Abstract – Taking the cue from a letter by Orwell, in which he is highly polemical towards George Bernard Shaw, this paper intends to explore the reasons underlying the demolition of celebrated literary models on the part of their former followers. Very often, from an urgency to find a space for themselves and establish their own artistic identity at the beginning of their careers, writers disavow those very literary figures who were the object of their admiration, if not worship in their youth. In this way, Orwell strives to demolish the image of Shaw from whom, during his formative years, he had derived not only an iconoclastic attitude towards orthodoxy, but also his adoption of a realistic method in writing. Before Orwell, Shaw himself had acted in exactly the same way, launching a reckless attack against Shakespeare and Victorian Bardolatry which to many appeared nothing less than a heresy. Not only, but the same posture can be seen in Shaw’s relationship with one of his main models, Henrik Ibsen. In *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* he gives a misreading of the Norwegian dramatist using an argumentative strategy which simultaneously appears as a wild appropriation and parallel destruction of Ibsen. Even though Shaw had affirmed in no uncertain terms that Ibsen had paved the way towards realism and a new conception of the theatre, he did not hesitate to belittle Ibsen’s extraordinary impact with the intent to affirm the superiority of his own ideas both as a Fabian socialist and a militant playwright.

**Keywords:** G. B. Shaw, George Orwell, literary models, misreading, artistic demolition