The word *rasa* is a fine crystal, secreted by Indian thought over slow centuries, and, like the crystal which can shed a many-coloured radiance according to the angle of incident light, it also reveals many meanings according to the angle of approach.\(^1\) The nature of aesthetic emotion, the unique and extraordinary *alaukika* delight kindled by works of art, through the experience of which a transmutation takes place is crystallised by Bharata, as *rasa*. His famous *Nātyasāstra*, the most ancient text on dramaturgy, was composed with an eye to dramatic representation. Though Bharata originally used the term *rasa* in connection with drama and poetry, later it came to be applied to other genres of art as well. In fact *kāyva* (poetry) and *nātya* (drama) are sometimes used synonymously.

The theory is set down at great length by Abhinavagupta in his text *Abhinavabhārati*, where the term *rasa* is discussed in all its connotative significance; himself a great critic, poet and philosopher, he brings into his discussions a tremendous insight and perception which has been imbibed by later theorists who consider *rasa* as the soul and essence of art. There is no English equivalent to

\(^1\) Krishna Chaitanya, *Sanskrit Poetics*, p. 1.
this term and so it cannot be translated or paraphrased. Its full import has to be imaginatively grasped, especially in the context of discussions of literary art and appreciation.

In a literal sense *rasa* means a kind of juice or sap and signifies the flavour one gets from tasting this liquid. It is a term borrowed from Indian medical science even as Aristotle borrowed the term *katharsis* used in relation to tragedy, from Greek medical science. It has also a metaphysical connotation as when in the *Upanishads* it is taken to be akin to spiritual delight (*ānanda*). The *Upanishads* hold that cosmic creation itself derives from *ānanda*, and has its being, life and sustenance in it. So *rasa* or aesthetic experience at the highest level is *ānanda* equal to spiritual delight.3

Generally *rasa* refers to the essence of a thing and this was the meaning carried over into aesthetics and art. Bharata’s realistic approach and eventual location of the aesthetic and artistic quality in a psycho-physical state is comparable to Aristotle’s in the West. As conceived by Bharata, this state is an experience of beauty in any work of art arising from a response inclusive of all the nuances

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3 This conception of *rasa* is in perfect harmony with the assertion made in Taittiriya Upanishad, "Rasō vai sah. rasm hiśvṛyam labdhvā ānandi bhavati" (II.7).
of meanings and techniques employed by the writer. As an aesthetic experience, rasa refers not to the mere organic pleasure derived from tasting (āsvādana), but signifies a kind of impersonal delight or objectified pleasure. So when the term is used as a factor in art, it refers to the much needed criterion of the beautiful as against the merely agreeable and pleasant.

Rasa is best explained, not by the theoreticians, but by the great dramatist Bhavabhūti in his Uttara Rāma Charita, when he makes Rama describe the peculiar emotion he has felt at the touch of Sita. This emotion is suggestive of the poetic emotion rasa:

I cannot say for certain whether it is pleasure or pain whether stupor or sleep; whether poison's work or intoxication; at every touch of yours a certain sensation comes upon me, stupefying all my senses, now bewildering my consciousness, and now paralysing (I.35).

The emotion is something akin to what Keats describes in the opening lines of Ode to Nightingale:

My heart aches and a drowsy numbness
Pains my sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk.

This concept, therefore, became in Indian aesthetics and art theory the most comprehensive principle signifying the art process in all its phases, the creative, the created and the appreciative; and its presence was indispensable to the work of art as well as the experience of art.
Bharata asserts that "no composition can proceed without rasa" (Nātayasastra, VI) Abhinavagupta comments that "the meaning of poetry is rasa" (Abhinavabhārati, 7.1). Bharata in the well-known aphorism explains rasa as being that quality which arises from the combined factors presented objectively by a work of art, and also those subjective reactions in the readers. He said "out of the determinants (vibhāva), consequents (anubhāva), and transitory mental states (vyābhichārin), the birth of rasa takes place."

This is the vibhāva-anubhāva-vyābhichārin-samyogād rasa niṣpattī. Bharata explains the factors of art creation. He says that an emotional state like fear cannot be stated in words or narrated. It has to be poetically constructed in order that it conveys not merely knowledge or information of the emotion, but produces an appropriate emotional response. The rasa-sūtra presents an anatomy of art experience.

The vibhāvas (determinants) refer to what in ordinary life would be the cause for arousing certain emotions. They can be equated to actual physical media. In real life they can also be called natural causes. But in a work of art, since they are part of an artificially contrived situation, they are referred to as determinants in

order to distinguish them from natural causes. The main stimulating cause is called the ālambana-vibhāva, like the characters in a play; while the environmental factors are called uddīpana-vibhāvas, that is, additional causes or excitants. Of the two-fold reactions which follow or accompany an emotional impact, the physical are called anubhāvas, while the mental are called vyābhichāri bhāvas.5

The traditional definition of rasa runs on these lines. Bharata discusses the type of material best suited for the creation of rasa and the most appropriate method for its effective presentation. He finally concludes that eight elemental emotions alone—namely, delight (rati), laughter (hāsa), sorrow (soka), anger (krodha), heroism (utsāha), fear (bhaya), disgust (jugupsa) and astonishment (vismaya)—are really suited for this purpose. Later a ninth feeling, serenity (santhi) was added. These emotions, being stable (sthāyi) and universal, find a ready correspondence in human experience and allow easy identification.

The cardinal concept of Indian aesthetics is rasa. It has been variously translated as 'Sentiment', 'Aesthetic Emotion', Stimmung, Geschmack, Saveur. As Krishna Rayan says, all these words have other connotations which can

5 G.K. Bhat, Rasa Theory (Baroda : M.S. University of Baroda, 1984), p.8.
mislead and confuse. He quotes the famous definition by Visvanatha from Sāhityadarpaṇa:

Rasa, experienced by men of sensibility, is born of the dominance of the sattva principle, is indivisible, self-manifested, compounded of joy and consciousness, untouched by aught else perceived, brother to the realisation of brahman, and its very life is unearthly wonder.

Krishna Rayan feels it is simpler to describe rasa as response to art.

It has all the features of the aesthetic experience familiar to Western philosophy - it is emotion objectified, universalised; and raised to a state where it becomes the object of lucid disinterested contemplation and is transfigured into serene joy; this is as far as the non-philosopher can get in defining the nature of the rasa experience.

The principle of rasa has tremendous psychological reality as it is based on the feelings experienced by human beings; these are called bhāvas. The eight dominant feelings, called sthāvibhāvas, predominant mental states or abiding reactivity in human consciousness, are singled out by the poeticians. Each of these is capable of being transmuted into a corresponding mood which is called rasa. Grief or sorrow can inspire the mood of compassion, karunā. It is

7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
believed that grief, the anguish of the Rama-Sita story which had intrigued sage Vālmiki, was expressed in a new metrical pattern and poetic grandeur when Vālmiki saw and felt the sorrow of the parallel story in the grief of the female bird at the sudden loss of its companion which had fallen a prey to the arrow of the hunter. Vālmiki does not curse the hunter in positive terms; he only passes a negative curse, feeling that the hunter would never find any peace anywhere. The feeling of compassion, karuṇa, is the emotion or rasa which pervades the whole story and is reflective of the sorrow of the human race itself. Thus it is seen that grief can inspire the mood of compassion, energy can give rise to the heroic, and delight, lead to a loving mood. The transmutation into poetic art purges these feelings of their personal and original meanings. They are rendered in an impersonal and generalised form, when they become capable of being experienced by other persons. They carry with them all the physical aspects of their expressions, called feelings, that is the vibhāvas and anubhāvas. Those which were private and incommunicable are no longer so. The mood or rasa thus created in art, invites the reader/spectator to reconstitute his own analogous private, incommunicable and forgotten feelings into this impersonal experience. In such a state he can enjoy, paradoxically, even grief.
The theory of *rasa* as given by Bharata is partly psychological and partly physiological. From the limited objective in view, that is, that of dramatic representation, Bharata and his followers analysed the effects produced on the minds of spectators, and through this they derived the basic human emotions.

With the hindsight which is developed from recent psychological theories it can be seen that human beings can experience a variety of emotions, though they can be traced to certain basic feelings. P.C. Chatterji refers to McDougall's belief that the basic or primary emotions were each connected with an instinctive urge like fear, anger, disgust, tender emotion, lust, wonder, subjection, elation, loneliness, craving, possessiveness, creativeness and amusement. As a result of the permutations and combinations of these primary emotions, many different shades and nuances of emotions are possible. If there is a complex which arouses two or more instincts at the same time, the emotive response is also complex. These he calls secondary emotions. Examples are scorn, awe, admiration, gratitude and jealousy. P.V.Kane also makes a reference to McDougall's findings regarding the emotions. Kane compares McDougall with another psychologist, R.J.S. McDowall and

points out the similarities between their findings and Bharata's. D.D. Vadekhar has made a similar observation in his detailed study of the concept of sthāyibhāvas. These may arise in specific conditions if a strong impulse is at work.

Bharata has also explained as to how those emotions get transferred from real life into art. The work of art becomes the objective correlative of the emotions. From the actual causes (laukika-karana) and the actual consequences (laukika-kāryas) in life, are made the representations of the causes (vibhāvas) and manifestations (anubhāvas). The real emotions get into conventional associates in the world of art, where they have a purely aesthetic existence, in the sense they are not real or practical, but idealised; they are not personal or particular but universalised. This kind of transmutation is possible because of dhvani, another significant concept crucial to literary art. The following chapter will elaborate on the significance of dhvani.

Edwin Gerow defines rasa as a generalized emotion, one from which all elements of particular consciousness are expunged: the time of the artistic event, the preoccupations of the

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10 Kane, Sanskrit Poetics, pp. 357-58.

qualities of the play or novel itself, place and character, and so on.\textsuperscript{12}

Though Bharata's classifications of the different rasas may not be wholly acceptable to many modern thinkers, its conceptual validity has to be granted. The rasa concept is that literature provides an emotional experience, and the emotions in art are the rasas. The created emotion in the work of art is capable of yielding relish. It is not concerned with what kinds of emotions get represented; or with how many they may be. G.K. Bhat holds the view that the question of the number of rasas is only an academic one which may have some relevance to the history of poetics, but not to aesthetic theory as such.\textsuperscript{13} It has been realised that Bharata's list is by no means exhaustive or complete. Addition of the number of sthāyibhāvas and then to the number of rasas is theoretically possible.

K. Krishnamoorthy gives Bharata and his two primary disciples a central place not only in Indian poetics but also in world poetics:

In the history of the world's literature of poetry, Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta stand as two peaks of Indian thought as they combined in themselves the all too rare endowments of creative poetry, meticulous learning, sensitive taste and

\textsuperscript{12} Gerow "Classical Aesthetic Categories," Literatures of India, p. 216.

\textsuperscript{13} Bhat, pp. 62-63
penetrating philosophy. Not all the library of critical works and drama including the specialised advances made in psychology of literature can render their findings ante-dated or anachronistic. The very life essence, the mainsprings of art creation are analysed in the theories of these two great thinkers.\textsuperscript{14}

Patankar has this to say about Bharata’s classification:

All that we shall be justified in saying is that we are unable to understand the principles of classification that Bharata used; the problem regarding the number of rasas is one of historical significance only. On one view Bharata studied the dramatic compositions which were available to him and saw that most of them expressed eight or nine emotions only. On another view, the number is based on the psychological findings about what constitutes the relatively permanent parts of the structure of the human mind. Much has happened in the fields of psychology and literature since Bharata wrote, and perhaps he would have changed his views if he had known all that later critics and later psychologists know about dramatic art and human mind.\textsuperscript{15}

But the basic concepts underlying this theory are valid today. Just as Aristotle is revered and figures in critical discussions of literature and drama, so too critics are

\textsuperscript{14} Krishnamoorthy, \textit{Literary Theories}, pp. 238-39.

\textsuperscript{15} Patankar, \textit{Philosophy East and West}, pp. 293-94.
becoming increasingly aware of the validity of these concepts in Indian poetics. George Whalley pays a glowing tribute to the great mind of Aristotle.

It seems to me more than possible that what Aristotle had to say about tragedy is absolute, that his account is not limited by the number of examples he happened to have in hand. It is the privilege of genius to make such discoveries on incomplete evidence and to make durable statements about them.16

According to George Whalley, all the disciples of Aristotle acknowledge his penetrating imagination and his grave unwinking intelligence, profound and incisive thinking, contemplative reflection of the highest order with a brilliant method of exposition to match it.17

Likewise, Bharata's shrewd mind does not miss the essential aspect of dramatic art when he postulates a two-fold definition of the term, first as the emotional presence in art, and then as the experience of art as realised by the spectator. What is applicable to drama can easily be adopted and adapted to other genres, to literature as a whole. Bharata has in the first place assigned a central place to rasa, in dramatic art. Any work of art devoid of emotion, or rasa is lifeless. It is stated with the same accuracy that rasa is of the essence of art.

17 Ibid., p. 39.
perspective in "vākyam rasātmakam kāvyam" (Sāhityadārpana, 7.1), that is, "sentence saturated with sentiment is poetry." The emotions in art, says Bharata, are no doubt drawn from real life; but they are different when they are given a status within the work of art. The emotions to reach the spectator have to be suggested in some artistic form, so that it can be realised by the readers. So rasa, according to Bharata, draws sustenance from the elemental human nature, which basically remains unchanged. There are bound to occur certain superficial changes in the emotions, according to the changing needs of society, but the essentials are not affected. This has ensured for rasa an undisputed place in literature. Still, Bharata's definition of rasa-sūtra need not be adhered to, to the letter. For instance, Bharata's statement about passing states of mind, transient emotions, even sthāyibhāvas may not be relevant in the context of modern society. It can even be claimed that the rasa theory of Bharata is probably well equipped to explain the nature of aesthetic experience in Sanskrit poetry and drama, and possibly the Indian vernacular literature which grew under the influence and inspiration of Sanskrit literature alone; and that it would be improper to analyse, and more so to evaluate, the kind of contemporary literature (the Indian novel in English which is the subject of the present study), which has been largely influenced by the West. This objection can be countered by interpreting rasa as emotion in art and also as aesthetic relish. These
two aspects, by focusing on the process of transferring emotional experience into art, can be used to explain any piece of literary writing in any language. In fact, T.S. Eliot's theory of objective correlative is rasa principle in essence. Eliot says that emotions cannot be expressed directly, "but have to be conveyed through the objective correlative, so that when external facts which must terminate in sensory experience are given, the emotion is immediately evoked."\(^{18}\) In the same manner Bharata takes the credit for analysing in detail the methods of art representation.

Another objection which can possibly be raised against Bharata's list of bhāvas as not complete or exhaustive can be answered by admitting the fact that addition to the number of rasas is theoretically possible. The changing social, cultural and political life from the post-Sanskrit to the present times may inspire hitherto untouched emotions and a capable writer may want to delineate them.

Krishnamoorthy pays this tribute to the Indian thinkers for realising much earlier than their Western counterparts, the central place of rasa among all aesthetic categories.

Their number may go on varying as new conquests are made by enterprising poets; in India also they have been so widened as to include snēha (friendship), vātsalya (parental love), bhakti (devotion), etc. from time to time. In the latest phase of modern literature, the alienated lot of the existential human in a mechanical city-life of this technological age, may be reckoned as a new rasa besides the traditional ones. Whether the content is this rasa or that is immaterial. The theory that rasa is the vital essence of literature remains unaffected. For it is this rasa which is imitated by the actors on the stage in a play; and it is this rasa again which is given a poetic structure.  

Contemporary society can offer only such emotions as leave a disturbing effect on the readers' minds rather than offer them a calm of mind. Literature depends on life for its raw material; this is transformed into art by the genius and creative imagination of the writer. If literature has the power to move, it is because of the emotions in it, that is, the rasa which finds expression in it. So, regardless of the effects it has on the readers, whether disturbed or sublimated, if literature can have an impact on readers it is considered to be of value. For it can make readers more aware of the realities around them, by exploring a little of the iceberg of life and in this way influence man. In other words, aesthetic consciousness is generated by the quality of the work of art. Sneh Pandit echoes the same view:

19 Krishnamoorthy, Literary Theories, p. 43.
Through this concept also was sought to be explained the well-known antinomies of art as met with in such polarised terms as realistic and idealistic, personal and impersonal, subjective and objective, emotional and intellectual, sensual and spiritual, practical and contemplative, for instance. In other words rasa as quality of the art object and of the aesthetic consciousness could synthesise both aspects and offer a point of reconciliation.20

The application of ancient aesthetic tenets to the modern literature can be questioned rationally. So the concept of rasa needs a redefinition and a restatement to make it applicable to modern literature; the theory and its nuances are not debated upon. In the following study, rasa as a concept is used to identify the principal emotions which are represented in art, and in so doing the study tries to identify and experience the distinct nature of this emotion. The discussion also touches on the crucial questions regarding art and the mimetic theory, through a study of characters as represented in novels.

Since Bharata’s classification of the rasas cannot be applied straightaway to modern literature and in particular to the Indian novel in English, a reclassification of the emotions which now find a place in the novels is considered

necessary. Contemporary trends in the life of man generate violence and horror, leading to certain states of mental aberrations which do not find a place in Bharata’s list. The ensuing reclassification is by no means exhaustive, but it serves to identify certain emotions and their predominant traits, which find artistic expression in modern novels.

Certain emotions like filial love or affection, marital love, love for the country, love for God, and a calmness and serenity derived from renunciation (santa rasa) can be included under Bharata’s classification with slight modifications. The traditional portrayals were of the idealised heroes, featuring royal persons and people from the higher classes, and the emotions were in the noblest form. But in the modern novels the common man is the hero or anti-hero, and so instead of rasa there is only rasabhāsa, that is, the shadow of the rasa. For instance, if the novel depicts filial love it may be unrequited; similarly, instead of marital harmony, there is portrayal of marital disharmony, reflecting the changing contours of the Indian social scene. Some of these emotions are studied to see how the artist has reconciled the inner and the outer experience through an imaginative grasp of the total experience.

In the same way even those emotions which do not have an equivalent in the traditional list of emotions, but
which have entered the modern novels, are studied from the aesthetic angle of the power of evocation and the means employed for literary presentation.

The complexity of human nature has always evaded understanding. More often than not, every individual is a stranger to himself. Creative writers have glimpses of the essence and true nature of man and try to capture them in their artistic creations; and in the modern society the demands on individual adjustments are many and complicated. Failure to adjust leads to tensions of a varied nature. There is disharmony among individuals on the emotional plane which reflects disharmony at different spheres like familial, social, cultural and spiritual. Some of these adjustments called psychic adjustments are depicted in many contemporary novels. The disharmony caused by cross-cultural tensions between two individuals or two groups is a very real feeling which many writers have tried to articulate in their works. Another common feeling faced by the modern man is the feeling of loneliness, or what can be called an existential feeling, which has been creatively represented by many modern writers. These are discussed in this study.

The predicament which faces modern society is a psychological instability leading to mental aberrations in individuals; and these enter the world of the novel in the form of madness, sex, violence or horror. This is a distinctive feature of today's fiction in America, England
and the Commonwealth countries. The Indian novel in English too does not ignore this most common psychic disturbance of the modern individual.

Filial love or parental affection called vātsalya is an emotion or feeling popularly presented in ancient literature. The Rāmāvana speaks highly of the love and respect Rama had towards his father, King Dasaratha. There is also the unbounding love of Dasaratha himself towards his sons, especially Rama. From one angle the whole epic can be seen as the effort of Rama to fulfil his father’s command, which is called pitru-vacana-pālana on Rama’s part. The intense love of Dasaratha, his parental affection, is set in contrast to the scene of banishment, giving room for high tragic conflict. Here is an instance of reciprocal love between father and son presented in an idealised form with the maximum effect for tragic potential fit only for epic treatment.

On the other hand, in the modern Indian novel in English, this emotion between the father and the son, in a social context which is poised amidst the tensions of change, is handled very delicately by some writers with varying degrees of success.
R.K. Narayan portrays one-sided love in Jagan's relations with his son, Mali, in *Vendor of Sweets*. There is a delicate touch of warmth in the portrayal. This sweet-vendor is claimed to have conquered taste, but is very conscious of his earnings from this trade. Himself very thrifty, he saves the proceeds from the sweet-stall assiduously. He thinks that it might come in handy for his son later. This is how Narayan delineates the love of the father towards the motherless son:

As Jagan approached the statue, he felt a thrill, not at the spectacle of the enormous gentleman standing in a Napoleonic attitude, benignly surveying the history and fortunes of Malgudi in a grand sweep (Jagan had ceased to notice the statue for over forty years now), but because he anticipated a glimpse of his son Mali on the other side of the statue. Jagan passed the statue on its north side so that he might not embarrass his son, but he liked to make sure that he was there; with a swift glance at the group he spotted Mali by the deep yellow of his shirt, and the brief glimpse filled him with joy. He tiptoed away looking elsewhere, muttering to himself irrelevantly, "Poor boy, let him be." He was proud of his son's height, weight and growth . . . He reached home, his thoughts still hovering about his son (p. 23).

Gradually Narayan builds up the father's affection for his son which has increased since his wife's departure. "Jagan

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had an almost maternal obsession about feeding the boy properly" (p. 30). The lack of response to his father's love from Mali is also depicted with precision. Speaking to his father about his decision to quit studies, the boy takes a brusque and aggressive attitude. The generation gap between the tradition-bound Jagan and the modern-oriented Mali is suggested very cleverly. Earlier, the son has not approved of his father cooking the meals for him. He has suggested the employment of a cook, which the father could not comprehend: "Do we engage a servant for us to do the breathing for us?," Jagan asks his son. But Mali has his way and decides to have meals in the college canteen. Here is the suggestion of Mali moving away from the shelter of his father's love. Jagan cannot summon up enough courage to ask his son what he would do if he leaves college. Such instances of a father's love for his son, often unrequited, are not uncommon in a fast-changing society where the generation gap is ever widening. But Narayan has touched the richness of human nature; and there is every likelihood that it will strike a familiar note to fellow human beings. If the inner feelings are represented, there is sure to be audience response.

A different kind of father-son relationship is presented by Raja Rao in *The Serpent and the Rope*.22

Ramaswamy can recollect, and even re-live, those intense experiences which he had felt as a child. He recalls, "My father of course, loved me. He never let me stray into the hands of Lakshamma" (p. 8). But Rama says that he did not love his father: "I have little to tell you about my father's death except that I did not love him, but that after his death I knew him and loved him. . . . Of course, I love my father now" (p. 9).

Through such reminiscences Ramaswamy depicts his father's love for him and also his own reactions to his father. It is with a kind of detachment that Ramaswamy also relates the death of his son, Pierre alias Krishna. While he assesses his relationship with his own father, he himself is a father to a son who has met with untimely death.

The portrait of Ramaswamy's father which emerges from the remarks of Ramaswamy's grandfather helps in the understanding of the father's nature. Ramaswamy himself is made aware of some of his father's interests like his mathematical brain, his propensity towards Sanksrit grammar and his rich musical voice. "Father's greatest sorrow was that I did not take his mathematical studies further" (p. 16). Though a strict Brahmin, the father had been liberal enough to accept Madeline as his daughter-in-law.

He disliked my marriage, I think chiefly because my wife could not sing at an ārti; but before the world he boasted of his intellectual daughter-in-
law and had a picture of me and Madeline on his table (p. 17).

Similarly, the pen-portrait of Grandfather as a noble and humble personality comes through very naturally in Ramaswamy’s thoughts. It is also through Little Mother, Ramaswamy’s stepmother, and Venkataraman, a family friend, that the deep love of the father towards his son is revealed. It seems the father used to weep while showing some of Rama’s letters to Venkataraman (p. 32). Little Mother too says that father had held Rama in high esteem and wanted his son to lead his own life (p. 47).

The depiction of this feeling of parental love and filial love is authentic and sincere and is still felt by many young men towards their fathers. It may not be demonstrative, but is felt subtly as in the case of Ramaswamy and his father. But the portrayal, whether requited or otherwise, is enjoyable as an experience when artistically presented as in these two instances.

Marital love has always enjoyed a popularity in literary art as it is based on the cardinal aspect of life, man-woman relationship. The ideal type of love of perfect reciprocation as depicted by Vālmiki in the great epic, the Rāmāyana, between Rama and Sita is an excellent example of this rasa called sringara. The vastness of the epic, the poetic grandeur of Vālmiki’s style, and the flawless nature of the respective characters who vie with each other in
their mutual love which sees many hurdles, all these show that such a unique relationship is possible only to this divine couple, divya dampati as they are called.

In the modern context, marital love does not run so smooth and is often marked by disharmony. It is built on differences almost as often as on oneness of thought. So it is marital disharmony, leading to adjustment in the earlier novels and in the later leading to divorce. This is a reflection of the changing society where women are treated with greater respect and are given a voice to protest against male domination. This is another rasa that the modern novelist depicts.

R.K. Narayan takes up this theme as an emotion in quite a few of his novels. In The Dark Room, Savitri is subject to the tensions of married life and is hurt by the wayward nature of her husband. She is shown to rebel by running away from the domestic circle of husband and children only to return, when she succumbs to the feelings of a mother's affection to her children.

The Dark Room presents an Indian housewife who rejects male mediation, her 'inner fury' aroused to a high pitch by the truculence and caddishness of her self-centred husband. Although Savitri revolts against the Doll's House of conventional Indian womanhood by retreating into the privileged
isolation of the Dark Room, her attempt is foiled by the logistics of her tradition-bound society.  

But Narayan has captured love in its best form in The English Teacher. Here can be seen *srīṅgāra rasa* in its pristine sense where the domestic harmony is presented in a fairly low key, but the love between Krishnan and Susila is presented in fairy-tale purity and poignancy.

The story of their wedded life is a prose lyric on which Narayan has lavished his best gifts as a writer. Spring is no hard material substance; it is a presence, it is an unfolding, it is ineffable becoming that strains after Being. . . . a thousand murmurs of ecstasy, meaningless worries, tremendous trifles, a thousand stabs of pain that are somehow transcended, a thousand shared anxieties, excitements and adorations: it is out of these that the texture of wedded happiness is wrought, and Narayan is an adept at giving form and meaning to this glory of holy wedded love. Quotation is difficult because the perfume is nowhere concentrated but fills the entire atmosphere.

This is how K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar sums up Narayan’s rendering of *srīṅgāra rasa* in The English Teacher. From *srīṅgāra* Narayan leads the *rasa* to *virahatāpa*, love in

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separation, which is also a common emotion featured by many Sanskrit classics. Even the love between Rāma and Sīta shines greater in separation, when Sīta is abducted by Ravana and kept in captivity. The *Uttara Rāma Charita* by Bhavabhūti is again the representation of love in separation in poetic terms. In *The English Teacher*, death separates the loving couple, but the husband’s love for the departed wife is true and intense. In fact, Krishnan believes he is closer to Susila in death and tries to reconcile himself to the permanent separation where there is no hope of joining her. Edward C. Dimock observes that in human love, relationships have two essential phases, union and separation. Separation is latent in union and union in separation. The *viraha* theme is emphasised by many devotional poets who are aware of the absolute separation, between the human and the divine. The soul is symbolised as the cowherd woman longing for union with God. This is one aspect of the *virahatāpa* as presented in early Indian devotional poetry.25

Narayan has also captured *sringāraabhāsa*, that is a simulacrum of emotion of love, in the love which develops between Raju and Rosie, in *The Guide*. It is the relationship

which is brought about by circumstances and it comes to as sudden an end as it began.

In novels like *The Serpent and the Rope*, and *Some Inner Fury*, where marital love cuts across cultural hurdles, the *śringāra* crumbles for want of sustenance. This is the kind of emotion that is experienced in the modern context and the creative writer has to capture only this in his works. Such an emotion can even be termed as a negative emotion.

Sujit Mukherjee defines love as "the mental condition which sanctions the search for an enduring relationship, most frequently on the physical plane, between a man and a woman. Love is the most common device for bringing characters in contact with each other at deeper levels of emotion."26

*Sringāra rasa* in the complex social set up of modern times is a far cry from the *śringāra* depicted in the simple tales of the *kāvyas* of classical literature. For example, racial differences have proved too strong to enable any lasting relationship to blossom forth. *Some Inner Fury* objectifies the dilemma of inter-racial romance and marriage which could not be sustained as long as the British still

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ruled India. Kamala Markandaya foresees through Mira’s prophetic words a future which could bring the two races together: "Though now for us there was no other way, the forces that pulled us apart were too strong" (p.243), she consoles herself,

It is all one, I said to myself. In a hundred years it is all one; and still my heart wept, tearless, desolate, silently to itself (p. 243).

Nayantara Sahgal treats marital disharmony in the upper middle class of society in a sophisticated manner. Her novels present women who are educated, mostly career-bound and hence economically independent. They find in their marriages a dissatisfaction which is projected as a lack of understanding between the couples leading to divorce.

The central preoccupation of Nayantara Sahgal’s novels is the suffering caused to woman in the prison-house of loveless marriage and her suffering when she makes a breakaway . . . there is domestic turmoil, anger and suffering in the unhappy lives of the mismatched couples in the novel. . . . For the women in the novels of Sahgal both the options are fraught with suffering and anguish.28


28 Meena Shirwadkar, "Indian English Women Novelists," Perspectives on Indian Fiction in English, p. 207.
Storm in Chandigarh and The Day in Shadow portray the situation and the plight of the divorced woman in the Indian society. Sahgal's creation of the woman lacks depth because she is not able to reconcile the personal theme with the universal.

Love for one's country is a powerful emotion in human beings. Mother and motherland are greater than heaven, says a Sanskrit maxim. It is instilled in childhood and grows in strength and depth with age. The feeling of exhilaration when one thinks of one's motherland leads many to promote the well-being of their country. It is also seen in those who try to maintain and defend the country's freedom and rights. In some instances there are people whose ruling passion is the love of their country.

The peculiar situation in India where British rule was overthrown and freedom was won by non-violent means was because of the efforts of Gandhi, one such person in whom the love for his country was more than his love for his family or personal belongings. His life was a living example of one who had disinterestedly and with great self-sacrifice exerted himself to promote the well-being of his country. His efforts to fight against the British rule in India which came to be known as the National Movement have been captured in many novels. It has inspired many writers to project the nationalist consciousness which Gandhi had fostered and
nurtured. The challenges of those times, the degree of self-sacrifice which was inspired among individuals, and the humiliations which many experienced at the hands of ruling power, have been depicted in many novels.

In The Crown and the Loincloth, Chaman Nahal tries to project the period from 1915 to 1922, the initial phase of the Gandhi movement in India. He focusses on the towering figure of Gandhi "whose burning idealism fired an entire nation's patriotism and whom the author sees as a symbol of moral and spiritual strength triumphing over the physical also" (Publisher's blurb). The author recreates a period of the history that was alive with the hope and energy of nation's men and women. The advent of Gandhi, a man who, though physically small, had enormous strength and whose stride could cover the whole nation, brought the people together like a magnet. Without his unwavering commitment the history of India would have been written differently.

In Kanthapura and Waiting for the Mahatma, though Gandhi does not appear as a central character, his presence is very much felt and experienced by the other characters and through them by the readers. Murthy propagates the ideals practised by Gandhi. He creates a great awareness among the village folk of Kanthapura about Gandhi and the national movement as well as Gandhi's views on the equality of human beings. In Vendor of Sweets, Jagan is an ardent
follower of Gandhi and through Jagan some of Gandhi's principles and ideals are presented.

The experience of liberation from human existence is the final goal of life according to Indian philosophy. Though the presence of God is denied by the atheists, the acceptance of an all-powerful presence is felt within the inner reality of each individual. In India realisation of this presence leads to a calmness and serenity called santa rasa. It is reached at a stage when the meaning of life is seen to go beyond the tangible realities, when human existence cannot explain the cosmic magnitude and functions even in scientific terms. When material property and worldly pleasures seem empty, through the path of righteousness man can attain liberation (moksha). Renunciation of worldly existence is the method of realising liberation. This is a deeply felt attitude among Indians, and many modern novels depict varying features of this attitude in them. On the satirical plane, the fake swami has a prominent role to play in society. The Indian mind always seeks the guru or master for guidance and many opportunists have exploited this attitude of Indians as even a money-spinning device. Ruth Prawar Jhabvala has satirised the fake swamis in many of her novels and short stories. Not only Indians but many westerners have been drawn into this ring.
But Ramaswamy in *The Serpent and the Rope* feels he has gained tranquillity and peace of mind only at the feet of his guru. Since these ascetics preach and practise a simple living and high thinking, it has an attraction for the tension-torn individual. The modern individual has to adjust himself with society and more often he finds himself alienated from society. The tensions represented by this kind of estranged feeling are the manifestations of the individual seeking psychic adjustments. This is a recurring theme in modern world literature. The alienated individual is the hero of the modern novel. In Indian writing in English it is the alienated Indian who figures. He appears as Ramaswamy in *The Serpent and the Rope*, Sindi Oberoi in *The Foreigner* (Arun Joshi), Srinivas in *The Nowhere Man* (Kamala Markandaya), and Nirode in *Voices in the City* (Ahita Desai). The loneliness may be caused by different factors. Social forces can cause a feeling of loneliness as in the case of Bakha in *Untouchable* (Mulk Raj Anand). Cross-cultural tensions may leave the individual in doubt about his roots, and especially in India where the British rule brought Western ideals and values into the India ethos, the alienated feeling is intense and marked.

Sindi Oberoi does not have the burden of being an Indian or American. He belongs neither to India nor to America or England where he studied, for he is born in Kenya and leads an itinerant life. Similarly his involvement with
June is not a lasting one and is more on the physical plane. More than Sindi it is Babu who is the victim of the American experience, and is unable to reconcile the pulls of family and the American way of life and courts death as the only method of escape from this life. Anita Desai's *Voices in the City* portrays the feeling of loneliness even among relations. The attitude of the novel seems to be that there is no point in asking one stranger about another. It is a form of loneliness where an intense inwardly lived life refuses to communicate. The failure to communicate leads to dissatisfaction and death as in the case of Monisha. The need to express one's feelings for others and a generous attitude of give and take could have averted the tragedy.

Another common emotion which has found expression in the modern Indian novel is the sense of despair experienced by the individual. It does not figure in Bharata's list. Nevertheless it is an emotion which arises under specific conditions when strong impulses are at work. According to P.C. Chatterji, it can be called a derived emotion as listed by McDougall in this findings.29

In *The Apprentice* (Arun Joshi), Ratan Rathor is alienated from himself because of the decrepit values in society. It is caused from the war of man with himself, when he is unable to reconcile himself to the pulls of the

29 P.C. Chatterji, p. 102.
physical and spiritual/intellectual natures in himself. That is, he is unable to reconcile his individuality with the demands of a civilised society. It is an unusual theme and Arun Joshi gives this emotion a prominent treatment and employs a satirical tone which alone can pierce through the morals in a corrupt society.

Arun Joshi treats the theme of alienation in yet a different manner in *The Last Labyrinth*. The dimensions added to this theme are etched on a larger plane. He tries to give a fictional form to the effects of the unknown on the limited human consciousness. Som Bhaskar is not the idealised hero; he is a contemporary Indian who feels the West as a powerful influence on him as much as the *Bhagavad Gītā*. His father had been preoccupied with the mystery of the First Cause which he had tried to investigate during his lifetime. Som Bhaskar is not sure about his wants. An enterprising industrialist, he meets Aftab Rai and Anuradha, and finds himself drawn to Anuradha in a futile relationship which almost costs him his life, and leaves him finally a mental and physical wreck. The spiritual void in him drives Bhaskar from Bombay to Benares and he passes from one maze into another to explore the last labyrinth which he does not reach and is yet to realise.

Life's mystery cannot be grasped without some effort, suffering and humane understanding. Joshi gives expression to these ideas in his novels, all of which deal
with the theme of alienation. Different facets of the alienated individual in the modern society are explored by Joshi in his four novels. If loneliness or alienation is one kind of feeling which is felt by individuals in society, and gets into novels as a dominant emotion, mental aberration, a characteristic of the modern man’s psyche, finds artistic expression in modern fiction. These get channelised as madness, sex or violence in some extreme form. American, British and Commonwealth writers have delineated this predicament of the modern man.

Sex, violence and fear are forms of bibhatsa, disgust, and bhayānaka, terror or horror. To represent these in fiction the artist has to resort to the realistic mode of presentation. The physical gruesomeness of the war scenes, for instance, when vividly portrayed can inform the reader of the actual experiences. The loss of values and ideals which inevitably results after a war can evoke a sense of pity or terror or even horror in the readers. The readers feel a sympathy towards those unfortunate people who underwent the harshest of realities. Transference of such an experience leads to the evocation of karuna rasa. It is interesting to note that war literature in the twentieth century has its focus not on the quality of personal valour but on the consequences of war in the ordinary man’s consciousness. With the introduction of gun-powder, the importance of personal valour has diminished. Norman
Mailer’s *The Naked and the Dead* and Stephen Crane’s *The Red Badge of Courage* allow the reader to see a soldier as a cog in a vast machine. Such novels focus on the human aspects of the situation. Therefore *vīra rasa* in the sense in which it has been used in ancient literature has undergone certain modifications in the modern context.

Chaman Nahal’s *Azadi*[^30], Khushwant Singh’s *Train to Pakistan* and Manohar Malgonkar’s *A Bend in the Ganges* recreate for the readers the troubled conditions of the partition times. History is transformed into art and the horrible experiences are rendered in fictional terms. Partition is seen as the impersonal and dehumanised process of a historical change, and is the cause of the miseries and privations of innumerable human beings. The effects of the complex situation assume a new meaning by the creative imagination of the author. “The author’s objectivity in the treatment of theme and event, his skill and insight in the delineation of character, and his vision of humanity the power and the glory, the weakness and the defeat - all align him with the finest novelists in the English language.”[^31]

How do you cut a country into two, where at every level the communities were so deeply mixed? There was a Muslim at every corner of India where there


[^31]: Joan F. Adkins, "History as Art Form: Khushwant Singh’s *Train to Pakistan*," *Journal of Indian Writing in English*, 2, No.2 (July 1974), p. 2.
was a Hindu. And then so soon at such short notice? The broadcast had said nothing at all about the fate of the minorities in the two new countries. If the logic behind the creation of Pakistan wouldn’t solve the problem of a minority, it was going to create new minorities - minorities which would be hounded out with a vengeance. And what of the civil service to which they belonged? How were they going to cut up the machinery of the government? There were Hindus and Muslims at every level of the machinery (p. 85).

This passage is almost a summary of events which Chaman Nahal presents in his novel, Azadi. Spanning the period from the announcement of the partition to the aftermath, the murder of Mahatma Gandhi, Azadi dramatises the impact of the momentous events of history on a few individuals, particularly on the members of the family of Lala Kanshi Ram, a tradesman of Sialkot, who are uprooted and forced to migrate to India which has neither accommodation nor work for the vast hordes pouring in every day. It is a novel of epic dimensions worthy of its theme. Lala Kanshi Ram after experiencing the trauma can still declare, "I have ceased to hate . . . I can’t hate the Muslims any more . . . We are all equally guilty . . . we have sinned as much. We need their forgiveness" (p. 338). Through the love, compassion, tolerance and forgiveness of Lala Kanshi Ram, it is the freedom of the spirit and the mind which the author has tried to project in Azadi, making political freedom meaningful. The novel decries evil, asserts the futility of
hatred and upholds the values of life, namely, love, compassion and hope. The human significance of love and sympathy asserts the eternal verities. The author sees beyond the artificial wall of hatred and feels the essential humanity of mankind transcending the superficial differences of religion. While the novelist has captured in this novel all the facets of the savagery of the conflict he has also simultaneously presented his vision of life which urges man to rise above baser instincts and spread the wings of individual freedom which is the true azadi.

Violence and sex which feature mainly in today's novels cannot sustain themselves on their own. They are no doubt present in life. But they do not occupy a central position in life and can even endanger the life and spirit of man if left unchecked. The emotions of bibhatsa and bhayānaka evoke disgust and horror. Chaman Nahal gives touches of higher values transcending the physical plane of existence through a portrayal of these negative emotions. The presentation of sex, violence and horror in novels are usually accompanied by a larger vision of life. Similarly, anger and hatred, two attendant feelings in man, are forms of mental aberrations which in their extreme form can destroy man. Man is subject to these mental states in the course of his life; some people may experience these more than others. But the fictional rendering of these experiences can enlarge man's vision and raise him above mundane levels.
of existence to higher levels, leading to a calm and peace of mind or serenity called śānta rasa which is the converse of all the restless quest of the modern individuals seeking and groping in life.

In like manner, madness or insanity can also be seen as an aspect of the human mind which is in the nature of a mental aberration. It is a state of mind which goes counter to notions of propriety or norms of behaviour. Psychologically too it is recognised as a potential state of mind in every individual which is kept in abeyance by external and self-imposed forces. When either of these two forces loses control, the individual is said to have gone mad. There is only a thin line dividing the states of sanity and insanity. The horror-sex-violence saturated times of today have a greater tendency to lead many individuals over the wall. As pointed out earlier, the difficulty of adjustment to the contrary pulls of the physical and the intellectual, the co-presence of good and evil in society, and a perennial conflict between the individual and society, are some of the dilemmas which every individual has to face. The issue becomes more complicated as tensions with subtle variations arise. The feelings which an individual is likely to undergo in these circumstances are fictionally captured by certain modern novelists writing in English. One such
writer is Anita Desai who deals with the theme of madness as a mental state in her novel, *Cry, The Peacock*.

A study of the portrayal of madness in literary art is by itself an exciting endeavour. Hamlet’s madness has been studied *ad infinitum* as it were. Faulkner’s Benjy is a fine depiction in fictional terms of the insanity of the idiot boy whose vision of life is more sane and intuitive than that of many others in the same novel who are supposed to be sane. The imaginative construction of the mad characters has to be done with great care so that the inconsistent behaviour becomes madness. Madness can be called *rasābhāsa* and not *rasa* in the strict sense of the word. The word *abhāsa* means a shadow or a semblance of the emotion. So madness can be called a negative emotion. But even this negative emotion has to be created and represented in fictional form.

*Cry, The Peacock* presents in artistic terms the growth of madness in a highly sensitive young woman. Maya is disturbed by the death of her pet dog, Toto, at the outset. Her reactions are contrasted with those of her husband who disposes of the dead body of the dog in a matter-of-fact manner and much to her shock. Later in Maya’s own narration, the creeping madness in her is described in very natural

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terms. She tries to grasp that elusive something which keeps on disturbing her, knowing fully well that it is not the death of the dog alone, but yet "another sorrow, unremembered, perhaps as yet not even experienced" (p. 8). Added to this is the deliberate distance or "hardness or coldness" of her husband Gautama whose personality is in keeping with "the meditator beneath the Sal tree" (p. 8).

The story can be considered a chronicle of the married life of Maya, a young and beautiful girl, extremely sensitive, even sensuous, constantly aware of the throbbing life of nature and the world around her, and herself being fully alive physically and mentally. Four years of married life have passed by, when the dog’s death triggers a fear about the untimely end of her marriage. This haunting premonition recalling the childhood prophecy of an albino soothsayer, slowly drives her to madness which makes her kill her own husband.

Through the mind of Maya, the reader can see the world in a thoroughly new light. Maya’s mind is a rare kind of prism reflecting the immediate physical world into a world of myriad colours. The astonishment which a young child feels when it is shown that white light is actually pregnant with seven colours is akin to the astonishment felt by the readers when Maya constantly sees beyond the mere appearance of a flower, a leaf, a blade of grass, or even a smell. The sharpened senses of Maya get transferred to the
reader, who is forced to apprehend the nature around him not as a background, but as something living, something central to the development of the character.

Though the reader may or may not identify himself with Maya's mind, he is led to comprehend her confused state, the degree or stages through which madness is reached. Maya's thoughts flit from image to image, "from beauty, evil snakes, summer, scent, flower, white . . . always being plagued by that something else, that indefinable unease at the back of my mind" (p. 12). To Maya the fear was meaningless yet as true as the physical shadow, which made its presence felt almost as if 'of evil descending from an overhanging branch, of an insane death, unprepared for, heralded by deafening drum-beats' . . . (p. 13).

When overcome with such thoughts she could hear and see such foreboding and grim sounds and sights, which made her cover her ears,

for the blood still beat there, and panic like a piston does not cease to live immediately one shuts it off, but continues to beat with a slow dying rhythm, until it fades naturally away (p. 13).

Maya's intense and emotional response to life, rather than an intellectual approach, is set in contrast with that of her husband. Too much emotionality can lead to madness. The sight of the moon, vast and ghost-white, makes
her remember the prophecy, when it was said that the stars, her horoscope and her forehead said the same thing. Here the determinants are the artificially contrived situations. Maya’s attitude to nature is almost Keatsian, choosing to see death behind the beauty of a flower. Maya’s tragedy lay in her overdependence on physical living alone which cannot continue for long and has to end ultimately. This truth comes to her with a force which she is unable to withstand.

This sentiment of madness is the ruling emotion in this novel. It is akin to the angī rasa, as described by Ānandavardhana.

Though there is a convention that more than one sentiment should find a place in entire works of literature, one of them alone should be made principal by the poet who aims at greatness in his works.33

This ruling emotion holds the novel together though ancillary emotions do help to build up this dominant emotion.

Krishna Rayan describes the use of a single emotion by Sanskrit poets.

When Sanskrit theory speaks of a single emotion dominating a dramatic or narrative poem, what is meant is obviously the emotion presented as resident in the central character, motivating the

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33 K. Krishnamoorthy, Ānandavardhana’s Dhvanyālōka (Dharwar: Karnataka University, 1974), p. 174.
plot and informing the language and imagery of the poem.\textsuperscript{34}

The state of madness in the heroine makes a single concentrated impact on the reader and that is the \textit{rasa} one observes in the novel. Though it is difficult to find a corresponding \textit{rasa} in Sanskrit aesthetics for the state of madness, the reader’s response is marked by a feeling of pity which can be said to correspond to the \textit{karuna rasa} of the ancient theories.

Ancient Indian literature was directed towards the four-fold end of life, namely, the four \textit{purushārthas}, \textit{dharma} (righteousness), \textit{artha} (material prosperity or wealth), \textit{kāma} (worldly pleasures) and \textit{mōksha} (spiritual emancipation). Indian poetics concentrated more on the aesthetic efforts of poetry than on social utility, because this was implicit and indirect. The aim of literature had been to imaginatively present these universal ends of life which every individual had to be concerned with. Literature’s influence on society was through the transformation of the individual by means of aesthetic experience.

If modern literature reflects worldly pleasures, \textit{kāma}, and sometimes righteousness, \textit{dharma}, or pursuit of material wealth, \textit{artha}, through the artistic representation

\textsuperscript{34} Krishna Rayan, \textit{Suggestion and Statement in Poetry}, p. 47.
of emotions the experience is transferred to the reader who is made more conscious of the realities which might otherwise have not reached him.

The concept of rasa can throw light on how modern writers have handled emotions in literature. The essence of literature is the depiction of emotions. But the way emotions get transferred into art is also explained by the rasa theory. The distinct nature of artistic emotion in its likeness to and difference from emotions in real life is emphasised by Indian aesthetic thinkers. Certain questions of art and the mimetic theory are also discussed by them.

To present the emotions the author has to bring in characters who react to events and situations. Drawing from Bharata's theory, characters can be considered as the main stimulating causes and hence seen as ālambana-vibhāva and the setting as uddīpana-vibhāva. In a novel peopled with characters and a setting, the novelist can bring out emotions through these factors known as ālambana-vibhāva and uddīpana-vibhāva. A strong and convincing feeling is presented by Anita Desai in fictional terms in the novel Fire on the Mountain. The novelist makes use of a few characters, especially Nanda Kaul, the old lady who is the chief ālambana-vibhāva. Raka, her great-granddaughter, and Nanda Kaul's childhood friend, Ila Das, are also vehicles for the expression of loneliness. The bleak hills of Kasauli, the barren atmosphere and the sharp pine serve as
uddīpana-vibhāva. Both these are necessary as objective correlatives to express this feeling of loneliness.

The ālambana-vibhāva, the shelter, support or source of a particular emotion determining its nature takes the form of a being, a character that stimulates a particular emotion in another being whom he or she affects. Similarly, pleasure-garden, moon, spring season and such other factors which are described by the poets are called uddīpana-vibhāva as they excite and strengthen a particular emotion roused by the stimulating cause.\(^{35}\)

Susanne Langer has pointed out that the artist tries to create "the appearance of experiences, the semblance of events lived and felt, and to organise them so they constitute a purely and completely experienced reality, a piece of virtual life."\(^{36}\) Her theory of symbol and form as the only method for conveying emotions is valid. It is through symbolic forms that a total experience can be expressed in full.

The rasa theorists also hold that emotions could only be represented by suggestion, while being fully aware of the distinctive nature of the artistic experience. The awareness that the world of art is always different from the world of reality is an established fact in Sanskrit

\(^{35}\) Bhat, pp. 11-12.

\(^{36}\) Langer, *Feeling and Form*, p. 212.
aesthetics. The world of reality is called laukika as different from the world of art which is known as alaukika. Bharata’s concept of nātyadharma explains the process of poetic transformation of reality. It can be called the concept of poetic autonomy, the creative interpretation of reality in art and the concept of lōkadharma. Physical gestures, costumes, scenery, style of speech, are some devices collectively known as abhinaya in stage representation. In a novel the āslambana-vibhāvas and uddīpana-vibhāvas bring about alaukikatava.

The transference of emotions in art is through characters and, in this context, the fictional characters. The curiosity of the reader to know what happens next, that is, his interest in the plot of the story, is matched by his desire to know how the fictional characters live and react in those situations. The characters of fiction sometimes lead a life of their own in the readers’ minds. Many fictional characters have become very close to readers who refer to these characters with a loving tenderness and friendliness. This is because it is possible to know and understand fictional characters better than some of our closest friends and even relations. Character studies can lead to a better understanding of human nature itself. The total human personality is like an iceberg defying any attempts to fathom its full range. But through literature a better understanding of human nature is possible.
Against this background which sees characters in fiction as representative of real human nature, structuralists deny the existence of any such theory. They cannot accept or concede to the notion of a fictional character, because to them the character is pronounced dead. Being committed to an ideology which decentres man and runs counter to notions of individuality and psychological depth, the structuralists cannot admit to the realists' notion of characters in fiction. Since the experiments begun at the turn of the century by Woolf, Proust, Gide, Mann and others, many aspects of the great or classic 'realist' fiction have been explicitly attacked. Plot, setting and character came under hostile scrutiny and were exiled. Character was pronounced 'dead' by many modern writers.

The rasa theory, on the other hand, assigns the fictional characters a status in keeping with their fictional background to which they rightly belong, while accepting the fact that the artist has created them from real life experiences. Life as it is actually lived should always form the writer's major source of material. J.B. Paranjape quotes Ānandavardhana:

Thousands upon thousands of poets as eminent as Vacaspati himself might use various subjects in their poetry, and yet like primordial world matter, they cannot be exhausted.37

At the same time Anandavardhana is also aware of the fact that literature cannot be judged by the criteria which we apply to the mundane world of reality. This awareness makes him remark,

In the field of poetry where we perceive suggested elements, truth (satya) and falsity (asatya) are pointless. To examine literature through (the usual) valid means of cognition would simply lead to ridicule.\(^\text{38}\)

A modern critic, A.D. Nuttall, in his analysis of the twentieth century trends in criticism which decry mimesis, repeats Anandavardhana's views:

What is the new mimesis? It is not a programme for writers. . . . My word to the writers is 'Try the world' (where try covers 'attempt', 'test', 'provoke' and 'woo'). . . . Thus with regard to artistic practice it might be claimed that the new mimesis is neither more nor less than the old mimesis, were it not for the fact that artists find new ways of imitating through form, the indefinite richness of reality.\(^\text{39}\)

Reality cannot be exhausted, and it is only possible to select; and reality has not been superseded by mere form.

The structuralist emphasis on convention and impersonality aims at objectivity in art. But Anandavardhana

\(^{38}\) Ibid, p. 283.

had claimed that the *alaukika* world of art need not be judged by standards other than those of the world it represents. It presents a view of literature which is autonomous and yet not wholly insulated from this varying world. Nuttall says,

> Literature can represent reality, but it can also invent, cheat, play and enchant. Literature composes new radically interrogative schemata which elicit new elements from reality and extend our perceptions, and this is mimesis working with its greatest (heuristic) power.\(^40\)

That is what the *rasa* theorists say. Reality is transformed into art and in the world of art fictional characters have a special status by which they have to be assessed. Their likeness to and difference from real life models can be seen as the difference between an object and its image in the mirror. The likeness is marked, but the difference is no less marked.

Characters in fiction need not be killed (even retrospectively). Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan says that they may have an existence from the verbal medium which is itself fluid and thriving on arbitrary meanings.\(^41\) Yet it is possible to regard fictional characters as representative of certain predominant human traits, as expressive of some of

\(^{40}\) Ibid., p. 193.

emotion from life into art is possible through the mysterious powers of language, the nuances of which are collectively known as dhvani by Indian theorists. Dhvani is the subject of study in the following chapter. Rasa also connotes the literary experience felt by the readers and this aspect will be dealt with in the chapters on sādhāranīkarana and sahṛdayatva.