

Research Article

**Subjugation Of Women In Storm In Chandigarh By Nayantara Sahgal**

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**ABSTRACT**

Assertion for rights is not the sole privilege of the Man but it has been yearning of the subdued woman with throbbing pulse to liberate herself for recognition, self-expression and individual fulfillment. To create one's own space, identity, existence and individuality unlike the western woman, Indian woman asserts her presence as equal by remaining within the periphery of family even if they are highly educated and self-dependent. The plight and dilemma of a woman is the limited choice in decisions which are mainly determined by man. Nayantara Sahgal's works deal with the plight and subjugation of married women in patriarchal Indian society. This Paper discusses how Indian women assert their freedom and independence when they are denied their independent existence and space in marriage and not recognized as equal partners in their relationships with their husbands. The paper deals with their struggle and fight for their freedom and independence.

**Keywords:** subjugation, feminism, patriarchy, exploitation, domination, struggle and independence etc.

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Feminism encompasses opposition to all forms of exploitation that women face as a result of their gender. The progressive revolutions may be divided into three cycles or waves: the first focuses on women's suffrage, the second on all aspects of women's lives, including families, sexuality, and employment, and the third's target encompasses fair justice for all citizens. "In both sides, women now assert their own identity. The emphasis has changed from emancipation to liberation for women." In India, the women's revolution is woven into the oppressive society's socioeconomic and cultural structure. With their shifting gender roles, they are now trying to create a new identity.

In today's world, women in India are at the top of every sector, thanks to increased schooling and a more inclusive attitude to the common man. Women are thought to be more powerful in making choices, leading a free existence with a transformed mindset, and doing their household duties purely and honestly. Indian poets, both male and female, have painted a clear image of women in rather sensible ways, illustrating the different colors of women's lives in general and the man-woman relationship in particular. Discord in relationships caused by a lack of contact, passion, and intimacy has long been a subject of discussion. Nayantara Sahgal has depicted the female psyche in situations where women are unhappy and dissatisfied with their married lives and feel alone in her writings.

Nayantara Sahgal, a brilliant Indian writer deals with the relationship of men and women, especially women who are subjected to oppression and sexism in the name of tradition and culture. Many of the protagonists in Sahgal's novels embody women's unassailable right to self-determination. Her third book, *Storm in Chandigarh*, is set in the city of Chandigarh. It emphasizes many aspects of human relationships such as independence, honesty, affection, fellowship, and equity. The novel also contains a scathing critique of the rejection of woman's liberty and individuality. Sahgal's idea of a free woman goes beyond economic and social freedom, being a cerebral or emotional solution. In the book, Sahgal tries to convey these tensions. She doesn't blame men for women's precarious situation. Instead, she accuses the machine of being to blame. In the book, she specifically discussed the impact of gender inequality on women's empowerment.

There is a need to redefine morality and virtue in *Storm in Chandigarh*. The novel's heroine demonstrates that women have the ability to pursue their lives however they wish as human beings. As a result, the heroine is portrayed as a free woman in the book. Saroj, the heroine, represents a new woman trying to preserve her individuality and breathe freely in the vile world of morally and physically unsatisfying relationships. Sahgal tries to depict a woman's emotional reaction to her limits and herself. She insists that a woman should strive to learn and know herself as a human being rather than merely as a slave to a man's existence. She investigates how women have been subjected to discriminatory stresses for several years.

## II. PATRIARCHY AND TRADITION IN NAYANTARA WORKS

The theme of 'tradition and modernity' is one of the recurring themes in Indian fiction. Almost all writers writing at the time of independence had to confront with this tussle between tradition and modernity when India was standing at the crossroad of change after it got free from the colonizers. The colonization of the country and English education had exposed major part of Indian population to the liberal ideas and modern temperament. This brought about a change in their outlooks, attitudes, and worldviews and above all how they looked upon this world.

Nayantara Sahgal's works shows how even educated husbands continue to refuse to accept women as equals with equal status. Her male characters are all from upper strata of the society like her own husband. They do not come out of stereotyped images of women, conservative views, socially assigned role of male and female. On the other hand, her female characters are modern and always in search of freedom and independence. They are in quest of equality and never accept any subservient role in their relationships with their husbands. They always run for self-exploration and self-discovery. In *Storm in Chandigarh*, Inder's words 'A thousand years from now a woman will still want and need a master, the man who will own and command her---and that is the man she will respect' speaks volumes of the mentality of the male characters of her works and the society they come from.

## III. SUFFERING OF WOMEN IN 'STORM IN CHANDIGARH'

The novel explores and emphasizes the urban, wealthy class environment in an urban setting, just to carry home the similarly bleak truth of Indian women's plight. Simrit and Som's divorce had already occurred owing to marital strife before the novel begins. Simrit had selected Som because of her fond childhood memories of spending time with him. Som had always struck her as a vibrant color in her life and accomplishments. The radiance of Som's personality, though, had misled Simrit, as she later learns. They had developed their own kind of entertainment in which zeal, profundity, and force were never included.

Simrit, like Saroj in *Storm in Chandigarh*, is an astute and perceptive woman who expects Som to cultivate a warm partnership founded on admiration, attachment, interest, caring, considerateness, communication, equality, and integrity. Simrit, on the other hand, is just a prized possession to Som, and he wants her to adhere to his subservient womanhood principle. Simrit is absolutely dominated by Som, to the point that she lacks articulation in everyday domestic decisions. Som's universe of company, ambition, and influence is devoid of

ethical principles, ideals, or friendships. Simrit, on the other hand, is an intellectual who places a high emphasis on ethical and well-behaved human interactions. As Som becomes deeply engrossed in a growing passion for prosperity, the chasm between the marital discordant ideals widens. All of his interactions are dominated by material interests, which are fueled by a heartless ambition that tolerates little opposition. On his path to the top, he has no qualms over shifting careers and discarding even close friends like Lalaji. Simrit is disgusted by Som's and fascination with dominance and possession. She feels alone in Som's universe because she is an articulate writer: Talk was the missing connection between her and Som, between her and his world. She has an insatiable need to converse. For lack of it, she was forced to be a silent despair.

Som resides in a society run by men, and his joy in procreation is centered solely on his son Brij. Simrit is insulted to learn about Som's treatment of the daughters. Som is still used to the palliatives of the money universe and has little to give as consolation, except with Brij. Simrit, on the other hand, is atypical in Som's eyes. 'Som considers himself a successful husband because he has won too much wealth,' he says. Simrit wishes for a sterile, cold environment in which there was a goal rather than self-promotion.

Som, on the other hand, is unable to comprehend Simrit's grief and expectation. He believes that simply supplying his wife with a fantastic existence of material comfort and luxury fulfills his duty to her. He is so engrossed with his own success that he misses Simrit's slow withdrawal from the corporate community. The friction in their marriage has an impact on Som and Simrit's intimate partnership as well. For Simrit, sexual pleasure must be combined with romantic affection and connection, while for Som, it is only a physical act. Simrit believes that sex is inextricably linked to the rest of her life. Som is perplexed at first, then enraged by her behavior, as though she has insulted his honor. 'We don't have to live as outsiders, do we?' Simrit begs Som. She eagerly invites Som to be mates, saying, Can't we just hold hands? Isn't it possible for a husband and wife to be friends? Is it against the law? ..... And something nice can come out of the non-insistence, that non-preying on each other. Although it was true that the only thing you could get without a hitch was a divorce, ancient perceptions and attitudes about women's self-governing identity had not been distorted in society. Legal regulations included little solace or compensation for social acrimony. Simrit therefore feels uprooted and abandoned in a society dominated by men.

Simrit and Raj's physical affection is depicted by Sahgal in a rather open and honest way. Their partnership is consummated when both Raj and Simrit are certain of their deep affection and affection: mutual love came instinctively and automatically with the certainty that the connection between them was reliable. Simrit thinks: They'd been in sync from the start, lovers from another world, forming a bond stronger than any she'd ever met. In order to be fulfilling and pleasing, a man-woman arrangement inside or outside of marriage must be unorthodox, departing from the traditional method. Marriage is not a kind of enslavement nor a means of emancipation. It isn't really an arrangement, so approaching in that manner is incorrect. The relationship between Raj and Simrit is grounded with compassion, consideration, human communication and companionship, rather than sexual sensuality.

The novel focuses on the unhappy and suffocating marriage experience of Saroj with her husband Inder. She feels suffocated in her marital life as a free and curious woman by nature. She finds it hard and tough to lead her life because of the lack of friendship, love, tenderness and concern in Inder. She puts all her efforts to involve herself and to make her husband involve himself in their relationship but they are all futile.

As a feminist novelist, Sahgal understands that her main responsibility is to advocate for women's liberation. She beautifully explains how women are abused by both people and culture still in modern times. She is particularly worried about the breakdown of marital partnerships, living alone, and personal terrors. Her female protagonists struggle as a result of their refusal to let go of their independence and stick to it at all costs. Sahgal depicts women struggling in marriage and agreeing to separate in order to break free from the suffocating bonds. Saroj, Simrit, Rashmi, and Anna all abandon or split their marriages because they are unable to be free to pursue their lives in their own way. Sahgal, who has directly witnessed the pain of a failing marriage,

portrays the plight of women caught between common expectations about womanhood and the stirrings of autonomy in a rather sharp and skillful way. In her scathing expose of the hollowness of man-woman partnerships built on historically predetermined patterns of gender disparity, Sahgal explicitly plays a feminist role. In her novels, Sahgal identifies unfulfilling marriages as being caused by a lack of romantic commitment, intimacy without respect, and sex without passion. Sahgal's female characters unmistakably represent her feminist beliefs.

Love is a relationship, not an organization, and women are people as well. However, the whole societal structure is directed toward men dominating women in marriage, intimate affairs, childbirth, and even adultery; the individual is the perpetrator. In Sahgal's books, this is thoroughly explained. "A modern era would begin the day women are embraced as fair partners." Their liberation is based on the common belief that a woman's body is her own and that she has her own thoughts on matters that concern her. Sahgal reflects a modern ethic in which a woman is not to be seen as a doll, an object of desire and fleeting gratification, but rather as a man's fair and honored companion.

#### IV. SUBJUGATION OF WOMEN IN 'THE STORM IN 'CHANDIGARH'

*Storm in Chandigarh* is the third novel written by Sahgal and it focuses on the love, marriage life, man woman relationship, freedom, honesty and equality. The term storm in the novel represents chaos, violence and conflicts that exist in both political and personal levels. Since the scholar attempts to project light on feministic perspectives it is necessary to analyse only the storm in personal lives of three married couples Inder and Saroj, Jit and Mara, and Vishal and Leela. Saroj, is the protagonist of the novel married to Inder who runs the textile mills of Saroj's cousin Nihil Ray in Chandigarh. Like Simrit in *The Day in Shadow*, Saroj does not seem to have any intimate emotional and sensible bondage in her four years of married life at which they have two children also. Saroj is a victim of the male chauvinism as usual. She does not love her husband like Simrit rather she is very much afraid of him.

#### V. CONCLUSION

The clear message Sahgal gives is men and women are equals and peaceful survival depends on mutual respect and understanding, women should have the moral courage to claim the rights and 'men were born to lead and educate sometimes to triumph'. So, in modern concept of marriage, Sahgal pleads for the new marital morality against traditional stereotyped marriage. To conclude, Nayantara Sahgal advocates the breaking down of polarities between man and woman to ensure absolute equality and freedom. Her female characters transgress patriarchal code of morality and defy the social norms that fetter them. They prefer to rise, revolt to realize their own worth and question the 'naturalness' of certain social actions instead of remaining curbed, controlled, directed and denied of their individuality. The writer invests them with courage to challenge prescribed gender roles and liberate them from male dominance. Her women characters tend to adopt anything useful and empowering from any perspective irrespective of the source where they come from. Her characters struggle to feel free and challenge any oppressive environment where one's thought and ideas are restricted. They create openness between their inner selves and their environment and uphold the same with dignity with a new outlook on life and an alternative perspective to everything. Sahgal's most of the female characters are well qualified and possess their own identity, but fail to make them established in their personal house, which later results into the legal separation of relation and they involve them into some religious, social activities. Dissatisfaction, isolation, disharmony and dissolution are aptly pictured by Sahgal in her works. Thus, it can be concluded that in *Storm in Chandigarh*, Sahgal unfolds the truth that liberty is an essential basic requisite for the progress of the individual, and then it promises the holiness of the human self, exposed of social double standards, conformity and pretense. She explored very clearly the effect of gender discrimination on women liberation in the novel.

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