

## Nayantara Sahgal: A Portrayal of Women's Identity

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### **Abstract**

*Nayantara Sahgal, a distinguished Indian novelist played a remarkable role in the national movement. She was the first Indian ambassador of U.N. In 1975, Nayantara Sahgal took to the streets to protest against the Emergency imposed by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi her Cousin. She spent her childhood and adolescence in India's politics, the crusade for emancipation from the British yoke and the influence of Gandhian ideas of nonviolence and freedom. She is a prolific writer. In her writings, she tells women to liberate themselves from the chains and bondages. She portrays the anger protest of women and breaking of traditional codes and customs and pleads for a true change in the circumstances of women. She tries to make women as par with men and ensure equal rights and dignity.*

**Key words:** *Novelist, National Movement, Non-violence, Crusade, Liberation.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Nayantara Sahgal is a distinguished Indian novelist played a remarkable role in the national movement. She reveals great political drama of the freedom struggle. Nayantara Sahgal was born on May 10 1927 at Allahabad into one of the most prominent families of India and her mother's name was Vijayalakshmi Pandit and her father died because of illness he suffered in prison for participating India's freedom struggle prison Pandit and she was the first Indian ambassador of U.N. Her uncle Jawaharlal Nehru was the first Prime Minister of India. Her cousin Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was the third Prime Minister as well as the first women prime Minister of India. In 1975, Nayantara Sahgal took to the streets to protest against the Emergency imposed by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi her Cousin. She was born in a family of freedom fighters.

She spent her childhood and adolescence in India's politics, the crusade for emancipation from the British yoke and the influence of Gandhian ideas of nonviolence and freedom. She is a prolific writer and she has written political novels of high quality. She has

nine novels, two biographics two political commentaries and articles. She joined with Jayaprakash Narayan as he seeks reinstatement of democracy and the constitution. She is interested about freedom and equality. She also continues to fight for the conditions of tolerance, peace and equality. In 2015 she returned the Sahtiya Adademi Award in protest against the killing of rationalists. She fights her battles with her pen. Her two novels, *The Fate of Butterflies* (2019) and *When the Moon shines by the Day* (2016) are filled with contemporary energy, the emerging challenges, and how the idea of India is at stake. Her novel *The Fate of Butterflies* tells about the times we are now living in, the challenges to Indianness that we tackle.

Her history book, includes “Freedom movement in India (1970) and political treaties” Indira Gandhi: Her Road to power” (1978). In her writings she tells the struggle of women to liberate herself from the chains and bondages. She portrays the anger protest of women and breaking of traditional codes and customs she pleads for a true change in the circumstances of women and she never likes a women as toy in the hands of her life partner and she tries to make women as par with men and ensure equal rights and dignity.

As a woman Sahgal advocating the emancipation of women. In her writings she portrays that in modern times also women is subjected to inhuman exploitation. Her view is women are easy target of a conventional society which did not allow women to hold or express their own views. She advocates social injustice and she focuses on full freedom of women. She tells that women should be aware of her identity and should raise her voice against injustice. Women should be aware of their identity and should raise her voice against injustice.

As a women writer she tries to bring a social change by awareness. She is different from other feminist writers because most of the feminist writers portray feminism in a domestic way. But Sahgal portrays it as a perspective of political way. She concerns for the women who are seized in the mess of liberty, individuality, stability and protection of marriage bondage. In her novel “Storm in Chandigarh”, she deals a complex relationships like love, friendship, honesty, freedom and equality. Here she portrays the confrontation between the newly divided states of Punjab and Haryana over the issues of Chandigarh and Bakhra Nangal territory Act.

Sahgal traces tradition and modernity in terms of ethics and morality. She also depicts the situation of young hearts broken by compulsory marriage and she suggests that marriage is

not just sexual relationship and it means friendship, companionship on equal terms. She suggests the sanctity of human relationship.

In her book “The story of India’s Freedom Movement” she wrote one of history’s most inspiring stories. In this book she also wrote about how the ordinary people of a country defeated the mightiest Empire in the world through the forces of Satyagraha and Ahimsa.

Nayantara Sahgal is the prime women writer of modern India. In her writings she manifested that women are not permitted to involve in politics though they had played a dominant role in freedom struggle. If women would be given participation in politics then there will be openness in accounts and everything. She supports the women leaders who strive hard for the country.

In her “A Time To Be Happy” (1958) she mentioned the socio-political life of the difficult period of Indian history before independence. It portrays women’s individual freedom. In her “This Tome of Morning” (1965) states that women are conscious of their individual rights after the advent of independence.

It may be declared that women writers are boldly fighting and speaking about women’s individual freedom, their virtue in society, politics and in freedom struggle with equality. Sahgal’s portrays the endeavouring women for self identity. Women are burdened with the care of their home, husband and children and they neglected to pay their attention upon themselves. Her writings attract the young Indians especially young women who wish to moot a socio, economic and political metamorphosis in the country.

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