CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION
The study in the foregoing pages reveals Bhattacharya and Malgonkar's preoccupation with the use of novel as history in their novels. Bhattacharya and Malgonkar pit their characters against the backdrop of socio-political facts as discussed earlier, and let them grow as authentic individuals. They may be represented by historical forces but in the end they behave like an individual, as human beings. After analysing critically the works of both the writers, it is found that they have used socio-political history in their writings and also they have suggested some ways out of the problems often discussed in their novels. In that way both these writers project their vision of the future through their writings that makes their work more interesting and readable. Both have followed the same motto. "Literature mirrors the society in which it is born" and in that way both believe in the doctrine of "the creative writer's final business is to reveal the truth" and they have used art as their medium to propagate their views and philosophy. As Chandrashekharan observes in this regard "when a novelist makes his works the embodiment of 'ethical values', he need not fear that these values will contaminate the pure spirit of his creative endeavour, provided that he adheres to the truth and
interprets life truthfully." Both of these writers have followed this principle in their writings. Thus, the treatment of Novel as history gets a new dimension in their hands. Through their creative endeavours, we realize how deeply some of the evils are entrenched in our social life and how difficult it will be to uproot them. All their works seek some way out of these evils to realize the future possibilities of life.

Thus, the subject matter of these writers is the same, that is, the socio-political history of the people of India but the 'mode of projection' is different. Whereas, Bhattachrya stands for specific ideas or strategies to deal with these socio-political facts of pre as well as post independence India, Malgonkar stands for the human definitions of these. It is in men rather than in abstract institutions or values that he sees the ray of hope.

As far as Bhattacharya is concerned, he has dealt with the serious problems faced by the country. The most important questions that he raises are with regard to the sort of future of the country, the extent to which she should preserve her traditional culture and way of life, the values she has to acquire anew and the
contribution the present generation can make to the building of a secure and happy future.

In all his novels Bhattacharya is concerned with the future of India, its social, religious, economic and political regeneration, so that it may make rapid progress and come to occupy its pride of place in the comity of world's highly developed nations.³

Bhattacharya is neither totally concerned with reflecting outer reality from a detached spectator's point of view, nor with metaphysical and inner reality like Raja Rao. He is also not committed totally to cause of the lowest section of society like M.R. Anand. Bhattacharya may be placed somewhere in between these novelists as his fiction shows some of the characteristics of these novelists but yet he is unique. His writing "quivers with an outraged social conscience"⁴ and portrays the exploitation of man by man and consequent suffering and misery. But he does not stop there. He goes further, because "For him art is... the communication of certain political and social ideals."⁵ First, Bhattacharya wants to arouse the people out of their complacency and apathy by highlighting the evils and wrongs, and then he suggests ways out to get rid of these problems in view to focus his vision of the future. The whole philosophy which projects his vision
by dealing with the novel as history can be summarised in the words of K.R. Chandrasekharan, as he puts it:

Firstly, Bhattacharya has a clear vision of the future that he desires for India. The picture that he has in his mind is transmitted to the reader particularly in *Music for Mohini* and *A Goddess Named Gold*. Secondly, he launches a vigorous campaign against what he considers to be anti-life tendencies and forces in the traditional Indian way of life and pleads, like his master, Tagore, for a full and joyous life. His thoughts on this subject are expressed in *Music for Mohini* and *Shadow From Ladakh*. Thirdly, Bhattacharya puts in a passionate plea for the synthesis or integration of values and philosophies which alone can put an end to discord, bring about harmony and give us the strength and equipoise needed for a life of achievement.

We can easily trace the influence of Tagore on Bhattacharya when he deals with this subject. *Music for Mohini*, *Shadow From Ladakh* and *A Dream in Hawaii* are the three novels which embody his ideas of synthesis.

"Gandhian Age in Indian history" as Prof. Iyager puts it, marked an important change in national life and Bhattacharya could not remain unaffected. All of his novels reflect Gandhi and his ideologies directly or indirectly with some modifications in particular reference to socio-political history of India. By doing so Bhattacharya connects artists endeavour to deal with socio-political problems and the literature was, thus, "identified with and deemed essential to the nation."
Bhattacharya has given an expression of his views on the shape of things to come in his novels. The quest for political independence start with his first novel *So Many Hungers* and continues in *He who Rides a Tiger* wherein it flows as undercurrent to Kalo’s quest for social emancipation from low caste in society. From *Music For Mohini* onward it becomes a quest for Ram Rajya. In this novel, Jayadev is in search for a society which is free from superstitions, taboos and age old inhibitions. He considers political freedom not as an end in itself, but as a means to the bringing about of a new social order. In that way, Bhattacharya while dealing with socio-political history of India, gives a way out of the problems India was facing on the eve of newly achieved freedom. Jayadev as a spokesman of Bhattacharya in *Music For Mohini*, knows that he has his own contribution to make in the struggle for social freedom and that he will acquire the right to seek private happiness only after his duty to the country has been discharged. Mass literacy is one of the objectives and he asks Mohini to help by teaching the women of Behula. Another point raised by Bhattacharya in his novel is that the land, as Jayadev believes, will be equitably distributed among the peasants and extensive
ownership by a few will become a thing of the past. In the new situation, houses like his should show progressive leadership by setting a good example. Superstition which creates false faith will have to be destroyed and the minds of men liberated. Jayadev has to fight against his own mother. He tells her in the course of a heated argument: "there is no room in the Big House for crazy beliefs. The village folks look to us for ideals and a way of living" (p.223).

A Goddess Named Gold has also projected Bhattacharya's vision of the future by delineating the socio-political history of India. In this novel, the quest for righteous actions, which a free nation must perform in order to fulfill its destiny continues. Bhattacharya desires the men of the new era to become selfreliant and self-respecting. No man should live on charity. Sohan Lal expatiates on this subject and tells Meera that if we want freedom is to be productive of good, exploiters like the Seth have to be eliminated. People should exercise their franchise intelligently and not allow themselves to be deceived by unscrupulous exploiters. Bhattachrya even goes to an extent of suggesting the idea of participation of Minstrel, a Gandhi's prototype, in election so that he could render
selfless service to the people because a great responsibility rests on the people who are elected to positions of power. It is their job to make other men share their faith in the future and to liberate them from the chains of the past.

Another important point, which Bhattacharya has dealt with in his novels, is that a man should live intensely and fully, seeking joy and beauty and not make life a penance or burden by imposing unnatural restraints and sacrifices on himself. This is one of the ideas that Bhattacharya learned from Tagore. It is stated in the poet's words in Shadow From Ladakh: "It is fullness of life that makes one happy, not fullness of possessions" (p.13). Both Mohini in Music For Mohini and Suruchi in Shadow From Ladaksh, represent the joy of life before their marriage and both are subjected to repression and lose their spontaneity and joy after they marry because of the wrong ideals of their husbands. Jayadev and Satyajit develop anti-life tendencies and lead incomplete lives until they are educated in the school of experience and change their attitude. Also Bhattacharya projects Sumita's liberation from the prison house of asceticism and her recruitment to the ranks of life which is one of the most significant
developments in the novel. In the end of the novel, Sumita also gives up her asceticism and follows the "path of the fullness of life" as envisioned by Tagore.

Another aspect worth noting in Bhattacharya is his moral approach to social problems in his novels. He has given greater emphasis on the need to revolt against the decayed aspects of the Indian tradition than on the acceptance and upholding of the finer elements in it. Religion is not only an affair of ritual and blind belief but is the source of moral values for most people. As contrasted with Anand, in Bhattacharya "there is definite vindication of specifically Indian values, in such a way that Bhattacharya aligns himself more with Narayan than with Anand". Bhattacharya satirises the blind faith of the masses in *A Goddess Named Gold* but in the same novel he upholds the novel - teachings of the minstrel and we find in his novels that good always triumphs over evil. All the noble characters pass a Gandhian test of courage and love and stick to rational and moral values.

The most important philosophical idea that Bhattacharya conveys through his novels is that of integration of approaches and synthesis of values. It is
this philosophy of synthesis or "dynamic equilibrium" in the art of living which forms the bedrock of his vision and through which he visualizes the emergence of an ideal man shaping a new social order. All Bhattacharya prot-agonists realize the importance of synthesis and move towards it after leading unbalanced lives. Bhattacharya has proved the importance of reconciliation and readjustment for the fulfillment of life in all his novels. The maximum happiness of the maximum number of people can be ensured not by rejecting one idea in favour of another but by finding a meeting ground if at all it is possible. Tagore advocated such synthesis and his influence is clearly visible in Shadow From Ladakh. Suruchi speaking to her daughter about Shantiniketan, refers to one of Tagore's important teachings:

Integration - that was the poet's life long quest: integration of the simple and the sophisticated; the ancient and the modern; city and village; East and West (p.215).

Jayadev in Music For Mohini takes upon himself the task of contributing to the building of a new order in India based on the principle of synthesis. Bhattacharya gives the following account of the new generation that Jayadev desires to be evolved in India:
Jayadev would break the crust of vulgarity and reveal ancient thought in its true splendor. But the new man of his vision, growing to his full statures was not to be a hollow incarnation, not a spiritless copy of ancient Hindu man. That were as stupid as Hindu moulded in a Western pattern (p.80).

Bhattacharya has projected as a product of synthesis. Mohini's father describes him thus:

He has the true legacy of the past, an inner health, a source of graceful living, and to that he has added our modern culture (p.158).

Bhattacharya also has projected the synthesis of modern and traditional values in Shadow From Ladakh. Bhaskar though represents modern world but still he lacks something and deep in him, there is a feeling that he has no roots and that he has to derive spiritual sustenance from the past. His restlessness is described by the novelist thus:

Yet, behind all that, there had always been a quest of which he has half aware, a quest he had not tried to analyse, understand. It was only after his return to India that, in retrospect, he had seen what he had wanted values that could outlive moments. Values that could assuage some hidden hunger in him (p.221).

Thus, Bhattacharya has projected the conflict between Bhaskar and the values for which Gandhigram stands, bridgeable. Bhaskar himself ask: "could there be no meeting point where they could blend" (p.222).
The theme of synthesis between opposites, has been started in *Music For Mohini* and it goes further in *Shadow from Ladakh* and ultimately becomes a mainstream in *A Dream in Hawaii*. This time Bhattacharya has taken the life of the people of the East and the West with their conflicting philosophies. But, Bhattacharya suggests the way out of their conflict and presents "*A Dream in Hawaii* a best "meeting ground of East and West" *(p.12)*. A critic observes regarding this novel as:

Bhabani Bhattacharya scores a fresh triumph in this novel. Even though a legitimate extension of his earlier thematic concerns, it breaks new ground in structural vitality and an intimacy of suggestiveness that function together to invest the novel with a deeper philosophical cultural and social significance.¹¹

Malgonkar has also used novel as history to project his vision of the future. In dealing with socio-political facts, Malgonkar is guided neither by the sociological idealism of Mulk Raj Anand, nor by the philosophical resolution of Raja Rao. Nor does he favour Narayan's ironical resignation to the problems of life. Malgonkar projects an empirical mode without sacrificing dramatic turn of events which sustain the narrative appeal. One would agree with Kalinnikova when she concludes that:
Malgonkar's works are remarkable phenomenon in modern English literature. Actuality of problems, realistic approach to them, skill to impart dynamism to action, beautiful style— all these put Malgonkar in the ranks of the most popular and readable authors.

Malgonkar's fiction reveals his intense passion for human values like equality of justice, freedom and integrity. The protagonists in his fiction seek and obtain a sense of fulfillment which projects his vision, in their commitment to these values. Kiran Barud in *Distant Drum* imbibes the ethos and discipline of the British army and almost becomes "a near symbol of the Satpuras and a vague symbol of the Army itself and its code". The single-minded devotion to duty by Kiran is highlighted by Malgonkar in this novel. Malgonkar in *Bandicoot Run* also deals with army life and this novel too, has emphasized on certain army codes which should be followed because they are above everything.

In *The Princes* and *The Devil’s Wind*, the narration is done in the first person. In these novels, characterization and the story are in tune with the historical background. In both these novels, Malgonkar seeks artistic integration of his experience and history within the framework of fiction. Prince Abhayraj reveals his experiences in the wake of the Instrument of

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Succession Act and Nana Saheb in *The Devil's Wind* unfolds the psychological depth of the protagonist. The author's point of view has appeared to identify itself with that of the protagonist in these two novels. The first person narrative has helped the author to achieve a superb integration of the historical material with the fictional mode.

Dayananda considers *A Bend in the Ganges* wherein "story and history do not blind". But it is difficult to agree with his views because *A Bend in the Ganges* at once depicts the horror of the Partition days and evaluates the ideologies of violence and non-violence in the given historic context and human life as a whole. It also shows through sensitive characters like Gian and Debidayal, how the ideologies shut off from the reality of life, cannot face the challenges of life. Thus in a way, Malgonkar rejects both senseless violence and cowardly non-violence.

One can safely conclude on the basis of the in-depth analysis of the novels of Bhattacharya and Malgonkar in the preceding chapters that both the novelists have broken fresh ground in adapting the fictional framework to accommodate an insightful
analysis of contemporary Indian History. They have depicted in grass-root details the sociological, cultural, economic and political history of the country in minutiae. They have created characters with facets individual as well as historical, the two sides contributing to each other umblically. They have incorporated within their narrative a clear vision of the future. Their reliance on artistic modes of projection of their historical consciousness makes their novels examples par excellence of novel as history.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


