

Gemeinschaft in Gandhi's: A literary study of Sahgal's Novel *This Time of Morning*

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Palayamkottai.

Nayantara Sahgal is the legendary woman novelist in India. As she is closely related to the political family she knows well about independence and its aftermath that happens in India. She witnesses all the political situation of India after Independence. She sees the conditions of India as a journalist and a writer. She starts to provoke everything in the form of writing. One such provocation is her novel *This Time of Morning*. Every novel of Sahgal speaks some important things as the theme. Such important themes are following Gandhian principles, nationality of the Indian people, socio-political situations in India and also about women empowerment.

The term Gemeinschaft was first introduced by Ferdinand Tonnies. Gemeinschaft refers the person who works only for the welfare and benefit of the society. The main aim of such people is to work for the society. The theory mainly deals with the Human Will. It speaks about

the humans and their wills and how they react to the problems related to the society. Every good relationship and good principle starts from home and it transforms the society to a better one.

Tönnies in his book *Community and Society* briefly explains about the theory of Gemeinschaft:

... the theory of Gemeinschaft starts from the assumption of perfect unity of human wills as an original or natural conditions which is preserved in spite of actual separation. This natural condition is found in manifold forms because of dependence on the nature of relationship between individuals who are differentially conditioned. The common root of this natural condition is the coherence of vegetative life through birth and the fact that the human wills in so far as each one of these wills is related to a definite physical body, are and remain linked to each other by parental descent and by sex, or by necessity become so linked. (37)

Ferdinand Tönnies speaks about the relationship and friendship. Friendship flourishes at very young age. People become good friends by a basic human will which forms a strong bond between friends. When there is a problem in a community, the fatherly or any other figure must maintain the peace by following justice without harming others. In the truth, any person can maintain justice in the society. It depends upon the persons who maintain peace through their justice. Ferdinand Tönnies sums up this fact as follows:

Judicial functions and the element of justice befit the authority of age, for youthful irascibility and passions of all kinds give rise to violence, revenge and dispute. The aged man is a speculator, above such frailties and less disposed to help one against because of predilection are hatred. He will try to discover by which side the evil was started and whether the existed sufficient provocation for

a normal moderate person. He will also decide through what action of suffering the excessive deed is to be compensated. (45)

Like Tonnie, Gandhi also has the main principles in his life. He treats every human individual as equal. Every individual is unique. We must have a classless society. In the society we must have people with social consciousness who work for the welfare of the society. Every individual in the society is able to contribute good things to the society. These individuals select a good leader from the society and make him/her to work for the society. This fact is elucidated by Manoharlal Tripathy as follows:

The worker, who has developed the good rapport with people, seeks to increase the amount of satisfaction in interpersonal relations and cooperative work among different people groups. With his skilful handling of the situation, he so organizes his meetings with the people that they feel comfortable and free to verbalise. In the beginning, the worker is the cementing force between various factions and groups in the village. (9)

In *This Time of Morning* the two characters Rakesh, Kailas Virind follow the Gemeinschaft theory by practicing of Gandhian principles. Rakesh as a young boy after his school education shows interest towards “the restoration of national opportunity” (*TTM* 68). He works for the welfare of the nation. During his childhood days, he participates in the freedom movement with Kailas Virind. The love for nation makes him join Kailas and his daughter Rashmi to guide the people towards freedom movement in Allahabad’s George Town.

According to Gemeinschaft, the person who works for the benefit of the society is called as Gemein. Rakesh proves his patriotic spirit towards the country. Rakesh and Rashmi teach many things in and around Allahabad. “It did not sound very political. It was more concerned

with teaching people the laws of Hygiene and encouraging the arts of spinning during the months when the fields lay fallow. And it seemed so inadequate, so endless and unrewarding when one thought of the hundreds of thousands of villages and the people in them to be prepared” (49). Thus they decide their life for the sake of the country.

Rakesh is one of the I.C.S officers and he comes to Delhi after Independence. Rakesh prefers is to join the foreign affairs to prove his love towards nation. He is one of the greatest followers of Kailas which makes him to think about the nation. Kailas is also one of the Gemeinschaft characters. Rakesh father never accepts the position of his son in Indian Government. Because,....

the foreign service would take Rakesh away from his country for years at a time. The child for whom his taxing profession had left so little time had grown up all too soon and now would be gone from him. He looked at the small house he had rented at the start of his practice and lately bought, at the garden which in recent years he had tended so carefully. They would be empty without Rakesh. Like most Indian parents the doctor had never envisaged a time when he would be quite alone. (64)

Rakesh, the disciple of Kailas has the same fascination towards India. The aim of Rakesh’s father is that his son will be great businessman in America after finishing his studies from America. Unfortunately Rakesh clears the exam of External affairs and starts to work for India. His father tries to prepare the mind of his business to become businessmen and for this he seeks the help of Dr.Matthew. Dr. Matthew is one of the Professors of Rakesh at the university who spends his life in teaching history. At present, he is appointed as an Administrative Staff, in the college of Delhi for the purpose of training to the trainers to learn history and make the

students to work for the nation of Independence “since independence to train future administrators” (64). Dr. Matthew is happy that his student has secured a pass in the examination and also convinces Rakesh’s father regarding the government job.

Kailas is one of the members of freedom movement and he has high fascination towards India. He follows Gandhian principles in his life. He is a good social worker and his main aim is to help and develop the society. Kailas, at very young age, participated in the freedom movement. Many times he went to jail for the purpose of freedom. His love towards nation makes him not to think of marrying any person because the jail life may bore that person. It is his wife Mira who changes the mind of Kailas and brings him into married life. Kailas accepts Gandhi as a political leader and he practices justice in his life. He opposes violence. After the death of Gandhi also he maintains the non-violence in his life. This is illustrated in the following passage from the novel:

Kailas belonged to the generation that had succumbed to the magic of Gandhi. The fire, the dedication and singlemindedness of the man in the loincloth had attracted him made him a member of the congress, sent him to jail along with thousands of his countrymen and trained and tempered something within him that might otherwise have developed haphazard and purposeless. (14)

Kailas joins congress at a very young age. It gives him a better placement in the society. Kailas believes that patriotic feeling must not come from outside, instead, the feeling of patriotism should burn like a fire deep inside the heart. It is the real enjoyment of Freedom. These samples prove that Kailas as a Gemeinschaft man. His contribution towards the society is totally based on human will. His service proves that he is the ardent follower of Gandhi. By

working as a government servant he proves his love towards nation. This has been recorded in the following passage:

Kailas put his faith, his maddening imperturbable faith, in one thing, the people. He had doubts about non-violence, he said. He did not accept it as a philosophy of life and it could never apply to a sovereign state which would have to maintain armed strength for defence. But he accepted it as the finest way for India at that moment in her history to win her freedom. It was the only way to fight without resentment, to leave no trail of blood and despair, no gaping wounds of the mind and spirit that would never heal. (62)

In this novel, Rakesh, Dr. Matthew and Kailas are the followers of Gandhi. Hence, they follow the Gemeinschaft theory in life. As per theory, they have real concern for the nation by working and helping for the society. Gandhi also practices the same values. According to him, everyone must for the society and help the society to form a better nation. Rakesh and Dr. Matthew are the fatherly figures who help the people in the society for a better nation.

Works cited

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