

# The Smile Behind Sorrow: Hasya Rasa in Robert Browning's "The Last Ride Together" and John Keats' "La Belle Dame Sans Merci"

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**Abstract--** Literature like poetry has aesthetic value along with social value. The expression of emotion is the power of literature that captivates readers. Readers enjoy text experiencing rasa, present paper explores. Robert Browning's "The Last Ride Together" and John Keats' "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" from the perspective of the rasa theory, i.e. an eastern aesthetic theory. Both the poems randomly selected expose Hasya Rasa experience. They poets utilize hasya rasa to proclaim and spread pleasure as well idea, thought, like erotic lover, waggish: the expression and realization of rasa constitute the aesthetic value and power of both the poems: the poems selected here demonstrate that the formal and serious poems can be amusing chucklesoms. Although the realization the level of hasya rasa may vary from individual to individual as their academics, professionals, social status and age, there is hasya rasa experience in both the poems.

**Keywords--** Hasya rasa, Vibhav, Anubhava, Sthayibhava.

Multidisciplinary approaches to the field of lit, have become significant practices in recent times. Such type of **attitudes** helps to produce new aspects and meanings of literary texts although there is great difficulty to maintain the meaning, original beauty grandeur of the literature of the east and the west. Rasa theory is an eastern aesthetic theory. The primary purpose of the research work is to study western poems through rasa theory i.e. an eastern literary theory.

The Rasa theory has occupied a great space in Bharatanuini's Natyasastra that deals with Sanskrit theatre and dramatic art. Bharatanuini has explained rasa theory in the context of drama in Natyasastra. After Bharatanuini, the nature of rasa has been discussed in reference of poetry. Rasa exposition is seen in the play whereas rasa is heard in the poem because a play is performed and act through 'drisya' in the theatre, but the poem is recited and read aloud, and **viewers recognise** rasa through sravna (audio- sound) Rasa has been extended from 'visual literature poetry' (Pollock 6) Poetry consist persons, environment, animals, objects or personification of 8th, which are emotionally narrative. Rasa is also applicable to poetry. Dandin says, "Rasa is found in both the language subject matter, and insightful people become intoxicated by it like bees by honey." (Cited in Pollock 5). The heightened feelings or emotions are expressed in poems.

W. W's very significant definition of poetry also **concentrates** on the experience of emotion in poetry, and he defines poetry is "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" and "poetry has its origin in emotions recollected in tranquillity" (Preface to Lyrical Ballads) words worth adds, "All excellence poetry is the self-generated overspill of mighty feelings."

## I. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL TOOLS

This study uses qualitative descriptive method. The article is based on the primary sources some western poems of different poets, and the secondary sources books and articles related to rasa theory. In the present paper, rasa theory is used as the theoretical tools of data analysis to find out hasya rasa experience in the poems. The paper is based on the critical textual analysis. Hasya rasa is an important sentiment of literary work of art. Humour in work of art is not only comic. A literary work of art may turn into uninteresting without the comic touch in story, it will turn into heavy and unexciting watching and reading. In the chapter 4 (48) of Natyashastra the Hasya rasa is explained as:

As for the rasa, it consists of the primary emotions of laughter. It arises from such vibhav as wearing clothes and ornaments that belong to someone else or do not fit (Vikrat), seamlessness (dhrstyā), greed tickling sensitive parts of body, telling fantastic tales, seeing some (comic) deformity (vyanga) and describing faults (Masson and Patwardhan).

Rasa is an emotion and sentiment generated in the sympathetic reader's after reading literary texts." due to metaphorical and suggested meanings it is used for self, bliss and pure joy" (Barlingay). Kapila Vatsyayan says, rasa is highly charged state of momentary freedom and emancipation which motivates inspire creation...this experience facilitates an abstraction of life into its primary emotion and sentiments." (Cited in Schwartz 14.)

Lee Siegel states about the importance of rasa that "Rasa is at once an inner and outer quality as the object of taste, the capacity of the taster to taste that taste and enjoy, the enjoyment, the tasting of the taste". (9). A reader laughs, cries, feels pain and pleasure, and assimilates their realities through exaggeration, fantasy and romance.

According to Krishnamoorthy: Rasa means supreme joy, mental feeling, and aesthetic enjoyment. All these shade. So of meaning somehow get fused in its ultimate connotations understood, it is the ultima Thule (ultimate end) of all literature the highest aesthetic value which is an end in itself. It can be attained only by a few gifted souls with hearts akin to poets...It is a disinterested, impersonal, contemplative state of ecstasy, sui generis (325).

Among all the all rasas, hasya rasa is discussed in this article because humour refers to, "a comic utterance, or to a comic appearances or made of behaviour" (Abhrams 340). Hasya rasa creates "laughter, by wearing unusual ornaments, uncouth behaviour, odd speech and words, dresses and strange movements of body in acting." (Sajjan, Mishra, and Sharma 29)

Vibhava is any cause of a particular emotion; it is "the support, cause or the stimulus for the rasa experience." (Mehta 83).

Raghavan in his 'The Number of Rasa' defines two types of hasya rasa: Self-laughing and laughing at. While realizing hasya rasa, people may laugh in six different ways:

- ✓ Smith (gentle smile)
- ✓ Hasita (slight laughter)
- ✓ Vihasita (open laughter)
- ✓ Upahasita (laughter of ridicule)
- ✓ Apahasita (obscene laughter)
- ✓ Atihasita (boisterous laughter)

The gentle, high rank and superior persons have smita and hasya; the middling and ordinary persons have vihasita and upahasita: and the bases lower and mean types of persons have apahasita and atihasita.

## II. CONVERSATION AND ELUCIDATION

A broken order, unexpected comic happening, unusual language use, ionic remark, satire, etc. make reader laugh. "where laughter (not happiness) and love are found together, the comic element will blend into the general atmosphere of fun and festivity" (Patnaik 117).

Exposition of Hasya Rasa in Robert Browning's 'The Last Ride Together' Hasya rasa is experienced also in Robert Browning's 'The Last Ride Together'. "The fixed form does not mean a fixed expression; humor is also possible in it" (Meyer 1010). Robert Browning describe his beloved in an unexpected way and in congruent relation of the image. The disorder but harmless kind of description give rise to laughter in the poem. The speaker of the poem praises his mistress unsuitably; there are strange contrast and not suitable in a general expression. he has not used the word mistress or beloved but "dearest". Dearest refers to the 'most loved or cherished person'.

The expression of dearest educe light chortle in the sympathetic readers, because the speaker talks about his beloved not his wife. the speaker of the poem shows malformation and inappropriateness of his mistress. 'your name in pride and thankfulness' he does not compare her beauty with anybody, he just exemplify

The blood replenished me again;  
 My last thought was at least not vain:  
 I and my mistress side by side;  
 Shall be together breathe and ride:  
 So, one day more am i deified,  
 Who knows but the world may end to-night.

By readingsuch humorous and incongruous comparisons, the l readers laugh, the speaker sees that there is no delight in her breath like perfumes. she does not say even a single word in the poem even then readers find funny and amusing comparison that evoke laughter.

Had I said that, had i done this,  
 So might I gain so might I miss,  
 Might she have loved me? just as well  
 She might have hated, who can tell?  
 Where had I been now if the worst befell,  
 And here we are riding, she and I.

Browning uses unusual comparisons to cause the theme love and hope. he uses Witty comparisons that make the readers smiling and laughing aloud. Vibhavas cause to evoke emotions. here the speaker, his mistress and the whole environment are vibhavas. the speakers serve as a ashrayalambana vibhavas in which hasya rasa is evoked. transitory emotions appear while going through the poem. the feeling of garva (pride) appear in the expression of love and hope in the poem.

Fail i alone in words and deeds,  
 Why all men strive and who succeeds?  
 What hand the brain went ever praised?  
 What heart alike conceived and dared?  
 What will but felt the fleshy screen?  
 We ride and I see her bosom heave,  
 there's many a crown for who can reach.



These vyabhichari bhavas like harsha, Garva, hope excite the slumbering emotion and quicken hasya rasa. Thus the poem concludes with hopeful conclusion and readers get optimism as well as contemplation after reading this.

Presentation of Hasya Rasa experience in John Keats' "La Belle Dame sans Merci"

Allow me to examine hasya rasa in the next very famous Ballad of John Keats "La Belle Dame sans Merci"; Keats present the "ail thee," knight at Arms, theme through curiosity in the poem. reader realise in the poem that the male speaker addresses a female persuading to love. She persuades him to fall in love because time is too short. he counts her eyes in comparison with

I met a lady in the meads,

Full beautiful - fairy's child, her hair was long, her foot was light,

And her eyes were wild. (13-16)

The lady seems innocent and shy but it in her humorous activity. she seems to tell if they have time enough, they will sit and walk together long time:

She took me to her Elfin grot,

And there she wept and sighed full sore,

And there i shut her wild wild eyes,

With kiss four (27-30)

Elfin grot symbolises the excessive feeling of love shown towards the woman. the knight is probably very in love because he could easily go in the cave without any hesitation. The knight may have run the risk of dying in the face of love, a strong life motivation.

Keats' 'La belle Dame sans Merci' opens with a protagonist knight at arms and fractions of nature:

"Alone and palely loitering,/ the sledge is withered from the lake,/ and no bird sings."

In these lines nature tries to explain something giving this desolate and turbulent autumn landscape that lacks liveliness and vitality. In her essay "Language strange" Weismann says that "nature speaks through the poet senses, she can be moral, instructor (96)." when a person loses his or her hope to live, that person feels on the verge of death without any spark of life. moreover, roses are the symbol of love but fading roses on the protagonist's cheek may again illustrate the loss of hope concerning the love since the knight -at-Arms might have been entrapped by a woman.

However, nature does not treat submissively on every occasion. sometime it distracts us: "for sidelong would she bend, and sing/ a fairy's song"(Keats XI.4-5) The present poem shows the relation between love and nature fed by mythology. when she sings fairy's song she may Allure all the men and entraps them. this sweet voice and her seductive song might be the end of the knight's life, if she entraps all men then protagonist may remain with the pain in his heart causing him to stay. the introduction of nature ends in seduction and betrayal. (Weismann 95)

Fairy Woman's offer of a transient Bliss, a particular kind of imaginative experience to the Knight, proves that love has been the source of life for the knight's despite its brooding aspects.

All these images readers laugh at the Speaker of the poem. The male Speaker Compares her 'youthful Hue' with 'morning dew'. Keats uses gloomy and pale image of the knight and the idea seize the day. This, hasya rasa is experienced in the poem. Here the speaker expresses his emotions in the words:

I made a Garland for her head,

And bracelet too, and fragrant zone,

she looked at me as she did love

And made sweet moan.

La Bella Dame sans Merci is a romantic poem, therefore embodies the features of a romantic period. in order to analyse the poem elaborately, it is important to have background knowledge about the period. the Romantic period in Britain starts with French Revolution in 1789 and ends with Reform Act of 1832. the French Revolution was effectively in the emergence of 'Liberty Equality and Fraternity' (Carter, Lea103)

Burwell also suggests that "the flower imagery here is twofold. the immediate effect is that the knight - at - arms is proven to be literary pale - hence the Lily - and there is a colour fast fading in his cheeks." Actually Keats is worried at being imprisoned by Fanny's love and annoyed at female bewitchment like Tom's faked lover Amena. it makes sense he attempts to overcome the fears through the knight's deprivation of La Belle dame's voice. in other words, Keats intend to imprison the feminine in the "marble of his art" (Gilbert and Gubar, 1979, p.460). he even equates poet quality with female sexual power, and thus the deprivation of La Belle Dsmr's voice demonstrates the poet's effort to confirm the stability of his masculine identity. As White concludes, "throughout his adult life Keats was concerned to prove his masculinity... while simultaneously reaching out of female company and women readers" (2010, p. 154). In the present ballad rati bhava also appears in the readers.

The feeling of mirth occurs when the speaker's mind has been an affected state of conscious - 'I made a Garland for her head and bracelet too.'

It proves that he intends to occupy her as his object of pleasure through embellishment. The Garland, bracelet and fragrant Zone are not only accessories but also symbols of male captivation and imprisonment. With the decoration of knight endeavors to 'dominate' her by domesticating her wilderness and bringing her within the world of romance" (Schulkins, 2014 p. 118).

The lady in this poem is equipped with romantic traits of beauty, innocence, obedient and openness; but on the other side she is described as sexually attractive, lustful, treacherous, devilish and dangerous. Mary Wollstonecraft states in "A vindication of the Rights of Women", "women are therefore, to be considered either as moral beings, or so weak that they must be entirely subjected to the superior faculties of men" (2001, p. 1414). She also in some way inscribed that opinion that the female sex was "the weakest as well as the most oppressed half of the species" (2001, p. 1422). Wolfson commented, "the ballad shimmers as a dialogue of the mind with itself" (2015: p. 85). Here, the expression of the feeling of mirth can be a gentle smile. The speaker may fear of losing her and her beauty; this feeling of fear is bhaya in vyabicharibhavas. A feeling of astonishment appears in the sympathetic reader when the speaker insists on the concept of seize of the day. The speaker has a feeling of sankha whether the lady will be convinced or won't. The readers also feel apprehension about the speaker's intention to the lady. The feeling of joy also arises when the speaker talks about the lady's beauty, the desired one.

### III. INTERPRETATION

Robert Browning's "The Last Ride Together" and John Keats' "La Belle Dame sans Merci" are investigated from the standpoint of Rasa Theory. Eastern Theory, Rasa is which is relished by the readers in the literature and art. The arousal of emotions of humour is the source of aesthetic delight in them. Without the evocation of Rasa, there is no meaningful thought, theme, pleasure in literature. Book lovers enjoy and want to re-read because of the evocation of rasa in the poems.

Here, the selected Western poems afford enough room for the evocation of Hasya Rasa. The pleasing value is engaged in the poems of poet like Robert Browning and John Keats. These poets give sufficient aesthetic pleasure and thoughts; the aesthetic beauty and emotion in the poems are examined from the Hasya Rasa theory. Emotion (bhavas) in the poems captivates. It proves that formal and serious poems like 'The Last Ride Together' and 'La Belle Dame sans Merci' can be laughable, amusing.

Hasya rasa is realised by the sympathetic readers through the process of universalization. Although the realization level of Hasya rasa may vary from individual to individual as the status and age, Hasya rasa is seamed in the above-discussed poems.

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