

## **NAYANTARA SHAGAL'S THIS TIME OF MORNING: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF MAN-WOMAN'S RELATIONSHIP**

**Dr. Baban Seyke**

Assistant Professor (English)  
Swami Vivekananda Government College,  
Berasia, Bhopal ( M.P.)

### **Abstract**

Sahgal's novels present a study of the desert of loneliness experienced by women in their relationship with men. Her women are lively, avid extroverts before marriage but marriage changes their destiny drastically. Their longing for involvement and sharing remains unfulfilled and they keep yearning for companionship all through their lives. Some of them spend their whole lives like this only but there are some who break free of this poor situation and move away from their so called homes in search of greener pastures. The women in her earlier novels are tradition-loving devoted wives who have accepted their fate and never bother to protest. Some of them are even happy with the status quo and they do not want any change in this secure system. But her later novels have women with gumption. They bear for as long as they can, but beyond that they do not hesitate in breaking the marriage bond though they believe in its sanctity.

Keywords: Nayantara Sahgal ,Feminism, Relationship , Marriage, This Time of Morning

### **Introduction:**

Nayantara Sahgal has written eight novels in all. All her novels, barring the first and the last, are told through the conscience of a woman. In all her novels a serious concern for women's issues is evident. Sahgal's women belong to the higher strata of society, they are educated and they are financially well off. Her women do not have to face many problems faced by their less fortunate counterparts. They do not know the menace of dowry, child marriage except one, illiteracy etc. their problems are more psycho-logical than social. These are educated women enjoying all material comforts. But mentally they are in a wilderness, in quest of identity, searching for selfhood. They are strong women who may evince timidity for a while, not because they are inherently so, but because they are emotional beings finding it difficult to break off all attachments.

### **Review of Literature:**

Women have made remarkable contribution to poetry and fiction in Indian English Literature .They have established their own 'great tradition. Novelists like Kamla Markanday, Nayantara sahgai, Ruth P. Jhabvala, Attia Hossain and many others have evinced remarkable artistic skill for satire, humour, criticism, irony wit, pathos, fantasy and even poetic touches.The key of the noticeable success of women novelists lies in the fact that women are born storytellers

and they are endowed with the gift of delving deep into the workings of human mind and heart with sympathy, sensitivity and understanding.

Indian women novelists in English have developed a style of their own. Each one is different from the other. Each one of them has her own world of experiences, her own way of looking at things and her own way of portraying her own characters. Nayantara Sahgal, for instance, depicts her work of experiences in her own very individual style. No other writer is so much concerned with the life of young men and women in Indian cities as Anita Desai is. No one else is so much concerned with the difference of ideologies, though and philosophy of the East and the West as Kamala Markandaya or Ruth.

Critical Analysis:

This Time of Morning is chronologically the first women (Rashmi) of Sahgal, who breaks free from the marriage bond, when she feels its suffocation. Rashmi found herself in a wilderness with Dalip. Though husband and wife, they had absolutely no communication. She is a girl, who wants complete sharing, total involvement; instead she gets a cold response. Their aloofness from each other is so complete that Rashmi feels, only apart of her was married to Dalip, the rest of her was yearning for involvement.

Infact, if Rashmi's marriage failed it is simply and only because of lack of reciprocity. she has nothing against Dalip. Dalip is neither a womanizer like Inder, nor is he an oppressor like Ram n. Surya. Dalip's problem is that he never felt the need to share himself with Rashmi. Rashmi, who is fascinated with the life of a nun because 'god demands everything', does not find dalip as receptive as herself. The absolute communication gap leads to various misunderstandings which in turn, makes spouses hostile towards each other. Rashmi is not a much demanding girl. Her only dream is to be fully involved, to give herself totally and in return to be given completely. but her marriage deprives her even of this simple joy of sharing. On meeting Rakesh after a long time, she feels relieved, as she could share everything with him.

In her thirst for love Rashmi gets involved with Neil, but sadly she fails in getting Neil involved with herself. Neil is the epitome of western superfluity and his love does not promise permanence. It is only physically that he holds Rashmi. her soul remains insatiate, as Neil with Karen and Carl... his children from his ex-wife..... but Neil is somewhat distant, detached.

She is so desperate that even a workman's acknowledgement of her gave a good feeling. It is in the person of Rashmi that the bleak married life of an average woman is brought forth. marriage is meant for happiness, but it can also bring sadness, "how like prolonged starvation, wronged marriage could be, robbing luster, defeating courage and will."

Ironically somewhere deep down, Maya and Rashmi think alike. Maya loves the narrator but finds marriage too strong a bond to break. She could not even think of possibilities other than marriage. Like her Rashmi also knows that her marriage is finished but she dares not mention this even to herself, for some ironic reason it was anguish to kill even that was better dead.

The total involvement that Rashmi wants is quite different from the one desired and practiced by her mother. It does not mean self-effacement. It must be based on the principles of equality. There is Mira who acknowledges the role of Kailas behind everything she does.

On one hand Mira's acknowledgement shows her docility and complete surrender, and on the other hands it comes as a statement of the responsibility of men for the defiance of women. Rashmi's firm decision to leave Dalip comes from an awareness of frustrating experience, while Mira's comforting securitty has insulated her against all odds and it has rendered her unsympathetic to the problem that new women like Rashmi might face. It is only later that she senses what lay in the horizon.

This irony is experienced not only by Rashmi but by another strong character Uma Mitra though her response to it is different. Uma is the young and voluptuous wife of not-so-young Arjun Mitra. Arjun is a bureaucrat fully engrossed in and devoted to his work. He is more of a mind and less of a body. he is so absorbed in his official dom that he tents to forget the emotional as well as physical need of Uma. Uma is full of life and she has her needs too.

Uma needs constant attention but Arjun can give only a promise of security. Arjun, though a nice man, fails miserably as a husband. He has neither time nor inclination to hold Uma. Uma is not a woman to give in and become passive. she has her cravings and she discovers her ways to satisfy them. For her, life is to be lived and to be the most of, but for Arjun, life is to confirm to certain moulds. He has his own notions of a decent life, ‘He has his views on how decent people spoke to each other, but she recognized no limitation; she was wild and lawless. When Arjun becomes aware of their vast differences, instead of breaking out of his shell, he recoils intuit all the more and considers ‘Uma dead’ Uma like a butterfly wanders from one refuge to another. Arjun never thinks of having a confrontation with her as he had already had one. He had warned her that she is putting their marriage to jeopardy. Instead of refuting the rumors about her will behavior, she had shrugged her shoulders and asked him challengingly, Marriage ? What marriage ?

Had Arjun been more firm and demanding? Uma might have been a different person. His indifference to her adds fuel to the fire of her sensuousness.,but Arjun cuts her off his life and his leads to jeopardy. They become total strangers, so much so that he finds himself unable to recall her face .

There are other minor characters who suffer due to want of response. As Celia does with kalyan Sinha. Kalyan is a man with magnetic attraction. women are attracted to him but he remains aloof. He has his own physical needs and he indulges in them as well, but his enjoyment of women is totally physical. there is no promise of attachments.

Conclusion:

Sahgal discovers that most couples are living in wilderness. They have absolutely no mutual interest, no common ideas to share and yet some of them remain stuck together all their lives. compatibility or no compatibility, most women want to stick to their marriage for as long as bearable. Their power of endurance is immense and they believe, ‘home is sacrosanct’ it is only, when their patience is taxed too long that they dare to rebel. On a comparative study, we find that the women in her early novels were not as aware of the want of reciprocity, as those of her later novels .Mira drowns herself fully in Kailas without ever brooding over his lack of concern, but lulu could not identify with the cause of Marlowe. she needs a life of her own. Rashmi has no other grudges but only lack of will to respond on the part of Dalip. This change is not the change in age, this can be attributed to the change in Sahgal’s perspective.

#### References:

1. Sahgal Nayantara, 1965 .This Time of Morning,New Delhi:Penguin Books.
2. Sahgal Nayantara, 1954.Prison and Chocolate Cake,London,Victor.
3. Iyengar,K.R.S.1973, Indian Writing in English, Asia Publishing House, New Delhi,1973
4. Ibid P-393
5. [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)