
UNIT 1 GEORGE BERNARD SHAW: AN INTRODUCTION

Structure:

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Objectives
- 1.3 Bernard Shaw: Life
- 1.4 Bernard Shaw and Socialism
- 1.5 Bernard Shaw as Dramatist
 - 1.5.1 Shaw's Plays
 - 1.5.2 Shaw and Ibsen
 - 1.5.3 Shaw's Major plays: A Brief Overview
 - 1.5.4 Shaw and the British Dramatic Tradition
- 1.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.7 Glossary
- 1.8 Works Cited and Reading List

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In earlier blocks of this course, you have been introduced to some of the finest British writers and their work, such as the drama of William Shakespeare, the fiction of Thomas Hardy, and the poetry of Alfred Tennyson. In this block, we will be turning once again to drama and study the play *Arms and the Man* by the British playwright George Bernard Shaw. Before we study the play in detail, we will discuss the life and work of Shaw, so that you are able to contextualise the play within the entire **corpus** of Shaw's dramatic achievement.

George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950) was one of the best known intellectuals of Britain in the first half of the twentieth century. His interests were varied, ranging from music and theatre to politics and philosophy. He made significant contributions in all the fields that he worked in. Shaw worked tirelessly till his death in 1950, at the age of 94. In the preface to *Buoyant Billions* (one of his last plays, completed when he was above ninety), Shaw wrote “as long as I live, I must write.”

One scholar captures the variety of Shaw's interests thus: he says, Shaw:

“was a committed socialist, a successful, if controversial dramatist, an inspired theatre director of his own work, and an influential commentator on contemporary music, drama and fine art. In all his endeavours, he demonstrated an **indefatigable zeal** to reform existing social conditions, **sterile** theatrical conventions and outworn artistic orthodoxies” (Macdonald1).

Bernard Shaw (popularly known as G.B.S.) had made a mark on all aspects of British cultural life by the end of the nineteenth century, and was so famous, that according to his biographer Stanley Weintraub, by the beginning of the twentieth century “he possessed the best-known initials in England” (Weintraub). Shaw was awarded the Nobel prize for literature in 1925. As noted in the *Oxford Companion to English Literature*, Shaw's “unorthodox views, his humour and his love of **paradox** have become an institution” (893), and the word “Shavian” is often used to suggest these qualities of his writing.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit you should be able to:

- assess the contribution of Bernard Shaw to British drama and theatre
- explain how Shaw attempted to revive British drama and theatre and
- identify the unique and original aspects of his work.

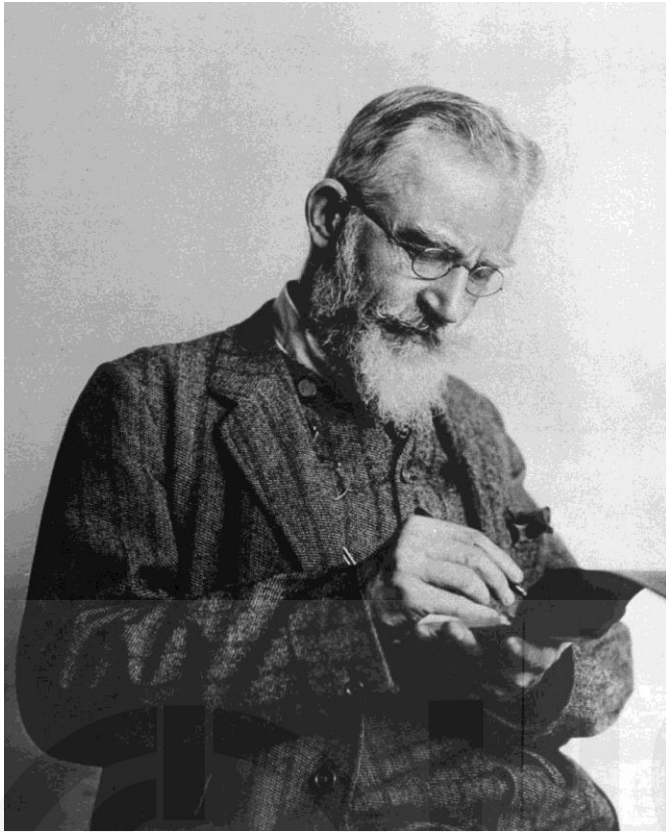
1.3 BERNARD SHAW: LIFE

Bernard Shaw was born in July 1856, in Dublin, Ireland in a middle-class Protestant family. His father George Carr Shaw was a heavy drinker and unsuccessful in his business, while his mother Elizabeth Shaw had ambitions to become a singer. The young Bernard Shaw got very little parental attention and was mostly left to his own resources. He received a mediocre schooling and was largely self taught. He inherited a love of music from his mother and eventually gained deep knowledge of music. His mother left the family and moved to London to pursue her musical career. After working as a junior clerk in Dublin for a few years, he joined his mother in London in 1876. In London, he began his literary career by attempting to write novels and music criticism. He desperately needed a source of income and while “waiting for responses to job applications, Shaw procured a reader’s ticket to the British Museum. It became his informal university, and because it was home to radical intellectuals, became Shaw’s informal club.” (Weintraub, “George Bernard Shaw”).

He also wrote theatre criticism, and the drama critic William Archer found him a job as a reviewer. Very soon, he established himself on the London art and theatre scene as a perceptive critic of music and theatre. He wrote critical articles for various newspapers and journals such as the *Dramatic Review*. Shaw also earned a reputation as a brilliant orator and gave several lectures.

According to his biographer Stanley Weintraub, “the 1880s were the decade in which Shaw found himself personally and professionally”. During this period, he became a socialist, a journalist, an orator, a critic of the arts, writing reviews regularly for *The Pall Mall Gazette*, *The World* and *The Saturday Review*, and began his work as a playwright (Weintraub, “George Bernard Shaw”). Shaw also became a political activist and a leading member of the **Fabian society**. He was a regular speaker on BBC for several years. Shaw married Charlotte Payne-Townshend, an Irish political activist in 1888 and they lived together till her death in 1943. Shaw died in 1950, as a rich, famous and successful writer, at his home, ‘Shaw’s Corner’ in the village of Ayot St. Lawrence.

(Sources for this section on ‘Bernard Shaw: Life’: Margaret Drabble Ed. *Oxford Companion to English Literature*; Sternlicht, S. *Masterpieces of Modern British and Irish Drama*; and Stanley Weintraub (“George Bernard Shaw”).



George Bernard Shaw (source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/>)

1.4 BERNARD SHAW AND SOCIALISM

During the 1880s, Shaw became deeply involved in the activities of the Fabian society. The Fabian Society was formed in 1884, and some of the most prominent left-wing thinkers of the late Victorian era became its members. *Fabian Essays* published in 1889, contained essays by political thinkers like George Bernard Shaw, Sidney Webb, and Annie Besant. The Fabians rejected violent revolutionary methods, preferring to enter local government and use trade unionism to transform society (www.fabians.org.uk).

The involvement with the Fabian Society left a permanent mark on Shaw's political and social vision. As his biographer notes, as a socialist, he believed in equality of opportunity and in the possibility that through social change, the human aspiration to lead a better life could be attained (Weintraub, ("George Bernard Shaw")). Shaw remained a socialist all his life and most of his plays have socialist themes and sub-texts. His socialist perspective colours his critique of the rigidities of the British class system and of the capitalist order in almost all his writing.

Nicholas Grene points out how in his various prose writings, such as *Fabian Essays* (1889), *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism* (1928), and *Everybody's Political What's What* (1944), Shaw maintained a consistent attack on the injustices of the capitalist system (135). Throughout his life, he continued to support various social causes such as women's rights, and was an advocate of equality of income, the abolition of private

property and changes in the voting system (Drabble, *Oxford Companion* 892). Most of his plays are built around such social issues and concerns.

After arriving in London in 1876, Shaw lived almost entirely in England. However many critics note a distinct Irish quality in his literary output. The critic Sternlicht points out that like Oscar Wilde (a playwright, who like Shaw, was born in Dublin, Ireland) Shaw had a distinctively Irish wit (19-20). The theatre critic Christopher Innes observes how living and working in England, while always aware of his Irish heritage, gave Shaw a unique perspective, and that “this independent perspective gave his critique additional point” (Innes, 2010). Thus many critics are of the view that his Irish heritage gave Shaw a unique perspective on British society which made it possible for him to view its social problems from a new angle.



‘Shaw’s Corner’ in the village of Ayot St. Lawrence - Shaw’s home for several years.

Source: www.geograph.org.uk

Check Your Progress 1

1. Explain the political methods of the Fabian Society.
2. Write a brief note on Shaw’s political and social vision. To what extent did this vision colour his dramatic work?

1.5 BERNARD SHAW AS DRAMATIST

In earlier blocks of this course, you have already learnt about the Elizabethan period in English literature, and you have studied the work of Shakespeare, the most brilliant of Elizabethan dramatists. The theatre critic Christopher Innes says that “the twentieth century is one of the most vital and exciting periods in English drama, rivalling the Elizabethan theatre in thematic scope and stylistic ambition” (2002, 1). This remark gives us an idea of the diversity of themes and the stylistic experimentation in twentieth century British drama. Some of the leading British dramatists of the early twentieth century were Bernard Shaw, J. M. Synge, Sean O’Casey, T.S. Eliot, Harley Granville-Barker, John Galsworthy and Noel Coward. According to Innes, the work of Shaw marks the beginning of modern British drama: “any study of modern English dramatists, has to begin with Shaw’s work” (2002, 8).

Activity: We have mentioned the names of some celebrated British playwrights in the section above. Prepare a list of plays written by these dramatists. Write short notes on the dramatic achievements of any two of them.

1.5.1 Shaw’s Plays

Some critics consider Bernard Shaw to be “the greatest playwright in the English language since Shakespeare”(Sternlicht 23). As mentioned earlier, Shaw began his writing career by writing music and theatre criticism and novels such as *Immaturity*, *The Irrational Knot*, *Cashel Byron’s Profession*, and *An Unsocial Socialist*. Shaw’s early attempts at creative writing were unsuccessful, but these writings anticipated many of the themes of his later dramatic work.

Shaw was a prolific writer, and over a writing career spanning more than sixty years, wrote more than fifty plays which continue to be read, performed and discussed even today. These include *Widower’s Houses* (1892), *Arms and the Man* (1898), *Mrs. Warren’s Profession* (1898), *You Never Can Tell* (1898), *The Devil’s Disciple* (1901), *Caesar and Cleopatra* (1901), *Man and Superman* (1903), *John Bull’s Other Island* (1904), *Major Barbara* (1907), *The Doctor’s Dilemma* (1908), *Getting Married* (1910), *Androcles and the Lion* (1912), *Pygmalion* (1913), *Heartbreak House* (1919), *Back to Methuselah* (1921) *Saint Joan* (1929) and *The Apple Cart* (1929). Some of his plays were published in collections such as *Plays: Pleasant and Unpleasant* (1898) and *Three Plays for Puritans* (1901). His prose writings include *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* (1891), *The Perfect Wagnerite* (1898), *Common Sense About the War* (1914) and *The Intelligent Woman’s Guide to Socialism and Capitalism* (1928).

1.5.2 Shaw and Ibsen:

Shaw found British theatre at the end of the nineteenth century, lifeless and uninspiring. Even as a reviewer of theatre during the early stages of his career, Shaw was “voicing his impatience with the artificiality of the London theatre and pleading for the performance of plays dealing with contemporary social and moral problems” (Drabble, *Oxford Companion* 892-893). In his attempt to transform British theatre, Bernard Shaw was deeply influenced by the work of the Norwegian dramatist **Henrik Ibsen**. Andrew Sanders in *A Short History of English Literature* notes how the spirit of Ibsen is evident throughout Shaw’s long dramatic career(478).

Sternlicht labels Shaw an Ibsenite: “He took Henrik Ibsen’s concept of the thesis play, in which a problem of society is presented for consideration by the society itself, represented by the middle-class audience. He employed the concept in social comedies that sparkled with wit, clever situations and wonderful dialogue” (Sternlicht 4). The ‘thesis play’, also called the ‘problem play’, first appeared (as noted in the *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Drama*), in France in the work of Emile Augier and Alexandre Dumas *filis*; these dramatists, in reaction to the empty romantic theatre of the nineteenth century, made the theatre a platform for moral and social reform. The ‘problem play’ reached its artistic perfection, in the plays of Henrik Ibsen, such as *The Pillars of Society*, *Ghosts*, *A Doll’s House* and *An Enemy of the People*. English playwrights like Henry Arthur Jones and George Bernard Shaw were greatly influenced by Ibsen and his method of attacking “outmoded social conventions, championing individual morality over the accepted traditions of marriage, politics and business” (Hochman, *McGraw-Hill Encyclopaedia of World Drama*).

Nineteenth century European drama was dominated by a form of drama called the ‘well-made play’, which was based on a typical structure and artificial conventions. In his prose work, *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* (revised edition, 1913), Shaw summarises the main aspects of Ibsen’s innovative drama and shows how it transformed the European theatre of his time. Shaw points out how, owing to the influence of Ibsen, a “new technical factor” had appeared in popular English drama also:

“This technical factor in the play is the discussion. Formerly you had in what was called a well-made play, an **exposition** in the first act, a situation in the second, an unravelling in the third. Now you have exposition, situation, and discussion; and the discussion is the test of the playwright. The discussion conquered Europe in Ibsen’s *Doll’s House*; and now the serious play-wright recognizes in the discussion the real centre of his play’s interest” (*Quintessence* 141).

Here Shaw is emphasising how, due to Ibsen’s influence, the ‘well-made play’, with its typical structure and conventions, which dominated English theatre in the nineteenth century, gave way to a new discussion-based play. He explains how this shift happened with plays like Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*, where Nora, the heroine “stops her emotional acting and says: “We must sit down and discuss all this that has been happening between us.” And it was by this new technical feature: this addition of a new movement, as musicians would say, to the dramatic form, that *A Doll’s House* conquered Europe and founded a new school of dramatic art” (*Quintessence* 144).

Shaw sums up his appraisal of Ibsen, with his remarks on how Ibsen created a shift away from the well-made play, by making discussion central to the play, and by making ordinary people the characters:

“The technical novelties of the Ibsen and post-Ibsen plays are, then: first, the introduction of the discussion and its development ... making play and discussion practically identical; and, second, as a consequence of making the spectators themselves the persons of the drama, and the incidents of their own lives its incidents, the disuse of the old stage tricks by which audiences had to be induced to take an interest in unreal people and improbable circumstances” (*Quintessence* 152-53).

Thus, according to Shaw, the technical innovations brought about by Ibsen are 1) making discussion the central feature of a play and 2) making ordinary people the characters and their

life situations, the incidents of drama, thus getting rid of the unreal characters and unreal situations of the well-made play. Shaw was extremely critical of the ‘well-made play’ and attacked its practitioners such as the French dramatist Scribe “for focusing on the mechanics of playmaking at the expense of honest characterisations and serious content.” (www.britanica.com). It was, he felt, based on “unreal people and improbable circumstances,” whereas Ibsen’s problem play, shifted the focus to “serious content” and the problems we actually encounter in society.

Christopher Innes says, that in Shaw’s view, Ibsen’s major innovation was that he changed the typical structure of the well-made play, which is like this: exposition → complication → crisis → **denouement**. Ibsen replaced the denouement with discussion (2002, 19). Many critics see Shaw’s study of Ibsen, as an attempt to bring a new kind of drama into English theatre, and as a turning point in the history of English drama. According to Christopher Innes, Shaw’s *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* marks the beginning of modern British drama, and the point where traditionalist drama gave way to modern drama. He says:

“The ferment of the modern era was already present in the final decade of the nineteenth century. Issues like women’s rights or class justice, which have become major contemporary themes, were already finding reflections on the stage. The year 1890 marks the beginning of modern drama in England, as the date of Bernard Shaw’s lecture on ‘The Quintessence of Ibsenism’. This can be seen as the **watershed** between traditionalist and modern perspectives, with its call for a revolution in the nature and function of the dramatic experience” (2002, 8).

Shaw’s drama, as well as his writings on theatre, are extremely significant, as they mark the beginning of modern drama in England.

Check Your Progress 2

1. Write a short note on the topic ‘Henrik Ibsen and the problem play in European drama’.
2. What do you understand by the term ‘well-made play’?
3. Write a short note on the ideas put forward by Shaw in *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*.

1.5.3 Shaw’s major plays: A Brief Overview

We have seen in the previous section how Ibsen brought about a radical transformation in European drama; Shaw attempted a similar transformation in English theatre. As pointed out in the *Oxford Companion to English Literature*, following Ibsen’s example, Shaw made discussion the basis of his plays, where, the dramatic conflict is the conflict of thought and belief (893). Most of Shaw’s plays have long prefaces before the plays explaining and discussing in detail the ideas in the plays.

Shaw’s creative writing is defined and shaped by his political and social vision. As Jan Macdonald points out, Shaw opposed the philosophy of ‘Art for art’s sake’, and repeatedly asserted that his motive for engaging in artistic pursuits was to promote political ideas (Macdonald 64). Shaw wrote on the basis of his conviction that “a work of art must be grounded in the society from which it grows and must contribute to the progress of that society, spiritually, morally or practically. Romance, prettiness and superficial sentiment will

not serve” (McDonald 11). We have to keep this in mind while reading Shaw and critically analysing his plays. Let us now look at the themes of some of his major plays.

Shaw’s first play *Widower’s Houses* was performed in 1892, and published along with *The Philanderer* and *Mrs. Warren’s Profession* in the collection *Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant* (1898). Based on the fact that the wealthy and ‘respectable’ character Sartorius is actually a slum landlord, *Widower’s Houses* exposes “the manner in which the capitalist system perverts and corrupts human behaviour and relationships”, by showing “respectable” middle-class people, exploiting the poverty of the slum (*Oxford Companion* 1066). According to Nicholas Grene, *Widowers Houses*, *Mrs. Warren’s Profession*, *John Bull’s Other Island*, *Major Barbara* and *Pygmalion* are the five plays of Shaw which are concerned directly with economic, social and class questions. *Widowers Houses*, which analyses the economic basis of capitalist society, adds Grene, “is the nearest he ever came to writing a purely socialist dramatic work” (135). In the preface to *Widower’s Houses*, Shaw claims that this play is “deliberately intended to induce people to vote on the Progressive side at the next Council election in London”(Preface to *Widower’s Houses*). According to Christopher Innes, this is one of the instances where Shaw used drama to campaign for specific reforms (*Sourcebook* 189).

Mrs. Warren’s Profession(1898): One of the ‘Unpleasant Plays’, this play was censored and the Lord Chamberlain did not give it a licence for public performance (until 1925) due to its controversial theme of prostitution. However, as Anthony Abbott says, “The play has become, during the past ten years or so, one of the favourites in the Shavian repertoire because of its feminist elements, and recent productions have put the emphasis where it belongs- on the play’s central character, Vivie Warren”(Abbott 47). What Abbott is emphasising here is the fact that though the play was subject to censorship for a long time, it is now becoming more popular, since it is now seen as having feminist elements.

John Bull’s Other Island (1904): Shaw wrote this play at the request of the great poet W. B. Yeats. *John Bull’s Other Island* and *O’Flaherty VC* are the two plays by Shaw to have an Irish setting and themes. This play deals with issues of colonialism and land ownership in Ireland.

Man and Superman (1903): A philosophical play centred on the characters Jack Tanner and Ann Whitefield. Act 3 of the play includes the dream sequence “Don Juan in Hell”, which has lengthy discussions of ideas such as the ‘life force’ and ‘creative evolution’.

Pygmalion: Published in 1916, this is one of Shaw’s best known plays, partly due to the fact that extremely popular musical and film versions of this play appeared later. The plot centres around the Cockney flower girl Eliza Doolittle, and the Phonetics Professor Higgins, and the professor’s attempt to teach Eliza Standard English, so that she becomes presentable in upper class society. *Pygmalion*, says Nicholas Grene, has an element of social criticism, as sharp as any of his other plays. It is all the more effective since it is expressed in a light-hearted manner. “Concentrating only on speech and accent, Shaw exposes the absurdities of a class-based society” (Grene 139). The title of the play links it to the Greek legend of the sculptor Pygmalion, who falls in love with a beautiful statue that he has created. The play formed the basis of an extremely popular musical titled ‘My Fair Lady’ and later a film of the same title. According to *The Oxford Companion to American Theatre*, the musical comedy ‘My Fair

Lady' (1956), by Lerner and Loewe, “managed to retain all of Shaw’s irreverence, wit and intellectuality”.

Major Barbara: Published in 1907, this play is centred on the characters Barbara, a Major in the Salvation Army; her wealthy father, the arms manufacturer, Andrew Under shaft; and her lover, the scholar Cusins. This play “portrays the conflict between spiritual and worldly power” (Drabble, *Oxford Companion* 609). According to Nicholas Grene, Shaw’s aim in *Major Barbara*, as in most of his plays, is to “expose hidden connections and complicities, ”in this case the links between **philanthropic** organisations and capitalism (Greene 138).

Candida :Published in 1898, *Candida* is a play about the relationships between Candida, her husband James Morell, and the poet Eugene Marchbanks. Forced to choose between the two men, Candida chooses her husband. According to G.K. Chesterton, the last scene of *Candida* is one of the moments when Shaw was truly inspired (121).

Saint Joan: (1924): This play is based on historical events in the life of Joan of Arc. According to Sternlicht, *Saint Joan* was recognized as a masterpiece, from its first performance itself. “More than any other of Shaw's plays, it made Shaw the obvious choice for the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1925. Critics and audiences have found that although evil is temporarily triumphant in *Saint Joan*, the young woman conquers because her spirit remains unbroken. (Sternlicht 19). Sternlicht sees Shaw's Joan as one of the great characters of modern drama. “She is his most perfect construction. She is Shaw's superwoman. His Joan has a nonconformist mind that thinks outside the medieval box.” (Sternlicht 26)

Heartbreak House (1919): As stated by Shaw in his preface, "Heartbreak House is not merely the name of the play which follows this preface. It is cultured, leisured Europe before the war." It focuses on the household of Captain Shot over and his family. According to the *Oxford Companion to English Literature*, this house portrays an aspect of British or European civilisation that is about to drive itself to destruction, “through lack of direction or lack of grasp of economic reality,” (446).Anthony Abbott sees this play as “Shaw's masterpiece, fuller and more complex in characterization than his other plays”. The inhabitants of Heartbreak House, says Abbott, “are the intelligentsia: still bright and imaginative, but withdrawn from the practical world, drifting aimlessly toward destruction. The house, designed by the captain in the form of a ship, is England herself. If the play's primary metaphor is heartbreak, or the process of disillusionment, *Heartbreak House* is Shaw's judgment on his own class and its failure to prevent the most tragic waste of life in human history.” (*The Vital Lie*, 54-55). Thus this play exposes the aimlessness of the elite classes and the intelligentsia of England and of Europe, and their inability in preventing the tragedy of World War I.

Check your progress 3

Explain how Shaw’s plays discuss some of the important social issues of Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries?

1.5.4 Shaw and the British dramatic tradition

Shaw was awarded the Nobel prize for literature in 1925 for his work, “... marked both by idealism and humanity, its stimulating satire often being infused with a singular poetic

beauty.” (www.nobelprize.org). Shaw brought a new energy to British theatre and imparted to it the capacity to vigorously engage with the pressing issues of the day. According to Christopher Innes, “If any single person set the course of British drama over the last hundred years, it was Shaw.... He not only influenced the general direction taken by other British dramatists, but was largely responsible for defining its terms.” Innes points out how Shaw, through the volume of his dramatic output and his public image, occupied a central position in British drama till his last play in 1950. According to Innes, the “mainstream of serious English drama has continued to reflect the realistic treatment of social questions that Shaw promoted” (2002, 13 -14). These comments show how Shaw’s influence on the mainstream British dramatic tradition has been deep and long-lasting.

Bernard Shaw’s plays continue to be read, performed and discussed in the twenty-first century. As Andrew Sanders notes, though his settings and preoccupations are predominantly those of England of the early twentieth century, he continues to surprise and provoke readers at the beginning of the twenty first century (479).

1.6 LET US SUM UP

We began this Unit by looking at the main events in Bernard Shaw’s life. We then went on to discuss his socialist vision, which essentially colours his entire work. In the section ‘Shaw and Ibsen’ we discussed how Shaw was influenced by the work of Ibsen, and his concept of the ‘problem play’. The last section of the unit provided an overview of the themes of some of Shaw’s plays, and also discussed Shaw’s influence on the British dramatic tradition. After studying this Unit, you will have the background knowledge to critically engage with the play *Arms and the Man*. In the remaining units of this block, we will study that play in detail.

Unit end question:

Discuss the achievement of Bernard Shaw as a dramatist. How did he transform the British theatre of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century’s?

1.7 GLOSSARY

1. Corpus : collection of written works
2. Indefatigable : never giving up
3. zeal: enthusiasm
4. sterile: lacking imagination or new ideas.
5. paradox: a statement containing two opposite ideas that make it appear impossible.
6. Fabian Society : “The 1880s saw an upsurge in socialist activity in Britain and the Fabian Society was at the heart of much of it. ... the landmark *Fabian Essays* was published, containing essays by George Bernard Shaw, Graham Walls, Sidney Webb, Sydney Olivier and Annie Besant. All the contributors were united by their rejection of violent upheaval as a method of change, preferring to use the power of local government and trade unionism to transform society. The Fabian Society derives its name from the Roman general Quintus Fabius, from his strategy of delaying his attacks on the invading Carthaginians until the right moment.” (www.fabians.org.uk)
7. Henrik Ibsen(1828-1906) was a Norwegian playwright, “generally acknowledged as the founder of modern prose drama.” While his early plays, such as *Ghosts*, *An Enemy of the*

People and Pillars of Society, were concerned largely with social and political themes, his later plays like *Rosmersholm* and *The Master Builder* were more concerned with the forces of the unconscious. (Drabble ed. *Oxford Companion to English Literature* 490).

8. Problem play: “A type of drama that developed in the 19th century to deal with controversial social issues in a realistic manner, to expose social ills and to stimulate thought and discussion on the part of the audience. ... The problem play reached its maturity in the works of the Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen, whose works had artistic merit as well as topical relevance . He went on to expose the hypocrisy, greed and hidden corruption of his society in a number of masterly plays.” (www.britannica.com)
9. Quintessence: the most important features of something
10. well-made play: A type of drama made popular by the French playwright Eugene Scribe. Its features were “complex and highly artificial plotting, a build-up of suspense, a climactic scene in which all problems are resolved, and a happy ending.”(www.britannica.com)
11. exposition: the scenes of the play which introduce the main themes, characters and background.
12. denouement: the end of a play where everything is explained or settled.
13. watershed: a period that marks an important change
14. philanthropic: meant to help the poor and needy

1.8 WORKS CITED AND READING LIST

1. Abbott, Anthony S. *The Vital Lie: Reality and Illusion in Modern Drama*, University of Alabama Press, 1988.
2. Bordman and Hischak. *The Oxford Companion to American Theatre*, Oxford, OUP. 2004.
3. Chesterton, G.K. *George Bernard Shaw*. New York, John Lane Company, 1909.
4. Drabble. Margaret. Ed. *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*. Oxford, OUP,1993.
5. Grene, Nicholas. “Bernard Shaw: Socialist and Playwright.” *The Crane Bag*, Vol 7 No:1, 1983, 135 -140.
6. Hochman, Stanley ed. *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Drama*. 1984.
7. Innes, Christopher. Ed. *A Sourcebook on Naturalist Theatre*. Francis and Taylor, 2000.
8. Innes, Christopher. “Defining Irishness: Bernard Shaw and the Irish Connection on the English Stage.” *A Companion to Irish Literature* Ed. J.M.Wright, 2010.
9. Innes, Christopher. *Modern British Drama: the Twentieth Century*. Cambridge University Press, 2002.
10. Macdonald, J. “Shaw Among the Artists.” Luckhurst, M. Ed. *A Companion to Modern British and Irish Drama (1880-2005)*. 2006.
11. Sanders, Andrew. *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1994.
11. Shaw, George Bernard. *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*. 1913.
12. Sternlicht, S. *Masterpieces of Modern British and Irish Drama*. Greenwood publishers. 2005

13. Weintraub, Stanley. "George Bernard Shaw." Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. www.oxforddnb.com

Reading list; (in addition to above books and articles, the following may also be consulted)

1. Grene, Nicholas. *Bernard Shaw: A Critical View*. Palgrave Macmillan, UK., 1984.
2. Dukore, Bernard, F. *Bernard Shaw, Playwright. Aspects of Shavian Drama*. University of Missouri press, 1973.
3. Bloom, Harold. Ed. *George Bernard Shaw*. Chelsea House Publishers, 1987.



ignou
THE PEOPLE'S
UNIVERSITY