for him in no uncertain terms, Crofts curses her and tries to detain her by physical force. Finally he takes revenge by making sure to ruin Vivie's relation with Frank. But Crofts, for all his power, is defeated by Vivie, and is quite afraid of Vivie.

Frank seems to be a feminist in the sense that he admires Vivie's intelligence and character. But soon one learns that he is looking for a wife with brains and money, to support him financially. He despises Mrs Warren though he himself is as thoroughly immoral as Mrs Warren, by his own admission. He wants to marry Vivie and live with her, but declares that Vivie should not live with her mother. Frank does not see anything wrong or despicable in his own use of his good looks to get a wealthy wife to support him, but declares that he cannot touch Mrs Warren's money from prostitution. He does not see that his conduct is a form of male prostitution.

The unforgettable Mrs Warren argues vehemently for providing women with more opportunities, professions and training so that they can support themselves in reasonable comfort. Mrs Warren describes with passion how poor, honest girls were driven to prostitution because of poverty and very low wages; how poor girls worked twelve hours a day for a miserable salary and how they died of lead poisoning in factories; how they ended up marrying poor labourers - who ended up as drunkards - and how th women struggled to keep a home with children; how the poor women

were overworked and ill paid in bars and sculleries. Mrs Warren's passionate speech is a bitter condemnation of the capitalist system and its injustices, especially towards poor women.

Mrs Warren points out that the only way for a woman to provide for herself decently is for her to be good to some man who can afford to be good to her. In the middle classes this usually takes the form of marriage. In the poor class, since the woman cannot expect marriage to an affluent man in most cases, she has to turn to prostitution. But no matter whether the girl is poor or middle class, in both cases her economic survival involves prostitution - legal in marriage and illegal without marriage. In other words, Mrs Warren sees marriage as just a legal and socially acceptable form of prostitution. Such a view is similar to Shaw's own view and to the view held by many socialists. In the preface to Plays Unpleasant, Shaw declares: "At present we . . . condemn women as a sex to attach themselves to 'breadwinners', licitly or illicitly, on pain of heavy privation and disadvantages."[2].

Mrs Warren asserts with conviction, in the manner of a genuine feminist, that it is not right that for a woman prostitution is better than any other employment open to her; that society is at fault for not offering better opportunities and choices for women. However, given the condition of society, Mrs Warren declares that a girl must make the best of it. In other words, a poor girl is not only justified but right to

choose prostitution because her alternatives are worse than an immoral life.

Mrs Warren, like Grace Tranfield in The Philanderer, has a strong sense of self-respect. Since poverty, starvation and overwork reduce a human to sub-human level, Mrs Warren decides that she can keep her self-respect only by choosing a profession which pays her enough to live like a decent human being, even if that profession happens to be an immoral and indecent profession like prostitution. She points out the irony and paradox that society leaves no option for a poor woman to live decently with self-respect except by prostituting herself.

Mrs Warren sympathizes with the poor girl who, as a prostitute, has to put up with and try to please all kinds of men, even when she is tired and in low spirits. Prostitution, Mrs Warren points out, is not a profession that any woman would choose for pleasure as the pious people make it out, but a last resort for survival.

Despite her righteous sentiments for the plights of poor women, Mrs Warren invests her money in brothels after becoming affluent. In a sense she becomes a renegade and joins the system which had exploited her in her youth. She does not stop with with prostituting herself but organizes brothels to spread the prostitution of poor girls. She even takes pride that the girls are better treated in her brothels than in the factories, bars, sculleries and the poverty-ridden homes of the girls.

The real tragedy of Mrs Warren is that she becomes so inured to that profession as to feel that she is not fit for anything else. It is not just money that keeps her in the business. It is also the work, excitement and the opportunity to use her talent for executive work and business administration that make her feel that she cannot give up her business for anybody. It is a pity that society cannot use Mrs Warren's vitality, hardwork, thrift, foresight, and capacity for business administration in a better profession than prostitution. Shaw believed in Woman's intelligence and capacities; Mrs_Warren's__Profession not only reflects his stand that women are very capable in many areas such as administration and business but also the criticism that society does not use women's potentials adequately. He depicts the tragedy resulting from the narrowing of Woman's potential in a very subtle yet effective manner in Mrs_Warren's_Profession.

In his preface to Plays_Unpleasant_Shaw blames society for Mrs Warren's profession. He declares that society should "make it possible for all men and all_women to maintain themselves in reasonable comfort by their industry without selling their affections and their convictions."[3].(emphasis mine). He asserts that the alternatives offered to Mrs Warren are not morality and immorality but two sorts of immorality: because starvation, overwork, dirt, and disease are as anti-social as prostitution, and they are the vices and crimes of a nation, and not merely its misfortunes. Shaw does not defend the immoral life of

prostitution but points out that the alternative offered by society to poor women is "a miserable life, starved, overworked, fetid, ailing, ugly."[4].

As Alfred Turco,Jr. points out, Shaw shows Mrs Warren as a woman who is a clear-sighted "realist" concerning her own rights, but an "idealist" blinded by convention in regard to her daughter's rights.[5]. Since Shaw asserts in the preface to Mrs Warren's Profession that Mrs Warren is "not a whit a worse woman than the reputable daughter who cannot endure her", it is clear that Shaw does not idealize either woman as a faultless paragon.[6]. Neither Vivie nor Mrs Warren are shown as the solutions to Woman's dilemma.

Mrs Warren is anti-feministic in some ways. She runs a business which makes profit out of the exploitation of poor girls who cannot earn a decent salary from other jobs. Mrs Warren gives the girls material comforts but makes them sell their bodies. In a similar way she also tries to bribe and buy her daughter Vivie, not for physical prostitution, but for being an obedient, dutiful daughter leading a life chosen by her mother - a life that is idle, aimless, fashionable and parasitic.

Vivie is the feministic rebel in the play who resembles her mother in her fierce self-respect and independent philosophy. Just as Mrs Warren discards conventional sexual morality in choosing a profession for her physical and economical survival, Vivie discards conventional morality regarding a daughter's

"duty", for her spiritual survival. She differs from her mother in not accepting the philosophy of Crofts, which justifies immoral practices with the excuse that "the big people, the clever people, the managing people" all subscribe to it and profit by it. Vivie cannot accept the idea of exploiting poor girls in brothels though she does not come up with some good, viable alternative method of providing jobs for poor girls. One sees only her refusal to cooperate with such people. It is the only possible step of protest, in her conditions. She does not try to force Mrs Warren to give up her business, perhaps out of her belief that each person has a right to live her own way of life. She unequivocally expresses her refusal to have any part of it, but does not try to reform her mother. Mrs Warren is too far gone to change.

But it is a mark of her solidarity with women that Vivie feels for the poor girls manipulated and exploited by her mother and the capitalist bully Crofts. Instead of keeping it a secret Vivie wishes she had the courage to expose the truth about the business of Crofts and Mrs Warren so that everybody would feel the guilt of society in allowing such things. It is true that her lady-like training makes her too ashamed to do so, but she has enough strength to have no part in her mother's money in the future.

Vivie praises her mother for her initial decision to live in reasonable comfort in an immoral profession rather than endure

misery and poverty in a moral life. Vivie has repugnance for prostitution like any other middle class lady, but she applauds a poor woman's rebellion against society's injustice, indifference and hypocritical morality. Like a born business woman Vivie declares that her mother was justified in deciding to get all the profit of her good looks for herself rather than let her employers in bars, restaurants and shops get the benefit of it. From the ethical point of view also Vivie sees her mother's decision as the right decision under the given conditions.

Vivie shows her solidarity with and support of her mother after coming to know of her mother's youth amidst poverty and suffering. She tries to suppress and forget her shame over her mother and assumes that her mother has given up her infamous business after becoming financially secure. But on knowing that her mother still runs brothels, Vivie gives up her attempts to be kind and affectionate to her mother and rejects her once for all. It is not so difficult for Vivie to cut her mother off, because she never had a close relationship with her absent mother.

Vivie rejects not only her domineering mother but also her young, charming but good-for-nothing lover. In fact, she rejects all romance and beauty and declares that she is going to be a permanently single and permanently unromantic woman of business. Such a stand, like Mrs Warren's stand, is a tragedy and an unbalanced and impoverished state of human personality. Shaw does not advocate such a stand but merely points out the tragic and

inevitable consequences of society's unfair and insensitive attitudes and practices, especially with reference to poor women.

There are other aspects of Vivie that are not necessarily commendable - such as her somewhat brusque and blunt speech and manners, her lack of interest and sensitivity to art, her contempt for and fear of sentimentality, tears and weakness, her repugnance for sex after her disillusionment and her ruthless rejection of her mother, who despite all her faults had made it possible for Vivie to be self supporting. One cannot forget that it is the education provided by her mother that enables Vivie to become a self-supporting professional woman.

Vivie is quite feministic in seeing a "frightful waste of women's time" in the artificial and bashful relations between men and women. She is unconventionally frank in her dealings with men and does not hesitate to denounce rich, powerful men like Crofts. She shows that she can be as hard as nails and as forceful and ruthless as a steam roller, to quote Frank.[7].

In Vivie and Mrs Warren, Shaw has shown two very strong women. Vivie seems the stronger and harder of the two. The two women, between them, excel in many areas in which usually men shine: Mrs Warren is a successful businesswoman and she is as practical, unsentimental and shrewd as men. Vivie surprises the men by her physical strength and she excels in Mathematics; she is very practical, shrewd, realistic and unsentimental. Both mother and daughter are very outspoken and do not use deviously

polite speech with men.

Though Vivie seems to be somewhat prudish, she declares that she would have acted exactly as her mother and her aunt, if faced with the alternatives of degrading poverty and prostitution. But Vivie condemns her mother for continuing in her business after becoming rich and also for being a conventional woman at heart while leading a very unconventional life. Vivie seems to be too hard on her mother, though she is realistic and practical in other areas.

Like her mother, Vivie also does not have a good choice and a bad choice but two bad choices. And she chooses the lesser evil, namely that of rejecting her mother. Because the alternative would be to be false to herself. Mrs Warren's initial decisions, though right under the circumstances, have ensured the relentless and inevitable consequences. The only way Mrs Warren could have kept her daughter was to bring her up in the brothel itself. This is the tragedy of the poor woman who, in order to survive, chooses to defy the conventional morality of a corrupt society. Shaw has created a very powerful drama, a near subversion of the whole structure of morality, out of the dilemma of a poor woman. By pointing out the injustice and tragedy in the life of a poor woman Shaw hints at the fault in the entire system of society. It is a mark of his feminism that he chose two remarkable and unforgettable women - Mrs Warren and Vivie - to make his point. Contrary to the opinion that a play about a

prostitute is not suitable for an audience of women, Shaw affirmed that Mrs_Warren's_Profession is a play for women; that it was written for women; that it was performed and produced, at a time of violent opposition, mainly through the determination and enthusiasm of women.[8].

As Gladys Crane points out, Vivie is one of the most liberated modern women among all of Shaw's fascinating strong women. She dares to be frank, blunt and honest instead of being a subtle and devious woman following the Victorian ideal. She chooses to be a self-supporting woman though her rich mother is dying to give her a luxury-filled life. Vivie chooses to reject marriage despite the offers from Frank and Crofts, because both men are good-for-nothing idle wasters and parasites. She chooses her profession unconstrained by conventions of society. She dares to reject the sacred concept of filial "duty" in order to be true to herself. She is not bought by all the bribes and temptations in the form of money, luxury, aristocratic title, love, beauty, travel, art and gaiety. When faced with moral choices, she sticks to her moral philosophy. To quote Gladys Crane again, Vivie, in her economical, social and psychological independence, in her moral consistency and in her dignity and self-respect, is an example of the "ideal for modern free woman."[9].

In The_Philanderer and Mrs_Warren's_Profession, Shaw has expressed his feministic ideas in a very clear, unequivocal way. His ideas on subjects such as Woman; marriage; love; the

attitudes of men and women towards marriage and love; the double standard of society; the price that Woman has to pay to keep her self-respect, independence and integrity in the 1890s; Woman's situation in her relations with men, in family and society; the need for Woman to be financially, intellectually and psychologically independent; Woman's equality with men in many areas - all these are seen in his artistic works and reveal his interest in feminism. His women characters, though fallible as human beings, demonstrate his feministic views and stay in the reader's mind and heart for a long time, slowly working out a conversion for more fair and liberal attitudes and practices.

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