



Candida: A Melodious Embrace of Love's Complexity

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Abstract:

Exploring the play *Candida* by the well-known Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw through the lens of Rasa theory, this research focuses on the rasa evoked in the play through various dramatic techniques and presentation, specifically śṛṅgāra rasa or the erotic sentiments. Śṛṅgāra rasa is one of the eight rasas discussed by Bharat Muni in his magnum opus *Nāṭyaśāstra*. This theory talks about the emotional experiences or different emotional states evoked, which is called Rasa. Shaw's *Candida* is a play majorly studied with the Western perspectives of audiences or readers, especially as a problem play. This research is positioned from a reader's perspective rather than that of a spectator. Drawing from classical Indian aesthetics and literary analysis, this research offers an understanding of how śṛṅgāra rasa intertwines with the complexities of love within the play. By delving into the subtleties of character interactions, dialogues, and the narrative arc, the analysis highlights how Shaw skillfully crafts an intricate portrayal of romantic and emotional entanglements. This endeavor enriches the conventional interpretations of the play by providing a nuanced comprehension of its emotional depth through the application of Rasa theory, thereby contributing to a more holistic appreciation of Shaw's work.

Key Words: Love, rasa, śṛṅgāra rasa

1. Introduction:

In the realm of dramatic literature, George Bernard Shaw's *Candida* serves as a captivating canvas that intricately weaves the threads of love's complexity. This research embarks on an exploration that transcends conventional analyses, delving into the intersections of Shaw's profound narrative and the rich tapestry of the Indian Aesthetic theory of rasa, focusing on śṛṅgāra rasa. This study seeks to unravel the layers of emotion, societal dynamics, and cultural influences embedded in the play. While existing scholarship has shed light on the thematic dimensions of *Candida*, a notable research gap beckons - the



uncharted territory where śringāra rasa converges with Shaw's exploration of love. By bridging Western drama with the insights of Indian aesthetic theory, this research endeavours to provide a nuanced and cross-cultural perspective on the emotional intricacies within *Candida* offering a fresh lens through which to appreciate the melodious embrace of love in Shaw's dramatic masterpiece.

2. Review of Literature:

This literature review delves into the richness of G B Shaw's *Candida*, exploring its intricate portrayal of love. Drawing insights from various research works, it examines how the play is studied, read, compared and worked upon by other researchers till date. It aims to uncover the existing knowledge regarding the text as well as Rasa theory.

Devang begins with the statement that aesthetic pleasure derived from artistic circumstances is called rasa. Bharat Muni was the first person to systematically discuss Rasa Theory in detail in his Magnum opus *Natyashastra*. It is observed that proper conjunction of Vibhāva, Anubhāva, Vyabhicāribhāva appeals to the Sthāyibhāva which leads to the Rasa nispatti. Vibhāva is of two kinds: 1) Ālambana 2) Uddipana. Anubhāva are categorized into three: 1) Āngika 2) Vācika 3) Sāttvika. There are thirty-three Vyabhicāribhāva and eight Sthāyibhāva which are permanently latent emotions in the human mind. Rasa are eight in numbers.

Rashmi Jain in her research article, undertakes a comparative analysis of Bernard Shaw's *Candida* and Mahesh Dattani's *Where There's a Will*, both centred around marriage and the role of women in society. Shaw exposes the flaws of ideal marriage in *Candida* while Dattani boldly addresses marriage and extramarital affairs in *Where There's a Will*. The study explores how time and ambiance impact family bonds and interpersonal relationships. It contrasts the portrayal of women and the concept of the "new woman" in the 1890s with the patriarchal context of the 1980s. Despite belonging to different periods, countries, and cultures, Shaw and Dattani share a commitment to art for life's sake. The paper sheds light on the unique tools and techniques employed by each dramatist, highlighting their distinctive styles in addressing societal issues. Shaw is portrayed as an apostle of new drama, while Dattani emerges as a revolutionary dramatist, both bringing forth invisible issues in postmodern society through characters drawn from diverse social strata.

Dr Sushil Kumar Mishra explores Love and Marriage Issues Portrayed in the Early Plays of G. B Shaw. George Bernard Shaw, influenced by Ibsen's impact on English drama, began his career as a realist using the stage for social messages. He saw the dramatist's role in addressing the conflict between human emotions and circumstances, focusing on social issues like slum landlordism, capitalism, and marriage.



As a committed socialist, Shaw's early plays served as a platform for addressing contemporary problems with satirical wit, showcasing the power of the pen over the sword.

Dr C Ramya explores Bernard Shaw's dramatic world, focusing on women characters as embodiments of softness, endurance, domesticity, passion, independent will, and human sympathy. It analyses Shaw's literary and artistic prowess by examining these characters, highlighting their aspirations and quest for liberation within his dramatic realm. The study underscores how Shaw's female characters actively engage in life, evolving into new, independent women. The conclusion emphasizes Shaw's portrayal of these women as self-sufficient and glorified individuals, embodying self-dignity and individuality, poised to awaken and positively impact the world.

Louise & Raina introduce a novel perspective on mind and creativity, influenced by the Indian aesthetic concept of saḥṛdaya (appreciative critic) in rasa tradition. It connects this tradition's non-duality principle with the symmetry principle in quantum mechanics. The paper explores significant implications for psychology, especially in understanding creativity, offering a non-Western lens for a comprehensive view of the mind's dynamics.

Existing studies provide valuable insights into love within dramatic literature, there is a dearth of exploration regarding how the Indian aesthetic theory of rasa, can enrich our experiences of reading works of George Bernard Shaw. It presents an exciting avenue for scholar to bridge the realm of Western drama and Indian Aesthetic Theory, contributing to a more holistic comprehension of the melodious embrace of love within Shaw's plays.

3. Research Objectives:

- 1) To apply rasa theory to Shaw's *Candida*
- 2) To examine the representation of love in *Candida*
- 3) Contextualize śringāra rasa in Western Drama

4. Hypothesis:

- Applying śringāra rasa to the interpretation of George Bernard Shaw's play *Candida* from a reader's perspective shall enhance the depth of emotional engagement, providing a culturally diverse and profound lens through which readers can navigate and appreciate the intricate complexities of love within the Western Dramatic narrative.



5. Research Methodology

The research methodology encompasses a comprehensive approach, beginning with an extensive literature review on Rasa theory, śringāra Rasa, and their applications in literature. Employing a close textual analysis, the study scrutinizes George Bernard Shaw's play *Candida*, identifying instances where śringāra Rasa manifests in characters, dialogues, and themes. A comparative analysis is conducted to juxtapose śringāra rasa's portrayal in *Candida* with other interpretations of love in Western literature. The historical and cultural context of both Rasa theory and *Candida* is investigated, and specific scenes or characters within the play are selected as case studies for in-depth analysis.

6. Rasa Theory:

Rasa Theory, rooted in Indian Classical Aesthetics, posits that artistic experiences evoke distinct emotional states called “Rasa”. The concept was originated and clearly discussed in *Nāṭyaśāstra*, the magnum opus of the great Indian Sage Bharata. It was further developed by Abhinav Gupta and other critics and theoreticians. Rasa deals with the emotional response of a reader or spectator that may not be easily described by words but usually felt while witnessing effective presentation of art.

“Vibhāvānubhāva-vyābhicāri samyogād-rasa-nispatih”

The Rasa is accomplished as a result of the conjunction of Vibhāva, Anubhāva, and Vyābhicāribhāva, which appeals to the Sthāyibhāva which leads to the Rasa experience. (Sethuraman-191) Vibhava is the cause or main source of emotions. Theoreticians who came after Bharata have divided into two: 1) Ālambana and 2) Uddipana. Anubhāva means consequences, bodily expressions by which emotion is expressed. Vyābhicāribhāva are transitory states which are not dominant or permanent but they feed the dominant states. Sthāyibhāva are labelled as the king of all the other bhava by Bharata. They are eight in number and are inborn gifts of men.

In the context of this research, śringāra rasa, associated with love and beauty, serves as a lens to illuminate the intricate emotional tapestry within George Bernard Shaw’s play *Candida*.

7. Rasa Analysis of *Candida*

George Bernard Shaw was an Irish playwright, music critic, philosopher, and a social activist. In 1884, he pioneered The Fabian Society. As a playwright, he wanted to force his readers or viewers to face the reality of unpleasant events. Since Shaw’s death scholarly and critical opinion about Shaw and his works may varied, but he is considered and read widely as second playwright to Shakespeare in the canon of English literature.



The play *Candida* revolves around the interactions and emotions of the characters, primarily centred on Candida herself. Her interactions with both Morell and Marchbanks evoke a strong sense of śringāra rasa, as they experience a range of emotions related to love, affection and attraction. It also somewhere evokes Vatsalya through the character and statements of Candida. Other than the principal rasa of Śringāra, this play is full of other sentiments as well i.e., laughter, anger, jealous, sorrow, etc. which leads to the realisation of Hāsya, Karuna, Vira, Raudra rasa.

In Indian Aesthetics, it is śringāra rasa that is given maximum importance. śringāra rasa has been divided into two: love in separation- it depicts the reactions of the lover and the beloved in the absence of each other or the loved object, and love in union- it depicts the intensification of love when the lover and beloved are together. (Patnaik, 56-57)

The exploration of Śringāra Rasa within this play reveals a nuanced tapestry of love, passion, and beauty. The character of Candida embodies the essence of Śringāra Rasa, evoking sentiments of romantic love and aesthetic appreciation. The dialogues between Candida and James Morell, with Eugene Marchbanks resonate with poetic expressions and subtle nuances, capturing the essence of the emotional and sensual dimensions of love.

Śringāra Rasa, traditionally associated with the themes of love and beauty, finds resonance in Candida's interactions with both Morell and Marchbanks. The tension between the intellectual and emotional aspects of love is palpable, adding layers of complexity to the portrayal of Śringāra Rasa. Candida's graceful demeanour and her ability to elicit admiration and devotion from those around her exemplify the aesthetic beauty inherent in Śringāra Rasa.

The play's setting and context provide a unique backdrop for the manifestation of Śringāra Rasa. The domestic sphere becomes a canvas for the expression of intimate emotions, and Shaw skilfully weaves Śringāra Rasa into the fabric of everyday life. The play's exploration of societal expectations and the role of women further enriches the portrayal of Śringāra Rasa, offering a multifaceted perspective on love within the cultural and historical context.

Furthermore, the play's dialogues, infused with lyrical qualities, contribute to the aesthetic experience associated with Śringāra Rasa. Shaw's language choices and the rhetorical finesse in expressing love and desire enhance the emotional impact on the audience, aligning with the principles of this classical Indian aesthetic theory.



As per the Rasa Sutra, “Vibhāvānubhāva-vyabhicāri samyogād-rasa-nispattih”, Here in this play, Bhāva, Vibhāva, Anubhāva, and Vyabhicāribhāva specifically for Śringāra rasa can be discussed as below.

Candida’s affectionate nature and her role as the centre of romantic attention evoke the emotional states of love, attraction, and tenderness. Her beauty, kindness, and charm serve as stimuli (Vibhāva) for the feelings of love and attraction in both Morell and Marchbanks. Looking at the consequences or Anubhāva, Morell’s efforts to provide for Candida’s needs and his dedication to her well being showcase his devotion. While Marchbanks’ reactions to her interactions with Morell reflects his jealousy and unrequited love. Marchbanks’ confessions for his love for Candida evokes different transitory emotions in James Morell i.e., anger, jealousy, insecurity.

Eugene: “I love your wife.” (Shaw, 37)

At different levels of act, I & II, laughter and anger are evoked as transitory emotions which are called Vyabhicāribhāva in Indian Aesthetics.

Morell: “...Eugene: take care. I have been patient. I hope to remain patient. But there are some things I won’t allow.” (Shaw, 37)

Morell: “[Wrathfully]Leave my house. Do you hear? [He advances on him threateningly]” (Shaw, 40)

Shaw’s witty dialogues and situational comedy bring out humour, especially in the interactions between Morell, Marchbanks and the supporting characters. The character of Marchbanks experiences frustration due to Candida’s affections for Morell, leading to emotional conflicts and outbursts. The play elicits compassion towards Marchbanks as he navigates his unrequited love and struggles with his emotions. Morell’s dedication to his work as a preacher showcases his courage and heroism in his pursuit of social change. Marchbanks’ fear of losing Candida’s love and attention drives his emotional reactions and internal struggles.

The play touches on societal norms and expectations, evoking a sense of disgust towards rigid traditions that restrict personal freedom.

Eugene: “We all go about longing for love: it is the first need of our nature’s, the first prayer of our hearts; but we dare not utter our longing: we are too shy.... All the love in the world is longing to speak but...” (Shaw, 44)



8. Conclusion:

Reading and analysing the play *Candida* from rasa theory's insights into emotional essence, the play waves together allure, charm, and poignant moments. Ultimately, *Candida* envelopes us in its melodious narrative, inviting us to ponder the intricate nature of love's tapestry. Love is presented as a modern setting of office or room, there is no vibhāva like garden or the season of spring.

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