

## I. Introduction

This research focuses on Nayantara Sahgal's fourth novel *The Day in Shadow* (1971). It tries to analyze Sahgal's feminist concern which underlies the social and political criticism of the state of affairs in post-independence India. It also underlines briefly the novelist's constant preoccupation with exposing the state of affairs particularly in Delhi's which happened to be the hub of social and political activities. The novel is set in Delhi and is close to the seat of power and justice. This section gives a brief outline of the novel *The Day in Shadow* and short introduction of Nayantara Sahgal and her literary creations.

*The Day in Shadow* is a starkly understated revelation of what it is like to be a divorced woman in a nation in which women for use has been the rule too long. It is a love story but it is also a social history by a talented writer who shows where of she writes Mrs. Sahgal makes the inheritors of Gandhi and Nehru come alive. Subtly, without sentimentalizing and with a special gift for telling sentences that must be read a second time, she traces two parallel course that come together at last, giving her protagonist the comrade she needs, giving him a partner in hope and faith. No magical victory is promised, for them or for their country. But, they no longer walk alone.

The novel is a fine example of the female literary tradition in Indian English literature. The Western wave of steam of consciousness technique affected the writings of the novelist and she also plunged deep into the inner world of her characters. The novel is basically concerned with the emotional effects of divorce on a woman-Simirit. It has the theme of survival of a sensitive individual in a ruthlessly materialistic society.

The crisis is already over when the story opens. Simrit and Som are divorced and she is trying to adjust to the aftermath of a divorce, Som lives in a male-centered world and doesn't view women as persons and find it easy enough to condone Lalli's murder of his wife. Moreover, he shows no affection for his daughters and loves only his son, Brij. Similarly, Simrit is also a blend of both the traditional and modern elements. She wants individuality and freedom, feels suffocated and unhappy in the husband-centered world and takes divorce from Som. Thus, she rebels against the conventional society of marriage as she yearns for a free communication of ideas with her husband beyond the grandular sensation of sex. In this sense, she is an awakened woman of the modern age who shows the courage of living alone in this world. But she does not get peace of mind after the divorce and it is tradition in her that makes her feel that by taking divorce, she has offended something old and ordained. Thus, she may become a modern Indian woman but she can never go away from the old traditions and customs of her own country.

Simrit suffered from marital incompatibility. She respects certain values of life more than material prosperity. Som never discusses business with her. Their intimacy never extend to areas of mind. She feels suffocated in the world of Som. It is the class of ideals that leads to their separation. She feels that talk is the missing link between her and Som, between her and his world. She has a famishing need for talk.

Simrit longs for self-expression and freedom to live as an individual within the bonds of marriage. She reflects her creator's love for individual freedom and her conviction that the bond of marriage is to be cemented with mutual trust, respect and consideration. She expects the physical intimacy between them to spread and envelop every act and gesture of their life with tenderness and love. What forces Simrit to

rebel against the conventional security of marriage is her yearning for a free communication of ideas with her husband.

Simrit, despite her passive acceptance of Som's domination, retains an individuality of her own. She wanted to be a good wife but not at the cost of her non-individuality. She is placed in a frightening situation-herself a cog in a machine with which it had become impossible to live.

Lack of understanding and sympathy ultimately ends in a final catastrophe divorce. She gradually copes up with the emotional shock of the divorce. It was a brutal divorce settlement inflicted on her. The settlement of business shares worth six lakhs of rupees on her son Brij when he attains the age of twenty five and the legal transfer of those shares to her custody for the payment of taxes even though she gets no income from them threaten to undermine her economic independence so thoroughly that she feels very frustrated and depressed.

Struggling to build a new life for herself and her children, she encounters a brilliant rising member of the parliament. Her friendship with Raj provides her the anchor and helps her to come out of the shock and stupor and establish a life of her own. The kind of resistance she develops to face her predicament was a first move towards freedom.

It is her courage which frees Simrit from the bonds of marriage as well as the divorce settlement. Out of this struggle for existence, is born a new Simrit a person who makes choices, takes decisions and becomes aware of herself as an individual. First the mind then the body open up to new responses and life affirms itself in a sense of fulfillment in her relationship with Raj. The relationship which she builds with Raj is thus an entirely different one-it is born out of a real need, not a habit and it

begins with the mind not the body. Simrit considers the new possibility that life has held before her. The personal world of Simrit and Raj, wedded with sympathy and understanding, seems to be a world which Nayantara Sahgal loves to depict as the only alternative to the mechanic world of power, politics and money.

Simrit's divorce does not imply that marriage has failed as a social institution; on the other hand, it clearly demonstrates the need for reciprocal relationships in marriage. For Simrit, freedom as in individual comes only when she is able to shed the feelings of guilt which her broken marriage has left her with. She learns to live life for what it is. One can sense when one reads the novel that Mrs. Sahgal believes in freedom at all levels and the doctrine of peaceful existence. Her concept of freedom is not morally political. It includes the full expression of one's personality and discovering of one's true identity. Her protagonists show faith in an individual capacity to communicate and reach others through debate and discussion. She has a profound conviction that all progress, whether social, political or economic is possible only in an atmospheres of freedom and where people can communicate on all fronts. Mrs. Sahgal projects immense possibilities of life for both personal as well as political crises. *The Day in Shadow* affirms faith in life and its immense potentialities through the character of Simrit. Speaking for her, the author states:

From the high spot an immense valley of choice spread but before her saze and she felt free at last to choose what her life would be. She was filled with sheer rustiness of being alive and healthy at this particular time. (236)

Born in 1927, Nayantara Sahgal has established her eminence as a political novelist in India with rare of prophetic foresight and sensitivity. Her greatness has received national and international recognition. She has worldwide readership. That is why she is today India's best known personality across the length and breadth of the country. As daughter of Vijaya Laxmi Pandit and Ranjit Pandit, a literary scholar, and niece of Jawahalah Nehru, Nayantara Sahgal spent her childhood and adolescence in and around Swaraj Bhawan and Ananda Bhawan in Allahabad. The homes of the Nehrus at that time presented a wide range of experiences. It was not only the nerve centre of political activity in pre-independent India but was also an amalgamation of the best of the East and the West. Nayantara Sahgal's father was a poet at heart and her mother a woman of great aesthetic taste. The Kashmiri Hindu heritage was proudly proclaimed and abided by all the members of the family. The overall atmosphere was of an Indian joint family with all its advantages-of loving elders, story-telling grandmothers and loyal servants. Their constant companionship and love was unforgettable especially for the children. Shagal's yearning for the joint family system is evident later in many of her novels. Moreover, Gandhi and Nehru were household names for her, and the tremendous impact of their thoughts and ideas is found in all her writings.

Nayantara Sahgal has been active on the literary scene for almost four decades, and has published eight novels and two autobiographies besides a history book *Freedom Movement in India* (1970), and a political treatise *Indira Gandhi: Her Road to Power* (1978). She has been well known for her views on the emergency in India and fight for civil liberties. Her close relationship with Indira Gandhi has made her writings on the Emergency and Indian politics very plausible for the average reader.

Sahgal's eighth novels are *A Time to be Happy* (1956), *This Time of Morning* (1965), *Storm in Chandigarh* (1969), *The Day in Shadow* (1971), *A Situation in New Delhi* (1977), *Rich like US* (1985), *Plans for Departure* (1987) and *Mistaken Identity* (1988). Nayantara Sahgal's first book *Prison and Chokcolate Cake* (1954), an autobiography, was published when she was only twenty seven years old. The second autobiography, *From Fear set Free* (1962), was written during a critical phase in her marriage. Both the autobiographies become important because they provide the basis for a better understanding of the novelist and her novels. The first book describes the powerful associations and experiences of Nayantara's childhood and provides invaluable insight into the shaping influences of her life. The political consciousness which dominates her literary creation is real and inseparable from herself and surroundings. She is equally aware of the period and place of her birth and its historical importance.

Her sixth novel, *Rich Like US*, won the 1985 Sinclair prize for fiction and the Sahitya Akademi Award. Her seventh novel, *Plans for Departure*, won the 1987 commonwealth writers' prize for Eurasia. Mrs. Sahgal has served on the jury of the commonwealth writer's prize and has been a foreign Honorary member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

In her first autobiography *Prison and Chocolate Cake*, Nayantara Sahgal presents how she has been influenced by Jawaharlal Nehru in every way possible and has very positive things to say about him whether it be in 1954 or 1985. Similarly, her second autobiography, *From Fear Set Free*, discusses in greater detail and maturity, the vision of Nehru in shaping the future of India's nascent democracy. It is this experience and conviction that makes marriage and man-woman relationships in the Indian context a recurrent theme in her novels. Apart from this, the idealism, the

individuality, the concern for moral values, above all, the faith in the human being, that he was the very basis for a change for the better, the belief that means must match ends or they would be self-defeating, are other major recurrent themes, and ideas in Sahgal's novels and they are directly inspired by the philosophies of Gandhi and Nehru.

These important factors establish the link in the novels of Nayantara Sahgal and create a need for a total, rather than a separate evaluation of her novels. Sahgal's first six novels. *A Time to be Happy*, *The Day in shadow*, *This Time of Morning*, *Storm in Chandigarh*, *A Situation in New Delhi*, culminating in *Rich Like US* form a sextet and should be studied together as they depict the contemporary Indian political scene of the past forty years, starting from India's independence in 1947. During this period, Nayantara Sahgal takes her readers through a tour of India, much in the same way as her hero Sandad sets out in her first novel, *A Time to be Happy*. The protagonist in each successive novel projects the views of the novelist in the latest political and historical context. They portray and reveal that if there is hope and confidence in the nation even after partition, there is an anguished awareness of acceptance and defeat in 1975 due to the emergency. Loss of personal freedom, whether it be due to the state or a person, is unacceptable to both Sahgal and her characters. This is why we find her heroines defying and even breaking away from the bonds of marriage to find a life of fulfillment elsewhere. A brief analysis of the six novels named above will reveal the continuity in them.

Nayantara Sahgal's first novel *A Time to be Happy* contains a large number of characters. The structure is thus a little unwieldy. The action begins and ends on a symbolic note signifying the end of an era and a new beginning. The novel is set in the immediate pre-and post-independent period, and deals with themes which are

taken up by Sahgal in her later novels also. Some of these are those which Indian writers in English can't avoid, namely the East-West encounter, the impact of English or Western education, the burning desire for identity and roots, marriage and Hinduism.

In this time of morning independence is already a few years old unfortunately, things are not as they should be, and in Delhi there is more chaos and order. The political stalwarts such as Nehru are old and a new brand of politicians are waiting in the wings to take over. They are devoid of the qualities which make for genuine leadership. However, the democratic institutions supplement and achieve what individual leaders cannot. Similarly, in *Storm in Chandigarh* the political scene is more dismal. The distinction between means and ends has virtually disappeared, and the unscrupulous politicians seem to forge ahead. Ironically the older surviving members of the Gandhian era, represented by the old feeble home minister, prove stronger in death than in life.

In *The Day in Shadow*, which Sahgal has called her most "personal" novel, the autobiographical element is uppermost. The novel is set in Delhi and close to the seat of power and justice. The inability of the law courts to translate legal theory into action is vividly brought about by Sahgal in the novel. On the political scenario it depicts the rise of politicians such as Sumer Singh, who are inclined towards super powers for collaboration and not to Non-alignment for self-sufficiency. *A situation in New Delhi* is the portrayal of the city torn apart by the failure of political leadership and violent student unrest. It would not be wrong to state that the entire book is a tribute to Nehru. His ideals and aspirations have been forgotten and the students experience a total vacuum in the absence of leadership. The students are restless and peace has no meaning for them. Only violence can attract the attention of those who

matter, and the most brilliant students become Naxalites. The action is seen through the eyes of Michael Calvert who revisits India after the death of its charismatic leader, Shivrai, politically the decline is total, even parliament can't ensure justice in such a situation, and disillusionment is evident in the intelligentsia.

Sahgal's most famous and award-winning book *Rich Like Us* was published in 1986, about almost a decade after *A Situation in New Delhi*. Maturity of technique and characterization and an experiment with language, all add to the success of the novel. This novel is set against the emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi in 1975 and at no place does Sahgal try to disguise her views about oppression, whether it be social or political. The deep-rooted political consciousness of Sahgal makes her the only political Indian woman novelist today. Her novels emphasizes the basic fact that politicians and individuals are inter-dependent and they greatly influence each other. Sahgal strongly believes that it is the conscious moral obligation of all right-thinking people to protest against injustice and wrong. Sahgal's literary achievement lies in her ability to transmute the social, historical and political forces of her time into the organic structure of the novel.

### **Reviews on *The Day in Shadow***

Many of the critics find that Sahgal is a political novelist with rare prophetic foresight and sensitivity. The political consciousness which dominates her literary creations is real and inseparable from herself and surroundings. Her novles depict the contemporary Indian political scene of the past forty years, starting from India's independence in 1947. Moreover, she has continued the theme of tradition and modernity in a subtle manner.

Commenting on *The Day in Shadow*, Anita Mahajan says that the Indians have got freedom but it is only on the surface level. In their attitude to love, morality, sex, marriage, education and religion, they are still the slaves of the West. They think that they can become modern just by imitating the Western style of life. They love organizing parties, drinking wine and flirting with women other than their wives. They enjoy late night dinners and ballroom dances. In the same way, they also go for holidaying like the foreigners. In such a modern society, vulgarly is considered to be a sign of modernity. Deeply setting through the novel, she says:

*The Day in Shadow* shows the superficial modernity of the Indian people who blindly imitate Western style in their fashions and manners, little knowing that these things are taking them away from the traditions and customs of their own country. Trimmed hair, slim body and naked stomach are considered to be signs of modernity. Similarly, in order to be modern, these people arrange parties and spend money lavishly. They think that a man living in Delhi has got to attend parties to know more and more people. Raj wants Simrit to go out of the house so often and meet more and more people though Simrit feels out of place in such parties. (10)

A famous Indian critic, S.K. Tikoo, says that Sahgel's *The Day in Shadow* deals with the feminist theme. It shows how tradition has left women behind loss of personal freedom, whether it be due to the state or a person, it's unacceptable to both Sahgal and her characters. This is why we find her heroines defying and even breaking away from the bonds of marriage to find a life of fulfillment elsewhere. The struggle of a woman trying to establish her identity apart from her husband and family

is unacceptable to Hindu society. The inability of the law courts to translate legal theory into action is vividly brought about Sahgal in the novel. Tikoo writes:

The novel stresses the state of subjection of women to injustice of various kinds and the need for intensification of the woman's struggle for liberation. As Raj confesses that the woman angle makes about as much den't as an insect on a laser beam. He is himself determined to take up cudgels against the unjust treatment of Simrit Raman. It is not surprising then that the man who fights against the injustice meted out to her ultimately fascinates her and becomes the object of her love whom he intends to marry despite the fact that she is a mother of three children. (248)

According to Urbashi Barat, Sahgal's *The Day in Shadow* explores the woman's search for selfhood within the patriarchal enclosure of matrimony. It examines the founding and nurturing of individuality, and the establishing of individualism in the characters. The conflict in the novel grows out of the protagonist's gradual awareness and final rejection of the chains imposed on her by convention and social morality as she steps carefully towards achievement of a personal identity. Barat writes:

Only Simrit is able to break free of the patriarchal enclosure and come to terms with herself. Her decision to remarry is a sign not of continuing subjugation but of social and sexual emancipation that leads to autonomy and selfhood. Her days now "could be entirely hers, and promise unending adventure (64)

Similarly, Susheela P. Rajendra Says that Sahgal's concern as a novelist is with the reality of the contemporary situation. In *The Day in Shadow*, she has

attempted consistently and comprehensively to analyze political happenings and trends revealing all the crevices of political life and exploring all its depths. She also projects a wider vision of the values she upholds and the novel becomes a concern for the quality of life. One interesting aspect of the novel is a study of two elements-her concern with social and political issues and personal relationships. Commenting on the novel Susheela writes:

Sahgal's protagonists seek to establish a new order which changed standards where there is no need for hypocrisy and where character is judged by the purity of heart and not chastity of body. Simrit decides to marry Som. But, Sahgal deals how lack of proper companionship communication and equality between man and woman cause wreck to marital relationship resulting in divorce. Sahgal's concept of free woman "transcends the limits of economic or social freedom and becomes a mental or emotional attitude." (233)

### **Rationale of the Study**

In the motley gallery of criticism and research upon Nayantara Sahgal's *The Day in Shadow* has earned a place of pride. It has attracted considerable body of scholarship. Sahgal's deep-rooted political consciousness, her resistance against established social inequalities and Hindu ambivalence, her pre occupation with the Hindus and Hinduism, her protest against the Emergency, have all come in for detailed analysis. But, relatively little attention has been paid to the study of the novel from feministic view point. Therefore, the objective of this research is a close study of Sahgal's involvement with feminism.

Sahgal's *The Day in Shadow* has been deliberately chosen for the study on feministic point of view with the hope that this research will be helpful to the general reader of Nayantars Sahgal for further studies.

## **II. Postcolonialism, Feminism and Postcolonial Feminism: A Theoretical Study**

The notion of women empowerment is a key and constitutive part of the field of post colonialism. At the level of theory, the postcolonial feminist critics have raised a number of conceptual, methodological, and political problems involved in the study of representations of gender, some of which are the focus of this paper to suggest that empowering the women of the Third World postcolonial societies involves necessity of decolonizing the mind at many levels. Also, considering the fact that the process of value based empowerment of women implies that it needs to be undertaken, keeping clearly in mind the different cultural contexts and connotations affixed to, or forced upon the women of the Third World societies, one needs to interrogate the extent to which Western or First World feminism is equipped to deal with the problems encountered by these women. Then, back home in the Third World societies, the process of empowerment requires them to subvert and demythologize indigenous traditions, nationalist representations which seek to label women into subordination, and have been in danger of perpetuating disempowering representations of women.

Considering the concern of the postcolonialism about the study of representations of gender, one remembers the specific problem of finding a global, cross-cultural sisterhood between 'First World' and 'Third World' women, and also the general problems regarding who has the right to speak for whom, and the relationship between critics and their object of analysis. It notices that like colonialism, patriarchy manifests itself in both concrete way such as disqualifying women a vote and at the level of imagination. It asserts and creates certain representational systems, which create an order of the world presented to individuals as 'normal' or 'true'. Like 'colonialism', 'patriarchy' exists in the midst of resistance to its authority. In sum, both

feminism and postcolonialism share the common aim of challenging forms of oppression.

Feminists like Kristen Hoist Peterson and Anna Rutherford have used the phrase 'a double colonisation' to refer to the ways in which women have simultaneously experienced the oppression of colonialism and patriarchy. It is argued that neo-colonialism celebrates male achievement in a series of male-oriented myths, while "women are subject to representation in colonial discourse in ways which collude with patriarchal values." We find that much of the postcolonial feminist criticism has probed into the representation of women created by 'double colonisation', and what strikes the mind is the emerging fact that the women in the Third World postcolonial societies become victims of gender inequalities existing in both the indigenous and the colonial culture: both often simultaneously oppress women during colonialism, and in its wake. And it becomes a task to be undertaken to empower the Third World women whose 'present' is a post-colonial reality that is an amalgamation of indigenous culture, colonialism, and independence. This involves the necessity of 'decolonising the mind' and gives way to natural questions: who de-colonises? And for whom? Do women have substantially more freedom after colonialism, or do they remain subservient to forms of patriarchal power and familiar gendered representations?

It is worthwhile in this context to see how differences in women's 'racial' identity impact upon study of gender difference. In the 1980's many critics studied the difficulties the black and the Asian women faced in working with the popular discourses of feminism coming from the West. Also as Hazel Carby<sup>2</sup> argues in the postcolonial Third World societies British colonialism interrupted the indigenous familial and community structures and imposed its own models instead. "Colonialism attempted

to destroy kinship pattern that were not modeled on nuclear family structures, disrupting, in the process, female organisation that were based upon kinship systems which allowed more power and autonomy to women than those of the colonising nation." The process had a crucial impact on the gender roles in indigenous communities, whose established traditions, and social systems were irreparably broken, many a times to the disadvantage of the women.

Carby's plea is that the indigenous gender roles could be more equitable than the sexist and chauvinist gender stereotypes and social roles brought from the colonising culture. However, we must also take even more critical view of indigenous gender roles as this paper will attempt in its course, and the postcolonial critics have rightly explored the oppression of the women within native communities as well.

Coming back to how the Western feminism addresses the problems of the Third World women, we hear Carby and other postcolonial critics exploring that black and Asian women are barely made visible within its discourses; and if at all they are addressed, their representation remains highly problematic. Their representation is Orientalist, and their social practices are taken to be barbarous, from which the Third World women need rescuing by their enlightened Western sisters. And while doing so, the First World feminism at times miserably fails in considering difficult cultural practices on their own terms; and the vision of empowerment, thus, is not value based, and hence, fails to serve its purpose.

The band of critics Carby belongs to, thus, holds that Western feminism has an ethnocentric bias in presuming that the solutions white women of the West have advocated in combating their oppression are equally applicable to all the women on the earth. As a result, issues of 'race' have been neglected which has prevented

feminists from thinking about the ways in which racism and patriarchy join each other. Besides, white women have not been able to visualise themselves as the potential oppressors of the black and Asian Women, even when trying to be benevolent towards them. Rana Kabbani in her enlightening study<sup>5</sup> refers to Victorian women colonial travelers of the West who also depicted the Orient in patriarchal terms. She argues that these women were token travelers only, and were forced by the racial pressures to articulate the values of patriarchy. Her study draws attention to presence and complicity of Western women in the mission of colonisation, and that they were also subject to the patriarchal imperatives of colonial discourses. Their observations are of no good for their black/coloured sisters of the Orient whom they seem to take for granted. Laura Donaldson probes it deep in her study and finds out that this predominantly white middle class feminism is not 'racist' on an outward plane, but a more subtle, apparently benevolent discourse that passively colluded with a racist culture. Gayatri Chakravarti Spivak's essay 'French Feminism in an International Frame, in her study on cultural politics, problematises the relationship between Third World women and their representation via First World scholarship. She also pursues if concepts drawn primarily from Western scholarship are suitable to contexts which are culturally divergent. She also reflects on her own Western education and training in international feminism, and situation in the Western academy. She records how as younger woman she had a particular assumption when applying the tools of Western feminism to 'Third World' women. She goes on to point out the problematic assumption that the system of knowledge can be generally applicable around the world. She also problematises the position of the critic while recording her error in feeling empowered as a well educated women in the West who could help the less privileged women of the Third World. Spivak demands that the relationship between the critic and her

research must be more positively interactive. She must learn to learn from them and be willing to anticipate how divergent cultural contexts may reveal hitherto unseen problems in her approach. An example is veiling of Muslim women which as a form of oppression is taken to be universal as it circumscribes large numbers of women. It is taken for granted that because Muslim women in countries like Saudi Arabia, India, Pakistan, and Egypt wear the veil, they all suffer the same degree and form of oppression. What is forgotten is the fact that the symbolic significance of the veil in each of these locations may not necessarily be the same. Also the probability, for example, of women's wearing the veil as an important act of political empowerment for themselves, is just ignored.

Different types of restrictions on the fundamental rights of women have existed throughout history in all civilizations. If we view the history chronologically we find women were taken as inferior to man by different thinkers. Aristotle declared that a female is a female due to certain lack of qualities and Thomas Aquinas believed that a woman is 'an imperfect man'. There is a long line of women writers who protested against these inequalities from Christine de Pisan to Mary Wollstoncraft and from Simon de Beavoir to the present day. The feminist consciousness is the consciousness of victimization. As a philosophy of life, it seeks to discover and change the more subtle and deep-seated causes of women's oppression.

Feminist thought has assumed different configurations in relation to post modernist approaches. Seen only as an agnostic struggle against all forms of patriarchal and sexist oppression; theoretically it becomes an impossibility. As soon as the oppressional conditions are removed, it ceases to exist. The very concept of equality has undergone tremendous change in the light of new French feminist

theories of difference. Through the process of gynes, a female discourse has been evolved by deliberate valorization of repressed feminist. The French post-Modernist theory of Lacan, Derrida and Deleuze has been used in the process of gynes. Because "post-feminism" has the danger of delimitation and exclusion, materialist feminist theory is offered. Now all the different strands can be divided into two relational and individualist theories as Karen Offen pointed out. The first division includes feminists who have focus on egalitarianism and liberalism in heterosexual familial settings. They are concerned with the notion of equality, which focused on woman's distinct position as woman. Individualist feminist includes a group of feminists who focus on a quest for personal individual independence and downplay sex-linked qualities. Currently relational feminism is being widely accepted as it avoids all the negativism associated with extremities of the individualist theories. Now-a-days feminist thought encompasses a moral vision and emerges as a holistic, anti-militaristic and life affirming philosophy.

From its tradition to now feminist theories have undergone different changes. So, some critics have used the term "post-feminism" to cover the different configurations of feminism and postmodernism. Today, feminist theorists believe that, strictly speaking, feminism is an impossible position. The traditional definition of feminism sees it as the struggle against all forms of patriarchal and sexist oppression. Such an oppositional definition posits feminism as the necessary resistance to patriarchal power. Feminism is committed to the struggle for equality of woman, an effort to make women become like men. The struggle for equal rights historically and politically emphasizes the value of women as they are. The very argument rests precisely on the fact that women are already as valuable as men. But in the situation of women's lack of equal rights, this value must be located as

difference not as equality. Thus, women are of equal human value in their own way. When feminism regards the value of women as women, it truly counters the systematic devaluation of women under patriarchy. In this scenario, Julia Kristeva suggests a third space for feminism to operate the space which deconstructs all identity, all binary oppositions.

So, we can conclude that now-a-days feminism must be viewed as a rapidly developing major critical ideology or system of ideas in its own right. Its developmental stages have historically been dependent on and in tension with male-centered political and intellectual discourse but whose more recent manifestations transcend later. In his essay 'Defining Feminism: A Comparative Historical Approach', Karen Offen writes "feminism emerges as a concept that can encompass both an ideology and movement for sociopolitical change based on a critical analysis of male privilege and women's subordination within any given society", (Offen, 151). As a philosophy of life, it opposes women's subordinations to men in the family and society, along with men's claim to define what is best for women without consulting them; thereby offering a frontal challenge to patriarchal thought, social organization and control mechanism. The present-day feminist thought seeks to destroy masculinist hierarchy but not sexual dualism. It is necessarily pro-woman, but this does not mean that it has to be anti-man. This acts as a rebalancing factor between women and men of the social, economic and political power within a given society. It is viewed as a humanistic philosophy. It still remains a political challenge to male authority and hierarchy in the most profound sense. But, today the theorists in describing its ultimate vision prefer the word "transformational" to the term "revolutionary".

The term feminism covers a broader scope and includes different aspects of humanity. Several dimensions have been seen ranging from liberal attitude and

demand for equal rights for sex to the radical one voicing out the extreme ideology that tends to theoretically turn the patriarchy upside down. There are liberal feminism and radical feminism but some feminists have developed feminism with their affiliation to certain theoretical backgrounds. They include political feminism, Marxist/socialist feminism, psychoanalytic feminism, bio-feminism, postmodernist feminism and others.

It is a mainstream face of feminism that explains women's position in society. It addresses the problems of unequal rights or artificial barriers to women's participation in the public world, beyond the family and household. By presuming the sameness between men and women, it reflects the concept of a fundamentally and sexually undifferentiated human nature by emphasizing that woman can do anything what men do. These liberal feminists do not perceive the sexes to be at war or dismiss that which has been associated with men. These liberal feminists unlike radical feminists emphasize reform in society rather than revolutionary changes. Liberal feminism draws on 'welfare liberalism', though it started as a form of liberal political thought influenced by the writers like J.S. Mill. They put forward their main agenda as collective responsibility for the formulation and development of liberal society, which supports equal opportunity between sexes.

This type of feminist thought emerged as an important force in the western world in the 1960s. The earliest feminists were women who were active members of Civil Rights Movement, who protested against the Vietnam war and struggled for the abolition of slavery. They realized that the strategies used to oppress the Black were similar to those used to keep women subservient. An urgent need was felt to acknowledge the necessity of viewing women as a separate group. This revolutionary feminism was a political necessity to fight racism, sexism capitalism and patriarchal

society. So, Vietnam War, Civil Right Movement and oppression against the Black and women play an important role for the development of feminism in the 1960s.

The notion of 'double colonisation' - i.e. that women in formerly colonised societies were *doubly* colonised by both imperial and patriarchal ideologies - became a catch-phrase of post-colonial and feminist discourses in the 1980s. But it is only recently that 'double colonisation' has begun to be adequately theorised. Ketu Katrak reminds us of the inescapable necessity of situating a feminist politics within particular colonised societies. Using the example of the Jamaican Sistren Collective's work, she grounds a decolonising feminist restitution in the local particularities of class and race. The Jamaican writer Erna Brodber's short essay 'Sleeping's Beauty and Prince Charming' (1989) suggests another way of actually theorising the concept of a double colonisation. Texts - the 'fairy tales' of Europe - have not only subjectified Jamaican women, but through cultural interpellation effected the erasure of the black female body within Jamaican male culture. Hence, the black 'Prince Charming' of Brodber's fable can *sense* his female counterpart, but when he looks for her, he can see 'nobody'. Sara Suleri examines a rather different refraction of the concept of 'double colonisation' in Pakistan through the recent institution of Muslim Law, a process facilitated by neo-colonial United States' support of a male regime where laws against rape have recoiled horrifically on the bodies of women and children.

Not surprisingly perhaps, the use of language in decolonising strategies forms the basis of Sistren's creative experimentation; and Trinh T. Minh-ha, aware of the difficulties of using the masters' tools to dismantle his house, nevertheless attempts to escape enclosure through complex linguistic/generic experimentation. Significantly, too, she refuses to be 'ghettoised' through the separate or combined essentialisms of

gender, race or ethnicity, seeing these consolidating positions - politically strategic as they may at first appear - as new houses or rather out-houses of the 'master'.

Chandra Mohanty's 'Under Western Eyes' is foundational in critiquing Western feminisms which too easily elide specific cultural difference and 'naturalise' all women's oppression under widely differing manifestations of patriarchal domination to European models. As Gayatri Spivak demonstrates, what is a radically liberating piece of writing or politics in *one* arena can act as a colonising agent in another. Sara Suleri's article offers a useful critique of a number of the positions discussed above.

There are various scholars like R.K. Dhawan, Shyam M. Asani, K. Meera Bai, who have started viewing Indian writing in English through the feminist lens. The feminist literary criticism practised in the West is also applicable in the context of India. Gayatri Spivak has made an admirable effort to develop an anti-imperialistic feminism which draws on the sight of recent poststructuralistic and postmodern theory. In a typical Spivak essay, the Marxist theory of surplus value, feminist debates of reproduction and the domestic mode of production, Indian critiques of imperialist ideology and post structural theories concerning the construction of the colonial subjects are all brought into conflict at the same time. So, the historic role played by Indian women in their own capacity definitely provides an alternative replacement model.

There are some bases on which the replacement models can be constructed. For example, there has to be a basis for new myths or one such basis can be protest. The best example is Nayantara Sahgal. All her novels talk about women who are oppressed by marriage, by political circumstances, by accidents of history. So, another feminist critic Kamala Bhasin claims that literary history presents mainly

men's story and to get the complete picture of the world, they also need women's story.

R.K. Dhawan writes that feminism is greatly followed in Indian English fiction. Feminists in India are pleading that discrimination against women must be stopped. It is a question of asserting one's identity, arousing public opinion of channelizing will and motivation to influence the conscience of society. If a woman is capable of making a mark in her profession, she should be recognized and treated as an equal. "The contemporary woman does not want to conform to the traditional image anymore. She wants her due-her rightful along side her male counterpart in the Indian society."(Indian woman novelist, 12) He focuses on male-dominated Indian society where the woman is still regarded as second person.

Similarly, Chaman Nahal writes for different forms of feminism in Indian fiction. She examines the replacement model in famine fiction. According to her, it is very difficult to construct a replacement model. One can not escape the myths-the conditioning myths with which one can grow up. She further writes that "Unless we can not construct a new myth, we can't construct replacement model" (Indian Women Novelist, 31). The historic role played by Indian woman in their own capacity definitely provides an alternative replacement model. But, this rich resource had been completely left out before the Independence in India. Only after the Independence this replacement model of feminism is used by many novelists.

Some critics like K. Meera Bai tries to differentiate two forms of women in Indian literature. Women of the oriental tradition are in general gentle, adjustable, accommodative, pliable and service minded. Indian women are particularly conditioned by traditions and conventions and willingly accept the responsibility of being the custodians of family honor and prestige. Indian women usually do not

bother about their own personal happiness and comfort as much as they address themselves to the task of making others happy and upholding traditions and conventions. On the other side, modern women do not find any sense in being acquiescent. It does not appeal to their imagination to be suffering and sacrificing individuals. As they feel the need for self expression and individual fulfillment, they begin to question the conventions and defy the tradition which tends to undermine their importance and individuality. Such women become non-conformists, in that they rebel against the accepted and existing moral codes and social norms, which either in theory or in practice tend to relegate women to a secondary place. However, conformity and non-conformity are purely relative terms. The set of values meant for particular people at a particular time may be questioned as to their validity in changed times and circumstances. Modern women challenge the injustice and demand redress. The craving for individual freedom and happiness results in the breaking up of family relationship. "A woman with modern outlook may strive for individual freedom and happiness but in such an attempt, she might drift anchoress for want of ideal alternative to traditional values" (Indian Women Novelist, 36). This kind of individuation might lead to clash of personalities and lead to the breaking up of the age-old institution of marriage. If tradition-bound women are in the risk of losing their identity, non-conformists face personal and social conflicts. In their quest for self-fulfillment they may have to undergo the painful experience of severing the family bonds and re-establishing themselves.

In the novels of women writers, we come across women who are traditional in their way of living but modern in their outlook and capacity to retain their individuality. Likewise, there are women who are modern in their dress and unconventional in their behaviour, who either come back to traditional life after a

brief experience or suffer in their futile search for a new order. If traditional women who still retain their individuality make their appearance in the novels of Kamala Marakandaya, women who face challenges in their quest for self-fulfillment are seen in the novels of Nayantara Sahgal. Likewise, women who opt for modernity for convenience are presented by Ruth Praver Jhabvala. Women who use modernity as a license for licentiousness too can be seen in these novels. Kamala Markandaya's women characters in general are conformists and traditionalists. Women occupy the central stage in most of her novels. Here, we can find different forms of feminism presented by the Indian women writers.

In the rigidly-formed and tradition-bound societies like India the repression has to put up which is usually very severe and the resultant suffering often assumes pathetic proportions for sensitive individuals. In this circumstance, M. Rajeshwar observes that "Among Indian again women happen to be the worst sufferers as the social norms and moral codes have been so framed as to be particularly disadvantageous to them" (Indian Woman Novelists, 40). This is perhaps why the Indian English novelists, encouraged to a certain extent by their historical and cultural context, consistently treated the neurotic phenomenon in their fictional works. This is a way to protest against the establishment.

Shyam Asnani tries to differentiate Indian feminism from Western perspectives because historical and social conditions are key factors for any literary works. He writes that the characters of Indo-English novel conform the signs of the Western influence, but none can accuse them of being un-Indian. Similarly, branding the Indo-English novelists, who strive to bring to current of new morality into their works, as propagandists of evil influences of the Western ideas or condemning them as moralists, is nothing but obscurantism. He writes that "The modern Indo-English

novelist explores and examines the relationship of man with his fellowmen, vis-a-vis the social forces at work around him in all their bewildering complexity. Thus, it covers the entire gamut of human experience" (Asnani, 105). So, Indian writers show Indian history and tradition in their writings.

The above form of feminist criticism has helped us to generate argument and justify the journey towards the emancipation of protagonist Simrit in a male dominated society. It has enabled us to understand the psyche, the intellect and the feeling of Simrit which urges her to bring about significant changes and live as an independent human being.

### III. Redemption of Female protagonist in *The Day in Shadow*

Like Sahgal's other novels, *The Day in Shadow* is also dealt with the theme of tradition and modernity. The main characters of the novel Som, Raj, Simrit, Sumer Singh, Brij and Ram Krishan-behave like moderns but at the same time find it quite difficult to isolate themselves completely from the age old traditions of their own country. Delhi, unlike Chandigarh, is not a new city. It has got its precious past. Though being the capital city of India, it has now become completely a modern city but it is still proud of its mosques, temples and other historical places. Undoubtedly, its past is lost in antiquity and it has not remained the same virtuous place running a slow and smooth life. Now, the life there is full of confusion, chaos and disorder and "there was a vigor and vulgarity about Delhi today-as there was about any process of growth and change." (48)

People in India think that they can become modern just by imitating the Western style of life. All their behaviours show their superficial modernity. In such a modern society, vulgarity is considered to be a sign of modernity. We find Som kissing his wife in the presence of his friend Lalli. In the same way, Simrit's friends don't like her ex-husband Som as they consider him to be a boor. According to these people:

A man had to be flashy on a big scale to be thought well off, and majestically vulgar to be admired, and Som had not arrived in that category. (4)

It is not that all the characters come in this very category. There is Shaila also who is quite traditional in her views and when Raj holds her arms in the market she asks him

not to do so and says that by holding her arm in the public he is creating a scene. Moreover, it is one's reputation and the labels that help one in solving the problems. Simrit is having problems in getting telephone connection because she is not an accredited journalist. People in such a society are judged not by their character, morality or education but by what kind of things they keep in their houses. Thus, people are losing touch with natural gifts of God considered so precious by our forefathers and are running after, the artificial luxuries provided by science which no doubt give them comfort and save their time but are making them idle.

Love of foreign languages has become an obsession with the modern man. When we first meet Som we find him talking with Lalli in Punjabi but later in the novel he learns German phrases while in the contact of his friend Vetter. He wants to look like a foreigner in his mannerisms also. Moreover, in Delhi the reputation of a civil servant has nothing to do with his merits but he must be good in English diction and good manners.

In *The Day in Shadow* there is not a single character whom we can call completely modern or traditional. Almost all the major characters are a mixture of both these elements. They are modern in some aspects but traditional, or we may call orthodox, in many other things. For example, there is Som who rises to be modern in each and every manner and blindly imitates the Western style of life. He speaks their language, learns their mannerisms and adopts their fashions. As Simrit reads:

He had German phrases on the tip of his tongue and Vetter's mannerisms. He did most of his personal shopping in Europe. In a royal blue jacket, a French silk tie and hand stitched Roman leather shoes he even looked foreigner. (9)

But, he can never go away from the traditions of his own country. It is tradition in Som that urges him to believe that woman has to live under the control of man. He hates women's individuality and their freedom and believes in male domination to such an extent that he gives the least freedom to his wife. He expects her to conform to his ideal of subdued womanhood, and considers the inequality of their relationship to be the right order of things. So, we see that though he is modern in other aspects, when coming to husband-wife relationship he is completely traditional. He gives no voice to Simrit even in the ordinary decisions of everyday life.

Similarly, Simrit is also a blend of both the traditional and modern elements. She wants individuality. She rebels against the conventional security of marriage as she yearns for a free communication of ideas with her husband beyond the granular sensations of sex. In this respect, she is an awakened woman of the modern age who shows the courage of living, alone in this world. But, she does not get peace of mind after the divorce and it is tradition in her that makes her feel that by taking divorce she has offended something odd and ordained. Thus, we see however modern an Indian woman may become but she can never go away from the old traditions and customs of her own country.

The sacred institution of marriage has also come under the impact of modernism. In traditional Indian society, marriages were arranged by the parents and after marriage the husband and the wife had to live with each other under all circumstances. It was considered to be a contract or a bondage made in the presence of God which had to be obeyed. But, in the modern society, people don't believe in arranged marriages and we see that Simrit gets married to Som, a businessman, against the will of her Brahmin parents. She remains unhappy with this marriage and ultimately takes divorce from her husband. After her divorce from Som, she plans to

marry Raj. So, marriage in the modern society is fixed by man himself and not by God as it was thought in the traditional Indian society. But, still there are some people who stick to these rules as we see that though Shaila and Raj loved each other, they could not get married as Shaila couldn't go against her parents wish and got married to a man of her parents' choice.

In the modern days, divorce has become quite easy, the easiest one. Simrit says that it takes a year to get a Birla car, five to get a fiat but:

You could get a divorce by mutual consent at the drop of a hat. The Hindu Code Bill had jumped two thousand years of tradition to confer that particular twentieth-century blessing. (5)

In the traditional Indian society extra-marital relations were considered immoral but such relations are becoming quite common in the modern society. Raj and Simrit are having an affair though Simrit is divorced and a mother of so many children. Earlier Raj was having a relationship with Shaila and even after her marriage with another man he longs to meet her Similarly, Sumer Singh has physical relations with Pixie and so many other girls.

Though the people are becoming modern in every possible manner, in some cases they don't want to shed their traditional attitudes. For example, in the modern times though people are educated, they are still unwilling to understand that there is no difference between a son and a daughter. A male heir is considered very important in a family. People give more importance to sons. As we see in the case of Som and Simrit that though they are having so many a daughters and only one son, Brij, Som shows no affection for his daughters and is considerate only to his son. Even after the divorce he cares only for Brij.

In the traditional Indian society, religion strongly influenced the minds of people. People used to have strong faith in the theory of "karma" and they accepted their fate willingly. They used to have full faith in the supreme power of God. In *The Day in Shadow*, there are such characters like Sumer Singh's father who believes that if there is any taint in his son, "only providence or a miracle would put it right". (134) Similarly, when Simrit is thinking about Brij's moving towards his father, Raj tells: "Some power outside her controlled it all. Not God or any rational conception. Just fate." (136) We also see that Simrit willingly accepts the tax terms as she believes that it is in her fate. But science has influenced the minds of the people in the modern society and they have "their new ideas and awareness of the presence of reality as an undeniable fact." Simrit accepts everything as her fate. But, Ram Krishn and Raj wish Simrit to take a stand against injustice and not to yield to a sense of helplessness and victimization. Raj refuses to accept fate as an answer to human problems. Though mainly the novel revolves around Simrit and her struggle for a new life, the novelist has also successfully handled the modern life of political leaders in the urbanized society of New Delhi and has launched a fierce attack on the imitative superficial world.

The search for selfhood, the perennial theme of artistic endeavour particularly evident in the novel-that product of the individual's awareness of his relationship to the world, through which he discovers himself acquires a special urgency and poignancy in fiction written by women. For women both in society and in fiction, are marginalized creatures, roles rather than individuals, part of the process of masculine development into selfhood, the quest rather than the reality. In women's novels, therefore, even when they are not concerned explicitly with exploring the feminine experience, even when they accept the masculine view point, they inevitably indicate

consciously or unconsciously, their awareness of the women's alienation from society and self.

In *The Day in Shadow*, women characters like Kusum, Saroj, Simrit and Pixie want to stand on their own feet and enjoy individuality, self-expression and self-dependence. Simrit does not want to be known as her husband's wife but as her own self. It is Simrit's longing for freedom and individuality that urges her to take divorce from her husband. When someone asked her about the profession of her husband she thinks:

Wasn't it odd, when you were standing there yourself, fully a person, not to be asked what you did? There was such an enormous separating gulf between herself and these women, most women most people. May be the question would be different in the twenty-first century. Simrit herself had never accepted a world where men did things and women waited for them. (6)

Simrit is an earning lady and can easily stand on her feet. Pixie, in this novel also moves towards self-awareness but she is quite different from Nayantara Sahgal's other women characters. She is a working girl who does not have security of an affluent background. When she decides to break her relationship with Sumer Singh, she has to weigh it against her need for a job and a roof over her head. But, still she decides to break which shows her courage to seek self-realization. Similarly, after a lot of struggle, Simrit also turns out to be a woman who can make choices, take decisions and makes up her mind to start a new life with Raj from whom she can get what she longs for and expects from her husband-love, warmth, affection and understanding.

Simrit's hesitant journey towards identity, too, is partly the product of that sensitivity of hers which has made her a writer. Yet this sensitivity keeps her aloof from people: her spiritual nourishment comes not from "her fellow man" but from "untouched unspoilt non-human things." (34) This shrinking from everyday life makes her so non-assertive that she complies in Som's taking over her life, becoming a manifestation of the mad-wife archetype characteristic of this patriarchal enclosure. The other women are destroyed because they fail in their quest: but Raj's entry into her life changes Simrit's course, turning it towards self-realization instead. His belief that living is "acquaintance with things in the raw...and with human beings at all levels" (34) gradually penetrates into her and propels her towards taking action before it is too late. She leaves Som and moves else where with her children, learning to cope with things on her own. Her divorce, then, is her first step towards self-discovery, for she has managed to break out of the enclosure: her next is her learning to cope with things on her own through reaching out Raj and fulfilling her own sexuality. Raj thus becomes an exemplar of the archetypal "green-world-lover".

While Simrit has love of things Indian and is truly and deeply attached to her family and children and also loves the human touch in things, she hates the twentieth century for so many of its barbaric and uncivilized traits. The exploitation of women or denial of justice to her by man and society has continued. But she also admires the present century "for the freedom it's brought for countries and people, especially for women. But it is barbaric otherwise, full of rotten, elastic standards and the worship of money. I hate the whole mess of human affairs. The only clean clear things left are the hills and rivers and the shape of a leaf, things like that." (34-35) Obviously, the hatred is caused by the deficiency of an ideology, of a modernized, civilized outlook on life, of a religion that would teach men honesty in thought and deed and make one feel as a

"continuous" (37) unbroken thing. She finds the Hindu race "mute, acquiescent, letting things happen to it, from a country to the mind and body of a woman. An educated woman at that....woman for use had been the rule too long." (37-38) This remark throws sufficient light on the causes of the broken family relationship of Som and Simrit. It was however not merely the "use," another name for exploitation, of the woman (Simrit) but also the sheer neglect of her by her husband that severed their relationship. In the company of his friend Lalli Som simply forgot his wife. When she punished the cook and dismissed him for "drunkenness and bad behaviour," (38) Som retained him. She had not even been able to purchase or change chair covers and curtains without Som's permission. Such little things created a frightful situation. The break had only to come about any way. When the break finally became a reality, the divorce settlement drawn up for the unsuspecting wife to sign showed up all the more clearly the essential callousness of the man.

In the matters of man-woman relationships and even in the laws established by the government, people have double standards. For example, no doubt divorce is made so easy and common by law in the modern society but it is not so easy a decision in such a society where women had stayed married no matter how unhappy and confining their marriages had been. Moreover, as in the case of Simrit we see that the terms of divorce settlement are harsh and involve a heavy responsibility for taxes. Thus, we see that though law has changed but not the attitudes of the people. Simrit feels uprooted and abandoned in the male-dominated world as she finds that nobody tries to see divorce from her point of view, as a person seeking freedom and fulfillment. Both Moolchand and Shah see nothing wrong with the divorce settlement though it is

a complete injustice with Simrit. So even law does not do justice with a woman in this society as the society is male-dominated where all the laws are made by the man himself. So, we see that no doubt modern man has changed a lot but he has still not given up that old traditional view of considering woman as an object of possession. After the divorce of Som and Simrit, Ram Krishan rightly says:

The Hindu woman traditionally has no rights apart from what her father or her husband choose to bestow on her. The law has changed some of that, but attitudes haven't changed much, which is clear from the husband's attitude in *this* case and the court's acceptance of such a document. A woman can apparently still be used as a convenience for tax purposes by her husband even after he has divorced her. (168)

Understandably, the novel makes a dig at the functioning of the courts in the country which directly or indirectly contribute to the suppression of or injustice to the women. The worst thing that has happened to this woman is that without a proper understanding of the Consent Terms in the divorce document, she has been obliged to put her signature on it and the \ document has been ratified by the court. Ram Krishan must \come at last to teach her to fight against the injustice and unknot the handman's noose put around her neck. In a cinematographic flashback, he recalls how he had stood for the women's liberty in the past when he persuaded his deceased wife Vinita to reject the traditionally laid down pattern of life of a wife. He asked her to stop the twenty-four hour housekeeping and service to her husband demanded by society and transformed her from a housekeeper and a cook into a warm friend and companion.

The real revolutionary in Ram Krishan reflects on the true import of the age-old Hindu theme of non-violence and points at the West's recent realization of violence as evil and its continuing emphases on the ail-conquering male in fiction and the doctrine of the survival of the fittest in the marketplace as unreal. To underemphasize the role of woman in society was itself unreal. Som's and-woman and even inhuman act is considered as violence and butchery.

The woman cannot carry on her struggle without the help of a like-minded friend She seeks Raj Garg's assistance to get out of the legal morass created by the divorce settlement. The document of divorce is described as "butchery" which would make the divorced Simrit another *Suttee*. It poses a challenge to Raj's moral conscience. Even though he is not personally involved in the matter, the document is a moral outrage. Simrit has put her signature to its Consent Terms and become legally vulnerable. The duplicity by which her signature has been obtained bum into his brain. He considers men such as Som as "Isolated forcefulness, isolated currents of energy undirected by ^vision or compassion, petered out, and at worst became aggression on their environment." (44)

There is no doubt that the Consent Terms have been signed by Simrit either through innocence or through sheer helplessness. Som's company lawyer Moolchand is invited to a meeting at Simrit's place to convey to Som that the shares be put into a trust and the gifts tax be paid by Som himself. But Moolchand refuses to be convinced. She is rather "unnerved by Moolchand's indifference." (58)

The determined but desperate Simrit does not grumble about her responsibility of looking after her children even in this trying situation. She retains the mother in her despite the pecuniary stringency imposed on her by

Som's transference of his tax burden onto her shoulders. She has even to withstand the psychological pressure which Som puts on her by giving Brij glimpses of his bright future which awaits him after his visit to Europe and the release of the shares money in his name. He might be inclined to emulate the life of his father but he would hardly remember that his father was so engrossed in promoting his business "his expensive soft leather briefcase hardly ever put down," (80) that he could not even enquire about his children's education or his wife. He was wholly dedicated to achieving success. His German friend and collaborator in business Rudy Vetter persuades Simrit to reconcile with Som but in vain. Drinking vodka or smoking can hardly bring her the relief she desires from the resultant tension in her mind. After all Simrit could not be merely a creature of sex for- her husband. Her refusal to accept that position followed by her resistance to Som's sensual advancement towards her brings about the crisis in their married life. As an intellectual being, she proposes to Som that they be only intellectual companions and so "non-preying upon each other," (95) implying thereby that they may show mutual respect for one another as friends and not as husband and wife. The expression of her mind is tantamount to an ultimatum to Som who, in his excited mental state, asks her either to be a docile wife or else finish off the farce of their married relationship for ever. The relations have already reached a dead end, and there comes the break between the couple.

Simrit's divorce in *The Day in Shadow* does not imply that marriage has failed as a social institution; on the other hand it clearly demonstrates the need for reciprocal relationships in marriage. A.V, Krishna Rao rightly points out, "Nayantara Sahgal with her reverent attitude towards life and its infinite possibilities exhibits an unprecedented

ethical sensibility in 'resolving the emotional crisis of Simrit in a symbolically significant manner, namely the marriage of Raj.' For Simrit freedom as an individual comes only when she is able to shed the feeling of guilt which her broken marriage has left her with. She learns to live life for what it is.

Simrit has love of things Indian and is truly and deeply attached to her family and children and also loves the human touch in things. She hates the twentieth century for so many of its barbaric and uncivilized traits except freedom it brought for countries as she says:

And I hate this century-except for the freedom it's brought for countries and people, especially for women. But it is barbaric otherwise full of rotten elastic standards and the worship of money. I hate the whole mess of human affairs. The only clear things left are the hills and rivers and the shape of leaf, things like that. (34-35)

So, we can find that as an intellectual person, Simrit is fully aware about the changing time that urges women to the liberation.

Simrit is not satisfied with her religion. As the Hindu religion is guided by the old conception, She finds the Hindu race

Mute, acquiescent, letting things happen to it, from a country to the mind and body of a woman. An educated woman at that one who prized her learning and had a profession, Raj wanted to shake her violently. Had she ever been avid, really avid about anything at all? She simply could not go through life like this, letting other people's ambitions and actions overwhelm her. First it had been her husband. Next it could be her children. Woman for use had been ruled too long. (37-38)

This above remark throws sufficient light on the causes of the broken family relationship of Som and Simrit. It was however not merely "use" another name for exploitation, of woman (Simrit) but also the sheer neglect of her by her husband that severed their relationship. In the company of his friend Lalli, Som simply forgot his wife. When she punished the cook and dismissed him for drunkenness and bad behaviour, Som retained him. She had not even been able to purchase or change chair covers and curtains without Som's permission. Such little things created a frightful situation. The break had only to come about anyway. When the break finally becomes a reality, the divorce settlement drawn up for the unsuspecting wife to sign showed up all the more clearly the essential callousness of the man.

The determined but desperate Simrit does not grumble her responsibility of looking after her children even in this trying situation. She retains the motherhood despite the pecuniary stringency imposed on her by Som's transference of his tax burden on her shoulders. She has even to withstand the psychological pressure which Som puts on her by giving Brij glimpses of his bright future which awaits him after his visit to Europe and the release of the shares money in his name. In general Som could not even enquire about his children's education or his wife. His German friend and collaborator in business Ruddy Vetter persuades Simrit to reconcile with Som but in vain. Drinking vodka or smoking can hardly bring her the relief, she desires from the resultant tension in her mind. After all Simrit could not merely be a creature of sex for her husband. Her refusal to accept the position followed by her resistance to Som's sensual advancement towards her brings about the crisis in their married life. As an intellectual being, she proposes to Som that they are only intellectual companions. Also she thinks "can't you be a brother to me Som, or just a loving stranger until we sort this out? And out of that non-insistence, that non- preying upon each other, something

sweet may dawn (96). This statement implies that they may show mutual respect for one another as friends and not as husband and wife. The expression of her mind is tantamount to an ultimatum to Som who, in his existing mental state, asks her either to be a docile wife or else finish off their married relationship for ever. The relations have already reached a dead end, and there comes the break between the couple.

After the divorce, Raj is found to be an easy alternative to Som. With his Christian background he at least knows, as Som did not know suffering and tolerance. His love affair with Shaila had come to a sudden end as soon as her parents decided in favour of another boy for husband. Love between the two young people had been so cheeped that it lost all the significance it previously had for the lovers. But it was decidedly true of the woman who had easily accepted the forces of society or her family to renounce what she had cherished. In this way, she had allowed herself to be dominated by men and society. Shaila forgot Raj as if she had never known him in her life. His contesting for a seat in Parliament was obviously a diversion to fight society. "Most of his reserves had been used up in the formidable fight against tradition". (104) Thus, we can find that as a self aware person, Simrit makes friendship with a more liberal person Raj. As a self aware person, she rejects the privileged and suppressed relationship and tries to make equal relationship.

Simrit is impressed with the innocent, selfless and lovingly idiotic mind of Raj. From there the journey becomes infinite. Raj at last proposes for marriage. Simrit's questioning glance leaps to his. The mild food of friendship was all very well, but now there is a live current connecting them, bright lights dancing. The holy beginnings he watched have come to fruition. And holy matrimony is the true and ancient answer to the holiest of God's gifts. Raj, brought up on challenges, takes this decision coolly and

calculatingly, knowing it too well that he is going to wed a woman who has hordes of children and a tax problem. And Ram Krishan solemnly draws a moral "Courage is the most moving thing in the world and these two have plenty of the foolhardy brand" (232). Simrit is filled with the sheer rightness of being alive and healthy. Part of it was physical well-being, as if there was no effort she could not ask of her body. The rest is balanced in a deeper, calmer rejoicing.

Men like Raj are born to lead and educate, sometimes to triumph, just when it seems fortunes can go no lower. Raj would be all right as he quotes from the Bible: "Good tidings of great joy" (183). And Simrit whispers softly the soothing words from the Rig Veda: "O Faith, give us faith" (183). The tragi-comic plot of Som-Simrit, Simrit-Raj re-enforces Simrit's self-consoling message that she quotes from the Isha Upanished, a book of antiquity: "The whole world is the garment of the Lord, Renounce it then, and receive it back as the gift of God" (76). In this statement we can find the real sense of emancipation in the character of Simrit.

To escape from the bounds of conventional society, Simrit adopts neurotic characteristics. Her unconventional mode of behaviour is defined as neurotic or madness in traditional society. The man like Vetter thinks that Simrit gets everything in the company of Som, but instead of feeling herself as the luckiest woman in the world, she was not happy in her marital life. "She could have anything she liked, clothes jewels, anything. Why was she not happy?" (80). This is the real problem faced by every intellectual Indian woman not only by Simrit. The men of such society can not grasp the problem in which these women are bound to live. Som's friend Vetter says "Som is doing all this for you" (81). What Vetter tries to describe here, is material

prosperity but the longing of Simrit is not on the materiality. What she searches is spirituality, the real form of emancipation.

The female who tries to go against the pattern of society are defined as neurotic, because they always try to challenge the system made by the men. Women are taken as *other* in those systems. This character Simrit tries revolt against those social patterns to search her own self. So, the males in the society like Som, Lalli and Vetter called her as strange and mad woman. The strangeness in her behaviour comes from the wishes of liberation from the continuous exploitation of her husband not by the mental illness. Vetter also consoles her by saying that every summer she can go to Europe but what she wants is not money or trips to Europe but real friendship between husband and wife. So, she is angry with Vetter, who only judges her in her outer appearance. At that time "Simrit had gone on crying wordlessly looking out of the window" (81). But Som and Vetter never tried to understand her feelings. Vetter explains her behaviour as mental illness, "Perhaps all you need is a medical checkup. Why not come to Germany when Som makes his next trip"(82). This neurotic nature of Simrit suggests that she does not want to live in the order imposed by male dominated traditional society. Simrit tries to justify that she is all well "And I'm not sick" (82). In this sense we can conclude that it is not Simrit who is going to be mad but it is the judgment of those men in the society who view her in wrong ways.

The society and the people who see order in this world, is disorder to Simrit. She tries to create her own world outside the boundaries of society. So, she is not satisfied with Som, though he possesses lots of wealth. Som thinks

that money can buy everything what she needs" we can go abroad any time we want any bloody time, buy anything we want. We can air-condition this whole place, furnish it all over again, and Rudy's right. You ought to have something to mark the occasion. What would you like? You didn't say" (89). The only one thing she wants is her own world and her own free self i.e. emancipation from her husband, "all she wanted was to get to a clean cold atmosphere where there was some goal beyond self advancement" (89). Thus, all these neurotic behaviour suggest that she wants to emancipate from the pattern of patriarchy.

The process of emancipation and the feminist learning of the novel must indeed involve a fight against the established institutions. Both Raj and Simrit are strongly in favour of turning down the Indian tradition which includes, for instance, landlordism or the Zamindari system in which the landlords enjoy unrestrained freedom to use women for their sensual delight. The corrupt private life of the state minister of petroleum Summer Singh with a widow-turned sex companion Pixie is only a typical illustration of the life lived by such top- ranking public servants with a feudal background. He maintains a private flat at 100 Willingdom Crescent where he has appointment with Pixie twice a week. Even the taxi driver who drives him there knows about his affair for "No minister could be anonymous for long in Delhi and he had been using this side of entrance for three months, though he had kept his own car before and left long before morning" (112). The ministers were not public servants but landlords in disguise, who sexually exploit the women. As an intellectual woman Simrit tries to raise voice against the corruption of society. The feudalistic tendencies of the pre- independence India still-prevails. The society is still male dominated with little respect shown to the independence and dignity of women. This is clearly illustrated by the financial settlement in Simrit Raman's divorce document. As Raj

Garg observes "it's an extravagant settlement on paper for children or rather the boy. For her it's murder" (145). And even among the children the favourable terms are "for the boy primarily, and the leftovers for girls" (145), as for their mother Mrs. Raman "gets nothing out of the fortune in her name" (145). On the contrary, she is subjected to a positive disadvantage by being obliged to bear the heavy tax liability on the shares, purchased and controlled by her husband. The novel also makes a dig at the functioning of the courts in the country which directly or indirectly contribute to the suppression or injustice to woman. The worst thing that has happened to this woman is that without a proper understanding of the consent terms in the divorce document, she has been obliged to put her signature on it, and the document has been raffled by the court. Ram Krishan must come at last to teach her to fight against the injustice and unknot the hand man's noose put around her neck. In a cinematographic flashback, he recalls how he stood for the women's liberty in the past when he persuaded his deceased wife Vinita to reject the traditionally laid down pattern of life of a wife. He asked her to stop the twenty-four hour housekeeping and service to her husband demanded by society and transformed her from a housekeeper and a cook into a warm friend and of emancipation.

The feminist movement of emancipation raised in the west is thus applicable to the social context of the Indian woman who is denied plain justice by her society, the society that still worships the male and acquits him of his guilt. In her fight against injustice, the woman is bound to receive help and co-operation from the right thinking and enlightened individuals like Raj and Ram Krishan. The revolutionary forces in society enable her to achieve her liberation from this type of naked brand of exploitation as well as from the exploiting male

and *his* society. Since, in the present situation in the novel, the woman had given her consent to the document, the only way to fight against the injustice perpetrated against her was to create public opinion against it. As a freelance journalist, she could make it an issue in the papers and, meanwhile, regard herself as free from any binding obligation to honour the document's terms. The feminist cause is thus upheld because it meant a fight against a social wrong. The need for such a fight was justified not merely by Christianity, people lauded about but even by Hinduism as Ram Krishna said:

That is the point to dig out of the Hindu approach, move it out of the universal into the present. The ingredients of the approach are already there, rather buried down under at the moment, like the best of diamonds. We have to dig them up, highlights them, make it known that this too is Hinduism. It's this that will provide the stamina, the sticking point, the being point we need to resist what we don't believe in. and give us will to act. (234)

In this statement of Ram Krishna, we can find that the real solution lies in inner part of Hinduism. We must reach in that inner part and we are able to find the solution of those problems. He states his philosophic views "to build Jerusalem you have to come back to character" (235-36). The Eastern philosophy and legends also teach us real form of spiritual emancipation that can change a person to the sublime thought. But, this thought depends upon individual perception or intellect to understand the message of Hindu philosophy.

Thus, having understood the message, Simrit feels freed at last to undertake the struggle no matter what amount of suffering it may involve. She is placed at "a high spot" where from an immense valley of choices spread out

before her gaze and she felt free at last to choose what her life would be" (236). Yet in carrying on with her struggle she has gladly retained the link with her children. The link has remained unaffected and undisturbed despite the new horizon which has now opened out to her. In this way, Simrit is able to change social ills and succeed her journey from subjugation to emancipation. Simrit herself is recognized as enlightened person by the emancipation from those institutions. Her friendship with Raj provides her the anchor and helps her to come out of the shock and stupor and establish a life of her own. The kind of resistance she develops to face her predicament was a first move towards freedom. It is her courage which frees Simrit from the bonds of marriage as well as the divorce settlement.

#### IV. Conclusion

Nayantara Sahgal strongly believes that it is the conscious moral obligation of all right-thinking people to protest against injustice and wrong. Her literary achieving lies in her ability to transmute the social, historical and political forces of her time into the organic structure of the novel. After a comprehensive study of this novel it will be appropriate to sum up her idea of feminism in as few words as possible.

*The Day in Shadow* primarily deals with the struggle of a young, beautiful and daring Indian woman trapped under the burden of a brutal divorce settlement and the agony and unhappiness she experiences in the hands of cruel and unjust male-dominated society of India. On one level the novel also exposes the life of the political leaders, business barons, journalists and free thinkers in the bbee and flow of the daily living in New Delhi. Nayantara Sahgal has presented the social life of those people living in India in the early sixties when India was on her way to progress after the attainment of independence. The novel shows that Indians have got freedom yet it is only on the surface level as in their attitudes to love, morality, sex, marriage, education and religion, they are still the slaves of the West. Sahgal has adopted an interesting method of creating her characters in the novel in order to promote her theme of women's suppression and revolt in the socio-political set up in modern India. The characters are functional. They are not so much individuals as types pointing to contrasting themes.

*The Day in Shadow* is the story of Simrit, lost and bewildered as she struggles to cope with the emotional shock of a divorce plus a brutal divorce settlement inflicted on her. Ostracized, victimized and shackled by memories of the past her only bridge to a new life is Raj, a brilliant rising member of parliament, who

passionately believes in freedom and refused to accept fate as the answer to human problems. And, finally it is the story of Delhi on the threshold of momentous changes, and a new breed of politicians far removed from everything Gandhi stood for.

Finally, it can be said that Sahgal is a moral writer, though not a moralist. She sees art as all great artists of the past have seen it, as an instrument for discerning and affirming the difference between right and wrong. The present novel is a study of the feminine sensibility-a journey towards freedom from fear. Freedom is not a gift but it is an achievement and every generation has to do its job well in order to continue and preserve the tradition of freedom. The past inaudible whisper has now become a crescendo that echoes the thoughts, emotions, ambitions and values of the Indian women.

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