FEMININE SENSIBILITY

Women of the early civilization were highly respected. This society, however, was patriarchal; therefore, the birth of a girl was generally an unwelcome event. The charms and rituals ensured the birth of a son in preference to that of a daughter. These charms are reported in the ancient Atharva Veda. Even though a son was desired and preferred, the birth of a daughter was a source of great pleasure to the family. No restrictions were placed on girls in performing religious rites. The marriage of a daughter was not a difficult problem since she was free to choose her husband.

The marriage of girls used to take place at the age of sixteen or seventeen. The women were not restricted and they were allowed freedom of movement within the society, even in the company of their lovers. The wife occupied the honoured place in the family as mistress of household. Marriages were mostly monogamous. Widow marriage was usually permitted within the family. Parents desired their daughters to marry the husbands of their choice.

Gradually circumstances changed. Sons alone were permitted to perform religious rites. The values of the sons increased further, and they began to be regarded as investments for the future. Without a son, no man or woman could hope to go to heaven. The position of the daughter was greatly undermined. Still they were not debarred from the study of the Vedas and there existed very few taboos regarding girls. After the Vedic period in India, the birth of daughter became an exceeding negative event because of the prevalence of marriage customs which subordinated the position of women.

The patriarchal type of family in its perfectly developed state was generally in existence. The senior male in the family was the undisputed head. Hindu women could not claim any patronage since the law of succession did not give them independent right of inheritance. The inheritor of the property
was made responsible for looking after the widow of the deceased. However, in spite of their low social status, women were still the ideal of conjugal devotion, and the family was not the most intimate and enduring social relationship. The attachment to their families was not an exercise of free will for the women. They only know to be dutiful wives and loving mothers. No other options were open to them. In most cases motherhood was the only solace for them in their subordinate existence. As mothers, they elicited respect, and through their sons, they ruthlessly made attempts to dominate their daughters-in-law and other poor and dependent relatives. The condition of the women in the Indian Society continued to remain low.

Bhattacharya is in favour of social and economic justice to women. The female for him is not the weaker sex. According to Bhattacharya, the initial from of life is female. He has projected his Indian sensibility and attitude through his women characters in his novels. He combated injustice and ill-treatment meted out to simple sober, unsophisticated house wives. He focused on the tragedy of unsuccessful maiden, marital life and of widowhood. He advocates the freedom, liberty and emancipation of women in order to extricate them from obsequious servitude and inhuman torture to which they were subjected by male sex, and their own i.e., mothers-in-law. His novels voice the need of emancipation of Indian women. His reformist objective is fore grounded in his novels. This scholarly man champions the causes of Indian women and exposes the deep mental agony of the married and unmarried women in his works.

His works sought to evoke pity and sympathy for the socially and sexually tortured women who dare not raise their voice for deliverance from persecution. Bhattacharya attempts to explore in to the deeper chamber of the mind that reacts passively and timidly to various forms of oppression. Bhattacharya depicts the Indian women living in an orthodox and conservative
family feel inhibited to raise their voice against the society due to their inferiority and the rigid code of conduct imposed on them.

Bhattacharya opines that there was no difference between men and women during ancestral times. Even women worked equally on intellectual grounds. He says that the ancestral woman was not a household drudge, a decorative being but an intellectual. She strode beside in a tireless quest for knowledge. Gargi and Maitreye were some role models from ancient Indian culture. He feels wonder about the ancestral women like Maitreyi and Gargi who used to work like their husbands on the intellectual part. He wishes that modern women should prove their talents as in the way of ancestral women intellectuals.

Bhattacharya depicts the image of the new women waiting for emancipation and liberation in a fast changing world in his works. He mentions the Hindu community in India as being governed rigidly by its traditions. As India has been a tradition bound nation, if women are also shackled by numerous social and religious customs and conventions that render them incarcerated behind curtains. In view of their miseries, Bhattacharya fictionalizes women’s cause with a view to ameliorating their position and releasing them from the state of traditional servitude. He portrays the evils and abuses of customs and traditions that had enslaved married women that rendered them practically helpless and voiceless. He upholds the reaction of women and shows how women endure physical and psychological suffering simply by virtue of their womanliness.

Bhattacharya champions the causes of Indian women and exposes in his works the deep mental agony of married and unmarried women. His “Music for Mohini” is the story that focuses realistically on the inner mind of suppressed women. The novel is seeking to evoke pity and sympathy for the socially and sexually tortured women who dare not raise their voice for
deliverance from persecution. His novels attempt at exploration into the deeper chamber of the mind that reacts passively and timidly to various forms of oppression. He depicts the defects of the Hindu marriage system which depends on aster and horoscopes and leads to utter failure in Indian society. He too depicts the tragedy of child marriage, early widowhood and sterility in marital life of women.

Most of the Indian women who live in an orthodox and conservative family feel inhibited to raise voice against aggressive dominance of the male persons of the society due to their inferiority complex and rigid code of conduct imposed on them. Their ambitions, desires, sense and sensibility are faithfully expressed in his novels. His novels show how such women in spite of being highly educated undergo psychological suffering due to complex of inferiority and deep sense of inhibitions.

Bhattacharya depicts the image of the new women waiting for emancipation and liberation in a fast changing world. He mentions above belong to the pre and post-Independence period during which communities in India were being governed rigidly by the traditions. In view of miseries of women Bhattacharya committed himself to fictionalize women’s because with a view to ameliorating their position and releasing them from the state of traditional servitude with the increasing awareness of feminine sensibility as a new revolutionary idea, the trend of feminist writing persisted in Indian literature even after independence.

On the other hand his novels are preoccupied with the theme of the East-West encounter. Bhattacharya panoramically portrays the evils and abuses of customs and traditions that had enslaved the married and unmarried women and rendered them practically voiceless. He upholds the reaction of women and shows how Indian women physical psychological suffering simply by virtue of their womanliness. The most conspicuous feature of his art is
portrayal of characters. He penetrates psychologically deep into the inner working of women and externalizes their passive reaction.

Bhattacharya is in favour of social and economic justice to women. The female for him is not the weaker sex. According to Bhattacharya, the initial form of life is female. He has projected his Indian sensibility and attitude through his women characters in his novels. He combated injustice and ill-treatment meted out to simple sober, unsophisticated housewives. He focused on the tragedy of unsuccessful maiden, marital life and of widowhood.

He advocated the freedom, liberty and emancipation of women in order to extricate them from obsequious servitude and inhuman torture to which they were subjected by male sex, and their own i.e., mothers in-law. His novels voice the need of emancipation of Indian women. His reformist objective is fore grounded in his novels. As a highly scholar he champions the causes of Indian women and exposes the deep mental agony of the married (Mohini) and unmarried (Sudha) women in his works.

His works sought to evoke pity and sympathy for the socially and sexually tortured women who dare not raise their vice for deliverance from persecution. Bhattacharya attempts to explore into the deeper chamber of the mind that reacts passively; and timidly to various forms of oppression.

Bhattacharya depicts how the Indian women living in an orthodox and conservative family feel inhibited to raise their voice against the society due to their inferiority and the rigid code of conduct imposed on them. Bhattacharya refers in his “Music for Mohini” there was no difference between men and women during the ancient Vedic period. Even women were scholars. He says that the ancestral woman was not a household drudge, and a decorative being but an intellectual. She strode beside man in a tireless quest for knowledge. Gargi and Maitrayi were some role models from ancient Indian culture. He’s
hero Jaydev wonders at Maitreyi who always helped her husband on intellectual part. He has given an idea in the novel that modern women should be like ancient intellectual women.

Bhattacharya depicts the image of the new women waiting for emancipation and liberation in a fast changing world in his works. He mentions the Hindu Community in India is being governed rigidly by its traditions. As India has been a tradition bound nation, if women are also shackled by numerous social and religious customs and conventions that render them incarcerated behind curtains. In view of their miseries, Bhattacharya fictionalizes women’s cause with a view to ameliorating their position and releasing them from the state of traditional servitude. He portrays the evils and abuses of customs and traditions that had enslaved the married women and rendered them practically helpless and voiceless. He upholds the reaction of women and shows how women endure physical and psychological suffering simply by virtue of their womanliness.

In his second novel Music for Mohini Bhattacharya depicts how Mohini – a city bred girl of Calcutta well to do and educated has to marry a young scholar, Jayadev of Behula and live in a tradition bound Big-House. She has to struggle much to crave out her own identity in the orthodox family. Bhattacharya focuses on the conflict between tradition and modernity. Mother (in-law) of the Big House represents tradition and Mohini represents modernity. The novel is a compromise between tradition and modernity. A modern sophisticated girl of a modernized city of Calcutta is brought into a tradition bound family in the form of matrimonial negotiation. She lives as a daughter-in-law in the Big-House that circumscribes all her thoughts and activities and imposes on her all traditional restrictions. In defiance of these impositions she grapples to introduce the modern concept of values. The novel seeks to delineate the various possibilities of synthesizing
two different antithetical concepts of tradition and modernity and amalgamating these heterogeneous ideologies. The mother-in-law represents tradition narrowness servitude of women and shackles of freedom. Mohini represents modernism, rationalism, new outlook and emancipation of women.

Bhattacharya synthesized two discordant concepts. Mohini behaves with her husband in the spirit and outlook of a modernized wife. Of course in the beginning she fails to understand the aim and concept of her husband who is the master and reformer of the village. But gradually she attunes herself to the concept of her husband. As the mistress of the Big-House she copes with the people as a traditional daughter-in-law, in keeping with the traditional code of conduct of the family. She alters habits as per customs of the Big-House. She turns into a pure vegetarian by stopping to eat fish. She is professional singer, fond of singing but reduces her throat to sing, as the mistress of the Big House should not use her voice at full pitch, and the other persons out of the house should not listen to it. If she wants to go out, the palanquin will be arrange, as there is a restriction to the mistress of the Big House to go out on foot as an ordinary woman. She has to perform all household duties in a silent manner. She lights the holy lamps in the prayer room, she sings in a lower voice, she responds to the elders in a humble tone of servitude.

While her husband’s attitude and outlook are rooted in the tradition of Behula, her own sensibility and sentiments are influenced by the modernity of Calcutta. Bhattacharya paints her as a new woman living in a world of tradition with her unconventional and modern outlook. The conflict between tradition and modernity is resolved by Mohini by her sense of adaptability, compromise and forbearance.

Bhattacharya also reveals the revolutionary sentiment of an unusual woman character through Mohini. Mohini refuses to accept old views. She defies the conventions of the Big House by climbing up a tree in the garden and
sitting on a branch for relaxation. Jayadev approved of this act of rebellion by himself climbing up the same tree and occupying her perch in her absence.

She is shown as an ideal Indian wife. Though Mohini comes from Calcutta city, she adapts herself to the age old customs of the Big House. As an ideal Indian wife she prepares to modify herself as the mistress of a scholarly man Jaydev. She shares her husband’s ideal duties and helps him in his programme of social work. L she takes job of conducting classes for the village women and giving them elementary education. She understands compromises and becomes Maitreyi to her Jaydev. She finds her music in him in a gradual process of evolution by achieving harmony.

It reveals that Bhattacharya is not completely anti traditionalist. He honours the valuable heritage in Indian life, simultaneously he protests against the absurdities and unwanted customs in the society regarding women. K.R. Chandrasekharan rightly says

“Bhattacharya is not an iconoclast who wants to demolish everything old in order to find room for something new.”

“Regarding the place of woman in society and in the home, his attitude is not one of radical feminism. He is conscious of the fact that the Hindu woman has an ancient hunger to offer worship’ – that is worship to the husband. Marriage changes a girl’s attitude fundamentally; she no longer desires to live for herself and is willing to make the necessary sacrifices and adjustments that her situation demands.” ¹

Bhattacharya reveals the scenario is similar to any ideal Indian wife, either to city bred or to village bred. After their marriage they adapt themselves to the new surroundings. Bhattacharya shows the similar condition with Rooplekha – the only sister of Jaydev. This village bred becomes a city
wed. She has to adapt herself for her doctor husband. She gradually changes her habits, dressing, and lifestyle. She turns herself into a non-vegetarian from a pure vegetarian stage for sake of her husband. She reveals her experiences to Mohini to prepare her for her newly married life. Again she reminds her, the role of an Indian woman as a daughter and a daughter-in-law who protects culture. She says to Mohini as

“We who’re so wed serve some real purpose. It’s 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. The city absorbs a little of the ‘barbaric’ village, the village absorbs a little of the ‘West-polluted’ city. Both change, unaware. They are less angry with each other. This is more urgent today than ever before. Our new India must rest on this foundation.”

Bhattacharya focuses light on broad mind of Indian women who think responsibility and pay attention to protect their age old culture. Since India has been a tradition bound nation, its women are also shackled by numerous social and religious customs that render them incarcerated behind curtains. Bhattacharya seeks to draw reader’s attention to the silent reaction of the oppressed women in the orthodox Indian society that denies them the right to live with freedom. He describes the plight of unmarried women in the orthodox Hindu society. There is a focus on the miseries of the unmarried women who become victims of dowry, caste system and horoscopes. When a girl crosses thirteen years there will be so many restrictions on her behavior, dress and everything. She is prohibited for studies and goes outside. Even she is restricted to laugh at freely.
There are evidences given by Bhattacharya in his *Music for Mohini*. Mohini loves music, by practice she becomes a professional singer in All-India Radio. She attends to Radio-station to record her songs. Her grandmother objects her to go to recording centre in view of that voice of a woman of a respected family should not be recorded in the commercial purpose. She says that unmarried girls should not be sent out side. She warns Mohini’s father not to send Mohini to music centre.

“You let the girl’s voice be caught in shiny black disks. You let her songs be sold in the bazaar for a few rupees a piece.”

“Girls of the most respectable houses and ladies of the highest Socialstatuses have put their songs on gram phone records. Why this fuss?³

Bhattacharya shows well how the unmarried women lose their independence at home and they fail to fulfill their desires for their career in his novels. In “Music for Mohini” Mohini has been shown as a victimized woman who has been crushed by the rigid customs in the country of the age old traditions. This is really a miserable condition of a typical young woman in India. After her thirteen a young girl faces many kinds of restrictions. She is questioned by every elder in the family and is suspected in every angle. The parents start to search a groom for her. They think to make marriage and send to in-laws’ house as they feel it as major responsibility. In this process a young woman loses her own identity. She is forced to bend her neck to the conditions. She sacrifices her desires and dreams just for sake of age old traditions. She silently accepts the unknown man as husband and suffers lifelong.
Bhattacharya shows this phenomenon through Mohini’s marriage in *Music for Mohini*. Mohini is a professional singer who is given freedom and encouraged in her profession of singing by her father, a professor who is broad minded with modern views. He sends her to English school. But the grandmother does not agree to send her English school and singing practice. She argues with the professor to search a groom for Mohini and reminds him that she has already crossed seventeen and now it is time to her to be married.

“Mohini, a child?  Mohini, a woman for four whole year, a child?” She paused a moment, recalling that her Mohini, spare of build though not thin, had not too feminine a figure. Many a young maid looked riper than she for marriage.” “Seventeen!” “And no horoscope made for her yet” 4

As a result of old mother’s prompting, several proposals for Mohini’s marriage are considered and conventional inspection of the bride is carried out by a few parties. Interviews are arranged. The first one is an Old-fashioned party, the elders who would not condescend to bring the groom to be with them. They arrive at dusk, the traditional bride-showing hour, when the soft sunset light paints a girl’s face with new grace. One of the elders in the party says that the horoscopes of the bride and groom well suited and he starts to bargain dowry as:

“The horoscope is favorable.
Your stars are at peace with the stars of our son.
The dowry you offer, sir, isn’t enough.
We would take your offer if the maid were well versed in our ancient culture.
She isn’t.
In the present circumstances, dowry must be decisive factor.
Think it over.” 5
The second party comes a fortnight later, the groom himself, a young married sister, their old parents. They examine the girl from foot to head. They make her walk few steps and test her grace of movement. They test her hair by fumbling with her prettily arranged hair and unloose it down her back to know its length. They rub her face with their thumbs to make sure the fair complexion is natural not of paint. A woman stoops to pull up her sari to the knees to inspect the shape of her ankles and legs. Mohini gulps down her tears of shame. The professor raises to his feet angrily shouts to go outside by pointing to the door. This incident makes professor feel shy and sad. Mohini consoles him as:

“Why must you bear insult on my account? Why must I get married? So many girls these days remain unwed; They work and earn their living. Why can’t I do it?”

“How don’t they set up a monthly fair where girls could be on view? Honest and inexpensive and much more convenient than this hateful bride-showing. The groom’s party could go round the stalls and see fifty girls in two hours, and the girls would be showing themselves to so many people at same moment.”

Hurt by these words of shame and scorn, the old mother replies as:

“Peasant girl and princess alike bear this ordeal. What other way is there, Mohini? In some modern circles in Calcutta, so I hear, boys and girls are allowed to mix freely and select their own mates. Are they happier? No!”

Mohini flings back, close to rears says as:
“They don’t have to give up their dignity, Dignity?
In our Hindu society a maid is addressed as Lakshmi, the gracious goddess. Married, she walks in to her new house hold proud as the Devi”

“Vulgar minds have cast pollution upon the old ways”

“If we must be old-fashioned, why don’t we go all the way back to ancient times? Swayamvara!”

A third party comes another day. This time it is a party without elders. A modern young man arrives with his friends, to make his own choice. They are a gay group, they chat and joke and they are full of courtesy for Mohini. They appreciate voice and singing skills of Mohini and also pay her many other sweet compliments. But they are rejected by old mother who does not like their western habits of smoking cigarettes, asking vulgar questions to bride and indiscipline behavior with elders.

A fourth match comes through a bangle seller. The groom suggested is a handsome, well educated and affluent young man in the late twenties named Jaydev who is head of an aristocratic family in the village, Behula, called the Big House. His widowed mother is a staunch pillar of orthodox. The two horoscopes of the bride and the groom have been carefully compared the planets are found matched. Mohini’s grandmother is impressed very much with the luck signs in the horoscopes. She recommends the professor to accept the match for his daughter. But the professor is reluctant to accept the match as he finds the big difference between the two cultures of the bride and the groom. Mohini has been brought in urban atmosphere and she has to go to the village and live in the country side. He thinks that if she is given to Jaydev she may not adjust easily in the Big House of Behula which stands for orthodox age-old traditions. But the old mother stresses matching of the horoscopes, for that the professor reacts as:
“Luck signs. Horoscopes. What rubbish!”

“There’s to be a cultural synthesis of a horoscope and a microscope!”

Having no option to change his mother’s mind, finally he bends before her in the matter of groom’s selection for his daughter. He inquires his daughter for her final opinion about the village match. She answers tenderly as:

“Good to live in a Bengal village,… The space, the clean air to breathe, the land covered with greenery. Lovely.”

What have we here, in the city? Din, dust, hustle, suffocating.”

Startled by her unexpected words, the professor sat up, and watched her with concern.

“So, you are trying to please old mother?”

“You don’t understand girl, space and emptiness could be more suffocating than din, dust and hustle unless you have a mental preparation. Even at my age, I would go mad in the country!”

“And then, consider: no more cinemas or theatres or concerts. No singing for AIR. What about that all your talent wasted.”

Her lips curled into a wistful smile. And she says:

“Who cares I’ll sing __ She stopped, hung her face.”

Bhattacharya has shown how such a young woman in spite of being educated undergoes psychological suffering due to deep respect and honour for the elders and age old traditions. He has shown well a typical Indian maid who always bends before the age old traditions. Mohini agrees to become daughter-in-law to a family of country side against her wish and will. In fact, Mohini
desires to get a husband according to her tastes of urban life. She never expects
to become a daughter-in-law to a house of country side. But now she bends to
conditions just to avoid friction at home between her father and grandmother
who stand for opposite poles of tradition and modernity and sacrifices her
dreams. When the professor inquires about her opinion, she forcefully hides
her emotions.

Bhattacharya exposes the anguish of the unmarried young woman
through Mohini who is psychologically tortured by the male dominated society.
The novelist further exposes the traditional Indian concept that emphasizes the
marriage of girls for the safety of their life and chastity. We get the picture of
the mental agony of Mohini who is rejected by the marriage parties on aspects
of dowry and horoscopes. He has shown this character from a woman’s point
of view and has imparted feminist significance to the novel, *Music for Mohini*.

Sudha is a victimized woman. She is crushed by the rigid customs of
the Hindu Society shown in the novel *Music for Mohini*. She becomes a prey to
the meaningless faiths of horoscopes and remains an unmarried. Sudha is an
orphan, brought up by her great uncle who believes blindly in astrology. He
speaks his thoughts to everyone, so people laugh at him and nick name him
Saturn’s Eye Sore. At her fifteen Sudha is about to be given to a young
handsome groom who is a reputed jute business man. On the day of “ashirvad”
the old man sits and counts the luck signs of Sudha in her horoscope and
speaks to the groom’s party as:

“Brothers, my Sudha is unfit to wed at present.
She is under the wrath of Saturn’s evil eye.
Wait a while. Wait till Saturn goes his way.”

Thus a good match is rejected due to blind belief of old man in astrology.
Sudha weeps but the old man feels happy as he thinks that he has saved the girl
from the danger of evil stars. As this consequence Sudha remains unmarried
and comes to be nick named in the village as “Saturn’s Eye sore”. She becomes a creature of the darkest ill omen. No one comes to marry her. She remains Saturn’s Eye sore, doomed to heart break for no fault of her own. She sobs in the night for her fate.

Sudha, an alone and neglected girl, slips in to a chance of friendship with a youth, a black smith, from the neighboring village, Sonapur. She meets him in the cool shadows of mango groves or of bamboo-screened pools. Her secret friendship with a black smith comes into light in the village. Her love affair with a lower cast boy is considered serious by the elders in the village. They do not allow Sudha, a higher caste Brahmin girl to marry a blacksmith, a lower caste boy. They object to the unconventional act in the village. The similar occurrence happened in the village in case of a peasant girl who had been aborted. But now this is Sudha, a higher caste girl, curse lay on her head; she must smear society with its blackness. The elders declare that Sudha must not marry the blacksmith and she must not meet the man again. She has to be looked after by the mother of the Big-House. The mother will make the luckless girl strive after knowledge, and knowledge will be like a sponge: it will absorb the smothered feelings, the wakened unfulfilled passions of her woman hood.

One by one the maidens of Behula, snub-nosed and squint-eyed, pitch-dark and protruding teeth, and even limping Jamuna, everyone is married except Sudha who is exquisite beauty with no stain on her face, body, spirit and character. Sudha loses intimacy with the other girls of her age, for she holds herself aloof, encloses in a hard shell of her own making. Sudha becomes oversensitive because of her fate and she nurses a feeling that the village girls scorn and shun her as something abnormal. She, in return, fiercely scorns all of them. She grows lopsidedly, scornful of human values, antisocial, frigid yet darkly passionate, it is her growth in darkness, not in light, in cramping space of a cold cell, in emotional bondage.
Bhattacharya has given a clear picture of the mental agony of a typical Indian maid who is tortured by the meaningless customs in the traditional bound society besides the traditional Indian concept that emphasizes the marriage of girls in which they are tested variously and victimized not only by the groom’s party, sometimes they are victimized by their own people. Sudha suffers from the acts of her own uncle who is an orthodox man. He case is similar to that of Mohini who suffers from her old mother who blindly believes in astrology, decides her life. Mohini accepts the match from country side against her wish; she does it, just to satisfy her old mother and to avoid the quarrels at home as she respects the elders. Just as Mohini, Sudha also suffers from her old uncle who does everything according to luck signs.

Bhattacharya points out the evils in the society. He revolts against hypocrisy under age-traditions which suppress women for centuries. He brings light on problems of women who are denied to express their wish and willing in selection of their groom. Whenever a maid wants to be married, the stars, luck signs, horoscopes, dowry and other formalities, willingness of groom’s party decide their marriage. She is restricted variously, she should not express her opinion on her would be partner and even she is restricted to lift her face to see groom’s face in the marriage interview. Bhattacharya opposes boldly these kind of misappropriate restrictions on women through the stories of the two characters of Mohini and Sudha.

Bhattacharya further goes to say that women are not only suppressed by the blind beliefs and orthodoxy in the society, He shows their problems through Sudha and Paru. Sudha becomes a main victim in the communal quarrels. Her friendship with a young man, a blacksmith leads to love and marriage. Her love is checked by the elders in the village. The village elders define her love as non-conventional, they further explain that a girl of higher caste must not love and marry a lower caste youth, already it has been happened in the village and the peasant woman has been aborted which is somehow tolerable in case of
peasant woman but it is completely unjust for a woman who comes from a higher caste. Without mistake of her own Sudha suffers a lot and thus she develops frustration and aggression against the society.

There is another reference of feminine aspect given by Bhattacharya through the story of Paru in the novel, *Music for Mohini*. Paru is the young daughter of a poor peasant in the village. She is going to be given to the money lender of seventy years old in the marriage as the poor man indebted to the money lender. The money lender’s third wife dead barely two months, she was like goddess Lakshmi Devi. Without any feeling of shyness and sentiment, the old man sets his age-stiff heart on young and innocent Paru. It is because Paru’s father is in neck-deep in debt at the money lender; his three fields are tied up in strong chains. The old man will release him for one price; it is young Paru’s hand, her marriage flower.

Bhattacharya points out the system of polygamy, the other deep rooted evil in the Indian society of age old traditions. It reflects domination and hypocrisy of male sex in tradition bound society. If a man fails to beget children with his wife, he becomes ready to get second marriage; his wife has to welcome her co-wife without any objection. A husband will get next marriage after marriage without any cause. But woman must never think about next marriage. If she becomes a widow, she has to live alone without marriage and she has to bear many restrictions in name of customs.

Bhattacharya opposes boldly these wild traditions. The crazy incident of marriage scene between the old man and the young Paru shows us Bhattacharya’s identification of unjust in the tradition bound society. It also shows us Bhattacharya’s recognition of hypocrisy in a male dominated society. We can see the projection of hypocrisy of men i.e., the money lender even at his age of seventy becomes ready to marry a young girl, without any love and gratitude towards his recently dead wife. Bhattacharya further points out
women always become victims to the hypocrisy of men and to the wild justice in the society. He shows it through the story of young Paru who becomes a victim in the wild game without any mistake of her own.

Seeta is another female character who becomes a victim to the age-old traditions in the novel *Music for Mohini* of Bhattacharya. She belongs to Shibpur, loves her second cousin whom she has known since childhood. In a mood of desperation she reveals her heart to her mother. It is a better match, for the boy is well placed, both belong to same caste and social status, and no dowry has to be paid, but the stars come in the way. The horoscope says that if Seeta gets married with her cousin she will be widowed. So another groom is selected according to luck signs and marries her. But immediately after a month her husband is killed in a street accident.

In the Mahabharata, Draupadi is described as the common property of the five brothers. She was put at stake in a gambling bout. Sita, the ideal woman character of Ramayana, was put to fire ordeal to prove her chastity. She was denounced by Lord Rama to prove himself as an ideal king. Draupadi did accept her subordinate position and fought in an open assembly when Duryodhana the winner of the bout, sought to disrobe her. Sita, on other hand, took her humiliations with fortitude and good will toward her husband. However, by this time the right of the husband over his wife or a man over a woman has generally accepted by the society irrespective of whether women acknowledge it willingly or not.

This willing acceptance, even today, is considered as the ideal of womanhood. Sita is worshipped in most of devout homes for her absolute obedience to her husband everywhere in India; her example is exalted to be followed by all women. Sita had great strength of character and virtue. She pursued what she considered to be right. Her love for the husband was limitless. Her character was of utmost purity and chastity. If we for the sake of
argument forget for the time being the divinity of Rama and Sita then arises a doubt in our minds that such a character might have been drawn to satisfy the male ego by the male poets. It might be possible that Sita’s character was enfolded in the myth of male supremacy and female subordination so that woman’s sole aspiration in life became the loyalty and the service to her husband who was put at the level of God to her. This emphasis on chastity and service to the husband may lead to the conclusion that the women of this period were put on pedestal as goddesses only if they lived the ideal and virtuous life according to the most rigid standards set by a male dominated society.

The model women were exposed to re-model. Women were exposed to such literature, which highlighted dependence and punishment for breaking the norms of conduct imposed on them by different priests. A blind faith developed among the women through a process of awe and forced reverence. The epic literature cites examples where the husband was carried on his wife’s shoulders to the house of a prostitute. The wife’s willingness to put her husband’s needs above her proved that she was sati. The literature which seems to have been developed by male Hindu priests completely subjugated the will of women. It emphasized husband worship along with the notion that a woman’s salvation was possible only by doing that which her husband desired.

An abundance of stories about pativrata Nari or the husband worshipping woman influenced women to perform every kind of unnatural act for the sake of their husbands. Women started taking pleasure in their morbid existence. Eventually they became even greater fanatics than men in opposing their freedom. Perhaps they were so removed from the idea of an independent existence that even the thought of such responsibility frightened them. It may be said that it is human nature that one wants to stay with the familiar even if it is destructive because the unknown is scary.
Bhattacharya shows in his works how the women in India are trapped more and more in the web of myth and lose their sense of self and will and how they are praised as goddesses and are robbed of their glory even though they are still seated on a high pedestal. He satirizes man’s obsession which is to pull them down to earth by having the women sing their praises and do their will only when the women please them and satisfy their ego-needs, they call them the goddesses of household, Griha Lakshmi, the moment when women defy male idiosyncrasies, they are called devils. It is seen in the novels of Bhattacharya how men take upon themselves the responsibilities of protecting and feeding the women who are consequently destitute and completely dependent. The women are shown how they are not allowed to move outside the household without male company since it is taken for granted that they are incapable of defending themselves. Bhattacharya reveals how women become frail and weak creatures that if any man other than their husbands touch them or cast a lustful glance towards them, they are defiled and dishonored. Hence, their only path to an honourable existence is to give the men unflinching loyalty, submit to their care and deny their own self and will.

In his “Goddess named Gold”, Seth stands for male ego and his wife Lakshmi stands for innocence. The Seth is a greedy, selfish and opportunistic cloth seller. He controls the cloth business at Sonamitti and its surrounding villages. Making use of the countrywide sari shortage, he has cornered the supply and pushed up prices. He has brought up in advance the full output of the village weavers. The Seth makes cash the weaknesses of the others. The Seth is not only a cloth merchant, but also a money lender. The village is neck deep in debt to him and tether to his stiff rate of interest.

The women of Sonamitti wear saris patched over and over, jackets cut from cast off gunny sack – that is why the price of old bags is going up. At night to save their saris further wear, some of the women sleep almost naked. It is all due to the Seth. So he is scolded by every woman in the village. His wife Lakshmi is entirely opposite to the character of the Seth and she is generous.
and helpful towards the other women in the village, but she is unable to do anything against her husband’s will. She expresses her inability before her friends who ask her help and support to bend her husband.

“What can a woman do?  
What strength has she against her house-hold king?  
Tell me dear sisters.”  

Her friends stress again and again about her opinion of joining with them. Bhattacharya explains her feelings as follows:

“Lakshmi felt wretched.  
Under her husband’s implacable will she was a lump of clay. The habit of submission was her ages – old inheritance. A woman had to obey her husband and household king. Yet the obligation to one’s friends – how let them down?”

However Lakshmi joins with her friends to revolt against her greedy husband. The women of Cow House and Lakshmi march in a procession by shouting “We demand cloth to wear, cloth” to the cloth shop of the Seth. The Seth wondered after seeing his wife in the procession which against him. First he asks his wife to come out from the band. But she stands with her head erect and refuses to listen to him. Then the Seth bids his wife as:

“Go back, wife.  
How could you leave Nago (her son) alone at home?  
Have you no sense, no feeling?”

But Lakshmi gathers for the perilous plunge, she gazes straight in to his eyes and says as:

“Mark my words. Unless you sell the cloth fairly,  
a hundred saris, I will take off what I wear.  
I will, on behalf of all, throw my clothes on
Bhattacharya points out the dual culture in the country where women have been mythically placed upon a high pinnacle while at the same time pulled down to dust in reality. It cannot be found nowhere in the world where she may be labeled either saint or sinner. He wishes to show her as self respected and self conscious and she can fight for her rights and she also knows how to protect herself. The Seth orders Lakshmi to go away from the protest, and tries another time to convey her as:

“go back, wife. How could you leave Nago alone at home?
Have you no sense, no feeling?.
What! You, Lakshmi, my lawful spouse?
I, Your lawful spouse.
You, the proud mother of that pig, my son and heir!"

But Lakshmi has not been convinced by the juggler words of her husband and she starts to do what she has warmed him. She sweeps her upper part of her sari aside and she starts disclose her jacket, she warns him as:

“Naked I will leave this room. Naked I will walk on main road.
All Sonamitti will see a woman, a mother, put to disgrace”. 

The jacket flies open across the bosom. She has never stood naked before he husband even in the darkness of night. The Seth gapes at his half-naked wife as she starts to untie her sari’s waist knot. He sees into her eyes in a pleading way, in a sharper tone,

“You bread-giver will gasp in poverty, remember that.
The child of your womb will turn one day into a Whining beggar boy.”

He watches her for a minute, hoping to see repentant tears, but her eyes give him a bright, happy glance. Finally the Seth has no chance except to come down to agree to the proposal of the women of the village to sell saris at normal
rates. The Seth stands a symbol for opportunism, hypocrisy and a typical husband of male ego. Many times he tries to bend his wife by telling her the traditions and conventional wife. Lakshmi stands for conventional wife of age old traditions. She turns against him because of his immoral tendency. In spite his immoral tendency, she never goes against her husband but now she turns against him for the sake of women of the village. Lakshmi represents a typical Indian wife. She honours the traditions and loves her husband till her self-respect is not insulted by him. But she revolts against him for sake of fellow women who are in need of cloth. She is symbol of purity, divinity, chastity and generosity. She is shown as woman of compassion. She is woman of social consciousness besides a responsible house wife.

Bhabani Bhattacharya exposes the poor condition of women who live in rural areas of India. They are totally ignored and do not get any special attention. They are usually paid less for the same job compared with men. They do manual labour at home and outside. Marriages are decided by elders and imposed on women. Men dominate the process of decision making at home and outside. In food, medical care and general treatment, females are discriminated. This has largely contributed the decreasing women population in India. Bhattacharya protests against child marriage, dowry and enforced widowhood. Bhattacharya is in favour of women’s involvement in the public activities of the village.

Bhattacharya highlights the views of Mahatma Gandhi who always stressed to ensure status of equality for women in the society. He emphasizes the involvement of women in the village building activities. He included uplift of women as one of the items of constructive programme. Rural development means improving the living standard of the low income population in rural areas and making the process of their development self-sustaining. The Gandhian strategies for the welfare of Rural women have got three major dimensions viz., social, political economic. These factors are interrelated. Hence total development means signifying the economic progress and
reforming the social elements and awakening the political consciousness of the people.

Devesh Basu in “So many Hungers” stands for Gandhian principles. He is a freedom fighter. He abandons his riches and lives simple life in the village Baruni. He adopts a peasant girl whose name is Kajoli. He teaches her patriotism. Woman, in his view, is entitled to a supreme place in her own spear of activity as man in his. Devesh believes in Gandhi’s opinion that woman of India has strength, ability, character and determination to stand on her own and work shoulder to shoulder with men in every walk of life. He has full faith in her sincerity and is sure however difficult task she is assigned, she will not lay behind in her perfect performance. Devesh appreciates Kajoli as:

“She is well-bred peasant girl.
She has a legacy of manners as old as India”.

Bhattacharya reflects Gandhi’s belief in the fundamental equality of man and woman in the sense that both possess immortal souls and same intellectual and spiritual potential. He is of the opinion that female weakness is only superficial: if women will draw upon their inner reserves of strength, no obstacle can block their progress. Bhattacharya also exposes expectations of Gandhi- all around development in a woman and he wants them to grow physically, mentally, spiritually and morally.

Jaydev in Music for Mohini, makes Mohini aware of ancient culture and civilization of India in which women worked equally along with men on intellectual grounds. They stood competitive with men. He desires intellectual maturity in Mohini, so he teaches he lesson in Sanskrit, and he entrusts he job of teaching to the village women. It reveals Gandhi’s aspiration that women should come forward voluntarily to serve the nation involving them in the public life. Gandhi believes in the proper education for women. He emphasizes the need for compulsory and free education for girls along with the
boys in the villages. He was the opinion that women should have the same facilities as men and even special facilities wherever necessary. He encourages the night schools for illiterate adults. They must be helped to acquire general knowledge through lectures etc. and if they wish, we should arrange to teach them. He says that education must be largely self-supporting as well as related to and tending to the betterment of rural life. Both Devesh and Jaydev resemble Gandhi. Devesh himself adopts the village and encourage education for women. Jaydev dedicates his life to Behula, even sacrifices his marital life for its development for that he conveys his ambition before his wife and convinces her to educate the village women. Jaydev requests her has:

“Mohini, listen then…. I want to make Behula a model village socially. Our political freedom worths little without social uplift. That means struggle. If we win, as we must, Behula will be an example for all Bengal. In this difficult undertaking you too, Mohini, have your part.” When the moment is ripe you’ll come forward, Mohini. Wont you?... To start with, the women of Behula must be taught how to read and write. They need the first elements of knowledge. There’s work for you.”

Mohini the newly married woman sincerely and immediately accepts the responsibility of teaching of adult women in the village. She also participates in the village constructive programmes which have been launched for the uplift of the masses and in the social and educational activities founded by Jaydev in the village. Jaydev afforded a place of equality and better status for women. Jaydev afforded a place of equality and better status for women. Jaydev tries to his best to remove various social and economic obstacles which stand in the way of their progress. He condemns all social evils related to women and he is against the artificial contraceptives which affect their health with the help of
Harindra and the ruffians. He opposes the suppression of women, whether by law or by custom. He advises them to reawaken the old spirit of self-sacrifice, love and inner strength in themselves. He also advises women in the village not to waste any of their spare time but to take to spinning and other subsidiary work such as keeping their village clean and the water in their tanks pure. He wants women to be at least aware of their position and the actual hardships that they have been undergoing. When his mother questions him whether his activities are good or bad, he answers her as:

“What have they done? They are out to destroy fever mosquitoes; they demand that ponds and grounds be kept clean, that shallow pools of water be filled up, so that mosquitoes lose their main breeding areas. They even volunteer their services free to the owners of ponds. What could be more fair?

“They’ve a social programme, as they call it. That programme is no very dreadful, mother. To start with, they won’t let an old man remarry unless he chooses a widow.”

“How marry a widow against social sanction?” -Mother

“Let the man who wants to marry become a reformer! The ancient books approve such a union, my research tells me. Later, degenerate ages stripped the widow of her human right. Today, a dependent widow’s lot is bad enough often. She would be better off even as an old widow’s wife. Look at our-er-ruffians’ next item on the program: no girl under sixteen may be wed. We have a law fixing the minimum marriage age at fourteen”.

Jaydev believes in the concept of Mahatma Gandhi who believes that woman as man’s better half. As long as she has not the same rights in law as that India is suffering from partial paralysis. According to Gandhi suppression of women
is a denial ahimsa. Therefore Jaydev regards every woman as his mother, sister or daughter as the case may be, and looks upon her respect. Thus he succeeds to command the confidence of the village people.

Bhattacharya shows that Gandhi’s principles are very important to be followed by nation like India through his works. He believes that neither village will be self-sufficiency without the social influence of village culture. The village culture which fairly stands the test of time must be rediscovered, valued and developed. Women should make use of all their talents to develop the village culture. Women should employ their strong controlling, purifying, stratifying hands to preserve the best in Indian culture. Jaydev digests well the Gandhian ideas and he follows them strictly to develop his village for that he keeps himself away from marital joys, he also makes his wife partner in his goal. He and his followers face adversity from people of orthodox.

Like Gandhi, Jaydev believes in the fundamental of man and woman in the sense that both posses immortal souls and the same intellectual and spiritual potential. He is of the opinion that female weakness is only superficial; if woman will draw upon their inner reserves strength, no obstacle could block their progress. Like Gandhiji, Jaydev expects all around development in a woman and he wants them to grow physically, mentally, spiritually and morally. In his view, woman is entitled to a supreme place in her own sphere of activity as man in him. He believes that woman of India has strength, ability, character and determination to stand on her own and works shoulder to shoulder with man in every walk of life. Bhattacharya describes mind of Jaydev who always highly places woman in his mind as follows…

“His mind had strayed from social philosophy and was occupied, strangely, with facts about ancient vedic women. The vedicwoman lived a thousand years before the Christian era. She was no household drudge, no decorative being, but an
intellectual, striding beside man in a tireless quest for knowledge. Her contribution to Aryan, though lived still, shining as evern
There was gargi. There was Maitreyi. Jaydev had evoked then before as bodiless thinkers, never as women. Suddenly today, he
saw them as women who had married, performed trivial household duties, borne children. And his vision of the vedic
woman drawn out of the mist of ancient ages had a curious likeness to a living vision he had seen for fleeting seconds at his
ceremony of the Auspicious Glance.”

With the emergence of Gandhi in politics, women in India started throwing shackles off more boldly and vigorously than before. It is true that the earlier social reformers like Rajah Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Vivekananda and Brahma Samaj and Arya Samaj leaders have done the pioneering work in his direction. But the highest credit goes to Gandhiji who made women jump into the political area through which they got the courage and will power to march progressively towards their emancipation.

Bhattacharya is desirous to show Gandhi’s influence on Indian women, because ever since he returned to India in 1915, he championed the course of women’s freedom and invited them to participate in the struggle for freedom. The response which the sisters all over the country gave to the call of the motherland constitutes one of the most brilliant chapters in Indian national history. They realized the power, which had revealed itself gloriously in the past but had been lying dormant in modern times. The salt campaign brought out tens of thousands from their seclusion and showed that they could serve the country on equal terms with men. It gave the village women a dignity which she had never enjoyed before and after.
Time and again he called upon women to join the Indian national congress and participate in the freedom. They came in large numbers at Gandhi’s call, acted up his advice by participating in the social and political movements. During the civil disobedience movement women came out of their homes in rage numbers at the call of Gandhi and performed their functions in numerous ways.

Bhattacharya presents the memories of Quit India movement and active participation of women in national movement. Even after getting Independence women recollect sweet memories of their participation in the freedom struggle. One of such scenes is presented in “Goddess named Gold”. Lakshmi, Meera and the other women converse as follows…

“Those days Sohagi remember? Gandhi-ji touched our spirit as it slept. Wakened, we became the equals of our menfolk. Proud, chins up, we marched in a column of our own, across the meadow to Pipli, onward to Kanhan. ‘Quit India!’ We shouted to the Engrej aliens in one big voice. (-Lakshmi)” 26

“We were all afire. Wherever we went, women came blocking out of field, barn and kitchen to cry with us, Quit! (Sohagi)”

“That thunderclap made the aliens in Hindustan tremble in their coat- and –pantaloons! (Bimla)”

“I marched with Nago in my womb seventh month. (-Lakshmi) 27

Bhattacharya focuses light on views of Gandhi who thinks that women have a crucial role to play in developing a strong unit of Shanti Sena (Army of Peace) thereby helping to resolve the rural conflicts by applying various forms of Satyagrhis (Explorers of Truth) through his ashrams. Gandhi’s opinion is _All
women can be of use in the work of Shanti Sena. If it were a question of raising an armed force, they would be course be useless, for their hearts are compassionate and they would have nothing to do with organized and merciless murder. But in the Shanti Sena they can be of more than men.

In “So many hungers, Devesh Basu, an incarnation of Gadhi runs an ashram in the village Baruni in which he trains women and supplies them moral courage through his preaching. Kajoli is attracted to his lectures and participates in the national movement actively. She becomes a true patriot. Bhattacharya describes her feelings as:

“She would be true to the flag even unto death, solemnly cried her voice; she would not let Devata overtire himself tenderly cried her heart. Devata to others, Dadu to her. While her eyes gazed at him and fretted, her lips smiled faintly with pride and softness.”

“Then they (police) came to Kajoli’s home and took her father, and Kajoli would have burst out crying, but her father gave her a calm glance and said: ‘Kajoli you made your pronam to the flag, you are fighter’. And Kajoli squeezed back the heavy tears in her eyelids, pressing her teeth into her lower lip till they bit into the tender skin, for she was a fighter”.

Like Mahatma Gandhi, Devesh encourages women in the way of non-violence in the freedom struggle.

“Friends and comrades, do not betray the flag. Do not betray yourselves. We stand or fall with our in most faith: ahimsa. If we use the weapon of our enemy, we play in their hands. The supreme test has come. Be strong. Be true. Be deathless. Bande Mataram!”
Kajoli sees pained, exulted, tears in her eyes, but a gleam too, for she feels a power in her. Gandhi believes that woman is the embodiment of sacrifice and therefore non-violence. Her occupation must therefore be, more conducive to peace than war. Kajoli exactly suits to the belief of Mahatma Gandhi. She is really embodiment of sacrifice. Kajoli, her mother and brother become victims of the Bengal famine. They suffer a lot by road side foot paths without food. Kajoli decides to join to a brothel to feed her mother and brother who suffer from hunger. A typical Indian woman thinks chastity is a superior among all, but she needs to save two souls from severe wither and decides to join with a brothel. However she resists herself to turn into a brothel as she always remembers moral preachings of Devesh an incarnation of Gandhi. Luckily she gets chance to become a paper girl. This scene reveals influence of Gandhi’s views on women on Bhattacharya.

Bhattacharya thinks that orthodoxy is the main hurdle in the Hindu society which resists literacy for women. Literacy of the Indian women is neglected due to age old traditions. The Hindus have avoided sending their girls to the institutes. They feel that it is ordained in religious books that the women are kept under restrictions. They are supposed to remain at home to perform household duties. The choice of schooling, therefore, remains very limited. Like many scholars and reformers, Bhattacharya also supports to give equal right to the Hindu women.

The Indian women’s lower status and position is due to many factors. The women are guided by the zeal resulting from their adherence to Hindu tenets as preached by orthodox men. Many of their interpretations of the religious texts go against their interests but because of their ignorance and upbringing they are incapable of raising their voice against them. They also suffer from the feeling of helplessness for improving their lot. Their plight is the result of a conspiracy by the Hindu fundamentalists which make them more
rigid in the observance of the religious practices and the obedience of religious injections.

Bhattacharya thinks that the plight of women can be improved only if they are encouraged to have liberal education and to think independently and assert their individuality. The Professor in “Music for Mohini” stands for the views of Bhattacharya. He is father of Mohini. He does not accept the orthodox traditions against the women. He sends his daughter, Mohini to an English convent school against his mother’s wish who opposes education for women. She advises him Mohini to be trained the traditional courses of Sanskrit and music at home. But the professor does not change his opinion of joining her in an English school. He wants to mould the girl in a modern way. Mohini is a lover of music and she becomes a good singer. When Mohini becomes young his widowed mother, a staunch pillar of orthodox presses him not to send her outside to sing in All-India Radio and she orders him to marry her. But against his mother’s narrow minded objections the professor sends his daughter outside to sing in radio. Here the professor stands for the Bhabani Bhattacharya a writer of feminine sensibility.

Bhabani Bhattacharya considers the modern women in India down trodden. He suggests that they have to exercise to alter their present condition. He desires to make them understand through proper education and training that the subordination might have been prudent in the past and the tension relieving in the present. He thinks it is no longer necessary for the Indian women to submit to it. He hopes they must reflect upon to what they desire and develop enough strength to achieve their goals of life. He wishes they must purge out old orthodox traditions and adapt to modern world. He opines that they have to take initiative in achieving their economic independence and ion the free exercise of their will power. He tells that they have to show their excellence in every diverse field.
Bhattacharya points the current situation of his time; there is large number of women who are living the life of drudgery and toil mostly because of lack of initiative on their part and due to their ignorance. He has identified that this country is facing the gigantic task of emancipation and empowerment of women.

He denies the general opinion that the men are more independent, ambitious or achievement oriented than women or that women are more nurturing, sociable or suggestible than men are. He opines that male and female are much more similar to one another than they are different, and they share the same fundamental needs, emotions and abilities. He finds out that customs, traditions, rituals and values and attitudes which view and treat women as inferior beings and less desirable than men are discarded and changed, the status and position of the Indian women are not going to improve. This change can be brought about through education. Education must prepare women for becoming all that they can be without any discrimination or prejudice.

Bhattacharya has identified Indian society as a very stratified one. There are many castes and classes and religions. The women belonging to upper and lower castes, rich and poor classes in Hindu society have their own specific problems and suffer from all those limitations. In his works he has paid special attention to the problems of women of all classes.

Bhattacharya has focused light on the problems of Dalit women for all those women who are either put in the category of Harijans or schedule castes. These women suffer from many types of social disadvantages. Some of them were considered, untouchable while in the case of most of them the food touched by the caste Hindus. Many of these indignities have now been sought to be abolished by the legal measures. Bhattacharya says that one of the important reasons for this state of affairs is the woeful neglect of their
education. Their ignorance is the major threat to their existence. Bhattacharya brings light on various factors in relation to their problems.

It has been shown through the school scene of Chandaleakah which explains that the Dalits were constantly reminded that they were the objects of hatred and their salvation lied in the service of the upper castes. This was done sometimes by persuasion but most of the times by force by the Brahanical order of the Hindu society. They were told that they must have committed some heinous crimes or evil actions in their past life and hence they are born as “untouchables”. This developed in them a feeling of inferiority complex and they began to consider themselves as the inferior specimen of the mankind.

This feeling was much more aggravated among the females of the Dalits since they were considered inferior to their own men. The Dalit women accepted their lower status and position and started believing that it was fated that they involve themselves in doing menial tasks. Since these tasks required no education or training they developed a mentality that education is meant for the upper and richer castes and not for them. They thus never made an attempt to send their children to the schools. Also the higher castes did not allow dalit children to sit with their own children in the schools and there were no schools exclusively set up for Dalit children.

Chandra Lekha is the only daughter of Kalo, a blacksmith. She is a mother less one. Kalo loves very much his daughter and does not prepare for his second marriage as he desires to look after his daughter well. He wonders at his daughter as she resembles her mother. Chandra Lekha is not only a beautiful girl but also a clever one. Kalo is good craftsman in his profession of a blacksmith. There is no other talented blacksmith in the town except Kalo. He earns well but he is an illiterate. He feels sad about his illiteracy. He determines to make his daughter a well educated. He sends her to the local English convent school. She becomes the first student in the school by her
performance. But as girl of lower caste she faces insults from the students of higher castes. Her presence is frowned upon as:

“Smith man’s daughter, what’s your fee to mend a leaking bucket?”

“Smith girl, tell your father not to cheat his customers. He mended one of our buckets and it was leaking again in two months.” 31

Lekha has firm faith in her father’s goodness and will not be slandered. She slaps the girl on her two cheeks. Kalo is criticized for his presumptuousness both by the high-caste people and the people at his level. As Chandralekha moves up from one class to another at school, her father is filled with pride and joy.

Bhattacharya points out that education of the lower castes in India has been very much neglected. Because of poverty and untouchability the girls of lower castes have been avoided sending to schools. They are supposed to remain as servants at home or at houses of the upper caste people. They are restricted to sit and study along with higher caste students. Their rightful position is a servant maid at houses of higher caste people. It is therefore, not surprising that very few girls of Dalit or Harijans are joined in educational institutes.

Bhattacharya reveals that the girls of the lower castes are not inferiors at all comparatively with that of higher castes on intellectual grounds. He shows that even girls of lower castes do well and they keep pace with that of higher caste or even surpass them, in the earliest schools studies most of which are concerned with concrete wholes. They learn by heart with ease, take delight in neatness and in the embellishment of their exercises.
Lekha’s story reveals that Bhattacharya is a great supporter of downtrodden. He boldly condemns the monopoly of higher caste people who dominate and control educational system under them besides the other fields. He has proved that intellectuality is not a legacy of the rich and higher caste people. If the poor is given chance and encouraged certainly they will prove their skills in public. Chandra Lekha, a daughter of a down trodden blacksmith has reached higher levels and proved herself as talented by winning state first gold medal.

Bhattacharya stresses the wish of Gandhi who wanted woman to contribute to communal unity. He said that Indian women should give up the habit of differentiating between high and low and between caste and caste. They should move with all women on a basis of equality. In particular, Gandhi advised that Indian women to mix freely with one another. If the women of various communities have been on terms of friendship and, if they are in close touch with the Dalit sisters much integration will be developed.

The marriage was performed at a little age, the choice then was not that of the girl but of the parents or other elders. A woman was debarred from revoking her marriage but the husband was free to throw his wife out of his household if she was not submissive. Widow marriage became unacceptable and was banned. The wife ought to revere her husband as a god even if he was vicious and void of any lmerit was accepted as applying to all women. The law of Manu became the accepted way of life. It stated that the father should protect his daughter while she was young, her husband when she was married, and her son when her husband was no longer there. The law contributed to woman’s inferior status in society and denied her all decision making rights.

The Hindu priesthood strongly argued that the Vedas, their holy texts sanctioned the practice, the prevalence of the Sati system and the opposition of its abolition by the orthodox priests, show the extent to which a society can
degenerate in the name of religious law. It also shows the strong influence of myth which the men and women came to believe. The honour of a family became so strongly linked with the widow during burning that kinsmen of a widow could cruelly push her into the fire. Unfortunately, the abolition of Sati system did not end the miseries of the Hindu widows. Their burning was stopped, but they were still treated worst than the pet animals of the household. They were not allowed to remarry and had to pass their lives depending on the charity of their kinsmen and serving them like domestic servants. The plight of the young widows was extremely bad. They were not only tortured but also sexually exploited by the unscrupulous males in the family or the neighborhood.

Many factors contributed to women’s dependent state. Numerous pregnancies during their most active years left these unfit and unable for engaging themselves in any type of employment except in case of very poor or destitute women. Men accepted the responsibility of looking after the material needs of the women but in return for this they demanded from them unflinching loyalty and devotion. They denied them any opportunity to develop them physically or mentally or to develop their own will power. Thus women became weak and inferior to men as human beings. The degeneration of the women in India was at its peak by the beginning of the nineteenth century the entrapment of the women in the mythical web was so complete that in almost all the spoken languages of India women were described as evil, an appendage of men always opens to temptation.

The higher-class women were kept away from the males by means of purdha and even a glimpse of a woman’s fully clothed and veiled body by a stranger was not tolerated. While travelling, dark clothes also covered the vehicle, and when the women entered it and left it, the male servants or the carriers had to be removed from their presence. The observance of purdha was
not only to safeguard the honour and chastity of women; it also kept them for special pleasure of the men. Certainly, the veil produced a special type of feminine beauty, which was pale and passionate with mystic eyes, and the mind of a child. Such women seemed to appeal to the morbid taste of the pleasure lovers. When a woman is unlimited and has free social interaction with the opposite sex; her sexual impulses are toned down. Perhaps those who put their women in purdha do so to obtain more sexual pleasure out of them.

In India the form of prostitution the Devadasi cult or temple prostitution, the practice of offering virgins to the deity was common. The cult of Devadasi supported the envelopment of women in the web of myth regarding self-sacrifice and negation of will for men’s pleasure. Women lost their individuality partly due to the contrivance of men and partly due to their need for the advantages they gained by being submissive.

Bhattacharya explores the Indian life, scenes and culture along with externalization of interior region of Indian women’s mind. He is concerned in his novels with the psychological crises in the lives of Indian women who are subjected to physical and psychological torture in a male dominated society. He exploits his skill in projecting convincingly the agonized mind of the persecuted women. His portrayal of women characters in the novels invariably bears authenticity to his feminine sensibility, outlook and perspective. His keen observation of life Indian women and their interest in the study of their inner mind is evidenced his vivid panoramic portrayal of their plight. He focuses in his novels on the existential predicament and travails of the subdued women in a male dominated society governed by rigid traditions and restrictions. He reached deep into inner the mind of the repressed women by virtue of his feminine sensibility and psychological insight and brings to light issues which are the outcome of Indian women’s psychological and emotional imbalances.
The twentieth century is a landmark in the history of Indian novels in English on account of the emergence of a host of eminent writers, who gave a new direction in the writing of fiction in English. Their novels distinctively assume feminist significance for focusing on the inner mind of Indian women in the feminist perspective. Bhabani Bhattacharya is one the Indian writers who made a pioneering efforts in writing novels of profound psychological significance. Bhattacharya’s typical attitude, sentiment and observation which are characteristically Indian in all respects, manifest in the characters of his heroines. Example can be cited of Kajoli’s commitment to sacrifice her life and virginity for the sake of her family in *So many hungers*.

His “So many hungers” portrays the agony of the young girl Kajoli. Kajoli is a village bred and innocent girl. Devesh, a freedom fighter says about her as “a well-bred peasant girl” with legacy of manners as old as India.” She has colourful dreams in her life. She is married to the young man, Kishore and lives happily but an unexpected disaster disturbs her happiness in name of Bengal famine. The Bengal famine shakes the rural people who depend upon agriculture in Indian. Kishore decides to go to Calcutta where he hopes to get employment in a mill. On his way he takes a short cut and climbs up the railway embankment. The Governor’s train is to pass that way very shortly, and therefore soldiers are guarding the track. A soldier warns Kishore to get away from the track. Kishore gets frightened and tries to run away, but the soldier shoots him dead. His sad fate remains unknown to the family right up to the end of the novel. Kajoli hopes that he has gone to Calcutta and when he fails to write, she fears that possibly he has been arrested somehow and sentenced to jail again.

Kajoli is now an expectant mother. There is no rice to eat in the house. She and her family live on roots, figs and whatever else their luck brings them. They sell whatever can be sold, including he cow-bells adorning their cow’s neck. Their suffering and starvation in way affect their nobility and purity.
Agents recruiting destitute girls for brothels in Calcutta try their best to tempt Kajoli but she angrily spurns their offer. Kajoli has been brought up in a traditional Indian family with a strong discipline. The typical Indian women strictly follow the age old customs and traditions. They feel it as sin to cross over the existed customs. They never violate them at any circumstances. Whenever any person violates the traditions in the society such person will be exiled from the society. Prostitution is treated as the meanest and anti social job in Indian society. It will not be encouraged or supported at any circumstance in India. Kajoli like girl never commits such sins. Bhattacharya shows the strong built traditional society of India through the event. He also reveals the strong character of an Indian woman who gives much priority to secure her virtue and virginity through the character of Kanjoli.

The family now finds it impossible to live in the village and, like thousands of other families, begins a long and hazardous trek to Calcutta. Kajoli has a painfully tragic experience on the way. A long time fasting makes her pale and lean. She becomes too weak to walk. She meets an Indian soldier and begs for food. He happens to have some bread in his kit-bag and provides her a portion. She is ravenously hungry that she devours it rapidly without thinking of her mother and brother. The soldier offers her some more. As he looks at the emaciated boldly in tattered clothes, his heart is filled with pity but another force begins to operate on him. He has been separated from his wife for over a year and so he is sexually starved and feels the hunger for woman.

Blinded by desire he grabs Kajoli and leads her to a meadow. Poor Kajoli in her unconsciousness becomes a prey to the Jakal of sex hunger. She is bleeding and unconscious and left lonely in the forest. Actually she has an abortion. As she lies helpless and bleeding, a jakal comes near attracted by the smell of blood and elated at the prospect of eating up the prostrate and almost moribund body. She is providentially saved from that fate by the arrival of her brother. She is admitted in a hospital in Calcutta. It is time of World war-II
Bhattacharya shows how the young girls were sexually tortured by the soldiers. Bhattacharya focuses light on many bitter happenings which were taken during the war period. The wild act of the soldier moves readers. As a champion of feminine sensibility Bhattacharya combated wild justice and ill-treatment meted out to soft, sober and innocent women he focused particularly on the tragedy of victimized womanhood of the war time.

Kajoli is discharged from hospital; her eyes are opened to the miserable plight in which she and her family are. A woman who sells betel-leaves and also runs a brothel offers her sixty or eighty rupees if she agrees to become a prostitute. She spurns the offer, but the growing misery of their situation makes her toy with idea of accepting the woman’s offer so that her mother and brother may be fed. She feels it as her moral duty to save her people from sever starvation. Through this scene Bhattacharya show the sacrificing nature of an Indian woman. In fact a typical Indian woman feels that virginity is the most valuable thing to be secured forever, but such a virtuous woman, Kajoli becomes ready to sell her chastity in the street just to save her people, Bhattacharya intends to say that a real woman feels saving lives from danger is her real chastity.

Kajoli gets up early in the morning and she stealthily leaves the place. She joins the betel-seller and together they proceed towards a house of ill-fame for which the woman is obviously a procuress. On the way Kajoli hears some boys selling newspapers shouting the most important news of the day. There is to be a hunger-strike among the political prisoners at Dehra Dun. She also understands that her dear Devesh is to be a leader of the Satyagrahis. This news changes the entire course of her life and saves her from the danger of degradation. She sees the image of the revered old man before her mind’s eye and his parting advice given to the people of Baruni echoes in her ears: “Be strong. Be true. Be deathless.” With a pang of remorse she realizes that she has
let him down and debased hedrself. A few casual words spoken by the betel-seller give her an idea.

The woman remarks that a newspaper which contains such news will sell like hot cakes and that a boy could earn a commission of two annas by selling a dozen copies. Kajoli eagerly pounces on the idea and acts swiftly and firmly. She buys three dozen copies of the paper and tells the woman that she has changed her mind and will return her money—minus a loan for payment of deposit for the paper. The woman is astounded, but Kajoli calls her Jackal-woman, slaps her on the face and leaves her gaping in amazement.

If Kajoli does not hear shouting of the paper boy, she will be turned into a brothel. But luckily she changes her decision after listening the shouting of the paper boy. If she turns into a prostitute it will not be called moral degradation and she will not be blamed because she does it for the needy. There is selfless sacrificed and she would be appreciated. Bhattacharya shows an innocent traditional peasant girl through the character of Kajoli. She comes from a family of age old traditions with strict discipline. A typical Indian woman fells that chastity is the most precious thing to be rescued for ever but such a virtuous woman Kajoli comes out thought of chastity just to save the lives of her mother and brother. Bhattacharya says that no moral values will be greater than the lives of the fellow beings. Whenever a person is in a dangerous situation, it is a moral, duty of every person to save them from the hazardous situations and the person must feel it as a given divine boon. Kajoli has no immediate alternation except to accept the chance offered by the beetle-woman. Even if she turns into a prostitute, she can stand away from the criticism of degraded woman. K.R. Chandrasekharan rightly says as:

“The story of Kajoli is thus not a story of redemption from sin but of providential escape from moral fall”. 32
She changes her path as she recollects the moral preachings of Devesh “Be strong. Be true. Be deathless.” And she gets moral strength to withstand as pure pearl. She is innocent and sentimental but she has very strong commitment at heart. She gets this strength from the preaching of Devesh Basu and thinks as follows:

“And she, dadu’s granddaughter? Hunger trapped, she had sold herself. What if Dadu knew?

What if Dadu knew one day? This, the final gesture of her life, would hurt him more than all the oppressions he suffered in jail-house and all the pangs of his hunger battle __

Kajoli you have made your pronam to the flag, you are a fighter, sol father had said as the Red turbans handcuffed him and took him away. And no one had cried, not she, not mother, not Kanu, nor even Onu, all having made their pronam to the flange, fighters all.” 33

Bhattacharya shows a kind of conflict in the mind of Kajoli. First she is attracted to the proposal of the betel-woman and horridly she decides she decides to join her. But in the last minute she draws back her decision she realizes it is unjust to join in the profession of meanest kind and she also thinks if she joins in the profession it may damage reputation of Devesh, her guide and philosopher. She also realizes that she is also an ambitious freedom fighter with high principles that should not travel by mean ways.

His “Music for Mohini” is the story of an Indian woman who undergoes a considerable traumatic experiences obsessed by forebodings and mental tension. Bhattacharya explores the turbulent emotional world of heroine Mohini who constantly suffers from mental conflict to which she is subjected to strange conditions which are completely different from her previous life
under shelter of parentage. She suffers not only from the odd behavior of the orthodox people at in-law’s house, she too wonders at passive behavior of her husband, Jaydev who does not care his wife, as this highly educated scholar dedicates himself for the development his village, Baruni. He thinks that his primary duty is to serve people of his village and marital life as secondary.

On the contrary, Mohini expects closeness of her husband and wishes to enjoy the marital privacy of the newly married couple. She hopes mental and physical closeness and little bridal enjoyments with her husband, but she fails to get them from her husband. In fact there is a big gap of communication and misunderstanding take place between wife and husband Jaydev an insensible youth hardly shares her psychological suffering. Mohini reacts to the indifference of her husband. The novelist projects the psychic mind of an Indian wife in tone of Mohini. She reacts with her husband in an evening in their bed room in this way as:

“I hunger for thy love.
Remember this sari?
I wore it for my flower-bed-night.
Pearl goes well with my complexion, nah?
I do not exist for you?
What’s wrong?
Won’t you tell me? 34

These spontaneous utterances evidence her traumatic experiences. Mohini absorbs herself in her world of tragic vision. Mohini feels utterly frustrated. Her unmitigated suffering drives her to a state of madness and desperation. Bhattacharya depicts the predicament of Indian woman behind curtain. He seeks to draw reader’s attention to the silent reaction of the oppressed women in the orthodox Indian society. He describes the plight of childless women in Indian society. People in India feel sentiment to beget
children in time after marriage. If a woman fails in this task she will be insulted rudely. Such women automatically get difficulties both in society and at home. The mothers-in-law are very rigid and hard toward their daughters-in-law in case begetting children as they feel prestigious to protect their family tree. *Music for Mohini* is a story that describes the psychological torture inflicted on a childless wife, Mohini by her mother-in-law.

Men in India go to second marriage if they fail to beget children with the present wife, women also agree to arrange second marriage to their husbands unwillingly just for children. Mohini fears that she is not going to bear a child when her mother-in-law repeatedly inquires about her pregnancy. During a brief period of agony and suspense Mohini prepares herself to tolerate a co-wife, Sudha, in the interest of her husband and family. Even she becomes ready to shed her blood in the holy ceremony in the temple of village goddess. The above events reveal that innocence and scarifying nature of a typical Indian daughter-in-law, and psychological torture inflicted on a childless wife by a mother-in-law.

Bhattacharya focuses on the conflict between tradition and modernity. Mother-in-law of the Big-House represents tradition and Mohini represents modernity. The novel is a conflict between tradition and modernity. A modern sophisticated girl of a modernized city of Calcutta is brought into a tradition bound family in the form of matrimonial negotiation. She lives as a daughter-in-law in the Big-House that circumscribes all her thoughts and activities and imposes on her all traditional restrictions. In defiance of these impositions she grapples to introduce the modern concept of values. The novel seeks to delineate the various possibilities of synthesizing two different antithetical concepts of tradition and modernity and amalgamating these heterogeneous ideologies. The mother-in-law represents tradition narrowness servitude of women and shackles of freedom. Mohini represents modernism, rationalism, new outlook and emancipation of women.
Bhattacharya synthesized two discordant concepts. Mohini behaves with her husband in the spirit and outlook of a modernized wife. Of course in the beginning she fails to understand the aim and concept of her husband who is the master and reformer of the village. But gradually she attunes herself into the concept of her husband. As the mistress of the Big-House she copes with the people as a traditional daughter-in-law, in keeping with the traditional code of conduct of the family. She alters her habits as per customs of the Big-House. She turns into a pure vegetarian by stopping to eat fish. She is a professional singer and fond of singing but reduces her throat to sing, as the mistress of the Big-House should not use her voice at high pitch, and the people out of the Big-House should not listen to it. If she wants to go out, the palanquin will be arranged, as there is restriction to the mistress of the Big-House to go out on foot into people. She has to perform all household duties in a silent manner. She has to light the holy lamps in the prayer room, to sing in a lower voice to respond to the elders in a humble tone of servitude.

While her husband’s attitude and outlook are rooted in the tradition of Behula, her own sensibility and sentiments are influenced by the modernity of Calcutta. Bhattacharya paints her as new woman living in a world of tradition with her unconventional and modern outlook. The conflict between tradition and modernity is resolved by Mohini by her sense of adaptability, compromise and forbearance.

Bhattacharya also reveals the revolutionary sentiment of an unusual woman character through Mohini. She refuses to accept old views. She defies the conventions of the Big-House by climbing up a tree in the garden and sitting on a branch for relaxation. Jaydev approved of this act of rebellion by himself climbing up the same tree and occupying her perch in her absence.

She is shown as an ideal Indian wife. Though Mohini comes from Calcutta city, she adapts herself to the age old customs of the Big-House. As
an ideal Indian wife she prepares to modify herself as mistress of a scholarly man Jaydev. She shares her husband’s ideal duties and helps him in his programme of social work. She takes job of conducting classes for the village women and giving them elementary education. She understands him and becomes his Maytreyi. She finds her music in him in a gradual process of evolution by achieving harmony.

It reveals that Bhattacharya is not completely anti traditionalist. He honours the valuable heritage in Indian life, simultaneously he protests against the absurdities and unwanted customs in the society regarding women. K.R.Chandrasekharan rightly says as:

“Bhattacharya is not an iconoclast who wants to demolish everything old in order to find room for something new. Regarding the place of woman in society and in the home, his attitude is not one of radical feminism. He is conscious of the fact that the Hindu woman has an ancient hunger to offer worship – that is worship to the husband. Marriage changes a girl’s attitude fundamentally; she no longer desires to live for herself and is willing to make the necessary sacrifices and adjustments that her situation demands.”

Bhattacharya reveals the scenario is similar to any ideal Indian wife, either to city bred or to village bred. After their marriage they adapt themselves to the new surroundings. Bhattacharya shows the similar condition with Rooplekha – the only sister of Jaydev. This village bred becomes a city wed. She has to adapt herself for her doctor husband. She gradually changes her habits, dressings and lifestyle. She turns herself into a non-vegetarian from a pure vegetarian stage for sake of her husband. She reveals her experiences to Mohini to prepare her for her newly married life. Again she reminds her role
of an Indian woman as a daughter and daughter-in-law who protects culture. She says to Mohini as:

“We who’re so wed serve some real purpose. It’s 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. The city absorbs a little of the ‘barbaric’ village, the village absorbs a little of the ‘west-polluted’ city. Both change, unaware. They are less angry with each other. This is more urgent today than ever before. Our new India must rest on this foundation.” 36

Bhattacharya focuses light on the broad mind of a typical Indian woman who feels responsibility and pays attention to protect their age old culture.

The novel *Goddess Named Gold* is a women’s novel because the liberation of the people from the clutches of Seth is accomplished by women alone. The bold decision of the women to resolve the crises proves their mettle. The women declare a war on the money-lenders, hoarders and smugglers who have become a curse to the society and a hindrance for the upliftment of the poor and the progress of the country. It is this courage conviction of the women of Sonamitti that helps them to liberate themselves from the Seth Samsundar, whose lust for gold knows no bounds. In short the theme deals with confrontation between hard core hoarder and black-marketeer Samsunder on one hand and the young energetic and zealous village belle Meera on the other. This is central to the whole novel which deals with the life and predicament of people in a pre-independence Indian village.

The novel unfolds the happenings of hundreded days prior to the occasion of Independence August 15th 1947. The locale is a village called Sonamitti. A group of six women of the village who call themselves “The Cowhouse Five”
is introduced. The group is so named because their almost daily meetings take place mostly in the unused cowshed of Lakshmi who is one among them. The Cowhouse Five is a feminist organization with Munni, Champa, Meera, Subhadhri, Sohagi and Lakshmi as members. These women belong to different age groups and represent the different strata of the rural society. All of them are ardent nationalists who are imprisoned for participating in the Quit India Movement.

Lakshmi represents the modern resurgent women who fight for their rights, and social injustice. She is the wife of Samsunder who is known as “Seth”. She is against her husband’s greed for money and his unsympathetic attitude towards the poor. Otherwise, she is very traditional Indian woman who is devoted to her husband. Samsundar is a cloth-merchant and a greedy money-lender. He is a worshipper of mammon and is reluctant to take part in the nationalistic movement for freedom. He exercises efficient control over the cloth-market so that no common man is able to afford to buy his requirements of cloth.

Bhattacharya deals with the feud between Samsundar and Meera, the heroine of the novel. Meera, a girl of sixteen, lives amid tragic circumstances. Her father had died of snake bite and her mother had died of grief before the child had learnt to sit up. Her grandfather is a Ministrel and she lives with her grandmother who is known for her patriotism and leadership. She is extraordinarily gifted girl who at the age of eleven, joined the Quit India movement and was arrested.

Meera proposed a protest march of the village women-against the Seth demanding hundred saris at a normal price. Another woman suggests that they should strip themselves naked and march through the streets to awaken the conscience of the Seth if he does not relent. The Cowhouse Five approves of this suggestion. Here, one notices the mood of women and their method of
thinking that really reflects the temper and spirit of India immediately after gaining independence. Just before the proposed demonstration, an accident takes place that brings out the sublime nature of the heroine’s spirit. Nago, the only son of Seth and Lakshmi, falls into well while flying a kite. No man is available for helping them on the spot. As the agitated women are in a dilemma and in discussion, Meera acts spontaneously and rescues the boy in time with help of the other woman.

In spite of the enduring hardships, Meera insists on joining the demonstration which takes place as planned, at midday. The demonstration and slogan-shouting have no influence on the Seth. Even Meera’s threat to strip herself does not frighten the Seth. But when his own wife, Lakshmi, begins to divest herself of her sari, he relents and as a result, he sells out two bundles of newly arrived saris on the spot to the assembled women. The Seth abuses himself for his softness. One realizes that the Seth has relented, not because of fear, but because of his foresight.

Lakshmi, the wife of the Seth is dedicated to the welfare of the people of the village. She unhesitatingly participates actively in the struggle against her husband as he is ever engaged in the act of amassing wealth at the cost of the destitute people of the village. Lakshmi coerces her husband to give every woman a sari free of cost. But the Seth is reluctant and slaps her for it. The Seth has learnt many tricks of the trade from the big traders and the other unscrupulous business men. The entire village is in neck-deep debt to the money lenders. As money is in short supply in the rural area, people are forced to take loans for celebrating a wedding, the birth of a child, or a funeral at an exorbitant rate of interest. They mortgage their crops for this purpose.

Bhattacharya vividly depicts the electioneering tricks adopted by the politicians of the time through the activities of the Seth. An election is due to take place at Sonamitti for electing the District Board. The Seth decides to
jump in the fray. He spends a lot of money and employs all sorts of cunning methods to purchase the votes. He hires propagandists to publicize and convince the people that he is one among them and a brother of the poor. He plans a number of activities to win the election. He thinks of using squads of young teachers from the village school for shouting slogans in his favour in the streets of the village.

But the minstrel’s arrival is a turning point for significant developments in the village Sonamitti. Meera wishes to use him to counter the attraction of the cinema show, so that Seth’s designs are foiled. The Minstrel promises her to conduct a story telling session after the cinema show. Before the session, the Minstrel promises to give the Seth a taveez or amulet to be worn around his arm so as to enable him to realize all his desires. Therefore the gathering at the story telling is amazed when the Minstrel gives the amulet to Meera instead of the Seth.

Meera wears a copper ring on one her fingers. Lakshmi as a token of her gratitude to Meera offers a gold ring to her for saving her child Nago, but Meera refuses the gift of a gold ring. As advised by the Minstrel, Lakshmi replaces the copper ring one Meera’s finger with a gold one when she is asleep. Meera knows nothing about it. When Meera is at the shop of Seth, she discovers that the ring on her finger is made of gold and both she and Seth are convinced of the amulet’s power.

The Seth is an absolute Machiavellian figure who adopts all possible means to improve his wealth and power. He always thinks in terms of profit and loss. The Seth symbolizes all kinds of loss. The Seth symbolizes all kinds of exploitation-economic, social and political. The Seth who witnesses a spider trying to trap a red ant has all sympathy for the spider because the Seth, like the spider, traps all the people who take loan from him.
The Seth with his wicked conspires to exploit Meera’s Possession of the amulet to his advantage. He fervently persuades her to accept his proposal for making gold out of copper. He tries to convenience her that this can be achieved only with his help. Otherwise, she will not be able to find enough copper for transmuting it into gold. So, she needs a partner to procure all the copper by investing his money so that she can help the needy. He offers himself to be a partner in her business and share the profits equally among them. But Meera does not accept this proposal as she does not want to amass gold for herself. All the gold that could be made is to be used for the benefit of the people of the village. She is very firm that the power of the amulet must be used for altruistic purposes. The Seth wants to experiment with the amulet for making gold.

Meera is over burdened with ornaments of copper coated with gold. Her waist band and other ornaments give the impression of an enlarged abdomen. Her grandmother misreads the situation and momentarily thinks that her granddaughter had become pregnant due to indulgence.

The Seth, Meera herself and the people have absolute faith in the amulet’s virtuous powers, though it has failed in its purpose. They then feel that some other kind of act might meet the requirements and make the magic work. Another act of kindness devised by the Seth is the caricaturing of the incident in which Seth’s son is saved by Meera. The Seth tempts the poor boy, Buddhu, to fly kites near the well. Meanwhile he summons Meera to his shop and engages his cunning assistant, Bulaki Rao, to continue, with his evil plan. While Meera and the Seth are engaged in conversation in the shop, Bulaki Rao comes and announces that Bhuddhu had fallen into the well. The Seth tries his best to encourage Meera to descend into the well for saving the boy in right earnest and feeling required for making the amulet work. She is favorably inclined to do so. But in the Meanwhile Sohanlal, The Seth’s driver and Meera’s lover arrives on the scene and does not allow Meera to go down into
the well to save the boy. He tries to descend into the well instead of Meera. The Seth gets angry because his plan has failed to take off. He asks Bulaki Rao to bring out the boy is hidden in the toilet.

The Seth conceives another plan in which he makes an attempt to create the right atmosphere for Meera to perform her act of kindness by threatening to dislodge an old father and his family from their ancestral home. He expects Meera to offer money to the old man for redeeming his mortgage house. But the old man realizes that it is only Seth’s money and hence refuses to accept it. His self-respect does not allow him to accept the help from the greedy tyrant. He and his family, therefore, leave the house and the village forever.

In a final attempt to make the amulet work, the Seth persuades two of the most notorious persons of the village, a drunkard and a prostitute, to get married in the presence of Meera. But the supposed marriage ends in utter failure as the drunkard and his friends demand money from the Seth while the bride continues her business till the scheduled hour of the marriage. Now Meera opens her eyes to reality. She strips herself of the copper ornaments and throws them in a heap on the floor, and disappears from the place. This signals the end of Seth’s lust for gold, yet he does not budge and has a hope for the better.

Meera is vexed by this insinuation because her chief desire for acquiring gold is to do some good to the poverty stricken people who are in need. Outraged by this insinuation, Meea wrenches free the amulet from her arm and throws it into the river in utter disgust.

The Minstrel tells the people that the freedom being celebrated by them is due to the touchstone. It is not just enough to possess the touchstone, but to realize that its miracles work only when faith freedom is like a dead pebble tied to their arms with a bit of string, fit only to be thrown away in to the river.
Bhattacharya is apprehensive of the bright future and his ray of hope in the ultimate triumph of the democratic values are embodied in the vision of Meera as advocated by the Minstrel in a midnight stroll, just before the magical amulet is thrown away by the girl. He wants Meera to visualize the problems of the future by giving her a foresight of what is likely to happen to her own intimate friends, the Cowhouse Five.

The combined and consistent efforts of the women of the Cowhouse Five of Sonamittti enable people to come out of the shackles of the Seth. The people and the country should be freed from such vultures of Jackals who squeeze the blood out of numberless millions. They can even draw blood out of stone mercilessly. Meera ventures to elaborate on the Minstrel’s classification of various kinds of Seths. Samsundar represents ‘the money Seth’ and ‘the Seth of politics’, while the village constable, Hoosair Singh represents ‘The official Seth’.

Bhattacharya has realistically depicted the glaring evils against women. He artistically depicts the evils of dowry and casteism deeply rooted in the system, and they become hurdles in the way of women’s development. It is the dowry which causes difficulty and distress to girls and their parents. The parents do not get suitable grooms without payment of dowry. It is also one of the causes for poverty in the country. In the novel, Bhattacharya has created an unfortunate old woman who suffers abominably because she is unable to manage to pay dowry for her daughter:

“A dowry for a maid, well past her marriage; she had no good look,
But a match could be arranged for eighty rupees.” 37

Bhattacharya emphasizes the grandeur and dignity of the conduct of women. The women in the villages suffer a lot, yet their sense of humour and hope for the future remain intact. The novelist is aware of the sagacity of the
villagers’ genuine desire for saving India from the wolfish exploiters and profiteers like the Seth. The wise women of Sonamitti know very well that mere gold alone cannot save the destitute and starving people. What is more important to them than gold is to destroy the Seth in the society. This is only way out through which the nation can be saved from all kinds of misery and starvation Bhattacharya’s concern for women’s empowerment in a male dominated, oppressive society is endorsed even by the first Prime Minster of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who vehemently sought the help of women in building up of nation. In the present day, on noticing him active participation of the women in all walks of life and their positive contribution to the progress of the nation, no one can ever be blind to this new generation of empowered women. One should appreciate Bhattacharya for foreseeing this long ago and recording it in his novel for the posterity.

Bhattacharya advocates the freedom, liberty and emancipation of women in order to extricate them from obsequious servitude. He echoes the need of emancipation and education of Indian women. His reformist objective is fore grounded in his novels, especially in his Shadow from Ladakh. Suruchi is a woman of great vitality, adorned with beauty and the gift of song. She becomes wife to Satyajit who had seen her once at Shantiniketan. Suruchi always supports and encourages Styajit.

Satyajit is one of the exponents of Gandhian philosophy. He guides the destinies of the ideal village Gandhigram and regulates its life so that it may become an example and a source of inspiration to the rest of the country. He always gets and seeks support from her to travel in the path of Gandhian idealism. He becomes a complete asceticism is highlighted by his bringing moral pressure to bear on Suruchi. She feels the conflict within her between the normal impulses and the repression that she is compelled to subject herself to. But she restrains her normal impulses as a woman and accepts a life of continence. As a wife she tries to deep herself as a conventional to the age old
traditions and as a mother she brings up her daughter, Sumita in the path of Satyajit and makes her an embodiment of his attitude.

Inspite of appearing outside the character as soft and smooth in its outer appearance, there are some controversies with the character which have been shown by the novelist. Bhattacharya is concerned with the psychological crisis in the life of Suruchi. His portrayal of Suruchi in the novel bears authenticity to his feminist approach, outlook and perspective. His keen observation of the life of an Indian woman and his interest in the study of her inner mind is evidenced by his vivid portrayal of her plight.

Suruchi is a bright and vital woman. When Suruchi is studying at Santiniketan, Satyajit is attracted by her beauty and he falls in love with her. Satyajit proposes marriage impulsively. After marriage satyajit decides to move to Sevagram on request of Mahatma Gandhi to serve the village. There are no comforts to enjoy in the village but Suruchi follows him silently. She willingly passes through every stage of readjustment, and remains tranquil. But she is not prepared for the new challenge to face. There are two separate rooms for them in the new abode. When Satyajit wants her any night, he will give her hand a quick squeeze after supper in the kitchen at sundown. That is an accepted signal. Suruchi will put the child to bed and slip into the room with its book-lined walls. When days pass away the familiar signal does not come from him.

Suruchi wants him, so she waits for him for several days. She suffers a lot bodily and mentally with the odd behavior of Satyajit. She can go to the room of Satyajit and ask him about it, but this traditional Indian woman feels shy to express her feelings openly. Once or twice she catches him looking at her with the expression she knew, and her heart thumps. But even as she waits he hurries out of the house, and returns hours after, deep in the night, and passes into his room in silence.
As she loses her patience, one day she exposes herself by removing her cloths before him and asks him, why does he have to deny himself? But he moves off without a word. She feels shy and insult and is brooding over her condition. The next day Satyajit speaks to her that he has decided to dedicate himself completely in the social service and he says as:

“One such idea is brahmacharya, complete chastity of body and even of thought. It is Gandhiji believed, a great source of spiritual strength. He never asked his followers to take that vow, but his expectations were clear. You know that, Ruchi?”

Satyajit’s impulsive proposal of marriage to her is an indication of one side of his nature—the side that encourages love of life and love of beauty and the result is his request to her to help him to live a life of brahmacharya. She surrenders but grudgingly and the strain imposed on her by her compliance is depicted in the incident of her breaking her glass bagles on a slab on a lab of stone. Bireswar, her husband’s best fried, happens to see her doing this act and he remonstrates with her, suggesting to her that she deserves to live a full life and ought not to surrender to asceticism.

Since India has been a tradition bound nation, its women are also shackled by numerous social and religious customs and conventions that render them in carcerated behind curtains. He focuses on the existential predicament and travails of the subdued woman in a male dominated society governed by rigid traditions and restrictions. Here we can see Bhattacharya’s commitment to fictionalize woman’s cause with a view to ameliorating their position. Satyajit simply advises Suruchi to marry another man as:

“Ruchi, listen. While I feel this compulsion, I cannot pose my ideas on you. That would be against the very spirit of
nonviolence. That would be against Gandhiji’s lifelong teaching. There is only one way.”

“Take your freedom.”

“Marry again.”

“Marry, this time, someone who isn’t a mad cap like me. You are young, in your twenty-ninth year. Marry someone who will give you true happiness” 39

Satyajit simply advises Suruchi to marry another man, but it is not possible to a tradition bound woman to come out from spiritual bonds, of course it is possible for a woman born in western society. In India a woman always bounds to the traditions and customs and she makes an oath at her heart to stick lifelong to her husband and looks after her children. Such kind of women even may die for the sake of spiritual bonds but not deviate from customs.

Satyajit misunderstands her. Even he fails to understand true Gandhian ideals in the nation’s service. Serving nation means serving people. If he fails to love his wife, he certainly fails to love his people. A Hindu takes an oath to look after his wife happily lifelong. He must not hurt not hurt any time. Suruchi is always faithful to her husband she is longing for his love and two sons from him. But satyajit, a man of non-violence hurts with statement of marrying another man to get happiness. It reveals Satyajit’s forgetfulness and hidden hypocrisy as their marriage was not an arranged. Once Satyajit, he himself expressed his love and proposed for their marriage. He promised and forced and tried in many ways to convince her. Even he discarded his caste to win the heart of Surchi. But after begetting a child he started neglect her in name of social service and Gandhian ideals of Brahmacharya.
It is only one way of thinking. But he does not think from the other side. He requests her to help him to live a life of Brahmacharya. She surrenders but grudgingly and the strain imposed on her by her compliance is depicted in the incident of her breaking her glass bangles on a slab of stone. Bireshwar, her husband’s best friend, happens to see her doing this act and he remonstrates with her, suggesting to her that she deserves to live a full life and ought not to surrender to asceticism. Satyajit does not understand what her denial will mean. He thinks the matter in his view. He expects that she will be his companion in ideas, even if they are so very strange. But Suruchi does not know the full meaning of her denial. She is not woman of instincts but a passionate mother. It is not enough to have only one child, and she desires to beget two sons. She worships blindly to Stone God for a boon of begetting sons. But she doesn’t get any response from stone God.

Suruchi struggles to remain passive. She does not forget about unborn sons. She had given them their names Ajoy and Sanjoy. She does not control her deep passion of begetting sons and always thinks about the unborn ones. Once she reveals to her daughter about the imaginary sons and she enquire her feelings about brothers as:

“Sumita, don’t you wish you had… a brother? Two brothers?”  

Sumita is surprised by the long hibernated and unfulfilled passion of her mother. Suruchi not only expresses her deep desire she also forces her daughter Sumita to beget many children after her marriage as:

“Sumita_Sumita_remembers this: when you marry, make up your mind to have many children. Let nothing stand in your way. Nothing”.  
“Your mother is somewhat mad, don’t you think so, Sumita? She tells things that should rather be left unsaid!”
As a wife Suruchi never gets over her longing for another child, a son, and secretly reproaches herself for her too easy surrender to her husband’s wishes. As a mother she is also pained to watch the development of Sumita into an ascetic. When the elders of Gandhigram condemn the girl, Jhanak, for her uninhibited behavior, Suruchi defends her conduct. She admires the girl for her courage and wishes she had the same courage at the most crucial period of her life when her husband initiated her conversion to his brand of asceticism. One of her greatest wishes is that Satyajit should have something of Bireswar in him, namely his zest for life. Satyajit realizes the unnaturalness of the life he has been leading and compelling her to lead, and decides to make amends. Bireswar advises him that the best course for him will be to surrender himself to Suruchi. At the end of the novel the reader is left with the impression that Suruchi has finally triumphed. K.R. Chandraseharna says as:

“The novel thus represents first the movement of Suruchi from graceful naturalness to cramping asceticism and secondly a movement in the opposite direction, namely, from inhibition to spontaneity and freedom.”

Bhattacharya tries to show how an Indian woman living in an orthodox and conservative family feels inhibited to raise her voice against dominance of her husband, owing to her inferiority complex and rigid code of conduct imposed on her. Her ambitions, desires, sense and sensibility are faithfully expressed in the novel *Shadow from Ladakh*. The novel also shows how such woman inspite of being highly educated undergoes psychological suffering due to inferiority complex and deep sense of inhibitions. The novelist has depicted the image of the new woman waiting for emancipation and liberation in a fast changing world.
The portrayal of Suruchi reveals that Bhattacharya is the painter of the inner world. He is not so much interested in registering the surface realities as in the probing of inner truths lying under the surface level. His heroines—Mohini and Suruchi are lonely and alienated in such a dark world. They are hopeless and full of despair. They revolt against existing patterns of life. They reveal a bleak and sinister vision of life. Through their attitudes they also exhibit perceptions set out in quest of meaning. They provide a vast potential for a psychological crisis which damage their value system. The panacea for them lies in the aesthetics of life. Their peculiar situation differs variously not only in nature but also in degree and quality. His women compromise with their surroundings for their survival. Some of them are the victims of marital disharmony. He has shown how the marriages are more or less business transactions. In case of Mohini, it is shown as that a marriageable daughter is handed over to the male partner and feelings. She has to fulfill either the either the parent’s obligation or the relative’s demands with different intentions.

Bhattacharya has presented marital disharmonies as they exist in Indian male-dominated traditional families. A marriage is a union of two souls. Some adjustment must be there. Of course this adjustment must come from both sides—the husband and wife. However in India, social situation, if a marriage is successful, credit is rarely given to a woman. If a marriage is unsuccessful the woman in many a time held responsible for the same. In fact, very often a marriage becomes successful because of the woman’s grace, love, and wisdom, sense of understanding, tolerance and sacrifice.

Some times his women go through the emotional predicament, mental and spiritual conflict, and domination of the male community, suffering at the hands of their in-laws, marital disharmony and what not. Still they adopt the compromising view and survive in their lives. They believe that in spite of disillusionment, disharmony, unfavorable circumstances, life is worth to be lived. They face the realities of life, understand and compromise with it.
Mohini and Suruchi accept the thorns of life willingly and try to overcome them and reach sweet smelling rose. Bhattacharya presents an important reality of life through his women who have the capacity to compromise.

Sumita is another important woman character in the novel, *Shadow from Ladakh*. She is carefully trained by Satyajit and she increasingly comes under his influence until at last she comes to be recognised as the best embodiment of his to life-satyajitism as it is called in the novel. She does not know any other thing except her father who is a great follower of Gandhi principles. She is highly modest. She is brought up in such a way that she becomes a symbol of austerity, wearing only plain white saris, going about bare-footed and eschewing the red mark of adornment on her forehead. She never feels the conflict within her between the normal impulses and the repression. For all appearances she is a disciplined like her father at all levels.

Bhaskar, a young engineer, man of modern quite opposite to her father who is traditional falls in love with Sumita. His first impression of her is anything but favorable; Sumita is too plain, too rigid for his sophisticated tastes. Seeing her chapped lips, he tells himself that she will do well to use a little lipstick. Taking her to a deserted temple at the commencement of their acquaintance and noticing her inventiveness to a sculptured portrayal of love on noticing her insensitiveness to a sculptured portrayal of love on one of the columns, he realizes that they are moving different orbits. He is progressively fascinated by the simple girl and her sterling qualities of head and heart.

A torrential rain brings them together and when Bhaskar reveals his warmth of feeling for her she is quick to respond. Love enters into her life and changes her entire outlook. She begins to take interest in dress and ornaments and becomes conscious of her personality as a woman. The transformation of her nature is indicated in the description of her second visit to the temple with Bhaskar and her human reaction to the sculptured figure of love. Soon after the
dawning of love in her heart, Sumita is summoned by her father to Delhi and there is an interregnum in the romance. In Delhi the girl is awakened to full womanhood by the influence of Nandini who takes part selflessly in social service but does not neglect the claims of the heart. Nandini is in love with a young man who enlists in army and is tragically blinded, but her love remains unalterable in spite of his misfortune. When Sumita returns to Gadhigram, she is an entirely different person and her union with Bhaskar in the end becomes a natural development.

Sumita resembles her father rather than her mother, as she is carefully trained up by her father and who increasingly comes under his influence and is recognized as the best embodiment of his attitude to life of Satyajitism. K.R.Chandrasekharn tells about her as:

“Her dedication has acted as a restraining force and has hampered her natural development.” 43

Her mother Suruchi surrenders herself to Satyajit but grudgingly, she deserves to live a full life. She secretly reproaches herself for her too easy surrender to her husband’s wishes. She is also pained to watch the development of Sumita into an ascetic.

Sumita is combination of the East and the west. She combines both the opposites by marrying Bhaskar. Bhaskar and Satyajit represent the two opposing points of view. Bhaskar has passionate conviction that the salvation of the country lies in industrialization. Industrialisation to him means not only the use of machinery and the establishment of factories for large scale production but also, more importantly, a reorientation of values and a revision of our way of life. At the material level he thinks that the problem of India’s rapidly growing population can be solved only by adequate production of the
necessaries of civilized life. Bhaskar rebels against many aspects of the convention bound life of the average Indian.

For all appearances Satyajit is a disciplined Gandhian applying the principles of Gandhian economic and ethics in the regulation of life of Gandhigram and the conduct of his own life. Against to Bhaskar’s modern views Satyajit represents three things mainly decentralized small-scale industry on the economic place, austerity and repression of natural instincts on the plane of personal life and non-violence on the plane of international relations. At all three levels Satyajit’s views are pitted against antagonistic forces. Gandhian economics is threatened by the new cry of industrialization. The steel production unit established in the vicinity of Gandhigram and called Steel town in the novel is the embodiment of the new approach.

Bhaskar, the young chief engineer of the factory, with his American training and highly westernized outlook, represents a three-dimensional opposition to Satyajit and Satyajitism. He believes that steel, standing for mass production, is the only solution to India’s growing population. Steel is the only shield that can protect the infant democracy against all enemies threatening her freedom and security. So far as attitude to life is concerned, he does not believe in any kind of repression or inhibition. Steeltown is a threat and a challenge to Gandhigram. Bhaskar with his fanatical zeal prepares a plan for the expansion of the factory involving the annexation and liquidation of Gandhigram.

Bhaskar is interested in striking at the village because it is a symbol of conservative reaction and it stands for values which he desires to destroy. Satyajit commences a fast to death to protest against the Government’s decision to let Steeltown swallow the village. Finally people’s warm adoration touches heart of Bhaskar. Bhaskar is convinced by his beloved Sumita that love can conquer hatred. Symbolic of the reconciliation between the two is the marriage of Sumita and Bhaskar. Sumita is made a bridge by the novelist. She
has become a link between the East and the West, modernity and conventional. In this way she becomes a key character in the novel. She has been shown as an ascetic in the beginning. As daughter of Satyajit who greatly follows Gandhi’s ideology of non-violence and noble Indian traditions and opposes Bhaskar but there is no personal hatred in her struggle. Speaking to Bhaskar on one occasion, Sumita quotes her father’s words as:

“To give hate for hate is only to make the evil grow stronger. To hate is to be defeated in the moral struggle”. 44

Sumita convinces Bhaskar and brings a change in him. Satyajit’s precept is to be seen in his reaction to the presence of the helpless Chinese children in his house. Thus sumita brings a change and experience of love in Bhaskar’s heart. The novelist describes the change in these words:

“A new insight had come_ he had begun to understand Satyajit. Some of the things that he stood for.”45

Satyajit also understands Bhaskar and starts a new chapter in his life. Sumita’s marriage to Bhaskar is bringing of Steeltown and Gandhigram together. The very last words in the novel are words announcing that the ascetic girl (Sumita) trained by Satyajit has surrendered herself to ‘the terrific wave’ which stands for love and fullness of life. Thus sumita has brought reconciliation between Gandhigram and steeltown with which the story ends. Through her character, the novelist advocates the way of integration and synthesis.
REFERENCES:

1. K.R. Chandrasekharan, Bhabani Bhattacharya, p.48
2. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Music for Mohini, p.113
3. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Music for Mohini, p.14,15
4. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Music for Mohini, p.17
5. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Music for Mohini, p.47
6. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Music for Mohini, p.48
7. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Music for Mohini, p.48
8. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Music for Mohini, p.48
9. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Music for Mohini, p.48
10. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Music for Mohini, p.60
11. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Music for Mohini, p.61
12. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Music for Mohini, p.62
13. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Music for Mohini, p.62
14. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Music for Mohini, p.177
15. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Goddess Named Gold, p.11
16. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Goddess Named Gold, p.19
17. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Goddess Named Gold, p.31
18. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Goddess Named Gold, p.31
20. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Goddess Named Gold, p.32
22. Bhabani Bhattacharya, So Many Hungers, p.37
23. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Music for Mohini, p.156
24. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Music for Mohini, p.173
25. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Music for Mohini, p.84
27. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Goddess Named Gold, p.12
28. Bhabani Bhattacharya, So Many Hungers, p.100
29. Bhabani Bhattacharya, So Many Hungers, p.101
30. Bhabani Bhattacharya, *So Many Hungers*, p.269
32. K.R. Chandrasekharan, *Bhabani Bhattacharya*, p.23
33. Bhabani Bhattacharya, *So Many Hungers*, p.269
35. K.R. Chandrasekharan, *Bhabani Bhattacharya*, p.48
36. Bhabani Bhattacharya, *Music for Mohini*, p.113
40. Bhabani Bhattacharya, *Shadow From Ladakh*, p.25
41. Bhabani Bhattacharya, *Shadow From Ladakh*, p.25
42. K.R. Chandrasekharan, *Bhabani Bhattacharya*, p.113
43. K.R. Chandrasekharan, *Bhabani Bhattacharya*, p.123
44. Bhabani Bhattacharya, *Shadow From Ladakh*, p.124
45. Bhabani Bhattacharya, *Shadow From Ladakh*, p.284