

TRAGIC POSITION OF WOMEN IN A MALE-DOMINATED SOCIETY IN THE SELECT NOVELS OF NAYANTARA SAHGAL

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Abstract

Nayantara Sahgal is a very intelligent and independent woman, always maintaining a sense of freedom, not easily influenced, but also an independent thinker; although the choices she makes in her personal life is subject to social pressure and criticized, she refused give up on her personal life. She handles marital disputes and alienation between men and women, describing conflicts and disappointments with insight and understanding. Even if a marriage is ended up between two people with the same cultural and traditional background, different temperaments and attitudes can lead to breaking the relationship. Sahgal deals with the attitudinal differences leading to the clash of personalities and final disintegration of marriage.

Keywords:

Suppression, Feminism, discrimination, Masculinity, Loneliness, Sacrifice.

The theme of her novel is to express the tragic position of women in a male-dominated society, which is a social stain. In society, a woman is considered a daughter, wife, sister, mother, and she is also considered to be "Maa" in the Bible, it is still suppressed, exploited and regarded as a servant of mankind in modern times. Nayantara Sahgal carefully observes and expresses this discrimination in her novel. She exhibited the pathetic condition of the women in the society. According to Manu, the law giver, "A woman should be under the protection of father in the childhood, then under the husband in youth and if the fate condemns her to widowhood, she must lean on her son". This happened at the dawn of social civilization. Here, the woman is the object of reward for her child's sexual behaviour and service. She lives in a "cave" where her husband rarely talks to her, for which she sacrificed and dedicated her whole life. In India, marriage is a system in which women are the objects of men's jewellery, property, and sexual satisfaction. Loneliness and violence became the femininity in her private life. A cave beautifully described in Nayantara Sahgal's novel.

The importance and superiority of men have always been part of the social customs and a generation of India. The patriarchal society advocates two images of women: one is that women are the sexual property of men, and the other is that women are the chaste mothers of children. The core values unite men and women in bonds of unity, loyalty and friendship. Stay away from today's social world. Men are proud

of their relationship before and after marriage. But they do the same thing, don't count on women. For women in our society who cannot live without men, this is a very terrible situation. They are considered weak and at risk of entering society.

All of this is expressed in Nayantara Sahgal's novels, such as *Storm in Chandigarh*, *This Time of Morning*, *A Time to Be Happy*, *The Day in Shadow*, *Rich Like Us*, *Mistaken Identity*. Hypocritical men are widespread in Indian society. Men are proud of illegal relationships before and after marriage, but they do not expect women to do the same. We discovered this in the relationship between Saroj and the Inder during the *Storm in Chandigarh*. Saroj was very upset and did not find mutual participation.

Her husband, an Indian, not only comes from a different culture, but also from a different kind of a person. He treated her very cruelly as a sexual object rather than a spouse. When Saroj tells him innocently about her affairs before her marriage, Inder considers it to be a serious moral offence. He feels that her act of relations with another man before the marriage was nothing but the crime. But, Saroj is not guilty and dishonest at all. Saroj often abuses Inder, mainly because she lost her virginity before getting married. Saroj, who grew up in an atmosphere of freedom, was shocked by her husband's violent reaction to the premarital relationship when she had in her college days. Inder could not forgive this behavior. Saroja continues to use her innocence. We have seen that Inder often tortured his wife Saroj for having a premarital relationship, but the irony is that Inder himself lost his virginity long before the marriage. He is sexually unreliable and successful, and insists on accumulating experience wherever he finds her. "Saroj was even beaten for this mistake, but Inder never played with words. Inder also had sex before marriage, but in a male-dominated society, this is not regarded as a man's fault. A woman in Indian society must be virtuous, chaste, passive, and loyal to her husband.

Although her husband had sexual relationship before marriage, she must not have sexual intercourse. It is not a crime for a man to have sex before or after marriage. If a woman suffers the same torture, it is one thing. This kind of inequality, a man who became a victim, suffered a lot of torture from her husband after innocently leaking the secret of her relationship with another man before marriage. Inder sees Saroj simply as his wife, property, not to mention the love between them. Therefore, the relationship between Inder and Saroj reveals the cruel face of patriarchy. A woman lives in appalling conditions and faces sufferings because of strong social conventions.

She found that men are superior to women in marriage which finds in Inder, the same we find in Ram also in the novel *Rich Like Us*. Ram, the protagonist of the novel, married Mona. Then he fell in love with Rose and ultimately failed. By declaring that, Hindu marriage was a sacrament and not a contract, he prevented his first wife Mona from giving up. On the one hand, he married Rose for the second time. After the second marriage, she had an extramarital affair with Marcela. When Rose wanted to explain, she explained to Rose that she had a sensible love for Marcela, but when she met Freddy (with whom she was engaged). Before, her attitude towards Rose became violent to meet with Ram in order to get some relief

from the suffocation after marrying Ram. He didn't even approve of her meeting with Freddie, and was very angry with her. He also reprimanded her very cruelly. Institutions are just a form, forcing you to show only society, otherwise it is useless.

Marriage is just a system for men to satisfy their sexual desires, while women are surrendering and self-sacrificing. It is ignored by men in society and the victim was silent. She must live in it. The "cave" is a symbol of hypocrisy, loneliness and lack of communication with the husband. In "Rich Like Us", Ram and his wife live a passionate life, while Mona takes care of the house and the baby, Rose provides sensory happiness and companionship in his career, and both women feel resentful and lonely and unsafe. ... Women survive in adversity, bravely maintain their strength and dignity, learn to overcome pain to make progress, and show sympathy and sensitivity to others. With this attitude, the mood of men during extramarital affairs is very obvious, but for women, this is by no means accidental. They want their wives to be chaste and not to have extramarital affairs. Nayantara Sahgal strongly condemns the attitude of these people. Women are only the objects of men. "The Day in Shadow" also shows the cruel side of society.

This novel tells the story of a young, beautiful and brave Indian woman trapped in a terrible divorce struggle. The heroine in the novel, Simirit, found herself in an overwhelming atmosphere with her husband Som, so she tried to divorce Som to gain freedom, but only after the divorce realized that this situation was too terrible and cruel, and could not be like A woman who lives in society like a divorce. ... Som also has the violent face of male dominating society. All efforts are made to be modern and blindly imitate the Western way of life. Som wants Simirit to behave like a traditional wife. It has no freedom, no right to speak, even in the ordinary world.

In her novel, Sahgal shows the limitations, cruelty and carelessness of male characters. Their cynical nature is often witnessed by the female characters in the novel. This leads to the loneliness, boredom, emptiness, and meaninglessness of life for sensitive women in the novel; for them, this is a cave of hypocrisy that exposes masculinity; loss of contact leads to separation between men and women. Both men and women suffer, but men suffer less because they are not dependent on women. In the end, the woman who had nowhere to tell embarked on the path of suicide. Look at this inhumane approach to Madhu in the context of New Delhi. Madhu rape case reveals the masculinity in this novel. Madhu, a student at Delhi University, was raped at the registry office. Only treat them as objects of enjoyment and ignore their feelings, will and selfishness. It is very contradictory that society produces such people and cannot punish them. In this matter, the role of Madhu's parents is also very inhumane. They "do not want to make any publicity about the already intolerable shame." They think that a hasty marriage is the only way to solve their problems. With this, Sahgal showed that if a woman is branded, then she has nowhere to go in a patriarchal environment. From this we find that everything created by society in her novels is based on the fact that society and law are created and controlled by people.

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