

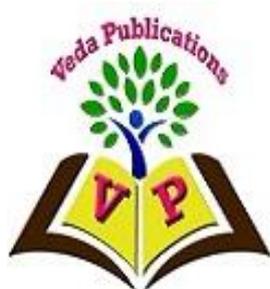


## A STUDY OF EMOTIONS APPLYING RASA THEORY IN SHAKESPEARE'S CYMBERLINE

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### ABSTRACT



Aesthetics, developed in Bharatavarsha through many centuries, says there can be no worthy literary creation unless it produces some sentiments or the other. The principles of literary art are universal. The doctrine of Rasa can be applied to any worthwhile literature of any country of any century. Shakespeare shows an obsessive concern for family and human relationships. No play of Shakespeare can be called a social or religious or political or an economic play with the same relevance with which it can be called a family play or a drama of human emotions. This paper explores various sentiments (*Rasas*) employed in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*. *Cymbeline* is treated with various sentiments: Erotic (*Stringara*), Pathos (*Karuna*), and Marvellous (*Adbhuta*). It also explores various kinds of erotic sentiment, they are: Love (*Kama Stringara*), Affection (*Vatsalya*) and Christian concept of Love.

**Keywords:** *Rasa Theory, Aesthetics, Shakespeare, Emotion.*

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### INTRODUCTION

The science of Aesthetics, developed in Bharatavarsha through many centuries, says there can be no worthy literary creation unless it produces some sentiments or the other. It would not be out of place, if we apply the doctrine of Rasa to the plays of the West. As the principles of literary art are universal, the doctrine of Rasa sentence or sentiment is also applicable to the literary creation of all countries. Shakespeare, one of the great masters of the West, shows an obsessive concern for family and human relationships, which give way to various sentiments. He is interested in man's relation to

society, government, religion and economics. His interest in the institution of family and human emotion remains supreme. No play of Shakespeare can be called a social, a religious, a political or an economic play with the same relevance with which it can be called a family play or a drama of human emotions.

### CYMBELINE -THE DRAMA OF EMOTIONS

*Cymbeline* is a dramatic romance. It presents a world where dissolution of family with separation of husband and wife, parents and children ultimately leads to reunions and recognitions - recognition of the lost children and reunion of husband and wife.



Love, quest, exile, repentance and historical conflict between England and Rome are the theme of this play. *Cymbeline* is an extremely complex work; in mastery of plot weaving it certainly has no rival.

Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* may be considered as employing Erotic (*Sringara*), Pathos (*karuna*), and Marvellous (*Adbhuta*) sentiments, though Erotic sentiment is the prominent one in this play. Shakespeare bring out its various aspects called love (*Kama Sringara*), Affection (*Vatsalya*) and Christian Concept of Love. The first kind is *Kama Sringara* results in the case of men and women of healthy youth. It is of two kinds: *Sambhoga* (fulfillment), *Vipralambha* (non-fulfillment; separation). The *sambhoga sringara* is stimulated by season, garlands, scent, ornament and experience or by listening to, or seeing desired company, beautiful surroundings, delightful music and beautiful parks. *Vipralambha Sringara* is very close to *Karuna Rasa* - distress, pain, agony etc., are the manifestations in both cases.

The first well- treated sentiment in this play is *Kama Sringara*, that is, the representation of love between Imogen and Posthumus. *Cymbeline* is the best example of the sentiment in love. It illustrates the triumph of modern love and marriage with the freedom of mutual choice of lovers, leading, though secret, to a publicized marriage. It has roots running deep down into the depths of human nature - love between Imogen and Posthumus is not love at first sight (as the love between Miranda and Ferdinand in *The Tempest*) - it is the companionably induced sexual attraction developing into psycho-somatic harmony which forms the basis of abiding love: Imogen assures the enraged father that her choice of Posthumus and rejection of his choice is preferring an eagle to puttock:

It is your fault that I have loved Posthumus:  
You bred him as my playfellow, and he is  
A man worth any woman, overbuys me  
Almost the sum he pays (I.i.143-148)

This makes clear that it is companionship, which makes them to fall in love with each other.

*Cymbeline* stands for domestic bliss and the bond between Imogen and Posthumus is unbreakable: Imogen is presented as essence of royalty. As the play opens, we find her in a doleful

state, with her husband Posthumus, banished and she is virtually a prisoner. While parting, they exchange gifts. Imogen weeps and Posthumus expresses his strong love and his desire for her love like this:

Posth: My queen, my mistress  
O lady, weep no more, lest I give cause  
And with mine eyes I'll drink the words you  
send,  
Though ink be made of gall (I.i.94-101).

They exchange gifts as a token of love. This is the sign of sentiment of Love:

IMO: Nay, stay a little  
This diamond was my mother's; take it, heart;  
But keep it till you woo another wife,  
When Imogen is dead.  
POSTH: For my sake wear this;  
It is a manacle of love; I'll place it  
Upon this fairest prisoner (I.i.109-124).

At parting, Imogen gives him a ring to wear for her sake. Posthumus exchanges his bracelet for the ring. Posthumus falls into company at Rome with some gay young men of different nations, who were talking freely of ladies: each one praising the ladies of his own country, and his own mistress. Here begins the real trouble Posthumus has great affection for her dear lady, and he affirms that his wife excelled all women in beauty and virtue and wisdom. There is a bet over the virtue of Imogen and when Iachimo comes to Britain and meets Imogen, he sees at once that she is unassailable. Then he resorts to a vile trick and steals her bracelet. He returns in triumph to Rome and convinces Posthumus of Imogen's guilt by circumstantial evidences. Such a good matured person as Posthumus falls as easy prey to the subtle machination of Iachimo. His love for Imogen, deep intense as it was, is cast away. His very faith in the virtue of women is shaken. He cries out for vengeance. In this conflict between good and evil, initially evil seems to over powered good. The wager is the devil's game and Posthumus is no match for Iachimo. Posthumus is made to believe by the intricate game of Iachimo that Imogen is disloyal to him. Posthumus urges Pisanio his servant, to take Imogen to Milford Haven on the pretext of seeing him and put her to death. Ignorant of Posthumus



intentions she only looks forward excitedly to an early reunion. Imogen's love is truly beyond beyond. When she reads the terrible words in Posthumus's letter to Pisanio, she cannot understand the accusation, she simply doesn't know what to think or do next. Yet even in this extremity, she does not blame Posthumus perhaps some has betrayed him. However, with all recriminations she is ready to die. When Pisanio unfolds his plan for deceiving his master, Imogen is genuinely distressed by the futility of it all:

Why, good fellow,  
What shall I do the while? Where bide? How live?  
Or in my life what comfort, when I am Dead to my husband (III.iv.126-130).

This reveals her boundless love towards Posthumus. Here doubt or suspicion can be identified as the sign of love-in-separation.

Shakespeare scatters all over the play subtle hints and delicate touches to indicate the strength of Imogen's love for Posthumus. Her love outfaces her father's wrath, her stepmother's hypocrisy and Cloten's imbecility. In Posthumus absence, she fondly clings to every bit that reminds her of him especially the bracelet. We are to suppose that it fits her wrist nicely when he first puts it on her arm. Then he takes leave and weeks pass; on the fateful night Iachimo removes it from her arm, it comes off. The explanation is that Imogen has been pining in thought, the bracelet has become too loose for her arm, and yet she has kept it on in a mood of worship, and this is how it slips out when Iachimo wants it. Bracelet has become loose for her arm indicates physical weakness. It is the sign of love sickness or love-in-separation. She kissed it a daily ritual immediately before going to bed. Dreaming is the chief characteristic of the sentiment of love-in-separation. It also means her waking and sleeping hours are equally consecrated to Posthumus.

Posthumus also has great love for Imogen. Sometime after Posthumus had ordered the murder of his wife, he is seized with remorse. He realized that he has gone too far in dooming his wife to death for her faithlessness. He now wishes that Pisanio has not carried out his command; if the Gods had taken

vengeance on him, and spared Imogen to live, she might have given a hence to repent. Shakespeare also treated this play with another aspect Erotic (*Sringara rasa*) sentiment that is known as *Vatsalya*. Rudrata introduced *Vatsalya* as a sentiment. He put forward the affectionate, *preyas* with reference to friendship and paternal, filial and brotherly love as distinguished from sexual love. *Vatsalya* does not reach the climax of physical union, but is strongly felt.

Of the dramatic romance involving love between father and daughter, *Cymbeline* stands as an outstanding play. *Cymbeline* is a legendary of British history and another story of a daughter, disobedient to a father, who preferred love to worldly place and power. Granville-Barker reminds us, that a woman's decision to marry without her father's consent was a grave matter in Shakespeare's time (1995:63). Even though Imogen is a daughter, disobedient to father, there can be seen love between them at many times throughout the drama. *Cymbeline* loves Imogen very strongly is evident in the alarm that he evidences when her absence is discovered and in his longing for her to comfort him:

Heavens! How deeply you at once do touch me! Imogen,

The great part of my comfort, gone (IV.ii.3-5).

She really cares for her father is her first reaction when she discovers that Posthumus has believed Iachimo's false tales of her identity: she regrets that Posthumus led her into disobeying her father:

And thou Posthumus,

My disobedience against the king my father --  
It is no act of common passage, but

A strain of rareness; and I grieve myself (III.iv.89-90,93-95)

Imogen holds for her father a definite regard that she retains throughout the play. *Cymbeline* is full of joy in finding the lost daughter Imogen. Finding what is lost, bringing to life what is dead, recovery of lost royalty and of seeing what is lost by a royal personage figure mostly as myths in the last plays. *Cymbeline* exclaims,

If this be so, the Gods do mean to strike us to death with mortal joy (V.v.)

He is in ecstasy, for a daughter lost is found. In the last scene Imogen's action reveals her great respect



towards her father: when from a father who was sinned, she asks a blessing. Her gesture is one of forgiveness. She accords her father the dignity that he could never have deserved without her. So that we may conclude that they have respect and affection towards each other.

One more aspect to discuss under the category of Erotic (*Sringara rasa*) sentiment is Christian concept of Love, a well treated sentiment in this play. Forgiveness, patience, compassion, and repentance are the basic principles derived from Jesus Christ's words. Jesus forgives all the sins of the humanity and he sacrificed his life for our sins: Father forgives them; for they do not know what they are doing Luke (23:34).

In *Cymbeline* we can find forgiveness, repentance, compassion and patience, which are the basic principles of Christian concept of Love. These elements lead all events to blissful conclusion. Posthumus employs a theological vocabulary: sorry, repent, and satisfy which specifically define the three stages that any soul must experience before it can receive remission for its sins. Other characters in *Cymbeline* sincerely repent, confess and gain forgiveness. *Cymbeline* forgives everybody, Imogen forgives Posthumus, and Iachimo and Posthumus repents. Cymbeline's mind is given to an understanding of Christian interpretation of life and the play ends not on a note of victory, but on one of reconciliation, curled with an ampler gesture of thanks giving. The element of forgiveness in this play proves that "Love does not remember the suffering that comes from being hurt by someone". This is Christian Concept of Love, which leads all the events to a blissful conclusion.

### CONCLUSION

We can say that Shakespeare has treated this play with sentiments of erotic and marvellous. It proves that we can analyze any play or creation of any country. We may not specify any sentiment as significant in dialogue or description in any literary creation, but they may be charming by the beauty of their style. Thus we can conclude drama is a combination of emotions.

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