

## Dramatic and Political Recognition in *Mrs Warren's Profession* Bayan Warren'in Mesleği Oyununda Dramatik ve Politik Tanınma Atalay GÜNDÜZ\*

### Abstract

This study aims to explore the connection between Bernard Shaw's third play *Mrs Warren's Profession* (1893) and the classical topos of recognition, as expressed by Aristotle and as developed by later commentators. From the very beginning of his career as a playwright with *The Widowers's Houses* Shaw's plays contain many different layers of recognition. In the case of *Mrs Warren's Profession* the play vibrates on the social, political, moral, cultural and dramatic levels. *Mrs Warren's Profession* abounds with characters who pass from ignorance to knowledge. Recognition as a concept presents a wide range of uses from Aristotle's anagnorisis as a major dramatic device to Hegel's use of recognition as an essential human need to be satisfied, to Markell's use of the term as a politically motivated concept. Exploring how the characters of the play passes through all these layers of recognition in the play, this study attempts to interpret the play from the recognition perspective which has not been tried by earlier students of the play.

**Keywords:** Mrs Warren's Profession, recognition, Aristotle, Hegel, anagnorisis

### Öz

Bu çalışma Bernard Shaw'un Bayan Warren'in Mesleği (1893) oyununu Aristoteles tarafından ortaya atılmış ve diğer eleştirilenlerce geliştirilmiş tanınma (recognition) kavramı ışığında ele almayı amaçlamaktadır. Dulların Evleri başlıklı oyunuyla adım attığı oyun yazarlığı kariyerinin başlangıcında itibaren tanınma meselesi Shaw'un oyunlarında çok farklı katmanlara yayılarak merkezi bir öneme sahip olmuştur. *Bayan Warren'in Mesleği* adlı oyun söz konusu olduğundaysa oyunda sosyal, politik, ahlaki, kültürel ve dramatik olarak tanınma kavramının çok farklı veçheleriyle karşımıza çıktığını gözlemlemekteyiz. *Bayan Warren'in Mesleği*'nde olan bitenden habersizken öğrenip farkına varan bir sürü karakter vardır. Tanınma kavramı Aristoteles'in *anagnorisis* olarak tiyatro sanatının kullandığı başlıca dramatik bir öge olarak kullanılmasından, Hegel'in insanların tatmin edilmesi gereken en temel ihtiyaçlarından biri olarak tanımlanmasından, Markell'in aynı kavramı alıp siyasal düzlemde bir öge olarak kullanıma açmasına kadar çok geniş bir düzlemde işlevselleştirilmiştir. Bu çalışma oyundaki karakterlerin bir biriyle olan ilişkilerine tanınma kavramı ışığında yaklaşarak oyun üzerinde daha önceki araştırmacıların gerçekleştirmediği bir okuma ortaya koymayı hedeflemektedir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Bayan Warren'in Mesleği, tanınma, Aristoteles, Hegel, anagnorisis

### Introduction

The first public staging of *Mrs Warren's Profession* in New Haven, 1905 created a lot of disorder. The first notice in *New York Herald* (1905) approached the play from a moralistic point of view and stated that it is "an insult to decency". Just like his continental masters Zola and Ibsen Shaw had mounted an attack on the Middle Class morality. Shaw's moralistic approach has been a point investigated from many different perspectives (Turco, 1976) His moralist stand cannot be separated from his political identity. As a Fabian Socialist Shaw was a prominent figure in socialist circles. As the third play of the *Plays Unpleasant* *Mrs Warren's Profession* has a quite political edge to it (Allett, 1995; Dukore, 1980; Innes, 2000; Yeo, 2005) Shaw's moralistic attack on the Middle Class morality was a political action which was immediately recognized by the censorship of the turn of the century institution. The play could not be staged in England until 1925, some thirty two years after its composition. With its history of censorship Shaw himself and many other critics and scholars have dwelt quite heavily on the issue (Connolly, 2004; Kapelke, 1998; Marshik, 1998). The play was censored basically for two reasons: the unconventional approach to prostitution and its approval of incest. The fallen woman, prostitute was one of the stock characters of late Victorian theatre and novel. Shaw's scorn, outrage against the stage fallen woman gave Shaw the motivation to write the play (Schrank, 1992; Grecco, 1967; Greer, 1970; Kornbluth, 1959; Meisel, 1963; Nassaar, 1998; Nelson, 1971). As a representative of naturalist theatre *Mrs Warren's Profession*, just like Ibsen's *Ghosts* before him voices the incest taboo on the stage through Frank's

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mouth, a theme which has attracted the attention of many different critics (Dierkes-Thrun, 2006; Nethercot, 1959; Innes, 2000). The play's special place in Shaw's dramatic works and the modern British theatre have also been studied widely (Potter, 1989; Raby, 2004; Sterner 1986; Strozier, 1965) Despite this strong scholarly interest on the play to the best of my knowledge this is the first paper which approaches the play through the lens of the concept of "recognition".

In the late Victorian England, towards the end of the nineteenth century, Kitty Warren, the daughter of a working class single mother with four girls, follows her elder sister into prostitution and prospers soon and even comes to manage brothels in European cities like Ostend, Vienna, Brussels, and Budapest. Very successful on the "business" side she has had hardly any time for her daughter Vivie Warren. She believes that she makes up for that neglect with money she pours over her. She expects her daughter to enjoy the wealth and never ask any questions about her identity or where the money comes from. Vivie at her early twenties, educated at the best schools of her times, at Cambridge in 1890s, she has had a quite comfortable life, never in need of money. Instead of enjoying the comforts of the economic well-being, and opportunities, Vivie, the new woman, chooses to educate herself in Actuarial mathematics to become an independent woman. After securing her position as an actuarial mathematician at her friend's office, she challenges Kitty with all her might and demands the truth about her mother's past: Who was her father? The play rests on the tension between the mother and the daughter. Vivie does not demand answers for her questions only she also demands recognition for her choices, for what she wants to do in life and for whom she wants to associate with. The play reaches its climax at the moment of Vivie's recognition of her mother as she really is, with what defines her true character in practice. *Mrs Warren's Profession* (1893) is the third play in the Shaw corpus. Although it can be regarded as one of the early plays coming before his comedies like *Arms and the Man* (1894), *Man and Superman* (1903), *Major Barbara* (1905), *Pygmalion* (1912), despite Shaw's reputation as a writer of comedies, *Mrs Warren's Profession* with its at times gloomy, but ultimately hopeful anti-climax is one of Shaw's most popular plays maybe after *Pygmalion*. This paper asserts that the play owes its popularity and enduring dramatic effect to its engagement with the topos of "recognition".

Kennedy and Lawrence observe the significant role recognition plays in world literature, but particularly in the Western canon. They state that the very canonical texts of western civilization such as Genesis, the Gospels, the Greek tragedies, the plays of Shakespeare, and the romance tradition which lasted until the eighteenth century are recognition stories. Kennedy and Lawrence also state the prevalence of anagnorisis as an "unshakable, selfish gene of literature" extending through time and geography to cultures all around the world is "fundamental to an entire range of narrative traditions; for instance, of Islamic literature from pre-Islamic Arabia to the present" (Kennedy and Lawrence, 2009, p. 4).

Since Shaw was an iconoclast at heart, one may presume that he would cut off himself from the literary traditions of the western literature. On the contrary, he did not hesitate to exploit the literary and artistic heritage of the classical literature. According to Albert, Shaw studied the classical Greek drama (Shaw, 1965, p. 570) very closely and made a great use of it. (Albert, 2012, p. 3). Shaw was a socialist who aimed to change the established economic and social system, thus a radical in his political views, yet when it comes to employ the conventions of the nineteenth century theatre, as Meisel observes, Shaw was quite at home (Meisel, 1984, p. 233) Holder, on the other hand, states that though Shaw exploits all the conventions of the nineteenth century melodrama without any qualms he still adds his own perspective on the prostitution issue and make it a quite disturbing play for the audience (Holder, 2015, p. 102-108).

### Anagnorisis-Recognition as a Dramatic Device

From classical Greek tragedies to contemporary soap operas recognition and discovery play a crucial role in the structure of many dramatic genres. Aristotle, the first theorist to observe the role of “discovery” within the framework of the plot of a tragedy, comments on the role of recognition:

A ‘discovery,’ as the term itself implies, is a change from ignorance to knowledge, producing either friendship or hatred in those who are destined for good fortune or ill. A discovery is most effective when it coincides with reversals, such as that involved by the discovery in the Oedipus. .... (*Poetics*, 1452a)...., according to our hypothesis, tragedy represents; and, moreover, misfortune and good fortune are likely to turn upon such incidents.

Now since the discovery is somebody's discovery, in some scenes one character only is discovered to another, the identity of the other being obvious; but sometimes each must discover the other (Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1452b).

Anagnorisis is a shift from ignorance to knowledge in Aristotle’s formulation. It is an awakening, an enlightenment, an eye opening experience. In *Mrs Warren’s Profession* Vivie, who does not know much about her own mother Kitty Warren, already has her suspicions about her mother’s life when the play opens. The mystery Kitty has drawn on everything mobilizes Vivie’s vivid imagination and provokes her curiosity. Kitty who believes that her daughter is still a little girl to be silenced with a frown or mother’s alleged authority is the blind, unsuspecting party who would be compelled to discover the reality about Vivie’s unbending and uncompromising moral character. From what we see with her early dialogue with Praed, Vivie reveals that she and her mother know very little of each other:

VIVIE. Don't suppose anything, Mr Praed. I hardly know my mother. Since I was a child I have lived in England, at school or college, or with people paid to take charge of me. I have been boarded out all my life. My mother has lived in Brussels or Vienna and never let me go to her. I only see her when she visits England for a few days. I don't complain: it's been very pleasant; for people have been very good to me; and there has always been plenty of money to make things smooth. But don't imagine I know anything about my mother. I know far less than you do. (Shaw, 1898, p. 94)

Genetically, culturally and socially family is the foundation stone upon which we build our identity. These things that Vivie cannot wait to discover are crucial for any human being curious about their own identity. She does not know who her father is; nor does she know her mother’s relatives; her mother’s occupation; friends; social standing. She learns some of these as the play unfolds, but the discovery of what her mother does for a living is enough to give her a strong determination to make up her mind and withdraw herself into an independent life.

Else extends Aristotle’s concept of *anagnorisis* emphasizing its function in helping the “shifts of fortune”. Else illustrates his point stating that Oedipus’ fate goes from good to bad and Orestes’ vice versa from bad to good. After identifying the status of discovery thus, he further comments on the effect of recognition which

is to uncover a horrible discrepancy between two sets of relationships: on the one hand the deep ties of blood, on the other a casual or real relation of hostility that has supervened or threatened to supervene upon it . . . its emotional power . . . depends on the tension inherent in this discrepancy (Else, 1957, p. 352)

Within the *Mrs Warren* context this discrepancy is a moral one between Kitty and her daughter Vivie. The shift of fortune Vivie goes through is a remarkable one. Although we can say that Vivie had already made up her mind to change her circumstances and claim her independence from her mother the revelation is quite determinate for her. She cuts her mother’s acquaintance and declares her independence. Against this unexpected mutiny from her daughter’s side, whose character she has just recently starts to discover, Kitty’s protests seem to be

quite weak though. Upon hearing her mother's confession about her past, Vivie's stance seems to be a moral and a heroic one. In a way Vivie sees her only chance of happiness in an independent existence in which she can fulfill her potential without the interruption of a lover or a mother. This brings us one more time to Aristotle who sees a strong connection between self-knowledge and happiness:

... in the assessing of human fortunes awareness lies nearer the heart of the matter than mere situation.... happiness and unhappiness are primarily matters of knowledge; and the tragic hero's 'recognition' is after all a form of self-knowledge: not the best kind, since that dwells at a level that has nothing to do with tragedy, but at least a step upward out of ignorance and self-deception. (Else, 1957, p. 353)

Aristotle says that discovery produces either "friendship or hatred in those who are destined for good fortune or ill". Within the context of *Mrs Warren's Profession*, Vivie's discovery creates, if not hatred alienation against her mother and this discovery "coincides" with a reversal in the fate of Vivie and Kitty Warren. And the discovery that Kitty Warren is a manager of houses of ill fame is unfolded very effectively. The point Vivie reaches as a woman who has necessary skills for her independence, as a graduate of Cambridge is extremely new and unusual for the time. Vivie has all the confidence and resources to stay alone and independent with her moral superiority and professional qualifications as an actuarial mathematician.

Kitty is discovered to Vivie, Vivie's identity being "obvious" but as Aristotle states "sometimes each must discover the other". This essay might just as well be titled as "Kitty's discovery". As it is first mentioned by Praed, Kitty has an ideal daughter in her head: "Well, frankly, I am afraid your mother will be a little disappointed. Not from any shortcomings on your part, you know... You are so different from her ideal" (Shaw, 1898, p. 93). As Kitty idealized her, Vivie is an obedient, conventional daughter who would dedicate her life to the pleasures of her mother, who could be bought by luxuries, pocket money, dresses and theatre boxes, a comfortable life; who would study at the university, do a tripod, gain academic degrees but treat them as ornaments instead of putting them to use:

MRS WARREN. Vivie: do you know how rich I am?

VIVIE. I have no doubt you are very rich.

MRS WARREN. But you dont (sic) know all that that means: youre too young. It means a new dress every day; it means theatres and balls every night; it means having the pick of all the gentlemen in Europe at your feet; it means a lovely house and plenty of servants; it means the choicest of eating and drinking; it means everything you like, everything you want, everything you can think of. (Shaw, 1898, p. 156)

Kitty's words reveal how little she knows about her daughter's expectations, pleasures and habits in life. She expects her daughter to act like a doll and to be at Kitty's beck and call of her mother. Though it breaks her heart to lose the hope of spending more time with Vivie in the future, in reality she seems to have no plans of withdrawing from her work which she says she cannot give up for anybody's sake. In that, as Vivie very cleverly observes, she expects Vivie to sacrifice her dreams, her potential for happiness, her capacities for a hope that will never be realized.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Of course there is also the Ibsen connection. Recognition has a central role in *A Doll's House* (1879), *The Wild Duck* (1884), *An Enemy of the People* (1882). Nora in *A Doll's House* discovers that her husband Torvald is not the man she takes him to be. This discovery which leads to Nora's disillusionment about her husband changes her life. In an *Enemy of the People* the doctor discovers that masses, people all around him would take their short term and personal gains against long term and public profit. But among all these *A Doll's House* is the closest to *Mrs Warren's Profession*. The first similarity is the final result: both of the plays yield a new woman as a result of their recognitions. Both plays are women's attempt for recognition in the Hegelian<sup>1</sup> sense, which I will refer to in the following pages. Nora's more significant complaint is that she has never been treated as a mature,

To go back to the previous matter on whether the shift in fortunes lead to Vivie's happiness or unhappiness, from an Aristotelean point of view we can say that this self-discovery helps Vivie make up her mind for sure for what she really wants in life. Yet the answer is not as easy as that. Although Vivie deals with that shock quite bravely it still leaves its scar on her. When the truth is revealed first by Kitty Warren and then spitefully and venomously by Crofts, Vivie loses the ground on which she builds her relationship with Frank and her mother. Both became impossible companions for Vivie to maintain any longer. In fact, she can accept the fact that because of dire necessity her mother did have to earn her living through prostitution but she presumes that, maybe because Mrs Warren could talk about it so coolly and with great confidence the thing is well over out of their lives. She turns into, if not a misanthrope into an asocial, untrusting person. Although Vivie had started to discover physical love with Frank ("the babes in the woods") covered under leaves, learning about her mother's profession alienates her from love as she begins to associate physical love as a source of evil. She defies this instinct and try to mutilate her own sexual drives, drowning them in a hectic life working herself to exhaustion (Griffith, 1995, p. 168).

Else observes that "In *Oedipus* the tragic fact is not that Oedipus has killed a man, but that that man was his father: recognition of the person, not the deed, is what counts" (Else, 1957, p. 353). In a similar way, Kitty does not exist for Vivie any longer, she dies; for she will never see or contact her any longer. Vivie has to kill her mother's social contact to lead a self-respecting independent life. That kill is just after the recognition of the well-hidden unspeakable character of Kitty. This point can be related to MacFarlane's statement which argues that recognition (anagnorisis) either leads to harmony or amity or to chaos/devastation and enmity; in Vivie's case it is neither of them. She just wants to build a new life for herself, leaving behind all those who are not innocent of her mother's character. Only Praed escapes her censorious judgment as he seems to be the only unsuspecting, naïvely innocent friend of her mother's. In the final scene with her mother, Vivie breaks free, gets rid of all the dubious people in her life; people who might deter her from realizing herself, preventing her from following her calling. She asserts herself fully knowing that it would be almost impossible for her to lead the life she chooses without dismissing her lover and her mother because both pose a threat to her liberty with their claims of love and duty. What helped her reach such a resolution? What awakened her?

### **Vivie's Struggle: The Politics of Recognition**

In his *Bound by Recognition*, Patchen Markell makes an excellent synthesis of Aristotelian dramatic, personal, psychological dimensions of *anagnorisis*, recognition and Hegel's political perspective of the same concept stating that:

. . . . the ideal of recognition is founded on the notion that what we do, and what others do to us, is rooted in who we are and who we are taken to be; likewise, *anagnôrisis* in tragedy matters precisely because our interactions are shaped by what we know, or what we think we know, about who we and others are. As Aristotle says, *anagnôrisis* is "a change from ignorance to knowledge, and *thus to either love or hate*, on the part of the personages marked for good or evil fortune. (Markell, 2003, p. 63)

Recognition is "a coherent set of commitments and values that enables an agent to know what to do....coherence of the identificatory scheme with which the agent has tried to govern his activity... effort to become sovereign through the recognition of identity" (Markell, 2003, p. 86) Markell establishes this link between Aristotelian anagnorisis and anagnorisis with a political side to it as "the recognition of an identity, either one's own or an-

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grown up person with a serious and mature personality. She is asking for recognition, from all the people around her.

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other's" (Markell, 2003, p. 85). He argues that recognition in terms of state sovereignty is to acknowledge "sovereign agency, which can be attributed as easily to persons as to institutions". In this broader sense recognition is the "condition of being an independent, self-determining agent" (Markell, 2003, p. 11).

For Robert R. Williams, in the Hegelian perspective intersubjective recognition is in the core of personal freedom and any kind of healthy relation of the individual to the society and to the family. Williams notes that in the Hegelian framework "The unity of the family is a unity of recognition" (2011, p.19). In the case of *Mrs Warren's Profession* we see that the lack of recognition on both sides leads to the collapse of that unity. What regulates our interpersonal relations is desire as the essential characteristic of human being and the incentive for social interaction. This desire can only be satisfied through recognition by others. Rockmore observes that Hegel's concept of desire and recognition could be better understood with a comparison established between Hobbes' notion of the social being which has to get into interaction with each other to protect itself from others in their social interaction with others. In that the self is in defense in its social environment. For Hobbes "man is a wolf for man (*homo homini lupus*)" (qtd. in Rockmore, 1993, p. 104). Hegel on the other hand thinks that human beings need the social life for recognition. In the Hegelian sense even in the core of the desire to make more money people are desiring for more recognition which is an innate human need. This also carries its complications and potentials for conflict within itself. For in most of the cases people try to gain recognition at the expense of the other: "the struggle of opposed self-consciousness" because each would like to "oblige the other confronting oneself, the other individual, to provide recognition, or a certain obeisance" (Markell, 2003, p. 12).

When we look at *Mrs Warren's Profession* from such a perspective, we can read the dynamics of Vivie-Kitty, daughter-mother relation under a new light. Kitty's plans for Vivie as she mentions them have been formed without ever consulting Vivie. In a sense Kitty asserts her authority, her desire for recognition as a mother at the expense of Vivie's freedom to make her choices as a sovereign individual who desires to be recognized as one. And most significantly the climax comes at such a point when Vivie denies to recognize Kitty as her mother. It is timely to recall Markell's observation "what we do, and what others do to us, is rooted in who we are and who we are taken to be" (2003, p. 63). Vivie as an agent does not know what to do with Kitty as she is not sure what her commitments to her mother are. Commenting on the workings of the Hegelian master-slave dialectic O'Neill writes:

Before we can reach at the level of master-slave dialectic, there must occur a doubling of the subject/object- relation on the level of sociology as well as of epistemology. Henceforth, consciousness exists in a double entente of mutual recognition, that is, intrasubjectivity is intersubjectivity, the achievement of identity accorded to each by the other rather than as a self-insistent stance excluding all others except as objects of self-appropriation. Admittedly, even intersubjectively aware consciousnesses at first confront one another in creaturely isolation, more sure of themselves than of any other, more attached to their own life and survival than to anything else....Yet this very situation is unstable since, unless there is a conscious decision to risk "one's" life in the potential conflict with another "self" making the same decision, one surely die—or be enslaved....In short self-consciousness must seek freedom as something higher than its own independence, since in the worst possible scenario only one self might survive the life and death struggle.... (O'Neill, 1996, p. 8)

On that Hegelian note Johnny in *Misalliance* says: "It's really a great encouragement to me to find you agree with me. For of course if nobody agrees with you, how are you to know that you're not a fool?" (Shaw, 1914, p. 13). At the beginning of the play Kitty sees Vivie as an object/slave in Hegelian terms and she does not recognize her consciousness: "What do you know of men, child, to talk that way about them?" "Your way of life! What do you mean?" But within this confrontation Vivie has taken the conscious decision to risk everything, in a figurative sense even her life, the life that she has led until that moment to gain

her freedom and become a “self-determining agent” who does not need to consult anybody, ask anybody’s permission or begs anybody’s approval for her actions. This in Hannah Arendt’s words gives her “uncompromising self-sufficiency and mastership” (Arendt and Canovan, 1998, p. 254) over her own future.

Even in the first dialogue with Praed, Vivie expresses her dissatisfaction with her mother’s attitude. Kitty has invited visitors without consulting Vivie. Kitty decides for Vivie, imposing that rather questionable company on Vivie. Both Kitty and Vivie did their best to be their own masters, to make their own decisions about their lives. In Kitty’s case it was poverty which had enslaved her at a Waterloo bar working sixteen hours a day, ironically for Vivie it was money that has done the same thing. It is only by rejecting her mother’s money she sets herself free from her mother’s clasp. In a similar vein Vivie discovers her own true identity about her family, her mother, her social standing, the source of her income, livelihood. She discovers, recognizes her own true identity another interesting point is that just as prescribed by Aristotle Vivie's fate is also totally changed by this anagnorisis, peripeteia is fulfilled she leaves home to stand on her own feet to be independent and make her own choices. In a sense reality liberalizes, unchains her from the duties of conventional family ties, frees her from her duties as a conventional daughter of a very unconventional woman. But there is also something very interesting perhaps we need to account for before we further read this situation. Vivie seems to be determined to break free even before the revelations of the visit. Vivie does not only reject a comfortable life with luxuries, she also turns away from “love” breaking up with Frank who does not recognize her as a mature woman with moral principles. She prefers a life where her intellectual achievements and capabilities as an actuarial mathematician are recognized by her colleague Honoria Fraser.

One more thing that is recognized here is the validity of the subjectivity of the “prostitute”’s point of view. As Bourdieu forcefully argues “The science of the literary field is a form of *analysis situs* which establishes that each position ... is subjectively defined by the system of distinctive properties by which it can be situated relative to other positions” (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 30). Thus expressing the role of positions in literary production Bourdieu further develops the idea stating “that every position, even the dominant one, depends for its very existence, and for the determinations it imposes on its occupants, on the other positions constituting the field and that the structure of the field”. Within the framework offered by Bourdieu literary Works cannot be interpreted as if they are single and isolated expressions of an individual author. Very similar to New Historicism Bourdieu suggests a reading which requires a culturally, historically, politically and aesthetically well-contextualized approach. Accordingly “the space of positions” is all about the “structure of the distribution of the capital of specific properties which governs success in the field and the winning of the external or specific profits (such as literary prestige)” (1993, p. 30). By letting Kitty Warren speak her own mind as a subject Shaw positions this point of view against the hegemonic fictional narratives of the time which would allow the “fallen woman”, “the prostitute” a bleak end, suicide, consumption or total loneliness. Whereas in Shaw’s structuring of the structured play Kitty is quite prosperous, she glows with success and self-satisfaction without showing any signs of regret and openly declaring that given the brutal circumstances of her livelihood it would be immoral to act otherwise.

Shaw had to pay a heavy price for this heterodoxy of course for the play would not be staged in England for thirty-two years after its composition. This literary, artistic, and political position taking within “the structured set of the manifestations of the social agents involved in' the field” cost Shaw for a short period of time loss in “specific capital (recognition)” and “by occupation of a determinate position in the structure” he loses sight of “the distribution

of this specific capital" recognition in this sense. Therefore, Shaw changed his strategy of taking position within the field and instead of addressing the doxa explicitly and with direct attack, he aimed to develop more indirect disguised ways of fighting the hegemonic positions. When Shaw published his first seven plays in 1898 he called the first three plays *Plays Unpleasant*, *Mrs Warren* the third so the watershed, and the next four plays starting with *Arms and the Man*, *Plays Pleasant*. Borrowing Bourdieu's observations on the issue, yet again even the controversy, the fury *Mrs Warren's Profession* created in England and the USA helped Shaw's recognition as a playwright "once it came under attack from the accredited advocates of bourgeois theatre, who thus helped to produce the recognition they sought to prevent" (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 42). Thus any attempt at the orthodox side helped to establish Shaw as a playwright.

### Conclusion

Shaw scholarship so far has interpreted *Mrs Warren's Profession* mostly from a political perspective. Vivie Warren has been taken as a representative of the new woman. Her professional ambitions are taken as political statements, a new Nora breaking free of her mother. The title of the play *Mrs Warren's Profession*: prostitution has been read within the moral hypocrisy of the Middle class morality. The play's social, political and cultural perspectives have been heavily discovered. Initially this paper claims that it was due to Vivie's search for her identity, to discover who she was, trying to know herself that she manages to find strength to stand up to her mother. Whereas, the recognition paradigm embedded in the play to such an extent that George Bernard Shaw, the playwright as a public figure can also be read within these terms, as an agent seeking recognition through this play.

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