**Drama as a Vehicle for Social Change: The Study of *Major***

***Barbara and Pygmalion* by G.B .Shaw**

**Anwar Mohsin Wali Albufayadh (Iraqi Ministry of Education) Ferdowsi**

**University of Mashhad. M.A Candidate.**

**Rajabali Askarzadeh Torghabeh\*, (Corresponding author), Assistant Prof. English Literature and Cultural Studies, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad** [*asgar@um.ac.ir*](mailto:asgar@um.ac.ir)

**Azra Ghandeharion, Assistant Prof. English Literature, Ferdowsi**

**University of Mashhad**

**Abstract**

*This article aims to study George Bernard Shaw (1856 –1950) who wrote his plays in*

*order to reveal his social ideas. His play, particularly Major Barbara (1907) and best portray his anti-capitalist views and his Marxist sidings. This play are about the portrayal of different classes, the dominant ideology, poverty, women's suppression, class conflict, and many other evils of a capitalist society. Shaw wrote Major Barbara to inform his audience of some of the social and political problems and to motivate people to solve these problems such as inequality. Barbara and her father believe in two different kinds of principles. This article intends to investigate this play and explore this issues from an Althusserian point of view. Applying such a method is that it would suggest a new way of reading Shaw's plays, ideas and tracing of Althusserian ideas in these plays. This study will also help its readers consider the social context to understand Shaw's socialist ideas better. According to Althusser, ideological authority is constructed by a powerful organization and creates submission in its subjects. The findings of the study show, how the ruling class of the society attempts to impose its ideology on people especially that of the working class. The study indicates that Shaw always considered his plays as a continuous challenge to force the people to consider their moral values and their origin.*

***Keywords***: *Shaw, Major Barbara, Althusser, Ideological State Apparatuses, Ideology, Interpellation,Political,Social, Repressive State Apparatuses*

**1.**

(

CJ VILICA •>

•• *l·,.,....*

.. ....

((j))

*"'.,;;,.;j"'"*

***w-11• ./J,.,."'"***

-

} <

v

A

*Jt;l("'''if' / lf(:/(j d}lf:if,, J:;. c(* (

*(VJ* -

'r'*----:' J·u;•.;Jtl,)lol*

0 I t"U·Dlot" • jl- 01.)!1 *.-.v.l•..*

ft.tUA" ttltttluUUtttUi ftiUHUUiHt.t'ftttttt ==

**Introduction**

Literature has always been the mirror of the society because of reflecting the conditions in a way that depends on the writer’s point of view or philosophy. Not only this, literature , particularly after the Industrial Revolution, has become in one way or another a means of spreading new concepts and doctrines or causing laws to be altered as it was the case with Charles Dickens whose writings about the poor people and their hard life made the British Government change many laws.

In a later stage when Shaw, Sidney Webb, H.G. Wells, and others formed the Fabian Movement, Shaw began to utilize his plays in spreading the ideology and political ideas he was bearing. As it is mentioned earlier in the second chapter, class conflict is inherent in a society and takes different forms. Man has exploited man since the dawn of history. Modern civilization has deepened this exploitation due to the abundance of capitals. It also led the thinkers such as Marx and Angeles to look for a way out of this dilemma; thus, they called for socialism as a suitable way of saving human beings from the greed of the capitalists.

In the two suggested plays, *Major Barbara* and *Pygmalion,* the researcher has tried to trace the socialist concepts and how Shaw as an Irish playwright succeeded to depict the conflict between the people from different classes and how poor or low-class people could gain their rights without violence. In *Pygmalion* we notice the exploitation of the working class, the lack of education, and being treated by the appearances. In *Pygmalion*, Shaw also reveals how money can change people’s attitudes. In this play Shaw expresses his great interest in the working-class women. He often remarks that acute hunger and severe cold make the poor suffer; otherwise, they are happy with their poverty:

[I]t is generally agreed that poverty is a very uncomfortable misfortune for the individual who happens to be poor. But poor people, when they are not suffering from acute hunger and severe cold, are not unhappier than the rich people: they are often much happier. (Shaw, 1949, p. 41)

Shaw wrote *Major Barbara* to inform his audience of some of the social and political problems and to motivate people to solve these

problems such as inequality and inactiveness about their condition. This

Shavian play is actually a thought-provoking play that scrutinizes the

morality of poverty. Though Barbara and her father believe in two different kinds of principles, Shaw intends to show which one may better serve as finding a solution to conquer the crime of poverty.

Undershaft has a factory and Barbara thinks of her father as a wicked man. On the other hand, Undershaft thinks of his daughter as an immature girl. They agree to visit each other's working place over the next two days in order to prove their philosophies. Undershaft observes that Barbara is

very zealous about her work. But Barbara's idea of morality is challenged when Undershaft offers to give a very large amount to the Salvation Army.

Barbara is irritated and thinks that her father's money will be rejected, but it is accepted; however, her superior argues that taking the contribution would be just for the sake of helping and saving the poor. Undershaft believes poverty is the worst crime of all, but Shaw questions the morality of both Barbara and Undershaft's efforts to restrain it. Though the Salvation Army helps the poor, it is under the condition that they accept God.

According to Paananen (2013), the time at which Shaw wrote this play was when millions of people were suffering from poverty and struggling with so many problems such as working for long hours with low

pay and in insecure conditions. In fact, most of the people belonged to the lower class of the society. There were many people in the upper class who believed that the poverty was the result of the poor people’s laziness. There

were also many in the upper classes who believed that the problem of poverty would be solved by more regular work. A great many people were troubled by the problem of poverty and wanted to fix it, but finding the remedy proved to be difficult. Shaw wrote his plays like *Major Barbara* as a sort of remedy.

Throughout the play many references are made to social life, society, and social classes. However, the role of social institutions are also very

much stressed. The abundance of references to social institutions such as the church, family, school and the Salvation Army prove the importance of these

institutions in the understanding of the play. These institutions are often mentioned along with a description of how they operate on individuals and their behavior. This brings to mind Althusser’s notion of Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA) which serve to reinforce the dominance of the ruling

class through ideology in family, religions and education.

**2- The Significance of the Study**

This study is significant in some ways; first it studies and links two

plays by Shaw fully focusing on their social and political highlighted features which are related to the author's contextual background and second it will trace Marxist ideas in the plays through an Althusserian reading, connecting history, sociology and politics to literature. Then it tries to draw on the common features and ideals of Shaw’s mind in his plays which form his oeuvre.

**3. Review of Related Literature**

According to Leary (1969) the play’s ―action‖ is a comprehensive

effort to discover a viable morality. It shows a movement from Sin, in Act I to Suffering in Act II to Atonement in Act III; or from Society to Poverty and finally, to Socialism; or from Hell to Purgatory to Heaven. Leary (1969) believes the acts to be divided systematically.

Kinyon (1970) conducted his thesis entitled *Bernard Shaw and the Irish question* to united Bernard Shaw’s Irish background and overall opinions about Ireland. According to Kinyon (1970), in *Major Barbara*,

Shaw is attacking liberalism, both for becoming conservative in the wake of successful reforms and for failing to understand the necessity for moving on to socialism.

Berg (1998) claims that Shaw examines the possibility of economic and religious salvation in *Major Barbara*, believing that the play implies the idea that the religious salvation relies on economic salvation. Berg (1998) thinks that Shaw believes in man’s body limitation and disability to change the world; in contrast he believes that economics and machinery can do the job. Berg (1998) mentions that the characters of Barbara Undershaft, her fiancé, Adolphus Cusins, and her father, Andrew

Undershaft, are the representatives of three different worldviews; Barbara as the one who thinks she can do good to change the world, Adolphus as a

lover who is torn between classical thoughts and religion, and Andrew who has a great ability to face the realities of his own time, believing that Shaw discusses the way these different sides synthesize to make an active and alive society.

Evans (2003) in her book makes readers familiar with the nature and the development of Shaw's manner of thinking. Her book also involves all the major plays written by Shaw. According to Evans (2003), as a socialist Shaw used his plays as a medium to reveal his view of life, which was

essentially socialistic; however, he not only used his plays as a means to talk about his viewpoints but also he was a public speaker, essayist, and author of works on political economy as well. Evans (2003) believes *Major Barbara* to be depicting three separate but conjoined dependency culture with an archetypal capitalist (Undershaft) as the link between the three groups, leaving even the author in a moral maze in the face of the dangers, the difficulties, and the complexities of the capitalist network .

According to Baker (2011), *Major Barbara* is the most evident example of Shaw’s philosophy of life. Baker (2011) believes that Shaw implies the irreconcilable nature of human beings under the umbrella of polar opposites including ―spirit against matter, religion against atheism, altruism versus egoism, heroic idealism opposed to cynical pragmatism‖ (Baker, 2011, p. 91). As Baker (2011) mentions to some critics the play reflects Hegelian dialectic relation with the final synthesis of power, idealism, growth and destruction. Baker (2011) believes the play proves the existence of evil in human existence and at the same time it insists on the possibility of transforming it.

Albert (2012) proposed a comparative study between classic and modern drama in his book. In his two-part divided book, he presents a vast

scope of information about the play. Under the topic of will, reason and

moral passion he compares Plato’s division of human nature and his

analysis of political society with its counterparts in *Major Barbara* which is manifested in characters like Undershaft, Barbara and Cusins. Albert (2012) asserts that Undershaft can be identified with merchants and trades and Barbara and Cusins to guardian and soldiers of Plato’s world and just like Plato explained in his book Barbara and Cusins have some rights but finally as guardians of utopia they should refer to commonwealth to meet their concerns.

**4. Family**

The initial characterization of Lady Britomart, an Earl’s daughter,

points out the way that she has been shaped by the ISAs. The mentioning of her being well-dressed, well-bred and well-mannered, coupled with the fat that she has become a very well managing matron oh her class all points

out to her being shaped and interpellated by the ideologies of the ISAs which have resulted in her taking her right and proper position in society. It is mentioned that she had been a naughty child until she herself grew to take up the position of the person who scolds. The working of the

institution of family on her is shown by the mention of her having been a naughty child and her role in the institution of family now as scolding mother points out to the importance of this institution.

LADY BRITOMART**.** is a woman of fifty or thereabouts, well dressed and yet careless of her dress, well-bred and quite reckless of her breeding, well-mannered and yet appallingly outspoken and indifferent to the opinion of her interlocutory,

amiable and yet peremptory, arbitrary, and high-tempered to the last bearable degree, and withal a very typical managing

matron of the upper class, treated as a naughty child until she grew into a scolding mother, and finally settling down with plenty of practical ability and worldly experience, limited in the oddest way with domestic and class limitations […](Shaw,

2005,p.39)

The characterization of Stephen, her eldest child and her favorite, also points out to the workings of ISAs on this person, especially that of

family. The fact that he is described as gravely correct points out to the

influence of ISAs in making him so, ―gravely correct young man‖

(Shaw,2005, p.40) this coupled with him still being in awe of his mother shows the influence that the institution of family still holds on him.

The institution of family, being the first among many other

institutions that are designed to shape the ideas of people, in order to maintain peace and the stability of the ruling class, is always present and strengthens the influence of other institutions. This excerpt shows the power of these institutions on shaping gender roles, stressing on the man’s responsibility for important choices rather than the woman.

LADY BRITOMART. (*squaring herself at him rather aggressively*) Stephen: may I ask how soon you intend to realize that you are

a grown-up man, and that I am only a woman? STEPHEN*.* (*Amazed*) Only a—

LADY BRITOMART. Don't repeat my words, please: It is a most aggravating habit. You must learn to face life seriously, Stephen. I really cannot bear the whole burden of our family affairs any longer. You must advise me: you must assume the

responsibility. (Shaw, 2005, p.41)

The institution of family is also responsible for shaping the minds of people, in a way that is conclusive of their social classes. This excerpt shows that the family upbringing and ideas differ for the upper classes and

from that of the middle classes. This excerpt also points out the upper class to have affinities with the ruling class and dominant class of society and how it is supposed to make decisions.

LADY BRITOMART. It is not pleasant for me, either; especially if you are still so childish that you must make it worse by a display of embarrassment. It is only in the middle classes, Stephen that people get into a state of dumb helpless horror

when they find that there are wicked people in the world. In our class, we have to decide what is to be done with wicked

people; and nothing should disturb our self-possession. Now ask your question properly. (Shaw, 2005, p.46)

The importance and reach of family as an institution that always has the word in approving the choices of its members, is shown by Lady Britomart’s sentence about the freedom given to her children. Although the subject is free but it is never free of the ideas of the intuitions dictate on the

proper way of conduct, which controls the freedom of subjects, ―I have always made you my companions and friends, and allowed you perfect freedom to do and say whatever you liked, so long as you liked what I

could approve of‖ (Shaw, 2005, p.46).

Lady Britomart’s remarks make it clear that Andrew Undershaft was

unlike most people and was not tolerated by her, not because Andrew did wrong things but because Andrew did not believe them to be wrong. This

points out to the fact that Andrew seems to be not under the pull of

institutions and seems to be not interpellated by their ideologies, having his own identity independent of what the ISAs propose. The other point that has stigmatized Andrew Undershaft is not simply his preference for ―wrong doing‖ but his advertisement and dwelling on those matters. Therefore, he was driven out of the institution of family so that he would not have the

chance to change the ideology that it exercises.

LADY BRITOMART. I really cannot bear an immoral man. […] and I should not have minded his merely doing wrong things: we are none of us perfect. But your father didn't exactly do wrong things: he said them and thought them: that was what was so dreadful. He really had a sort of religion of wrongness just as one doesn't mind men practising immorality so long as they own that they are in the wrong by preaching morality; so I couldn't forgive Andrew for preaching immorality while he practised morality. (Shaw, 2005, 48-49)

The interpellated subjects are often thoroughly under the rule of the ideologies that they had been brought up under by ISAs. This process of interpellation is therefore, so complete and unconscious that the subjects do not notice the ideologies and lose their ability to think about this process. This excerpt shows that Stephen as an interpellated subject who is unconscious of the process that he has gone under all his life, does not realize the ideology as a form of thinking but as the only truth possible. Stephen admits that people have different opinions or even different religions but he is shocked that they might have different ideas about wrong and right.

STEPHEN. All this simply bewilders me, mother. People may differ about matters of opinion, or even about religion; but how can they differ about right and wrong? Right is right; and wrong is wrong; and if a man cannot distinguish them properly, he is either a fool or a rascal: that's all. (Shaw, 2005,

p.49)

**5. Church and Religion**

The different ISAs since they all belong to private sphere rather than

the public sphere are less centralized and more heterogeneous, however, they are unified by subscribing to a common ideology in the service of the

ruling class). This can be seen from the following section of the play in which Lady Britomart is dubious of how Barbara will act since she has become the a major in the ISA of church, Salvation Army, she belongs to another ISA and though it is at its core contains the same ideology as that of the ISA of family, however their surface differences is causing some concern.

LADY BRITOMART. […] I don't know how Barbara will take it.

Ever since they made her a major in the Salvation Army she has developed a propensity to have her own way and order people about which quite cows me sometimes. It's not ladylike: I'm sure I don't know where she picked it up. Anyhow, Barbara shan't bully me […] (Shaw, 2005, pp. 51-

52)

The different ISAs belonging to the private sphere and being heterogeneous while putting forward the same ideology has the benefit of giving the illusion of freedom, as well (Althusser ,1971). This can be seen from the fact that Charles, believes being in the Salvation Army is to be a

dissenter since he belongs to the stablished church of England. These differences satisfy the subjects need to freedom while still being kept manageable.

UNDERSHAFT. Is Cholly also a member of the Salvation Army? BARBARA. No: he says it's bad form to be a dissenter. But I don't

despair of Cholly. I made him come yesterday to a meeting at the dock gates, and take the collection in his hat. (Shaw, 2005,

p.62)

Undershaft is highly critical of what he calls as people’s Christmas

card moralities of peace, showing that unlike most people the ISAs have failed to make him a subject of their ideology. Undershaft makes the point of not separating business from his moral life which shows that he simply does not accept the customs and rituals of the ISAs, mentioning that unlike other business owners who are under the ideology of ISAs he simply does not believe in them and therefore makes no contribution to charities to clean his money since he does not believe it to be dirty. The point that Undershaft alludes to is the reach that ISAs have on other large business owners who ends up financing the ISAs ,enabling them to distribute the ideology of the dominant class. Although this helps the large business owners as the ISAs they finance end up reinforcing their place in society as the dominant class. Undershaft mentions that he has his own morality and religion one that would have a place for canons and violence, this shows that he is unlike the other people in the society and is not interpellated by the ideology rather he has his own ideology.

UNDERSHAFT. [….] All the spare money my trade rivals spend on hospitals, cathedrals and other receptacles for conscience money, I devote to experiments and researches in improved methods of destroying life and property. I have always done

so; and I always shall. Therefore your Christmas card moralities of peace on earth and goodwill among men are of

no use to me. Your Christianity, which enjoins you to resist not evil, and to turn the other cheek, would make me a bankrupt. My morality--my religion--must have a place for cannons and torpedoes in it. […]

STEPHEN. (*coldly--almost sullenly*) You speak as if there were half a dozen moralities and religions to choose from, instead of one true morality and one true religion. (Shaw, 2005 p.65)

Stephen’s response to his father’s statement is as that of any deeply interpellated subject, as was mentioned before, the workings of ISAs have been so successful on Stephen that he unconsciously and whole heartedly believes there to be only one truth and one ideology.

The play's obsession with the significance of money and damage of poverty for the society is very well noticed in Undershaft's statements. The clearest statement of these concerns occurs when Cusins asks Undershaft,

"By the way, have you any religion?" and receives the reply, yes, that there are two things necessary to salvation, money and gunpowder (p. 283). In

the first act and in a conversation between Stephen and Lady Britomart, she approves of this fact.

According to (Althusser, 1967 ), clearly enough, these money and the gunpowder are the opposites of two of the basic concepts of Christianity, the virtues of poverty and what is best called nonviolence. And of course Undershaft calls his choices a religion. On page 287 he

speaks of money and gunpowder as his "gospel," and on page 288 he specifically repudiates the Christian alternatives: "Leave it to the poor to pretend that poverty is a blessing: leave it to the coward to make a religion

of his cowardice by preaching humility: we know better than that." Undershaft considers his attitude as a "religion," because he thinks

that what he is doing is more beneficial to the poor rather than what his

daughter is doing. This is clearly inferred through what he says in his conversation with Stephen and Lomax:

UNDERSHAFT. Not at all. The more destructive war becomes the more fascinating we find it. No, Mr. Lomax, I am obliged to you for making the usual excuse for my trade; but I am not ashamed of it. I am not one of those men who keep their morals and their business in watertight compartments. All the

spare money my trade rivals spend on hospitals, cathedrals and other receptacles for conscience money, I devote to

experiments and researches in improved methods of destroying life and property. I have always done so [….]. (Shaw, 2005, p. 65)

STEPHEN *(coldly—almost sullenly)* You speak as if there were half

a dozen moralities and religions to choose from, instead of one true morality and one *true* religion .(Shaw,2005,p. 65)

UNDERSHAFT. For me there is only one true morality; but it might not fit you, as you do not manufacture aerial battleships. There

is only one true morality for every man; but every man has not the same true morality.(Shaw,2005,p. 65)

However, Barbara cannot accept this because her perception of Christianity is extremely different from her father's ideology. To her his view is evil, leading to a tension because Barbara regards her father as a devil who is trying to entrap the poor.

According to Althusser (2006), this play is chiefly a concentration

on the conflict between a father and his daughter on what it means to save others' souls. When these two meet each other's working place to see which of them is more beneficial, Barbara notices that unlike the shelter that is in an awful state, her father's factory seems like a heaven. She sees how her father was right because his workers are happily working.

Although Undershaft does not care about others, his providing his workers with enough security to increase his factory's production makes them happy. He considers poverty the worst crime. For Undershaft, the

"crime of poverty" is a crime committed against society by the poor themselves because it kills society's happiness, forcing the ruling class to eradicate its freedoms and plan "cruelties" to check them.

This is what Althusser (1976) states that the ruling class of the society attempts to impose its ideology on the working class in a gentle way so that it does not have to try any violence. Althusser believes that in a

capitalist society, any individual is regarded as a subject that is provided with the property of being a self-conscious, "responsible" agent whose actions can be explained by his or her beliefs. However, for Althusser a person's capability to notice himself or herself in this way is not characteristic or prearranged. Rather, it is developed through the recognized social practices, which impose on individuals the role of a subject (p. 95).

Althusser believed that the Marxist theory's survival depends upon a social construction that has to repeat the industrious forces and this is

guaranteed by the income system which pays the least amount to the workers so that they appear to work day after day (2001, pp. 1483-1484)*.* And this event happens through the State Apparatuses which are deceptive conspiracies and organized by the capitalist ruling ideology to suppress,

abuse, and defeat the working class.

According to Paananen (2013), in this play Shaw has criticized Barbara for her Christianity and the Salvation Army because it relies on false beliefs. This criticism is chiefly noticeable at the beginning of Act II

when Price and Rummy discuss their false admissions and how essential they are for the Salvation Army. What was noticed and discussed here approves of the fact that Shaw always considered his work as a continuous challenge to force the people to reconsider their ethical values. So, what can be concluded here is that Shaw did not leave spirituality and religion completely aside in his plays because while he discussed the inappropriateness of the religious organizations as the Salvation Army, he asked if the spiritual salvation was more important. Actually, for Shaw, a socialist world without intensified "spirituality" would not be a good world.

**6. Salvation Army**

Salvation Army has different ideas and customs from the established

church of England and other ISAs, but yet another ISA, it is designed to spread the same ideology and interpellate the people, to ensure the dominance of the ruling class. The working people and poor classes of

society are the ones that mostly come into contact with this ISA and it can be seen that these classes are under very harsh, difficult and unsatisfying life conditions, many of them only come to this ISA for food and a meal

without paying attention to the religious aspects that they are trying to propose. Some of them are even faking a lot of its rituals and customs, however, in the end it can be seen than this ISA is functioning in a very

successful manner.

From the dialogue below between to customers of this ISA, it becomes clear that they are not grateful for the low quality meal they receive which indicates their anger and understanding of their own value. Knowing the corrupt condition of their society some of them as the man mentioned here , being an intelligent working man, tries to defy the rule of dominant class and the capitalists by working as less as he can and not

being honest and hardworking in a society that does not appreciate his work. This shows that the ISAs if he has been into contact with them

throughout his life have not successfully interpellated the necessary qualities in him and have failed to make him a rounded subject.

THE WOMAN. Feel better otter your meal, sir?

THE MAN. No. Call that a meal! Good enough for you, props; but wot is it to me, an intelligent workin man.

THE WOMAN. Workin man! Wot are you?

THE MAN. Painter.

THE WOMAN. *(skeptically)* Yus, I dessay.

THE MAN. Yus, you dessay! I know. Every loafer that can't do nothink calls isself a painter. Well, I'm a real painter: grainer, finisher, thirty-eight bob a week when I can get it.

THE WOMAN**.** Then why don't you go and get it?

THE MAN. I'll tell you why. Fust: I'm intelligent--fffff! it's rotten cold here (he dances a step or two)--yes: intelligent beyond the station o life into which it has pleased the capitalists to call me; and

they don't like a man that sees through em. Second, an intelligent bein needs a doo share of appiness; so I drink somethink cruel when

I get the chawnce. Third, I stand by my class and do as little as I can so's to leave arf the job for me fellow workers. Fourth, I'm fly enough to know wots inside the law and wots outside it; and inside it I do as the capitalists do: pinch wot I can lay me ands on. In a proper state of society I am sober, industrious and honest: in Rome, so to speak, I do as the Romans do. Wots the consequence? When trade is

bad--and it's rotten bad just now-- and the employers az to sack arf their men, they generally start on me. (Shaw, 2005, pp. 72-73)

Most of these people, as mentioned earlier just come to this ISA to

keep warm, eat, therefore, the lie about their life, and go through the rituals necessary in the ISA. They pretend to be immoral to be accepted and make believe that they are being saved instead of admitting that they are ordinary people who cannot work in a society that is so unfair to them. Although some of them like the people who in the Salvation Army, it is shown that some, here the man, does not like the girls who work here, because they have an easy job.

PRICE. Wot! Oh Rummy, Rummy! Respectable married woman, Rummy, gittin rescued by the Salvation Army by pretendin to be a bad un. Same old game! RUMMY. What am I to do? I

can't starve. Them Salvation lasses is dear good girls; but the better you are, the worse they likes to think you were before

they rescued you. Why shouldn't they av a bit o credit, poor loves? They're worn to rags by their work. And where would they get the money to rescue us if we was to let on we're no worse than other people? You know what ladies and

gentlemen are.

PRICE. Thievin swine! Wish I ad their job, Rummy, all the same.

Wot does Rummy stand for? Pet name props? (Shaw, 2005, pp.73-74)

The customers lie and make up stories just to be able to go to the confession ritual and show that they are changed, although they have nothing to be changed about, and are simply out of work or are refraining from low paid jobs. Some of the customers, Price, mentioned before as the man, are more aware of this ISAs working and its aim. Price points out to the aim of this ISA which is to make them into passive subjects of the ideology and ensure the rule of the dominant class. Price sees the army as an institution that tries to make them into good, neat and powerless people who can be further robbed and take advantage of by the dominant class.

PRICE. Right! Do you spose the Army'd be allowed if it went and did right? Not much. It combs our air and makes us good little blokes to be robbed and put upon. But I'll play the game as good as any of em. I'll see somebody struck by lightnin, or hear a voice sayin "Snobby Price: where will you spend eternity?" I'll ave a time of it, I tell you. (Shaw, 2005, p.75)

The condition of the working classes in this society is shown through the words of Shirley who other think is an old man, although he is not more than 46. Just because he looks older for having white hair, he has been fired

from his job and cannot find work due to his age, despite being a very good and hardworking worker. He is proud of having worked all his life since thirteen and having always been independent.

Price, however, think that Shirley should not be complaining since Shirley’s position is like that of many other people in the society. Price suggests that Shirley should not be sad or embarrassed and get a few meals from this ISA and the people in it since they have wronged people like him many times and have been using the benefits of Shirley’s labor as thieves do. Shriley, however, is very sad and ashamed and is crying because of his shame. This shows that Shirley has been interpellated successfully into a

hardworking and proud man who has accepted the conditions of his life and is embarrassed instead of being angry. Shirley refuses to take what he

believes not to be his, only accepting it as a loan to pay back later.

SHIRLEY. I'm not an old man. I'm only 46. I'm as good as ever I was. The grey patch come in my hair before I was thirty. All it wants is three pennorth o hair dye: am I to be turned on the

streets to starve for it? Holy God! I've worked ten to twelve hours a day since I was thirteen, and paid my way all through; and now am I to be thrown into the gutter and my job given to

a young man that can do it no better than me because I've black hair that goes white at the first change?

PRICE. *(cheerfully)* No good jawrin about it. You're ony a jumped- up, jerked-off, orspittle-turned-out incurable of an ole workin man: who cares about you? Eh? Make the thievin swine give you a meal: they've stole many a one from you. Get a bit o your own back. (JENNY returns with the usual meal). There

you are, brother. Awsk a blessin an tuck that into you. SHIRLEY. (*looking at it ravenously but not touching it, and crying*

*like a child)* I never took anything before.

JENNY. (*petting him)* Come, come! the Lord sends it to you: he wasn't above taking bread from his friends; and why should you be? Besides, when we find you a job you can pay us for it if you like.

SHIRLEY. (*eagerly)* Yes, yes: that's true. I can pay you back: it's

only a loan. (*Shivering)* Oh Lord! oh Lord! (Shaw, 2005, pp,

76-77)

Rummy, although is not like Shirley is not exactly like Price, either, since she has grown to like and care for the people in this ISA who give her

food and attention. Therefore, although the interpellation has worked on her is some ways as well (Althusser 1970). However, it is not only the

customers here who are interpellated but the people who work in this ISA have also been interplellated to believe in the ideology they spread. Although most of them are from high classes like Barbara and Jenny they truly believe in what they are doing to be in the benefit of people, therefore, they work hard and find rest in praying.

RUMMY. God bless you, lovey! You've fed my body and saved my soul, haven't you? (*JENNY, touched, kisses her)* Sit down

and rest a bit: you must be ready to drop.

JENNY. I've been going hard since morning. But there's more work than we can do. I mustn't stop.

RUMMY. Try a prayer for just two minutes. You'll work all the better after.

JENNY. (*her eyes lighting up*) Oh isn't it wonderful how a few

minutes prayer revives you! I was quite lightheaded at twelve o'clock, I was so tired; but Major Barbara just sent me to pray for five minutes; and I was able to go on as if I had only just

begun. (To PRICE) Did you have a piece of bread? (Shaw,

2005, p, 77)

According to (Althusser,1971),the people who work in this ISA are unconsciously perhaps only reinforcing the rule of the dominant class by suggesting passive actions and solutions to the working people. Major Barbara does not rebel against or try to fix the society who turns out good workers because of their age but only suggest to fix the immediate situation, therefore, he suggest that he dyes his hair black so to fool the employers. Once she hears that this hasn’t worked, she mentions that Shirley has done what he could and now he should wait for God to do his part, once again only pacifying the workers to keep them in their place. Although Shirley is a secularist, but that nonetheless does not liberate him form the grips of the ideology and it has made him into a good, hardworking and grateful worker.

SHIRLEY. Peter Shirley. Fitter. Chucked out two months ago because I was too old.

BARBARA. (*not at all surprised*) You'd pass still. Why didn't you

dye your hair?

SHIRLEY. I did. Me age come out at a coroner's inquest on me daughter.

BARBARA. Steady?

SHIRLEY. Teetotaller. Never out of a job before. Good worker.

And sent to the knockers like an old horse!

BARBARA. No matter: if you did your part God will do his. SHIRLEY. (*suddenly stubborn)* My religion's no concern of anybody but myself. BARBARA. (*guessing*) I know. Secularist? SHIRLEY. (*hotly*) Did I offer to deny it? (Shaw, 2005, p.83)

Once Barbara introduces Shirley to her father, it becomes more

apparent that although Shirley does not like the capitalist business owners the interpellation of the ISAs on him, have made him into a fearing person who believes in conscious and that is what is stopping him from changing his life conditions, making it clear that religion, church and such ISAs by spreading the belief on conscious and morality are only keeping people down.

SHIRLEY. No; and proud of it.

UNDERSHAFT. (*gravely*) Poverty, my friend, is not a thing to be proud of.

SHIRLEY. (*angrily*) Who made your millions for you? Me and my like. What's kep us poor? Keepin you rich. I wouldn't have your conscience, not for all your income.

UNDERSHAFT. I wouldn't have your income, not for all your conscience, Mr. Shirley. (*He goes to the penthouse and sits down on a form*). (Shaw, 2005, p.90)

The workings of this ISA is portrayed in detail when Barbara is

trying to win the soul of the Bill, a young troublesome youth of working class who does not believe in God and is therefore violent and assertive. Barbara mentions that he is to be made into a man, therefore, trying to set standards of being a man, which Bill objects to, saying that he already is a man. Barbara tries to change his behaviour and belief in God and implant a conscious into him that would later on assist in making him a passive worker who will not take to violence to defend his rights against the dominant class (Althusser 1970).

BILL. (*blustering*) Make a man o me! Ain't I a man? eh? Ain't I a man? Who sez I'm not a man?

BARBARA. There's a man in you somewhere, I suppose. But why

did he let you hit poor little Jenny Hill? That wasn't very manly of him, was it?

[…]

BARBARA. (*with a steady soothing hand on his arm and a gentle voice that never lets him go*) It's your soul that's hurting you, Bill, and not me. We've been through it all ourselves. Come with us, Bill. (*He looks wildly round*). To brave manhood on earth and eternal glory in heaven. *(He is on the point of breaking down).* Come. (*a drum is heard in the shelter; and BILL, with a gasp, escapes from the spell as BARBARA turns quickly. ADOLPHUS entersfrom the shelter with a big drum*)*.* Oh! there you are, Dolly. Let me introduce a new friend of mine, Mr. Bill Walker. This is my bloke, Bill: Mr. Cusins. *(CUSINS salutes with his drumstick).* (Shaw, 2005, pp.93-94)

The case of Cusins and his interpellation is very interesting, since he calls himself a collector of religions, which shows that he believes to a

certain extent that there are many ways of looking at the world and many ideologies and he is not, devoted any single one of them. Cusins interestingly, once undershaft mentions that his religion is based on money and gunpowder, mention that undershafts ideas is the same as that of the

ruling class, or what he calls the governing class, which shows that he is aware of the governing class’s method for maintaining their position, which is that of force, RSA and money that assists the ideology through funding ISA intuitions. However; Cusins has also been interpellated partly since he believes in qualities such as honor, justice, truth, love, mercy which although out of the realm of religion but nonetheless have interplleated Cusins and made him into a passive although intellectual subject as well,

―[e]xcuse me: is there any place in your religion for honor, justice, truth, love, mercy and so forth?‖ (Shaw, 2005, pp.96)

Cusins description of the ISA of the Salvation Army pinpoints many interesting facts about this ISA. Firstly that it is an army of joy and love and courage, which is what most people think because it is against the established church. Second he mentions that there is dancing and music which shows that the ISAs stop short of nothing even this forms are only used to spread ideology. Thirdly, it becomes apparent that its influence

shows no rank and that it works on poor and rich people as successfully and even on the educated.

CUSINS. Father Undershaft: you are mistaken: I am a sincere

Salvationist. You do not understand the Salvation Army. It is the army of joy, of love, of courage: it has banished the fear and remorse and despair of the old hell ridden evangelical sects: it marches to fight the devil with trumpet and drum, with music and dancing, with banner and palm, as becomes a sally from heaven by its happy garrison[…..].(Shaw, 2005, p.98)

Undershaft tries to show to Cusins that Salvation Army like that of any other ISA or institution is for sale and is to be controlled by those with power or money, ―All religious organizations exist by selling themselves to the rich.‖ (Shaw, 2005, p. 104). Cusisn does not understand why somebody

should by an institution like this that has no profit and only helps the poor, however, Undershaft tells Cusins of the importance of this ISA and its

benefit, by mentioning that it draws the teeth of the working men and poor people and makes sure that business owners will have safety, ―Oh yes I do. It draws their teeth: that is enough for me--as a man of business‖ (Shaw,

2005, p.105). However, Cusins does not accept that and mentions the good

that this ISA does by making the workers sober, happy, attached to their homes, unselfish, and spiritual, however, Undershaft each time mentions how all those qualities and values work to the benefit of the ruling and capitalist class and would benefit the employers of labour.

CUSINS. Nonsense! It makes them sober—

UNDERSHAFT. I prefer sober workmen. The profits are larger. CUSINS. –honest-

UNDERSHAFT. Honest workmen are the most economical.

CUSINS. -attached to their homes-

UNDERSHAFT. So much the better: they will put up with anything sooner than change their shop.

CUSINS. --happy—

UNDERSHAFT. An invaluable safeguard against revolution. CUSINS. --unselfish—

UNDERSHAFT. Indifferent to their own interests, which suits me

exactly.

CUSINS**.** --with their thoughts on heavenly things— UNDERSHAFT*.* (*rising*) And not on Trade Unionism nor Socialism. Excellent. (Shaw, 2005, p.106)

Mrs. Brines who is in charge of the Salvation Army is very hospitable towards Undershaft because, she is trying to get money from him. From Mrs. Brine’s words, it becomes clear that she is aware of the

role of ideology in the maintenance of peace in the society. She believes their institution should be funded better because it is only for their sake that this cold winter with people having no jobs and no money, have not rioted

like they did before in 1886 and damaged the property of the rich. Therefore, Mrs. Brines knows that it is only through ISAs that RSA and police can be at peace and control without having to interfere. She mentions how they take the anger and resentment out of the people and makes an example of one of the customers Price who has become very moral.

MRS. BRINES. No, Sir: the whole nation does not know it, or we

should not be crippled as we are for want of money to carry our work through the length and breadth of the land. Let me tell you that there would have been rioting this winter in London but for us.

UNDERSHAFT. You really think so?

MRS. BRINES. I know it. I remember 1886, when you rich gentlemen hardened your hearts against the cry of the poor.

They broke the windows of your clubs in Pall Mall.

[…]

[…]

won't break windows then. Come here, Price. Let me show you to this gentleman (*PRICE comes to be inspected*). Do you remember the window breaking?

MRS. BAINES (*with swimming eyes*) You see how we take the anger and the bitterness against you out of their hearts, Mr. Undershaft. (Shaw, 2005, pp.113-114)

Cusins mentions that a wedding chorus from an opera has been changed into the music of this army, which further shows that ISAs use all

forms to spread the ideology, ―It is a wedding chorus from one of

Donizetti's operas; but we have converted it. We convert everything to

good here, including Bodger.‖(Shaw, 2005, p.120)

**7. Influence of ISAs and the role of RSA**

The media, newspapers such as The Spectator and The Times are also mentioned to be responsible for setting the right tone and issues to be discussed. The ISA of media, is therefore, of importance in also correcting

the language use that is proper for criticizing matters, ―You had better confine yourself to The Times. You will find that there is a certain amount of tosh about The Times; but at least its language is reputable.‖(Shaw,

2005, p.132)

To Undershaft, who is looking for a foundling to inherit his state and business, it is very important that the person who is to inherit should not have been schooled. School being a very important and critical ISA which forms the individual into subjects, therefore, Undershaft wants somebody who has not been influenced by the ideology of the dominant class. However, he cannot find any worthy foundling because nowadays they are

all schooled and their minds are filled with secondhand ideas which are in accordance with the ideology and all they are fit to do is to pass on the

ideology they were brought up by to others as teachers. The school ISA is described as an institution that drills and disciplines and through these practices makes the students into docile and passive subjects.

UNDERSHAFT. I want a man with no relations and no schooling:

that is, a man who would be out of the running altogether if he were not a strong man. And I can't find him. Every blessed foundling nowadays is snapped up in his infancy by Barnardo homes, or School Board officers, or Boards of Guardians; and

schoolmasters; trained to win scholarships like a racehorse; crammed with secondhand ideas; drilled and disciplined in docility and what they call good taste; and lamed for life so that he is fit for nothing but teaching. If you want to keep the foundry in the family, you had better find an eligible foundling and marry him to Barbara. (Shaw, 2005, p.136)

As a person who has been in many different classes, Undershaft has been endowed to see the workings of ideology and therefore, is immune to them. This is clear when he reprimands Lady Britomart for trying to trick him into giving the inheritance to his son. According to Marx (1947), Undershaft mentions that the tricks of the governing class which is to coax people to do want they want by the use of ideology and setting wrong and right, would not work on him since he is part of the governing and ruling class and aware of those tricks, ―these tricks of the governing class are of no use with me. I am one of the governing class myself‖ (Shaw, 2005, p.136).

Lomax who is also from a very high class and is to be a millionaire, finds peace and security when he sees the number of guns and ammunition

that are available in weapon factories. He mentions that if there is a riot or fight they can kill many of the beggars. This points out to RSA, the

repressive state apparatus which although a last resort is always an option for the ruling class, ―I've been through the Woolwich Arsenal; and it gives you a ripping feeling of security, you know, to think of the lot of beggars we could kill if it came to fighting‖(Shaw, 2005, p.143).

Undershaft, tells the story of his liberation from hunger and being poor and used which he accomplished once he put away the morality that had kept him down and hungry and docile and vowed that nothing would

stop him short of a bullet. This part shows that Undershaft believes that to fight an oppressive regime one should not turn to ideology and should take

action. The individuals must not allow themselves to be stopped by ideas and words and if they are going to be stopped it should only be with the help of RSA and their violence and bullets.

UNDERSHAFT. *(his energetic tone dropping into one of bitter and*

*brooding remembrance)* I was an east ender. I moralized and starved until one day I swore that I would be a fullfed free man at all costs--that nothing should stop me except a bullet, neither reason nor morals nor the lives of other men. I said

"Thou shalt starve ere I starve"; and with that word I became free and great. I was a dangerous man until I had my will: now I am a useful, beneficent, kindly person. That is the history of most self-made millionaires, I fancy. When it is the history of every Englishman we shall have an England worth living in.(Shaw,2005,pp.165-166)

Within Undershafts religion and morality of revolt against the being docile and moralized by ISAs lies his answer as fighting. He sees the only

escape from a repressive regime to be in taking up arms and willingness to

kill. He mentions the police another RSA that can scatter unorganized revolts and riots but when they become organized by their new ideology they can become a government.

UNDERSHAFT. It is the final test of conviction, the only lever strong enough to overturn a social system, the only way of saying Must. Let six hundred and seventy fools loose in the

street; and three policemen can scatter them. But huddle them together in a certain house in Westminster; and let them go through certain ceremonies and call themselves certain names

until at last they get the courage to kill; and your six hundred and seventy fools become a government. Your pious mob fills up ballot papers and imagines it is governing its masters; but

the ballot paper that really governs is the paper that has a bullet wrapped up in it. (Shaw, 2005, pp.166-167)

Barbara and Cusins who have realized the far reaching influence of the ISAs and the ruling class, realize that to help people first they must acquire power since all the institutions, even hospitals and churches belong to the ruling class. Therefore, they decide to run the factory so to give everyone a fighting chance by being able to arm the ordinary men.

BARBARA. Undershaft and Bodger: their hands stretch everywhere:

when we feed a starving fellow creature, it is with their bread, because there is no other bread; when we tend the sick, it is in the hospitals they endow; if we turn from the churches they build, we must kneel on the stones of the streets they pave. As long as that lasts, there is no getting away from them. (Shaw,

2005, p.179)

**8. Conclusion**

This played showed the ISA of Salvation army and the way it

operated on people of lower classes although its influence was not limited to those classes, it targeted them and kept them from turning on the society and business owners in the strict and harsh conditions of the workers lives. Showing the working of this institution and how it ensured the order of society through ideology and minimized the need for RSA.

It also showed the interpellation of different characters and the extent of that interpellation. Making Undershaft the mouthpiece for providing

ideas on how to escape from the grips of ideology and how to fight back oppressive regimes by willingness to take extreme measures. The significance of having Undershaft be so aware of the workings of society and ideology rather than any other character shows the importance of having first-hand experience and coming from lower classes, since it was not the upper class or educated characters who realized this. Undershaft’s

ideology is also important since he stresses on the importance of fighting and violence instead of mere social reform..

**8. References**

Albert, A.P. (2012). *Shaw, Plato, and Euripides: Classical currents in*

*Major Barbara.* Gainesville: University Press of Florida. Althusser, L. (1969). *For Marx* (B. Brewster, Trans). New York: Verso.

Althusser, L. (1970). Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses. In Lenin

and Philosophy and other Essays (pp. 121–176). New York: Monthly

Review Press.

Althusser, L. (1971). *Lenin and philosophy and other essays* (B. Brewster, Trans.). New York: Monthly Review Press.

Althusser, L. (1976). In *Essays in Self-Criticism*. pp. 33

Althusser, L. (1990). *Philosophy and the spontaneous philosophy of the scientists and Other Essays*. London: Verso Books.

Althusser, L. (2006). Ideology and ideological state apparatuses. In A.

Sharma & A. Gupta (Eds.), *The anthropology of the state: A reader*

(pp.86-99). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Baker, E.S. (2011). Major Barbara. In H. Bloom (Ed.), *Bloom’s modern*

*critical views: George Bernard Shaw* (pp.87-111). New York: Infobase Publishing.

Berg, F. (1998). Structure and philosophy in *Man and Superman* and

*Major Barbara*. In C. Innes (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to*

*George Bernard Shaw* (pp. 144-161). Cambridge: Cambridge

University Press.

Evans, J. (2003). *The politics and plays of Bernard Shaw*. United State: McFarland & Company, Inc.

Leary, D. J. (1969). Dialectical action in Major Barbara. *The Shaw*

*Review*, *12*(2), 46-58.

Paananen, V. N. (Ed.). (2000). British Marxist Criticism. New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Shaw, B. (2005). Major Barbara: Webster's Spanish thesaurus edition. San

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Diego: ICON Group. |  |
| Shaw, G. B. (2000). *Major Barbara.* London: Penguin Group. | |

