



Social and Political Milieu in Nayantara Sahgal's This Time of Morning

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Abstract: Intermingling of history and politics is called as literature. It cannot be separated from each other. Without politics life won't be fulfilled. It has started from ancient days of king's ruling. Nayantara Sahgal is social and political novelist and also a feminist. Naturally, she belongs to the political family of Nehru. Her mother Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit is first woman ambassador. She grew up at the time of before and after independence. So she has seen everything by her eyes. That helps her to write actual things. Her family has participated in the freedom struggle and her father died in the Lucknow prison Jail. The impact of these things make her as a political novelist and a keen observer of society. And she is dare enough to question the ruling party. She never hesitates to present real things in her novel. This novel, This Time of Morning is one among the political novels of Nayantara Sahgal . Through this novel, she questions the corrupted politicians like Kalyan Sinha. And it describes modern thinking of woman to lead their life freely. Many politicians misuse their power for their own self-development. This present paper attempts to analyses the political corruptions and social conditions of that time. It clearly shows the people after independence.

Keywords: History and politics, Mindset of people before and after independence, corrupted political parties and affected women.

Introduction

Always, Nayantara Sahgal's novels have expressed her own life experience. The present novel, This Time of Morning reveals her time of real characters of those political parties. She condemned them for many political issues. She tries to explore about the things which she feels strongly through her fiction. Mostly, she concentrated on the important values of freedom and social responsibility. She combines the real political happenings with the story [1]. An allegory can be created by the political and cultural events for life. This present novel deals about the attitudes of Indians for whom power and position became a potential reality. The clash is usual between the officials for the power. She uses to satire to describes every incident in this novel [2]. The critic

Makarand Paranjpe says, "To me Nayantara Sahgal's novels are meaningful chronicles of a larger narrative, indeed as most Indian English fiction is". (159)

The characters like Hari Mohan and Somnath wants for power in an interview with Jasbir Jain in 1990, Nayantara Sahgal says about power, "I think of politics not as leading the country but politics as the use of power, and also the abuse of power [3]. It happens at so many levels". (Sahgal's Interview 186) Rakesh, who is first introduced in this novel. He returns from abroad after six and half years of service. He likes to work hereafter in Delhi. He finds many changes in Delhi after independence of few years. He struggles to handle the corrupted political parties [4]. He has to

work under them. The title of the novel itself indicates the morning after independence. After freedom, the social and political and working class people's mindset and suffering are revealed in this novel. Rakesh, Indian Foreign Service officer, has returned to Delhi and finds many changes here. He says,

The plane had been full, and the man at the booking counter had told him all planes travelled with a full load. Sensitive to changes during his absence in foreign capitals, every Indian detail held an interest for him. (1)

Saleem has received Rakesh and speaks about the devotion of country. Bari Rachel comments on Saleem as,

So too saleem. He chose India over Pakistan much to the consternation of his brother who had moved to Pakistan. But Saleem had thought of the assorted band of legislators who journeyed three times a year to Delhi and who had come places which had not known a bus or an electric fan. The Lok Sabha for him "symbolized faith". For him it was the custodian of the public conscience... the guarantee that no man could arise and say, 'I'm India (44)

The two important characters, Kailas Vrind who is a follower of Gandhi. And another character is Kalyan Sinha who is corrupted politician and who has grown up from poverty. From this novel, Sahgal tries to show how even educated woman could not change the society and how they suffer. Saleem received Rakesh and says about his transfers. He says,

But before a year was out they or their wives were agitating for foreign posts again. Allowances in Delhi were out, accommodation was difficult and once families had been seen, family affairs straightened out, and school-age children left in boarding schools, they were restless and ready to leave. (5)

The secretary General of the External Affairs Ministry is Arjun Mitra, who is a dedicate worker. Because of his sincerity he is liked by junior officers. Sahgal describes Sinha as, "The controversial Sinha had spent two years in Delhi as Minister without portfolio. He had recently been appointed Advisor on Foreign Affairs and his gaunt arresting face

appeared regularly in the papers". (6) Rashmi is may be called as heroine of this novel and who is a daughter of politician, Kailash Urind. She is a divorcee and living with her parents. Her marriage life with Dalip ends in failure. Both are hate to live together. So they are separated by divorce. Kailash has served as a Chief Minister of Utter Pradesh, before independence. Kailas and Kalyan has controversial opinion on politics. Because Kailas is strict follower of Gandhi and his rules of Ahimsa. Whereas Kalyan is a corrupted politician. Bari Rachel says about Nita as,

Nita is the young, beautiful daughter of Dr. Narang, who is a queer blend of Eastern and Western culture. Western life-style is a part of Narang's culture but when it comes to his daughter, he would act in the most traditional manner, imposing severe restrictions on the movement of his ambitious daughter. Narang's family never allows their daughter to party. (48)

Each character in this novel is individual. They come coherent under the connection of politics. Otherwise no one has coherency. Because this novel describes the incidents. Arjun Mitra is an officer, foreign returned and married a young woman Uma, who is nearly twenty-year-old girl. He always concentrates on only files and official dealings. So Uma is misleded to do wrong things because of her loneliness. The couple is not happy in their marital life. For the sake of his family, he does not take the decision of divorce.

Another typical character Dr. Narang who likes to drink, smoke and dance but he never allows his daughter Nita to do so. Her movements are restricted within the four walls of the house. Kalyan Sinha offers job for Nita. Dr. Narang cannot avoid it. So he allows his daughter to work in the office of Kalyan. She falls in love with him. Rakesh is an educated man and who has chosen Indian Foreign Service as his profession. But his Parents hates this. However, he likes to serve for the nation with devotion. Kalyan Singh is a associator of Rakesh when he was a student. He runs organization called India Centre, which helps voluntarily. Many young ladies visit this often. One among the lady is Leela is a young girl from traditional Indian family [5,6]. Later, she identifies by Rakesh for the police the drowned body of Leela who was pregnant. He

suspects Kalyan for his death. B.P. Sinha comments on Nita in his Feminist Concept,

Nita and Rashmi are not inclined to be passively docile; instead they want to live their own lives. Nita wants a job of her own and resents the idea of an arranged marriage to perhaps one of the 'putty-faced' men whose family regard her as a catch. (54)

In the election, Kalyan nominates Hari Mohan instead of Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. This incident displeased the President. When Mitra suggests that nomination of Hari Mohan is not good. Kalyan even never let his ear to the words of Mitra. Dhiraj Singh is a civil servant who is upset because of his demotion as an Indian Ambassador to Burma. Now he is an Additional Secretary in External Affairs. His son Vishnu is a student at Oxford, spends lot of money on clothes and entertainment. His daughter Binny is fond of enjoys her foreign life style. So, he hates his children. Because they are acting to him to get money. He wants to retain his post. So he decides to meet Kalyan Sinha. He too accepts his request because he needs the support of some Government officials like Sharma, and Dhiraj.

Rashmi has crush on Neil. And she presents a small silver Ganesh. Because Ganesh has overcome all the obstacles in life. Then she reveals the broken marriage to her mother. She acts like typical Indian mother,

Rashmi's announcement was worst than bad news. It was a mortal blow to all she held sacred. What had brought Rashmi to this pass? What reason could sever the marriage bond? Women had since time immemorial stayed married, under every conceivable circumstance, to brutal insensitive husbands to lunatics and lepers. (46)

Kailas thinks of his political career. He recollects Gandhiji's revolution begin with the incident in 1893 when he was thrown out of a first class railway compartment in South Africa. Kailas's political career has begun in the end of 1919. He remained as a witness for the death of swami Satyanand. He suggested his father to join non-cooperation movement but he moves against to it and dead. He says, "Arrest and imprisonment became a normal way of life. Jail became a place of pilgrimage". (171) Kailas has gone to prison for five

times. He learnt many things in the prison. Kailas sees Prakesh Shukla, who is Ex M.P from Uttar Pradesh. They recall the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Then he says about the false politician Kalyan. He is notorious man in politics. B.P.Sinha comments on this novel in his Social and Political Concerns in the novels of Nayantara Sahgal,

In This Time of Morning a post-independence generation has come into being, a generation has come into being, a generation to whom freedom is no longer a dream but a reality and this generation to whom freedom is no longer a dream but a reality and this generation lives side by side with an older generation which has struggled to turn into one... And there are those who like Somnath and Harimohan adhere to the Gandhian values in name but not in spirit. (Sinha 32)

Hari began his career as a sweet deliverer. Mitra usually goes to the shop of Hari Mohan. During war time, he had supplied food for American and British soldiers and earned lot of money from it. Hari recognized by the people as a rich man. He happens to meet Kailash. He helped him to bring Printing Press for the coming election. Both become partners. Hari Mohan has selected by the people. And there was a riot among the people because of partition. Kailash has gone to many villages where minorities are living. Result of his effort, Uttar Pradesh remained with peace when compared with Punjab and Bengal.

Conclusion

Totally, this novel expresses the political and state of that time. The country's partition has created Hindu Muslim riot among the people. Many deaths have taken place at that time of partition. Women have too suffered in the time of independence. They feel free from the slavery from British firm after independence but they are not come out for real freedom. They dare enough to overcome all social rules and regulations. Mostly, Sahgal's heroines are free from those restrictions. Women have felt the freedom of their own through choosing life partners even after divorce. And the society remains with confusion. It is a comment on the ruling party and its misbehaviors.

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