

CHAPTER THREE

CONCLUSION

Having analysed the portrayal of Julius Caesar in G. B. Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra* in the previous chapter, I find out that the historical figure, Julius Caesar, and G. B. Shaw's Julius Caesar share one similarity and some differences. The similarity of their portrayals lies on the fact that they are both portrayed as a brave general. The Julius Caesar in historical sources is portrayed as a war general with his undeniable capability to capture many lands under the Roman Empire by defeating opponents in battlefields; Shaw's Caesar, on the other hand, is placed at a calmer setting of place and time but still Shaw is able to pull out a courageous characteristic through his reactions toward events happening in the story.

The differences found between Julius Caesar in history and in G. B. Shaw's drama, however, are not completely the opposite; they do not need to be, but still they give different lights on the figure. Shaw so wittily puts characteristics into his portrayal of Caesar that it portrays Julius Caesar, yet at the same time portraying a man who is much different from Caesar. While Julius Caesar is said to pursue only political position by winning wars and people's

hearts with his eloquence and leadership, not only Shaw's Caesar is portrayed as a capable general but also as a person who cares about the Roman soldiers he brings with him. He even cares about Cleopatra, who is practically a stranger to him; his caring actions can be seen throughout the play.

Julius Caesar's savageness is not the issue that Shaw highlights in portraying his Caesar. In real life, the man seems to be heartless as he slays many people during his attempt to acquire areas for the Roman Empire, but in *Caesar and Cleopatra*, Shaw's Caesar is a man who holds virtues in his life. His Caesar condemns wrongdoings and later realizes that he has no rights to punish the wrongdoers because he is just as bad as them.

Shaw's Caesar also shows sense of humour, unlike the historical figure, Julius Caesar, who is devoid of such emotion. Shaw's Caesar jokes and teases, replies to a mock wittily, and consoles a mourning heart by his playful characteristic; the portrayal we cannot find in Julius Caesar in history.

Considering the similarity and the differences found between Julius Caesar's and G. B. Shaw's Caesar's characteristics, I conclude that Shaw's purpose of creating such a character is to let the readers see Julius Caesar, the historical figure they know, in a different view.

Shaw maintains Caesar's inevitable characteristic, which is his being courageous, and at the same time manages to show the characteristics that are not much exposed in history. G. B. Shaw, the playwright, cannot leave out the fact that Julius Caesar is a brave man even in his literary works because it is who Caesar is; nevertheless, he sets the setting to be slightly different from the real facts. Shaw is persistent to keep his Caesar's characteristics which are different

from the history, although by writing the play in such a way he states his disagreement with the current trend at that time, melodrama.

The similarity the historical figure and Shaw's Caesar share has led to the differences and then to the purpose of the author in creating Caesar's character with such portrayal. Shaw wants to show Julius Caesar from different perspective in *Caesar and Cleopatra* by giving his Caesar a caring portrayal rather than following the history books.

Shaw also gives his Caesar virtuous characteristic, providing the readers a figure that is straight, not judgemental, and holds to life virtues rather than a man with camouflaged ambition under his practice of clemency. The next difference is about Shaw's Caesar's humorous side which Shaw thinks very important in his character making since it makes his Caesar different from the original historical figure or other writers' portrayals of Julius Caesar.

After reading and analyse the play, I learn that there is not only one way to see someone; we might want to put that someone under different spotlight to learn about him / her better. I once again conclude that G. B. Shaw's purpose in making his own version of Julius Caesar is to show the readers there are other ways to see Julius Caesar besides his being a military general. Being unique and complicated, a famous figure like Julius Caesar has many traits and characteristics that intrigue people to discuss them. Many writers try to portray him in their literary works; G. B. Shaw, however, tries to bring out the traits yet to be explored by other writers ahead of him. Shaw balances the characteristics of Julius Caesar in his play with the ones in history and manages to put his Caesar under the light he wants; he

wants the readers to see Julius Caesar not only as a brave soldier or an ambitious politician but also as an ordinary man who has virtues and sense of humour.