CHAPTER 4

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The corner stones of Shaw’s social philosophy are the Creative Evolution and the Elan Vital or Life Force, which he calls “unmistakably the religion of the twentieth century, newly arisen from the ashes of pseudo Christianity”¹ and ‘God without body, parts or passions’² respectively. These basic elements which have their intellectual roots both in science and philosophy, present the Shavian amalgam for the idealistic good of mankind. Charles Darwin pioneered the biological theory of evolution applicable to the entire kingdom of living beings. Darwin built up the hypothesis of natural selection on the principle of survival of the fittest in a struggle for existence among various species. This theory gave fatal blow to the Book of Genesis by proving false the Biblical story of creation of the universe and man. But like samula Butler, Shaw could not accept Darwin’s theory as it gave scientific basis to all kinds of traditionalism, racism. Irrationalism, elitism, pluralism, pragmatism and syndicalism, which dominated the social and political thought of the nineteenth century. As Shaw asserts:

‘Natural Selection’ has no moral significance: it deals with that part of evolution, which has no purpose, no intelligence and might more appropriately be called accidental selection or better still, unnatural selection, since nothing is more unnatural than an accident. If it could be proved that the whole universe had been produced by such selection, only fools and rascals could bear to live.³

He, then, moved on Lamark’s theory of Evolution which made Shaw to believe that the process of evolution is not automatic or determined but is the result
of some kind of will or Force, possessed with a Will. According to Lamark, “living organisms changed because they wanted to." The Kernel of Lamark’s theory is that acquired characteristics are inherited and passed on to the next generation and the basis of these acquired characteristics is Will. Lamark’s idea of Will is also strengthened by the German philosopher, Schopenhauer, who called this spirit or life giving force by the name of ‘Will’ and this Will is closely similar to Shaw’s Life Force. “The driving force behind Evolution is a Will to live and to live…more abundantly.” According to Schopenhauer, this Will is constantly striving and striving and is accompanied by pain. Satisfaction is always short lived and only partial because the Will is purposeless. But Shaw, agreeing with Samuel Butler, who for the first time postulated the possibility of some living Force or Spirit termed by him as Elan Vital rather than Will, which animated Matter, that was in some way independent of it, and which tried to use it for its own purposes, rejects the view of Schopenhauer that Will is purposeless, This Will, which Shaw christens as Life Force has a purpose and this purpose is the search for perfection through the method of trial and error.

To Shaw, Life Force is not an omnipotent and omniscient perfection but is striving to be so. As it proceeds experimentally by trial and error, so it creates the problem of evil by its unsuccessful experiments and mistakes. Hence, according to the Shavian theory of Life Force, an evil is the manifestation of its imperfection. Life Force is the creative power behind the universe. It objectifies itself in all forms of life which are also its creations. Thus, the entire manifestation of life depends upon it. It has a passion and a purpose for betterment. Since it is always
striving after perfection, it rejects the lower forms of life which began with amoeba and developed in to man as an improvement on the preceding ones. It has no attachment with artificial moral elements such as honour, virtue, chastity, respectability, beauty, love, romance, pleasure, power and place as Don Juan says. “For honor, chastity and all the rest of your moral figments, it cares not a rap.”

Thus, Shaw’s creed of Creative Evolution is based on the theory of Life Force. Explaining the philosophy of Shaw Maurice Colbourne states: There is a spiritual power in the universe; call it the life Force; about its origin we know nothing. It is neither all-powerful nor all-knowing, but strives to become both through its own creations. It goes slowly forward by a process of trial and error.

In this way, Shaw accepts the metaphysical principle. The will i.e. Life Force is the essence of reality and he thinks it to be beyond the principle of sufficient Reason. He attributes to this power the consciousness of a profound purpose which is tantamount to evolution or betterment. This will becomes dynamic and creative. It may relatively be unconscious but it is not blind towards anything except towards moral figments.

The Creative Evolution and the life force as the key tenets of Shaw’s Social Philosophy find mention here and there in all his writings. But it is in the Dream Interlude in Act III of Man and Superman together with the preface, the Revolutionist’s Handbook, Collection of aphorisms, in the five plays constituting Back to Mathuselah and in Farfetched Fables that he makes a conscious and consistent statement about them.
Shaw’s philosophical theory of universe is also founded upon his faith in the
dictums of life force and creative Evolution. Explaining the operation of life force,
he assumes it as vitality with a direction or purpose. This purposive-ness creates
desire, desire creates imagination, imagination gives birth to will and will results in
creation. Thus, according to Shaw, this is the mystery behind the creation of the
universe. It is unfolded in his play, Back to Methuselah, particularly when serpent
answers the question of Eve, “You imagine, what you desire; you will, what you
imagine; and at last you create what you will.”

According to his, “the universe is not the creation of any body or being like
God or some Super Human Creator or spirit or Spiritual Force or Agency but it
exists and makes itself as it goes along”9 from the beginning, containing both life
and Matter with their independent entities. It “Did not look like pure accident; it
presented evidence of design in every direction. There was mind and purpose
behind it.”10

According to Darwinians, life and Matter both are inherently opposed to
each other. Like Bergson, Shaw does not accept this concept of opposition and
struggle between life and Matter. In Back to Methuselah, the Ancients try to
discard Body to be lost in contemplation. Which alone is the life eternal yet Shaw
nowhere indicates any struggle between the material and spiritual forces of life.
The life force strives to go upward and the final stage of upwardness- the stage of
perfection- results in pure thought or contemplation. Shaw conceives further that
life seeks matter to subdue it in order to use it for its own expression in some
form or the other. Consequently, life enters matter, and animates it. Emphasising the significance of life Force in a body of a man, Shaw asserts:

a dead body and a live one are physically and chemically identical and the difference can be accounted for only by the existence of a Vital Force.\textsuperscript{11}

Life is helpless to evolve or develop itself unless it enters and uses matter and thereby creates living organisms. Life is purposive. Highlighting the objectives of Life, Shaw asserts in \textit{The Simpleton of the unexpected Isles} through the Angel, who appears to announce the day of judgment, "Lives, which have no use, no meaning no purpose will fade out. You will have to justify your existence or perish. Only the elect shall survive."\textsuperscript{12} According to Shaw, life has two objects i.e. the immediate and the ultimate ones. The immediate purpose is the acquisition of new faculties and higher intelligence. This is rendered by the creation of the living organisms which are the embodiments of both Life and Matter. Matter is the spirit's Whet-Stone upon which Life sharpens itself in order to have incentive and accumulate energy necessary for further advance. "Matter limits the operation of Life,"\textsuperscript{13} and compels it to overcome these limitations. As a result thereof, Life goes on acquiring new powers and new faculties. After this higher advancement of life, our existence as individuals will have to merge finally into the life eternal\textsuperscript{14} the life beyond Matter, which shaw regards the ultimate object of life and which he calls the life of pure thought or meditation. Then, life's individualized expressions will become permanently individualized. It will be free from the
need of incarnating itself into Matter, and there will be no temporary individuality. Thus, according to Shaw, "Life began as a pure force (Vortex)"\textsuperscript{15} and it will end as pure thought which will be the finale of its mission.

Shaw's concept of Man is also founded on the theory of Life Force. According to him, passing through different variations and forms under the evolutionary process, the organism develops into the human being, who is not a base accident of Nature and who is not born for himself but is born as the instrument of Life Force to serve its purpose, the purpose of betterment in Life. Shaw warns:

The power that produced Man when the monkey was not upto the mark, can produce a higher creature than Man if Man does not come upto the mark. What it means is that if Man is be saved, Man must save himself….. If Man will not serve, Nature will try another experiment.\textsuperscript{16}

Man is to develop his existing faculties and to contribute his mite to the process of creative evolution. When Man reaches his final stage of perfection, he will be a highly evolved animal, in Nietzsche's term, the Superman, i.e. the Philosophic Man. \textit{In Man and Superman}, Don Juan says:

No: I Sing, not arms and the hero, but the philosophic

Man: he who seeks in contemplation to discover the inner will of the world, in invention to discover the means of fulfilling that will, and in action to do that will be the so-discovered means.\textsuperscript{17}
Though the purpose of Nature is fulfilled by both man and woman yet according to Shaw, woman is the repository of vitality, which has been termed by him as the 'blind fury of creation.'

She is the major force in the Creative Evolution. It is through her that Life Force comes to assume meaning. Biologically speaking, a woman has the fulfillment of Nature's highest purpose and greatest function "to increase, multiply and replenish the earth." A woman is the link in the continuance of life on earth, a man is just an instrument for letting life emerge from the womb. She needs him. She must seduce him for without her travail the race must perish. She wins over ninety nine men but the hundredth man is something more than a mere instrument of woman's purpose. He is the superior man, the genius with a philosophy, the man selected by life Force to carry life to higher and higher level. "The philosopher", says Don Juan in Man and Superman, "is Nature's pilot." He has the excellence of intellect and season-ability and an extra dimension of understanding and dynamic. Being armed with these virtues, he has the capacity to control life, society and political administration in the best possible way so as to carry them constantly towards betterment or the final stage of perfection. However, he is also entrapped by woman for her end. Woman represents materialism and man spiritualism. Both man and woman are supplementary to each other like Spirit and Matter. In The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles, Prola, the priestess rightly says to Pra, the priest about the dire need of each other.

Prola- ………the foundation of life is within me.
Pra- But you have given the key of it to me, the Man,
Prola- yes, I need you and you need me. Life needs us both.²¹

Like Henry Bergson, Shaw also ponders over the role of instincts and
intelligence in the living organism. According to him, they are two different
forms of the same original life impulse (Life Force) to enable it to adjust with
the environment. Shaw refers to instinct as an unconscious force or natural
impulse, or unconscious inner will and to intellect as ‘mental capacity to
foresee,’²² any situation on conscious will. Frank A. Beach states:

“Technically, the term ‘instinct' refers to inherited Mechanisms, which
are fixed for the species and which produce complex patterns of behavior and
which can not be modified significantly through learning.”²³

According to Bergson, "Instinct is the innate knowledge of things."²⁴ On
the other hand, according to Mc Dougall, intelligence is the capacity to improve
upon native tendency in the light of the previous experience. The living
organism is the tool of instincts whereas the intellect uses the tools other than
the organism. When instinct fails to cope with the new and complex situations,
intellect comes to its rescue. Sentiment, passion and emotion are the different
artificial aspects of instinct. He conceives sentiment to be an outer encrustation
on the primal instincts and absolutely unconnected with the evolutionary
impulse. Defining passions, Shaw asserts:

… In the eighteenth century, passion meant irresistible impulse of the
loftiest kind: for example, a passion for astronomy or for truth. For us, it has
come to mean concupiscence and nothing else.²⁵
So far as emotion is concerned, it is an stirred up state of the whole body. An emotion of lust is passion, and a permanently organised disposition of emotion is sentiment. Shaw does not give much importance to these artificial facets of instinctive impulse. This is why Shavian heroes seem to yield to instinctive urge more than to sentiments, passions and emotions. The great men of Shaw like Nepoleon are so seasoned that they are never actuated by love and hatred of another person. His new man, the Superman, whom Shaw presents in Back to Mathuselah, will also be free from the tyranny of passion, sentiment, emotion, morality and even the stimuli of their birth such as pleasure,, beauty, respectability and poverty etc. The articulate passions of love, honour and justice supply him only mechanical motives for action. In the primitive stage, the stage of imperfection, man was governed more by instincts than by intelligence. But in the final stage of evolutionary process, there is no difference between the power and might of instinct and intellect. There is a complete harmony between the unconscious will (instinct) and the self-consciousness (intelligence). Consequently, the Superman will assume the life of pure thought, the eternal meditation. Since man is still far from perfection, the behavior of Shaw's important heroes is more instinctive than intellectual.

Biblically, man is not corrupt. "The Messianic concept of the prophets certainly implies that man is not fundamentally corrupt." Similarly, Shaw starts with the supposition that man is not bad by nature. To reveal the nobility of human nature, Shaw asserts in the preface to The Doctor's Dilemma:
The Character of Dubedat illustrates one of my pet theses, which is that no man is scrupulous all round. He has according to his faculties and interests, certain points of honour, whilst in matters that do not interest him, he is careless and unscrupulous.27

Moreover he thinks that cruelty springs from the conventional morality, institutions and political systems and not from human nature. Man is the tool of situations and he develops good or bad modes of behavior in different situations. Mrs. Lunn in Over-Ruled says, "A Man's heart seems to me much like a sponge; it sops up dirty water as well as clean."28 Thus, environmental element are the determinants of human nature. Shaw comes to realize that this effect is more forceful in the initiality of man but with the passage of time and advancement of Life Force, it becomes less forceful than before. It is the environment, not the nature of man, that compel him or her to adopt the basal ways of life. In his play, Heart-Break House, Lady Utter word conveys Shaw's views when she says:

…… I know by experience that men and women are delicate plants, that must be cultivated under glass. Our family habit of throwing stones in all directions but positively dangerous.29

Surprised over the changing nature of man within no time. elderly and wise, Hannah says:

…… Men are like children, when they get a gun in their hands. They are not content till they have used it on somebody.30
Love of economy and money are also the great contradictorical factors in enslaving human nature. According to Shaw, love of economy is the root of all virtue and love for money flows through human veins. "…. universal regard for money is one hopeful fact in our civilization, the one sound spot in our social conscience."⁴¹ According to him, capitalism nurtures the nurslings of corruption and misconduct, which try to debase human nature. Likewise, middle class people who are equipped with both knowledge and means to redeem humanity from the clutches of the selfish and Machiavellian people, can also the blamed for spoiling human nature by being chained hand and food to their morality and respectability. In fact his concept of human nature includes all the three component sides of intellectual explorations – the cognitive the affective and the conative or the knowing, the feeling and the doing.

Human associations and institutions are the part and parcel of social Philosophy as they are the greatest determinants of various social values and concepts as well as the greatest social assets. Shaw attacks the conventional institutions and calls them the cancer-region of society. To give vent to his craze to review and renovate the social institutions which were badly crippled by Victorian morality, sentimentality and idealistic notion, Shaw lashes out at all their false coats and creams. After a penetrating probe into their roots, he not only exposes their outward hollowness and obsolescent decorum but also concurs that the institutions do not let the Creative Evolution drive on to the fruitful goals of human life. The creative impulse (Life Force) is being thwarted constantly and the result is that the upward thrust of evolution gets balked
down. He not only criticizes but also dictates the dictums to reform these rotten systems out and out as he asserts:

"Also I admit that my career as a revolutionary critic of our most respected social institutions kept me so continually in hot water that addition of another jugful of boiling fluid by the Lord Chamberlain troubled me too little to entitle me to personal commiseration, especially as the play greatly strengthened my repute among serious readers."\(^{32}\)

Under the purview of his dramas, no institution of modern society has exercised Shaw's imagination so powerfully as the institution of marriage.\(^{33}\) Sociologically marriage\(^ {34} \) is the total of some social rules and regulations which sanctions the permission to a man and a woman to establish sexual relations. But like the sociologists and other socialists, Shaw does not search for the technical details of marriage. He draws our attention to its shortcomings and their possible solutions along with rational suggestions to improve this institution. He criticizes it for the evils it breeds and preserves. According to him it is wrapped in false ideology. It has failed in carrying out its real aims, and narrows down the scope and future of the mission of Life Force. Its idealistic notion is false, static and illogical. As a result, it is futile, outgrown and evasive.\(^ {35} \) Conventional morality, respectability, sentimentality, religion, property, class, hyper-gamy, romance and sex are the false premises, on which this institution is based. Through his plays, Shaw vehemently opposes the unhappy marriages, sustained by the dictates of these false notions. He concurs that romance, howsoever passionate it might be, is temporary and unrelated to
marriage. *In Arms and the man* Bluntschli, the hero of the play, at last makes romantic Raina believe that marriage is not an emotional union of two romantic young people, it is a solemn contract. Similarly, in *Candida*, Candida's relations with Marchbanks have not been much encouraged by the dramatist as they are based on pure romance, which is more or less one sided love affair. Shaw is of the opinion that love does not mingle with love but with a different so art of emotion which is an amalgam of the emotion of patronization and calf-affection. Explaining the mystery behind love, Shaw asserts that man and woman form the two opposite polarities in life yet a woman is the link in the continuance of life on earth and man is just an instrument for letting it emerge from the womb. A woman is essentially a pursuer in the Scheme of Nature and a man a destined prey to her. She knows how to lay the trap for a male. Out of sheer curiosity, she plays on the emotions of man and offers slavery to him. It is wrong to expect fidelity from her for she may throw over the present lover in favour of any other mate. It is equally wrong to consider her weak. Bravery and 'vitality' are the noted strong points in a woman. Her love for man is most chasing and pedantry. A woman in love is nothing short of a spider waiting to catch her fly. But it is selfish and temporary. Similarly, Shaw does not think that marriage involves sex. According to him, neither does sexuality make marriage successful nor is marriage impossible without sexuality. Sex relation, to him, does not form the integral part of marriage, which may be with or without sex. Shaw's own marriage with Charlotte was free from any sexual relationship and yet he was the most happily married man. According to him,
sex instinct is the fundamental instinct in life, which ought to be satisfied not because it is romantic and pleasurable but because it is necessary and evolutionary. It is to him, the most impersonal one. It can be irresistibly desired and rapturously consummated between the persons, who cannot endure each other for a day in any other relation. This irresistible desire reaches its climax and becomes blind fury, when it is under the impact of creative energy. We do not know, when, how, and why it will be aroused. The whole creative force of the universe suddenly leaps into activity in the body and all power of acting otherwise than instinctively is lost. In Man and Superman, Don Juan tells Anna:

In the sex relation the universal creative energy of which the parties are both the helpless agents, overrides and sweeps away all personal considerations, and dispenses with all personal relations. The pair may be utter strangers to one another, speaking different languages, differing in race and color, in age and disposition, with no bond between them but a possibility of that fecundity for the sake of which the Life Force throws them into one another's arms at the exchange of a glance. Thus, Shaw pleads for sexual activity even outside the bonds of marriage and throws overboard this conventional sex morality in his plays- Candida, Getting Married, The Philanderer, Man and Superman and Over-Ruled. He completely rejects the attributes like love, romance, sentiment, enjoyment, hypergamy, class and respectability etc. not because they are unrelated to marriage but their presence distracts us from the real goal. Besides, in most cases, these attributes are not genuine but only a pretence and a pose. Sex, therefore, to him is an instrument
through which the purpose of life is fulfilled, and the more it is Left free from considerations of the conventional morality, the better it is for a fuller achievement of the ultimate goal. Having deep faith in Eugenics, Shaw concurs that it is through the discerning sense of the woman that Superman will appear on earth through her careful selective breeding. This is possible only when the woman plays a free role in the selection of suitable match for fulfilling the Nature's behest. Shaw is worried not only also by many other evil effects of marriage on woman. He puts forth:

"No normal woman would be a professional prostitute if she could better herself by being respectable, nor marry for money if she could afford to marry for love."^{39}

The checks on their sex have degraded woman to the status of household drudges and slaves. The domestic, social, economic and spiritual slavery and subservience of women to men hinder their energy of work, freedom of survival, equality of status and income. Under such circumstances women have to be timid and suppressed so that they fail to take the risk of fulfilling the will of Creative Evolution. "The greatest sacrifice in Marriage is the sacrifice of the adventurous attitude towards life: the being settled."^{40}

So long as the institution of marriage continues to be a prisoner of conventional morality, mankind cannot be redeemed from its evils to reach biological ascendance. That is why also most of the marriages are unhappy and loveless unions, and most couples usually lead dog's life.
However, Shaw does not ignore the inevitability of the institution of marriage. He regards it as a necessary institution of the maintenance of the race and rearing of families. He asserts:

"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 our selves. We are thus led to device marriage institutions…."

Marriage being a social institution, should always be subject to change. As he asserts:

"Obviously, it is useless to look for any consistency in such institutions, and it is only continual reform and readjustment and by a considerable elasticity in their enforcement, that tolerable result can be arrived at."

Therefore, social morality also must not be static and conventional as Gurvitch also confirms "……… moral values are the most dynamic, the most creative, driving most powerfully towards constant surpassing."

According to Shaw, the most successful marriages are a pure contract. based on freedom, equality and free love. The advanced people will form charming friendships in place of marriage as Charteris tells Julia:

"Advanced views involve advanced duties: …… Advanced people form charming friendships: conventional people marry … and its first duty is
unhesitating uncomplaining acceptance of a notice of change of feeling from either side.\textsuperscript{44}

This new pattern of marriages will redeem people from all the ills of conventional marriages and will open the gates of selective breeding to establish the superiority of human race. Thus, Shaw considers the ideal marriage to be a union or a solemn contract between man and woman as a means of bringing to birth a new and better generation. He denounces the prevailing conception of marriage as boiling down in essence to ‘one room for the two people.’ It is one of the cardinal doctrines of Shavianism that marriage as an institution will be tolerable only if men and women are made economically independent of each other. Moreover, the personality of a woman must be recognized, her psyche need must be paid attention to and she must be rightfully installed by the hearth. If there is domestic drudging in it, it must be shared by both partners. Recognition of an absolute right to sexual experience, fertile unions outside marriage, occasional changes of partners and transient casual adventures out of doors without breaking up the home life, must be encouraged. The natural aspect in marriage is the one presented in the play, \textit{Candida}, by Morell who gives Candida free rope in matters of philandering and flirtations. Similarly, divorce is a boon not a curse of marriage. According to Shaw, it should be resorted to as freely and abundantly as one can.
"Divorce, in fact, is not the destruction of marriage, but the first condition of its maintenance …… Divorce only re-asserts the couples: a very desirable thing when they are ill-assorted."45

In the play, Getting Married, The Bishop also gives his final approval to easy divorce as the best remedy for the ills of marriage.

Shaw gives plenty of food for thought even in regard to the forms of marriage. In the plays- Candida, The Philanderer, Getting Married and particularly in the prefaces to Getting Married and Over-Ruled, he supports monogamy and polygamy. According to Shaw, monogamy refers to the conventional form whereas polygamy denotes the natural one. In other words, the former is concerned with the property ridden relations, while the later with spontaneous relations. Both these forms of marriage are in constant war with each other, as Shaw asserts:

"There is a continual and irreconcilable inflict between the natural and conventional sides of the case, between spontaneous human relations between independent men and women on the one hand and the property relation between husband and wife on the other, ............"46

However, the existence of monogram or polygamy (including polygamy and polyandry) is not ethical but "depends solely on the proportion of the sexes in the population."47 In the play, Over-Ruled and in the preface in the preface to Getting Married, Shaw asserts that polygamy and polyandry are natural things and there is nothing vicious about them. But they are objected to by inferior man and women. Who do not want to be condemned to celibacy by the
monopolization of many women by a few men and the vice versa. The result is
that all our ordinary men and women are unanimously in the defence of
monogamy. Stating the possibility of a dark future for polygamy and a bright
future for monogamy, Shaw asserts:

"………. it is the scarcity of husbands or wives of high quality that leads
women to polygamy and men to polyandry, and that if this scarcity were cured,
monogamy, in the sense of having only one husband or wife at time, would be
found satisfactory."48

Finally, Shaw regards polygamy better than monogamy. The element of
jealousy is the only defect, it contains. In Shavian conception of marriage, there
is no room for jealousy. A man or woman is not the property of anyone. Shaw
does not like the thought of Othello and Antony, who thought that they were
betrayed by the women they loved. He contends that the theme of Othello is fit
for comedy and not for tragedy. A women is free to philander like a man. In
Candida he looks down upon Morell who thinks that two persons, he and the
poet Marchbanks, cannot love the same women, Candida, and she must choose
between the two. He asserts that Catherine's greatness in Great Catherine came
from her unfettered philandering. It may also be pointed out here that Shaw
himself also was a born philanderer.

Speaking on the future of marriage in the fifth and last part – "As Far As
Thought can Reach in the Year A.D. 31920" of the play, Back to Methuselah,
Shaw declares that there may come a time in the very remote future, when
marriage will be perfectly unknown and children would be hatched out of eggs.
But till then, marriage cannot be despaired with. The preciont institution of marriage, however, will have to be transformed. Then, Society will have to become socialistic in order to facilitate proper kind of marriage.

Shaw, the leading thinker and writer of his time, was inspired by a passion for social justice and superior race. He took up for a critical scrutiny of the existing conditions of home life and the ideals of the family and eagerly discussed plans and schemes for drastic reform. He strongly detested the pharisaical tyranny and the blind worship of respectability and decorum that were rife within the family fold. He regarded the prevailing pattern of home life as unhealthy, unnatural and inimical to the growth of personality. The cruelties and injustices of family life, flourished under the shadow of Victorian respectability, decorum, tradition and morality made him so derisive that he unhesitatingly declared that English home life of his day was neither honorable, virtuous, wholesome, sweet, clean, nor in any creditable way distinctively English.

With the living conscience of a social thinker, the missionary zeal of a humanitarian reformist and as a sharp realist, Shaw works to expose and denounce the spurious ideology of the Victorian household through his dramas. Emphasising the fact that a race of Supermen is necessary for eliminating all our ills, he asserts:

"Until there is a France, in which every man is a Napolean, a Rome in which every man is a Caesar, a Germany, in which everyman is a Luther plus
Goethe, the world will be no more improved by its heroes than a Brixton Villa is improved by the pyramid of Cheops.⁴⁹

So, he desires a Conscious fertility in place of the old unintelligent, inevitable and almost unconscious fertility, and at the same time the development of every newborn child. A child is the greatest creation of the Life Force. It is an experiment, a fresh attempt to produce the just man made perfect i.e to make humanity divine. Shaw finds the family structure, standing on its head and failing to fulfil its aim. According to him, "the family ideal is a humbug and a nuisance"⁵⁰ and domestic peace and tie have been crushed by the organised tyranny of the undisputed authority of the pater-families. "Home life, as we understand it, is no more natural to us than a cage is natural to a cockatoo."⁵¹ Thus the institution of family is great hindrance to the evolution of human race. That domestic ties are a snare for the soul is well illustrated in Fanny's First Play. In you Never Can Tell, Mrs. Clandon describes two kinds of family life. One of them is based on a mutual respect. On recognition of the right of every member of the household to independence and privacy in their personal concerns. She then points out another sort of family life:

"In which husbands open their wives' letters, and call on them to account for every farthing of their expenditure and every moment of their time: In which women do the same to their children; in which no room is private and no honour sacred; in which duty, obedience, affection, home, morality and religion are detestable tyrannies, and life is a vulgar round of punishments and lies, coercion and revelation, jealousy, suspicion, recrimination".⁵²
Families, according to Shaw, are generally of the second type. Thus, Shaw is extremely horrified with the ugly ulcer of family life.

Shaw's championship for women's emancipation from man's dominance in social, political, economic, sexual and family relationship is second to none. He remains silent nowhere in exposing the fact the men's dominance over women is not only undemocratic, unpsychological and inhuman but is also a threat to the progress of the human race. He questions the so-called double standard of morality and regards man-made laws and conventions as grossly unfair and unjust. He ridicules the cult of womanly woman and tries his best to banish the notions of helpless innocence and docility, associated with femininity for all time. Emphasising the necessity of women's redemption from the dependence on man, Shaw reveals that family life will never be decent, much less ennobling, until this central horror of the dependence of women on men is done away with. Bringing men and women to the level of equality, Shaw asserts that woman's redemption from prostitution by economic independence and her redemption from unhappy union by easy divorcing laws must be enforced by the society. He feels that a woman cannot emancipate herself until she repudiates 'her womanliness, her duty to her husband, to her children, to society, to the law, to everyone but herself.\textsuperscript{53} In \textit{Candida}, Candida is a practical clear headed intelligent woman, who is inclined to regard her husband with amused indulgence. She describes him with a shade of good humored contempt as a clergyman, a thorough clergyman'. On the other, she treats Marchbanks, the poet with maternal indulgence. Moreover, her freedom from false
sentimentality, morality or respectability as well as her wisdom gives her a complete control of the situation. In *Getting Married*, Edith abhors the idea of economic dependence on her husband and the prospect of being tied down to him, even if he becomes insane or a criminal. In the same play, Reginald Bridge – north's wife, Leo's flirtation with a young man and her open proposal to her husband to do so, do not slacken their fondness for each other. Lesibia Grantham, Mrs. George are also the new type of daring ladies in *Getting Married* who seem to open the gates of woman's emancipation from male dominance.

The problem of mutual relationship between parents and children has been a subject of absorbing Interest to Shaw. Shaw is opposed to undesirable family discipline and character, malpractices and deformations in the relationship of parents and children, prison like environment of home and irresponsible dealing of parents with children. He feels that the institution of family is neither natural nor conducive to the welfare of children and parents. To them, home is an unwanted asylum. According to him hotel is better than home. In *you never can Tell*, the waiter says to crampton, "I have always said that the great advantage of a hotel is that it's a refuse from home life, sir."54 Shaw is surprised at the inhuman attitude of English ladies for whom,

"*It is easier to love the company of a dog than of a common place child between the ages of six and the beginnings of controlled maturity; for women, who cannot bear to be separated from their pet dogs, send their children to boarding schools cheerfully.*"55
He repudiates the assumption that family by compelling people to spend their childhood with their brothers, sisters and parents creates a specially warm affection. In *Misalliance*, he exposes the hollowness of this conception. John Tarleton, his wife, his son- Johny and his daughter- Hypatia are bound by indissoluble family ties but their tastes, temperaments and characters are so divergent that they appear to be perfect strangers. This is because of their living in different societies but their living so does not loosen their family ties. The atmosphere of his household is vitiated not only by a lack of fraternal affection but also by a still worse parental filial relation. The assumption, that there exists between parents and children a very intimate relationship, is also wrong. The young and the old cannot see eye to eye with each other. Parents are often considerate and sympathetic because they know that the children are only themselves over again. But children cannot conceive of their parents as fellow beings and are, therefore, insensitive to their feelings. Tarleton does not know what his son and daughter are doing under his nose. Reduced to hysterics by the callous audacity and ruthless tongue of his daughter. Tarleton is glad to get rid of her at the price, demanded. This aspect of the family Life is further explained by Shaw in *Fanny's First Play*, where an account of excessive control of the parents over their children, the son and daughter are forced to revolt against their home or parents. Shaw infuses this theme in his many other plays. John Tanner's outbursts against his mother in *Man and Superman*, a son's revolt against disagreeable home in *Devil's Desciple* a daughter's escape from a domineering mother in a dream-delirium in *Too True To Be Good*, the leaving
of young children by their mother at the sea-side in *Candida*, and Hesione's lack of desire for children etc. in *Heartbreak House* reveal the common disgust with parental bonds and the claim to have the right to follow their own bent of mind or to act according to their fads. What a nauseating dullness of quiet domesticity, Hypatia feels in *Misalliance* when she cries.

Oh, home! home,! home! Parents! Family! Duty! How I loathe them.\textsuperscript{56}

She continues:

"All the day I listen to mamma talking at dinner I listen to papa talking; and when papa stops for breath I listen to Johnny talking."\textsuperscript{57}

Thus, according to Shaw, parents are the greatest obstacle to the free growth of a child. They try to bring up the child after their hearts' desires. Their effort is nothing but a very mischievous and cruel sort of abortion. He further says:

"Most children can be, and many are, hopelessly warped and wasted by parents who are ignorant and silly enough to suppose that they know what a human being ought to be, and who stick at nothing in their determination to force their children into their moulds."\textsuperscript{58}

In *Misalliance*, Tarleton declares that "a family is an awful thing, an impossible thing, Cat and dog."\textsuperscript{59}

As a social realist, Shaw suggests readjustment and rationalization of the institution of family. According to him, in a modern democratic set-up the responsibility to rear and educate children must be shouldered by the State. In
place of professional baby farms- the families- State must have its own arrangement growth. To emancipate them from the parental dominance, they must be free from the mutual family affections. No man should know his child or children and vice versa. Elucidating this ideal in *Misalliance*, Tarleton asserts, "Parents and children: No man should know his own child. No child should know its own father."\(^{60}\) Shaw not only reduces the liabilities of the family but also suggests its abolition. He says:

"If a family is not achieving the purposes of a family, it should be dissolved just as a marriage should, when it too is not achieving the purpose of marriage .......... Means of breaking up undesirable families are as necessary to the preservation of the family as means of dissolving undesirable marriage are to be preservation of marriage.\(^{62}\)

In *Misalliance*, Tarleton tells Hyptia, "Let the family be rooted out of civilization; Let the human race be brought up in institutions".\(^{63}\)

Conventional religion is the institution, most severely criticised by Shaw. Throughout his long career, he talked so much against it and undertook to tell the truth about the existing evils to such an extent that he has often been regarded irreligious. He ridicules its theology as an empty mockery, scoffs at the hollowness of the church and takes up the banner of revolt against God. According to him, conventional religion is manmade, unscientific and based on blind faith. It is often confused with some kind of emotionalism or spiritual ecstasy. Moreover, It is devoid of secularism or religious toleration, humanism and liberalism. It gives birth to the feeling of inequality and partiality in classes,
sects, sexes and communities. Its performance of worships are governed by man-made dogmas. Thus, the questioning spirit of Shaw undermines the foundations of orthodox religion and he shows little respect for the conventional, spiritual sanctions and the moral ideals.

Churches as centre of innumerable ills earn much censure from Shaw. According to him, they do not change their obsolete ways and practices with the passage of changing situations. Revealing the violation of Godly law of change by the Churches, he says:

"....... as the law of God in any sense of the word which can now command a faith proof against science is a law of evolution, it follows that the law of God is a law of change, and that when the Churches set themselves against change as such, they are setting themselves against the law of God."\(^64\)

Shaw admits property the central source of corruption and Churches the store-house of property. Consequently, he considers Churches the den of corruption, as he asserts:

"Whilst the Church was being so corrupted by its own property, and by the influence on it of the lay proprietors, that it lost all its moral prestige. ...."\(^65\)

Thus, Shaw reveals that the Churches are accomplices of capitalism which finances and encourage them to spread superstitions like the blessedness of poverty for the protection of their own interests. Moreover, they are under the influence of the capitalistically dominated State and as a result, they work as the auxiliary police. "Churches are suffered to exist only on condition that they preach submission to the state as at present capitalistically organised."\(^66\) Shaw
also hits out at religious institutions like the salvation Army, which exploits poverty to get converts. He finds faults with the hopelessly prerevolutionary science fostered by religion, its fairy tale descriptions of the origin of life and morals, its children notions about the starry universe and repudiates its value and validity.

Shaw feels that if a religion conforms and abets towards the social good of man, it is all right with him and if not he need not pay any heed to it. He believes with the renowned Indian philosopher, Swami Vivekananda, who says:

"I do not believe in a God or religion, which cannot wipe out the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth ........ I do not call it religion so long as it is confined to books and dogmas."

This assertion lays stress on the service of Man. Shaw not only humanises it but also gives it a social and economic purpose and points out that Man is the greatest of all beings. Hence, the best way to realize God is to serve mankind. But to his surprise he finds the conventional religion contrary to this humanistic view and notices that religion is the servant of a few rich and dominant men and the master of all the remaining part of the poor fellows. In religious conventionality, religion and riches are synonymous. Undershaft says to Barbara in Major Barbara, "My religion? Well, my dear, I am a Millionaire. That Is my religion." To Shaw religion and riches are two opposite poles in man's life. As a Christian missionary, Major Barbara realises that man cannot serve both God and Mammon. She makes the fatal discovery that the temple of God has to be built by the unrighteous deity of wealth. She comes to note that
men like Bodger and Undershaft earn huge profits from the misery and exploitation of others, they also provide funds for relitious and charitable institutions to alleviate the sufferings, caused by them. She declares that so long as religion and philanthropy are dependent on rich capitalists, it is absurd to talk of real morality and salvation. Major Barbara frets and fumes against the reservoir of tainted wealth, supplied abundantly to charity and religion. She has to get over another shock and is compelled to admit that an individual can have no religion so long as he is poor and hungry. Wealth may not by itself lift the soul but poverty certainly degrades and corrupts it, Undershaft points out to Barbara:

"It is cheap work converting starving men with a Bible in one hand and a slice of bread in the other ...... their souls are hungry because their bodies are full." \[^{69}\]

Stating the cause of evil, Shaw asserts that evil is not the result of individual sin but of social misfeasance. It is produced by circumstances not by character. Poverty and other evils are the by-products of an unjust social order and Street Arabs are produced by slums and not by the Original Sin. He suggests sufficient means of substance not only for decent living but also for the decent subsistence not only for decent living but also for decent observance of religion. There can be no talk of real life and there is no need of following any particular religion because such religions are nothing but blind alleys and dark wells, from which nobody can escape nor can one receive light of the reality of
the universe. Moreover, they are not the religions in real sense and essence but properly speaking, they are religionists. Swami Vivekananda rightly asserts:

"True religion is spiritual religion, that which seeks to live in the spirit, in what is beyond the intellect, beyond the aesthetic and ethical and practical being of man, and to inform and govern these members of our being by the higher light and law of the spirit. Religionist, on the contrary, entrenches itself in some narrow pietistic exaltation of the lower members or lays exclusive stress on intellectual dogmas, forms and ceremonies, on some fixed and rigid moral code, on some religio-political or religio-social system."\(^{70}\)

Shaw refuses to accept conventional Christianity as a necessary institution for the welfare of man's spiritual and moral self. He says:

"Christianity as a specific doctrine was slain with Jesus. suddenly and utterly. He was hardly cold in his grave, or high in his heaven (as you please), before the apostles dragged the tradition of him down to the level of the thing, it has remained ever since."\(^{71}\)

But Shaw is not irreligious as he appears to be. A religious man in spirit, he was against the form, in which religion was being practiced because he knew that religious codes have often perverted social relationships, and have even admitted conduct detrimental to social interest. He wants religion to be practiced for the welfare of all but he recommends it only to the extent, it can serve his purpose of socialism. He wants to harness religion to the service of mankind and in work for the establishment of true democracy upon earth. In the
words of Ivor Brown, "Society cannot be held together without religions."\textsuperscript{72} Likewise R. F. Rattray asserts, "Religion is insisted on as of central importance, but it consists in the right use of power."\textsuperscript{73} Realising the inevitability of religion in human life, he propounded his own religion, the religion of ‘Creative Evolution’ permeated by God or Life Force.

Shaw advocates that man should be guided by the unconscious Life Force (instinct) rather than by conventions. His heroes and the man of destiny like Caesar and Napoleon may yield to passion for the time being but they are not its slaves for any length of time. Love, hate, beauty, pleasure and pain have no effect on them. They are guided by their own instincts. The new man- The Superman, whom Shaw introduces in \textit{Man and Superman} and \textit{Back to Methuselah} in detail will be free from the tyranny of passion, reason and morality. He is imperfect and fallible and is constantly busy in marching on towards the stage of his perfection.

Shaw is also a conscious thinker about social relationships and social structure. Being a true humanist, he confines himself to the relationship of the individual to his social environment and most of his plays aim at focusing attention on the interaction between the individual and society. They are steeped in love for the oppressed, the exploited and the tradition tormented individuals who form the major part of society. In every play, we are shown the grim consequences of some social prejudices, traditions, conflicts and ills. St. John Ervine also rightly assert: "He wrote little or nothing that was not intimately concerned with his faith about man and society ….."\textsuperscript{74}
As a matter of fact, Shaw was not a sociologist, he was a socialist. So, he does not propound any systematic theory of society in his plays but he only seeks to expose the false facets of society, exhorts people to build their own concept of society. His plays contain serious attacks on social ills like sim – landlordism, militarism, prostitution, marriage, husband hunting and professional tyrannies etc.

According to Shaw, there are "two main problems of organised society: How to produce subsistence enough for all its members. and how to prevent the theft of that subsistence by idlers."75

These are the problems of economic production and distribution. There is unequal distribution of work in production which forces many to work more than their maximum capacity and a few to work less than their minimum capacity or to work not at all. But what is more surprising is that the workers or have-nots are marred and the idlers or the haves are worshipped. This fact is exposed particularly in Widowers Houses, Mrs. Warren's Profession, The Millionairess, and Major Barbara. "Society is not only divided but actually destroyed in all directions by inequality of income...."76 which germinated capitalism, classes and poverty and these are like the root of giant tree, emitting poisonous gases and mighty branches to suck up the climes of human advancement. Shaw is of opinion that all social institutions are governed by economic conditions and that there is fundamentally only one tyranny: The Tyranny of Capitalism. In his Widower’s Houses, he presents the ferocity of capitalism and declares that the very foundations of society are rotten and in a
capitalistic world virtue cannot save itself from the taint of vice. Sartorius in the above play represents every capitalist of the world.

Property materialises capitalism and to Shaw "Property is an organised robbery."77 He thinks that these robbers are the greatest sinners. Even God cannot spare them from punishment. He asserts:

"Property is theft: respectability founded on property is blasphemy: Marriage founded on property is prostitution: it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven."78

Shaw seems to have the severest allergy to capitalism, which breeds poverty and classes.

Poverty creates suffering, hardihood, breathlessness, over-work and subservience. It degrades and hampers the dictates of Life Force. Wealth may not by itself lift the soul but poverty degrades and corrupts it. To Shaw, prostitution is not because of female depravity and male licentiousness, but because of underpaying, undervaluing and maltreating of women. He declares that so long as there is no economic security to eliminate poverty, so long as religion and philanthropy are dependent on rich capitalists, it is absurd to talk of real morality and religion or salvation. He makes up conscious of the fact that poverty should neither to pitied as an inevitable misfortune nor should be tolerated as just retribution for misconduct. It should be tolerated as just retribution for
misconduct. It should be resolutely stamped out as a disease fatal to society as it is a great obstacle to a decent wholesome existence.

Capitalism and poverty nourish classes. Consequently, classes divide society into upper, middle and lower ones and more widely, society is divided into upper and lower classes or the employers and the employers or the rich and the employers and the employees or the rich and the poor or the people of wealth or unearned income, enjoyment, respectability, decorum, sentimentality and dominance, on the one hand and the people of poverty, labour, suffering humiliation and slavery on the other. This division of society into classes is not only a great setback to the rapid arrival of Superman on earth but it also creates hatred among men against liberty and equality;\(^7^9\) gives birth to partiality and intolerance.\(^8^0\)

Shaw comes to realise that in modern society, human impulse and personality is repressed by the unhealthy laws and institutions. As a result thereof,

"virtually, there is one law for the rich and another for the poor, one law for the cunning and another for the simple, one law for the forceful and another for the learned, one law for the brave and another for timid, and within family limits one law for the parent and no law at all for the child.\(^8^1\)

He saw that laws are based purely on conventions and in matters of punishment, the real cause of the crime or the situation, under which a man has to commit it, is never cared for, is never analysed. Major Barbara comes to realise in the end that the criminals are proved non-criminals and vice versa.
After examining the festering sores of society, Shaw declares that "nothing can save society then except the clear head and the wide purpose."\(^8^2\) He realises that evil or crime or sin is not the result of human nature but the result of defective social organization. It is with this background that he strives for its overall reform so that it may fulfil the purpose, for which it has come into existence. The wicked, the vicious, the thieves, the lunatics, amateurs and the murders are a great danger to an individual as well as to society. They must be got rid of, if society is to achieve an ideal stage. Thus to Shaw, the cultivation of good conduct and sharp intellect among individuals are the prime necessities for a defect less society. In addition, "equality is fundamental in every department of social organization."\(^8^3\) He suggests equality in economic distribution social set-up, in matters of justice and laws irrespective of class, creed and sex. He even suggests "sacrifice of individual liberty to the good of the community."\(^8^4\) In fact, Shaw pleads for a complete switch over from capitalism with its classes and poverty to an organization, based on justice and conscience and marked by the harmony of intellect and instincts.

To Shaw, the State is a permanent institution and the government is its association to implement its rules and regulations. It not only maintains law and order but also works as an institution of social control and functions. The character of a state is determined by its purpose and procedure of work and these things must be conditioned by the interest of the individual and the society. Shaw's social bent forces him to look to the State for the eradication of social ills. But State itself has failed to perform the duties, for which it exists. It
has assumed the position of the master to the Society and of the servant to the
plutocrats. It is money that rules and administers and not the prime minister or
the king as the exposes in the *Apple Cart*. Thus, Shaw finds State completely
under the control of plutocracy, which is ruled by the propertied amateurs and
lunatics.

*He warns*: unless the country remains the private property of
irresponsible owners maintaining a parliament to make any change impossible,
with churches, schools and universities to inculcate the sacredness of private
property and any government disguised as religion, education and democracy,
civilization must perish.⁸⁵

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   Prefaces*, p. 541.

2. Ibid., p. 518

3. “Preface to Back To Mathuselah”, *The Complete Bernard Shaw
   Prefaces*, p. 527.

4. Ibid., p. 508

5. Ibid., p. 514

6. “Preface to Farfetched Fabules”, *The Complete Bernard Shaw Prefaces*,
p. 900.


11. Ibid., p. 517.


16. Ibid. p. 959.


21. Ibid., p. 388.


30. Ibid. p. 797.


34. Shaw asserts: "There is no subject on which more dangerous nonsense is talked and thought than marriage." (Preface to Getting Married)", *The Complete Bernard Shaw Prefaces*, p. 1.
35. Defining marriage, A. E. Hobel asserts, "Marriage is the complex of social forms that define and control the relations of mated pair to each other, their kinsman, their offspring and society." (Man in the primitive world, p. 105).

36. Elucidating its futility, Shaw asserts, "Marriage is an institution which society has outgrown but not modified, and which "advanced" individuals are therefore. Forces to evade." ("Preface to Plays, Unpleasant)", The Complete Bernard Shaw Prefaces, p. 726.

37. Emphasizing the fact that man is the pursued, Tanner says to octavius, "……. Fool: it is you, who are the pursued, the marked down quarry, the destined prey," (Man and Superman): The Complete Bernard Shaw Plays, p. 353.

38. Tanner says to violet, "Vitality and bravery are the greatest qualities, a woman can have……." (Man and Superman): The Complete Bernard Shaw Plays, p. 350.


43. Ibid.


55. *The Complete Bernard Shaw Plays*, p. 194.


58. Ibid. p. 615.


72. *Shaw In His Time*, p. 165.

73. Bernard Shaw : *A Chronicle*, p. 162


76. Ibid. p. 579.


83. Ibid. p. 189.
