Application of Literary Theory with Reference to Psychoanalysis to
the Plays of George Bernard Shaw

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Literary theory in the modern literary scenario is an all pervasive influence. The happenings in this field of study have been versatile enough to keep the spirit going on with continued multifarious contributions. We are very familiar with trends, which show that the literary theory is part and parcel of the creation of new texts. This means that to probe the explication of the theory in new text may not be a challenging task. Literary theory creates an awareness of the variety and changing perspectives of interpretation, thereby creating a change in interpretative practices in the literary studies altogether.

We have famous critics of Shaw like Heskeih Pearson, Joseph MacCabe, Stenlay Weintraub, C.B. Purdom, HC Duffin and G.K. Chesterton to whom the scholars of Shavian literature are obliged for their valuable contributions to Shavian criticism. Nevertheless, even in the critiques of most of these critics we find that the approaches have been limited only to the well-defined ideological system dictated by Shaw himself. This is perhaps because Shaw has dominated each and every work related to him. The approach of the critics has been profound only up to the extent where Shavian forte has not been pirated. Then the enigma remains unsolved about the real George Bernard Shaw. The approaches towards the study of Shavian literature have been basically confined to the ideology of Shaw. This study will attempt to prove that there is a full scope for a scholar who wants to come out of this influence; i.e. to say, Shavian literature needs to be looked at in a new light. The
literary theory as already said can provide us with revitalized study in this connection. 

The proposed research considers it logical to dwell on George Bernard Shaw while conducting a study of the literary theory as a critical tool. This thesis takes up Freudian Psychoanalysis as a literary theory that focuses George Bernard Shaw.

To achieve the above mentioned analysis the research is arranged in the following manner:

First chapter deals with the Literary Theory in general and Psychoanalysis in particular vis-a-vis its background, major contributors and major theories. The study here leads to a detailed discussion of psychoanalysis highlighting its advent, basic concepts of Freudian psychoanalysis and Freudian psychoanalytic criticism.

In chapter two continuing from the chapter one, a detailed account of all other Psychoanalytic criticisms is taken up. This account deals with the Lacanian Psychoanalytic criticism and Post-Structural psychoanalytic criticism with insights to major critiques in these categories.

Chapter three analyzes in detail the component of Psychoanalytic criticism in light of modern drama in general and Shaw in particular. The chapter firstly takes up some modern European plays that have been associated by having it as a part of their thematic framework. After this a detailed analysis of Shaw's involvement with Psychoanalysis is taken up where the focus is on the fact that how one great thinker and playwright had his encounter with equally great philosopher and psychologist of his time. This analysis is based on a survey of various works of Shaw.

Chapter four presents Psychoanalytical analysis of *Man and Superman*. This analytical study is done through the application of basic Freudian principles of Psychoanalysis.

Chapter five deals with a psychoanalytical analysis of *Candida*. Here also the
basic Freudian principles of Psychoanalysis are taken up.

Chapter six provides the conclusions reached upon after the preceding chapters.

The methodology that has been taken in the present thesis is based on analytical modes. The sequence of steps in the wake of research has been like:

(i) Literature Survey

(ii) Preparation of Argument

(iii) Analysis of the Plays

Chapter division is as follows:

1. Psychoanalysis: A Literary Theory

2. Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism

3. Shaw and Psychoanalysis

4. Application of Psychoanalytic Theory to *Man and Superman*.

5. Application of Psychoanalytic Theory to *Candida*.

6. Conclusion