Pygmalion ends with the state of Eliza as a broken-hearted woman whose illusions are mercilessly shattered by Higgins. The metaphor of human hearts being broken is used more elaborately in the entire action of Heartbreak House (1916). As explained by Shaw in the elaborate Preface to the play, it dramatises the conditions of the “cultured, leisured Europe before the war” (CP 378) in an atmosphere of dream and fantasy. In this play of Shaw’s middle phase the span of social criticism ranges much wider than that of Man and Superman or Pygmalion. Louis Crompton has labelled the play as “reactionary” (153), perhaps to denote Shaw’s strong opposition to capitalism. Michael J. Mendelsohn is perhaps nearer the truth: “Here is Shaw at his most challenging and, . . . at his most serious” (399). What this critic further says is worth mentioning: “It appears at times that it is not a play at all, but a dreamy Ellie-in-Wonderland or a genial rendition of the importance of being Darnley” (399), thereby exploiting the all-pervasive influence of dream and fantasy which moulds Shaw’s theatre language in a completely new form and direction.

The composition of the play was not very smooth, as Shaw felt much emotional disturbance, not only because of the technical problems of composition, but also because of the apathy, moral degeneration and sluggishness in the state of England. This prompted him to portray an entire society — European rather than just English — with all its hollowness and hypocrisy — with an intention to seek remedy for it. Written under the influence of Chekhov and Shakespeare, Heartbreak House is the Shavian ‘dream play’ (Morgan), in which imagination is more important than logical construction of the plot. The subtitle of the play “A Fantasia in the Russian Manner on English Themes,” clearly indicates Chekhov’s and Tolstoy’s influence in the treatment of the subject and also in the
technique. In fact, Chekhov’s *The Cherry Orchard* (1903) provides for Shaw the scaffolding for the construction of *Heartbreak House*, and Shaw has unhesitatingly acknowledged it, although Shakespeare’s *King Lear* provides an important component of the multilayered intellectual and imaginative background of the play. There is a fine structural parallelism between *The Cherry Orchard* and *Heartbreak House*. Both the plays deal with the subjects of illusion and reality, utilise the settings as central images associated with the impending disintegration of a social order. Sounds have been treated, in both plays, as non-verbal dramatic components which intensify the action and emotional impact of the plays to make the characters aware of a far-reaching catastrophe.

While discussing the idiom of theatre the first thing that draws our attention is the stage-setting of *Heartbreak House* with all its elaborate details which are highly suggestive. The sombre atmosphere of the opening which projects an aura of surrealism is in fact deceptive, because it would lead to such a dramatic world which is governed by money and power, perhaps more prominently than in *Major Barbara*. However, an informed audience might note that the initial atmospheric effect of the play is built up from a dream-like situation – a dramatic legacy from *Man and Superman*. Captain Shotover’s ship-like house is a perfect ‘objective correlative’ for the emotional, moral and spiritual state of the broken-hearted inhabitants. Shaw has almost effortlessly decoded the house into a ship, for his own dramatic purposes. The house stands as a place, a shelter which is far away from the centre of civilisation, something like the Shakespearian Forest of Arden, where the Shavian characters interact with each other, experience ‘heartbreak’ and are led to a profound sense of catastrophe. Again, the replica of the house as a ship reminds us of the manor house and the garden as a major locale of Chekhov’s *The Cherry Orchard*, both functioning as instrumental in telescoping human society in its miniature form. Besides the image of the ship, Shaw has employed a host of other stage-props which are also functional in accelerating the movement of the play. Of them the volume of Shakespeare and the “bottles of rum”(as non-verbal items) in Captain Shotover’s
study generate special dramatic effect, because the former is associated with Ellie Dunn and the latter with Shotover — one item being a stimulant of intellect, the other that of body. Thus, Shaw has finely related the two main protagonists of the play through stage-props. This has been done in a subtle but effective way keeping the audience in tension and in the theatrical anticipation.

Critics are in consensus of opinions in treating the two daughters of Shotover as the Shavian counterparts of Lear’s Goneril and Regan. But Ellie may also be called the Shavian Rosalind who during her short stay at the captain’s house experiences a bitter, almost heartbreaking state of mind. As usual with a Shavian play, *Heartbreak House* also dramatises the progression from illusion to reality. This is symbolised by the clock on the stage, showing that it is six o’clock in the evening. The clock as a signifier of the time of action has also been used at the beginning of *Pygmalion*, in the task of setting the tone of the play.

That the sequence of the action of the play is dream-like is clearly suggested by the fact that it opens with Ellie Dunn sleeping while reading Shakespeare. The metaphor of forgetfulness is also operating at the initial stage of the play. Ellie Dunn has been invited by Mrs Hushabye (Hesione) to her house, but she has almost forgotten that fact. And this would be a “pleasant surprise for her” to find the young lady, for whom “It has been a very unpleasant surprise to me to find that nobody expects me” (Act I, 759). The juxtaposition of “pleasant surprise” and “unpleasant surprise” in fact creates a surprise in the mind of the audience, which is cleared off by a very pertinent comment of Nurse Guinness, “You’ll get used to it, miss: this house is full of surprises for them that don’t know our ways.” The speech is addressed to Ellie, the visitor to the Heartbreak House, but when examined in depth, it appears to be a guideline to the audience who are also to enter the same house and witness the dramatisation of so many surprising incidents.

*Harold Clurman*, an eminent director of the Shavian theatre, offers us a clue to the production of *Heartbreak House*. In his “Notes for a Production of *Heartbreak House*” (1961) this director warns his actors not to be thoughtful about the influence of Chekhov, because to him it is an un-Chekhovian play:
In directing the play the first thing I told the actors was that both the phrase "Russian manner" and the name Chekhov were to be disregarded in connection with Heartbreak House: they were altogether misleading. (415)

Clurman's production of the play was a great success in 1959-60 New York season. His notes for the production of the play are of great help for other directors of the play. Warren Sylvester Smith, the editor of an anthology of critical essays on Shaw, therefore, rightly comments:

The notes of a thoughtful and experienced director may be a way of getting close to the language of theater for which Shaw wrote. (Clurman 407)

Since almost all the characters remain under some poses, it is the task of the director to find what the pose is or what the man or woman under the pose is. This idea has been suggested by Clurman, who is also delighted to note that the play has been successful in creating mirth in the audience. Referring to the spontaneous reaction of the audience at a Washington performance of the play, he says:

I was delighted because the spontaneous remark in ordinary American meant that the person who had made it was glad to be attending a "laugh show" (414).

Clurman's observation for a successful production of Heartbreak House is worth quoting:

The director's task then was to combine the "fun" aspect of the play - its arch frivolousness - with its basic intent. The setting had not only to disclose a place but make a comment - smilingly suggestive of the author's mood. The clothes had to be costumes. The characterizations had to be tipped from realism to a kind of gay picturesqueness. Gravity had to be avoided - except as fleeting reminders that we were still dealing with a truth about life - our lives. This slight duality - a sort of "gayed up" seriousness - part game, part prophecy - is only a reflection of the text itself which begins as a comedy of mad manners and ends with an air raid by an enemy never named or even hinted at throughout the course of the play. (415-416).
The action in *Heartbreak House* takes place in a ship-shaped country house in Sussex at 6 o’clock of a September evening. An old man Captain Shotover owns the house, which is the home for his eldest daughter Mrs Hesione Hushabye, her husband Hector and their children. Mrs Hushabye has invited to the house her young friend Ellie Dunn, her father Mazzini Dunn and her betrothed Mr Mangan. Mrs Hushabye’s younger sister Ariadne and her husband Governor-General Sir Hastings Utterwood, have come down straight from a foreign country – the two sisters have not seen each other for about 23 years. Sir Hastings’s young fashionable brother Randall Utterwood also arrives there uninvited. Another uninvited guest is the old, villainous burglar. Though 88 years old, and pretending to be hard of hearing, Shotover with his white beard is quite active and hardy, and frequently uses a whistle hanging from his neck. Mrs Hushabye, 44 years old is a dark ‘siren’, fascinating and gorgeous enough to lead men by the nose. Ariadne is 42, blonde and smart. The protagonist Ellie Dunn is a young, intelligent girl, but not of the smart idler type, who appears to be in a romantic and sleep-walking mood. Excepting Ellie, all the other characters are in a sort of pose, none of them being exactly what she / he appears to be.

The play opens with Ellie falling asleep with a Shakespeare volume in her lap and getting into a hazy state of mind, so that the dramatic action may be said to take place in a state of unreality. It is a three-Act play. The first Act takes place in a sitting room that resembles the back part of a high ship with a gallery on the stern. The second Act occurs just before dinner-time of the same day, and the third Act after the dinner in the garden.

Mrs Hushabye wants to wreck Ellie’s engagement to Mangan, the business magnate, because she considers him too old (55) for Ellie. But while in the process Mangan tries to make love to her, she also discovers that her husband Hector has already been making love to Ellie, posing as a bachelor. Thus, serious complications come up in personal relationships. Ellie gives up Mangan as well.
as his huge wealth, and prefers a symbolic marriage with Captain Shotover – a “marriage not in the flesh but in the spirit.” In the last Act bombing by an enemy plane starts killing not those who are surprised and remain within the house, but Mangan and the burglar, who go out into the air-raid shelter.

The main reason why *Heartbreak House* was neither offered for publication nor for performance during the First World War was Bernard Shaw’s refusal to join the hysteria of patriotism that gripped the English nation. Though the play makes no direct reference to the war, the theme upholds the victory of youth and wisdom over parochial emotions. It was only after the war hysteria passed over that *Heartbreak House* was published (1919), and got its first stage production on 10 November 1920 in New York by the Theatre Guild at the Garick Theatre.

It was given 120 performances there. The first performance of the play in London was held on 18 October 1921 at the Royal Court Theatre by J.B. Fagan. It found no revival in London until 1932 when Barry Jackson brought it to the Queen’s Theatre on 25 April (1932). Obviously, this play is taken to be “one of the most complex of all Shaw’s works” (Gibbs 177).

Shaw’s dramatic technique in this play seems to be most effective in creating a dream-like state in which almost all the characters are engrossed, and the dialogues used by them are congenial to it. Fantasy and unreality functioning on different levels float all through, making the audience forget reality. But like other Shavian plays, *Heartbreak House* has also its social ground base, and hence dream is more functional than factual. It has been used to discover the man beneath the mask, and more significantly, the subconscious beneath the conscious.

The play opens in a setting that is in keeping with the world of Heartbreak House — of “cultured, leisured Europe before the war,” as represented by Chekhov and Tolstoy. The locale is the hilly country in the middle of the northern part of Sussex on a fine evening in late September. The action unfolds in a house in which the fantasy of being inside a ship is concretised. A young lady, “slender, fair and intelligent looking,” whose name is Ellie Dunn, is seen waiting for Hesione (the elder daughter of Captain Shotover) who has invited her
to this house. While waiting, Ellie reads Shakespeare (Shaw's spelling is retained in the dialogue only) and dozes into a slumber. She has been much disappointed since her arrival here at the utter indifference of the inmates of the house to her. Ariadne, Captain's second daughter, now Lady Utterword, who arrives here after Ellie, also suffers similar disappointment and is "much flustered" at such a reception, particularly since she has returned home "after twenty-three years." What hurts her more is her father's intentional or unintentional distancing from her as a stranger on the excuse of his failure to recognise her as Ariadne. Or is it an intentional strategy or stance to derecognise her identity, a conscious refusal to acknowledge the daughter who married a "numskull of a husband" at nineteen to escape from "this house?" Her husband is Sir Hastings Utterword, "who has been governor of all the crown colonies in succession," and as his wife she enjoys the privilege of being "the mistress of Government House." Captain Shotover says to Ellie that Hastings "resembled" the figure-head of his ship, "the Dauntless" which was to the child Ariadne "the most beautiful thing on earth." Now that daughter has become to the father "a perfect fiend." Shotover has not "forgotten" her at all, but wants to maintain stiffly his own programme of attaining "the seventh degree of concentration." His daughter Hesione describes him as a person "as mad as a hatter." Hesione has invited Ellie to this house, but does not intend her to marry Mangan, the "hog of a millionaire," though surprisingly, she allows Ellie to be intimate with her husband Hector. Ellie introduces her father Mazzini Dunn to Captain Shotover, who unfortunately takes her as a pirate's daughter, linking her to a sailor Billy Dunn. Ellie tells Ariadne of this confusion Captain Shotover creates: "Lady Utterword: I dont know what to do. Your father persists in believing that my father is some sailor who robbed him." She also talks at length about her father who taught her "to love Shakespear," and she likes Othello "who had been out in the world doing all sorts of brave things and having terrible adventures." Ellie's grandparents were poets, "like the Brownings," who gave Mazzini "the noblest ideas, but they could not afford to give him a profession", and he 'fought his way along' as he was poor. Ellie says "I am proud of his poverty." She is
extremely grateful to Mangan for his kind act of giving Mazzini the capital he wanted after his financial ruin. And her gratitude to Mangan, induced Ellie to choose to marry him.

But in the second Act, after a long discussion with Mangan, Ellie makes him aware of her strength and brings him under her control. But during the time he sleeps under the spell of hypnotism, he hears Hesione's comments about him made to Ellie. After being awakened by Ellie, he voices his agonised disillusionment with Hesione and also with all women. In the third Act, this embittered and heartbroken Mangan surrenders to Ellie whom he now wants to marry. But Ellie rejects his proposal, and reveals her secret that she only wanted “to feel” her strength over him, and also that she has got into a mystic marriage with Captain Shotover and so, “cannot commit bigamy.” Everyone is taken by surprise. After sometime the enemy air-raid begins and some explosions are heard. While others including Ellie refused to go down to the cellar for safety, Mangan and the burglar run out of the ship house and take shelter in a gravel pit (where Shotover’s dynamite was stored) which is struck by a bomb killing the two. Shotover’s house reminds one rather remotely of the Hell in Man and Superman, “the home of the unreal,” a “Palace of Lies,” with its atmosphere of dream, unreality and flux. Wisenthal has expressed this view (138). Shotover himself comments that Heartbreak House is not his house, but his kennel only. So, the unreality and the unsubstantiality of the place have been emphasised again and again. “Nothing is solid and real in Heartbreak House,” as Wisenthal comments (138). The language of the play is found to match well with its general setting and atmosphere.

III

Alexander Leggatt has traced the similarity between the Shavian Heartbreak House and the Shakespearian Forest of Arden. According to him, Heartbreak
House “remains a place of ordeal both for its visitors and for those who live there” (83). Both function as backdrop to the main action of the play, as places of erotic adventure and truth-telling. In the second Act of the play Hector warns Randall: “In this house we know all the poses: our game is to find out the man under the pose” (792). Shaw has been successful in mingling his verbal games with those of the games or tricks performed by the characters in different dramatic situations. For example, we may say that right at the start of the action, Shotover’s inability to recognise his daughter, willingly or unwillingly, is the part of a ‘game’, making her plead “I’m little Paddy Patkins”:

THE CAPTAIN. Your tea, young lady. What! another lady! I must fetch another cup [he makes for the pantry].

LADY UTTERWORD. [rising from the sofa, suffused with emotions] Papa! Don’t you know me? I’m your daughter.

THE CAPTAIN. Nonsense! my daughter’s upstairs asleep. [He vanishes through the half door].

Lady Utterword retires to the window to conceal her tears.

ELLIE. [going to her with the cup] Don’t be so distressed. Have this cup of tea. He is very old and very strange: he has been just like that to me. I know how dreadful it must be: my own father is all the world to me. Oh, I’m sure he didn’t mean it.

The Captain returns with another cup.

THE CAPTAIN. Now we are complete. [He places it on the tray].

LADY UTTERWORD. [hysterically] Papa: you can’t have forgotten me. I am Ariadne. I’m little Paddy Patkins. Won’t you kiss me? [She goes to him and throws her arms round his neck].

THE CAPTAIN. [woodenly enduring her embrace] How can you be Ariadne? You are a middle-aged woman: well preserved, madam, but no longer young.

LADY UTTERWORD. But think of all the years and years I have been away, Papa. I have had to grow old, like other people.

THE CAPTAIN. [disengaging himself] You should grow out of kissing strange men: they may be striving to attain the seventh degree of concentration.

LADY UTTERWORD. But I’m your daughter. You haven’t seen me for years.

THE CAPTAIN. So much the worse! When our relatives are at home, we have to think of all their good points or it would be impossible to endure them.
But when they are away, we console ourselves for their absence by dwelling on their vices. That is how I have come to think my absent daughter Ariadne a perfect fiend; so do not try to ingratiating yourself here by impersonating her [he walks firmly away to the other side of the room].

(Act I, 761)

A unique dramatic situation marked by surprise and suspense has been fabricated by Shaw, in which both the visitor (Ellie Dunn) and the daughter (Lady Utterword) happen to be strangers to the owner of the house (Captain Shotover). A series of jerky, fragmented “wh” questions uttered by Lady Utterword in order to gain recognition from her father is well attuned with the uneasiness and uncertainties of the Heartbreak House world. Her long speech beginning with “I know what you must feel, Oh, this house, this house!” (Act I, 760) is essentially packed with significance, as it denotes the inner world of the house. Here, the juxtaposition of “nobody” and “anybody” proves the continuation of the same Shavian rhetorics introduced in Arms and the Man and Candida. Lady Utterword’s expressive bafflement that “nobody” is at home to receive “anybody” brings out the essence of the play:

A WOMAN’S VOICE. [in the hall] Is any one at home? Hesione! Nurse!

Papa! Do come, somebody; and take in my luggage.

Thumping heard, as of an umbrella, on the wainscot.

NURSE GUINNES. My gracious! It’s Miss Addie, Lady Utterword, Mrs Hushabye’s sister: the one I told the Captain about. [Calling] Coming, Miss, coming.

She carries the table back to its place by the door, and is hurrying out when she is intercepted by Lady Utterword, who bursts in much flustered. Lady Utterword, a blonde, is very handsome, very well dressed, and so precipitate in speech and action that the first impression (erroneous) is one of comic silliness.

LADY UTTERWORD. Oh, is that you, Nurse? How are you? You dont look a day older. Is nobody at home? Where is Hesione? Doesnt she expect me? Where are the servants? Whose luggage is that on the steps? Where’s Papa? Is everybody asleep? (Act I, 760)

Captain Shotover’s house, where his own daughter returns after twenty three years, is the potential replica of the modern materialistic world. Shotover’s
daughter is accepted as a “lady”, not as a “daughter.” Unconsciously or consciously, Shaw here has inverted the pattern of *King Lear*, through the utilization of language game where the old king is addressed by Goneril’s steward not as a king, but as “my Lady’s father.” The serious problem of identity has been given a comic touch at the beginning of *Heartbreak House*. Whereas Lear discovers the fiendish nature of Regan and Goneril much later, Shotover completes the task at the outset by calling his absent daughter Ariadne “a perfect fiend.” In *King Lear*, Lear the aged king gets disillusioned with his daughters through the successive revelations of their real natures, here in Shaw’s play it is the daughter herself who is disillusioned:

**LADY UTTERWORD.** I will not be ignored and pretended to be somebody else. I will have it out with Papa now, this instant. (763)

But the main action of the play is centred on the process of disillusionment of Ellie Dunn, the Shavian Cordelia. Lady Utterword has struck a significant chord at the very opening of the play in saying that besides being objectively disordered, there is a persistent “disorder in ideas” in the house. Her observation is strengthened by the gloomy comment of the Captain:

**Youth! beauty! novelty! They are badly wanted in this house. I am excessively old. Hesione is only moderately young. Her children are not youthful.”** (761)

This dramatic speech marked by a ring of chanting, points out the fact that in this most allusive and poetic play, Shaw tries to secure the marriage of youth and age. Shotover, who imbibes within himself the Lear-like insanity and the Prospero-like magicality, passes an indictment not only on his own house, but also on the entire world. The insertion of this serious comment by Shotover is an index to the serio-comic bias of Shaw. However, the metaphor of “knowing” and “forgetting” marks the opening episode of the play. Both Shotover and Mrs Hushabye do not recognise Lady Utterword.

Shotover comes to imagine Ellie only as the daughter of that sailor by whom he was robbed. Apart from the comical displacement of Ellie’s identity which Shotover confounded, the audience is given the Shavian touch of comicality when Mrs Hushabye fails to recognise her sister and says to Ellie: “Oh! you’ve brought someone with you. Introduce me”:
LADY UTTERWORD. Hesione: is it possible that you dont know me?

MRS HUSHABYE. [conventionally] Of course I remember your face quite well. Where have we met?

LADY UTTERWORD. Didnt Papa tell you I was here? Oh! This is really too much. [She throws herself sulkily into the big chair].

MRS HUSHABYE. Papa!

LADY UTTERWORD. Yes: Papa. Our Papa, you unfeeling wretch. [Rising angrily] I'll go straight to a hotel.

MRS HUSHABYE. [seizing her by the shoulders] My goodness gracious goodness, you dont mean to say that youre Addy!

LADY UTTERWORD. I certainly am Addy; and I dont think I can be so changed that you would not have recognized me if you had any real affection for me. And Papa didnt think me even worth mentioning! (Act I, 762)

The parenthetical instructions are of great help for the director. Theatrical improvisations are facilitated by them. What Shaw likes to mean by this episode of non-recognition is that human relations are disintegrating fast. A bleak world is looming large, where family ties are forgotten, and men are getting ferociously at one another's throats.

IV

The most musical of all Shaw plays, Heartbreak House is overcharged with surprising incidents which contribute to the total effect of the play. All such incidents and episodes are interlinked like musical chords forming an integrated idiom of theatre. One such interesting event is the entrance of Mazzini Dunn, the supposed pirate; which offers Ellie a scope to clear off the suspicion of the Captain regarding the identity of her father. Mazzni Dunn makes a very pertinent comment in pointing out that his daughter is not interested in young suitors, which becomes essentially proleptic, as Ellie will get into a spiritual marriage with Captain Shotover. The marriage of contraries has been finely dramatised in
the play, bringing into focus the contrast between the “youth” of Mangan and the “graver, solider side” of Shotover, who is almost a father-figure to Ellie.

In the conversation between Ellie and Hesione, Shaw divulges an important ‘secret’ — the already formed relationship between Ellie and Mangan, a relationship which does not reach fulfilment, but which makes Ellie see through the actualities of life, having a far-reaching dramatic consequence. But the audience is to know another important secret — the newly revealed interest of Hesione in getting Mangan in her seductive grip. This initiates the subject of women-at-war in love. Hesione tries her best to “understand” the real nature of Ellie’s passion for Mangan, but seems to fail:

MRS HUSHABYE. Quite a romance. And when did the boss develop the tender passion?

ELLIE. Oh, that was years after, quite lately. He took the chair one night at a sort of peoples concert. I was singing there. As an amateur, you know: half a guinea for expenses and three songs with three encores. He was so pleased with my singing that he asked might he walk home with me. I never saw anyone so taken aback as he was when I took him home and introduced him to my father: his own manager. It was then that my father told me how nobly he had behaved. Of course it was considered a great chance for me, as he is so rich. And — and — we drifted into a sort of understanding — I suppose I should call it an engagement — [she is distressed and cannot go on].

MRS HUSHABYE. [rising and marching about] you may have drifted into it; but you will bounce out of it, my pettikins, if I am to have anything to do with it.

ELLIE. [hopelessly] No: it’s no use. I am bound in honor and gratitude. I will go through it.

MRS HUSHABYE. [behind the sofa, scolding down at her] You know, of course, that it’s not honorable or grateful to marry a man you dont love. Do you love this Mangan man?

ELLIE. Yes. At least —

MRS HUSHABYE. I dont want to know about ‘the least’: I want to know the worst. Girls of your age fall in love with all sorts of impossible people, especially old people.

ELLIE. I like Mr Mangan very much; and I shall always be — (Act I, 764-65)
In Shaw’s plays (including *Heartbreak House*), the characters are in “love” not being induced by any supernatural agent, but by the influence of such factors as money and status which are essentially social. The ‘lovers’ of Shaw are prompted not by any “love-juice” of any Shakespearian Puck, but by some internal cravings for social success and status.

The musicality of the play makes the plot develop in a cumulative way, making every thread of it linked by characters who form duets and trios among them. Hence the linear plot development is absent in the play. The progression of the dramatic action in the first Act also follows the same pattern. *Heartbreak House* lacks what is called ‘speech as action’, but abounds in such dramatic speeches and idioms that contribute to the very dreamy atmosphere of the play.

Any critical analysis of the dramatic speeches of the first Act reveals that almost all of them are directed towards the revelation of some “secret” and the resultant discovery — all bringing the characters face to face with some higher plane of reality, experiencing ‘heartbreak’ on different levels of the dramatic action. For example, Hesione’s discovery that Ellie will stick to Mangan for her own sake is certainly a great blow to her as she experiences a defeat in the field of ‘love.’ Unlike Eliza, Vivie and Barbara, all the women in this play are preoccupied with love, and they are rather, obsessed with sexual passion which, curiously enough, is directed beyond marital relationship.

V

Alessandro Serpieri says that “all linguistic and semiotic functions” in a play depend on “the deictic orientation of the utterance towards its context.” Serpieri’s view on the function of deixis may be quoted here:

In the theatre... meaning is entrusted *in primis* to the *deixis*, which regulates the articulation of the speech acts. Even rhetoric, like syntax, grammar, etc., are dependent, in the theatre, on the deixis. (qtd. in Elam 127)
The word ‘deictic’ (adjective) / ‘deixis’ (noun), a term from Linguistics, is a feature of language that directly relates the situation of a verbal utterance to persons and also to the place and time. Deictic expressions are what differentiate narrative and descriptive styles followed in fictions from the direct presentation of situations (known technically as ‘ostension’) in drama. In Aristotelian context the former is called ‘diegesis’ (narrative/descriptive mode of representation) and the latter is ‘mimesis’ (direct imitation) so that a play performs the state of affairs itself. It takes the forms of I/you, my/yours, this/that, now/then, here/there and such other personal as well as spatio-temporal patterns of expressions. This can be illustrated by an exchange of words between two persons in the opening sequence of Heartbreak House:

THE WOMANSERVANT. God bless us! [The young lady picks up the book and places it on the table]. Sorry to wake you, miss, I’m sure; but you are a stranger to me. What might you be waiting here for now?

THE YOUNG LADY. Waiting for somebody to shew some signs of knowing that I have been invited here.

THE WOMANSERVANT. Oh, you’re invited, are you? And has nobody come? Dear! dear!

THE YOUNG LADY. A wild-looking old gentleman came and looked in at the window; and I heard him calling out “Nurse; there is a young and attractive female waiting in the poop. Go and see what she wants.” Are you the nurse? (Act I, 758-59)

The dialogue creates for the audience an inter-personal relationship in a particular location and within a particular time. Such a discourse is the ‘deixis’, and what we get through it is not a set of description but concrete references by speakers to themselves, to their listeners or addressees and also to the space and time involved. Elam rightly comments that “drama consists first and foremost precisely in this, an I addressing a you here and now” (126). The use of such type of deictic orientation occupies a large space in the formation of the Shavian dramatic idiom. Keir Elam (The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama) has observed the fine use of such a dramatic technique right at the start of the play as illustrated above. With the unfolding of the dramatic action we observe how an immediate relationship is established between two speaker-listeners and the
here-and-now of their speeches before the audience is made aware of any detached dramatic information regarding later actions. The exchange between the Woman Servant and the Young Lady with which the play opens is charged with such deictic discourse, with a lot of personal or possessive pronouns like “I”, “you”, “he” and also the here-and-now. The Young Lady, that is, Ellie, is utterly shocked to see that there is nobody in the house to receive her. She has been made to wait for somebody to show some signs of knowing that “I have been invited here.” The use of the expression “sign of knowing,” though apparently simple, only as a marker of irritation or disgust in Ellie’s mind, turns out to be theatrically significant, for in a modern theatrical world “signs” are more important than elaborate narrative patterns. Keir Elam has analysed the Shawian linguistic innovation and noted how finely Shaw has utilised the dialogue to create an interpersonal dialectic. All this is usually done with the help of a number of deictic elements such as demonstrative pronouns and spatial and temporal adverbs as “here” and “now.” Elam has given a fine definition of deixis in saying that “Deixis, therefore, is what allows language an active and dialogic function rather than a descriptive and choric role” (127).

Some critics have tried to find affinity between Shakespeare’s Cordelia and Shaw’s Ellie. But the basic difference between the two lies in the fact that the Shakespearian heroine has not sacrificed her “love” for her would-be husband for the sake of her love for and allegiance to her father. She is unhesitating in saying:

I love your Majesty
According to my bond; no more nor less. (King Lear I.i 91-2)

Lear King of Britain feels too old to continue ruling the country and decides to divide his kingdom among his three daughters. But before that he wants to evaluate their love in terms of public declaration through words in the royal court. He first calls upon Goneril — “Our eldest-born, speak first.” Goneril takes full advantage of the deictic manipulation — “Sir, I love you more than word can wield the matter.” King Lear is befooled by her cunning speech and bequeathings to her and her husband Albany the fixed portion of the kingdom. The
King is similarly befooled by the second daughter Regan's flattering words of love, by which she even tries to outdo Goneril. King Lear bequeatheth another portion of the kingdom to her and her husband Cornwall in overwhelming deictic terms. Then he turns to Cordelia and asked her to 'speak':

CORDELIA. Nothing, my lord.
LEAR. Nothing?
CORDELIA. Nothing.
LEAR. Nothing will come of nothing: speak again.
CORDELIA. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
    My heart into my mouth: I love your majesty
    According to my bond; nor more nor less.
LEAR. How, how Cordelia! Mend your speech a little,
    Lest you mar your fortunes.
CORDELIA. Good my lord,
    You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me: I
    Return those duties back as are right fit,
    Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
    Why have my sisters husbands, if they say
    They love you all? Happily, when I shall wed,
    That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry
    Half my love with him, half my care and duty:
    Sure I shall never marry like my sisters,
    To love my father all.
LEAR. But goes thy heart with this?
CORDELIA. Ay, my good lord.
LEAR. So young, and so untender?
CORDELIA. So young, my lord, and true.
LEAR. Let it be so! thy truth, then, be thy dower: (I, i 86-107 )

The deictic presentation of hypocrisy achieving victory over a selfish and authoritarian King and of sincerity and truth being defeated is thus wonderfully illustrated. Even the most loyal courtier, Earl of Kent, cannot save the situation, "when Lear is mad." Ellie being proud of her father's poverty, does not at all consider him to be "selfish" and wants to marry Mangan to ruin him in the world of love, as she ruined her father in business. No Cordelia, Miranda or
Desdemona would have thought so. Though Ellie seems to be a romantic proper, she actually belongs to the Shavian clan of such heroines as Candida and Ann, than to Cordelia or Desdemona.

VI

A closer survey of the Shavian use of words reveals that Shaw perhaps could not resist the temptation in using the word “understand” in different dramatic situations to carry on his argumentations, as he has successfully done the same in Candida. Ellie is of the opinion that Hesione will not be able to “understand” the depth of her relation with Mangan, something which Hesione brushes aside by promptly retorting “I dont care” — another very linguistically potential verbal expression frequently used by Shaw in the play. In fact, all the sojourners in the Heartbreak House of Shotover are to come to terms with one other on the ground of different sorts of “understanding” in which some will enjoy happiness and some experience “heartbreak.” The relation among them is basically commercial. This is finely revealed by such words as “honour” and “gratitude.” The failure of Ellie’s father in the world of business has been presented by Ellie by saying that “It nearly broke his heart,” (Act I, 764) without knowing that later on she will herself admit — “I have a horrible fear that my heart is broken.” If Mazzini Dunn is heart-broken in the world of business, his daughter suffers the same in the world of love. So, Wisenthal’s view that “heartbreak” means suffering which results from disappointment in love (139), may be extended to include the psychic effects from disappointment in the commercial world. In fact, Shaw has used the word in its multidimensional implications. Ellie’s love story has dual aspects: she “loves” Mangan and wants to marry him for her father’s sake; but she is actually swayed by the “romance” with Marcus Darnley, her visionary hero. Again, the irony lies in the fact that she has to experience a
terrible "heartbreak" in both cases — first, knowing that Darnley is no other than the matter-of-fact husband of Mrs Hushabye, and then, realising that Mangan is devoted to Hesione. Shaw has contrived a fine comic situation in which both the ladies are shocked and heart-broken — Ellie by knowing that she has been deceived in romance, and Hesione by discovering the "secret" that her own husband is Ellie's real-life white Othello (Darnley). Ellie's narrative has little action and more dream-like vision. The way she narrates her love-affair with Darnley creates a surrealistic plane of existence.

Like "understand", the word "fool" also serves a great purpose in bringing the Shavian characters face to face with the stark reality of life. Ellie considers herself to be a "fool" in her failure to "understand" the real nature of Hector. A highly charged dramatic moment is created when the broken-hearted Ellie is being consoled by Hesione who almost philosophises in saying that it is only life educating her.

ELLIE... I have a horrible fear that my heart is broken, but that heartbreak is not like what I thought it must be.

MRS HUSHABYE. [fondling her] It's only life educating you, pettikins. How do you feel about Boss Mangan now?

ELLIE [disengaging herself with an expression of distaste] Oh, how can you remind me of him, Hesione?

MRS HUSHABYE. Sorry, dear. I think I hear Hector coming back. You don't mind now, do you, dear?

ELLIE. Not in the least. I am quite cured. (Act I)

And so when Ellie is patiently saying that she is quite "cured", a genuine cathartic effect is communicated to the audience. The word "cured" carries a perfect psychological and pathological connotation. Ellie is now cured of her illusion, as Raina (Arms and the Man) and Eugene Marchbanks (Candida) had been similarly cured earlier. If Ellie is turned a "fool" in her love affair with the imaginary Darnley, Mangan experiences the same with no other than Ellie herself. This is implicitly but sufficiently hinted at in the conversation between Captain Shotover and Mangan. The attitude of Ellie towards Mangan is well anticipated by the aged Captain. That she will not surrender to the capitalistic
entrapment of Boss Mangan is foregrounded in the encounter between the two, who have unconsciously become the rivals in Ellie’s “love.” Shaw has fashioned the character of Shotover almost as a sort of deus ex machina in the world of the Heartbreak House. So, when Mangan proudly announces that he is going to marry Ellie, it is the Captain who is well aware of the underlying irony in his pride, because his own daughter Hesione will replace the “pirate’s child” — Ellie Dunn. Captain Shotover still feels a deeper obsession with the word “pirate.” The encounter between Mangan and the Captain is highly comic in which the former is disillusioned about love and marriage:

MANGAN. Well, I am damned!
CAPTAIN SHOTOVER. I thought so. I was, too for many years. The negress redeemed me.
MAGNAN. [feebly] This is queer. I ought to walk out of this house. (Act I)

If Hesione is to “break” off the relation between Mangan and Ellie, it is the Captain who performs the same task, though in an implicit way. In fact, the present encounter between the two is well balanced with the earlier one, and like Ellie, Mangan is also baffled about the essence of the Heartbreak House. These two brief dramatic “texts” get their necessary momentum and significance when they are dramatized before the audience successfully, and the crux of that success lies in the underlying note of illusion from which Ellie and Mangan suffer. Both of them fail to “understand” their position in the house of the Captain. When Mangan asks Shotover “Am I in her house or in yours?”(769), the Captain’s answer is essentially ambiguous, but charged with the Shavian poetry: “You are beneath the dome of heaven, in the house of God” (Act I, 769). Here the personal “her” and “yours” are made to transform into the impersonal “heaven.” As Shaw has already made us see that men cannot stay long in Heaven (Candida, Man and Superman), so the strong-hearted Mangan who is now a broken one, feels “damned”, and resolves to leave the Shotover “dome of heaven”: “This is queer. I ought to walk out of this house”. The house, like the orchard of Chekhov, has its own charm and beauty, and perhaps would not accept any stranger who fails to conform to it.
The entrance of Randall marks the final phase of Act One, in which the audience watches how the processes of cross identity, knowing-forgetting, love-deception continue. This reveals a new aspect of the Shavian dramatic idiom. Randall kisses Hesione with the permission of the Captain. Lady Utterword is soon turned into a fool by the criss-cross love-relation: “Randall: you have flustered me so: I made a perfect fool of myself” — this dramatic speech seems to be perfectly balanced with Hector’s: “I am deliberately playing the fool, out of sheer worthlessness” (Act I, 772). It is a matter of great interest to note how Shaw has fabricated a fine dramatic situation here for his characters to play some effective roles. Lady Utterword is aggrieved that she has been made a “fool” by Randall. If the audience shows some sympathy for her pathetic plight, this does not last long, for the audience has to observe how this “safe woman” befools Hector the “exceedingly clever lady-killer” in the game of love:

LADY UTTERWORD. I am a woman of the world, Hector; and I can assure you that if you will only take the trouble always to do the perfectly correct thing, and to say the perfectly correct thing, you can do just what you like. An ill-conducted, careless woman gets simply no chance. An ill-conducted, careless man is never allowed within arm’s length of any woman worth knowing.

HECTOR. I see. You are neither a Bohemian woman nor a Puritan woman.

You are a dangerous woman.

LADY UTTERWORD. On the contrary, I am a safe woman.

HECTOR. You are a most accursedly attractive woman. Mind: I am not making love to you. I do not like being attracted. But you had better know how I feel if you are going to stay here.

LADY UTTERWORD. You are an exceedingly clever ladykiller, Hector. And terribly handsome. I am quite a good player, myself, at that game. Is it quite understood that we are only playing? (Act I, 772)

Both of them indulge in certain role-playing. When they enact their “roles” on the stage, the audience can well anticipate connection and gap between the play-text and the performative text. The characters are to take part in some games, deliberately putting on masks. It is the Captain who does not take part in that game. He is like Eliot’s Tiresias — one who enables us to see through the
actualities of the Heartbreak House. Hector is the most wretched victim in the
game of love. The word “game” becomes almost a *leit motif* and a determining
factor in the concluding phase of the first Act. Relying on this word the actors
can get into a pose and out of it – which becomes interesting in performance.
Again, Shaw perhaps could not withdraw himself from his passion of employing
the heaven-hell metaphor. This is most glaringly evident in one of Hector’s
speeches, uttered in reply to his wife’s assertion that they are frightfully in love
with one another in an enchanting dream-like state: “You fascinated me, but I
loved you; so it was heaven. This sister of yours fascinated me; but I hate her; so
it is hell.” This lyrical expression echoes Hector’s unfulfilled desire of “love.”
Gordon’s comment is quite relevant in this context:

> Around these sisters spreads a circle of civilised but oppressive dalliance.
> Hector Hushabye is bound to both, ‘married right up to the hilt’ to Hesione but
> soon enthralled by Ariadne. Ellie is initially infatuated by Hector; Mangan for
> a while by Hesione (despite his presentiment of doom); and Randall Utterword
> has no other purpose in life than to pay court to his sister-in-law. (158)

The end of the first Act completes the circle. Captain Shotover’s “invention” is
to be balanced with the “invention” of Hector — the former’s is related to
navigation and the latter’s to women. The ending of the Act marks the end of a
trance or a reverie. Hesione suddenly feels that the guests are not yet properly
accommodated — a task which should have been performed by her at the start of
the play. However, the audience feels that they have been kept deliberately
awake in a dream-like atmosphere, where every impossible thing has been made
possible. There is a fine fusion of the setting and the mode of theatre language
expressed in the behaviour of the characters. This is well articulated in the Lear-
like behaviour of the Shavian Captain. Nothing can be more appropriate than
this realisation of the aged Captain:

> MRS HUSHABYE. Oh, Guinness will produce some sort of dinner for them.
> The servants always take jolly good care that there is food in the house.
> CAPTAIN SHOTOVER. *raising a strange wail in the darkness* What a
> house! What a daughter!
> MRS HUSHABYE. *raving* What a father!
> HECTOR. *following suit* What a husband!
CAPTAIN SHOTOVER. Is there no thunder in heaven? (Act I, 774-75)

The employment of the modern verbal duel or repartee accelerates the action of the drama, pushing the characters out of their poses or elusive role-playing.

VII

After the excited performance at the end of the first Act the second Act starts in a calm and serene manner with a *tete-a-tete* situation in which Mangan and Ellie find “opportunity” in sharpening their “understanding” with each other. The first episode is therefore charged with such dramatic materials which are very patent for the Shavian Discussion Plays. Here is a reversal of situation from that of *Man and Superman*, for although Mangan is eager to win the love of Ellie, she has made up her mind not to respond to his call. Unlike Eliza in *Pygmalion*, Ellie is no subaltern to beg “love” from Mangan. Her speeches are marked by a force of their own which can pierce through every obstacle put in the way by the masculine power of Mangan, representing the Capitalist cultural system. Shotover, having overcome his initial suspicion of Ellie, realises that she is doing right in her “dealing” with Mangan. Shaw has carefully designed such dramatic tricks of ostension which recur frequently in many of his plays including this play; all these constitute part of Shaw’s dramatic idiom. The motif of madness that pervades the action of *Heartbreak House* may also be traced in *Candida* where all the principal characters including Candida suffer the malady of madness. “What, Candy mad too!” — this exclamation of Burgess is really unforgettable for the audience. The inner madness of the characters is well matched with the peculiar atmosphere of the House. Ellie is still unable to withdraw herself from the deep-rooted spell of the house — not being familiar with this “extraordinary house,” something which Mangan also feels after sometime. It is unique in the Shavian idiom that these two opposite characters
show affinity in expressing their feelings by using almost similar dramatic speeches:

MANGAN. I like the place. The air suits me. I shouldn't be surprised if I settled down here.

ELLIE. Nothing would please me better. The air suits me too and I want to be near Hesione. (Act II, 775)

*Heartbreak House* is a play about human relationship, and it is occasionally seen that when any one of the characters fails to manage that relationship properly, he or she blames the house, and thus the setting becomes a perfect dramatic metaphor, performing the role of a catalyst.

In Mangan-Ellie interaction the audience has to witness a superbly manipulated dramatic scene where, Ellie, in every phase, shows her individuality as a character. Shaw's dramatic speech has its own strength and weight, though the underlying spirit of fantasy and illusiveness remains the same. When Ellie comments that if women are very particular about men's character, no marriage will take place, we observe how she has formed a penetrating insight into human nature. This comic speech shows her own dignity. Among the women in the play, Ellie alone proves that marriage depends on trust and fidelity. She knows this very well, and that is why she deals with Mangan in a light-hearted, casual manner, but never allows him to dominate her. Ellie wants to take a sweet revenge on Mangan through her power of sexual charm; she would like to destroy him in "love" as he destroyed her father in "business":

MANGAN. Yes I did. Ruined him on purpose.

ELLIE. On purpose!

MANGAN. Not out of ill-nature, you know. And you'll admit that I kept a job for him when I had finished with him. But business is business; and I ruined him as a matter of business. (Act II, 775-76)

For Ellie, love is a business transaction. And the powerful capitalist Mangan is an easy prey in the world of love against the siren-like Ellie:

MANGAN. [almost beside himself] Do you think I'll be made a convenience of like this?
ELLIE. Come, Mr Mangan! You made a business convenience of my father. Well, a woman’s business is marriage. Why shouldn’t I make a domestic convenience of you?

MANGAN. Because I don’t choose, see? Because I’m not a silly gull like your father. That’s why.

ELLIE. [with serene contempt] You are not good enough to clean my father’s boots, Mr Mangan; and I am paying you a great compliment in condescending to make a convenience of you, as you call it. Of course you are free to throw over our engagement if you like; but, if you do, you’ll never enter Hesione’s house again: I will take care of that.

MANGAN. [gaspng] You little devil, you’ve done me [On the point of collapsing into the big chair again he recovers himself] Wait a bit, though: you’re not so cute as you think. You can’t beat Boss Mangan as easy as that. Suppose I go straight to Mrs Hushabye and tell her that you’re in love with her husband.

ELLIE. She knows it.

MANGAN. You told her!!!

ELLIE. She told me.

MANGAN. [clutching at his bursting temples] Oh, this is a crazy house. Or else I’m going clean off my chump. Is she making a swop with you — she is to have your husband and you too have hers?

ELLIE. Well, you don’t want us both, do you?

MANGAN. [throwing himself into the chair distractedly] My brain won’t stand it. My head’s going to split. Help! Help me to hold it. Quick: hold it: squeeze it. Save me. [Ellie comes behind his chair; clasps his head hard for a moment; then begins to draw her hands from his forehead back to his ears]. Thank you. [Drowsily] Thats very refreshing. [Waking a little] Don’t you hypnotize me, though. I’ve seen men made fools of by hypnotism.


(Act II, 777)

Shaw creates a great dramatic scene of comicality in which all the characters are busy searching for someone who has made Mangan fall asleep. Shaw is deliberate in introducing such comic incidents which mainly centre on the matter of mistaken identity or mysterious personal relationships. His characters are made to play hide-and-seek about their motives and get into peculiar situations
that entertain the audience. This is so recurrent that it constitutes an important component of his dramatic idiom.

At the end of her interaction with Mangan, Ellie comes out as the Shavian Fairy Queen, one who takes the great capitalist into her power and possession by means of the language of "love" and enchantment. Shaw creates a near fantasy world of illusion or dream. The word "sleep" repeated so many times, creates a hypnotic effect upon Mangan, who is sent to the fairy-land of romance and illusion. In *Man and Superman* Shaw dramatises a particular dream scene. But here in *Heartbreak House* dream pervades the reality of life. Whenever the situation is harsh and unbearable, his characters are sent to some dream world. They are presented on the stage as travellers, and again are allowed to undertake mental journey into the imaginary realm of wishfulfillment. Ellie completes her triumph over Mangan by making him go to "sleep." But this hypnotic sleep keeps him conscious of — even able to hear — what Hesione, Ellie and others speak disparingly about him:

MRS HUSHABYE. [*with the most elegant aplomb*] Sh-sh-sh-sh-sh! Mr Mangan: you are bound in honor to obliterate from your mind all you heard while you were pretending to be asleep. It was not meant for you to hear.

MANGAN. Pretending to be asleep! Do you think if I was only pretending that I’d have sprawled there helpless, and listen to such unfairness, such lies, such injustice and plotting and backbiting and slandering of me, if I could have up and told you what I thought of you! I wonder I didnt burst.

MRS HUSHABYE. [*sweetly*] You dreamt it all, Mr Mangan. We were only saying how beautifully peaceful you looked in your sleep. That was all, wasnt it, Ellie? Believe me, Mr Mangan, all those unpleasant things came into your mind in the last half second before you woke. Ellie rubbed your hair the wrong way; and the disagreeable sensation suggested a disagreeable dream.

MANGAN. [*doggedly*] I believe in dreams. (Act II, 783)

In the midst of great confusion regarding the search for the person responsible for Mangan’s sleep, Hesione makes a very significant comment that Ellie’s marriage to Mangan would be nothing but a sort of sacrifice of the female heart.
But the audience is keen to discern the fact that there is more pretension than genuine concern in the verbal expressions indulged in by Hesione, Ellie’s rival in love. The elderly lady is still to recover from the fear that Ellie might defeat her in the game of love. It is Mazzini Dunn who defends Mangan in a typical Shavian fashion by revealing the fact that this “slavedriver” could hardly know anything about machinery, and since Ellie has “remarkable strength of character” as a result of her study of Shakespeare, she has little to fear from involvement with Mangan. Shaw here blends realism and fantasy in a superb manner, while speaking of money (capitalism) and Shakespeare (intellectual power). When Hesione taunts Mazzini Dunn by saying that he may say that he has more money than Mangan, the aged man becomes more serious and brushes aside that thought: “I dont care enough for it, somehow. I’m ambitious! that must be it. Mangan is wonderful about money: he thinks of nothing else. He is so dreadfully afraid of being poor” (Act II, 779). Since the Capitalist is afraid of poverty, he is a money-seeker, and since Mazzini Dunn is proud of being poor, he helps Mangan earn more money. Shaw makes a fine bond between the two ways — the way of the capitalist and that of the working class, and also draws the map of their relationship in the social system. As Mazzini serves as a supportive base to Mangan’s business, he thinks that Ellie will do so in the matter of love. This two-fold task done by the father and the daughter is exemplified by Shaw with the help of a host of dramatic expressions:

MRS HUSHABYE. Then who manages his business, pray?

MAZZINI: I do. And of course other people like me. (Act II, 779)

Mazzini says to Hesione that it is Ellie who “will diet him splendidly,” out of love or “wont Ellie make him jump, though, when she takes his house in hand!” David J. Gordon observes that by the use of her seductiveness and refined maternal charms, Hesione tries to prevent Ellie from marrying Mangan and also to extend motherly protection to others including her husband:

Hesione, like Candida, distributes an amused maternal indulgence. Much of it is offered to Ellie who heartbreakingly discovers that the object of her romantic adoration is none other than Hesione’s husband, who told romantic stories about himself under an assumed name and who will soon be caught in the web
of Ariadne's charm. Some is bestowed on her philandering husband, some on the plain and mild Mazzini, and some (for the sake of her plan) on the snarling and whining Boss. (157)

But Gordon has missed one point. If we examine Mazzini Dunn's speech beginning with "No: I'm no good at making money," we must note that it unburdens the innate desire of a father who imagines his daughter in the role of a protective mother-wife. Dunn's use of the word "baby" inverts the popular notion of Mangan as a Boss in the capitalistic world and makes him a pathetic, helpless victim in the domestic world. Here Ellie is a Candida-figure for Mangan who is "really the most helpless of mortals" (Act, II 779). Ellie has to offer a "protective feeling towards him." Shaw is never out of the notion of woman as a protective power with her inner strength. Dunn's subsequent conversation with Hesione shows that he will have to protect Mangan from outside, and his daughter from inside:

MRS HUSHABYE. Then who manages his business, pray?
MAZZINI. I do. And of course other people like me.
MRS HUSHABYE. Footling people, you mean.
MAZZINI. I suppose youd think us so. (Act II, 779)

And a little later he even denotes the future state of affair, and hopes that Ellie would manage his house. The two words "love" and "resignation" have been used with varied implications. Mazzini does not want Ellie to live on resignation. Hesione fails to capture the implication of "resignation" and says that she should not live with a man she does not love. This is immediately answered back by Dunn that her life might be not so happy if she lived with a man she did "love":

MAZZINI. There! You see, Mrs Hushabye. I dont want Ellie to live on resignation.
MRS HUSHABYE. Do you want her to have to resign herself to living with a man she doesn't love?
MAZZINI. [wistfully] Are you sure that would be worse than living with a man she did love, if he was a footling person? (Act II, 780)

Then Hesione's use of the word "clever" is nicely balanced by Dunn's "stupid":

MRS HUSHABYE. . . .You know, I really think you must love Ellie very much; for you become quite clever when you talk about her.
MAZZINI. I didn't know I was so very stupid on other subjects. (780)

The stupidity of Hesione in respect of the "love" of Ellie and her father is exposed in this dramatic episode. Mazzini Dunn exposes the hollowness of Hesione's pride in attracting men. He is not at all afraid of her warning voice: "Take care. You may not be so safe as you think" (780). This comes as a retort to a fine comic speech made by Dunn: "Would you believe it that quite a lot of women have flirted with me because I am quite safe? But they get tired of me for the same reason." Shaw then defines love in a superbly aesthetic manner. Dunn's concept of "love" is far superior to that of Hesione — a love which happens once and gives birth to "such a lovely girl" like Ellie. However, the episode ends with the triumph of Dunn in leading Hesione to a state of utter foolishness. The Shavian use of such words as "love", "safe", and "care" becomes a pattern of his dramatic idiom.

The next dramatic interaction between Ellie and Hesione reveals certain important facets; but the endeavour of Hesione to dissuade Ellie from marrying Mangan still continues. Ellie's "I know. He is only asleep" is uttered casually to cool down the excitement of Hesione. Ellie has been wrongly accused by Hesione as a "matrimonial adventurer," but in her decision to marry Mangan there lurks a desire for revenge. Shaw has artistically utilised the power of "love" as a weapon which Ellie uses against the financially powerful Boss. From the psychological point of view it may be said that Ellie's defeat in the romance with Marcus Darnley (Hector) is changed into her victory first in the acceptance of a proposed marriage with Mangan and then in her rejection of it.

VIII

The theatre language in the play helps create a dramatic atmosphere of fantasy in which most of the characters are drowned and pass through different layers of phantasmagoria. But one cannot ignore the basic purpose of Shaw the dramatist
— his commitment as a realistic playwright. That is why he does not forget to remind the audience of the danger of marriage in a patriarchal society. Hesione warns Ellie that in the name of marriage Mangan will “buy” her. But this does not crush down the spirit of Ellie, who boldly replies that “it is I who am buying him.” The metaphor of “buying” and “selling” shows that Shaw very often thinks of marriage as a matter of material profit and loss. Words like “owner”, “buy”, “broken”, “pet” — all contribute to the total effect of the Shavian use of language. The metaphor of sleeping and waking, besides denoting the dream atmosphere of the play, also suggests different poses of the characters and their indulgence in falsehood. Thus Ellie’s exasperation in her speech — “Even the hair that ensnared him false! Everything false!” — has a deep-rooted dramatic significance. But whatever it may be, Shaw’s power of manipulating dramatic situations is unique: in his hypnotised state of sleep Mangan could actually hear all their disparaging words about him and thus he has “found” the two girls “out.” Mangan says that he believes in dream. This is really Shavian. But what is ironical is his use of the expression “You were making a fool of me.” The unique metaphor of the broken heart so persistently used in the play, is no isolated instance here, but a resultant, cumulative effect evolving from the earlier plays, where the same metaphor has been used in different situations to imply different meanings. Here lies the validity of the remark of Gordon that the play is a culmination of so many earlier works, particularly Misalliance.

The romance theme is better integrated, language and incident always pointing toward a central cluster of metaphors. The strong heroine Ellie, in comparison to Lina [Misalliance], is less magically conceived, more fully engaged in the action. (162)

Mangan is found in a heartbroken condition. Heartbreak House provides for Shaw a sort of his wishfulfilment in his socio-political mission. He would like to cure the exploiters like Mangan with the help of love and romance. Captain Shotover is the Shavian Prospero, magically transforming Mangan’s language of audacity – “Perhaps you think I cant do without you” — gradually into a language of surrender and unmanly sentimentality:
MANGAN. [writhing but yielding] How you can have the face — the heart [he breaks down and is heard sobbing as she takes him out]. (Act II, 787)

The way Shaw builds up his dramatic dialogues shows that not a single string is allowed to be left unused in the total harmony of the texture. So, what appeared to be a triumph for Mangan a little ago turns into a defeat for him. Hence his pertinent comment: “To hell out of this house: let that be enough for you and all here.” Perhaps it is the Captain who exposes the real nature of the house: “You were welcome to come: you are free to go. The wide earth, the high seas, the spacious skies are waiting for you outside.”

The brief episode where the Burglar comes and leaves the stage may not be taken just as a superficial snapshot, for it is also an integral part of the atmospheric tonal effect of the play. This is revealed in a comment by Mangan: “The very burglar cant behave naturally in this house.” This episode creates a sort of Brechtian ‘alienation effect’ upon the audience. The Burglar reveals a secret that the Captain sold himself to the Devil in Zanzibar, but he himself is exposed as one Billy Dunn, thereby freeing the father of Ellie of the charge of a pirate. But the most heart-breaking secret is that he has married the maid Guinness. This has even led the strong-hearted Hesione to conclude: “Well, we have had a very exciting evening. Everything will be an anticlimax after it. We’d better all go to bed” (Act II). But all this is highly touching to Ellie and leads her to take up a tremendous decision by her own which is in one sense an “anti-climax,” but truly Shavian, for Shaw believed in the marriage of contraries. Ellie explains the meaning of heart-break in an almost musically attuned manner:

When your heart is broken your boats are burned: nothing matters anymore. It is the end of happiness and the beginning of peace.

This speech marked by a fine play of alliteration, has less action, and more emotion. It fuses dialogue and music. Herself shattered by the cruelties of the world around her, she now indulges in fantasy and tries to find her real vocation there. Fantasy appears to Shaw as a means of salvation — salvation from the hard realities of life.
The word "heartbreak" recurs throughout the play and adds different dynamics to it. Almost all the characters undergo heart-break experience in their respective ways. Even the hard-hearted Mangan experiences this state, and when Shotover points out that Ariadne's heart will never break, she is touched to the quick: "Papa: don't say you think I've no heart."

The Ellie-Shotover episode towards the close of the second Act may be called a self-contained dramatic piece within the large dramatic world. It starts abruptly, but is a dramatically logical one, for Ellie's "heart" has been in turbulence exposing her split personality. Ellie's proclamation that she is not in love with Mangan is no fantasia, but a solid reality, a reality which has been deliberately suppressed by her for the sake of her father. She finds in the Captain a perfect spiritual partner. In the marriage-power relation with Mangan, Ellie's power rests on love with which she wants to earn or rather snatch money from that capitalist. Her tension-ridden query: "Who will have the best of the bargain, I wonder?" is a marker of progression from Candida to Ellie Dunn. Here Shotover is not the actual father of Ellie, but of course a father-figure who is later offered the role of a husband. Ellie's bargain with Mangan is based on her selling of soul and earning of money. Shaw manipulates a host of recurring words like "soul", "money", "fool", "sell", "deal" — some of which are related to the material world, some to the spiritual, to dramatise the conflicting aspects of the two. But the metaphor of loss and finding-out still holds the pivotal point in the action.

Earlier we have seen how Mangan wakes up and finds out the real truth about Ellie and Hesione; Ellie too repeatedly says that she has "found out" Shotover — first, that he has sold his soul to the devil in Zanzibar, and second, that he merely pretends to be living a life of resignation. It is the task of Ellie to bring him back to the life of action. The only difference is that while Mangan has to take refuge in sleep and dream to discover human nature, Shotover has to pretend and to get a glass of rum to be oblivious of such a cruel reality which is too much for him. The Shavian Captain does not face life, but runs away from it into a world of
scientific dream — “I cannot bear men and women. I have to run away. I must run away now” — only to be seized by Ellie. How interesting it is to note that Ellie uses the same word “hypnotise” like her opponent in love, Hesione. Ellie’s confession that he (Captain) is the “only person in that house I can say what I like to” is no detached statement, but a well-prepared dramatic utterance which is philosophically Shavian also, for Shaw believed in the union of opposites. Again, Ellie is presented as a tired navigator in search of a happy destination. And that is why Shotover’s mock threat that “old men are dangerous: it doesnt matter to them what is going to happen to the world,” creates no panic in her mind. Actually, both of them are tired of life in their different ways. So, Shotover’s long speech comes as a natural sequel to his mental condition:

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER. A man’s interest in the world is only the overflow from his interest in himself. When you are a child your vessel is not yet full; so you care for nothing but your own affairs. When you grow up, your vessel overflows; ... In old age the vessel dries up: there is no overflow: you are a child again... (Act II, 790)

This speech is essentially a Shavian reconstruction of Shakespeare’s representation of the phases of human life – one aspect of which is embodied in the last phase of old Lear. Shotover now has his pathetic realisation: “I am too old. I must go in and out.” But the Shavian comic touch is unmistakable when we know that he runs away for “a glass of rum.”

The conversation between Ellie and Shotover takes the audience into a kind of surrealistic world. Ellie asserts this by saying: “You must never be in the real world when we talk together.” Ellie’s request to the Captain not to “drink”, but to “dream” comes as a means of her wishfulfilment — it is a means of repairing her broken heart, since the Captain is for her a surrogate lover. This episode may be called a symbolic recapitulation of the reconciliation of Lear and Cordelia towards the end. A heart-broken Shotover (a father-figure to Ellie) surrenders to the inevitable reality of life with the language of resignation and acceptance: “I am too weary to resist or too weak. I am in my second childhood. I do not see you as you really are” (Act II, 790). The metaphor of disorder is very powerful here. It undermines the failure of Lear to “see” into the real nature of Cordelia.
The remaining part of this Act constitutes "a friendly chat" between Randall and Hector. They mainly talk about Ariadne, but a Shavian play is never a *tete-a-tete* only. So, soon the casual language of love and marriage culminates in a serious concern about human nature. Hector points out the duality in man's nature — man loves to remain under "pose." The word "pose" also gains a special significance in revealing the Shavian concept of metalanguage. To Shaw, life is a "game" in which we are to take part in different poses — only to be exposed in the final turn. So, the metaphor of concealment and revelation goes on and reaches its culmination at the final revelation of the meaninglessness and absurdity of human existence. All forms of illusions are shattered on different planes and the characters are to come face to face with the verdict of the Providence.

In this final phase of the second Act Shaw also plays with his favourite words like "care", "fool", "boy" and, of course "understand", to focus on different layers of human relationship and its complications. To "manage" Randall, Ariadne makes him fall "asleep", as Ellie does with Mangan. Hector calls her a "fool", but the Shotover daughter promptly replies that she is not such a fool as she looks. This shows the hiatus between appearance and reality and reveals the dramatic technique of "pose." This is ironically expressed by Hector: "Is there any slavery on earth viler than this slavery of men to women?" Randall may boastfully "deal" with Ariadne, but actually he is only under the spell of one of the "demon daughters" of Shotover. The Act ends with the expression of frustration: "Oh women! women! women!" — which may be viewed as an echo of Mrs Higgins's outcry (in *Pygmalion*): "Oh, Men! Men! Men!"

"Judging and judgement are recurrent motifs in the play" — observes Charles A. Berst (159). This Shavian critic shows how the characters judge one another until they are finally judged by the Eternal Will. In fact, this judgement motif
forms for Shaw a peculiar dramatic idiom, along with the interplay of masking and unmasking. Hesione’s false hair is a deliberate disguise to heighten her image of a siren woman, a male-catcher, no doubt. But it is the Shavian use of dramatic language, sometimes discursive, sometimes purely fantastic and subtly impressionistic, which helps the audience in detecting clues to the real nature of the characters. This is what exclusively happens in the final Act of the play — the setting of which is essentially Chekhovian.

In the Preface to Heartbreak House Shaw particularly refers to Chekhov’s The Cherry Orchard by the expression “a fantasia in the Russian manner” on which his play is modelled, both structurally and thematically. Mendelsohn has elaborately discussed the similarities and differences between the two plays. The most significant point of kinship between the two is the theme of “heartbreak” suffered by some people of the aristocratic class representing the “cultured, leisured Europe before the war.” Structurally, both the plays, as viewed by John Gassner, are almost “plotless”, and as such, they are “fundamentally anti-Aristotelian” presenting a “semi-comic and semi-tragic” subject (qtd. in Mendelsohn 401). However, both the plays keep a semblance of the action progressing, and we notice climactic situations and conflicts in them. The auction of the orchard and the sound of the axes felling the cherry trees in Chekhov’s play mark the conflict leading to the semi-tragic resolution. In Shaw’s play the “husband-switching” comic conflicts and the consequent heartbreaks, and finally, the dynamite and the bombing leading to a near cataclysm show its remarkable dramatic features. While in both the plays talk is more important than action, Chekhov gives greater indulgence to directionless talks. For example when Lopakhin impatiently tries to get an answer from Mme Lyubov Ranevsky, he totally fails to draw out any positive answer.

LOPAKHIN. You must come to a decision once and for all — time waits for no one. Surely the question is quite simple. Do you agree to lease your land for summer cottages or don’t you? You can answer in one word. Is it yes or no? just one word!

LYUBOV: Who’s smoking disgusting cigars out here? (Act II, 182)
In Shaw's play, Shotover resorts to similar games of evading direct answers to almost every question, but towards the end of the third Act, Ellie corners him. Other characters also remain wrapped up in their own egocentric thoughts, though they keep on apparently coherent talks. This is what Ariadne characterises as "the same disorder in ideas, in talk, in feeling" (Act I).

There are some significant differences also between the two plays. Shaw presents a limited number of class representatives — those of the decadent aristocracy and just two persons (Nurse Guiness and her pirate husband) representing the underprivileged class — the others being only symbolic characters. But Chekhov's characters cover larger range of society — Gayev and Feers live in the past, Trofimov in the future, Mme Ranevsky represents the dying aristocracy, and the others attempt to live in compromise with the present; Yasha, a ruthless self-seeker, is the only exception, belonging to no groups. Mendelsohn thinks that Heartbreak House should not be described as "optimistic." This is not acceptable, as I have shown later in my analysis of the significance of the final catastrophe of the play.

Daniel Dervin perhaps is not wholly justified in saying that Shaw's genius is creative but not introspective. The third Act, though largely Chekhovian in atmosphere, offers the audience both a creative and introspective Shaw, one who shows some unusual power in delving deeper into the hearts of darkness of his characters. The Act begins in "a fine still night, moonless" — Shaw's stage direction informs us, and immediately links it with Chekhov's setting in which the cherry orchard is seen at a distance, after sunset. There is a close correspondence between the stage-setting and the mental state of the characters. Chekhov significantly writes that most characters "sit lost in thought" (The Cherry Orchard, Act II, 180). The Shavian characters are also lost in "thoughts", but they are much concerned about the decayed condition of their society. That is why Ariadne's language of exultation "what a lovely night! It seems made for us" is curtly negated by Hector's "the night takes no interest in us. What are we to the night?" Shaw has to write a dream play without dreamy characters or youthful lovers, except Ellie who is still under the spell of dream with the
Captain: "In the night there is peace for the old and hope for the young" (Act III, 794). Hesione’s listening to the “splendid drumming” in the sky has affinity with the sound of the felling of trees in *The Cherry Orchard*. All these are symptomatic of the breaking of human relationships. Hence the “musical” and “operatic” mood of the opening phase soon merges into a mood of intellectual experience, in which Shaw once again sharpens his linguistic resources in connection with the meaning of ‘heartbreak.’ Earlier, we have seen how almost all the characters blame the house. Now we note how Hector reveals another very important matter, “We are wrong with it. There is no sense in us. We are useless, dangerous and ought to be abolished” (Act III, 794). Shaw’s language here is no dream fantasy but essentially poignant in breaking into a new realisation. The analogy between the Shotover house and a ship is a very potent dramatic symbol, in which the concept of micro and macro merges into a single one which is England, symptomatic of a larger reality. The reference to Shotover’s wife as the witch of Zanzibar and their demon daughters links the story vaguely to that of King Lear, and Darnley’s stories of adventure charm Ellie almost into a Desdemona. Thus *Heartbreak House* is both illusive and allusive.

The Ellie-Mangan episode, a crucial one in the play, is further illustrated here, where all the characters take part in the discussion about their proposed marriage. And the focus of action suddenly shifts from the social to the personal, in which characters like Hesione feel more comfortable. Shaw emphasises ‘darkness’ as a suitable condition in discussing such matters which ‘light’ does not permit us to do. Psychologically viewed, darkness is akin to the subconscious level of human mind. So, in Act One, Shotover comments that money is made in the dark. Now in Act Three, his elder daughter echoes the idea and says that marriage may be discussed in the dark. Mangan punctures the illusion about him regarding his money: “People think I’m an industrial Napoleonic. That’s why Miss Ellie wants to marry me. But I tell you I have nothing” (Act III, 795). He comes out not as a stern capitalist, but a practical businessman and breaks the “heart” of the trio — Ellie, Hesione and Hector.
Ariadne is saved because she has no heart to break. They express their frustration in a choric manner of accusing Mangan:

ELLIE. You! who have to get my father to do everything for you!

MRS HUSHABYE. You! who are afraid of your own workmen!

HECTOR. You! with whom three women have been playing cat and mouse all the evening. (Act III, 796)

The culmination of this shattered experience occurs in Hector’s language of near ejaculation: “Is this England, or is it a madhouse?” Ellie’s psychic progression takes place through different stages of her shocking experience, and all of them lead her towards her final decision of marrying Shotover. But before that, Mangan’s tearing off his dress may be said to have some analogy with Lear’s doing the same on the open heath in the storm scene. Shaw, like Shakespeare, shows that in spite of all his outward coverings man is basically the most ‘unaccommodated’ one. Again, undressing means revelation of the primitive self of a man in which he is at least true to his own beliefs and ideals — a revelation which is not possible when he is well-dressed/decorated. Mangan opines that since they have turned themselves “morally naked,” they should not be ashamed of being “physically naked.” The topsy-turvy situation of the house is well captured in a speech by Mangan who now wants to be alone after being deceived by almost everybody: “I don’t know whether I’m on my head or my heels when you all start on me like this. I’ll stay. I’ll marry her. I’ll do everything for a quiet life. Are you satisfied?” To this Ellie’s retort is a profound expression of her strength and maturity, characteristic of a Shavian woman. Ellie boldly proclaims that she does not think of marrying him, but only shows her strength and power over him. If Mangan wants to win over the world by his money, Ellie does the same by her love. She makes it clear that Mangan could not be able to “escape” if she “chose” him, but she asserts that she will not commit any “bigamy.” This she announces in a superbly theatrical manner, taking all the characters present by utter surprise:

ELLIE. I cannot commit bigamy, Lady Utterword.

MRS HUSHABYE. [exclaiming all together] Bigamy! Whatever on earth are you talking about, Ellie?
LADY UTEERWORD. [exclaiming all together] Bigamy! What do you mean, Miss Dunn?
MANGAN. [exclaiming all together] Bigamy! Do you mean to say you're married already?
HECTOR. [exclaiming all together] Bigamy! This is some enigma.
ELLIE. Only half an hour ago I became Captain Shotover's white wife.
MRS HUSHABYE. Ellie! What nonsense! Where?
ELLIE. In heaven, where all true marriages are made. (Act III, 797-98)

Captain Shotover's "white wife" has succeeded to transport herself to heaven where peace resides. *Heartbreak House* completes its journey as a Shavian poetic play: Ellie comes out as a poetically-conceived entity, more visionary than realistic. She announces her own marriage in such a dramatic speech which has enough internal action, as it springs from the very unconscious level of her self.

Next, we have the concatenation of speeches, dramatised in a choric manner. Ellie has opened up the flood-gate of speeches which might create a profound impression on the audience. She speaks like a transported figure: "Yes: I, Ellie Dunn, give my broken heart and strong sound soul to its natural captain, my spiritual husband and second father." She is able to ignore the judgement of Ariadne and Hesione with her newly found happiness. Shaw's employment of the word "blessing" rings like a refrain when Ellie shows that there is "blessing" in her assertive role in choosing Shotover. The word "blessing" functions as telescoping the inner realm of Ellie which is now full of "strength." She is free from the "bargain" with Mangan, and now feels no need of it. This happens when her heart is broken. This is the Shavian paradox and twist in language. She gains strength out of her "broken heart," so also the Captain who now utters a philosophic vision of life. Mangan is completely helpless. All his verbal tricks are gone. He almost talks like Morell (in *Candida*): "I don't understand a word of that" (Act III, 798). He is now converted into a real fool. The fantasy effect of the house is further reinforced by the realisation of Mangan. "Ever since I came into this silly house I have been made to look like a fool, though I'm as good a man in this house as in the city" (799).
The final phase of the play dramatises different connotations of the metaphor of heartbreak. The marriage of Ellie and Shotover metaphorically signals the union of youth and age, as viewed by Wisenthal, but it also unites power and wisdom. Ellie has gained that power through blessing in marriage, and Shotover has wisdom but no power. Shaw has framed the end of the play in an ambiguous way regarding the meaning of bombing which has a destructive beauty or in the Yeatsian term a “terrible beauty” (in “Easter 1916”).

A closer look at the philosophical credo of Shaw reveals his deeper concern about war as a means of annihilation of decadent civilisation. This is categorically presented in his *Commonsense About the War*, for which he had to face a lot of trouble. But it is a curious fact that he makes his characters react towards war from a fantastic or unreal point of view. Both Hesione and Ellie sense the feeling of the music of Beethoven in the sky that thunders. Deviating from his earlier naturalistic bias, Shaw now offers his audience a foretaste of surrealism in the framework of this play. The concatenation of short speeches is directed towards a vision of the future of mankind. Shaw now seems to be invoking all his characters to de-pose the poses and reveal their real selves. The process has been initiated by Mangan with his desire of tearing off his dresses. In all this confusion Ellie has to stand erect and endure heartbreak to find new resources to have a forward-looking journey. The metaphor of navigation takes the audience “out of thought.” This is done by the dream-like state which is well illustrated by the Shavian theatre language. When all the characters are talking at random and at cross-purposes, they are actually moving towards some point of meaning in their relationship with each other, with the ship-like house, with England epitomised by the ship, and finally, with the history of Europe during the War. Ellie gives the name ‘Heartbreak House’ to “this silly house, this strangely happy house, this agonizing house, this house without foundations.” In the midst of all their cross-talks, the air raid begins with explosions one after another. While Hesione and Ellie excitedly welcome the Beethoven orchestra in the sky, some of the other characters realise the gravity of the impending doom and ask them to go down to the cellars. Shotover thinks that “the judgement has
come.” Only Mangan and the burglar leave the ship-house and run for safety to the gravel cave, and the bomb explodes on it and destroys them. At last, others are safe since the raid is over, and Randall’s flute plays the tune of “keeping the home fires burning”:

_They wait in silence and intense expectations. Hesione and Ellie hold each other’s hand tight._

_A distant explosion is heard._

MRS HUSHABYE. [relaxing her grip] Oh! they have passed us.

LADY UTIERWORD. The danger is over, Randall. Go to bed.

CAPTAIN SHOTOVER. Turn in, all hands. The ship is safe. [He sits down and goes asleep].

ELLIE. [disappointedly] Safe!

HECTOR. [disgustedly] Yes, safe. And how damnably dull the world has become again suddenly! [He sits down].

MAZZINI. [sitting down] I was quite wrong, after all. It is we who have survived; and Mangan and the burglar — (Act III 802)

The ending of the play is marked by a cataclysmic incident, which projects the doom of the world in a way. This seems to foreshadow T.S. Eliot’s vision in _The Waste Land_ (1922):

_After the torchlight red on sweaty faces_  
_After the frosty silence in the gardens_  
_After the agony in stony places_  
_The shouting and the crying_  
_Prison and palace and reverberation_  
_Of thunder of spring over distant mountains_  
_(“What the Thunder said,” V. 322-27)_

But there is a significant difference between Shaw’s and Eliot’s visions. While Eliot’s vision of the universal doom was generated by his experience of the total devastation of the first World War, Shaw’s experience of the War (till 1916 — when the play was completed) could not totally darken his vision, so that he presented only destruction of two evil-doers — Billy Dunn the burglar and Mangan the exploiter. Margery M. Morgan rightly comments:

_The catastrophe in Act III can be seen as the fulfilment of Shotover’s design: out of the profound stillness of the old man, now mystically wedded to Ellie, a_
vision and concentration of purpose have called to external forces — to the
elements themselves — and have been answered. ‘My dynamite drew him
there. It is the hand of God’, he cries, on learning that Mangan had taken
refuge in the cave where the bomb fell. . . . the final explosion is a symbolic
fulfilment of his fantasy of power. (206)

The dialogues are artistically manipulated to externalise the dramatic vision.
Martin Meisel says:

Though Shaw had no hope of developing an adequate rhetorical notation, he
made shift with the language of music in directing his actors. (316).

The audience can well anticipate the presence of Shaw the director. Verbosity
and musicality are fused in the dialogic pattern of the Shavian theatre. Every
speech is managed to show the tone, manner and pitch, creating unexpected
shock, surprise, stimulant and of course amusement.

A staunch practitioner of the Ibsenite realism in his early plays, the mature Shaw
(in his middle phase) became an advocate of fantasy. Apart from his theatre,
Shaw the dramatist seems to undergo a journey from reality to fantasy, turning
away from the rational order of Ibsenite problem plays. In this play (Heartbreak
House), “instead of the expected Shavian wit, the dialogue is heavily charged
with overtones, breaking out of the usual rhetorical balances and Latinate
antitheses into an ambiguous, highly charged dramatic poetry” (Robert Brustein
114-115). This is something new in Shavian drama. The dramatic speeches of
Shotover, particularly in the third Act, appear to be as coming out of the
unconscious level of his creator. The dream metaphor which pervades the play
draws a lot from the fantasy element of the Cinderella motif of Pygmalion. But
in Heartbreak House the way Shaw manipulates the desires and wishes of his
characters shows that he is foreshadowing the concept of “magic realism” in
drama. Again the play has also the quality of a “fable.” The musicality of the
Shavian theatre vocabulary goes well with the technical aspects of a fable. Shaw
himself admitted that the play is a sort of national fable or a fable of nationalism.

“To the Chekhovism of the play Shaw has added his own poetic symbolism”
(157) — this realisation of Louis Crompton is perfectly in accordance with the
theatre language of Shaw in Heartbreak House.
The underlying musicality of the play originates from his experiences of his mother's operatic performances. Shaw very often emphasises that to understand his plays, the audience should have some foreknowledge of music. In fact, musicality and theatricality in Shaw can hardly be differentiated. Shaw utilises his operatic knowledge in framing dramatic scenes and dialogues, shaping them into overtures, arias, ensembles, and duets. He even incorporates operatic ideas to the mode of acting and seeks a rhetorical notation based on music. The final choric action of the characters seems to be in the process of performing an operatic drama. It is thus helpful in synchronising the entire dramatic situation in a harmonious whole. This is successfully followed by Harold Clurman, we have already mentioned, whose production of *Heartbreak House* was a success of the 1959-60 New York session.

Thus, we draw the conclusion that the extraordinary synchronization of the verbal and the non-verbal elevates the idiom of theatre to 'a miracle of rare device.' The brilliant but stylized use of poetic symbolism, effective use of light and sound leading to silence after the dramatization of the final disaster—all these are presented with extraordinary skill of a theatre craftsman. The external cosmic disaster and the internal turmoils of the heartbroken people are nicely intermingled with an anticipation of a new beginning.
Works Cited


