

## The Theme of Social Conflict in the Novels of Nayantara Sahgal

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**Abstract:** Indian English literature refers to the body of work by writers in India who write down in the English language and whose native or co-native language could be one of the frequent languages of India. It is also related with the works of members of the Indian diaspora, such as V.S.Naipaul, Kiran Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri and Salman Rushdie, who are of India descent. Nayantara Sahgal's views on society, politics and culture are of huge importance. She thought ahead of her times. The image of humanity that she presents in her novels has immense significance even today. However, her views in this regard have not been paid the consideration they deserve. A little books or hypothesis have ever been undertaken to study the action of society, politics and culture in her novels. It is hoped that the current research will discover the hitherto unfamiliar dimensions of Nayantara Sahgal's fiction and construct optimistic involvement to a enhanced perceptive of the writer and her work.

**Key Words:** feminist; male-dominated; inheritance; political; frustrated.

### 1. INTRODUCTION:

This paper has been prepared with an aim to prepare a background study. After independence, as the socio-political-economic environment of India underwent a change, the novelists began to imitate the changing beat of the nation. A new harvest of novelists like Bhabha Bhattacharya, Manohar Malgonkar, Nayantara Sahgal, Kamala Markandaya and Khushwant Singh sustained to feed the tradition of communal realism by probing more extremely and expansively into the social, political, economic and cultural background of the modern period. Indian English novelists of 1960s and 1970s like Anita Desai and Arun Joshi shifted their center from socio-political and economic concerns to the examination of individual's center world. Indian novel in English touched the original horizons after 1980s when some promising novelists like Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Shashi Tharoor, Upmanyu Chatterjee, Arundhati Roy, Amitav Ghosh and Rohinton Mistry arrived on the fictional firmament and signaled a new fashion by introducing fresh them and techniques. The thematic campaign of these novelists is as enormous as the subcontinent. These novelists, with multinational outlook, took alternative to magic realism, fractured arrangement and subverted the majestic narratives of the mature generation.

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Makarand R. Paranjape, Indian Texts and Traditions in English: In this volume Paranjape has discussed about the diverse conduct of convention by various writers from dissimilar perception.

### 3. MODERN INDIAN WRITING IN ENGLISH:

Women novelists have made a major involvement to the modern Indian writing in English. They have, in a numeral of ways, not only surpassed their male counterparts but also maintained a lofty standard of literary writing applauded not only by Indians but overseas readers as well. The history of Indian English fiction by Indian Women novelists dates back to the last quarter of the nineteenth century when a crowd of women novelists appeared on the literary scene and exploited the type of fiction technically and thematically to put across their point of view in a more powerful and authoritative way.

### 4. IMPORTANT SOCIAL AND MORAL CHANGES:

This paper has focused upon the reading of important social and moral changes deftly delineated by Nayantara Sahgal. In fact, Sahgal is deeply troubled with women's status in Indian society. Her equivalent British writer Doris Lessing is a strong supporter of women's cause in the west. Despite belonging to different countries, having diverse socio cultural backgrounds, but look at the women's question from the similar point of view. They both advocated feminism long before the arrival of feminist movement in the 1960 in the west. The paper studies the theme of social conflict from the feminist perception in Nayantara Sahgal's *Storm in Chandigarh* (1969) and Doris Lessing's *The Grass*

*is Singing* (1950). They both look at feminism afresh and from a different angle. Their characters after passing through different vicissitudes in their voyage of life understand how radical approach can be grievous for their own self as well as for their family and the society at large.

#### **5. CENTRAL PLACE OF WOMEN:**

Sahgal gives a middle place to women in her novels frequently strikes gives a central place to women in her novels constantly strikes the note that women should not be treated as a “sex object and glamour girl, fed on false dreams of permanent youth, lulled into an inactive role that requires on individual identity.” Sahgal believes that woman is an equivalent honored partner of man and should be treated as such. Most of her female characters struggle for this equality.

#### **6. SAHGAL’S FEELINGS FOR POLITICS:**

Nayantara Sahgal’s novels read like commentaries on the political and social chaos that India has been facing since independence. Mrs. Sahgal’s feeling for politics and her authority over English are rather more remarkable than her act as a novelist. She is a novelist of politics as well as victorious political writer for different newspapers. Her writing is generally characterized by effortlessness and bravery.

#### **7. RECEPTIVITY OF WOMEN:**

Her novels represent the modern incidents and political realities saturated with imaginative and impartiality. As a women novelist, Sahgal recognizes that her duty is that of advocating the liberation of women. She has gone profound into the female mind in her novels. She describes in her novels how women are exploited even during the contemporary times by both the individuals and the society. She tried to depict the receptivity of women that how a women looks out at herself and her problems. During almost six decades of post-colonial history of Indian English fiction, a wide variety of novelists has emerged focusing attention a large amount of social, economic, political, religious and spiritual issues faced by three coinciding periods of human knowledge. In Indian novelists in English, women writers like R.P.Jhabvala, Nayantara Sahgal, Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Arundhati Roy, Shobha De, Bharati Mukherjee, Jhumpa Lahiri, Rama Mehta, Manju Kapur and Geeta Mehta have heralded fresh consciousness, particularly the wretched troubles of the Indian women. Through women writer’s eyes, we can observe a special world, with their assistance we can seek to understand the potential of human realization.

#### **8. ENCOUNTER OF THE EAST WITH THE WEST:**

In this paper, focus has been on the treatment of the encounter of the East with the West and the consequences thereof in her novels. The cultural conflict between the East and West is a frequent theme in Indian English literature. Nayantara Sahgal has been vigorous on the literary scene both as a creative author and a political writer. She has the single distinction of being the political novelist on the Indian English literary scene. Her work has a strong sensible base and reflects not only her personal values but also the changing values of a society exposed for both freedom and power, East and West. In fact, Sahgal was born and brought up in an exclusive family wealthy in culture and traditions. She received education in the West and its impact whether her novels are set in colonial or post-colonial India, the power of the west is clearly evident. She seems to support the openness of mind of the west. However, the East is her appreciated inheritance which she would not lose at any cost.

#### **9. INSANITY OF POWER:**

In all her novels, she exposes the power-hungry politicians and their insanity for power. She highlights the passionate freedom fighters, desire for freedom and their sacrifices for their motherland. In all her works, there is a combination of two worlds: the personal world of man-woman relationship and the impersonal world of politics. Husband-wife estrangement resulting from lack of communication, East-West encounter, extra-marital relationship, existentialistic problems and unpredictable inappropriateness form the major themes in Sahgal’s novels.

#### **10. CULTURAL VIEWS OF NAYANTARA SAHGAL:**

In this paper, an effort has been made to seriously analyze the cultural views of Nayantara Sahgal as reflected in her novels. Moral values and traditions, the very vital aspects of culture, have been paid huge thought by Nayantara Sahgal in her work. To her, culture is not stationary. It is energetic. It receives timely influences and sheds off the needless ones. She compassionately records that the ethical order is changing, not degenerating. She rejects brainless devotion to traditions such as of arranged marriage and favours a trivial modification in Hindu Marriage Act so to assist division which is the central theme of *The Day in Shadow* (1971). As a writer with feminist concerns, Nayantara Sahgal is a progeny of the tradition wherein authority itself is sanctified as goddess “Sakti” a female symbol. Her novels request to imagine the independent survival of women and weaken all attempts to preclude them forms the centre-stage of human survival. Sahgal’s approach towards the subject is holistic and focuses mainly on the query of identity-crisis for women.

## **11. CONCLUSION:**

The finding of the foregoing conversation has been summed up in this paper. Thus, the current study has been effectively aimed at analyzing fictional world of Nayantara Sahgal from the practical perception with a vision to showing how she is reflecting and representing the different conventional social realities being changed into the contemporary ones in metropolitan India. In her novels, the majority of her characters, in her the primary stage, declare their feminine identity though gripe and disobedience but finally end up accepting and embracing the conventional values of patriarchal society. Therefore, the quarrel in her protagonists between traditional pull desires for female frustrates the search for completeness and integrated selfhood.

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