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A STUDY OF SOCIO POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES IN THE NOVELS OF NYANTARA PANDIT SAGHAL

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ABSTRACT:

Nayantara Sahgal is one of the popular Post-Colonial novelists in the post independent India. As A.V. Krishna Rao mentioned "Nayantara Sahgal is perhaps one of our best socio-political novelists today." Her themes primarily deal with social and political ideas. However, her characters are very much involved in political ideology and are much human. Her novels present several social and cultural changes that take place in Independent India.

KEYWORDS: Social, Political and Ideology.

INTRODUCTION :

Since Sahgal spent her childhood in Annad Bhavan, the home of Nehru in Allahabad and has attained firsthand knowledge of politics among the Indian novelists, she has politics mixed in every drop of her blood. Nehru was her maternal Uncle and her father was also an active freedom fighter. Her father was jailed many times for taking part in India's freedom struggle and died in prison. Every novel of Sahgal has important political events which takes the important role in it.

Sahgal's novels give a detailed chronological account of Indian politics from 1940's to 1970's as she had said "politics is embedded in her bone and marrow". She could not tolerate to affect the vital human interest. Her family members were actively engaged in the country's struggle for freedom and they were pioneers of the Indian politics. So she has been writing open political comments on various issues from 1940. She has been observing the political ups and downs with a tinge of western liberalism. Her novels reflect pre-independence, post independence and contemporary Indian political conflicts. She never professes any specific political ideology or political movement.

During 1970s and 1980s Sahgal showed many references to significant political happenings. Many critics believe her as political novelist and some considered a novelist with political cognizance. Her novels mostly deal with issues related to historical reconstructions. Personal and public history was entwined in her early novels. In all her novels, social, political and cultural history of India was the main aspect and she critically examined them. Her writing mostly covered the period from, 1930 to 1975. During this period there was a mass awakening to rise and revolt against the British Raj. In 1975 emergency was declared in India which forced her to write or react to political crisis since then. In her novels, she reveals the true face of power hungry politicians and their nature of valuing power as only ambition. As she comes from freedom fighters' background, she never fails to highlight the devotion of freedom fighters and their sacrifices to the country. Her novels always have two different poles, personal world of man-woman relationship and impersonal world of politics.

Saghal's works centre on socio-political backdrop of the country, man-woman relationship, man's quest for identity and woman's search for sexual freedom and self realization. She gives a clear picture of high-profile politicians and bureaucrats. They never discuss on the problems faced by the country. But they attend cocktail parties and worry about their personal problems. Saghal's autobiography *From Fear Set Free* depicts saghal's personal life and anecdotes of her mother's life. The book gives a detailed account of saghal's life in India and abroad. Her autobiography chronicles the events and incorporates India's social and political history. These details have been the central core of her later fiction. The book *From Fear Set Free* gives more information about her marriage.

Her first novel 'A Time to Be Happy' deals with the activities of the Congress party and the political events of 1942. The novel gives a clear picture of the upper middle class life. The novel also presents the changing socio-political life of the country. The novel is set in the time after the freedom of the country. It shows how the pre-independence effect still prevails in the independent India. In this novel, Gandhi's call to the people changed the protagonist and he recalls his past life. The protagonist's thinking and thought were changed by Gandhi's call.

This Time of Morning is a purely political novel. It is set in the early Post-Independence of the country. It shows what happened in the corridors of the power, in the drawing rooms of the political figures. Most of the action takes place in Delhi. The death of the C.M. of Delhi, the pillar of Delhi Government, leads to confusion in the state and as a result the fall of the government becomes inevitable and its context is decline. It is a deeply disturbing novel with a high degree of artistic maturity and technical virtuosity. In this novel, some characters are symbolically portrayed with contemporary political personalities. It also deals about the role of civil service in the country, which affects heavily on the country's choice of a political and administrative structure. The novel shows the central role of the civil servants of the country and saghal's political and personal world. It also deals about people, politicians, bureaucrats, journalists, parliamentarians, liberated society ladies and educated house wives.

Rakesh, protagonist of the novel *This Time of Morning*, is a young officer in Foreign Service. He was an ardent nationalist while he was growing up. He returned to Delhi after six years of stay in a foreign country and now found many changes in the country. He realised that the magnetic personality of the present day politicians are a threat to social freedom. They enslave people through their personal magnetism.

Saghal's artistic achievement shows the growth and development of the individual consciousness of Rakesh as well as Kalyan. Kalyansinha emphasizes the need to protect the society from the rapacious individuals. His enemy is Kailas, PM's reliable assistant and Gandhian type of freedom fighter, whose statement as head of the selection board that would choose candidates for the election.

Thus the first two novels, *A Time to Be Happy* and *This Time of Morning*, show the effect of the colonial encounter on the pre and post independent India. In *This Time of Morning* the political setting is true which reflects the contemporary scene of New Delhi. Saghal's art gives full scope to every character in the novel as shown in the foreign pages. Thus saghal's art is a more mature medium of communication and illuminates the experience of life. She shows the stress and strains of highly sophisticated society of New Delhi.

One of the best political novels of Saghal is *The Storm in Chandigarh*, which deals with the partition of East Punjab. The central theme of the novel is violence that was held in the 1960s. The violence and political tension originate from Chandigarh being the common capital of the two states Punjab and Haryana. It also deals the personal tension resulting from the failure of marital ties. The subtle form of violence could be seen among the young married couple's life. The novel shows a clear picture of post-independence period when there was political upheaval in Punjab on its linguistic line. At that time saghal's attention was on national illness. As, she has well acquainted with the political environment of Anand Bhavan, is quite authentic in portraying the reality of the political and personal backgrounds which are well fisted and run paralleled to each other. She carefully handled in introducing the characters who behave like modern and they do not isolate themselves from the tradition.

"A Time to be Happy" is the reference of congress activities of 1942. The novel is set in the immediate pre and post independent India and narrated in the first person perspective. It deals with the search for identity during the India's struggle for liberation. The novel covers the period from around 1932-1948. It gives a different

level of reference like Indian national movement that left indelible impress in the minds of countless comfortable among the upper middle class Indians. The novel depicts the story of Sand an Englishman brought to be success, and uncertain about his future. The central character of the novel is Sand, a westernized Indian, who searches for identity and the central theme of the novel is awakening and of Sand's consciousness, self discovery and identity. Sahgal tries to show a nation's consciousness through the fragmentary of consciousness of an individual. The story is filtered through the consciousness of the narrator. The women characters are individualistic but still confined by traditions. The novel reflects Sahgal's interest and involvement in the process of changes in immediate pre and post independent India.

This Time of Morning is also one of the pure-political novels written by Sahgal. It shows what happened in the corridors of power in parliament. Some of the characters of the novel are quintessential of the contemporary political personalities and she beautifully and symbolically portrayed the political personalities. The novel is about the decline and fall of Kalyan Singh's government and much of the action take place in Delhi. This Time of Morning is one of the best political novels written by Indian in English.

Thus Sahgal always frames her novel on tumultuous period of India. Her novels are primarily connected with social and political forces of India. In Indian English literary scene, Sahgal has a unique distinction of being a typical political novelist.

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