CHAPTER III

VISION OF THE FUTURE
The intimate relationship between art and society is very clearly evident in literature as literary works not only record the social reality of their time, but in several ways transcend it to project the realm of future possibilities. Bhabani Bhattacharya and Manohar Malgonkar both have used this concept emphatically in their writings. They project their vision of the future suggesting various ways out through their writings. Whereas Bhattacharya shows his firm faith in the essential goodness of human soul and also in the synthesis of the opposites by way of accommodation, compromise and understanding, Malgonkar acknowledges certain passions for human values like quality of justice, freedom and integrity. The study in the foregoing pages will reveal their preoccupation with these qualities to present their vision of the future in their writings.

Bhattacharya has projected his vision of the future in all his novels. As Bhattacharya himself says that the novel should have a social purpose, "his stories abound in social and historical realities, quite often bitter and gruesome, such as the Bengal Famine of 1943, the tragedies of the freedom struggle and partition, and the evils of poverty, corruption,
ignorance, superstition, exploitation, greed, sexual
perversion, etc. But beneath them, there is almost
always present the novelist’s influencing faith in
future life."² Moreover, Bhattacharya's faith in the
vision of the future is confirmed again when he mentions
explicitly:

...art must teach but unobtrusively by its vivid
interpretation of life."³

Bhattacharya in So Many Hungers! presents
the different dimensions of hungers to project his
vision of the future. Hunger, represented by Samarendra
Basu, brings him no fruit in the end of the novel. Both
of his sons, Rahoul and Kunal are not benefited with his
wealth. Kunal is missing somewhere and Rahoul is in the
jail. In that way Bhattacharya has tried to focus on the
utility of the money acquired by wrong means. In
silineating the hunger for food, Bhattacharya again
projects his vision of the future by creating the
character of Kajoli, in the novel. She even in the times
of crisis, such as the Bengal famine of 1943, tries her
utmost to protect herself from the evil designs of the
betal women. Even further, Kajol’s mother’s rejection of
the advance made by the betal women is suggestive of her
strong belief in moral values. In that way,
Bhattacharya, while depicting a graphic picture of the Bengal famine of 1943, which is a heart rendering scene of starvation and death, still shows his strong belief in moral values which projects his vision. Even the young boy Onu, in a state of utmost misery and helplessness, is shown having a vision of dignified, bright future life based upon hard work and self respect.4

On the political front, Bhattacharya while chronicling the situation of Quit India Movement of 1942 and the Second World War, shows his firm belief in fighting with the evil forces so that a bright future could be achieved. When Samarendra Basu asks Rahul how long World War II will last, the young man answers: "Till the new epoch is born" (p.5). Even the message delivered by Devata of "Be strong, Be true, Be deathless" (p. 72) clearly shows Bhattacharya's firm faith in life. Moreover, the ending of the novel by the famous lines of Rabindra Nath Tagore again confirms his faith:

The more their eyes redden with rage the more our eyes open: the more they tighten the chains, the more the chains loosen.(p.204)
Bhattacharya by projecting Rahoul, an important character of the novel suggests a way out of the problems India was facing at that particular time. It was the time for making and reshaping India and Bhattacharya sees no short cuts to these problems. Thus the novel presents political freedom as the sine qua non for self realization of both the individual and the nation. In this holy yajna for freedom, it is incumbent as much on women as on men to offer themselves at the altar. Especially the intellectual elite are called upon to come out of their ivory towers and give their less enlightened but more enthusiastic brethren the lead even if it entails the sacrifice of their secure perch. Rahoul, an astrophysicist, for example, gives up his sheltered ivory towers to join the struggle for making a new India.

Thus in that way, Bhattacharya, while depicting the authentic picture of Bengal Famine, IIInd World War, Quit India Movement and freedom struggle, focuses his attention on the ways out suggested by him in this novel. Thus the analysis of the major scenes and episodes during this time set forth Bhattacharya's unsevering conviction in brightness of life which is
unmistakably, but artistically, presented at every turn and twist of the story. Thus the novel is an artistic embodiment of his vision of the future.

In *Music for Mohini* too, Bhattacharya applies the same conclusion as drawn from the above analysis of *So Many Hungers!*. This novel also expresses Bhattacharya’s firm faith in life. In this novel too, he projects his vision of the future by suggesting various ways out. As per this, some intellectual elite are called upon to come out from their ivory towers. In *Music for Mohini*, Jayadev, the highly cultured and scholarly scion of the Big House and Harindra, a doctor sacrifice their secure perch for the welfare of the society.

The marriage of Jayadev with Mohini itself suggests Bhattacharya’s faith in life with which he shows his vision of the future by projecting the opposites; the old and the new values, city life and village life, the old and the young — in harmony with each other. The novel has repeated references to the need for a synthesis of the old and the new," the horoscope and the microscope" as Mohini’s father puts it. But the synthesis remains merely on the conceptual
level, with Jayadev, its chief theoretician. We are informed by the omniscient narrator how Jayadev had delved back into India's remote past for a solution (p.67) of her current problems. But Jayadev would use the past creatively: "Look back that you may look forward. Look to the roots of India in this fateful hour of flowering. Use the buried material of the past to write the new social character" (p.68)... the new man of his vision was not to be a hollow reincarnation, not a spiritless copy of ancient Hindu man" (p.68). Jayadev stands for a re-examination of the past in the light of the present and the likely future and thus for forging new strategies using past experience.

Even when Jayadev's mother is forcing his wife, Mohini, to sprinkle blood from her bosom to appease the deity, his clear cut exhortion is "Do not bow down to such insult. You are the new India. The old orthodox ways have been our yoke, have enslaved us. Let us be free" (p.166). This show Bhattacharya's firm faith in the changing scenario of the Indian traditions and society. Thus keeping in tune with his attempt at chronicling the events of the post independence period, Bhattacharya describes the ongoing changes in the Indian social set up. In the end of the novel, Bhattacharya's
concept of 'life is all compromise', clearly shows his vision of the future and consequently there is a perfect adjustment and sweetness in the Big House, and all clashes between mother and son, mother and daughter-in-law, and husband and wife disappear:

At last, there was no discord. Life was music - a note of song for the old. Mother in her, a note for Jayadev and his rebel gods, a note for the Big House and Behula village, torn and at cross-purposes for a while. Her life was music - the true quest of every woman, her deepest need (p.138).

Thus, while describing the social history of the country in the wake of the newly achieved freedom, Bhattacharya shows his firm belief in the synthesis of the opposites which projects his vision of the future. And ultimately Bhattacharya presents Mohini in a mood of reconciliation and not opposition, lets the credit for the child go to the deity (p.188). So the spirit of faith is kept, but the superstition is eliminated.

In, He Who Rides a Tiger, Bhattacharya's vision of the future gets more advanced and sharper than in So Many Hungers!. Though the background of both the novels is the same that is Bengal Famine of 1943 and Quit India Movement yet the treatment is different whereas So Many Hungers! is a silent saga of human
nurseries and sufferings; this novel is their vocal protest. *He who Rides a Tiger* is essentially the story of a crusade to challenge the very organisation of society.6 Bhattacharya projects his vision of the future in this novel by highlighting the protest against two evils - the evils of exploitation which results in hunger and degradation and the evil of caste system prevalent in India during that particular time. Two characters in this novel symbolize the protest, Kalo that against exploitation and Biten that against caste system. Bhattacharya through this novel gives a message to the society, "food for all!", work for all!" and "jail for the rice profiteers!"7 which clearly projects his vision of the future when Kalo, poses to be a Brahmin "to hit back" (p.34) by raising of a stone of God Shiva out of the earth, he rides this lie "as if it were a tiger which he could not dismount lest the tiger pounce upon him and eat him up" (p.34). In this way Bhattacharya does not recommend the wrong ways to fight against exploitation. This point is expressed by Lekha when she approves the ideas of revolt but she is not quite convinced about the method adopted.

When Kalo confesses his guilt in public he is not being degraded or insulted by his daughter and
the common-folks. They cry "Victory to our brother". Even Chandra Lekha is brimming over with high spirits and happiness. She has an overwhelming realization of a sort of eternal victory: "Baba, after this, what ever happens to us, what ever we go, we can never again be unhappy or defeated" (p.252). Even Bitem also congratulates him:

You have triumphed over these others— and over yourself. What you have done just now will steel the spirit of hundreds and thousands of us. Your story will be a legend of to inspire and awaken (p.232).

This proves Bhattacharya's firm faith in true values of life which helps him in projecting the vision of the future.

Bhattacharya sees no short cuts to freedom and progress — neither violence nor miracles. This is true of Bhattacharya’s another novel A Goddess Named Gold. Meera’s good-intentioned folly in banking on a taveej for making the lives of the villagers prosperous is exposed and freedom is presented as the taveej which can transform the lives of people if it is used in good faith.8 Freedom is a means to the welfare of the people which, indeed, is the ultimate end.
Bhattacharya in this, also points out that political independence alone will not lead India to true progress unless the people are motivated by acts of sympathy and kindness. A change in the attitude and outlook of an individual is a pre-requisite for the greater happiness of the people. In that way Bhattacharya projects his vision of the future which warns us against the evils of profiteering and poverty which if not completely eradicated may defeat the very purpose of freedom and lead to many more hungers. Bhattacharya also suggests that true freedom and miracles are not possible without love and hard work. Simple traditional miracles (even if they occur) and gold can not provide people with happiness and security. Men and women will have to fight against the merciless wealthy people and will have to believe in, and practise, true acts of kindness. Shohan Lal justly points out to Meera: "you can not have gold enough to save all India!"... "It is the fight with the Seths that will save India, not a miracle, not armfuls of Gold " (p.117). Thus in a way Bhattacharya gives a solution for the problems, India was facing just after getting its independence.
Bhattacharya even goes to the extent of suggesting that the Minstrel, a Gandhi-like character, should participate in election so that he could render selfless service to them. By doing so the robbers, the seths and the other exploiters, with Gandhian caps and glib tongues will not able to exploit the freedom of India. Only those who are sincere and true in their efforts can lead India to prosperity. Thus Bhattacharya expresses his belief of betterment of life and that should be the ultimate goal of every human activity, and that all other things should only lead to it. According to him, even "freedom is the means to that end" (p.303). This end is quite difficult to attain, and man can achieve it only through hard work and love, and not through miracles. As a matter of fact, miracles do not drop from heaven, but are the creation of man's labour and love. Thus towards the end of the novel, the minstrel says to the huge crowd of villagers:

...The miracles will not drop upon us. It is we who have to create them with love and with sweat... (p.303).

These words fill everyone with a new hope, so that each feels that a true touchstone is within his grasp. The listeners come to have a profound faith in bright
future, feeling themselves released from a past, dead and gone. Thus in that way Bhattacharya projects his vision of the future.

Bhattacharya in *Shadow From Ladakh* gives a forceful plea for a reinterpretation and reappraisal of Gandhism in the modern context. That alone it can be a way out. Herein, Bhattacharya proposes a synthesis between the virtues of a narrow, isolationist, Gandhism and open-ended industrialism. The realms wherein it is arrived at include the personal, the economic and the political. Both the spinning wheel and steel are shown to be complementary to each other, working as means to the same end of the betterment of the people. Through this novel, Bhattacharya raises some of the questions regarding Indian policies and plannings for the future. The Chinese invasion has virtually the death-knell of Gandhian values. During the traumatic experience the nation had, people in their suppressed tone blamed Gandhiji for incapacitating the nation to fight by advocating non-violence as they blamed Nehru for not visualizing the Chinese designs of many warnings to the contrary after their annexation of Tibet.

The Gandhian strategy of winning over your adversary in a non-violent manner is shown triumphing in
personal and societal realms through the winning over of the Gandhi grammians by Baskar. Even Sumita, more given to Satyajitism than Satyajit himself, is converted through exposure by Bhaskar to the vision from his side of the fence. The Mao-worshipping Chinese girls are won over through the exercise of soul-power and love. However, in the realm of national politics the Gandhian gesture of a Shanti Sena to ward off aggression fails to be efficacious for want of popular mandate. Satyajit’s fast unto death undertaken for political-cum-ideological reasons does have the desired impact, for even the workers at Steel-town rally round in support of Gandigram (p.368).

Thus in a way Bhattacharya raises some of the recent problems at the time of Chinese invasion. He also suggests the ways out. It is the need to review the prevailing Indian political, social, economic and defence strategies. Emphasis is laid on the fast developing industrialization which is inevitable in view of the crying need for enormously greater production and especially in the context of the continuing threats of external aggression. Thus, Bhattacharya reflects his vision of the future by explaining that neither the Gandhigram type of life nor the steel town mode of living
deserves to be accepted or rejected in its 'entirety'. He favours the harmonious blending of the old and the new: simple and the sophisticated; city and village; East and West (p.215), which only can help in leading a healthy and happy mode of life.

The last novel of Bhattacharya in this present study is *A Dream in Hawaii* which also reflects his vision of future in the same way as do *Music for Mohini* and *Shadow from Ladakh*. Whereas Bhattacharya in these two novels explains the need for the synthesis of the opposites values, herein *A Dream in Hawaii* he shows the synthesis of East and West. He gives an idea of integration of spiritualism of East and materialism of West in order to attain the fulfillment of life. Bhattacharya through Yogananda of *A Dream in Hawaii* preaches the spiritualism of the East, but he does not deny the importance Western value pattern. Along with spiritualism, he thinks the necessity of the science and technology for the progress and prosperity of the world.

Unlike many faddists in the religious field, Yogananda had great faith in technology. It was no longer a Western product, a Western challenge. All human society was set on being technology-based. This was a need for the preservation of life itself.
Bhattacharya asserts that an adequate knowledge of the material world is as significant for man as the profound spiritual wisdom. These two are supplementary and complementary to each other:

There can be no true knowledge without wisdom, and no true wisdom without a hard core of knowledge (p.201).

Thus in a way Bhattacharya projects his vision of the future by emphasising the need of blending of these two diverse cultures. Bhattacharya, in the end of the novel concludes that neither the spiritualism of the East nor the materialism of West deserves to be accepted or rejected in its 'entirety'. In the end of the novel, Bhattacharya projects Yogananda's dream which reveals the Neeloy in him. Really it was Debjani, who, through her insistence on seeing the Swami in Neeloy, had made him into one, leading him to deny the sensual aspect of life and acknowledging only the spiritual being in him (p.84). Ironically enough, it is only when he is at the pinnacle of his grandeur as a 'Swami', Yogananda realizes the truth of his inner being which continues to nurture Neeloy, resisting all outward impositions and control. In that way, Bhattacharya has proved that sex and spirituality are two sides of the
same coin, in spite of the fact that all sorts of perversions are committed in their name.

Thus, the novels of Bhattacharya reflect his vision of future of asserting firm faith in the essential goodness of human soul. Howsoever bad and evil intentioned a person may be, there is always a possibility of his seeing the light of reason and the surfacing of good in him.

Apart from this, Bhattacharya stands for some specific ideas or strategies which are given as the solution of the problems discussed in his novels. Most of the strategies adopted in the struggle for freedom from an alien administration would be equally efficacious in the struggle against political and economic exploitation in the post-independence India. Though all his novels have been published in the post-independence period, Bhattacharya in So Many Hungers, He Who Rides a Tiger and a Goddess Named Gold sets his stories in the pre-independence period. People are shown opposing their tormentors. In the pre-independence context, in So Many Hungers!, A Goddess Named Gold and even in He Who Rides a Tiger, though in an oblique manner, the novelist validates Gandhian political
ideology in an unalloyed way. However, coming to the post independence period, Bhattacharya would like Gandhism to be interpreted in an innovative, creative way. We have already seen how the Gandhian insistence on brahmacharya is objectively appraised in *Music for Mohini*, *Shadow from Ladakh* and *A Dream in Hawaii* and the novelist finds it a needless encumbrance in the present context, what he presents is the need for synthesis between the old and the new in *Music for Mohini* and the East and the West in *A Dream in Hawaii*. The same is presented in *Shadow from Ladakh* as the desirability of Gandhism to grow with time to be sharper and more efficacious for the present problems of a burgeoning population, the need for industrialization and national defence. For Bhattacharya, then, an enlightened application of Gandhism in a creative manner, whereby the outer form may be modified but the inner vitality retained, is the only way out in *So Many Hungers!* through non-violent assemblies and the show of solidarity among the down-trodden does make an impact. *A Goddess Named Gold* shows women folk successfully using the same strategy in fighting against black-marketers on the eve of Independence. Sohan Lai, a positive character in the same novel, is apprehensive that the exploiting
Seths in diverse guise would mushroom once the country is free. But Meera, the protagonist in the novel, feels sure of uprooting them all with strategies tested in the freedom struggle (p.124). The protagonist, Satyajit in Shadow From Ladakh, set in the early sixties, is depicted successfully arousing the conscience of the people through the exercise of soul power when he undertakes a fast-up-to-death for safeguarding Gandhigram, the village run along Gandhian lines. Here, Bhattacharya repudiates that recourse to Gandhian strategies of non-violent protests and fasts in a free democratic country was the grammar of anarchy. Also Bhattacharya shows his disinclination to surrender the individual's right of protest against the corrective power of the state even if it be a democracy. Bhattacharya's novels consistently espouse the perennial significance of Gandhism. In that way Bhattacharya, projects his vision of the future in all his novels.

The other novelist in the present study is Manohar Malgonkar who also projects his vision of the future by showing his firm faith in some positive values of life. In Distant Drum he emphasises these values as he himself confirms the main idea of the novel thus:

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This book is largely the story of the success or failure of the efforts of one of the officers of the Regiment to live up to its code.\textsuperscript{11}

Malgonkar presents Kiran Garud, in \textit{Distant Drum}, a measure of nobility and dignity. Kiran took this profession not merely as an ambition of "a means of earning a living: it has been rather an end in itself". Malgonkar presents Kiran as a true soldier committed to his duty. So the whole novel traces the growth of its protagonist Col. Kiran Garud through a variety of his encounters with men and situations\textsuperscript{12}.

Even by presenting the Kiran-Abdul episode, Malgonkar proves that true friendship knows no bounds of "narrow, controlled rules" or community hatred. Though Kiran and Abdul represent two opposing communities, yet they work in harmony to establish "a world of new values", which is the need of the times. In that way Malgonkar is focusing the possibilities of a situation of harmony in between these two countries. In that way Kiran builds a world of new values which makes him intensely human, committed to a set of values that fosters integrity.

Malgonkar defines Kiran's identity as a soldier. Nothing would impede him in the realization of
his goal, neither the lust of Margot Medley nor the genuine love of Bina. He remains unchanged by the pressures brought on him by Mr. Sonal and Vishnu Saran dev and ultimately he finds the harmony of his life both in his service and in his love. Thus the major parts of the novel *Distant Drum* "are related to the protagonist Kiran Garud's moral and intellectual evolution and the authentic documentation of army life". So in that way Malgonkar presents his vision of the future.

In *Combat of Shadows*, Malgonkar has "tried to show how the two shadows of "desire and aversion are always active to take possession of the soul of man". Desire and aversion are opposite shadows. Those who allow themselves to be overcome by their struggle can't rise to a knowledge of reality. In that way, *Combat of Shadows* is a striking dutch painting of an individual failure and its final realization in the life of a coward. G.S. Amur believes that the novel tells:

> the story of an Englishman's moral disintegration and death in the Indian soil.

Malgonkar presents Henry in conflict between "desire and aversion". Henry is a man of no integrity. He fails to establish viable relationship with Ruby Miranda or with
his English wife Jean. In that way, Malgonkar presents the darker side of the life with the help of Henry Winton. He is an embodiment of evil. Thus the character of Henry Winton appears to reveal, as Dayananda believes, Malgonkar’s preoccupation with the darker side of the nature of the ruling British.\textsuperscript{16} The death of Henry Winton confirms the poetic justice done in the novel by Malgonkar. Thus, Henry’s failure in life without any sense of fulfillment is due to his inauthenticity or what Sartre calls ‘faith’. He has never been able to go beyond the conflicting ‘desire and aversion in his dealings. He has failed to attain the knowledge of reality.

The other dimensions of the novel which projects Malgonkar’s vision of the future is the present style of politics in the hands of the new brand of politicians in post Independence India. The novel clearly demonstrates that the Indian politicians can sell out the national cause for self interest without any moral scruples. In \textit{Combat of Shadows} Jugal Kishore, a trade union leader serves the purpose of the novelist. Thus in that way, Malgonkar presents his vision of the future by projecting the dark aspects of human life.
In *The Princes*, Malgonkar shows his vision of the future by projecting the growth of Prince Abhayraj, in the very context of the integration of the Princely State of Begwad from the early days of political unrest in 1938 to the merger in 1949. In this novel Malgonkar as Dayananda says, “presents an interweaving of the two themes in the novel the rising freedom struggle and the growing up of a prince.” In *The Princes*, Malgonkar presents “the development of the protagonist from a state of a personal and social alienation caused by emotional problems of childhood and adolescence through a maturing process which involves experience of sex and war, to the fulfillment of personality in the realization of human relationship and the affirmation of tradition values.” In the end of the novel, Abhay is given the knowledge to be a man Abhay’s decision to give up his role as an independent spectator and to stand by his father, ‘right or wrong’, is a direct consequence of the partition of the country and the threat of an open split with the Government of India.”

Abhay himself confirms the transformation taking place within him:
Indeed it seems to me that with the passing of the years I have come to identify myself more and more with those values. With the result that today I feel myself a spokesman for whatever the princely order once stood for.

The novel is concerned with the evolution of Abhay as he is exposed to the conflicting loyalties and ideologies. In the end of the novel, Abhay shows a sense of loyalty to his father, which is nothing more than a recognition and a return. So when there was a crisis period in the princely India, Abhayraj resigns his commission in the Army and assumes his responsibilities to the state. So both Abhayraj and his father, despite the seeming differences in their outlook, long to preserve their identity and seek fulfillment in the Odd order. Thus, Abhay’s growth from boy to man, his transformation—"through a series of rites and revelations into a hero", confirms his firm faith in some values in human life. So Abhay, in the end leaves the ‘ivory tower’ of a princely isolation and alienation and identifies himself with the common man. Thus the vision of the future of the writer is defined and clarified by the growth of the protagonist Abhay, towards self-discovery, maturity and understanding of the world.

In *A Bend in the Ganges*, Malgonkar examines Gandhism in the modern context. This time, Malgonkar...
concentrates his attention on the role of terrorists as well, besides the followers of Mahatma Gandhi, in the struggle of freedom. Malgonkar in this novel presents the existence of violence in human life. He says violence is a part and parcel of life. It can not be avoided completely. Negation of this fact is blissful blindness. One can avoid it only by accepting its existence in life and by boldly facing it but not by preaching non-violence blindly. Also Malgonkar does not uphold terrorism as an answer to the country's question of freedom. He does not accept or reject Gandhi's principles. As Hafiz Khan, a muslim character predicts-

In the midst of Gandhi's non violence, violence persists-violence such as no one has ever seen. That is what awaits this country's the violence battled up in those who pay lipservice to non-violence.22

Similarly, on the other hand, Gian Talwar's commitment to Gandhian ideals is at best troubled with self-doubt:

Was the non-violence merely that of a rabbit refusing to confront the bound(p.93).

Malgonkar also does not uphold violence as a way of life. In the death of Debidayal and Shafi Usman. Malgonkar discards violence by revealing its self-consuming nature. Ultimately the affirmation is in "the
value of love which transcends violence and non-violence - the real and the unreal and brings about freedom and fulfillment to the individuals. 

In this novel, Gian and Debidayal represent two different ideologies of life. Gian accepts the path of non-violence and truth, and in his interaction with a crucial event in life jettisons his principles. He kills Vishnu Dutt, the murderer of his brother. The murder changes his life and principles totally. He starts a life based on "a bundle of lies and series of deceitful deeds," to get himself to a comfortable position. On the other hand, Debidayal chooses the path of violence and he is betrayed by his friend and freedom fighter Shafi Usman. He undergoes sufferings and humiliation at the hands of Britishers in Andamans. His compassion for Mumtaz transforms him and compels him to review the philosophy of his life. Thus in a way, Malgonkar rejects both, the senseless violence and cowardly non-violence in the novel.

Thus in the end of the novel, both "Gian and Debidayal, with contrasting natures and contrasting ways, come to realize the same redeeming factor - affirmation through love" as the prince, Abhayraj in
The Princes. Now as Amur points out, "the Gian who survived is not the Gian who built his life on falsehood, but a morally regenerated individual." It is only by immersion in the flux of experience—in Konshet, in the Andamans and in Duriabad—that he achieves authenticity."

Thus Gian and Debidayal are the two major symbols in the novel and it is through them that the author's vision of the future gets defined and clarified—Debidayal has withdrawn into a life of domestic happiness and that Gian has risen from his degraded and mean position to a sense of sacrifice and love.

The Devil's Wind presents his vision of the future by projecting a true historical event; a Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, by Nana Saheb's point of view. In that way, Malgonkar has broadened our understanding of the sepoy Revolt, taking advantage of the novelist's perspective, and also by delving into inner recesses of the mind of his main character, Nana Saheb.

In this regard Professor G.S. Amur observes that "Malgonkar has succeeded in restoring to the image of Nana Saheb its basic humanity." Nana has been regarded as a hero by Indians and as a villain by
Britishers but Malgonkar — treats him as "a human being" which he himself confirms in a pre-publication interview, "I write of him as neither a patriot nor villain but as a rather mixed up human being, like most of us." Malgonkar's concern is: what makes Nana human, a compound of good and bad. He shows a keen sense of "a feeling for life as it is, in an artistic acceptance of reality." He does not shrink to turn the history of Sepoy Revolt inside out to reflect on Nana's role in it. He evokes the picture of 1857 with a concern for reality and transforms into art.

The whole interest of the novel, as Malgonkar says, lies in the fervent portrayal of Nana's intense quest for fulfillment of his life which he finds in the values of friendship, patriotism and love. Malgonkar tries to show that Nana has no intentions of cheating either his country or his British friends. He does not want the innocent to be killed gratuitously. Although the novel pleads for his innocence, Nana could not overthrow his obligations as a friend to the English people. So he sends word to the Wheelers before his attack on the Entrenchment. During his attacks, violence erupts without his knowledge or involvement. Nana continues his incessant struggle for the freedom of his
mother land even after his repeated defeats which shows his patriotic fervour. Ultimately after his retreat to Nepal, he seeks fulfillment in the love of Eliza, a British girl. He feels redeemed himself in a state of nirvana in her blissful company. Nana feels that "all his losses are compensated by this domestic bliss." It was almost the bliss of savage life.

Eliza and I were like some symbolic couples... finding total fulfillment in one another and hankering for nothing which we could not find in our own surroundings.

Thus, in that way, Malgonkar presents the figure of Nana which plays a crucial role in the novel. The part played by Nana is very much like that of Abhayraj in The Princes. Like Abhay, Nana is both an actor and narrator of the novel. During the course of the novel, the full character of Nana evolves from a naive, impulsive and spoiled prince to a politically conscious, rebel and finally to a calm observer of the past events - a mature and philosophical hero who renounces and rejects his life of violence and rebellion and achieves a calm and philosophical attitude towards life. Thus, the vision of the future, of Malgonkar in this novel is defined and clarified by Nana when he seeks redemption in the love in the end of the novel.
Malgonkar is an artist with a total vision of life. The preoccupation with the theme of good and evil is recurrent in most of Malgonkar's novels. *Bandicoot Run* is the lively example of this, in which Malgonkar projects a more intense psychological perception and insight into evil. It is here, in this novel, that good and evil become almost a spectacle of mystery. It is a metaphysical vision where they cannot be isolated from each other. Human life comprises both good and evil and it is this life that is the incarnation of the mystery. By doing so Malgonkar projects his vision of the future.

In *Bandicoot Run*, Malgonkar presents a view of stark corruption in Indian Army after the independence. Kiran Garud in this novel stands for certain positive qualities whereas Shamlal Behl typifies the opposite. General Behl tries to accuse his colleague General Garud but the investigation reveals how the secrets have been transmitted to Pakistan and who has revealed them. The Board accuses Shamlal Behl for the leakage of secrets. In that way goodness prevails over evil which is the main themes of Malgonkar novels.

Thus, Malgonkar in *Bandicoot Run* reveals that the question of national loyalty is vital to the
writer. To him, army is cleaner than anything and the army code is above everything. In that way, Malgonkar shows his faith in certain codes which are more precious than money.

The last novel taken up for present study is *The Garland Keepers*. In this novel, Malgonkar presents his vision of the future by projecting his deep concern for human freedom which is in peril at the time of emergency imposed in India. M. Rajagopalachari considers the novel "an indictment of infringement of human rights and gross abuse of power in emergency." Malgonkar creates some fictitious characters against this backdrop to reveal their moral degeneration. He, however, suggests the hope of resistance to such atrocities through some positive action from some characters.

Malgonkar shows with bitter irony that in the rule of Emergency, the entire power could be used to serve the political ends of the top leaders. Anybody can be arrested, terminated or promoted depending on his compliance or otherwise with the higher-ups. Seniority "means nothing—not even for that highest judges in the land". Freedom, justice, rule of law turn out to be
myths in the hands of powerful coterie. This is the dark side of the life which is represented by Swami Rajguru who is the head priest’ of the caucus. Other members are Ekanti Ma, the Great Leader’s son and the most dreaded man’ Kalas Kak, his favourites Kaul and Pashupat known as the Owl. But at the same time Malgonkar creates characters like Om Prakash, Vimal Lal and A.B. Chopra which show uncompromising commitment to truth and work in the novel. They took the cudgels to fight the monumental corruption. Malgonkar presents a series of move and countermoves between these opposite forces and ultimately goodness prevails over evil forces and as the result of this, the possibility of dethronement of the Great Leader is not ruled out. Thus, Malgonkar’s vision of the future is confirmed by his passionate quest for freedom and justice in the end of the novel.

Even, though Malgonkar shares with Bhattacharya the realization of the dangers of a stagnant ideology, he is different from him as regards his suggestion of the way out. While Bhattacharya stands for specific ideas or strategies, Malgonkar stands for the human definitions of these. It is men rather than in abstract institutions or values that he sees the ray of hope which helps him to project his vision of the future.
Malgonkar's novels are replete with unabashed eulogy of English men in general for their sense of duty, devotion and commitment to principles in handling difficult situations in India - values which he clubs together to form a code his protagonists live by. His positive heroes, hold the English as their ideal. Kiran Garud in *Distant Drum* illustrates this propensity to deify the English as the picture of perfect commitment and devotion to a valued cause. "Whenever Kiran was confronted with a tricky situation, he always tried to think what a British C.O. would have done in his place" (p.59). The English tea-estate managers in *Combat of Shadows* have gone "half nature" (p.118) in their concern and consideration for the natives. Gian and his brother, Hari, in *A Bend in the Ganges*, look up to the "crop of honest, selfless English officers at the top"(p.124) to give them justice. In *The Princes*, Abhay holds the Englishmen in the same high esteem.

Whereas the commitment, devotion and scrupulousness of English men is taken as axiomatic, the corruptibility, inefficiency, irresponsibility and self-seeking of Indians is taken so much for granted that an honest politician like Puran Das in *Bandicoot Run* has specifically to be distanced from the rest of the tribe.
In *A Bend in the Ganges* Gian believes that an average Indian is "mixed up, shallow and weak" (p.128) and the novel shows it to be so. Gian doubts, "whether India could ever do without the British. It was they who were so scrupulous about the ends of justice" (p.129). The doubts is bit large in Malgonkar's corpus for the Indian politicians are presented as thoroughly unscrupulous in their naked lust for power. Lala Vishnu Saran Dev (*Distant Drum*), Jugal Kishor (*Combat of Shadows*), Kanak Chand (*The Princes*), Krishna Manikam (*Bandicoot Run*) and Swami Rajguru in (*The Garland Keepers*) represent fully what their creator thinks of their calling.

The values the English men exhibit in abundance and the average Indian woefully lacks form a code. Adherence to this code, Malgonkar feels, is essential for protecting individual and community interests. The values comprising the code are loyalty, courage, strength, skill, grace, steadfastness, sense of duty and gentle manliness and so on. Himself a retired Army officer, Malgonkar specifically refers to those values as having emanated from the Army Code after it had "shed away its unethical overtones and become refined into a standard of behaviour for men who had to enforce discipline without appearing to do so"
(Bandicoot Run p.48). Besides the army, the Malgonkar code finds fertile ground in the true to-the-soil world of the peasantry (which has its vital code of justice/vengeance) and the princely order (which had its own unwritten code of honour).

The single most-prized value of the code is loyalty—loyalty to a friend and to the group one belongs to. All the positive characters in Malgonkar represent loyalty and camaraderie irrespective of caste, creed, colour or community—Kiran Garud, Abdul Jamal, Bertie Howard, Ropey, Booker (Distant Drum), Jamadar Dongre, Tony Sykes, Abhayraj (The Princes), Kiran Garud, his subordinate, Ranoji, Gilchrist (Bandicoot Run) Om Prakash, Vimal Lal, A.B. Chopra (The Garland Keepers) Nana Saheb (The Devil’s Wind). Malgonkar insists on his protagonists, adherence to these values in their roles as individuals and as publication. Malgonkar’s men, rather, have their public lives governed by this set of private values. Jamal in Distant Drum saves his friend from the official enquiry into their officer’s suicide. Kiran too, flouts all barriers to go to and share drinks with Abdul Jamal, now an officer in the Pakistan Army, even though the two countries are at war with each other.

Spike Ballur, Kiran’s officer, ‘understands’ Kiran
gesture and thus he saves Kiran. Winton's failure in *Combat of Shadows* is to be attributed to his betrayal of the code. He is loyal to none, not even to his own feelings.

Another distinguishing attribute of Malgonkar's men is courage in the pursuit of a desirable goal. This value is well-illustrated by 'Bull' Hampton in *Distant Drum*. He deliberately engages a column of Japanese Army in action at Twin Pagoda Hill and dies in harness. Kiran, the controlling voice in *Distant Drum* is full of approbation:

That was the sort of thing that created Regimental legends; not a dozen cold and beautifully planned actions backed by tactical logic (p. 137).

The valour of Jamadar Dongre and Tony Sykes evokes the same praise in Abhay, the narrator in *The Princes*. The purposeful daredevilry executed by Debi and other firebrand terrorists in *A Bend in the Ganges* is also presented in a manner which would earn the appreciation of the readers. Gian, in going back to Duriabad to save Sundari, even though he very well anticipates the communal holocaust there, displays the same courage. Winton in *Combat of Shadows* fails, for he does not
measure up to the existing standards set for his men by Malgonkar.

Malgonkar's obviously, is a plea for action to protect values which are, in essence, traditional. Bhattacharya, in one sense, can be taken as a novelist of ideas, even though as a novelist he is committed to concretization of themes and problems in terms of felt life. On the other hand Malgonkar is a believer in men rather than philosophic values or institutions. The values he cherishes are more elemental and earthy. Another Indo-Anglian novelist who resembles him in this respect is Khushwant Singh. Singh and Malgonkar are essentially writers of adventure tales of charismatic heroes and daring outcasts who are in the very thick of epoch-making events—World War, rebellious movements, freedom struggle, partition.

The way, Malgonkar presents his protagonists acting single-mindedly in pursuit of the values they cherish, the impression is gathered that he would have no extraneous or peripheral issue cloud their perspective. His men are prompted primarily by being true to themselves and winning the love and respect of their colleagues and subordinates. Kiran, Abdul, 'Bull'
Hampton (Distant Drum) Hiroji, Abhayraj, Tony Sykes (The Princes), Debi, Gian (A Bend in the Ganges) Nana Saheb (The Devil's Wind), Nadkar and Reddy (Bandicoot Run) Om Prakash, Vimal, A.B. Chopra (The Garland Keepers) - all adhere to the code with persistence in a straightforward manner unencumbered with pragmatic considerations. Winton in Combat of Shadows proves the rule by negative analogy. It is his lack of candour with himself which vitiates his responses and ultimately drives him to the wall.

Concentrating on simple values, Malgonkar's protagonists reject tangential concerns as distracting and irrelevant. They have, especially, a bias against the establishment.35 A typical Malgonkar man is "wrought in the Clark Gable Hollywood tradition- cynical, grinning, a Lady's man, cocking an outrageous snook at the Indian Establishment whether arm chair generals or congress politicians or hypocritical preachers of ahinsa in a country at war, forging its soul in the smithy of blood and fire".36

Thus, from a close observation of the modern socio-political scene, Bhattacharya and Malgonkar derive differing conclusions to project their vision of
the future. Bhattacharya’s is a strong plea for rediscovering the true essence of ways rooted in our tradition and employing them in a constructive manner, moulding the method, if need be, to sharpen its efficacy. A genuine application of all-encompassing socio-political philosophy of Gandhi would seem the most suitable in the present times as much as it had been in the past. Malgonkar on the other hand, has no patience with vague abstractions and philosophic and theoretical speculations. What matters for him is the bustle of action rather than the pale cast of thought. Action could even be impulsive, seemingly irrational. Whereas Bhattacharya presents a view largely shared by many other novelists, Malgonkar with his "fundamental subversion of the accepted values of post-independence India, its virtual ignoring of the pacifist tradition and its deliberate refusal to compromise with the modern world," becomes one of the most original novelists in his field in this respect.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


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17. Ibid, p. 90.


19. Ibid.


37. Ibid, p. 194-95.