

RESEARCH PLAN PROPOSAL

The Politics of Marriage: A Study of Marital Relations in Select Works of Anita Desai and Nayantara Sahgal

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Research Problem

The story of Cinderella promotes love and marriage as an escape from a world of drudgery and lack of fulfilment into one of enchantment and “living happily ever after.” Indeed, the Cinderella story has now come to symbolize the lives of those few beautiful women who have gone from rags to riches when the right prince comes along. And the same Cinderella story for a man symbolizes marrying a perfect girl of his choice whom he loves. But reality is different as observed by Fulghum (1997: 19), “Love is three-quarters dream and one-quarter reality—but problems arise when you fall in love with the dream and not the reality.”

Marriage is a very important social institution that is responsible for orderliness and harmony in society. Also, it is a fundamental basis of all human relationships. Especially, Indian society imparts great significance to it. Marriage, may it be of any caste, class or religion, is of paramount significance in an individual’s life and family. It is a crucial decision which should be taken with utmost care, for it is a matter of a life-long relationship and partnership. Whether marriage is arranged or a love match, in both cases a lot of parameters should be tested and analysed before taking the leap. Now the question arises, why, even when a marriage is decided with such discretion and discernment, people suffer in it? Why do marriages fail? Above all, what is it that goes in the making of a successful marriage?

In my dissertation, I will analyse select works of two major Indian women writers writing in English—Anita Desai and Nayantara Sahgal—who explore marital relationship as one of the prominent themes in their novels.

The questions I will investigate are: How do women writers portray marriage? What is the difference between the male writer’s and female writer’s perception and depiction of marriage? Why do marriages break or are unhappy? Why women writers consider marriage as male domination legitimized? Is there a progression or regression in the thought of the author with regard to marriage in their novels? What is the Indian concept of A New

Woman? Does marriage give equal scope of a happy life for both husband and wife? What is a female author's representation of the male in the institution of marriage? Is the male marginalized in a woman's text? How modernism, post-coloniality, women's education, globalization, political and civil rights of women have brought about a change in the institution of marriage in India? Are males also victims of patriarchy or social pressures? When both male and female are ready to live together - what goes wrong in a marriage? Why is there a lack of communication? Why do extra-marital affairs happen? Is a successful marriage based on the effacement of the self by the female counterpart? Does the acceptance of an extra-marital affair justify the act of betrayal? Is marriage today just procreation and living together? Is marriage as a partnership balanced? Has this balance shifted or changed or shows movement towards equilibrium after independence, spread in women's education and changing social structures? Is women's education leading to breakdown of marriages? Why is marriage also a kind of politics?

I hypothesize that the institution of marriage is loosening in India. The rigidity in marital relations which Indian society had before independence is not the same now. A movement towards a more liberal outlook is evident in the novels of Nayantara Sahgal and Anita Desai.

For example, Nayantara Sahgal in *Rich like us* has shown this movement from rigidity to the present level of liberalism attained in the institution of marriage, through the change in the thinking of male and female characters, and society has adapted to it. Initially women in India willingly performed sati after the death of the husband because it was idolized. Gradual awareness against this injustice made women oppose it but then they were forced to do so. The novel also shows Mona in that novel believes that marriages in the Hindu society are not meant to be broken, so she lives being a wife to a husband who neither loves nor behaves like one. But Saroj, in *Storm In Chandigarh*, and Simrit, in *A Day In Shadow*, move out of a suffocating marriage. This shift is not just evident in the female character's thinking but in that of male characters too. Ram, in *Rich like us* believes Hindu marriage to be a sacrament, and hence continues with it. Whereas Som, in *A Day In Shadow*, offers Simrit a choice to leave him even after being a father to three children and eighteen years of marriage. Also Raj, in the same novel, decides to marry Simrit, an elderly lady, mother of three children.

Marriage, although it involves both the male and the female, has been dominated by the male. The institution of marriage is not balanced. I also hypothesize that now a movement towards attainment of an equilibrium between the male and the female in the institution of marriage

has started, still there is a long way to go. Characters like Raj, in *The Day InShadow*, and Vishal Dubey, in *Storm In Chandigarh* by Nayantara Sahgal and Matteo, in *Journey To Ithaca*, Raman, in *Where Shall We Go This Summer* by Anita Desai, show that even male ideology regarding marriage and women is changing. Education of both male and female, feminism, change in socio-economic structures of society, globalization, and technological development might be some of the factors responsible for it.

In testing my hypothesis, I will study in depth select novels of Anita Desai and Nayantara Sahgal against the backdrop of changing marital relationships. I will also include secondary sources, interviews and other critical studies relevant to my argument. The psychology of marriage is now changing. The bases of marriage which were once considered to be procreation and progression of race or religion, are now adapting to the new-found needs and requirements of society and individuals. The new foundations of marriage are now becoming understanding, compatibility, companionship, communication and love at all levels-- physical, emotional, mental and spiritual. Those marriages that achieve these goals are happy, while others suffer or break.

Definition of Terms

Marriage:

By marriage I mean opposite-sex marriage which is a term used for a legally (in most societies) or socially recognized marriage between two people of different sexes. Though in less than a generation, homosexuality and same-sex marriages have gone from being universally condemned to being almost fully normalized in some societies. My research will talk exclusively about the gendered perspectives of marriage, i.e. marriage between opposite-sexes.

Feminism in India:

Feminism in India is a set of movements aimed at defining, establishing, and defending equal political, economic, and social rights and equal opportunities for Indian women. It is the pursuit of women's rights within the Indian society. Like their feminist counterparts all over the world, feminists in India seek gender equality: the right to work for equal wages, the right to equal access to health and education, and equal political rights. Indian feminists also have fought against culture-specific issues within India's patriarchal society, such as inheritance laws and the practice of widow immolation known as Sati.

Psychoanalysis:

It is a field of study which was originated by Sigmund Freud in the twentieth century, in his work named, *Interpretation of Dreams*. It is an analysis of the human psyche, which is divided into three parts namely-the ego, the super ego and the id. It is also a study of the repressed fears, anxieties, drives and desires (basically sexual) that contribute in the making of an individual psyche. In my dissertation I will use psychoanalysis to study the psyche of both male and female characters.

New Woman:

The concept of 'New Woman' began in West at the turn of the nineteenth- century. Women, including women writerswho demanded equal rights and an independent place in the community, came to be known as 'New Woman.' At this time the institution of marriage and traditional relations between the sexes were re-examined.

The Women's Liberation Movement of the West has had a deep ideological impact on the intellectuals and the educated masses of India. In her essay, 'Women: Persons or Possessions',Nayantara Sahgal castigates those who regard women as 'property' and discourage individuality in them. Thus, the term 'New Woman' in Indian literature symbolizes women as individuals who move from private to public domain. They are women who are finally independent and they break traditions in sexual relations. They oppose the institution of marriage in its prevailing form in one way or other, i.e. they reject the traditional approach towards marriage.

Background

Concise Oxford Dictionary defines marriage as “The formal union of a man and a woman, typically as recognized by law, by which they become husband and wife.” It is a social union or legal contract between people called spouses that establishes rights and obligations between the spouses, between the spouses and their children, and between the spouses and their in-laws. The definition of marriage varies according to different cultures, but it is principally an institution in which inter-personal relationships, usually intimate and sexual, are acknowledged.

The importance of marriage has been recognized globally for various reasons such as: it legitimizes the living together of two people of opposite sex through social and legal sanction; it legitimizes child birth in which nurturing children becomes the responsibility of both husband and wife; it accords functional division of labour of all life’s activities; proposes financial security and offers enduring emotional support. Other than these, marriage has much deeper implications. Professor Robert P. George in his book *The Clash of Orthodoxies* considers marriage to be a “multi-level relationship: that is, a relationship that unites persons at the bodily, emotional, dispositional and spiritual levels of their being.”

Marriage as partnership should be balanced. But religions all over the world (Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, etc.) have established husband’s superiority over wife. The duty of a wife is always to serve her husband (master) and children. This, the scriptures say, is the word of The Lord. But feminists throughout the world have opposed this inequality stating that the inequalities that exist between men and women are not natural but social, not pre-ordained but created by men so that they remain powerful. Religion, marriage, family, education, arts, knowledge systems are all social and cultural ‘structures’ that enable the perpetual reinforcement of this inequality. These cultural structures are ideological that make women believe that they are subordinate.

Mary Wollstonecraft in *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) rejects the then established view that women are naturally weaker or inferior to men. She advocates education for ‘improvement’ of women’s condition but is hesitant to upset the gender hierarchy. She believes that education should instil love for domestic life. Margaret Fuller in *Women in the Nineteenth Century* (1845) advocates education as a means of emancipation for woman. Her key planks are: education, employment and political rights. She opposes gender roles.

Virginia Woolf in *A Room of One's Own* (1929) develops a woman-centric notion of reading and education. She shows authorship to be gendered and says there is no literary canon of women's writing. She also shows how wives become mirrors that project a double sized image of the husband than what he actually is. Simon De Beauvoir's in *The Second Sex* (1984) says "One is not born a woman but becomes one." Patriarchy makes use of sexual difference to maintain inequality between men and women.

The same notion of gender equality is advocated by feminists in India who, other than social, economic political rights, demand equal status for women on all fronts including marriage. Dr. K. L. Sharma in his book *Indian Social Structure and Change* says, "In India, people generally believe that marriage is not between two individuals, but it is in between two families in terms of bonds that it creates between them. It is also a sacrament" India is a country with many religions, castes and classes. There are different ideologies and beliefs regarding marriage in the above mentioned categories. Marriage has been a prominent theme in Indian novels and among Indian novelist writing in English. Some prominent Indian women writers who have talked about it are Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Praver Jhabwala, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Mazumdar Desai, Kamala Das, Shashi Deshpande, Bharti Mukherjee, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Namita Gokhale, Jhumpa Lahiri, etc. All these novelists have brought into light the different facets of marital relationships in India and outside. Their works suggest that the institution of marriage is not balanced but gendered, where husband exercises his authority over wife.

The world has undergone change and so has India. The social, economic and political conditions of India have changed in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Because of this, institutions like family, education, law and marriage have also undergone changes. Indian literature which is a part of Indian society has also witnessed this change. Hence, I hypothesize that the institution marriage which was rigid and male-dominated before independence in India, is now loosening and a movement towards establishing equilibrium between husband and wife has now started, though still it has a long way to go. For testing my hypothesis, through a reflection of this change in Indian fiction in English, I have chosen some select works of Anita Desai and Nayantara Sahgal that focus on this shift. I have chosen these two writers because they belong to the list of early talented women writers writing in English in India who have seen this pattern of change and their sensibility have responded to it. Also, they have talked about marriage as one of the major themes in their work. A shift

from rigidity to liberalism in marital relationship is visible in their novels, to the reader as well.

Examining Nayantara Sahgal's works, S. Krishna Sarma in the book *Indian Fiction In English* (1999) says: "Reading her novels, particularly *Storm In Chandigarh* and *The Day In Shadow*, one is struck by her concern with some set of values—an endeavor to examine and validate the traditional Indian mores—secular, social and physical. This is so much in evidence in these novels that one could almost classify them as exhortative if not altogether didactic. But what is noteworthy is that much of the interest of these novels stems precisely from this concern with values, and a search for the positive values which contribute to the passion of life and fullness of experience." (232-33). Dr. Sarma further shows that Nayantara Sahgal is interested in breaking the traditional orthodox notions of marriage and relationship. This she does is by creating character like Vishal Dubey who "would have been happier knowing the truth about her affair with Hari. A man of full life must be able to accept his wife's past—that's the meaning of living together." (235)

Shyam M. Asnani in his article, "Portrayal of Man-Woman Relationship in the Novels of Nayantara Sahgal" states that Nayantara's novels revolve around two themes: "one—that India is changing with the times and Indian people must also adjust their thinking to these changes: two—the lack of communication between individuals, especially between man and wife, causes unhappiness and prevents human fulfillment." (232). The liberal and modern outlook in Sahgal shows her belief in "new humanism" and a "new morality", according to which woman is not to be taken as a "sex object and glamour girl" with no individual identity but as man's equal and honoured partner. Nayantara Sahgal "regrets that in this "atomic age when monumental problems have been resolved by science and research, the human relationship still seems largely unsearched." She, therefore, pleads for the new marital morality based on human trust, consideration, generosity, and absence of pretence, selfishness and self-centeredness."

In *Indian Fiction In English* (1999) J. G. Masilamanitalks about feminism in Anita Desai for him Anita Desai is obsessively concerned with the fate of married woman in I Indian society today. The society is in a state of transition with its cultural values in the melting pot. One could sense in Desai's novel a compelling urge for a way of living which would respond to the innermost yearnings of women for freedom and self-dignity. He observes that in Desai's novels Indian husbands are preoccupied with themselves. They possess an image of a

‘provider’ around whom the wife orbits effacing herself completely. Giving the example of Sita and Raman in *Where Shall We Go This Summer?* as recognizable mythic figures Masilamani says, “Sita’s sojourn to the Island of Manori is impelled not only by the desire to free herself from her husband but from an entire civilization of which he is the representative figure.” Her fiction is not just Indian but global. This article shows that women have started to look for their place in the institution of marriage.

Feminist concept: A Study of Nayantara Sahgal’s Fiction published in 2010 by B. P. Sinha is a critique of Nayantara Sahgal’s works which analyses her painful married life and separation from Gautam and remarriage with Mangat Rai. Her personal agony becomes the inspiration for some of her novels like *Storm In Chandigarh*, *The Day In Shadow*, *A Time To Be Happy and This Time of Morning*. Her women characters do not submit to the close confines of a suffocating married life but they move out of it. Sinha quotes from a letter in which Nayantara throws light on her women characters: “I try to create the virtuous woman—the modern Sita, if you like. My women are strivers and aspire, towards freedom, towards goodness, towards a compassionate world. Their virtue is quality of heart and mind and spirit, a kind of untouched innocence and integrity.” For Nayantara Sahgal, ‘The New Woman’ is determined to live with self-respect.

Dr. B. Janaki and Dr. Renu Josan in *Indian Writing in English: Tradition and Modernity* in the article “Social Web and Cry of the Self: A Critical Analysis of Anita Brookner’s *Hotel Dulac* and Anita Desai’s *Where Shall We Go This Summer?*” suggests that the tension between the self and society is the main focus of the novels of Anita Brookner and Anita Desai. The article states that the change in the social outlook in modern society has affected the condition of women in India. Analyzing Anita Desai’s work, the authors state that all her protagonists are married, alienated characters in a harsh, cold and relentless world dominated by men, whose search for values and harmony in life either ends with annihilation or compromise. The heroine of Desai’s novel *Where Shall We Go This Summer?* Sita attains self-knowledge and hence reconciles herself to her destiny and life. Sita, accepts her husband and children. Between the two uncompromising attitudes of Maya’s madness and Monisha’s suicide, Sita understands and succumbs to the world to connect.

D. Maya in *A Companion to Indian fiction in English* believes that “Dislocation or uncenteredness—geographic, emotional or cultural—can be seen to be the root malady underlying the sense of alienation and rootlessness setting in on Anita Desai’s characters.

With women it often results from an incompatible partnership with an insensitive, practical and successful male.” (137) Analyzing her novels she says—“*Cry, the Peacock* is the poignant presentation of neurosis resulting from fissures generated by emotional and intellectual alienation between partners.” (139) Marital discord contributes to the agony of an essentially lonely being. She further says: “The major concern for Indian women novelists writing in English has been the delineation of woman’s growth into self-awareness. Desai’s stance in *Where Shall We Go This Summer?* is a clear indication that she does not advocate a gyno-centric struggle leading to woman’s liberation in western feminist terms. The familial bond of which woman is the crux, has to survive. The bonds of Indian tradition have to be preserved.”(143)

The angles through which I will analyze marital relationships in my study are social, biological (sexual), religious, psychological and legal. Marriage in India is a social enterprise where both male and female submit to parental and social pressures. Personal preferences are overlooked. This plight is depicted by Anita Desai in *Cry, the peacock*, when Maya says, “Our marriage was grounded upon the friendship of the two men, and the mutual respect in which they held each other, rather than upon anything else.” (40). Here the two men referred to are Gautam, her husband and her father. Nayantara Sahgal has also talked about the socio-religious pressures and the consequent psychological effects of marriage, through the suffering of Mona and Rose, the two wives of Ram in *Rich like us*. Rose, opposes these humiliating pressurized experiences when she says:

“I don’t think I can take much more of this, Ram.”

“Of what?” he had the temerity to ask.

“You living with two wives.”(63)

He proves his helplessness by answering-

“But there’s no divorce. Hindu marriage is not a contract, it’s a sacrament.”(63)

Nayantara has hinted at different forms of and beliefs about marriage in India in *Rich like us* explicating Hindu marriage as a sacrament, Christian- a contract, Muslim- a contract which permits a Muslim to have four wives at a time. (p.63)

In my dissertation I would also try to look for patterns of change in marital relationships on the following grounds as- change in marital structure from pre- independence to post-

independence, till the present time; change in marital relationship after feminism came to India; the changes in marital structure in the late twentieth and twenty- first century due to male and female education, globalization, effect of western ideology, technical advancements and inter mixing of caste and cultures.

Nayantara Sahgal in *Rich like us* has presented marriages of Hindu society that favoured sati, and then how British government passed regulations abolishing sati and permitting widows to remarry. She has portrayed how this transformation was slow and painful. The same novel depicts the movement of society after independence through Ram. Thus, breaking the social, cultural and religious norms of Hindu society, Sahgal's other novels like *Storm In Chandigarh* and *The Day In Shadow* presents couples like Inder and Saroj; Som and Simrit who choose to part rather than suffer in a suffocating marriage. These decisions have been taken by educated, elite men and women. Anita Desai shows women's suffering in marriage. Maya, in *Cry, the Peacock* turns insane after sharing married life with Gautam and kills him at the end. Nanda Kaul, in *Fire on the Mountain*, is heartbroken and helpless at the end of his married life. Sita, in *Where Shall We Go This Summer* reconciles with Raman at the end, opting for life and a promising happy married relationship.

The present view regarding marriage is that it is based on compatibility. If marriage is compatibility then on what levels does it exist- physical, emotional, mental or spiritual. This is the question which Anita Desai and Nayantara Sahgal seem to be asking in their novels through the lives of Maya and Gautam in *Cry, the Peacock*; Raman and Sita in *Where Shall We Go This Summer*; Ram and Rose in *Rich like us*; Inder and Saroj in *Storm In Chandigarh* and Som and Simrit in *The Day In Shadow*.

Marriage is a relationship in which both husband and wife are important. They are supposed to be the wheels of a car that carries life forward. But now the question arises, can one wheel be bigger than the other? If so, will the journey be smooth? In my thesis I will investigate the position of both the male and the female in the institution of marriage.

India is a patriarchal society and so is the institution of marriage in it. The position of a woman in a marital relationship is always secondary to man, subordinate, that of second- sex and of one who needs a master to rule. The stereotypical roles of a good wife like loyalty, devotion, submissiveness, home maker, care taker of husband and children are ingrained in her psyche. The male's perception of woman is perfectly stated by Nayantara Sahgal in *Storm In Chandigarh* when Inder speaks his mind out and says "A thousand years from now a

woman will still want and need a master, who will own and command her – and that’s the man she’ll respect.” (92) Nayantara Sahgal defines the identity of a woman in *Rich like us* through Sonali who says “But now I believe all wives are good because they have little choice.... The Hindu wife is a Hindu wife and can be nothing else. And it is not until we can take the goodness of a woman less for granted that we shall learn to value it. It is only looking back that I see her as a person, not the personification of an image.” (161). Som in *The Day In Shadow* calls Simrit as “an object of pity and tenderness, a poor little thing.”(78). But with women’s education and changing social structures women have now come to realize themselves as individuals and characters like Sita in *Where Shall We Go This Summer* by Anita Desai, Simrit, in *The Day In Shadow* and Saroj, in *Storm In Chandigarh* by Nayantara Sahgal are individuals who have realized their own selves and have taken decisions of their own choice. Hence, my dissertation will explore this movement of a woman in marriage who finally realizes their selves.

A Companion to Indian Fiction in English (2011) presents a study of Nayantara Sahgal’s works by Dr. Jasbir Jain. She points out that marital relationships reflect power structures in Nayantara’s fiction. She is a feminist and her writings of the fifties and sixties display a “highly developed consciousness of the gendered nature of morality and social structures” and marriage is one of them. She further states: “It is patriarchal society, a ‘husband-centered’ world where women have no independent identities and where to get away from her husband is like running an obstacle race. The relationship takes on the form of a prey and predator if it is a loveless one or does not base itself on respect of the other. This kind of situation is evident in novel after novel irrespective of race or religion.” (121) Showing another facet of marital relationship she says “All marriages however, do not necessarily fall into the same pattern. There are good men who value the human aspect of marriage. But the men, who fall into this category, reflect the traits fostered by the Gandhian attitude towards power.” (121) Some examples of such men are Kailash Vrind in *This Time of Morning*, Sonali’s father in *Rich like us*, Vishal Dubey in *Storm In Chandigarh*, etc., all these men are not necessarily placed within love relationships but their code of ethics reflects a concern for the individual.

Thus, critics like Dr. Jasbir Jain have pointed out a beginning of male sensitivity towards women and her space as individuals. This although, has been hinted at by other critics, will form one of the primary focuses of my research with regards to the writers under consideration.

In order to make the discussion of marriage in my work fair and clear-eyed, I will try to analyze the position of the male in the institution of marriage. The male is the owner of the house, master, generator and controller of finances. He is the pivot around which the life of wife, children and family revolves. He has the 'power' in his hands. All this is well known and a lot researched and proved correct up till now. My argument is that though men dominate, they are not completely insensitive to women's needs and desires. These traits of sensitivity, although scant, are also depicted by male characters in female authored texts like Gautam in *Cry, the Peacock* seems to be worried about the deteriorating condition of Maya. In *Storm In Chandigarh*, when out of rage Inder slaps Saroj, he apologizes when senses return, saying "I've been worried to death about you. Get in...Are you alright? Get in."(176). His sensitivity and concern for his wife are evident in the lines: "Inder did not know how long he has sat there in the failing light while his wife slept.... It had vividly shown him the terrible potential of this situation, the stirring of something worse than disaster, the beginning between them of death."(179). Even after such realizations men follow the same trend. They reinforce the patriarchal domination. They curb their sensitivity and understanding for what they have been conditioned to do since ancient times. One of the reasons for this might be social and patriarchal pressures at work. And others still remain to be investigated.

To conclude, I hope to explore certain fundamental and temperamental differences between the male and the female. These differences are not just physical or biological but also psychological. Those couples that understand and appreciate these differences, those that want and try to be compatible can live a happy married life like Raman and Sita in *Where Shall We Go This Summer* and Jit and Mara, in *Storm In Chandigarh*. Those couples that do not communicate at any level –physical, emotional, mental or spiritual are bound to suffer or break.

Tentative Chapter Plan

- I. Introduction
- II. Marriage as portrayed in the works of Anita Desai and Nayantara Sahgal

III. Women's Position in Marriage

IV. Men's Position in Marriage

V. Conclusion

Chapter content

I. Introduction

In the first chapter, I will define marriage, focusing on its importance in the life of an individual and society. It will deal with marriages in India in different religions, races, casts and class. Further, I will talk about the portrayal of marriage in Indian literature in English by both male and female writers, changing trends in marriage and about some Indian women writers writing in English who have chosen marriage as one of the themes in their fiction.

II. Marriage as portrayed in the works of Anita Desai and Nayantara Sahgal

In the second chapter my emphasis will be on analyzing marriage as portrayed in the works of Anita Desai and Nayantara Sahgal with special reference to my primary sources:

Anita Desai's :-

1. Cry, the Peacock (1963)
2. Where Shall We Go This Summer (1975)
3. Fire on the Mountain (1977)
4. Journey To Ithaca (1995)

Nayantara Sahgal's:-

1. Storm In Chandigarh (1969)
2. The Day In Shadow(1971)
3. Rich like us (1985)

III. Women's Position in Marriage

The contents of chapter three will focus on a female author's (Anita Desai and Nayantara Sahgal's) perception of marriage with reference to their novels. It will also analyze the following- female's position in the institution of marriage; the process of realization of self in marriage, female's character's views and experiences in marriage and the stand female characters finally opt for.

IV. Men's Position in Marriage

Chapter four will talk about the representation of male in the novels of Indian women authors of my research. It will explore a male's position in a female-authored text and in the institution of marriage. It will be an investigation of questions like what position do male counterparts take during the time of crises in marriage? Is male voice marginalized? Are male victims of patriarchy? Is a male sensitive to women's needs?

V. Conclusion

Chapter five will be the concluding chapter, where I will analyze the findings of my research about the loosening the marital structure in India and will try to show that-how women have started to gain some voice in their marital relations. I will test my hypothesis.

Research Methodology

My research methodology would consist of close reading, interpreting and in-depth analysis of select novels of Anita Desai and Nayantara Sahgal. I will also support my study with a significant number of critical writings on my authors and their works under consideration which deal with my subject of marital relationships. I will intensively study sociological and psychological works that deal with my subject. I will also analyze books on the socio-economic condition of women and books that show how men and women are fundamentally different. To justify my argument, I will compare and contrast marital relationships in the works of my authors as well as its depiction in the works of some other novelists. I would also include autobiographical material like letters written by and to Nayantara Sahgal, published in an epistolary form in a book called *relationship*. I will also substantiate my arguments through interviews given by my authors regarding the subject of marriage.

To make my interpretation more significant and relevant, I would try to analyze, marital relations, male and female psyche under the framework of established critical theories like feminism and psychoanalytic criticism. All theories cannot hold true for all times, so I will analyze my subject within the texture of the above mentioned critical theories and how it has moved ahead of them. I would analyze how marriage, human relationships and the human mind evolves, changes and adapts to the ever-changing needs of individuals and societies.

Through the above mentioned methodology, I would try to find out whether my hypothesis is justified or refuted. It would be a research, an exploration of the subject at least for me if not for others. But I sincerely hope that it adds something to the existing source of information and knowledge.

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