

# Beyond Gender Division: The Militarization of Feminism in George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*

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## ABSTRACT

Generally, feminist studies show significant associations between patriarchy, militarization, and gender inequality. Historically, males control and marginalization of women from positions of power are remarkable. The inequality between women and men in any field and women's integration in the military, in particular, have always brought tensions to the surface, especially in a male-dominated society. The current study tackles George Shaw's *Saint Joan* (1923), which illustrates a new heroine of different levels and circumstances to embody the Great Man's Theory of Leadership. The play refers to the military ethics of women and how this military superiority of women can cause hatred towards them. The play investigates the problematic analysis of the military and masculine New Woman by determining Shaw's representation of a woman who was burned for attempting to "be more like a man". This new woman is primarily concerned with achieving her freedom and asserting her individuality, rebellion, and leadership. Therefore, this paper aims to analyze the characteristic masculine traits of a self-sufficient heroine in English drama. Finally, the outcome of the notion of the New Woman is highlighted and considered a call to bring attention to social and gender abuses.

**Keywords:** *Gender inequality; Great Man Theory of leadership; male-dominated; militarization; masculine characteristic; patriarchy.*

ما بعد التقسيم الجندي: عسكرة النسوة في مسرحية جورج برناردشو القديسة جوان.

## المستخلص:

أظهرت الدراسات النسوية بشكل عام ارتباطات مهمة بين النظام الأبوي والعسكرة وعدم المساواة بين الجنسين. تاريخياً، كان سيطرة الذكور وتهميش النساء من مواقع السلطة أمراً لافتاً للنظر. لطالما جلبت قضية عدم المساواة بين المرأة والرجل في أي مجال وإدماج المرأة في الجيش، على وجه الخصوص، التوترات إلى السطح، لا سيما في مجتمع يهيمن عليه الذكور. تتناول الدراسة الحالية مسرحية القديسة جوان لجورج شو (1923) والذي يوضح فيها بطلة جديدة بمستوى وظروف مختلفة لتجسيد نظرية الرجل العظيم للقيادة. المسرحية تشير إلى الأخلاق العسكرية للمرأة وكيف يمكن لهذا التفوق العسكري للمرأة أن يسبب العداء لها. حيث تبحث المسرحية في التحليل الإشكالي للجيش والمرأة الجديدة الذكورية من خلال تقديم شو لامرأة أحرقت فقط لمحاولتها "أن تكون مثل الرجل". حيث تهتم هذه المرأة الجديدة في المقام الأول بتحقيق حريتها وتأكيد فرديتها وتمردتها وقيادتها. لذلك فإن الهدف من هذه الورقة هو تحليل السمات المميزة الذكورية لبطلة مكتفية ذاتياً في الدراما الإنجليزية. أخيراً، تم تسليط الضوء على نتيجة مفهوم المرأة الجديدة وأخذها في الاعتبار كدعوة للفت الانتباه إلى الانتهاكات الاجتماعية والجنسانية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** عدم المساواة بين الجنسين، نظرية الرجل العظيم للقيادة، هيمنة الذكور، العسكرة، السمة الذكورية، والذكورة.

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## INTRODUCTORY BACKGROUND

Before tackling this research, it is necessary to first elaborate on the social and political backdrops on which the new military woman grows up within a male-dominated community. Gender inequality is highlighted with regard to physical, military, and intellectual traits since women are perceived to be inferior to men in all of these aspects. Thus, to keep her status according to gender characteristics and the stereotypical Victorian woman, she has to be dependent, submissive, and obedient. They should stay at the house to cultivate the children without any equity to learn; they deserve contempt and independence. Along with being physically weak, they lacked awareness, courage, and strength of character and thus needed a man's protection. Consequently, she was seen as ineffective in achieving any intellectual or military achievement. Rosemarie Tong deplors the fact that women have been recognised as weak creatures and have always been compelled to be caring and nurturing. Women's inferior spiritual and social position is a result of their relation to nature and sensuality, whereas males are dedicated to authority and reason.

Victorian men's attitudes towards women were not exclusive to the Victorian era; this attitude originated in previous ages. Historically, the issue of conflict between the genders dates back to ancient Greek philosophy. Aristotle, for instance, accepted that nature consistently went for flawlessness, yet continued to contend that a female was just a second-rate, deficient form of man, who was displayed as the perfect order of nature's goal. Certainly, the women were under tremendous pressure to return to their ancient traditions the role of mothers and housewives, entirely devoted to their children and dependents on their husbands, and to promote the idea that women should be happy to wash dishes and prepare meals, cleaning the house, and being the perfect woman.

Obviously, women's plight has not changed for centuries since all political and cultural systems define women as inferior creatures. However, at the end of the nineteenth century, calls began for changing and improving the position of women in different customs in education, politics, and law. Thus, the world witnessed great development, leading to a definite transformation of women's ideas about themselves. So women started manifesting themselves and their needs in a movement called feminism. It is usually expressed as an indication of inclusiveness, dedication to equality, and liberal politics. Women's demands for social changes and the equivalent rights of self-articulation and independence were the start of women's gender awareness. Females strived to destroy the political, social, and legal requirements imposed by men on them. They occupied the role of the protagonist, who set a different trend by challenging male authorization and attempting to reconstruct the system founded by men.

Mary Wollstonecraft's (1792) "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" was the earliest spark that raised the woman's questions about her being emancipated and self-supporting, ultimately leading to the birth of the New Woman. This woman discards traditional femininity, encourages women to liberate themselves from the servitude of physical beauty into the uplifting realm of reason, and suggests an effective contribution in life. Wollstonecraft sets out a "prototype of a non-gendered identity that represents thinking and activities in which the body and its sex are transcended in order to reach beyond women's objectification and the idea that female ideals, conservatively defined by sexual submission, acceptance of intellectual inferiority, and flimsy receptivity, were distinct from male ones" (p. 154). Wollstonecraft argues that gender exists not only in the body but also in the mind, heart, and spirit. As Janet Todd elucidates with a quote from Denise Riley: "Wollstonecraft is denying that there is an essential difference between the two sexes and trying to point out that gender, if taken as definitive of personal and social identity, is a prison: Can anyone fully inhabit a gender without a degree of horror? (Riley 6; Todd 186).

Therefore, as a result of increasing oppression, women reject traditional femininity and achieve their strength by affirming their masculine qualities to break gender roles. So the term "New Woman" was given to the first group of women whose horizons and skills were expanded, breaking the cultural stereotype of what a woman should be. Furthermore, this concept believes that these new women are not limited to household and pleasure roles. Accordingly, these women with flexible personalities were unseemly to stay contained in the narrow portions of a patriarchal society. Thus, this "New Woman" continues to exceed the thresholds set by male-dominated organisations, including their rights to higher education, employment, property, and voting. In addition, the concept of the New Woman reflected a deviation from a self-sacrificing old woman character into a New Woman who exerted control over their own lives, whether economic, personal, or social.

## GREAT MAN THEORY OF LEADERSHIP

**"No great man lives in vain. The history of the world is but the biography of great men" - Thomas Carlyle**

One of the most complicated and multidimensional phenomena is leadership. A cross-cultural variety of cultural traditions contributes to emerging leadership traits. It can be defined as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (Northouse, 2018, p. 43). It has been intensively investigated over

the years, and in today's rapidly and constantly globalized society, it is more essential than ever. The Great Theory was constructed on the assumption that specific people had distinct inherent qualities. Thus, it was based on the belief that leaders are exceptional individuals born with innate qualities and predestined to lead. Goldstein exposes that "culturally constructed gender identities enable war. Masculinity is associated with qualities that make good warriors. Appeals to masculine identity help to overcome men's reluctance to go to war and help produce a functioning army".

Therefore, the Great Man Theory was viewed as the most prevalent theory of documenting leadership well into the mid-20th century. This theory flourished on the idea that the impact of powerful leading figures can illustrate most historical events. These leaders frequently emerged out of nowhere to ascend to power and guide their people to glory, and their "greatness was often derived from military leadership". Therefore, the theory of leadership indicates "that some people are born with the necessary attributes that set them apart from others and that these traits are responsible for their assuming positions of power and authority, particularly describing the influential role of prominent names such as Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, and Abraham Lincoln".

Thus, some critics referred to leadership as "the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, or the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish a shared objective" (Yukl, 2013, p. 54). Moreover, the leader is considered a "hero who accomplishes goals against all odds for his followers". In addition, leadership is derived from "the innate characteristics a person is born with. Traits are left undefined and often attributed to divine inspiration or military power. The success of these leaders is based on the traits they are born with, which can be physical and behavioural and therefore cannot be developed" (Owen, 1999, p. 76).

Furthermore, leadership theory focuses on the features and behaviours people can adopt to increase their leadership capabilities. Some of the fundamental traits that leaders state is paramount to good leadership are strong ethics and high moral standards. "To the extent that leaders emerge from previously amorphous crowds, ephemeral and unreflective actions give way to more stable and permanent forms of organization." The leaders of emerging social movements or religious organizations impose social control on the previously unstructured collective behaviour of the crowd, thereby transforming it into an audience" (Cosser, 1971, p. 362).

Moreover, the strategies through which a leader may influence, lead, and affect the actions and behaviour of others in order to achieve certain goals in a given condition are known as leadership strategies. "Leaders and followers do not act in a vacuum. They are propelled, constrained, and buffeted by their environment. An effective leader must understand the nature of the leadership context and how it affects the leadership process. Only then can he or she operate effectively in seeking to achieve the group's objectives" (Wren, 1995, p. 243).

A leader's power to motivate enthusiasm and confidence in those around them is known as leadership. Leadership, on the other hand, is the capacity to influence the behaviour of others. It can be defined as being capable of influencing a group to collaborate towards a common goal. Future goals must be generated by leaders, who must also inspire colleagues to strive to achieve them. Keith Davis defines leadership as "the ability to persuade others to seek defined objectives enthusiastically. It is the human factor that groups people together and motivates them towards goals" (Rost, 1993, p. 32).

Furthermore, leadership is a technique by which a leader may lead, instruct, and encourage the conduct and contributions of others so as to achieve established objectives in a specific situation and environment. A leader may inspire confidence and determination in his soldiers. The Great Man Theory of Leadership is based on the concept of leadership figures' influence. These leaders frequently appeared to ascend to power and lead their people to glory, and their greatness was often drawn from their military leadership. While they were unjustly sure of what attributes led to their success, historians of the past ascribed leadership to something intrinsic in great men, thereby establishing the theory. Long until the mid-twentieth century, the Great Man Theory reigned supreme as the most popular theory of leadership, apparently explaining the power of huge names like Abraham Lincoln, Julius Caesar, and Alexander the Great. Leadership has the potential to influence the behaviour of others. It is also defined as the capacity to influence a group towards realizing a goal. Leaders are required to develop future visions and motivate the organizational members to want to achieve them.

In his preface, Shaw utilizes the term "leadership" to define Joan as a leader. Joan as a genius figure is one of the most complicated philosophies emphasized by Shaw. He effectively refutes the claim that Joan was a lunatic. Joan ascribed everything she did to the wise guidance of her "voices" as she identified them as the voices of Margaret, Michael, and Saint Catherine during her trial. Shaw asserts that she had a visionary mind, but not a deficient or hallucinatory one. Her policy was also quite sound: nobody disputes that the relief of Orleans, followed up by the coronation at Rheims of the Dauphin as a counterblow to the suspicions then current of his legitimacy and consequently of his title, were

military and political masterstrokes that saved France. Napoleon or any other illusion might have planned them as proof of genius. (Shaw, 2000, p.7)

Genius is an inherent and central characteristic of Joan, according to Shaw's perspective. It is a vital and prominent element of her leadership; it is an aspect of her humanity, which is always depicted in representations of her as a mystical character. A genius is someone who, through seeing further and delving deeper than others, has a distinct set of ethical evaluations from others and who has the energy to put this extra vision and its values into action in whichever way best suits his or her special talents. "A saint is one who, having practiced heroic virtues and enjoyed revelations or powers of the order which the Church classified technically as supernatural, is eligible for canonization" (Shaw, 2000, p. 8).

Shaw confirms Joan's disastrous fate since her attempt to prove her ability to transcend men's leadership traits and that this excess leader endeavour will bring her down. Indeed, Shaw presents Saint Joan as a protagonist who exemplifies the influential features of a leader, but her misfortune causes her destructive fate. Among the most prominent attributes of Joan's "leadership" is her capacity to accomplish the goal she demands and to focus on it with incredible intensity. Therefore, this is one of the most crucial aspects of her military superiority. Her primary attention was on retaking Orleans and reviving the enthusiasm of the French forces, but she was also effective in instilling (or re-installing) her objectives in the hearts of all the French nobility, military leaders, and ordinary men with whom she had profound contact.

### NEW WOMAN AND MILITARISM

Feminist prospects and conventional military values are often perceived as confronting a zero-sum game. Thus, war is perceived as the male's domain par excellence. In general, efforts to increase women's military effectiveness are perceived as a step backward for women's rights due to the traditional patriarchal system in which the logic of violence and war prevails. Gender abuse and inequality are highlighted in relation to physical, military, and intellectual traits since women were regarded as inferior to men in all these respects. Shaw presented Joan to the audience as a paragon of national and rational thought. She was labelled a witch due to her choice to break free of the gender dominion of her era.

Although fighting and the military are considered men's professions all over the world, women have become a competition for them and have proven their ability to fight and lead. For women, it is unwise to overlook a large and influential institution like the military to promote self-assertion. Furthermore, militarism frames much more than just armed troops for political and military activities. Military values and militarist ideology have numerous impacts on the construction of narrow definitions of masculine and feminine characteristics. An alternative culture should overhaul this narrow-mindedness without separate, rigid gender roles. Dictatorship against women remains a focal issue. Therefore, addressing the intersections between patriarchal militarism and gender is essential for feminists to achieve their goals. Historically, women's "most pressing" issues in their patriarchal society have been put off by making women's physical and mental capacities an essential part of opposing militarism against them.

The militarism gender analysis is significant in defying the fundamental perspective of male militarism. Instead, masculinity features are considered the fundamental core of militarism, which is defined as "the result of the process of militarization in which military values, ideology, and patterns of behaviour achieve a dominating influence on the political, social, economic, and external affairs of the state, and as a consequence, the structural, ideological, and behavioural patterns of both society and the government are militarized." Thus, the power ideology influencing governments with various political objectives and their effects can develop into different aspects of social structure.

Furthermore, male military ideologies encourage dominant gender stereotypes that are utilized to oppress and marginalize women. Thus, military construction must question and confront the core foundations of gender oppression. According to Cynthia Enloe, a specialist on gender and militarism, female subjugation is recognized as an essential aspect of male militarist doctrine. Obviously, militarism is extremely attached to organizations of masculinity, which consider that "omitting gender from any explanation of how militarization occurs is not only to risk a flawed political analysis; it is to risk, too, a perpetually unsuccessful campaign to roll back that militarism" (Dziak, 2019, p. 94).

The imposing of rigorous conceptions of gender roles is the main part of the ideological manifestations of the masculine military. Therefore, these conceptions are continually used to justify discrimination beliefs from generation to generation. Essentially, it can be said that disregarding human values is the origin of discrimination and violence in any culture. Gender classifications are social interactions and cultural characteristics connected with the male and female biological sexes. In this regard, sex is biological, but gender is sociological. These gender qualities are

frequently articulated as binary oppositions (active/passive; logical/intuitive; rational/irrational, etc.) and are reinforced by many regulations in a masculine culture. They are by no means adopted by all men since many resist these militaristic roles of women as restrictive behaviour.

The stereotype of the military that builds a soldier out of a boy is a common one. A soldier who exclusively values stereotypically masculine features is a man of dominance, submission, and aggression against women. Even in communities that do not support being militarized, armed organizations play a "special role in the ideological structure of patriarchy because the notion of combat plays such a central role in the construction of concepts of 'manhood' and justifications of the superiority of maleness in the social order". Thus, the aggressive socialization of men's characteristics of militaristic masculinity is in direct opposition to the socialization of women: "There should be someone on the bottom (women) in a hierarchical construction of submission and domination in the patriarchal system".

Consequently, the military and the patriarchal system insist that feminine features are in opposition to masculine and military identities. Thus, the real soldiers are powerful, courageous, and aggressive men, while women are the opposite: incompetent, submissive, and in need of protection. So this confirms the masculine soldier's dominion idea: "Focusing on motherhood and nurturing as the primary traits of women actually reinforces the military ideology, which requires women to be submissive and rewards men for being aggressive" (Bennis, 2009, p. 67). The legend of the masculinity of war is based on the patriarchal assumption that women need protection. This distinction is quite apparent in the military's aggressive ethos since the military mind rejects equality with women because it is based on self-denial. Thus, as boys mature into men and soldiers, they accept the conventional attitudes of women's submission. "These ideas become deeply ingrained, and society accepts that it is just natural that boys are aggressive and girls are passive, and gender-specific roles are considered common sense in much the same way that militarism itself is".

Throughout all circumstances, women remain the main members of communities as mothers, teachers, and militaria. Thus, women face a difficult perspective on war and male aggression established by biological aspects, economic, social, and political constructions. It is also connected to the societal inequalities between men and women as well as their distinct connections with the military, especially in times of war. In most cases, women are the only victims of political subordination and exclusion. The masculine authority used to exclude women from authority and decision-making positions because it was more critical of their values and attitudes.

Women achieved distinct interests with militarism's reinforcement within themselves, yet gender designations constrain their lives and encourage their marginalization. Still, militarism and war can be men's affairs, but women have undeniably succeeded in them. While the conventional controversies of militarism and war constrain women's distinctive experiences, the gender analysis reinforces the existing women's militarism. The associations between oppression and institutional violence, such as militarism and patriarchy, are intrinsically linked to gender oppression and violence. Furthermore, although a gender analysis investigates the powerful connections between patriarchy and militarism, it also permits women to identify the main reasons for their oppression and generate the interactions between interrelated institutional ways of oppression.

Without a radical change in the social system, any gains made by women at the personal or local level would be incomplete. Hence, women must act with determination at all levels to achieve their goals. To achieve this, society as a whole need to evolve from a patriarchal military culture to a culture of peace. Women need to keep trying to collaborate, refusing to be silenced, and acknowledging that all world issues of peace and justice are essential to women's rights and freedom. The rebellious woman is one who recognises her status in the patriarchal system. She is not simply influenced by manly ego and authority. She fights back against the inhumane abuse she has experienced from the male community. In this framework, the rebellious woman is depicted in two ways: as bold and as courageous. It is clear that the struggle against patriarchy and militarism is not an easy or simple task. However, change occurs at all levels through identifying dilemmas and re-educating society. Therefore, confrontation is the key, and women can advance in it to be "cooperative rather than competitive, assertive rather than aggressive" (Burns, 2003, p. 37).

Numerous of these beliefs are profoundly ingrained in all patriarchies. Societies need to educate their male members to recognize women as equals to them, not as vulnerable individuals who need protection. Changing this negative socialization is a daunting responsibility, but still, it is hopeful of identifying gender stereotype processes and passing their values and behaviours from generation to generation. It is an important duty to create change and shatter these "dichotomies of proper masculine and feminine behaviour and attitudes. Positive characteristics of conciliation and cooperation should be encouraged in everyone. By emphasizing that all emotions and traits are human and not gendered, we can free women to be strong without being "unnatural" and men to show softer emotions without being accused of being less than men (Fiedler & Chemers, 1974, p. 34).

The position of women has not changed for centuries. Throughout history, all political and cultural systems have defined women as inferior and weak creatures. Yet, throughout the nineteenth century, a large category of authors behaved against the prejudices of women. Shaw presents a new drama (the intellectual and discussion drama) as a drama of unrestricted discussion of social, political, and philosophical subjects. Shaw illustrates new heroines of different levels and circumstances in his intellectual drama to embody his concept of the New Woman. This concept primarily concerns achieving her freedom, asserting her individuality, rebellion, and military leadership. Shaw apprehends his difficult and sublime mission of defending women and performing them in the drama of the Victorian age. Shaw's drama represents the highly intellectual opportunity that has adopted theatre as a social authority to modify and substitute existing social structures and traditions. *Saint Joan* is a disputable play that sheds light on various social issues of the Victorian time and is filled in as an analysis of the brutal male-centric belief system that deliberate women are perceived as vulnerable creatures and that they are always obligated to nurture others. On many occasions in the play, Shaw denounces the traditional view of women.

### **THE SOLDIERING WOMAN AND GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN *SAINTE JOAN*.**

Shaw's passion for improving humanity supports his idea that the place of women should not be restrained to the domestic sphere. In *Saint Joan*, Shaw reveals how women, in their struggle to combat the persecution of males throughout history, have reached a level of authority and independence used to control their gender. The military woman is the evolving female version of human society and is a suitable candidate for the maintenance of Shaw's concept of the New Woman and to promote a better evolution of humans into intellectually advanced beings.

Female depiction as a warrior is a universal theme in different cultures and civilizations. In Shaw's *Saint Joan* (1923), a gender study of militarization is crucial. Therefore, the play is an analysis of the effects of militarism on women's characters, revealing that women are obsessed with militarism and warfare. The interrelationship between militarism and gender has been long recognized as the source of violence against women. It is a significant and relevant theme in Shaw's plays because it works as a symbol and figurehead for nationalism. Joan, as an active national heroine, has faced difficulties in her quest for equality and a fair society in which both males and females are empowered.

*Saint Joan* narrates the story of a French woman who led the army and resisted the British colonisers during the 15th century. In fact, many critics assumed that this female heroine embodies the image of the New Woman and Great Man theory concept since she breaks with the patriarchal laws and "has a non-conformist mind that thinks outside the mediaeval box" (Sternlicht, 26). Joan is a poor country girl without any political influence, physical power, or social status. Yet, she converted into a preeminent historical figure and a national symbol, which is a staple in great man theory. Therefore, *Saint Joan* formulates a strategy of deconstructing feminism and shaping it into a fight since she is determined not to show any "feminine deficiency" traits like sympathy and weakness or fail contrary to the basic male laws in the military. Feminists are faced with patriarchal ideology and a social structure that fulfils a justification for institutionalized discrimination towards women. The concentration on feminine qualities predisposes women to inferiority while also promoting an erroneous generalization about female nature.

During the Victorian era, militaristic institutions were based on patriarchal oppression and inextricably associated with the church. In the middle ages, despite the supremacy and domination of the churchmen, Joan was deemed a revolutionary heroine. She resists and revolts to attain equality with men and challenge the authoritarian rule of Catholic clergymen. Joan grants a voice to women in persecuted and humiliated cultures. She is trying to heal the dilemma of the marginalization of women, especially in Victorian society. Gender inequality and militarization are significantly associated with controlling regime types. As long as patriarchal and military institutions dominate societies, there will be no justice. Therefore, feminists have an opportunity and common aims to break down the social conversion and recognize the connections between institutional and religious oppression against them. "By examining militarism's role in socializing people to accept violence as natural and patriarchy as normal, we see, too, that gender systems of domination and subordination are not fixed but, rather, are constructed through socialization and perpetuated through unjust political and economic structures". Therefore, the women in Shaw's works were presented as bold, strong, assertive, and independent leaders who did not depend on or were submissive to men.

It is obvious that the new woman concept is shown in many literary works by Shaw, as heroines were non-conforming to the moral and social norms of patriarchy. These new women were conscripted into Shaw's plays, abandoning their conventional images of dutiful girls and submissive mothers confined to the domestic sphere. *Saint Joan* represents the revolutionary contrasted picture of the Victorian woman and her status in a restricted environment. Her execution was an inevitable result of her portrayal of a woman who dropped the role of a submissive Victorian woman and became a militarist. Since then, the social situation of women has been restricted rigidly to social traditions, religion, and political orders.

Downtrodden femininity's social and physical criteria of Joan's time prevented her from fighting and displaying her special strength and devotion. Shaw introduced Joan as a sort of woman who wants to lead a man's life, which ultimately drives her to her tragic downfall. In fact, she is a woman of action; she rejects female romanticism. Shaw regards her as a wise and intelligent country girl with extraordinary strength of mind and confidence. Her courage and devotion fully value her success. Shaw's interpretation of her mystical mission is linked to her inner awareness and faith. Joan is a courageous and self-sacrificing figure; she dedicates her life to what she believes. Joan's fight is not for the sake of the king, the church, an aristocratic class, or even for herself. She is a symbol of revolution and reformation for the poor people of her country. She is "the Madonna reborn—a woman of God dictated by the patriarchal hierarchy who holds no power of her own.

The play is a depiction of women's struggle to attain a respectable status in military institutions and to demonstrate that they are rightfully equal to men. Therefore, women had to adopt masculine features to break the gender limitations and achieve intellectual and spiritual success. As a reaction to the increasing oppression and development that the world witnessed, women started expressing themselves exactly like men. To attract the audience's sense of political equality, Shaw emphasizes the assumption that men and women share the same political ideology. Shaw educated the audience: "By transgressing the standards of the patriarchal system, Joan sets the premises of feminism and women's awakening, which will flourish during the twentieth century. Essentially, Shaw illustrates how Joan's evolution as a woman holds its course in the play; she is regarded as nobody and rejected. Yet she revolts and insists on being respectful and accepted. Saint Joan represented an attack against the church and the priestly class of organizations. The play is contemplated as an attack on the church and the priestly class. Shaw repudiates the church's intermediary statues and the priestly community's divine affiliation.

The play narrates the story of the French exploitation of Joan's distinguished leadership in her war against the English forces and the consequent rejection of her by accusing her of being a conjectured heretic. Joan is displayed in the early scenes as a vigorously determined country girl with a strong sense of duty towards her divine mission. Through her enthusiastically denounced enthusiasm, she gradually acquired the confidence of the French soldiers against the English troops. Finally, Joan is captured by the English, who return her to the court of the Inquisition and trial her as a witch. Furthermore, it should be remarked that the play's heroine belongs to mediaeval times, yet she demonstrates Shaw's feminist and reformist beliefs and implements the image of the New Woman. In the corresponding context, the heroine defies religious authority with her manly attitude, since it is forbidden for females to locate themselves as equal to males.

Shaw represents Joan of Arc as a prominent historical character who symbolizes a powerful nationalist heroine for France. She helped free the land of France from the English armies in the fifteenth century. These leaders emerge to power and lead their nations to glory, where their eminence is typically derived from their military leadership. She declares that she has obeyed only the voice of God, who speaks to her privately. Therefore, she refuses to submit to the authority of princes and priests when they want her to behave contrary to what she believes God has told her. When Joan met Sir Robert for the first time to explain to him her holy mission, he shouted, "It is the will of God that I shall send you back to your father with orders to put you under lock and key and thrash the madness out of you (Shaw, 2000, p. 56). This speech reveals the absolute control of men and the lack of power of women in that period. They must be servants in their father's houses and then in their husbands' houses after marriage.

Joan aims to separate herself from the female gender. Even she used to wear men's clothes. Many men ridicule her, as the Archbishop insults her appearance in the second scene: "This creature is not a saint; she is not even a respectable woman. She does not wear women's clothes" (Shaw, 2000, p. 57). In his preface to Saint Joan, Shaw says: "To understand Joan's history, it is not enough to understand her character; you must understand her environment as well". In fact, the light, skillful touches of the dramatist Their belief in witchcraft further stressed the cruelty and superstitions of the mediaeval atmosphere. Shaw asserts that Joan became an exceptional threat to the political forces of England, represented by Warwick, and the religious forces of France, represented by Cauchon. They are willing to get rid of her under the accusation of heresy and witchcraft to hide their real motives for domination. During her imprisonment, Joan became a symbol of all future National Liberation Fronts. She addresses her enemies and accusers, saying:

**Joan:** I will go out now to the common people, and let the love in their eyes comfort me for the hate in yours. You will all be glad to see me burnt, but if I go through the fire I shall go through it to their hearts forever and ever. (Shaw, 2000, p.112)

Shaw highlights the issue of the evil nature of the church's people. Joan is accused of being a heretic and burned like many other women in her era. She is apparently fighting alone for her life against the most powerful force in her world. Joan's enemies are afraid that she will break up the unity of the military institution and destroy their personal and spiritual power in Europe by encouraging the people to unite their nations. Joan has represented one person while

the church priests have all civilized Europe against her spiritual charge. They believed that if they released Joan, thousands like her would spring up, and the church's authority would be destroyed. In this play, the most obvious truth is that the conflict between Joan of Arc and the Christian Church is represented by the conflict between nationalist judgement and corrupted authority. For this reason, the political leaders become threatened because their authority is in danger. Quite unconsciously, through her unquestioning devotion to religion and nationalism, she becomes a martyr (Edwards, 1984, p. 76).

**The Archbishop:** Women: they will drag you through the streets, and burn you as a witch. **Joan:** I am a witch.

**The Archbishop:** Peter Cauchon knows his business. The University of Parise has burnt a woman for saying that what you have done was well done, and according to God. (Shaw, 2000. P.28)

Shaw depicts the archbishop as a man of hypocrisy. Saint Joan provides a critical view of the church's role in English society at that time. The play portrays a powerful expression of hypocrisy and pretension inherent in the institution of the church. Shaw was entirely against the strict doctrines of the church. Joan is affirming her firm faith, still declaring herself a faithful daughter of the church, and she cannot live without a free life. She opposes the church's authority and refuses to accept the established religious rules. She considers her personal judgement to be higher than the church's authority. Therefore, she is burned on the charge of heresy and witchcraft, considering her dangerous to all the church institutions.

Through the rebellious character of Joan of Arc, Shaw creates her as a vehicle to embody his philosophy of the life force. He described her as a "manly woman". She stubbornly repudiates sentimentality, prudishness, and hypocrisy around her. In her character, Shaw embodies all the qualities of unwomanly heroines. Joan is asserting her individuality and refusing the stale conventions of her environment. Indeed, Shaw's Saint Joan was formed during the fifteenth century, yet the play proved that she was an archetype of this concept since the heroine challenged the patriarchal and religious rules of the mediaeval age. Consequently, she doesn't subject herself to the will and authority of men. Still, she was condemned to execution because she transgressed the rigid laws of her manly society. (Jain, 2006, p. 26).

Joan was prevented from physically fighting with men just because she is a woman: "She is a woman of God dictated by the patriarchal hierarchy who holds no power of her own" (McCall, 2011, p. 86). Joan depicted oppositional models of female identity. Shaw portrays her as a figurehead for the soldiers. Joan symbolizes the values in which "the body and its sex are transcended in order to reach beyond women's objectification and the idea that female ideals, conservatively defined by sexual submission, acceptance of intellectual inferiority, and flimsy receptivity, and which were distinct from male ones, were defined in absolutely opposed terms" (McCall, p. 45).

From the beginning, Joan's description states her masculinity. Despite her weak physical appearance, Joan demands to be a soldier and join in the battle as an equal to a man. Her unique behaviour mirrors her rebellious character. Shaw depicts her as "an able-bodied country girl of 17 or 18 [...] with an uncommon face, eyes wide apart and bulging as they often do in very imaginative people" (Shaw, 2000, p. 52). Shaw's portrayal of the heroine's male traits supports her defiant attitude in facing traditional viewpoints on gender roles. Consequently, Joan's characteristics correspond to those of males, as Warner affirms she has "a boyish stance, cropped hair, medievalized clothes, and armour (Shaw, 2000, p.36). Adjectives like "eager, rough, strong, and bright" are associated with Joan's personality. Joan's body endured the atrocities of the fight; she was wounded several times, yet she did not retreat. The chaplain said that she "had her throat pierced by an English arrow and was seen to cry like a child from the pain of it. It was a death wound, yet she fought all day" (Shaw, 2000, p. 90).

Therefore, the unwomanly female figure reflects Shaw's feminist panorama. He endeavours to deconstruct the traditional definition of femininity. In order to be released from the shackles of patriarchy, Shaw asserts that a woman should "repudiate her womanliness, her duty, to her husband, to her children, to society, to the law, and to everyone but herself (Shaw, 2000, p. 22). Joan rejects her femininity and considers it an impediment that prevents her from fulfilling her noble aim. Certainly, Shaw's revolutionary ideas are effectively revealed by the rebellious heroine. She is uninterested neither in marriage nor in being a regular housewife; as she affirms, "I am a soldier. I do not want to be thought of as a woman. I will not dress as a woman. I do not care for the things women care for. They dream of a lover and of money. I dream of leading a charge and of placing the big guns" (Shaw, 2000, p. 91).

Shaw struggled to submit Joan as more of a heroine of nationalism and faith than a witch. By stating that, Joan queries to create an innovative identity of an independent and self-sufficient woman. She chooses to pursue an effective career to oppose the stereotype that each woman is born entirely to be a housewife and a mother. Moreover, among male warriors, Joan is a symbol of heroism and bravery. She demonstrates throughout the play that she is committed to a



dutiful spirit of nationalism, which is a fundamental trait that leaders state is paramount to good leadership: strong ethics and high moral standards.

The ability to influence the actions of others is another component of the great man theory. It may also be defined as the capacity to convince a group to work towards a unified purpose. In various instances, Joan commands fighters towards triumph and prevents their withdrawal, assuming that "the English will fall on their knees and beg thee to let them return to their lawful homes in peace" (Shaw, 2000, p. 78). Joan derives her intense motivation to vanquish the English troops from her firm national identification as a French militant. She asserts, addressing the troops: "You and Polly will live to see the day when there will not be an English soldier on the soil of France, and there will be but one king there: not the feudal English king, but God's French one" (Shaw, 2000, p. 61). She extends her status among the French troops in terms of her intelligent military strategies and tactics. According to Warner, her "charismatic presence at the battle of Orleans affected this astonishing victory; [...] she was the saviour who created the modern nation-state of France" (Shaw, 2000, p. 34).

Joan was the forerunner of nationalism in an acrimonious, Catholic-oriented age. Consequently, she defeats the traditional portrait of the subordinate woman and expresses Shaw's revolutionary vision against the institutionalised church. Indeed, she "gave him an opportunity to combine women with religion for the expression of his progressive ideas at the highest level" (Jain, p. 148). Joan is religiously observant and is satisfied that obeying the laws of God is an ethical duty. Although she is conscious that it is a transgressive approach for Catholic clergymen because it promotes a new doctrine based on a direct connection between God and human beings, consequently, she is indicted for heresy because she asserts that "God must be served first" (Shaw, 2000, p. 130). This is one of the main reasons Jan was accused of heresy, while she believed that she was serving a higher purpose and carrying out the "will of God," as she says throughout the play.

Joan is a manly woman because she has the most admirable qualities of a man. She used to wear the soldier's clothes and equipment, hold a sword, and ride a horse. As a commander, she rejects the conventional status of a woman. Joan treats her soldiers as friends, sleeping side by side with them on the floor. She receives gifts of armour and masculine surcoats. A woman who deals with her gender limitations and would like to have given birth to a male instead was definitely as popular in the past as it is today. Shaw states that "she was the sort of woman that wants to live a man's life". Joan is a realistic figure; she arises in conflict with the spiritual powers represented in the Catholic Church and the King. She does not only defy the man's authority, but she also offends the Catholic Church with her manly costumes.

Joan sees the feudal lord Robert de Beaudri's court to request armor, a horse, and a few soldiers to accompany her to meet the Dauphin and lead troops to "raise the siege of Orleans"(Shaw, 2000, p.8). As she states in the first scene of the play. In these words, Joan sums up her philosophy as an unconventional female who attempts to destroy conventional views of gender boundaries through her selection to go beyond the domestic sphere, wear like men and lead a military career. In the Medieval Age, women were prevented from wearing clothing like men. Consequently, she has to face both male and religious authority. At the same time, women in the medieval age were not qualified to be warriors as they have no right to ride a horse or carry a sword where "war is defined as a male activity" (MacDonald et al. p. 6).

Rather, girls are raised to be housewives and to take care of men and children. Transforming into a soldier means holding onto the most important aspects of heroism, usually including masculinity, physical strength, and courage. Thus, a male is destined to be a hero and a warrior, indicating that he is authorized to "master other people as well as the natural world". (Pearson and Pope, 1981, p. 4). In other words, it is not a natural task that Joan has to fight for her principles as a female fighter and a leader of soldiers, as Lee R. Edwards signifies, "has represented heroes typically as military leaders: commandin, conquering and above all male" (Pearson and Pope, 1981, p.4). For these particular reasons, the patriarchal culture of the Middle Ages did not accept the thought of Joan as heroin in the same way they viewed male heroes. As it is shown in the third scene where Donoa tells the girl that he welcomes her "as a saint, not as a soldier".

The conception of militarism is not just involuntary to Joan but is vital to her preservation of faith in nationalism as much as she needs weapons. She seriously accepts and believes in her role as a warrior, so she is ready to sacrifice herself and fulfil the orders to death. Joan is a brave woman willing to sacrifice herself for her nation. Although Joan is a woman, she encouraged her soldiers to work as a unit and to be loyal to their comrades in arms. This ideal model of war administration is based on a sense of community and cooperation rather than a model of hierarchy, dominance, and submission, which is considered a significant aspect of the great man theory.

Although Joan was portrayed as a strong-willed woman able to subvert the standards of the mediaeval aristocracy, her revolutionary concepts led to her suffering and rejection. The Catholic Church accused her of heresy just because she dressed like men. Furthermore, the military institution represented by the church went so far as to view her as a witch, so her success in freeing the city of Orleans was recognized as the assistance of Satan because English leaders did not believe an army led by a woman defeated them. As Pearson and Pope (1981) point out, "simply by being heroic, a woman defies the conditioning that she be the damsel in distress, and thus she implicitly challenges the status quo". (p.9)

Ultimately, Joan was more perceived as a successful rebel military leader than a saint, leading to her tragic downfall. Certainly, during the development of events, she keeps her strong will and defends her point of view despite the disapproval of many male characters, which could not weaken her determination. She even patronized highly influential male figures, including the feudal lord and military leaders such as Dunois, by taking over the army's leadership, which was under his command. She went as far as to patronize her own king by calling him "Charlie" or "poor child" and telling him what to do. Joan represents a figurehead for the French army. Consequently, other men's leaders became further uncomfortable with her achievement, even those who were on her side, like Dunois, who doubts her exceptional contribution to the French triumphs over the English, or Bluebeard, who remarked maliciously in scene five: "Not content with being Pope Joan, you must be Caesar and Alexander as well" (Shaw, 2000, p. 108).

Henceforth, Joan appears to stand alone in the face of the powerful established religious institutions. In this regard, Shaw asserts in his preface that: "If she was old enough to know the effect she was producing on men by being right when they were wrong . . . she might have lived as long as Queen Elizabeth" (Shaw, 2000, p.8). Thus, her execution was an inevitable consequence of her excessive pride and gender-transgressive behavior. Hence, men became more and more uncomfortable with her success, even those who stood by her, such as Donoune, who tried to deny her great contribution to the French victories over the English, or Bluebird who sarcastically said in the fifth scene: "Don't just be Pope Joan; you must be Caesar and Alexander. From then on, Joan felt that she stood alone in front of the powerful, established religious and secular institutions" (Shaw, 2000, p.108).

On many occasions in the play, Shaw denounces the traditional view of women. Illuminating the female role in Saint Joan, one might say that Joan of Arc is the only outstanding female character. Other women are only portrayed stereotypically. This can be read as an effort by the playwright to criticize all varieties of gender prejudice. These biases are heavily emphasized early on in the first scene, as the Robert de Boudry court patronized Joan and insulted her with offensive expressions like "slut", "rude baggage" and "crazy". It is exceptional here to emphasize that insanity has long been associated with women, as many critics argue. Furthermore, Joan appeared as an ordinary woman belonging to the lower class and subject to the authority of a man. This can be clearly revealed in the second scene through her meeting with the Archbishop, who represents both a higher male and religious authority, because she fell on her knees with a bowed head and did not dare to look up and repeat "my lord".

However, being an uneducated and simple-minded woman made her incapable of releasing herself from the patriarchy's principles. This indicates that even a revolutionary woman like Joan can never completely eliminate the patriarchal supremacy so deeply rooted in human history. This was the case when she needed men to guide her hands while writing letters and, afterward, while signing her confession document. This may be interpreted as the woman's inability to avoid a man's tutelage. So, Joan finds herself having to struggle with these prejudices to prove that she can be a good soldier regardless of her gender, which she has tried so hard to disavow by cutting her hair, dressing as a man, and being a soldier.

Moreover, throughout the history of human civilization, women have been oppressed through highly male-centred discourse. Gradually, Joan loses her calls and drops silent forever in one of the brutal ways as she is burned at the stake. In addition, Joan's death at the end of the play may symbolize the triumph of male authority over any attempt to subvert its privileges. In this sense, the denouement comes to overcome the men's oppression of Joan after her reconstruction. The men she knew during her life were happy to get rid of her because they were not accepting her as a saint or a fighter, even those who were by her side. Charles, for example, did nothing to save the woman who crowned him King of France.

Shaw formulated Joan of Arc as a new woman conscious of her progressive "primary feminist" convictions, in contrast to many other writers who tried to romanticize her character by depicting her as an attractive young woman. Joan is also described as a representation of a special individual whose revolutionary concepts may destabilize the special institutional order personified in the Catholic Church and the feudal system. For Marina Warner (1981), she "is a preeminent heroine because she belongs to the sphere of action, while so many feminine figures or models are assigned and confined to the sphere of contemplation" (p. 28). Mediaeval men behaved furiously against Joan's transgressive behavior. Therefore, her execution can be interpreted as an attempt to suppress the woman's viewpoint through the

power of patriarchal regularity. Hence, transcending the boundaries of gender cannot be an easy responsibility, and this patriarchal authority can never be denied, especially in the Middle Ages, when feminism, as a theory, was still not recognized. Despite the catastrophic and severe accusations levelled against her in court, Joan does not give up her beliefs or adjust her principles in order to adhere to the norms of how a young woman should conduct herself.

Shaw's female characters are unromantic women "Saint Joan is an attempt at several kinds of synthesis. In it Shaw unites the practical and the ideal" and carries as far as [he] can take it the spirituality of the girl heroines" (Bentley p.168). Throughout his literary work, Shaw's unwomanly women often astonished Victorian audiences. He courageously fights against the weak depiction of women in the drama of his time. His explicit feminist affiliations with Joan indicate her power in pursuing a sort of "Holy War" against patriarchy.

Shaw asserts that Joan's trial was not fair as it suggested, he demonstrates how seriously Joan's gender affected the path her opponents judged her personality. Shaw's rhetoric during this play indicates that the indictments leveled against her were more destructive or exaggerated due to the male characters' gender discrimination. Shaw discusses discrimination based on gender and social conventions in the Middle Ages in various ways, including the play's obvious absence of women and the male characters' inclination to interpret Joan's confidence as disobedience and sinful pride. Thus, he defends Jan as a rebel who refuses to submit to the life that society has given her as a woman, even in the midst of death.

Gender inequality is mentioned in the several figures which depict Joan's self-assurance as sinful pride and disobedience. The Archbishop of Reims, Regino de Chartres, continually warns Joanne that she is committed to the terrible sin of pride. Following the French triumph at Orleans, Joan assures King Charles that she intends to continue the war and conquer Paris and that she sees God's will that they do so. In response, the archbishop condemned Joan for claiming she could hold out God's will with such continued confidence "When you first came you respected [God's will], and would not have dared to speak as you are not speaking". He adds. "You came clothed with the virtue of humility, and because God blessed your enterprises accordingly, you have stained yourself with the sin of pride. The old Greek tragedy is rising among us. It is the chastisement of hubris" (Shaw, 2000, p. 243).

Joan's military courage and confidence stemmed from the French military victory, yet these attributes mean nothing to the Archbishop "Joan's self-assuredness is sinful and unladylike. He regards her forwardness as inappropriate, and the problematic nature of this outweighs the military victories Joan's confidence has made possible" (Shaw, 2000, p. 176). His rejection of Joan is mainly religious; it is a sin for someone to fabricate that he can talk on behalf of God.

Joan continuously revolts against bending gender stereotypes through her physical features and rebellious conduct in reaction to a culture that insisted on keeping her invisible and men who failed to take her seriously. Thus, rebelling against her society's traditions, Joan insists on wearing man's clothes, armor, and fighting. John de Stogumber comments that: "Her inner voices instruct her to fight, and to fight, she must wear armor". In this approach, "her decision to don men's gear may be seen as a metaphorical representation of her rebellion against gender norms. The male characters in Saint Joan repeatedly deride Joan and refuse to take her seriously" (Tourish, 2013, p. 21).

In return, she responds with the opposite of disrespect. Joan refused to respect the official titles of her male counterparts, referring to them colloquially. Joan asserts herself of equal status by talking informally with the men; she also counteracts oppression at the hands of her enemies by belittling them and pushing back against them. Joan defends herself incessantly, determined to deal with her accusers with essential answers rather than relinquish her beliefs in order to accept the submissive role the society has given her and secure her safety.

Several have accused Shaw of sharing the attitudes of Henry Higgins as stated in words shown by Alan Jay Lerner: "Why can't a woman be more like a man? This repeated refrain in the musical version of Saint Joan does indeed seem to fit Shaw's mind; several critics have noted that Shaw, a crusader for women's rights, wanted to enable women to become more like men" (Symons, 1979, p.24). Among his proclaimed purposes, Shaw is enthusiastic to portray Joan as the embodiment of modern paragons: "she was, in fact, one of the first Protestant martyrs. . . one of the first apostles of Nationalism, and the first French practitioner of Napoleonic realism in warfare" (Shaw, 2000, p.7). As a woman, Joan has also become one of the "unwomanly women". Shaw's modernizing of his heroine reflects his desire to overturn the Victorian gender framework, which degraded females to a lower rank because of their gender.

Great man theory flourished on the idea that most historical events can be illustrated by the impact of powerful leading figures just as Joan, who represents a figurehead for the France army. Shaw's treatment of the Joan story is the most faithful to the historical record. Joan is a brilliant military leader who is ultimately doomed by death. Joan is an attractive character in warfare and nationalistic. According to Shaw's thoughts, neither church nor state can be ethically admirable. Remarkably, a typical modern interpretation of Saint Joan shows medieval political deception by religious

authorities and the state to eliminate and neutralize people who have become inconvenient or costly obstacles to military powers.

According to leadership theory, certain people are born with the fundamental characteristics that distinguish them from others, and these characteristics are responsible for their obtaining positions of power and authority. Therefore, Shaw's play observes Joan, as an "upstart" and unafraid of man's patriarchal dominance over women. In the Preface to his play, Shaw states that Joan is a genius intellect who changes in the face of traditions to assert her superiority over authorized leaders. She can face down military heroes because her intelligence is extremely superior that she perceives profoundly deeper than they do "A genius is a person who, seeing farther and probing deeper than other people, has a different set of ethical valuations from theirs" (Shaw, 2000, p.5). She presents her intelligence in the opening dialogue. Joan's first talk reveals her religious motivation.

**Joan:** [bobbing a curtsey] Good morning, captain squire. **Captain:** you are to give me a horse and armor and some soldiers, and send me to the Dauphin. Those are your orders from my Lord. . . My Lord is the King of Heaven. (Shaw, 2000. P.38)

Finally, analysts ensure that Joan is a genius and strong warrior who leads military leaders to victory and defeat of England. Shaw depicts Joan as a symbol of the sincere faith that will lead her to walk to the stake to be burnt. She does not die as a frightened victim but as a revolted martyr. It is explicit that even an accomplished character cannot triumph in our world. As Shaw states in his Preface, "The world cannot tolerate its geniuses; superior men and women make others feel inferior and resentful, and so the superior ones end up being condemned to die, just as Joan is condemned to die by the Catholic Church and its Holy Office of the Inquisition"(Shaw, 2000. p.4).

Saint Joan affords a powerful heroine who explicitly manifests Shaw's concept of New Women in creating a strong symbol of nationalism. Joan abandons her life for what she believes and struggles against the community's expectations of women. Her extraordinary commitment and inescapable martyrdom would ultimately lead to canonization since she already had power and respect throughout her life. Joan was a female who resisted the traditions, she endeavored to start a revolution and this is what marks her as such an intriguing figure of nationalism.

The play outlines the development of the feminine principles of equality and the full liberation of New Women. Joan does not believe in clothes or superficial appearances, as proved by her declaration of the phrase "Dressing up don't fill empty noddle" (Shaw, 2000, p. 76). This makes her superior for possessing Godliness and passionate devotion to France. Joan's fight is not for the king, or aristocracy, but for her people with whom she shares ties of sorrow and love. These ties connect her to the ordinary people and solidifies Joan as a powerful symbol in history and religion.

When Joan first speaks with Sir Robert to reveal her holy mission to crown the Dauphin, Robert explodes at her face: "It is the will of God that I shall send you back to your father with orders to put you under lock and key and thrash the madness out of you" (Shaw, 2000, p. 56). Sir Robert's anger reveals women's complete lack of power of during this era; girls were at the mercy of their fathers and then turned into servants to their husbands after marriage. "For a man to thrash the madness out of a woman was a societal norm at this point in time and even Saint Joan of Arc was at risk of this gender-based violence". Consequently, her unique ideals can be seen through her opposition attitude regarding the standards of a narrow-minded, male-dominated society. Because she was a woman, Joan was judged to death on the grounds of blasphemy and heresy. Yet till the end, she stood rigid to her political and religious beliefs. Joan is loving and sacrifices herself for her country. She keeps her devotion continuously till the bitter end, despite the torture and pain inflicted upon her: "If you hurt me I will say anything you like to stop the pain. But I will take it all back afterwards; so what is the use of it?" (Shaw. 2000, p. 127)

In conclusion, one could assume that by violating the gender role, Shaw's drama succeeds in presenting signifiers of the eponymous character's femininity. Joan feels aggrieved by her gender because she is restricted from fighting in battle due to her sex. Joan seems to resent her femininity aspect, yet it is what makes her such a typical and powerful figurehead for the Catholic religion and France. As a religious figure, Saint Joan embodies a powerful icon for both women and men. Women want to become like her and get encouragement to serve and protect their country. The object of sacrifice is significant in this play. Joan herself turns into a martyr instead of depending on the deaths of others for her beliefs.

## CONCLUSION:

There is extensive attention paid to the performance of theatre in addressing fundamental issues of culture and encouraging social consciousness towards political and religious change. Saint Joan reveals Shaw's successes in enriching the theme of the ascendancy of women by depicting his New Woman and linking it with the military. Joan is uniquely allegorized as the symbol of heroism and chivalric tradition. She occupies a remarkable place among

Shaw's female heroines. He has turned to history in search of a character significant enough to carry the principles of the Great Man Theory. The revolutionary contrasted picture of the Victorian woman and her status in a restricted environment is portrayed in the character of Saint Joan. Joan's enormous self-confidence and exceeding affection for soldiering and leadership lead her to martyrdom in men's dress, making her an outstanding stage character. Shaw depicts the traits of the French military figure Joan of Arc, "the new woman," who is a supremely confident woman. This new woman is concerned mainly with winning her freedom and asserting her individuality, rebellion, and leadership. This prominent protagonist personifies the soldiering woman who commands the soldiers and becomes a hallmark of the triumphant liberation of her nation. She stands against the conventional notions of women's personhood and the idea of the womanly woman" of the Victorian period. Shaw's description of the heroine asserts her defiant attitude against traditional views on gender roles.

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