



Nation before self in Harinder Sikka's 'Calling Sehmat'.

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Nation is a community of people formed on the bases of language, culture, ethnicity, beliefs, age old tradition and history. Nation is a state of relationship where emotionality plays vital role. Nation is a matter of pride for masses and a conduct where self-identity most of the times go hand in hand with it.

Self is an individual whose conscious reflection is seen as an object most of the time. Self is seen as a personal identity in first place, with reference to the second person or object. An individual's identity is defined as the culmination of one's self believe and continuity in expression to bridge future and see the difference.

Harinder S. Sikka is right now the gathering executive, vital business, Piramal Group. Subsequent to moving on from Delhi University, he joined the Indian Navy. He was charged in January 1981 and accepting untimely retirement in 1993 as a Lieutenant Commander. He as of late delivered a film, Nanak Shah Fakir, which won recognition at the Cannes, Toronto and Los Angeles universal film celebrations. The film won three national honours including the Nargis Dutt Award for best element film on national reconciliation.

The story opens, in the city of Malerkotla, in the north Indian Territory of Punjab, a mother rings her grandson to illuminate him that his mom has died. Samar Khan, elevated to the position of Captain in the Indian Army, was eager to introduce himself before his mom in his new uniform. Oh dear, that minute never came. Looking for consent from his Commanding Officer for crisis leave, he at that point continues from Delhi where he was on short obligation, to Malerkotla. While breaking the report about his mom's

destruction to the close by townspeople, who thought about her as their saviour, Samar begins recalling her past. Be that as it may, for what reason does he say, “She was the most cryptically excellent lady to come into his life when he was simply seven.”

The story is set in 1971, India and Pakistan. The story unfurls with the romantic tale of Sehmat's folks – Tej and Hidayat Khan. Tej visits Kashmir and is enchanted by Hidayat. The story at that point gets when Sehmat is in school and talented. Hidayat as a feature of his exchange associations has contacts in Pakistan, and supplies urgent data to Indian Intelligence. He falls grievously sick, when pressures among India and Pakistan are ascending in 1971. The circumstance in East Pakistan is dismal and inconvenient for Pakistan, and they are quick to dispatch a pre-emptive assault on India. Hidayat reaches resolution that there is no option aside from Sehmat to have his spot. But, before the final marriage ceremony takes place she is given the Spy training and so Sehmat also learns that, her father and grandfather were too working for RAW and that she is third generation doing this. After marriage Sehmat manages to get the love, care and place in the family and as and when she gets any information, she passes it that very moment and for months this keeps on going. On the other hand, Sehmat also start loving her husband and his family. Then one day Sehmat gets to know about destruction the Pakistan army is planning to make on INS Vikrant and destroy the naval force of India from Bay of Bengal as India was gaining more power from the navy. But, in this process of passing information her identity is leaked and everyone gets to know who Sehmat is? Towards the end of the text we get to read that Sehmat somehow returns to India after the officers of RAW kill her husband, and that she is pregnant with the child of Iqbal. Sehmat after getting to her home loses her senses and thinks that blood is there in her hand and gets in highly depression which results that a college friend of hers takes away her child and gives him his name and after growing up the boy joins Indian Army and is proud to be a son of parents who laid their lives for their country be it, the Iqbal or Sehmat herself.

As per Harinder Sikka, he discovered the story during the Kargil strife. He gained the story from an Indian armed force official who let him know of how his mom, a Kashmiri Muslim, had hitched a Pakistani Army official to furnish India with grouped data during the 1971 war. Sikka inevitably figured out how to meet the official's mom in Malerkotla, Punjab where she in the end unfurled further components of her story. As a piece of her obligations in Pakistan, she used to mentor General Yahya Khan's grandkids. It took Sikka roughly 8 years to fictionalize the story and mastermind it into a durable account. He fictionalized the name of the principle character so as to keep her unknown. During an on-going meeting, he has said that the genuine lady behind the character has since kicked the bucket. As a tribute to her, Sikka officially propelled the book on board Vikrant, which was docked at Naval dockyard in Mumbai.

The book can be categorised into four sects:

1. Romance
2. Suspense
3. Action
4. Philosophy

Romance is seen at two different intervals but, the love and relationship portrayed is more of the sacrificing nature. On one hand, we have the centre characters i.e. Sehmat and Iqbal, who fell in love with each other eventually after marriage but, what they choose for themselves on first leap was the nation and not the blooming love. On the other hand, there is another character Abhinav, college friend of Sehmat who is deeply in love with her but, its one sided and pure as the water of river Ganges. Abhinav, later in the novel is shown adopting Samar Khan the child of Sehmat and Iqbal, and bringing him up with the best of values and telling him how brave both of his parents were and lastly making Samar able enough to serve the nation by joining Indian Army. If Samar is the result of love between Sehmat and Iqbal then, the moral values in him is the result of Abhinav's one sided pure love for Sehmat.

Suspense is seen right from the beginning, Sehmat until the moment her father Hidayat Khan told her, wasn't aware of the fact that he and his father were working for RAW and Sehmat was now the third generation to do so. The suspense continues even in the real world for who Sehmat actually was, is not disclosed yet.

Action is another important part of the novel, as the character of Sehmat is shown doing many action sequences and truly getting the tag "India's Fearless". Whenever anyone tried coming in path of her spying Sehmat Killed him and not just the person but she also killed the innocence of hers each time say it, killing of the Servant or killing her brother in law.

Philosophy is last yet, important part of the novel as Sikka ends the story through it. The author shows how once the innocence is killed and Sehmat starts questioning her existence and starts imagining blood in her hand thereafter. The philosophical touch at last was decent and the incredible subtleties as what Sehmat accomplishes for the nation while in Pakistan and how everything takes care of overwhelming profits was essentially awe-inspiring.

The novel *Calling Sehmat*, depicts the message Nation before Self very beautifully. To leave one's own country and settle in another and then passing on the crucial details to safeguard the homeland is not any layman's cup of tea. In one of his interviews Sikka says, "Sehmat executed her brother by marriage Mehboob Syed, a military official after he started examining Abdul's demise. Abdul was one of the dependable hirelings of Sehmat's in-law's family and Sehmat had squashed him under a truck after he got suspicious of her exercises. Envision the measure of mental fortitude Sehmat had at when she was conversing with her sister-in-law who had heated the best potential cakes for her husband (Mehboob

Syed) and Sehmat tasting those baked goods, completely knowing the way that the her brother in law would never return. This requires a great deal of guts”.

Besides all said and done, the toughest part of Sehmat’s life was, putting on gun to Iqbal and telling him, herself that “yes! I am an Indian spy and there nothing beyond nation to me not even my own self or my own life”. On the other hand it was too the most difficult moment for Iqbal’s point of view because his love of life or rather his better half that he loved more than his own life, turned out to be an Indian spy. But, there was something more for them waiting and that was, Iqbal’s death during the bomb blast which was done in order to save Sehmat by the officers of Intelligence bureau RAW. And this is also the very time when readers get to know the how great of a person Iqbal is, because even after knowing the truth he tells his father that what all Sehmat did was only for her nation just the he, and his family have been doing.

Each word of the novel is flavoured with the sentiments Patriotism; Say it for India or Pakistan. For the most part, we allude to our nation as our homeland. This further demonstrates we should have a similar love for our nation as we have for our mother’s. All things considered. Everybody must have the uprightness of enthusiasm as it improves it. Patriotism implies serious love and backing to ones possess nation. Enthusiasm and patriotism is indeed the very same thing for both have faith in placing national interests above other universal contemplations. Nationalism is one of the most grounded human slants. It is normal from each resident of a nation that the individual in question would value a profound and standing adoration and worry for the nation, yet there can be discovered numerous backstabbers and deceptive nationalists. They are a genuine risk to a nation. They are more hazardous than genuine adversaries. A country can watch well against outside and known foe; however it isn't so natural to manage inward adversary in the appearance of bogus and misleading nationalists. They are much the same as two-timers. Genuine loyalists are the genuine quality of a country. A country isn't just a physical element of land, waterways, mountains, businesses, and so forth yet additionally an exceptional inclination and love of the majority. The resident of a country are constantly prepared to make any forfeit for the solidarity, trustworthiness, security and progress of their nation. They consider no penance too extraordinary to be in any way made for their adored homeland.

Sehmat and Iqbal were true Patriots therefore; they choose the love for nation before each other. Nation has always been the emotional parameter for the people living across borders but, majorly the emotional and mental attachment can be seen in the people working for the safety and security of the borders i.e. the armed forces and intelligence bureau as they are the ones who even lay down their lives.

To conclude, Harinder Sikka’s *Calling Sehmat* by each turning page beautifully depicts the love and sacrifice for homeland. Sehmat always had a choice to say No towards her duty for motherland say it, marrying Iqbal and settling down in Pakistan or after setting there again working for RAW or killing her brother in law or lastly pointing gun towards her husband and thereafter seeing him die during the bomb blast which was made in order to save her. Beside all her love for husband and in laws Sehmat choose

her duty. Infact this was the reason that her son's personality was flavoured with pride because off motherland as well as because of mother. Sehmat was a fearless daughter of this nation with reflection of Rani Laxmi Bai in her charismatic personality.

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