

Shakespeare through the Lens of Eastern Poetics: A Case Study of *King Lear*

Dr Garima Gupta

Assistant Professor,
Department of English
University of Jammu,
India

Abstract

The tragedies of Shakespeare are a testimony to his coruscating virtuosity as a master craftsman and playwright par excellence. His unparalleled delineation of the characters and his deep insights into the vagaries and intricacies of human psyche make him relevant for all times to come. One of the ways to do justice to his craft is by analyzing the emotions that he captures in each of his characters and the best tool of analyzing this would be the theory of Rasa- the most comprehensive of all the theories in terms of the detailed analysis of emotions as used drama. The extract taken for detailed analysis in the present paper is Act I, scene I of *King Lear*.

Keywords- *Shakespeare, King Lear, Rasa Theory, Emotions, Tragedy*

Introduction

King Lear by William Shakespeare was first published in a quarto dated 1608, but it had entered the Stationer's Company register in 1607. The first performance dates from 1606, and, according to other evidences, it is generally believed that the play was written between the years 1605 and 1606. It is the most celebrated and generally regarded as one of his greatest tragedies. Its critical history has been varied with Leo Tolstoy stating that throughout his life Shakespeare aroused in him 'an irresistible repulsion and tedium' finding the plot of *King Lear* to be stupid, verbose, unnatural, unintelligible, bombastic, vulgar, tedious and full of incredible events, wild ravings, mirthless jokes, anachronisms, irrelevances, obscenities, worn-out strange conventions and other faults both moral and aesthetic' (George Orwell's *Lear, Tolstoy and the Fool* 1950). Thackeray found the performance of the play "a bore" (Kermode 51) and P.B. Shelly commented that the comedy should be as in *King Lear*, 'universal, ideal, and sublime' A. W. Schlegel in *Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature* (1811) comments that the two stories are harmonized adroitly contributing to the intrigue of

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the play but for Charles Lamb, *King Lear* is not possible to represent on stage. According to A.C. Bradley, *King Lear* is Shakespeare's greatest achievement and the fusion of the two plots is done with the same proficiency as in *Much Ado*. G. Wilson Knight, in *King Lear and The Comedy of the Grotesque* (1930) posits it to be great in the abundance and richness of human delineation. Harold Bloom regards the play as the greatest work ever written, and finds that *Hamlet* and *King Lear* 'now constitute either a kind of secular scripture or mythology' (*The Invention of the Human* 476).

Bharata succinctly encapsulates the theory of *Rasa* in his most famous formula-like *Rasa* sutra in chapter sixth of *Natyashastra* thus, "The sentiment is produced (*rasa-nispattih*) from a combination (*samyoga*) of Determinants (*vibhava*), consequents (*anubhava*) and Transitory States (*vyabhicari-bhava*)" (105). Giving an illustration, Bharata, in the same passage says:

As taste (*rasa*) results from a combination of various spices, vegetables and other articles, and as six tastes (*rasa*) are produced by articles such as, raw sugar or spices or vegetables, so the Dominant states (*sthayibhava*), when they come together with various other states (*bhava*) attain the quality of the sentiment (105).

This means that a flavor is latent in food. Only when it is tasted does it become active.

***Rasa* comprises the following components of aesthetic experience:**

Determinants or *Vibhavas*

The determinants of an emotion are those external factors or objects of the experience which generate the emotion which is latent in the perceiver. They are of two kinds:

- i) ***Alambana Vibhava***: It is the generative factor that directly brings out an emotion in a person. For example: a man may experience the emotion of fear at the sight of a lion. Here the lion is the generative factor of the feeling of fear.
- ii) ***Uddipana Vibhava***: Emotions may lie quiescent in our consciousness and may not divulge themselves in the absence of suitable environmental factors. This is called the exciting factor or the *uddipana vibhava*. To cite the above example, the feeling of fear in the man and the lion is fully evoked in the presence of certain enhancing factors such as jungle, other creatures crying out of panic and running desperately to safety, horrifying stillness and so on. So, *vibhavas* are exactly what T.S. Eliot names objective correlative.

Physical Gestures or *Anubhavas*

The outward manifestations brought forth as a result of the *vibhavas* are known as *anubhavas*. These changes are voluntary as they can be produced by an effort of the will. For example: the emotion of anger urges one to gnash and chafe one's teeth.

Involuntary Mental States or *Sattvikabhavas*

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Fear arises from *vibhavas* such as crimes committed against preceptors and kings, wanderings through forests, nocturnal darkness, movements of owls and so on. It is represented by *anubhavas* such as trembling of the hands and feet, palpitation of the heart, stupefaction, perspiration, perched mouth, licking with the tongue, searching for a vantage point, loud lamentation, horripilation etc. Now if we observe carefully stupefaction or immobilization, perspiration and horripilation may not be called gestures since they are beyond human control. *Sattvikabhavas* are the mental reactions that are a direct result of mental states. Bharata lists eight of them: change of voice, trembling, change of colour, tears and fainting, stupefaction or immobilization, perspiration and horripilation. *Sattvikabhavas* are very difficult to exhibit on the stage and can be achieved only through utmost dedication on the part of the actors so that they actually bring themselves to feel these mental states.

Transitory Mental states or *Vyabhicaribhavas*

These are the varying emotional strains that help to sustain and intensify the basic emotion. Emotions are not necessarily developed by the *vyabhicarins* - they are only a means of reinforcing and enhancing it. Bharata lists thirty-three of them in *Natyashastra*: discouragement, weakness, apprehension, envy, intoxication, weariness, indolence, depression, anxiety, distraction, recollection, contentment, shame, inconstancy, joy, agitation, stupor, arrogance, despair, impatience, sleep, epilepsy, dreaming, awakening, indignation, dissimulation, cruelty, assurance, sickness, insanity, death, fright, deliberation.

Sthayibhavas

According to Bharata, “*bhavas* are so called because through Words, Gestures and the Representation of the temperament, they *bhavayanti* (infuse) the meaning of the play [into the spectators]” (118). He gives the various *sthayibhavas* of the eight *rasas* in chapter seven which are love (*rati*), amusement (*hasya*), sorrow, (*soka*), anger (*krodha*), dynamic energy (*utsaha*), fear (*bhaya*), disgust (*jugupsa*) and wonder (*vismaya*).

Bharata enunciated eight *rasas*. Sources of these eight sentiments are Erotic, Furious, Heroic, Odious. The Comic arises from the Erotic, the pathetic from the furious, the marvelous from the heroic and the terrible from the odious.

These *rasas* along with their corresponding dieties, colours and dominant states is given below:

The Various Rasas along with their Dominant States, Deities and Colours

Rasa	Dominant States	Deity	Colour
Sringara (Erotic)	Rati (Love)	Vishnu	Light Green
Hasya (Comic)	Hasya (Mirth)	Pramata	White
Raudra (Furious)	<i>Krodha</i> (Anger)	Raudra	Red

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Karuna (Pathetic)	Soka (Compassion)	Yama	Ash Coloured
Bibhatasa (Odious)	Jugupsa (Aversion)	Shiva	Blue
Bhayanaka (Terrible)	Bhaya (Fright)	Kala	Black
Vira (Heroic)	Utsaha (Bravery)	Indra	Light Orange
Adbhuta (Marvellous)	Ascharya (Amazement)	Brahma	Yellow

According to *Rasa* theory, the human mind is the repository of primary emotions that are inherent and inborn and lie deep into the subconscious or the unconscious strata of our being (*sthayibhavas*) and are called into play by external stimuli. *Sthayibhavas* (dominant emotions) develop into *Rasa* when awakened and brought to a relishable or enjoyable state. *Vibhavas* (determinants) are the media that help in the arousal of *sthayibhava*. *Anubhavas* (consequents) are the bodily expressions by which an emotion is expressed and *vyabhicaribhavas* (transitory mental states) are a series of diverse emotions that maintain and reinforce the basic emotion. The conjunction of *vibhava*, *anubhava* and *vyabhicaribhava* produces *Rasa* which is the very essence of the real event and free from all personal cravings and egoistic aspects of the self and hence blissful.

The reason why William Shakespeare has the distinction of world's most quoted author lies in the fact that his works explore the various shades of human character. The genius of his characters and plots owes to his great understanding of human nature as they present real humans in a wide range of emotions and conflicts. His explorations of human ambition, madness, greed and lust and many other emotions find no parallel in English literature. His analysis of the problems of dynastic successions, the monarchs and the aristocrats in his historic plays reveal jealousies, loves and hates inherent among the great powers. The way he has scrutinized the multifaceted human nature, be it villainy and courage or virtue and egotism, unveil the literary genius in him and undoubtedly rank him the greatest playwright of all time as also a favourite of the critics. However, an estimate of the volume of critical works on him shows that despite being most acclaimed and widely read and staged, still certain art pieces of him are yet to be critically attended to and accorded their much deserved appreciation.

Application of *Rasa* theory has brought to fore new elements of Shakespeare's expertise. There is a collaboration of various emotions in his plays like *vismaya*, *bhayanaka*, *karuna*, *raudra*, *hasya*, *jugupsa* and *sringara*. Among these *bhayanaka*, *karuna*, *raudra* and *jugupsa* stand dominant. A perusal of Shakespeare's works in terms of *Rasa* theory has accredited the genuineness of these emotions in appraisal of his works.

King Lear: A Case Study of Act I, Scene i

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An aging King Lear decides to distribute his territory capriciously among his three daughters, Goneril (wife of the duke of Albany), Regan (wife of the duke of Cornwall) and Cordelia (for whom the duke of Burgundy and the king of France are suitors) on the basis of protestation of their love for him. The hypocritical Goneril and Regan claim their filial love in a fulsome manner and are rewarded. The youngest daughter Cordelia, however, surprises everyone by refusing to make an extravagant and insincere speech to prove her love and says that she cannot love him exclusively for half of her love is reserved by her when she gets married. Lear is furious and disinherits her. The Earl of Kent tries to intervene and is banished and the King of France accepts Cordelia despite the fact that she has been totally deprived of her share of kingdom.

Lear immediately realizes the rashness of his decision as Goneril and Regan abuse their power and unleash their cold-blooded character by refusing to allow Lear the maintenance that he had stipulated for. Enraged, he leaves into the stormy night in the company of Fool and followed by Kent (in the disguise of a servant named Caius).

Meanwhile, the sub-plot of the play deals with the Earl of Gloucester who is turned against his son Edgar by his illegitimate son Edmund. As a result Edgar has to flee for life and takes the disguise of a lunatic beggar (Tom O' Bedlam) and joins Lear's group on the heath. Lear's suffering, resulting from his ill-treatment and rage, drive him mad. With the help of Kent and Gloucester, he is driven to Dover where Cordelia comes to her father's rescue and gradually Lear's sanity is restored to him. As the action unfolds, the earl of Gloucester is accused of treachery and his eyes are put out by Cornwall, who receives a death wound in the struggle. In addition to this, both Goneril and Regan have turned their affections to Edmund and due to this rivalry Goneril poisons Regan before killing herself.

The English forces, under the leadership of Edmund, defeat the French army and Cordelia and Lear are taken prisoners. Gloucester, conciliated with Edgar, dies off stage. Edmund receives a fatal wound in the duel against Edgar; his last minute respite, under good impulse, comes too late and Cordelia is hanged. Lear dies from grief. Kent, Albany and Edgar are left to restore order and finally Edgar accepts the responsibility for the kingdom. Its sources include *The True Chronicle History of King Leir and His Three Daughters*. The story of King Lear is also told in Geoffrey Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (c.1136), in *The First Part of the Mirror for Magistrates* (1574), in Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1587), in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, and Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*.

That beneath the superficial incidental particularities of age, culture and time of composition lies a universal story of familial love and relationships, sibling rivalry, issues of legitimacy, and power is proved by the fact that this play readily lends itself to a reading in the light of *Rasa* theory, taking into account the ideas proposed by the sage Bharatmuni as analysed in the present paper.

The story can be structurally analyzed according to the Sanskrit dramatic structure as under:

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- i) The King decides to divide his kingdom and transfer all his powers to his three daughters. Although he has already made the divisions, he wants to hear from each one of them how much they love him. Goneril and Regan make extravagant protestations of their filial love and are accordingly rewarded. But the youngest daughter, Cordelia, infuriates him because she has nothing to say and is therefore banished along with the loyal Kent who tries to intervene on her behalf. She is married off to the King of France. In the sub-plot (*prasangika*), the earl of Gloucester's illegitimate son Edmund intrigues against his brother Edgar (the legitimate one) by means of a forged letter which convinces Gloucester that Edgar has been plotting his murder. Goneril is already fed up with her father and decides to get rid of him by complaining against his undisciplined knights. Lear is shocked and decides to stay with Regan. This is the face or *mukha* of the drama.
- ii) Act 2 and 3 is the reflection of the *mukha*. This involves Edgar fleeing from his place and donning the disguise of a beggar named Tom, Regan defending her sister which further enrages Lear and he decides to leave the palace in the company of his Fool on a stormy night, Edmund planning to betray his father in order to please Cornwall, Lear beginning to lose his mind and taken to Dover for safety by Kent and Gloucester and the threat of an invasion by the French army.
- iii) In Act 4, that is, the womb or the *garbha* of the play, the plot thickens with Goneril and Regan in love with Edmund, Lear's sanity resorted to him with the help of Cordelia and the blind Gloucester prevented by Edgar from committing suicide.
- iv) The fourth juncture or the *vimarsa* of the play is the growing jealousy between Goneril and Regan, Cordelia's army defeated, Lear and Cordelia taken prisoners and Edmund's evil plot against the lives of Lear and Cordelia.
- v) The *nirvana* or dénouement follows with Edmund's succumbing to his injuries, Goneril's suicide after her subsequent poisoning of Regan, the deaths of Lear and Cordelia and finally Albany and Edgar to govern the country.

Act 1 scene i

The opening scene is a dialogue between the Earl of Kent and the Earl of Gloucester in a state room in King Lear's palace. They are deliberating (*vitarka*) upon the forthcoming division of the kingdom among the Duke of Albany and the Duke of Cornwall. Gloucester introduces his illegitimate son Edmund to Kent feeling "often blushed to acknowledge him" (9) (transitory emotional state or *vyabhicaribhava* of shame or *vrida*) (Cavell 228) informing him (Kent) that he is no longer ashamed of it. At this point the sound of the trumpet is heard and King Lear along with Cornwall, Albany, Goneril, Regan, Cordelia and attendants enter the scene. Lear's grand entry amidst 'sennet' and 'coronet' showcases his royalty, ascendancy, and prestige and the authoritative initial lines spoken by him, "Meantime we

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shall express our darker purpose. Give me the map there.” (36-37) explicitly portray the secondary emotional state of arrogance (*garva*). “The entire abdication scene is dominated by Lear’s arrogant absolutism” (Drakakis 53). The old King is determined to abjure all his official responsibilities and move slowly towards death without any burden so he decides (*mati*) to divide his kingdom among his three daughters. The decision is, however, based on his whim:

LEAR. Tell me my daughters,
(Since now we will divest us both of rule,
Interest of territory, cares of state)
Which of you shall we say doth love us most?
That we our largest bounty may extend
Where nature doth with merit challenge. (48-53)

The eldest daughter Goneril declares her love for her father in honey eyed words and fawning admiration:

GONERIL. Sir, I love you more than word can wield the matter;
Dearer than eye-sight, space and liberty
Beyond what can be valued rich or rare;
No less than life with grace, health, beauty, honour;
As much as child e’er lov’d, or father found;
A love that makes breath poor and speech unable;
Beyond all manner of so much I love you. (55-61)

Lear is quite chuffed by this flattery and in a joyful exuberance (*vyabhicaribhava* of joy or *harsa*) bestows upon her and her husband (Albany) a large part of his kingdom, “With shadowy forests and with champains rich’d, / With plenteous rivers and white-skirted meads,” (64-65). Then he urges the second daughter Regan who avouches her love for her father in glowing terms, in fact she goes a step further of her elder sister claiming:

REGAN. Only she comes too short: that I profess
Myself an enemy to all other joys
Which the most precious square of sense possesses,
And find I am alone felicitate
In your dear highness’ love. (72-76)

Lear is extremely delighted (*vyabhicaribhava* of joy or *harsa*) with Regan’s obsequiousness and rewards her portion equal to that bestowed on Goneril:

LEAR. To thee and thine, hereditary ever,
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom,
No less in space, validity, and pleasure,
Than that conferr’d on Goneril. (79-82)

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Finally the youngest daughter Cordelia “our joy” (82) is asked to profess her love for her father. But Cordelia, whose asides (*atmagata*), “What shall Cordelia speak? Love, and be silent” (62) and “Then poor Cordelia! / And yet not so; since I am sure my love’s / More ponderous than my tongue” (77-79) express the transitory emotional state of anxiety (*cinta*), replies patently “Nothing, my lord” (87). Lear is shocked and agitated (*vyabhicarin*) (“explosive reaction”) (Linley) at this display of ingratitude by Cordelia, “Nothing will come of nothing speak again” (90) because he was expecting much more from his darling daughter. But her constant refusal umbrages Lear (*sthayibhava* of anger or *krodha*) and he presses Cordelia:

CORDELIA. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave

My heart into my mouth: I love your Majesty

According to my bond; no more nor less.

LEAR. How, how, Cordelia! Mend your speech a little,

Lest you may mar your fortune.

CORDELIA. ...That lord whose must take my plight shall carry

Half my love with him, half my care and duty:

Sure I shall never marry like my sisters,

To love my father all. (91-104)

“What infuriates him in Cordelia is her untainted feudal spirit” (Drakakis 153). Love is not a quantitative entity; it’s a feeling to be shared and an emotion to be felt. Goneril and Regan audition successfully since they know that only ceremonial words and not real emotions can win them their father’s property. Cordelia refuses to take part in this spurious love pageant because she cannot impress her father by public display of affection and by using rehearsed and decorated words like her elder sisters.

Depression (*dainya*), shock and dejection are the secondary emotional states (*vyabhicaribhavas*) aroused in King Lear when he says, “But goes thy heart with this? . . . So young, and so untender?” (105-106). Cordelia displays contentment (*dhriti*), “So young, my Lord, and true.” (107), which leads to Lear’s “fit of fury” (Wilson 188) (abiding emotion or *sthayibhava* of anger or *krodha*) culminating into *raudra rasa* and he retracts the remaining part of the kingdom dividing it equally between Goneril and Regan:

LEAR. Here I disclaim all my parental care,

Propinquity and property of blood,

And as a stranger to my heart and me

Hold thee from this for ever. (113-116)

Lear’s agitation (*avega*) and anger (*krodha*) (*vyabhicarins*) can also be observed in the following lines:

LEAR. I loved her most, and thought to set my rest

On her kind nursery. [*To Cordelia*] Hence, and avoid my sight!-

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So be my grave my peace as here I give

Her father's heart from her! (123-127)

As for himself, he will stay with Goneril and Regan by turns for a month and will reserve for his service a hundred knights displaying the secondary emotional state of arrogance (*garva*).

Kent courageously tries to meddle between "the Dragon and his wrath" (122) arousing *vira rasa* along with the floating emotion (*vyabhicaribhava*) of contentment (*dhriti*) which can also be noticed at different places, "Reserve thy state, / And in thy best consideration check / This hideous rashness." (149-151) and a little later "My life I never held but as a pawn / To wage against thine enemies, ne'er fear to lose it, / Thy safety being motive" (155-157) also "Revoke thy gift, / Or whilst I can vent clamour from my throat / I'll tell thee thou dost evil" (163-165). But the old King is unrelenting and enraged under the spell of the abiding emotion (*sthayibhava*) of anger (*krodha*) ("out of my sight!" (158) and "O vassal! Miscreant!" [163]) accompanied by the floating emotion of cruelty (*ugrata*) and arrogance (*garva*) banishes him allowing him only five days to make preparations to "shield thee from the disasters of the world" (174) and threatening to kill him if he is seen on the tenth day. One can again notice the secondary emotional feeling (*vyabhicain*) of arrogance (*garva*) in Lear's speech:

LEAR. Hear me, recreant; on thine allegiance hear me!

That thou hast sought to make us break our vows,

Which we durst never yet, and with strange pride

To come betwixt our sentence and our power,

Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,

Our potency made good take thy reward: (166-172)

Finally Kent bids farewell to the king stimulating the abiding emotion (*sthayibhava*) of grief (*soka bhava*) feeling worried (*cinta*) (*vybhicarin*) about Cordelia, "The gods to their dear shelter take thee, maid, / That justly think'st and hast most rightly said" (182-183).

Enraged, headstrong, embarrassed before his assembled court, Lear refuses to follow Kent's admonition to "see better" and plunges right on. His blindness is a result of willfulness, of a failure to heed the alternatives to disaster that he might have chosen, were he other than the man he is, and that have been open and obvious to everyone else (Halio 15).

The joint suitors of Cordelia, the King of France and the Duke of Burgundy are called in by King Lear to enquire whether they still wish to marry her, she being no more the loving daughter of her father and nothing to her possession but her own destiny. Under the displeasure of her father she is reduced to a timid creature with nothing appealing but a mere show, "When she was dear to us we did hold her so; / But now her price is fallen" (196-197)

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and displaying the transitory emotions (*vyabhicaribhavas*) of inconstancy (*capalata*) and arrogance (*garva*).

LEAR. Will you with those infirmities she owes,
Unfriended, new adopted to our hate,
Dowered with our curse and strangered with our oath,
Take her or leave her? (202-205)

Lear's distraught over once-his-loving daughter's attitude not to consider the worth of filial love, engulfed by feeling of dejection ultimately makes her a hate child. Notwithstanding the harshness of terms and sensing the disadvantage of having her as wife because the only thing she is going to have in dowry is disownment from her inheritance of the royal kingdom, the Duke of Burgundy refuses the proposal. However, the King of France through the arousal of the transitory emotional (*vyabhicaribhava*) state of shock recognizes that Cordelia's misfortunes are an outcome of her inability to make people happy by kowtowing around and she is going to suffer merely for want of flummery and points out to Burgundy, "Love's not love / When it is mingled with regards that stands / Aloof from th' entire point" (238-240). He is ready to accept her hand saying that her qualities of head and heart are a dowry over and above the royal kingdom displaying contentment (*dhriti*). Meanwhile, Cordelia again pleads to her father triggering the abiding emotion (*sthayibhava*) of grief (*soka*) accompanied by the secondary emotions of sadness and dejection:

CORDELIA. I yet beseech your majesty-
If for I want that glib and oily art
To speak and purpose not- since what I well intend,
I'll do't before I speak- that you may have known
It is no vicious blot, murder or foulness,
No unchaste action or dishonoured step
That hath deprived me of your grace and favour . . . (223-229)

But she displays immense steadfastness (*dhriti*) when she says, "a still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue / That I am glad I have not, though not to have it / Hast lost me in your liking" (231-233). Though she has the faith of her father and the fortune following that faith, still better things are in store for her in France where she would be the queen and own possessions fairer than those her father would have given her. In spite of all the disregard and rejection meted out to her, he (King of France) asks Cordelia bid farewell to her father and sisters invoking the floating emotional state (*vyabhicarin*) of indignation (*amarsa*). To her utter dismay, Lear, affected by the abiding emotion (*sthayibhava*) of anger (*krodha*), does not have a single word of farewell or blessing for his daughter and leaves the place pledging not to see her face ever after, "Better thou / Hadst not been born than not t'have pleased me better" (234-235) displaying arrogance (*garva*). With heavy heart and misty eyes (*sattvikabhava* of tears or *asva*), Cordelia takes leave of her sisters. She calls upon them to

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take good care of her their father whom she would have never entrusted to them, had the situation been not the same stimulating *karuna rasa* accompanied by the *sattvikabhava* of tears (*arsu*) and the secondary emotions (*vyabhicaribhavas*) indignation (*amarsa*), revulsion (*nirveda*) and engulfed with sadness and dejection:

CORDELIA. The jewels of our father, with washed eyes

Cordelia leaves you. I know you what you are,

And like a sister am most loth to call

Your faults as they are named. Love well our father.

To your professed bosoms I commit him.

But yet, alas, stood I within his grace

I would prefer him to a better place.

So farewell to you both. (268-275)

“She (Cordelia) is not disgusted by her sister’s flattery (it’s nothing new); but heart-broken at hearing the words she wishes she were in a position to say. So she is sent, and taken, away” (Cavell 293). Regan and Goneril, through the arousal of the secondary emotional state (*vyabhicaribhava*) of arrogance (*garva*), extend a very cold response. They urge her not to teach them as they know their duty well. She should rather do some concerted efforts to please her husband whom she has been given in charity. Here one can also notice the arousal of *sringara* (love) *rasa* in the Cordelia-King of France (*alambana vibhava* or generative factor) episode. This is well supported by different critical readings of the play. A.C.Bradley, the most renowned Shakespearean critic comments on the episode:

Her assertion of truth and right, her allegiance to them, even the touch of severity that accompanies it, instead of compelling mere respect or admiration, become adorable in a nature so loving as Cordelia’s. She is a thing enskyed and sainted, and yet we feel no incongruity in the love of the King of France for her . . . (*Shakespearean Tragedy* 240).

And

The King of France, who is prepared to accept Cordelia as his wife without any dowry, only for her personal qualities, is not a serious politician, but a romantic lover whose noble declaration on behalf of ideal and disinterested love reminds us of Shakespeare’s sonnets rather than of the old chronicle play (Mehl 83).

No doubt the environment is not congenial (which is a prerequisite for the arousal of love) as she is being disowned by her father. She is sad and dejected and pleads her father to reconsider his rash decision. In spite of this the King of France is ready to accept her very well knowing that she has no dowry. There is love or at least an undercurrent of attraction. If it had not been so, he would have rejected her easily like Burgundy did. He is smitten by her virtues such as plain speaking and her innocence which act as *uddipana vibhavas* (exciting

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factor) in this case and intensify his love for her. Moreover, their love is also mutual as Cordelia also decides to marry him.

Now the two sisters, Goneril and Regan, being left alone, discuss the fresh state of affairs or in a way start showing their true self displaying arrogance (*garva*). What actually follows is their hidden, ugly and common intentions. Neither of them is actually interested in Lear's welfare. They talk of his hasty decisions, random choices, his mood swings, short-temper and high-headedness and above all his false judgments as displayed lately by disowning Cordelia, once his most lovable daughter, labeling her the most unworthy that even nature would be ashamed of, in a way they actually chalk out their future plan of action based on their common interest and that comes out to be their joint venture to get rid of their aged father by depriving him of his left-over authority invoking the abiding emotion of disgust (*jugupsa*) in the readers towards them.

Conclusion

Shakespeare's magnificent tragedy, *King Lear* (1605), unfolds the story of an aging monarch, who invites disaster by dividing his kingdom between his two ungrateful daughters, giving importance to the recitation of their love for him and rejecting the honest one. The poor king is deceived by the reams of effusive praise trotted by his hypocrite daughters (Goneril and Regan). All his anticipations prove false and the tender chords of filial love give way to the selfish motive created out of lust of power on the part of his elder daughters. The opening scene arouses a number of emotions as the youngest daughter Cordelia refuses to make an embellished and dishonest speech enraging Lear leading to *raudra rasa*. Kent, the loyal servant of the king arouses *vira rasa* as he warns Lear about the rashness of his decision. Cordelia is banished leaving her father to the care of her sisters and thereby arousing *karuna rasa*. But one also observes the *sringara rasa* when the King of France decides to accept Cordelia on the basis of her virtues very well knowing that she has been disinherited by her father. Lear immediately realizes the folly of his decision when Goneril and Regan refuse to allow him the maintenance that he had stipulated for. The entire play is full of epic emotions-*bhaya*, *jugupsa*, *raudra*, *vira*, *sringara*, *hasya*-which puts the readers into confusion regarding the predominance of a particular emotion. However, the dominance of *karuna* or *soka bhava* in view of the sufferings meted out to him at the hands of his loved ones whom he trusted unconditionally cannot be ruled out and hence the qualification of the play as tragedy. Shakespeare is a universally critiqued literary genius whose works have been extensively evaluated and investigated by critics all over the world. But the criticism of his craft in terms of human emotions has been somewhat restrained. However, when re-routed in the light of *rasa* theory, the same emerges fully blossomed.

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