

# Raina Petkoff's Changing Attitudes towards Love: A Study of Her Defense Contrivance Based on Psychoanalytical Analysis

Farhana Haque

M.A, Department of English and Humanities, Brac University, Mohakhali, Dhaka, Bangladesh

**Abstract**— Raina has been portrayed as one of the major characters in the play *Arms and the Man* by George Bernard Shaw. Raina was fascinated towards love and gradually her sense of love got changed because of her psychological issue. In this paper i would like to exhibit the character Raina's mental condition through the psychoanalytical explanation of Sigmund Freud. To analyse *Arms and the Man*, most of the researchers used the psychoanalytical approach and qualitative method. Therefore the researchers did attempt to analysis the character of Raina after using the defense contrivance. In this way i have intended to analysis the psychological condition of Raina step by step. First of all the analysis will begin with Id, Ego, Superego, anxiety and at last her defense contrivance. George Bernard Shaw actually proved that in the attributes of Raina there were the presence of idea and reality and secondly the anxiety based on the conflicts between Id, Ego, Superego therefore this major and phenomenal character did generate defense contrivance regarding her changing attitudes towards love.

**Keywords**—Raina, Id, Ego, Superego, Defense contrivance, Psychoanalysis, Arms and the Man.

## I. INTRODUCTION

George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man* has been considered as a play which actually did deal with several political and social issues secretly. Idealism and romanticism has been depicted as one of the dominated issues through satire and even more importantly the issue of class has came forward. The play did criticise the ideal of the heroic and heroism of the war therefore It has been presented in the title which is *Arms and the Man*. George Bernard Shaw has explained about the matter of heroic and heroism in his preface to the play *Arms and the Man*. The title of this play basically was based on the first line of famous ancient epic *Aeneid* by Virgil. "I sing of *Arms and the Man*". But the thoughts, opinions, and feeling that expressed by Bernard Shaw were somehow the opposite of the lines by Virgil. In a true sense Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the*

*Man* was a satire in the practice of romanticism of war and reckless heroism in war. When this play was performed for the first time in Britain and that was the time of Britain's number of experiences regarding salient social and political changes and those changes were based on class issue which was become the national debate. In my paper my vital discussion will be upon the important and predominant character Raina Petkoff. As we have seen Bernard Shaw has started his play by showing the estate of Raina. In Raina's bedroom the romantic scenes were happened between her and Bluntschil. The conversation between them was totally centered on the opposite opinions about war. Raina used to think that hero should be like her fiancée, major Petkoff, who has served himself for his country to contribute in the war. On the other hands Bluntschli has his own opinion. He said that every country and the armies have to face the war for each others sake. Soon Raina realized that her ideologies related war was wrong and she preferred her *Chocolate Cream Soldier*. As she has turned his opinion about war therefore her opinion about love has also changed. This changing ideas of Raina actually compelled to analyse the conflict of love by using the psychoanalytical approach.

## The defense contrivance of Raina by using the psychoanalytic approach

The analysis of this paper will be based on Raina Petkoff's defense contrivance and its reflection in this play *Arms and the Man*. However the main concern of Rain's character was how the conflict of love has been viewed from the issue of Psychoanalytic Approach. play especially from the aspect of the Psychoanalysis. The activities of Raina's defense contrivance have been started from her first time love feelings. She became doubtful about Sergius whether he is the romantic hero she's looking for or not. As a result she did lie and convinced herself that Sergius is the one who will be suitable for her.

"I sometimes used to doubt whether they were anything but dreams. When I buckled on Sergius's sword he looked so noble: it was treason to think of

disillusion or humiliation or failure. And yet—and yet— (Quickly.) ( Act I, p.10 )

By these above lines it can be said that, Raina actually didn't feel confident either about her thoughts of Sergius and she was not feeling the certainty regarding her love towards Sergius. She then ignored this kind of thinking by engaging her mind with her beautiful imagination about Sergius and also she made a habit of reading romantic books. Raina's sense of changing love moved forward when Bluntschli did slip into her bedroom. He actually did run away and climbed into Raina's house. For making an enquiry about Bluntschli an officer went into her room and asked whether she saw an enemy soldier, and in answer she said lie to him and told that she saw no one in her room.

The officer :(with soft, feline politeness and stiff military carriage). Good evening, gracious lady; I am sorry to intrude, but there is a fugitive hiding on the balcony. Will you and the gracious lady your mother please to withdraw whilst we search? Raina: (petulantly). Nonsense, sir, you can see that there is no one on the balcony. (Act I, p.15)

For Bluntschli, this was the first soft corner of Raina in her heart. Therefore she did lie to the officer in order to keep Bluntschli safe. Again Raina did tell lies to her father when he asked what is happening in the library. There actually Bluntschli, Sergius, Raina and Louka were having a quite tensed and uncomfortable arguments. Furthermore, Bluntschli and Sergius were about to have a duel. On the other hands, Raina said to her father that nothing happened in the library for hiding the fight between Bluntschli and Sergius.

Petkoff : Excuse my shirtsleeves, gentlemen. Raina: somebody has been wearing that coat of mine: I'll swear it—somebody with bigger shoulders than mine. It's all burst open at the back. Your mother is mending it. I wish she'd make haste. I shall catch cold. (He looks more attentively at them.) Is anything the matter? Raina : No. (She sits down at the stove with a tranquil air. ( Act III, p. 68)

Finally Raina lied to Bluntschli and told that she doesn't belong to him to cover up her shame.

Raina : (pretending to sulk). The lady says that he can keep his tablecloths and his omnibuses. I am not here to be sold to the highest bidder. Bluntschli: I won't take that answer. I appealed to you as a fugitive, a beggar, and a starving man. You accepted me. You gave me your hand to kiss, your bed to sleep in, and your roof to shelter me— Raina: (interrupting him). I did not give them to the Emperor of Switzerland!(Act III, page 75)

#### **Raina's ideas about soldier and the war**

Raina was having the idea about war as like her father and Sergius before she did meet with Bluntschli. She thought that soldier is a man who can combat fearlessly with the enemy for saving his own country. She also got this oversimplified idea from the books she used to read.

Raina : Well, it came into my head just as he was holding me in his arms and looking into my eyes, that perhaps we only had our heroic ideas because we are so fond of reading Byron and Pushkin, and because we were so delighted with the opera that season at Bucharest. Real life is so seldom like that—indeed never, as far as I knew it then. (Remorsefully.) Only think, mother, I doubted him: I wondered whether all his heroic qualities and his soldiership might not prove mere imagination when he went into a real battle. I had an uneasy fear that he might cut a poor figure there beside all those clever Russian officers. ( Act I, p. 10 )

#### **Raina's pride regarding her family's wealth**

Raina was very proud about her family's wealth. As a soldier her father easily got his high rank in the army not because he was dedicated towards his job but because of his family who was known as the richest family in the town. As like Raina's father, she felt proud that she is a Petkoff, the most richest family in her town. In an arrogant way she said that she has a library in the house and also said that it is her family who has only this library in the house than other houses in the town.

Raina : Do you know what a library is? Man : A library? A roomful of books. Raina: Yes, we have one, the only one in Bulgaria. Man : Actually a real library! I should like to see that. Raina: (affectedly). I tell you these things to shew you that you are not in the house of ignorant country folk who would kill you the moment they saw your Servian uniform, but among civilized people. We go to Bucharest every year for the opera season; and I have spent a whole month in Vienna. ( Act I, p. 23)

#### **Raina's uneasy appearance regarding the issue of saving Bluntschli**

Raina got furious after Sergius did mock at her and did tease that she has saved an enemy soldier by keeping him in her room. But Sergius didn't know that the girl did talk was Raina. Raina also didn't able to tell him that she is the one who saved Bluntschli. In order to hide her uneasy appearance, she did mock at Sergius that his live in the camp has made him harsh.

“ Sergius : (with bitter irony). Oh, yes, quite a romance. He was serving in the very battery I so unprofessionally charged. Being a thorough soldier, he ran away like the rest of them, with our cavalry at his heels. To escape their attentions, he had the

good taste to take refuge in the chamber of some patriotic young Bulgarian lady. The young lady was enchanted by his persuasive commercial traveller's manners. She very modestly entertained him for an hour or so and then called in her mother lest her conduct should appear unmaidenly. The old lady was equally fascinated; and the fugitive was sent on his way in the morning, disguised in an old coat belonging to the master of the house, who was away at the war. Raina : (rising with marked stateliness). Your life in the camp has made you coarse, Sergius. I did not think you would have repeated such a story before me". (She turns away coldly.) ( Act II, p. 35 )

Raina was feeling angry when her mother also talked about the girl that saved an enemy soldier during the war. After hearing that she was avoiding this topic because she doesn't want her father and her fiancé to know that she is the one who has saved that enemy soldier.

"Bluntchli : Then Sergius and Petkoff continue discussed about this topic. Unable to prevent her fear that her father and fiancé will soon cover up that she is the girl talking about, she projects her feeling to her mother by mocking her that she is —little beastl. Catherine : Imagine their meeting that Swiss and hearing the whole story! The very first thing your father asked for was the old coat we sent him off in. A nice mess you have got us into! Raina : (gazing thoughtfully at the gravel as she walks). The little beast! Catherine : Little beast! What little beast" ? ( Act II, p. 42 )

#### **Raina's feelings of guilt about the lies she told for Bluntschil**

Raina felt herself as a guilty person when she said lie to the officer that she did him in her room. She didn't able to stay calm as she did lie twice during her life and remarked that it is so hard for a girl to say some lies.

" Raina : Gratitude! (Turning on him.) If you are incapable of gratitude you are incapable of any noble sentiment. Even animals are grateful. Oh, I see now exactly what you think of me! You were not surprised to hear me lie. To you it was something I probably did every day— every hour. That is how men think of women". (She walks up the room melodramatically.) ( Act III, p. 54 )

After that Raina got angry towards Bluntschli when he did mock at her that she cannot be a person to believe.

" Bluntschil : (dubiously). There's reason in everything. You said you'd told only two lies in your whole life. Dear young lady: isn't that rather a short allowance? I'm quite a straightforward man myself; but it wouldn't last me a whole morning. straightforward man myself; but it wouldn't last me a

whole morning. Raina : (staring haughtily at him). Do you know, sir, that you are insulting m" ?( Act III, p. 54 )

#### **Raina's anger towards Sergius**

In the time of Sergius's visit to Raina, she saw him teasing Louka, who was her maid. From the window she saw that scene and became very angry to Sergius but she had stopped her anger somehow. And she did lurk this scene about seeing Sergius and Louka where she felt Sergius did cheat with her. But she just asked that whether he was doing flirt with Louka or not then Sergius said that he didn't. As Raina didn't want to do any kind of fight with Sergius as they were separated for a long time. Hence she did behave romantically to Sergius instead of arguing related the issue of Louka.

" Raina : I'm ready! What's the matter? (Gaily.) Have you been flirting with Louka? Sergius : (hastily). No, no. How can you think such a thing? Raina : (ashamed of herself). Forgive me, dear: it was only a jest. I am so happy to-day". ( Act II, p.41)

" Raina : Who then? (Suddenly guessing the truth.) Ah, Louka! my maid, my servant! You were with her this morning all that time after—after—Oh, what sort of god is this I have been worshipping! (He meets her gaze with sardonic enjoyment of her disenchantment. Angered all the more, she goes closer to him, and says, in a lower, intenser tone) Do you know that I looked out of the window as I went upstairs, to have another sight of my hero; and I saw something that I did not understand then. I know now that you were making love to her. Sergius : (with grim humor). You saw that? Raina : Only too well". (She turns away, and throws herself on the divan under the centre window, quite overcome.) (Act III, p.65 )

Finally Raina didn't able to resist herself from telling about the incident between Sergius and Louka. Therefore she told him everything that she saw Sergius flirting with Louka.

## **II. CONCLUSION**

Raina Petkoff, has been considered as the female main character in this play who had the stereotype idea about war and hero. She basically got this type of idea from her father, her fiancé Sergius and also from the books she used to read. In the Petkoff family Raina was the only favourite to her father. Moreover she did act like her father's puppet. Raina's conflicts between her Id, Ego, Superego, and her disappointment towards Sergius made her to re-arrange her own opinions. As a dramatic person in the play she has experienced a characteristic change regarding her sense of love. After meeting with Bluntschil, Raina Petkoff's stereotype concepts of war

and hero became changed. After observing the above discussion it has been proclaimed that the characteristic change of Raina Petkoff is the main theme where we can see the evidence are the connection between the elements of structure and the psychoanalytical elements of the play.

#### **REFERENCES**

- [1] Bernard Shaw, *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 5th ed., edited by M.H Abrams, Vol. 2, W.W. Norton, 1986, pp.1759-62.
- [2] Study Guide, written and researched by Jim Mc Nabb , Canada, p.5,2003.
- [3] Ward, A.C, *Arms and the Man*, with an Introduction and notes pp. 88-89, Orient Longman , Chennai, 1954.
- [4] Wells, H.G.: *The Way the World Is Going*, New York, 1928. Chapter xxviii.