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1. What is the epigraph of the play? What does it suggest?

The epigraph of the play is *arma Virumquecano* which in English means “Arms and the Man I sing”. It is taken from Virgil’s epic *The Aeneid*.

The epigraph has been used by Shaw with an ironical intention. While the great epic poet glorified the weapons and the soldiers who wield them, Shaw applies this glorious term to criticize the modern soldiering and the hollow romance of war. Shaw does not negate the contribution of great soldiers of the past who became the heroes in classical epics like *The Aeneid*, *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. But he implies that modern war has no such noble causes of war and battlefield. Moreover, since man has developed his intellectual power with the progress of civilization, war should never be the way of solving conflicts. Thus, Shaw emphasizes the cultivation of intellectual power as arms and the elevation of man to a highly intellectual superman.

2. Indicate two odd elements in Raina’s bedroom? What do they suggest?

The two odd elements in Raina’s bedroom are the basin with a pail beneath it and a toilet mirror. They look odd because they should stay in toilet.

In the opening scene Shaw describes Raina’s bedroom. This description has suggestive meanings. The furniture are from native and also from foreign land. It indicates that Raina is not confined to her national sentiments. However, the two odd things produce humour because both the basin and the toilet mirror should be installed in the toilet room. Instead Raina has placed them in her bedroom. But Shaw suggests that Raina and the whole Bulgarian civilization are in a process of imitation. Imitation has always been the way by which an underdeveloped nation tries to raise itself to other better nations. And the process of imitation is apparently ridiculous because in many respects it is a blind imitation. Raina has imitated the habit of washing and cleaning of hands and face from the better culture but she has overemphasized it by placing the basin in the bedroom. Similarly, she has given too much importance to an expensive toilet mirror.

3. “Sergius is the hero of the hour, the idol of the regiment”-explain the occasion. Do you think the speaker is just about Sergius?

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The speaker is Catherine. She informs the result of a battle fought in Slivintza between Bulgarians and Serbians. She tells Raina that this battle has been won and that Raina's betrothed lover Sergius has become the hero and idol of the nation by his personal venture in the battle and victory.

Both Catherine and Raina feel ecstatic by the facts that Sergius acted without order and led a cavalry charge by himself and swept through the army of machineguns. Catherine compares Sergius with avalanche and the fleeing gunmen with husks. But both of them fail to see the reality of the situation. In many respects Sergius is lacking the marks of a modern soldier. First, he disobeyed the commanders and acted without order; this is an act of indiscipline and impudence. Secondly, he ordered other cavalry soldiers to follow him which means he put the life of others in danger. Thirdly, he was the first man to challenge the gunmen and sweep through them. This is a tremendous act of foolishness because he never thought that guns are more powerful than sword. Thus, he actually acted comically in the battlefield by risking his life and also the lives of other soldiers. However, both the women fail to see the practical sides as they consider war as a glorious place to prove heroism and patriotism.

4. Who are Byron and Pushkin? How do they affect Raina and Sergius?

Byron was a great romantic poet and the champion of justice and equality. His poems reveal the violent zeal and romantic desires to change the established social system. Pushkin was the Russian poet who was very much inspired by the works of Byron and Shakespeare.

Both Raina and Sergius are very fond of reading the poems of Byron and Pushkin. Their romantic minds are covered by the zeal of patriotism and other romances. But Raina had a little doubt about the exactness of those dreams. As a result, when Sergius went to war to fulfil the romantic glory, Raina slightly had doubt about his success. But Sergius acted in a heroic manner and defeated the army of machineguns by risking his own life. When the news of this heroism comes to Raina, she becomes conscious of the truthfulness of their romantic dream.

5. "My hero! My hero!"-who said this and about whom? Comment on the speaker's attitude.

Raina said this about Sergius. Since Sergius won a battle by his sole bravery, and thus proved that romances were actually real, Raina called her as her hero.

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While muttering the above words Raina raised the photograph of Sergius and adored it peculiarly. She did not kiss it or press it to her breast or showed any mark of bodily affection. She elevated it in such a manner that it seemed that he was a saint and she was a priestess. The whole scene is less romantic and more comic. Raina did not respond to the pictured lover spontaneously, but in a highly artificial manner that only revealed an enforced love for her hero. Shaw implies that the love between Raina and Sergius is only based on romantic desires and not on mutual trust and understanding of day to day life.

6. Describe the first appearance of The man at Raina's room. Does it suggest anything?

The man in Raina's bedroom was aged about 35 with very common appearance. He was tired, stained with blood, mud and snow. His dress was torn. But he was very alert and on the guard on the desperate situation.

This first appearance of the man is very striking. As the play mocks at the false glory of heroism this man serves that purpose. Firstly, the meeting between the hero and heroine of this play takes place in an unromantic situation. Secondly, the hero forces his way to the room by threatening the lady. Thirdly, the hero is in a deplorable plight and almost odd in appearance. Fourthly, even the heroine is in her nightdress and not in her fashionable style. Yet somehow a deep understanding grows between them

7. "it is not the weapon of a gentleman" --- what is the weapon? Comment on the situation.

The weapon refers to the cloak of Raina that the fugitive Bluntschli snatches so that she cannot call any soldier to her room.

This situation is both humorous and thought provoking. Apparently, it is ungallant to snatch the cloak of a woman so that she feels ashamed and remains calm in her room. The man Bluntschli does the same thing to Raina so that she does not call the soldiers in her room. This seems humorous because the man appears to be a coward that even plays with a woman's honour to save him. But a deeper analysis gives an opposite idea. Bluntschli knows that Raina is so romantic about battle and heroism that she cannot be threatened with a pistol. But she is sensitive to her social position. She will never receive any stranger in her nightgown without cloak. In this desperate situation he stoops to this low action only to save himself.

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Shaw means to say that a man should use his intellect and not emotion in crisis. The man has just done the similar thing.

8. "Nine soldiers out of ten are born fools"—why does the speaker say so?

How is it proved in Act I?

The speaker Bluntschli comments this. He means to say that most soldiers believe in physical strength and romantic ideal of war. They have no intellectual power. So, most of the times they prove to be false and foolish.

In Act I of *Arms and the Man* this statement is clearly proved. When the Russian officer enters Raina's room in search of the fugitive, he commits serious mistakes only to prove himself to be a fool. Firstly, the pistol lying on the ottoman. Secondly, when Raina pushes open the window, he fails to notice that it is unbolted and hence anybody can enter through the balcony. Thirdly, Raina tells him that she was not sleeping, yet she stands in her nightgown in the cold weather. Fourthly, when the bullet strikes the mirror opposite to Raina, she stands on her ground before the curtain. It is because the man is hiding behind it. But the officer does not notice the strangeness in her manner.

9. "A miss is as good as a mile"—why does the speaker say this? What attitude of the speaker is revealed here?

The man in Raina's room says this. He has a narrow escape from the Russian officer and he is saved. So now he tells Raina that although it is a close shave, there is no consolation because it is nearly achieved.

This statement of Bluntschli, just after his narrow escape, reveals his practical nature. While ordinary people talk about the narrow shave in an impulsive manner, this man is very casual about this. It is because as a soldier he is habituated to such tough situation. It is also because this man is very practical and so he does not give too much importance on the past; he is rather concerned with the present.

10. "I always carry chocolate instead"—identify the speaker and the situation.

Comment on the grim irony of the speech.

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The speaker is the fugitive in Raina's room. When the man tells Raina that his pistol is empty, he comments that in the battlefield he carries chocolate instead of bullets.

This apparently shocking statement may sound amusing because a soldier can never carry chocolate in the battlefield. But there is a grim irony of the situation. A chocolate is otherwise a food. A soldier like Bluntschli has experienced that war has given to offer other than blood and cruelty. It is just a game. A practical unromantic man can easily realize that food is more necessary in the battlefield than bullets. Hunger is more powerful enemy to defeat than the enemy soldiers. So, this man carries chocolate with him. The dramatist also implies that food is more important than bullet.