

Arms and the Man key Facts

Writer: George Bernard Shaw | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Writer: George Bernard Shaw (1856 – 1950)

Full Title: "Arms and the Man"

Source of the Title: The title comes from the opening words of Virgil's Aeneid, in Latin: Arma virumque cano ("Of "Arms and the Man" I sing").

Written Time: 1894

Published Date: 1898 (in book form)

Genre: Anti-Romantic comedy and social satire

Tone: Funny, light, and critical (Shaw makes fun of false heroism)

Point of View: Third-person (The story is told by a narrator who is not a character)

Total Acts & Scenes: 3 Acts (No separate scenes mentioned)

Time Setting: During the Serbo-Bulgarian War in 1885.

Place Setting: Mostly in a wealthy Bulgarian family's (Petkoff) house and the surrounding areas.

Key Notes

Serbo-Bulgarian War:

The Serbo-Bulgarian War was a short war between Serbia and Bulgaria. It happened in the year 1885. The main reason for the war was a political problem. Bulgaria joined with a region called Eastern Rumelia. Serbia did not like this. So, they attacked Bulgaria. The war did not last long. It started in November 1885 and ended the same month. Bulgaria won the war, even though its army was smaller. The soldiers fought bravely, and their leaders were smart. This war is important in the play "Arms and the Man" by George Bernard Shaw. The story begins during this war. But Shaw does not show war as something glorious. Instead, he shows that war is not

always brave or beautiful. He uses humor to tell the truth about war. The Serbo-Bulgarian War is a real event, but the characters in the play are fictional (not real).

Anti-Romantic Comedy: An anti-romantic comedy is a type of play that makes fun of traditional love stories. In romantic comedies, love is shown as perfect and beautiful. Heroes are brave, and heroines are always sweet. Everything ends happily. But in an anti-romantic comedy, the writer shows that real life is not like that. Love can be foolish, and heroes can be weak or scared. These plays are still funny, but they tell the truth. They break the false ideas of love and war. George Bernard Shaw's "Arms and the Man" is a good example of anti-romantic comedy. In this play, Shaw shows that soldiers are not always brave, and love is not always magical. He uses humor to show the reality of life. That is why "Arms and the Man" is called an anti-romantic comedy.