

NEW PERSPECTIVE OF WOMEN IN 'A SITUATION IN NEW DELHI BY NAYANTARA SAHGAL'

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ABSTRACT

Nayanatra Sahgal is one of the most luminous literary luminaries of Indo-Anglian novelists. Her female characters come from the different sections of the society. In her novels, there is no sign of traditional and conventional views like „Frailty, thy name is woman“ or „Woman is a bundle of sin“. She shows in her novels how the mind of a woman passes through unremitting pain. Sahgal's woman refuses to be an acquiescent, suffering and sacrificing lot. She wants her individual identity and fulfillment. Sahgal is of the opinion that “everything around the writer is material for novel...All material comes from real life....generally draws on one's own experience or someone else's experience”.¹ I think it's the artist's job and the writer's job particularly to show the way.”² Thus her novels have autobiographical element and impression.

INTRODUCTION

Nayantara Sahgal is unquestionably an outstanding Indian-English novelist. In Sahgal, we find a happy culmination of most of the nascent gains achieved by her predecessors to artistically mingle the political and the personal in the realm of fiction Nayantara Sahgal is a prolific writer who has eight novels to her credit, two biographies, two political commentaries and a large number of articles in various newspapers and magazines. She is a recipient of the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award for her novel „Rich like Us (1985), the Sinclair Award and the Common Wealth Award for Eurasia for her novel „Plans for Departure (1986) “. She has taken women of different society as her protagonists. We find that her female characters come from the different sections of the society, but they all face similar problems in the society.

MATERIALS AND TOOLS

Most of her protagonists are emancipated, assertive, intellectual and independent women. In her novels, she depicts the repressed condition of Woman in a male dominated society. She seems to be modern and liberal in outlook. She believes in new humanism and a new morality. According to which a woman is not to be taken as a sex object only that has no individual identity, but she is a man's equal and honored partner. Nayanatra Sahgal's woman is conscious of her emotional and mental needs and cries for the change of order that will bring individual fulfillment. The problem is that one has to fight against an established order. Her concept of freedom is the freedom of mental makeup and emotional attitude.

In her novel, „A Situation in new Delhi“, Sahgal describes a number of woman characters who differ from each other one way or the other. Devi seems to exploit the situation as she uses both Usman and Michael and is excessively attached to her brother. Sahgal's Devi is more free and independent. She moves freely among her guests, talking with a gaiety and vitality which is irreversible. People usually fall in love with her. She has passed her life as a shadow of her brother. She doesn't have any knowledge of official matters.

On other hand, Pinki accepts all traditional roles assigned to her. She is a happy girl and very enthusiastic about her marriage and obediently consents to her parent's choice. "Girls like Pinki lived as their mothers and grandmothers had". (P42) She is considered a voluptuous young version of Veena". (P36) After the tragic incident of Madhu, She is not been allowed to put her nose out of her house without her mother's permission. But she is very happy with her trousseau saris and thinks herself lucky.

While, Veena, Pinky's mother is also an example of traditional Indian woman who can't think about anything rather than her beauty and her household duties. She has never helped Pinky in developing her identity and individuality. On the other hand, she has always tried to make Pinky a typical traditional woman. She gives a party only because Arvind, her Son-in-law has come in their town.

"A Son-in-Law was sacrosanct. God took Second place. Sons-in-Law who had driven their wives' relations to drink, Desperation and bankruptcy, somehow Vanished blameless into the family's Annals. (P90)

Skinny Jaipal is the new woman of Sahgal. She has a passion for the act of living and involves herself fully in whatever she undertakes. Another pair of Nadira and Usman is also not properly adjusted. Usman desires whole heartedly to share his deepest and innermost thoughts with Nadira, but Nadira remains stubborn, uncompromising and refuses to come out of the fortress around her. The relationship between Usman and Nadira proves that communication is essential for harmonious marital relationship.

CONCLUSION

In this way, we can affirm that Nayantara Sahgal has shown a number of female characters in “A Situation in New Delhi”. Sahgal has shown, how in a free and democratic country like India, a girl’s parents remain in a frightened state and how girls are brought up in traditional society. Moreover, she has given importance to communication and considers it a necessity for maintaining a good relation. All this shows that she wants to raise her voice with the „NEW WOMAN“ for a „New Identity“.

REFERENCES

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