Chapter IV

Style

Style is something individual. It cannot be changed. It has to come from inside. It has to suit the material. It cannot be consciously borrowed. It is possible to be influenced by a writer of his own style by reading admirably. It should be safe for the novelist to evolve a seemingly natural technique for, ultimately, art lies in concealing art. Indian novelists writing in English have to face two problems: firstly the type of English he/she is going to use for expression of emotions, feelings and sentiments and secondly the articulation of the native sensibility in an alien tongue. In the use of language, Sahgal’s English is marked by lucidity, precision and perspicuity.

Sahgal’s family background, her western education, her rich parental tradition of national commitment are the factors that contribute a lot to her style, technique and the theme of her writings. Her fictional world is inhabited by business magnates, sophisticated bureaucrats, political carreists, foreign advisers, intellectuals like University Professors, and Journalists and their better halves. It is a selective world of upper and upper-middle class men and women of power and position. It makes her describe them with a great measure of authenticity. She presents a highly complex picture of the upper class society with its contrasting ideologies and conflicts. Her characters represent a principle, a force, a condition and an essence. Her major characters seem to be fresh and alive as real human beings with their individual
idiosyncracies, follies and foibles. They are ambitiory, jealous, idealistic, bold, selfless, corrupt, adulterous, greedy, scheming and so on.

In Sahgal’s novels, the narrator / narratee is omniscient and possessed of all that the novelist herself knows about the story as in the case with *Morning* and *Chandigarh*. Sahgal expresses her own feelings through these characters with a great talk “dramatizing them, embodying them, in living form, instead of stating them directly” (Lubbock 67-8). She uses technique as a means to express the experience and at the same time makes the pattern emerge effectively and automatically. She is highly sensitive to the moral rhythms of existence. She lets her characters come out with formative decisions. She orders the non order of experience in all her novels. It is the distinctive quality of her art.

She has a constant themes like politics, history, women issues and so on. So she has to shift her themes from novel to novel. Commenting on the thematic shifts in Sahgal’s novels, Makarand Paranjape in “Cultural and Political Allegory in Nayantara Sahgal’s *Rich Like Us*” summarises:

As to the thematic shifts, I see them in two places in Sahgal’s career. There is a shift after the first novel from the description of the social milieu in a small town to the problems of the beleaguered wife in *This Time of Morning, Storm in Chandigarh, The Day in Shadow, A Situation in New Delhi* and *Rich Like Us* – all of which have the women’s question at their centre. With *Rich Like Us*, this problem
seems to have been fully worked out, after which there is again a shift in subject in *Plans for Departure* and *Mistaken Identity*. Though *Plans for Departure* has a woman protagonist, she is not fighting the system as in the earlier novels. *Mistaken Identity* is entirely centred on a male protagonist, reminding us of *This Time of Morning*, the first novel. (134)

Sahgal’s very considerable linguistic competence and stylistic devices are present in her novels. It heightens the sensibility of the reader. She is particularly effective when she uses metaphor and simile.

In *Happy*, the locale is Sharanpur, a small town with textile industries, mostly owned by the British and some Indian business houses, namely those of the narrator and Sir Harilal Mathur. The narrator shuttles between Lucknow and Sharanpur. Calcutta is even represented as a city of Bohemian life, moral turpitude, intolerable squalor, unashamed snobbery, and commercial callousness. A.V. Krishna Rao in “Historical Consciousness in the Novels of Nayantara Sahgal” says: “The image of incongruity due to the superimposition of the English culture on the Indian cultural situation is sustained by Nayantara Sahgal throughout the novel with commendable concentration and unobtrusive descriptions” (21). In it, Sahgal’s narrative technique moves back and forth not only in regard to the sequence of events but also concerning the honeycomb of human relations. The narrator’s own story is mixed with Sanad’s story. K.V. Krishna Rao once again observes: “The narrative undulates but does
clarify and refine the confused heap of historical details of his involvement with the Gandhian movement for India’s freedom. The historical and the personal strands in the story are dexterously interwoven” (21-2). The point of view is that of an observer – narrator, whose participation in the action of the novel is intermittent or indirect. Commenting on the use of first person narrator, Shyam M. Asnani in “Form and Technique in Nayantara Sahgal’s Novels” observes that in Happy “The unfolding of the story in the first person has proved to be one of the most effective narrative devices particularly because the narrator, instead of being just an eye witness to the incidents, is actively involved in the destiny of the central character and is thus gifted with a ‘double-edged perspective’ on the happenings and episodes in the novel” (43).

Morning is a story in eighteen chapters. It is an artistic paradigm. Sahgal covers vast canvas of elite Delhi. In it, occasional flashbacks are inserted. Rakesh’s teacher, Mathew, reminisces his moments with Rakesh’s father. The omniscient writer in this novel emerges in the shape of Rakesh, who arrives in New Delhi after six years to take stock of the situation. The novel ends with Rakesh determining to have a serious talk with Kalyan Sinha, the Minister without portfolio. There are also sub-plots related to the problems of Kailash, the Prime Minister’s assistant, Kalyan Sinha, Sir Arjun Mitra, Hari Mohan, Neil Berenson and others. The characters require introspection with time and space. The suggestiveness and sufficiency of Sahgal’s creative use of the English language is evident in Morning.
The central theme of *Morning* is given by Rakesh as follows:

> It was the assurance that every man counts that life is the sum total of moments, that the human being through the exercise of his reason is the instrument of all progress. A group was individuals. What was needed was not the burial of the self but its relation and celebration, for surely the only hope for people anywhere was that they should recognize and foster each other’s humanity as individuals. (136)

Thus, her art is a more mature medium of communication as well as a more satisfying process of illumination of the experience of life with all its stresses and strains in the highly-sophisticated society in Delhi. Her fictional concern for values in an age of impermanence is of vital and fundamental importance. The value that she offers consistently and profoundly is freedom as a necessary pre-requisite for all human achievement. Separateness, aloneness, alienation and agitation are the various modes of individual experience that enable her principal characters to realize freedom in its various manifestations. Thus, Rakesh and Rashmi, Arjun Mitra and Uma. Kailas and Mira, Kalyan and Nita do become integrated as individuals through the communication of love, warmth and humanity. Sahgal’s *Morning*, celebrates the self in a more realistic manner. On the whole, it is perhaps the best and most authentic political novel with a striking ambivalence in its artistic import, ever published by an Indian novelist in English. Commenting on *Morning*, A.V. Krishna Rao in ‘Historical Consciousness in the Novels of Nayantara Sahgal’ says:
If Nayantara Sahgal’s first novel, *A Time to be Happy* (1957) is a recreation of the national consciousness before 1947 as it affected countless, young men like Sanad, her second novel *This Time of Morning* (1965) is an artistic paradigm of the inalienable freedom of the individual consciousness against the backdrop of unethical politics of power, conflicting attitudes of men in power and the sophisticated high society, which is, ironically enough, virtually incommunicado for all its important members. It is, in a sense, a deeply disturbing novel with a high degree of artistic maturity and technical virtuosity. While her artistic vision steers clear of a good deal of disgusting details of socio-political corruption in contemporary India, her ability to manipulate the plot and present the characters invites comparison with Jane Austen and C.P. Snow. (22-3)

**Chandigarh**, as suggested by the title, is a telling statement of violence in the common capital of Punjab and Haryana. The Home Minister announces violence everywhere in 1960s. Vishal Dubey dips into his past recollecting the unhappy married life with Leela. After a while, he emerges out of his past and confronts the present. Other characters like Mara, Jit, Harpal Singh, and Gyan Singh also indulge in their past through flashback, revealing how their present is an outcome of their history. The themes of tradition and modernity is also woven in the fabric of the novel through descriptions of Mara, the ultra-modern woman and those Indians who are attached to tradition and Indianness. Sahgal’s chief concern is freedom of individual and thereby
freedom of a nation – India. Gyan Singh and Harpal Singh become symbols of the impact of partition in 1947. Chandigarh stands as a symbol. For its initial settlers, it was more than an ordinary city. “It had symbolized a journey to recovery. It was industry made to thrive and abundance to flow again” (SC 28). It embodies a dream of progress and perfection. Nishal Zaidi in “Storm in Chandigarh: A Search for Values in the Post-Colonial India” observes: “But the ensuing storm signifying an erosion of those dreams proves that any attempt at imposition of order and balance from outside is a mere illusion and it is only a matter of time before the whole facade crumbles down” (113-14). For Dubey, the architecture of Chandigarh becomes synonymous with Indian democracy. Sahgal writes: “That was architecture transplanted not conceived here and he wondered how successful democracy was superimposed on illiterate masses exploding millions of them” (SC 212). It is a mixture of west with the east. Commenting on the word ‘Storm’ in the title of the novel, Susheela P. Rajendra in “Individual Freedom as the Central Motif in Storm in Chandigarh” says:

The metaphorical expression of ‘storm’ in the novel works at two levels; one the political, following on the partition of Punjab into two states and two, the personal or emotional crisis in the marital conflicts that a husband can cause violence to his wife or vice versa. The two backgrounds (political and personal) run parallel to each other and are well integrated in the theme of her fictional framework. In this novel Sahgal adopts a compact and tighter knit structure of the plot. The author employs ‘flash-back’ technique to render the narration in various
episodes. (175)

Gita Rajan in “A Common Sense Chronicle : Nayantara Sahgal’s A Storm in Chandigarh” says that “Storm in Chandigarh addresses the issues of nationalism, heroes, and femininity in its popular form. Sahgal manages to bring all three issues together successfully through the technique of repetition the violence and tension in contemporary Punjab – Chandigarh mirrors the trauma of the India-Pakistan fracture; Dubey mirrors some of the actions and philosophies of Gandhi-Nehru; and, Gauri-Saroj are mirrored repetitions of femininity and female desire. The artist’s innovation lies in her ability to repeat images instead of producing facsimiles” (45).

Sahgal’s Shadow has two levels of plot structure:

i. One is that of the courageous woman, Simrit, who fights her way out of a broken marriage like that of Sahgal’s

ii. the other is the life-style of the politicians, business magnets, journalists and bureaucrats.

The novel opens in the present but slips back into the past life of Simrit. The opening of the novel is a paradoxical one as it presents Simrit’s loneliness and the crowds enjoying themselves around her in a grand gala party at the Inter-continental Hotel. Sahgal also mingle with westernisation with Indianness as Som seems to be modern and thoroughly westernised and expects his wife to be traditional Indian wife, who is submissive. The space of the novel is much covered by Simrit’s inner struggle to compromise with her husband’s male chauvinism. Pixie, Sumer Singh’s mistress, also
decides to extricate herself from the suffocating situation of being a commodity for his entertainment. She develops into a thinking individual. This novel can be called a recreation of the Parasurama myth. Rajeshwar Mittapalli in “Myth as Macro-Structure: A Reading of Kamala Markandaya’s *A Silence of Desire* and Nayantara Sahgal’s *The Day in Shadow*” relates:

Parasurama is the youngest son of Sage Jamadagni and Princess Renuka. One day Renuka witnesses the connubial bliss of a couple and is inspired by impure thoughts. Jamadagni perceives that his wife has fallen from perfection and orders his sons, one after the other, to kill her. Only Parasurama, the youngest, obeys him which so gratifies him that he promises any blessings Parasurama may want. Parasurama desires that his mother be revived in purity and he himself might be invincible in single combat and enjoy length of days.

If we identify Som, Simrit and Brij with Jamadagni, Renuka and Parasurama respectively things fall into a line. Som inflicts his wife with a heavy tax burden in retaliation for her defying the traditional authority vested in him. For a traditionally brought up Hindu husband like him her seeking divorce seems worse than Renuka’s falling from perfection and so he thinks that she deserves to be punished. Obviously, Brij comes as a convenient tool to inflict pain on her. He ‘plants’ Brij in Simrit’s camp in the sense that he is sure of winning him back any time he wishes. Of the six lakhs transferred to Simrit five lakhs will be inherited by Brij
alone. Moreover, Som constantly holds the promise of sending Brij abroad for studies dangling in face. Brij on his part cannot risk ignoring Som’s promise even if that means great pain and distress to his mother. He acts very much like Parasurama in carrying out his father’s desire but unlike the mythical hero he has no regard for his mother’s fate. In spite of his best efforts he cannot broach the subject of the tax burden before his father. Simrit finally finds happiness in the love of Rai who has been her sympathiser all along. (125)

**Delhi** is not a complicated novel. In this novel, the stream of consciousness technique is used. Devi’s feeling of dislocation after her brother Shivraj’s death forms one level of the novel. The other level is Devi’s son, Rishad, with his Naxalite friends. The title ‘situation’ demands a situation on the campus of Delhi University, resulting out of a rape. The novel relates the death of Shivraj and returns to Devi and her problems. There is a back step movement several times in the plot when Devi recalls her glorious past with Shivraj’s clean administration and her emotional relationship with Michael. Michael recalls Shivraj nostalgically when the novel begins and in the end he remains from on his decision to commemorate the deceased politician. Commenting on the word ‘situation’ in the novel **Delhi**, O.P. Mathur in “After Nehru What? : A Perspective on A Situation in New Delhi” observes:

The novelist’s attitude to Shivraj can be interpreted as ambivalent. On one level the novel is pessimistic, set in a vacuum of hope. The really
different “situation” in the New Delhi after Shivraj’s death is that we are left with nothing positively encouraging or hopeful. The new tendencies now surfacing—violence, authoritarianism, censorship, committed bureaucracy, a hypocritical concern for ‘social justice” in the name of which any wrong can be done and an undefined fear in the common mind are symptoms of the new, the looks of the approaching storm, the penumbra of the new shadows, and the threshold leading to the vicious “riches” of the Emergency, so graphically made the subjects for the writer’s work, dealing with the post-Nehruvian period. The novel is a depressing commentary on Shivraj- Nehru’s complete failure properly to mould the ethos of the decades which followed his death. The legacy he left was largely a non-legacy as far as moral values are concerned. (208-9)

The technique in Rich offers a fair objectification of the materials of art. It enables its evaluation. It contains a vast political setting with its intellectual and moral implications. It proceeds in the direction of the pattern and its implications which is difficult to incorporate in the craft for a writer like Sahgal. Sahgal’s involvement with the civil liberties movement launched during the Emergency is perhaps too deep to enable her to achieve a transmutation of the new materials into art. The narrative is mingled with irony as well as with humour. It dissolves the anger.
**Rich** is evidently a sample of her perfection in technique. Sahgal arranges the novel against the backdrop of Emergency in India in 1975 and the oppression emerging thereby. In it, the political situation is relegated to the background and human concerns are placed foremost. Sonali forms the main plot of the novel and Rose, an English woman, married to an Indian, and finally is murdered under the guise of suicide forms the sub-plot of the novel. The narrative is arranged in third person which turns into first person, when Sonali and Rose take up the link of the story running into twenty-one chapters. Sonali’s dilemma and introspection is alternated with that of Rose. As usual in Sahgal’s novels, the plot operates like a pendulum between the past and the present. Commenting on the title of the novel **Rich**, Jasbir Jain in “The Novel as Political Biography : Sahgal’s **Rich Like Us** and **Plans for Departure**” says : “**Rich Like Us** is a double-edged title, ambiguous and divided even in its double meaning. Who is ‘rich’ and who is ‘us’? [....] Beginning with an ironic title with multiple meanings, the novel moves constantly between the past and the present through two consciousnesses, one of Rose and the other of Sonali (53). Further, Jain writes :

From a narrative point of view though the two strands adopt contrastive techniques, both move backward in time. Sonali’s memories of the past and her father’s records allow us to see the idealism nourished by idealism. Rose has her own memories of England, of her English friends, and her husband’s business. The cleanness which invested these relationships contrasts sharply with Dev’s collaboration with Newman.
Rose and Sonali are two of a kind and their affinity goes to prove the value of individual strength. (58)

The period covered in the novel is less than a year but in terms of history, it stretches back to the part. Jain further writes: “Ravi’s shame-faced confession of failure gives Sonali her freedom, the possibility of a continuity of the hope and idealism of the past makes her look forward to the future” (58). Commenting on the narrative structure of Rich, Meera Ramachandran in “Kicking at the Walls of Sub-Genre: A Note on Rich Like Us” says:

First of all there is in Rich Like Us a narrative structure which involves frequent spatial and temporal trapezing exercises. London, Lahore and Delhi converge to a one ‘here’ and several historical eras get compressed into the ‘now’. Chapters begin with a comment on the present and instantly telescope into a distant past. The reader can try and establish the bridge at the political-ideological level. (63)

In Rich, Gandhi’s morality and Nehru’s humanism moulded Sahgal’s thinking. She also makes references to Indian cultural traditions. Hers is no romantic idealism. She displays mature understanding that power is power but it is arbitrary. She makes recurring use of myths and symbols to place her ideas on power and freedom. Sanjogita Singh in “Rich Like Us: A View” says: “The recurring image of the handless, helpless beggar being dragged by society ladies symbolizes the mutilated personal and political freedom and its precarious survival” (93).
**Departure** adopts a different point of view and different narrative mode. There are two points of view projected through the narration. One is Anna Hansen’s. She is an outsider-insider – a Danish in India. But she stands outside both the native and the imperial circles in India. The second consciousness is that of Sir Nitin in the background – gentle, perturbed, and feels things are getting out of control. Anna is the narrative centre where thoughts and actions coverage. The novel moves both into the past and future. Even though Anna becomes the main consciousness through which the narrative is unfolded, she remains intangible and abstract. The novel is rooted in pre-war (1914) Europe with India as its locale and follows third person narrative running into fourteen chapters. Through Anna Hansen, a Dane, that British Imperialism in India is viewed. Characters are chosen from mixed background. They are Henry Brewster, the local magistrate, his wife Stella, Marlowe Croft, the local priest and his wife Lulu, the Pryors, Madhav Rao, the local shop – keeper, and Dr. Basu, the eminent botanist. The plot shifts on various levels. Western women arrive in India. Anna arrives in India in her capacity as Dr. Basu’s secretary. Sahgal uses psychological introspection as Henry Brewster discovers himself to be a misfit. The juxtaposition arising out of the relation of Henry and Stella, Marlowe and Lulu, Nicholas and Anna and Basu and Anna is remarkable. Commenting on the title of the novel Jasbir Jain in “The Novel as Biography : Sahgal’s **Rich Like Us** and **Plans for Departure**” says:

The plans for departure, referred to in the title are many, the title works at various levels. The beginning of the realization that the British would have to leave India is forced on them by such men as Tilak, and women
like Anna. Earlier Anna leaves Nicholas in 1913 and comes to India. Stella also leaves India and Henry Brewster. Finally Anna summons her grand-daughter to her deathbed and is thus planning for her departure. Journeys are begun, never ended, and every arrival at a destination is a new beginning. But primarily long before the British became consciously aware of the need to free India, at a subconscious level, and also at a personal level, it became increasingly clear that they would have to leave. (63)

In Departure, Sahgal’s main concern is with men and matters. Anna is the principal woman character in the novel. It also deals with history. It also looks like a detective fiction as Anna wants to unravel the mystery behind Stella leaving Henry Brewster. It relates themes like woman’s quest, identity, East-West encounter politics, freedom and so on. M.G. Hegda in “Plans for Departure : A Study” is of the opinion that

One of the assets of Sahgal’s fictional art is a definite perspective with which she views men and matters. Often the perspective is offered by the principal woman character in the novel. In Plans for Departure a significant chunk of history i.e. 1914 is presented as the experience of an emancipated Danish spinster Miss. Anna Hansen. Sahgal’s scrupulous selection of the period as well as the protagonist is perfectly matched by her enviable understanding of the history. Selection of a British character or an Indian character as the central consciousness would have marred
the facility which she enjoys now. While Anna’s sojourn at Himapur, an imaginary hill station in the Himalayas and the decisive impact of this stay on her life, is the major note in the novel, themes like human relationship, status of the woman, East-West encounter, British imperialism, the Indian National Movement, and the steady growth of a sombre mood in which the whole world is moved towards the catastrophe war of 1914 make further symphony. (115-16)

**Identity** is written in first person narrative. Bhushan, the narrator, is the young prince of Vijaygarh. The plot takes shape through flashback as he arrives in Bombay in 1929 from America. Sahgal deals with historical movements such as Khilafat movement, American political scenes, Russian revolution, Lahore conspiracy case, and the Dandi Salt March and so on. Characters in Sahgal arrive to achieve their identity, which they ultimately discover. She establishes the value of freedom as the first requisite to the development of the self and secondly the need of communication, without which an unbridgeable gulf yawns between individuals, leading to serious consequences as break up of relationships like marriages. Maintaining relationships is essential for man, not only for a healthy social life but also for his own psychological and emotional well-being. Sahgal’s sympathy lies with men and women who are forced by their milieu to fumble in the dark for their self awareness. She is a culturally advanced onlooker. This is the reason why she gets upset regarding some social inhibitions prevailing in India. She represents that carefree class of Indians who are least concerned with the enslaved state of the country. Sahgal s characters are culled
from upper strata of Indian society with an admixture of few foreigners. They comprise men and women who are bureaucrats, ministers, academicians—all trapped in their predicament, constructed to fit into the design of her moral universe and the novelist elicits belief in their deep lying potential. Characters in her fiction are the essential elements of the novel. About characters and their relationships, Miriam Allott in *Novelists on the Novel* opines: "We recognize the true novelist by the strength with which his realization of the actual world and of individuality triumphs over his abstract speculation, his oddities and opinions." (145)

Sahgal’s art of characterization is appealing. She portrays her characters as emotional beings. The human concern is paramount in her characters. Her men are painted as normal beings pulsating with life and women as struggling to achieve a respectable place for them. Sahgal does not lose sight of feminine virtues which constitute feminity to woman-loving, caring, dedicated, inspired, motherly and educated. She does not portray them as mute and unsusceptible to their needs.

Sahgal’s women too suffer from the gnawing fear of loneliness. She is deeply concerned about the problems of the new woman, intelligent, educated and a careerist, trying to etch a dignified image for her in a patriarchal and male-dominated society. Freedom of expression, communication, and understanding are the pre-requisites to all relationships. Man and woman, bath constitute a healthy society and are complementary to each other. One cannot negate the other, but both require recognition of their identities. Sahgal implicitly states, they themselves should discover first, only then can they expect the world around them to recognize.
From her first novel **Happy to Identity**, Sahgal employs flashback technique, shuffling and reshuffling scenes from the present to the past and vice versa. Sometimes she shifts her narrative from first person to third person to make her view better to the readers. The use of first person gives the characters’ psyche; whereas the third person distances her to judge a situation. Thus, she avails herself of the advantages of both the techniques as and when the situation demands. By the end of the novel, there is no formal closure of problems and relationships. The novel becomes an open-ended one.

B.S. Jamuna in “Narrative Strategies in Nayantara Sahgal’s The Mistaken Identity” says: “Therefore Sahgal’s narratives can be viewed as wonderous interplay of factual and fictional demands resulting in an aesthetically complex discourse” (30). Similarly, commenting on the narrative technique used in **Rich** and **Departure**, Jasbir Jain in “The Novel as Political Biography: Sahgal’s Rich Like Us and Plans for Departure” says:

In both these novels the multiple vision and point of view of a political biography is at work. It is a narration of history-in-the-making with the advantage of hindsight. **Rich Like Us** has a multiplicity of narrative techniques in addition to the variety of point of view, while **Plans for Departure** has Anna as the centre of consciousness. The techniques of fiction are used to arrive at an understanding of a country and its life, to understand the happenings and events which appear to be separate and limited in scope but actually relate to each other in order to weave a pattern. The novel adapts itself to the techniques of biography, or one
can say the other way round that a biographical approach governs the narrative. There is thus a similarity between the approach of the creative writer and the historian, the creative writer using events in order to comprehend the reality of the world. Sahgal's work is different from an ordinary biography on two counts: first the protagonist is not a person but a country; second the focus is not on major historical happenings, but on the psychological processes and the emotional conflicts which have gone into them. (63-4)

In *Morning* and *Chandigarh*, Sahgal uses the omniscient point of view. She uses “time sequences in flash-backs” (Zuckerman 86). The flashback technique used in both the novels enables Sahgal to juxtapose past with the present by alternating scenes. Through flashback technique, reminiscences, and direct narration, Sahgal effectively sheds light on certain facets of a character’s personality and incidents associated with the characters. While the point of view of the novel is third person omniscient, Sahgal uses Rakesh and Vishal Dubey to comment on the personality of other characters, discuss current situations, and introduce major themes in both the novels. In *Morning*, the change of eras and clash of values create a melodrama of high intensity as they affect the private lives of bureaucrats, politicians and high-ups alike. Shyam M Asnani in “Form and Technique in Nayantara Sahgal’s Novels” observes:

> In this surrealistic, semi-historical novel, Sahgal, herself a keen observing participant in the big drama of New Delhi’s fashionable and
affluent society, portrays her dramatic personae and events against the richly eventful backdrop of freedom and its aftermath with remarkable authenticity. Her observations of life around her neither dogmatic nor intensive, are just accurate. One can almost identify these fictional characters with the historical ones. But the world they inhabit is increased with imagination and romance, love and flirting. (45)

Her characters like Kalyan Singha, Rashmi, Nita, and Rakesh emerge strongly as individuals with conflicting emotional demands of their own nature.

In **Morning**, **Chandigarh** and **Shadow** Sahgal follows the third person omniscient point of view. But each of these novels has one particular character who goes in and out of situations functioning as the narrator's point of view. In **Morning** it is Rakesh, in **Chandigarh** it is Vishal Dubey and in **Shadow** it is Raj Garg who act as the filtering consciousness for the omniscient author's narration and reflection. In **Shadow**, the novelist brings out emotional struggles and the thought process of the central characters like Raj, Simrit, Ram Krishnan and Sumer Singh by using a modified version of the stream of consciousness technique. In **Delhi** the novelist adopts the omniscient narrative method. But in **Rich** both omniscient narrative method and first person narrative method are used in simultaneous chapters. Sonali, a young I.A.S officer, is the first person observer-participant-narrator, who describes the degenerating socio-political milieu of India during the nineteen seventies in the name of Emergency. This narrative is interwoven with the story of Rose and her husband Ram, which is
narrated from the omniscient point of view. This split narrative which pictures two
different realms of the story, beautifully comes together in the last chapter where Rose
dies and Sonali manages to pull herself together in a heroic way. In “Historical
Consciousness in the Novels of Nayantara Sahgal” A. V. Krishna Rao rightly observes
that Sahgal adopts a shifting point of view in Rich so as to "invest the story with a
dimension of history; and her knowledge of European and Indian history helps her in
elucidating and illustrating the current events in the light of historical wisdom" (35).
Sahgal describes not only what happens in the outside world but also what happens on
the landscape of the minds of different characters. This kind of probing necessitates the
telling of the story from the point of view of at least few important characters. Thus,
one can find the multidimensional view point in some of her novels. She has an
extraordinary skill in shifting the point of view in a subtle way.