

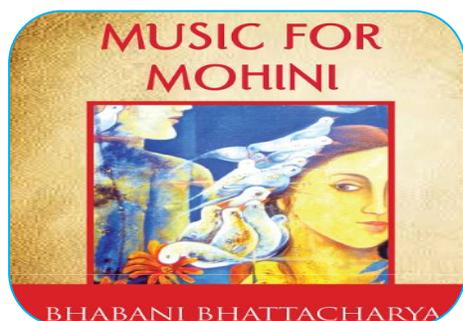


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## PERCEPTION ON THE IMAGE OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY WITH REFERENCE TO HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS AND FAMILY IN BHABANI BHATTACHARYA'S 'MUSIC FOR MOHINI'

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### ABSTRACT:

Our cultural life and society are dependent upon a few forms of family organization. The group of a family is the most sensitive unit of the society where all the members are free to share their happiness, sadness, and anxieties of life. This is the family which supports the members to interact with the more extensive social system. For protection, socialization, and reproduction, a family is necessary. The relationship between the family members especially the bonding of marriage where both men and women play a very important role is generally

studied and remains the focus position in many works of Indian literature. Bhabani Bhattacharya is one of the most accomplished contemporary Indian women writers in English. A novelist with a clear perception on the image of women in society is passionate to study human relationships and family. The aim of this article is to study the different relationships in a family and the complexities of village-city relationship, and tradition and modern in the context of marriage in Bhabani Bhattacharya's second novel 'Music for Mohini.' he shows the fundamental values of Indian womanhood in Mohini's character. The marital life of Jayadev and Mohini are the focal point of this study. The disturbed relationship and disappointments in their life forced introspection in the protagonist Mohini. The mother of Jayadev is a common orthodox woman married to the centuries-old powers of her husband's house. She assiduously attempts to maintain vital the family traditions opposite all the differences. The Big-House is a suggestion of feudal settings. Mohini's approach into the house waves the development of tension between traditional ethos and her reasonable modern aspirations.

**KEYWORDS:** Orthodox women, Tradition and Modernity, Daughter-in-law and Mother-in-law.

### INTRODUCTION :

Bhattacharya shows the real predicaments of the country and the place of women in culture and the home. In the opening, the fight is fierce, then the adjustment between the traditional and modern ideas is represented by the Professor

and the Old Mother. Bhattacharya represents two roles in a clash with each other, later on, in harmony with each other. He does not display either of the two characters yielding to the other. G. Rai points out that: "The central theme of the novel is the tie or tussle between orthodoxy and modernity which remains a glaring problem in Indian Society even today. The rural-urban clash is an important feature of the novel.

The traditional ways of lie stand in sharp conflict with those if modern ways" (Rai, 128). The novel is an accurate reflection of post-independent India making trials to come out of the old values. The primary concern is to make drastic reform in culture. Bhattacharya focus brightness on the full mind of Indian women who think efficiency and pay attention to preserve their age-old habits. Since India has been a tradition-bound nation, its

women also fettered by various social and religious customs that render them imprisoned behind curtains. Bhattacharya tries to draw the reader's attention to the silent reaction of the enslaved women in the orthodox Indian society that refuses them the benefit to live with freedom. He describes the situation of unmarried women in the orthodox Hindu culture. There is a hub on the problems of the unmarried women who become sacrifices of dowry, caste system and horoscopes. When a girl passes thirteen years, there will be so many limitations on her behavior, dress, and everything. She is prohibited for studies and goes outside. Even she is curbed to laugh freely.

With Bhattacharya constant concern for social development, he explains the changing situation of women in Indian society, i.e., from her doubts and fears to a state of self-assertion and self-confidence. Women have given as having an excellent sense of involvement and change in Bhattacharya's novels. Music for Mohini remains on the alteration of the female heroine named Mohini, a care-free, young, tomboyish, city-bred girl into a genius, cultured lady of tradition in the Big House of village Behula. It reveals not only the process of her change but also the spirit of transformation and the extent of her success. After being married for two years, she wants for the love of her husband, Jayadev and a child. For Jayadev, real love has no meaning as he cares for the upliftment of his country only. It becomes the root cause of her matrimonial division. Hence leading her to test her versatility, flexibility and also exposes whether or not she is intelligent of growth and building a life of service and involvement. She manages in the midpoint of her typical Indian problems of a daughter-in-law to reach and to help her husband in his self-appointed responsibility of educating the villagers by weeding out the corrupt superstitions; she falls into the responsibility of teaching the village women. By transforming her care from family to culture, Mohini emerges as a powerful woman of high power and liberation. In the words of Rashmi Gaur: "Bhattacharya has portrayed Mohini as a representative of his image of the new woman who is to act as a bastion against the corrupting influence of the west and protect the traditional values of personal and social life from any sudden or violent change. Mohini is expected to be a harbinger of new ideas and new skills in a stagnant society without much freedom to act of her own volition." (Gaur, 56)

Mohini, the protagonist of the novel, is representative of the new India, of the recently emerged free India as the view of her father recalls her when she makes herself for the blood-giving ceremony. Mohini's marriage and the festivities accompanying the celebration are typical of India, gaining freedom and the celebrations in its viewing. The city-bred and village-wed liberal girl Mohini has to play an essential role in changing the face of backward Big House and the village. Her sister-in-law Roplekha who unlike her is village-bred and city-wed highlights the role, and their condition demands them to play in the regeneration of free India. The novel, *Music for Mohini*, as was declared in the opening is the depiction of a woman. Mohini sacrifice of her happiness for the benefit of societal and cultural growth of the nation. Even then the clear-cut message of the novelist presents it a novel that describes the rebuilding of free India and the reorientation of purposes by the atonement of a woman by changing herself in characteristics accordingly. The thought describes how a woman uses strange customs and cultures to make a hopeful society free from old fetters into the freedom of mind and faith in an organization.

Mohini's father is a professor. He is an ordinary city resident. He caricatures at all kinds of old beliefs. He does not allow either his mother's views. He thinks the old orthodox ways as the yoke of Indians. However, he wears an ornament to shield him off from the evil eye. He does not need to lose Mohini under the clutches of his mother's antiquated viewpoint. He gives Mohini to a convent. He is determined to mold her presently, on the other hand, he grants wisdom of the old habits as meaning bangles and seeing horoscope, during the training of the marriage, he respects the conditions of Hindu customs: "They old customs and the conventions are not too unsound ... they seem to suit our mental climate... He eventually sees the necessity for a cultural synthesis of horoscope and a microscope." (52) Before her wedding, her grandmother handled to suffer for her future, "who knows what music the gods have in store for my Mohini?" (56). The music of life, the vibrant beauty of a knowledgeable, equitable relationship has been withheld to Mohini. The contradictions which the modern culture had inherited from the antiquity about women are vocally now in the character sketch of Mohini, who

mutely hurts the indifference of her husband and the fierce nature of her mother-in-law. It is only towards the end that she can take on the independent choice and stand by it. Whether she could have the strength of retaining this determination has neither been not proposed nor been refused by the novelist. The novel has not been able to authentically display the concept of the resurgence of women's confidence in her.

Mohini is worried by the seriousness with which her mother-in-law demands a male child from her, within a month of her marriage she is managed to prepare comforters for the yet to be conceived male heir of the family. Her problems deepen when she comes to know that her son has connected with the longevity of her husband according to his horoscope. Mohini asks her credulity but is powerless to escape from the tension which is created by her mother-in-law, who finds her every month and gets excited. It imagines revulsion in Mohini and kills peace inviting sadness and troubles. Before marriage, she has taken up quickly with joy and peace and had led a contented life. Her mother-in-law plans this unsafe environment. She decides her every month and disturbed. Mohini gripped her hands as the mother's words rang in her hearings, and she cried, "just as well I am barren, just as well I am barren." Moreover, even as she calmed down, her hands clenched again, and her eyes were bright, "I will not have a son who is to be a limb of the cold, heat less Big House." (165)

Mohini's grandmother and her mother-in-law have real orthodox views. However, both are opposed to their attitudes. Old women do not ignore everything new. Unlike Jayadev's mother, her grandmother allows the development that comes inevitably with time. A condition arises between her mother-in-law, her husband and herself. Her mother-in-law objects sending Mohini to a convent. She estimates Mohini is singing over all India Radio as a disgrace to the family name. However, she, however, allows that she is an old headed woman relating to the old age. Hence it is normal to object her. When she drops the planned fiancée for Mohini, because, she exclaims, "They are alike No tradition No true culture, Apes of westerns." (17)

Mohini's mother-in-law orders her not to use face powder, not to wear sleeveless blouses, not to wear glass bangles. She insists her to sing only spiritual songs and to wear a plain cotton saree. The widowed mother-in-law has saved a pair of wooden sandals of her late husband in the family prayer room and allowed worship to them daily. Many restrictions like this give life characterless and monotonous for Mohini. Mohini's sister-in-law, RoopLekha, connects in her character the old and new values when Mohini doubts the fusion of the city and the village describing the new and the old values, RoopLekha statements that such a union is essential.

Mohini remembers the messages of her husband and her father. Though, Mohini also hears her Old Mother's advice. When she recalls of it all, she thinks considerably doubtful. Finally, she chooses to act according to her mother-in-law's ideas. The news of her mother's wish concerning the offer of blood to the natural goddess moves Jayadev through Sudha. He falls no time to come to her achievement. He says his mother firmly, "Values, Mother? There are values beyond your grasp. Since, you will always try to teach them with your reason, never with your feelings. Life has punished you." (180)

Jayadev's sister, Rooplekha, also hurts after marriage. She shows out the affinities and differences between them when she speaks to Mohini, "You are city-bred, village-wed, I am village-bred, city-wed, we share one familiar lot; we have been pulled up by the roots (92). The concepts of Rooplekha further develop on the vision of Bhattacharya when she speaks: "We who are sowed, serve some real purpose. It is as though we made a bridge between two banks of a river. We connect culture with culture, Mohini, our old Eastern view of life with the new semi-Western outlook." (94-95)

Bhattacharya likes in an independent India people would lead a mixed life where the world was not divided up into fragments by narrow native walls. Thus it gets for its background the post-Independence view in India. It presents the conflict between the twin the cultures of tradition and modernity and reconciliation is suggested which may be used as a form of adjustment. He describes perfect Indian woman in Mohini whose life separates into two phases. It is necessary to review the two phases in order to visualize the adjustability and thought of Mohini in the living situation. The first element of the novel describes Mohini in an urban environment, as a young seventeen-year-old, carefree, impulsive, college-going girl, whereas the second role represents her as a modified mature

woman living in the new atmosphere of a village. K.R.Chandrasekaran correctly says as: "Mohini finally obeys the mother-in-law only because she seems to hear the persuasive voice of Old mother counseling" (Chandrasekara, 51). This change in Mohini is representative of the principle of Indian women. Her adaptability to new situations is remarkable. She tries all along to make out the best in both cultures. Bhattacharya suggests that agricultural India is still unable to shake off the shackles of superstition and orthodoxy. Age-old ideas and beliefs still linger in rural culture. The clash between orthodoxy and modernity prevail a glaring difficulty in Indian culture even today. The author is very intimate with the rules and opinions observed in the villages. He needs the establishment of a perfect society which is free from dead members and unaware views. He wants that people should live by the light of mind and may never fail their way into the dreary wastelands of dead rules. He thus famously shows in Mohini, the ideal Indian woman. She is not a whole of the tradition and modernity nor an improved victim but a new woman. She absorbs tradition only to give a new way to the idea of Indian womanhood.

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