Chapter XI

THE AESTHETE-ARTIST IN SHAW'S EARLY PLAYS

BECAUSE OF HIS CONVICTION that the artist is an iconographer of a living religion, Shaw devoted his creative energies to writing about the religion and its men and women of action; the fact that few artists appear in his plays is in itself a comment on his idea of an artist's function. After Candida, which with its preface contains Shaw’s definition of the artist’s role, Shaw’s major concern is for artistically depicting creative evolution, not for talking about art and artists. It is as though he had spent his literary apprenticeship looking for a clarification of his role, and, having found it, he states it once for the record in An Unsocial Socialist, modifies it in Candida, then goes about his real business as one of the men of genius “selected by Nature to carry on the work of building up an intellectual consciousness of her own instinctive purpose” (Epistle Dedicatory, M&S, p. xx). When artists do appear in Shaw’s plays, they are merely variations of the character types developed in the novels. The artist-figure in the early plays—Praed (Mrs. Warren’s Profession), Apollodorus (Caesar and Cleopatra), Marchbanks (Candida) and Henry Apjohn (How He Lied to Her Husband) before their final conversion, and Octavius (Man and Superman)—is best understood as Shaw’s refinement of the conventionally courteous and honorable, the socially acceptable, the love-worshipping aesthete-artist of the novels.

Praed, the architect in Mrs. Warren’s Profession, preaches “The Gospel of Art” and believes that art can reveal romance and beauty
—“a wonderful world”—to Vivie. Like the avant-garde artists of the 1890s, Shaw as well as the aesthetes, Praed advocates rebellion against conventional authority, telling Vivie, “I am a born anarchist.” He wants “real” interpersonal relationships, and repudiates “gallantry copied out of novels” because it is “vulgar and affected” (pp. 179–80). Nevertheless, Praed is as proper as Shaw’s earlier aesthete-artists; Shaw calls him an upholder of “conventionally unconventional” behavior and upbraids the critics who take him for “the sole sensible person on the stage” (Preface, *Mrs. Warren*, p. 164). Praed is refined and chivalrous; and, though he professes to admire “modern young ladies,” he is unprepared for Vivie’s Philistine practicality. When Vivie tells him that she tried for fourth wrangler at Oxford only because her mother paid her to do it and that she would not do it again for the same amount, Praed, who believes that such honors bestow “culture,” is “damped.” In spite of contrary evidence, Praed continues to believe that the world is beauty and romance and, at the end of the play, proposes that Vivie go with him to Italy, where she “will cry with delight at living in such a beautiful world.” Even when Vivie reveals to him Mrs. Warren’s profession, he is only momentarily upset; he recovers instantly to pay Vivie a “sensitive compliment.” According to the play, his Gospel of Art is as bad as Mrs. Warren’s “Gospel of Getting On,” for, as Vivie tells him, “if there are really only those two gospels in the world, we had better all kill ourselves; for the same taint is in both, through and through” (p. 236). Praed is of no value to society because he is not genuinely realistic and rebellious; we know nothing of his art, but, given his world view, it would be based on the illusion that this is the most beautiful of all possible worlds.

The poet of *Candida* contrasts sharply with the self-deceived Praed. Marchbanks is Shaw’s portrait of the aesthete-artist being shaken out of his faith in love and honor and being changed into a tough-minded, realistic, independent man, the kind of artist who, like Owen Jack, “can never associate beauty with a lie.” Though Marchbanks has many of the external characteristics and some of the attitudes of the aesthete-artist such as Sholto Douglas or Adrian Herbert, he does not pay mere lip-service to art, his sensitivity is no pose, and he tries to rid himself of illusions. Critics have likened
Marchbanks to Shelley, to Lord Alfred Douglas, to William Morris, to Shaw himself. Shaw claimed that "De Quincey's account of his adolescence in his Confessions" furnished the germ of Candida. All of these are partially correct, for Marchbanks is a composite of several poets and of many poetic traits; he is "the Poet, who must enlighten the world as to its goal, and must teach men to think and feel nobly."  

The appearance and mannerisms of Marchbanks emphasize his kinship to De Quincey's youth, whose "constitutional infirmity of mind ran but too determinately towards dreamy abstraction from life and its realities." Marchbanks "is a strange, shy youth of eighteen, slight, effeminate, with a delicate childish voice, and a hunted tormented expression and shrinking manner"; he is irresolute, timid, intense, nervous—"so uncommon as to be almost unearthly" (Candida, p. 91). The idea of an older woman influencing the dreamy youth Shaw may have taken also from De Quincey's Confessions: De Quincey's hero has a benefactress, Lady Carbery, who is ten years older than he and who, like Candida of Eugene, thinks "highly of my powers and attainments." And De Quincey's hero also idolizes "a lovely lady" in a picture which he keeps over his mantelpiece at school; the lady's face is "radiant with divine tranquillity" and she acts as "a special benefactress to me by means of her sweet Madonna countenance." Marchbanks, it will be recalled, has chosen for the Morell hearth Titian's Madonna "because he fancied some spiritual resemblance" between Candida and the lady.  

Marchbanks also has affinities with the "boy poet" of the decadence (Lord Alfred Douglas and Aubrey Beardsley come to mind), a type satirized in Punch for publicizing his "erotic affairs." Marchbank's pain in society seems a deliberate allusion to the hypersensitivity of the decadent aesthete. He is nervous and ill at ease in everyday social situations, as the stage directions in his first scene state. He behaves "nervously," "anxiously," "apprehensively," "irresolutely," "miserably," "with an expression of hopeless suffering"; he worries about what to pay the cabman, and he is "terrified" at the prospect of sitting on a public platform. His "poetic horror" at the idea of Candida's filling the lamps, scrubbing, and peeling onions approaches the pain that Des Esseintes in Huys-
mans's *A Rebours* feels on hearing a maid wringing out wet clothes or hearing cloth torn in two, except for this important difference: Marchbanks is pained by an idea (of the woman he loves performing menial tasks), and the decadent is pained by an aesthetically offended physical sense. But, like Des Esseintes, Marchbanks shrinks from the brutal and coarse; he explains to Morell that he does not tremble at the idea of being a poet but at the want of poetry in others; and Morell's threatened violence makes Marchbanks almost hysterical.

But Marchbanks is more than a Shavian version of De Quincey's youth or of the decadent aesthete. His character has most in common with Shaw's earlier portraits of serious artists, who, as we have seen, share numerous characteristics of the genuine aesthetes. Marchbanks's miserable and lonely childhood has caused him to feel alienated from the world. He also hates, as the aesthetes do, society's reverence for "goodness": as he explains to Prossy, fear and shame keep people from loving and understanding each other; when she objects to his boldness, he says, "Nothing thats worth saying is proper" (*Candida*, pp. 103–5). He confesses to Candida that "doing wrong" makes him happy, but he means by "wrong" natural behavior that is considered wrong by society, a wrongdoing that in Shaw's view is the only means of destroying illusions. Like Shaw's other genuine artists, Marchbanks is not afraid of defying conventional morality. Also, like Shaw's other artist-protagonists, he does not talk about whether or not his art is moral; it is simply his way of life.

The same sensitivity that makes him uneasy in mundane conversation, inept in business affairs, awed by machines, and terrified of violence gives him an ability to understand and to stir human feelings. After a few minutes of talking with Prossy, he understands not only that she is in love but whom she loves; and Prossy's "feelings are keenly stirred" by his talk (p. 104). After Candida's unconscious cruelty to Morell, Marchbanks can "feel his [Morell's] pain in my own heart" (p. 118). When Candida is asked to choose between the two men, Marchbanks understands her anger and interprets it for Morell; and, when she states her choice, he "divines her meaning at once" (pp. 137–38).

Marchbanks is able to summon extraordinary courage to ex-
press what he feels to be important, such as Prossy's unrequited love or his love for Candida. In his first battle with Morell over Candida, his cringing manner changes, and he speaks "vehemently" and "ruthlessly." He is "unimpressed and remorseless" at Morell's oratory. When he speaks "wildly" and "impetuously," he goads Morell to the threat of physical violence, at which Marchbanks shrinks, "cowers," and "screams passionately." But he is not deterred from his intention to "force [the truth] into the light." He continues "with petulant vehemence," "with renewed vehemence," and finally "with lyric rapture" his onslaught on Morell's complacency. This scene foreshadows Marchbanks's triumph in the final battle for Candida, when he proves the stronger of the two. In the final scene, when Candida recalls how lonely and unhappy his life has been, he points out that there were compensations: "I had my books. I had Nature. And at last I met you"; and, finally, it is Marchbanks who has "the ring of a man's voice" in his speech, while Morell kneels to accept Candida's blessing "with boyish ingenuousness" (pp. 139-40).

Marchbanks's growth to independence, his artistic coming of age, is the significant event in Candida. The conflict of the play can be seen as a struggle between a child and a man, between the weak and the strong. Ironically, the eighteen-year-old boy becomes "as old as the world"; the physically strong, socially and morally sure clergyman proves "the weaker of the two." The play builds to a climactic scene in which Marchbanks, through Candida's insistence that he drop all attitudes, including a "gallant attitude, or a wicked attitude, or even a poetic attitude," comes to realize the perfection of love: "In plain prose, I loved her so exquisitely that I wanted nothing more than the happiness of being in such love" (p. 129). But this recognition is not enough for the poet; it merely makes him sentimental and noble, willing to sacrifice himself for love of Candida. Candida (and Shaw, as his dramatic criticism makes clear) has only "infinite contempt for this puerility" and says, "Much good your dying would do me!" (p. 131). She perceives that his education is incomplete, that he must learn a final lesson. And when he learns "to live without happiness," he becomes wiser than his teacher. At the end of the play Candida is no more able than Morell to comprehend the "open secret" in the
poet's heart. Marchbanks thus changes from the poetic knight to the neophyte poet; or, to adapt the terms of the preface to *Plays Pleasant* to Marchbanks's growth, he changes from the Pre-Raphaelite at his best to a poet struggling to develop into something higher.

Because critics sometimes forget that Marchbanks is a young poet, and thus no more (and no less) like Shaw the mature artist than the priggish clerk Smith in *Immaturity* is like his creator, and because they cannot always avoid judging a character according to values outside the play, Marchbanks is one of the most maligned of Shaw's characters. One critic calls him "an aesthetic prig, unhealthy and unbalanced"; another correctly calls him "the popular version of the artistic temperament," but incorrectly considers him an unpleasant and dangerous figure, who is insensitive to others' feelings—"ruthlessly selfish" and filled with "desperate courage," callousness, maliciousness, and cynicism: "It would not be hard to make out a case for Marchbanks as the villain of the piece." Such readings of Marchbanks's character, as I have indicated above, rely too heavily on the appearance and mannerisms of the youth and not enough on the glimpses of character revealed in his forthright and bold speech. Like the genuine artists in Shaw's novels, Marchbanks refuses to be bound by convention; he is a sensitive outcast from society. Though he admits that "all the words I know [except 'Candida'] belong to some attitude or other" (p. 125) and though he is capable of playing a role, as when he heroically plays "the Good Man" in Morell's absence, he is also capable of dropping the pose in the interest of truth-telling. And finally, as do all of Shaw's other artist-protagonists except Cyril Scott, he rejects love for art, thus becoming more like the genuine aesthete-artist than he is at the beginning of the play when he has the appearance of the stereotyped aesthete but not the dedication to art alone.

Marchbanks does not talk about the moral function of art; on the other hand, neither does he profess a faith in art for art's sake. The character associated with art for art's sake is Morell, with his "mere rhetoric." What Morell considers "the gift of finding words for divine truth" Marchbanks calls "the gift of the gab." In their first confrontation, Marchbanks begs Morell to "put aside all that
cant," but Morell, according to the stage directions, "continues steadily with great artistic beauty of delivery" (pp. 97-98). Candida echoes Marchbanks's criticism when she tells her husband that people come to his church because "you preach so splendidly that it's as good as a play for them." The women are all in love with him, she says, "And you are in love with preaching because you do it so beautifully" (pp. 114-15). She calls his sermons "mere phrases." And, like Praed in *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, Morell is the "conventionally unconventional" character in the play (p. 118). With superb irony, Shaw gives the semihysterical and effete aesthete-artist the realist's strength and the artist's independence; to the masterful, moral, successful socialist preacher he gives romantic illusions and a penchant for art for its own sake. However, Morell is not made reprehensible; he has his share of human folly and is satirized for it, but he also has redeeming qualities in his real courage, his social conscience, and his final humble acceptance of the truth.

In *Caesar and Cleopatra* Shaw creates a believer in art for art's sake in Apollodorus, who introduces himself as "a worshipper of beauty" and "a votary of art." Though Apollodorus, the patrician carpet merchant and aesthete, is partly modeled on William Morris (above, pp. 10-11), he is not a faithful portrait of Morris. In the first place, Apollodorus is historical, appearing in Plutarch's *Life of Caesar* in the account of "the first occasion . . . that made Caesar to love [Cleopatra]: "She, only taking Apollodorus Sicilian of all her friends, took a little boat, and went away with him in it in the night, and came and landed hard by the foot of the castle. Then having no other mean to come into the court without being known, she laid herself down upon a mattress or flockbed, which Apollodorus her friend tied and bound up together like a bundle with a great leather thong, and so took her upon his back and brought her thus hampered in this fardle unto Caesar in at the castle gate." In the second place, Apollodorus's appearance is not like Morris's; the stage direction describes Apollodorus as "a dashing young man of about 24, handsome and debonair, dressed with deliberate aestheticism in the most delicate purples and dove greys, with ornaments of bronze, oxydized silver and stones of jade and agate. His sword, designed as carefully as a medieval cross,
has a blued blade showing through an openwork scabbard of purple leather and filigree" (C&C, p. 137). This description in no way suggests the hearty, bearded Morris, characteristically dressed in rough serge, who is said to have resembled a ship's captain more than an aesthete. Furthermore, Morris became so active in arts and crafts and political movements that in the 1880s and 1890s he was often used as a contrast to the aesthetes; and Shaw was especially cognizant of Morris's change to a socialist-reformer-saint.” The allusions to Morris are in the nature of a private joke, a personal reminiscence which is both a tribute to, and a gentle satire on, his old friend.

Apollodorus is so much the aesthete that he applies an aesthetic test to all things, even to the gods. He praises Caesar's proposal that Cleopatra “come with me and track the flood to its cradle” because “Caesar is no longer merely the conquering soldier, but the creative poet-artist” (p. 175). When Caesar says that “as dogs we are like to perish now in the streets,” Apollodorus says, “What you say has an Olympian ring in it: it must be right; for it is fine art” (p. 182). Speaking of the Egyptian gods, he says, “The only one that was worth looking at was Apis: a miracle of gold and ivory work” (p. 187). In these three statements Shaw gives to Apollodorus all the attitudes of Shaw's artist, i.e., the romantic man of feeling, the kind of artist Shaw became only under ether, the artist condemned in the preface to Three Plays for Puritans and literally damned in Man and Superman. Apollodorus praises Caesar's speeches of love and of despair, and he perceives not the religion represented by the Egyptian icons but only the artistry of their form. Like the aesthete-artist in Shaw's novels, Apollodorus is not only a devotee of art but a devotee of woman; he sings of the pangs of love and serves as Cleopatra's “perfect knight,” her polite and gallant “servant.”

As in An Unsocial Socialist, Shaw contrasts this aesthete-artist with the man of affairs, who is also an artist of sorts. Caesar occupies himself with the Roman arts of peace and war, government and civilization, which, he tells Apollodorus, are of greater value than “a few ornaments.” Nevertheless, Caesar does recognize merit in Apollodorus's art, in that it offers amusement to men, courtship to the ladies, and welcome relief from a life of action. Caesar pays
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tribute to Apollodorus after Rufio has scornfully called Apollodorus a "popinjay":

The popinjay is an amusing dog—tells a story; sings a song; and saves us the trouble of flattering the Queen. What does she care for old politicians and camp-fed bears like us? No: Apollodorus is good company, Rufio, good company.

RUFIO. Well, he can swim a bit and fence a bit: he might be worse, if he only knew how to hold his tongue.

CAESAR. The gods forbid he should ever learn! Oh, this military life! this tedious, brutal life of action! That is the worst of us Romans: we are mere doers and drudgers: a swarm of bees turned into men. Give me a good talker—one with wit and imagination enough to live without continually doing something! (P. 167)

Caesar is echoing Wilde’s defense in “The Critic as Artist” of the contemplative, artistic man over the man of action; Wilde had said, “Action is always easy. It is the last resource of those who know not how to dream. the one person who has more illusions than the dreamer is the man of action.” The play suggests that life without art is incomplete. Even Caesar becomes an artistic man on occasion, dressing gorgeously, waxing poetic, and wooing Cleopatra (in the banquet scene, act 4), just as Apollodorus on occasion fights in Caesar’s campaigns. At the end of the play, Caesar leaves the government of Egypt to Rufio, but he leaves the art of Egypt in Apollodorus’s charge, admonishing him to “remember: Rome loves art and will encourage it ungrudgingly” (p. 190).

Caesar’s patronage of art comes from an appreciation of both the limitations and the value of art. This is not so of the ordinary Englishman, represented in the character of Britannus, whose attitude toward art reverts to that of the “amateur aesthetes” of Punch, those for whom art was a fad, not a serious profession. Britannus considers Apollodorus “a vagabond” until Caesar explains, “Apollodorus is a famous patrician amateur”; at this the “disconcerted” Britannus apologizes to Apollodorus, while explaining to Caesar, “I understood him to say that he was a professional” (p. 151). Shaw’s use of the terms amateur and professional in this specialized sense testifies to the powerful impression the aesthetic
controversy of the 1880s had made on him, for by 1898 these terms would have had an old-fashioned ring, recalling the *Punch* attacks on the pseudo-aesthetes in the early 1880s.\(^\text{12}\)

Shaw also alludes to amateurs in *Man and Superman*; Don Juan says that “Hell is full of musical amateurs” (p. 95). Shaw’s heaven, it should be noted, has no “artistic people,” though it is filled with artists, for example, Rembrandt, Mozart, and Nietzsche. Shaw again uses *artist* in two senses: (1) the fashionable, conventional worshipper of beauty and love, and (2) the artist-philosopher. Because Shaw’s portraits of artists in the early plays are variations of the former type, his reverence for art tends to be forgotten unless one reminds himself that each play has two artists: the artist figure (Praed, Marchbanks, Apollodorus) and the artist at work in the play (Shaw). Another case in point is *Man and Superman*, where Octavius is “the Artist” of the play, but where the genuine artist is the creator of *Man and Superman*.

In the Epistle Dedicatory Shaw describes the artist as a genius with “all the unscrupulousness and all the ‘self-sacrifice’ (the two things are the same) of Woman. He will risk the stake and the cross; starve, when necessary, in a garret all his life; study women and live on their work and care as Darwin studied worms and lived upon sheep; work his nerves into rags without payment, a sublime altruist in his disregard of himself, an atrocious egotist in his disregard of others. Here Woman meets a purpose as impersonal, as irresistible as her own; and the clash is sometimes tragic” (p. xx). The artist is “abnormal,” “a madman” in the world’s view, for his genius nature sets him apart from ordinary men; furthermore, because his preoccupation with art alone frees him “from the otherwise universal dominion of the tyranny of sex,” his notions of woman, love, and sex are unreliable—his very freedom from the tyranny makes him prone “to romantic nonsense, erotic ecstasy, or the stern asceticism of satiety” (pp. xx–xxii). This theory of the abnormality of the artist’s vision because of his single-minded dedication to art is a restatement of Oscar Wilde’s idea that artists are of necessity “lacking in wholeness and completeness in nature” because of their “concentration of vision and intensity of purpose” and their preoccupation with formal beauty.\(^\text{13}\) Shaw repeats the idea when Tanner advises Octavius about his role as artist: “You
have a purpose as absorbing and as unscrupulous as a woman's purpose”; the artist uses women, Tanner says, as materials for his art and as inspiration for it; he is

a bad husband . a child-robber, a blood-sucker, a hypocrite, and a cheat. Perish the race and wither a thousand women if only the sacrifice of them enable him to act Hamlet better, to paint a finer picture, to write a deeper poem, a greater play, a profounder philosophy! For mark you, Tavy, the artist’s work is to show us ourselves as we really are. Our minds are nothing but this knowledge of ourselves; and he who adds a jot to such knowledge creates new mind as surely as any woman creates new men. In the rage of that creation he is as ruthless as the woman, as dangerous to her as she to him, and as horribly fascinating. Of all human struggles there is none so treacherous and remorseless as the struggle between the artist man and the mother woman. Which shall use up the other? that is the issue between them. (Pp. 23-24)

Octavius, of course, is the reverse of this description: far from being unscrupulous, he is chivalrous and gallant; instead of being an “abnormal” member of society, he is the embodiment of conventional attitudes and opinions; instead of pursuing art with a single-minded passion, he pursues Ann Whitefield and is heartbroken at her rejection of him. The description of Octavius on his first appearance in the play emphasizes his good looks, his elegant attire, his “engaging sincerity,” “modern serviceableness,” and “amiable nature”; one has only to recall the anarchic manners and dress of Owen Jack or Marchbanks to know that this is not the portrait of a Shavian artist, but of the romantic hero of a conventional play, a resemblance noted by Shaw: “He must, one thinks, be the jeune premier; for it is not in reason to suppose that a second such attractive male figure should appear in one story” (p. 4). Tavy’s opinions match his proper appearance: he considers Violet’s disgrace “a frightful thing”; he admires Hector’s noble rejection of his inheritance, and is in turn admired by Hector, who “gets on best with romantic Christians of the amoristic sect”; and he refuses to believe that the revolutionary Tanner and the avaricious Ann are serious. He tells Tanner that he makes it “a fixed rule not to mind anything you say. You come out with perfectly revolting things sometimes” (p. 24). To Ann’s question about Tavy’s future
wife, "Suppose she were to tell fibs, and lay snares for men?" he blindly answers, "Do you think I could marry such a woman—I, who have known and loved you?" (p. 154).

Octavius has only one characteristic in common with the artist-philosopher of Shaw's preface: he has a distorted notion of women, and he remains free "from the otherwise universal dominion of the tyranny of sex." But his freedom is not from choice, as is the artist-philosopher's, but from Ann's refusal to have him. Ann tells him that he is "very foolish about women," that, unless he wishes to be disillusioned, he "must keep away from them, and only dream about them" (p. 153). Ann and Tanner call Octavius's artistic temper "an old maid's temperament"—"barren."

Octavius belongs with the worshippers of Love and Beauty in hell, where, as Juan explains, "Our souls being entirely damned, we cultivate our hearts" (p. 88). Octavius demonstrates his kinship to the man of "heart" in hell when he promises never to cease loving Ann, using the Statue's words: "And when I am eighty, one white hair of the woman I love will make me tremble more than the thickest gold tress from the most beautiful young head." And Octavius's world view is appropriate to hell, which Juan calls "a perpetual romance, a universal melodrama," resembling "the first act of a fashionable play, before the complications begin" (pp. 100, 125-26).

Octavius is, then, a dramatization of "the Artist" described in act 3 by Don Juan: "Then came the romantic man, the Artist, with his love songs and his paintings and his poems; and with him I had great delight for many years, and some profit; for I cultivated my senses for his sake; and his songs taught me to hear better, his paintings to see better, and his poems to feel more deeply. But he led me at last into the worship of Woman" (p. 111). His explanation of why the artist idolizes love repeats Shaw's prefatory remarks and Tanner's speech to Octavius: "Now my friend the romantic man was often too poor or too timid to approach those women who were beautiful or refined enough to seem to realize his ideal; and so he went to his grave believing in his dream" (p. 111). But Juan approached women with infamous success, thus coming to know that woman falls somewhat short of the artistic ideal: "That is just why I turned my back on the romantic man with the
artist nature, as he called his infatuation. I thanked him for teaching me to use my eyes and ears; but I told him that his beauty worshipping and happiness hunting and woman idealizing was not worth a dump as a philosophy of life; so he called me Philistine and went his way” (p. 113). Like Juan’s artist friend, Octavius idolizes women and love. Ann is to him, in Shaw’s words,

an enchantingly beautiful woman, in whose presence the world becomes transfigured, and the puny limits of individual consciousness are suddenly made infinite by a mystic memory of the whole life of the race to its beginnings in the east, or even back to the paradise from which it fell. She is to him the reality of romance, the inner good sense of nonsense, the unveiling of his eyes, the freeing of his soul, the abolition of time, place, and circumstance, the etherealization of his blood into rapturous rivers of the very water of life itself, the revelation of all the mysteries and the sanctification of all the dogmas. (Pp. 15–16)

This view of Ann, Shaw says, is not “in any way ridiculous or discreditable”; and the poetic quality of the description of Ann suggests that Shaw too was capable of viewing woman with this reverence. But Octavius’s estimate of Ann is, the play demonstrates, blind to reality. He looks to her for “fulfilment” and “inspiration,” and, though Tanner tries to persuade him that marriage to her would give him neither, Octavius remains faithful to his ideal.

Octavius also evidences all the sentiment that Shaw associates with the artist in hell. He “cries unaffectedly” over the death of Mr. Whitefield; tears come to his eyes when Ann torments him; and he is “sobbing softly” after Ann tells him that she cannot marry him. He is compared to “the bird that presses its breast against the sharp thorn to make itself sing” (p. 153), an allusion to Wilde’s story of “The Nightingale and the Rose,” where the poor bird sacrifices its life for the sake of true love. The contrast between Shaw’s two kinds of artists—one with the hellish, the other with heavenly, temperament—is sharply drawn when Octavius tells Tanner that he would like to write a play with Ann as its heroine (p. 22). Given Octavius’s illusions about Ann, it would be a romantic play in which the heroine is obedient, kind, and loving, one worthy to be worshipped. In implicit contrast to Octavius’s
projected play is Shaw's play with Ann as heroine. Interestingly, Shaw's view of the heroine encompasses both Octavius's worship and Tanner's scepticism.

It is tempting to take Tanner as Shaw's spokesman in *Man and Superman*, especially when Shaw says that he "felt about marriage very much as Jack Tanner does in *Man and Superman". On important issues—on sex, marriage, parent-child relationships, property, etc.—Tanner voices Shaw's views. But he is no more a representative of Shaw than is the Christian socialister preacher Morell, who is Tanner's dramatic ancestor. *Man and Superman* is a reworking, with interesting variations, of the triangle in *Candida*. If *Candida*, which focuses on Shaw's artistic persona, and *Man and Superman*, which focuses on his prophetic persona, are viewed as companion pieces, one finds that Shaw finds validity in both the artistic and active life, a statement also implicit in the Caesar-Apollodorus friendship. Tanner, like Morell, has a social conscience and "the gift of the gab"; but he has Marchbanks's scorn for happiness and final realization that "life is nobler than that." On the other hand, Octavius has Marchbanks's freedom from sexual involvement, but Morell's conventional view of women. Whereas in *Candida* the moralist is the weaker of the two men, in *Man and Superman* the artist is the weaker. But, because Candida chooses the weaker and Ann Whitefield chooses the stronger man, the outcome of the two plays is essentially the same: the moralist-preacher marries; the artist remains uninvolved; and the woman satisfies her mothering instinct. However, Marchbanks is permitted to lose his illusions about domestic life, and Octavius retains his; thus they will be considerably different artists. If in his maturity Marchbanks chose to write a play with Candida as heroine, the woman would not, after his glimpse of Candida's strength and control, be like Octavius's vision of Ann; it would be presumably like Shaw's portrayal of the mother-woman, a vision of her as both romantic enchantress and realistic boss.

A love triangle is also the situation of *How He Lied to Her Husband* (1904), a one-act play which Shaw wrote to fill out the bill in Arnold Daly's New York production of *The Man of Destiny*. In a brief introduction to *How He Lied*, Shaw says that the play illustrates "what can be done with even the most hackneyed
stage framework by filling it in with an observed touch of actual humanity instead of with doctrinaire romanticism” (p. 181). In this play the poet, Henry Apjohn, is a familiar Shavian type—an elegant young man who writes poems, fights well, and idolizes a woman. In the original version of the play, Shaw linked Apjohn’s idolatry to a romantic misinterpretation of Candida, which had been the hit of the 1903-4 theater season in New York. Aurora Bompas, the heroine, is “a very ordinary South Kensington female of about 37, hopelessly inferior in physical and spiritual distinction to the beautiful youth” (pp. 183–84); she imagines that she is Candida (to whom she is also inferior on both counts). Apjohn, identifying with Marchbanks, courts Mrs. Bompas and writes love poems to her. When the playlet begins, the poems are missing and have probably been taken by the sister-in-law, who incidentally objects to the “immoral” Candida. Aurora’s distress at the idea of her husband’s reading the poems and the husband’s pride at having a wife worthy of such adoration destroys Henry’s illusions about women, love, and Shaw’s Candida. When Apjohn exits he not only quotes Eugene’s farewell but tears up his tickets to Candida.

Shaw omitted the Candida discussion in the Standard Edition of the play, presumably because he did not want the playlet regarded as a key to, or a satire of, Candida and because it is a topical allusion which is for an age, not for all time. The effect of the Candida discussion is not, as many critics of Daly’s performances assumed, to satirize Candida but to satirize one more romantic notion of the playgoer. Just as Shaw hated the all-for-love motive in the popular drama, he also hated the idolizing of Candida, whose “figurative shawl,” Henderson notes, “as a topic became sadly frayed by the animated discussion of la revolée and la femme incomprise.” The portrait of the upset, conventional housewife ridicules the folly of the women who misunderstood Candida by applauding her speech to Morell to “put your trust in my love for you,” etc. And the portrait of Apjohn is another statement of the poet’s need to free himself from romantic illusions about domestic life and, in the original playlet, about art, specifically Shaw’s art in Candida.