

## CHAPTER -IV

MANOHAR MALGONKAR'S CONCEPT OF HERO IN HIS  
HISTORICAL NOVELS4.1 DISTANT DRUM : KIRAN GARUD :

Malgonkar is a keen observer of manners and moods of men. He describes the workings of the mind of his heroes in detail in his novels. There is an astonishing variety of characters in his novels. His characters are alive in limb, they are comic and serious, simple and deep, foolish and thoughtful. One of the most striking aspects of Malgonkar's characterization is the importance of masculine characters—one after the other, from Distant Drum to Bandicoot Run, all heroes are male. Kiran Garud in Distant Drum, Henry Winton in Combat of Shadows, Gian Talwar in A Bend in the Ganges, Abhayraj in The Princes, Nana Saheb in the Devil's Wind, Jai Kumar in Open Season are masculine heroes of Malgonkar's fictional world.

In Distant Drum, Malgonkar attempts to present various facets of army life in India during the period of transition from the last years of the British regime to the beginning years of Congress rule. The action of the novel covers the period from 1938 to 1950. On the personal level, it is the story of army officers initiation into the code of his growth and maturity in the Indian army. The choice of the subject matter is relevant because the Indian Army is a direct inheritance from the British and still gives allegiance to the British system of values.

Distant Drum is an exposition of a story of success and

a narration of the process of self-realization of the hero Kiran Garud. The novel is a human story of struggle and success and final achievement of goal of the hero Kiran Garud.

In Distant Drum, Kiran Garud is the young hero and the novel deals with the education of Kiran Garud. The real focus of novel is on the development of the personality of Kiran Garud, an army officer. The novel records Kiran's movement between 1938, when he joins the 4th Satpura as a second Lieutenant, and 1950, when he returns from Kashmir front to Raniwada as a Commanding Officer.

The novel is divided into three parts 'Regiment,' 'Staff' and 'Active Service'. Kiran Garud is the central figure in all these parts, using the techniques of flash back, Kiran focusses light on various aspects of army life. The Major parts of the novel Distant Drum are related to the hero Kiran's moral and intellectual evaluation and authentic documentation of army life. C.L. Proudfoot rightly remarks that Malgonkar

'recaptured the atmosphere of the earlier days faithfully and right through the whole book runs the golden thread of authenticity with never a false note', 1

Much of the details of army life is projected through action and experience of the principal characters in the novel. Malgonkar has presented in the novel, in the words of

G.S. Amur, ' a symbolic presentation of the Indian encounter with the British army and its values for India.' 2

There are many themes in Distant Drum : The Indo-British relationships at a personal level, the theme of loyalty and friendship, the theme of love between Kiran and Bina, the theme of the self-realization and the initiation of the hero Kiran Garud in the Satpura Code. Kiran Garud, joined the army in 1938 as a Second Lieutenant and rose to the position of a Lieutenant Colonel and became the C.O. of a battalion at Raniwada.

Distant Drum is a documentation of the army life which observes certain essential code of behaviour Malgonkar himself says :

"This book is largely the story of success or failure of the efforts of one the officers of the Regiment to live up to its code". 3

As per the elements of the Code, a Satpura Officer is, first and foremost, a gentleman. He is not expected to do anything against the Regiment's 'izzat' and he should always finish off his own tigers. When two of them bet, only one should check up and the other should take his word always. He should not say that 'he does not know'; on the other hand, he should say that ' he will find out' because he should take his professional responsibilities very seriously.

The code is wide , elastic and rigid too. Every Satpura officer is expected to try to live upto the code, even though it is not always possible to succeed. There is a blend of freedom and discipline in the Code. It is a Code of honour, where any sort of cowardice is considered as the irredeemable sin. The Code is essentially secular in nature. It is a study in attitudes and it is not a defence of any particular culture. The hero Kiran Garud tries to follow the Code, which is called the Satpura Code. Kiran belongs to the 4th Satpuras, which is a battalion of Indian Regiment. Its name seems to have been derived from the Satpura Hills, difficult to cross because of its impenetrable jungles and valleys, befitting a battalion. Kiran Garud is a staunch upholder of Satpura Code.

Though the hero of the novel admires the British officers for their Satpura Code, he also questions their behaviour when they go wrong. In the words of a reviewer in the Times Literary Supplement :

'Distant Drum is the Story of how he (Kiran) applied the principle that he inherited from the old army to the changed conditions of modern India'<sup>4</sup>

Malgonkar explains, in the guise of the love story of Kiran and Bina, the working of the army in detail before and

after Independence and makes the monotonous, drab and dull existence of the army entirely engrossing and absorbing, throbbing with life, by creating human situations. In other words, 'Kiran becomes an event-making individual in the novel'.

In the British Indian Army Kiran, as Second Lieutenant, had to put in eighteen months exhaustive training of the Regiment's customs and mess etiquette. In the beginning, Kiran feels angry and bitter like all Second Lieutenants. Later on, he realises that this strenuous training was part of the process of increasing resistance; it was all an essential part of grounding as an officer which directs his action, determines his point of view and profoundly affects his character and personality. The eighteen months training was like a test in the emergence as hero.

Being courageous and brave, Kiran comes out triumphantly in his training of eighteen months. Then he is trained at the Military Academy in Dehradun. He receives further education of the Regiment from the British officers. He has an ideal of the military commander in his mind. The British Officer turns him into almost another British Officer. He is righteous, firm and strict. At the time of Kiran's joining the army, the C.O. of battalion was treated like a god : 'a tin god, perhaps, only a major sort of deity with power to control the destinies of more than a thousand

men, but all the same god'.(P.77).

Kiran is very much impressed and influenced, Ropey Booker, a British Army officer, who represented Kiran's ideal of Military Commander, Kiran tries to live like Booker, a brave and gentlemanly figure. Thus Kiran inherits the code of behaviour; the gentlemanly code, the Satpura Code from Ropey Booker. Kiran's experience of serving under good officers like Ropey Booker and Spike Ballur was the foundation for his emergence later as a fine officer. To Kiran, Ropey Booker was like a stern and indulgent father of the Victorian period and he was always proud of his officer and man relationship. He became, with his exemplary behaviour, at the end of the Burma Campaign, a military colonel with the unmistakable stamp of a great commander.

There were hurdles in Kiran's career. He could not maintain the style of the life of his predecessors, as he was paid only half that pay and since the cost of everything had increased three times. About the type of life led by the army people, says Mr.Sonal :

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For one thing, these people in the army now-a-days are very badly paid; you know, very badly. Then they get shunted about all over the country, many places where they can't take families... they

can't afford to get married and...live comfortably'.(p.195)

This clearly indicates how the army people face many hurdles. Nevertheless, to serve in the army is an adventure. Kiran accepted the call to adventure; so he got recruited in the army, it was his own choice. He faced many problems and obstacles; but that was the fate of everyone in the army.

It is Kiran's experience as a Bum Wart, a Second Lieutenant, that really introduced him to army life. Bum Warts were considered 'dirt and less than dirt' and they should not speak at meal times, unless they were spoken to. It shows their discipline. They were insulted at every step and given even extra parades even for the slightest, real or imaginary, irregularity. One needs courage to swallow the insult. The most important thing is that no discrimination was shown between the Indian Bum Warts and the British Bum Warts. It was not only a matter of hard training, but also process of cutting one down to size, making one learn how to take it and realize that he was one among the soldiers, though he, as an officer was entitled to a salute and to absolute Obedience from those he commanded. As an officer, he had to carry the extra burden of responsibility because of his upbringing, education, and training. That was the only difference between an officer and soldiers.

This shows how Kiran is different from other characters in the novel. Kiran is a different and superior character in the novel compared to other characters. Being an officer Kiran differs from other men in the degree of his powers.

Second Lieutenants were put under the charge of senior subalterns who would take them in hand and teach them the regiment's customs and mess etiquette. It was their responsibility to see that the Second Lieutenants behaved themselves properly on all occasions. Once Bertie Howard took Kiran to task when Kiran did not show interest in playing Fredda on a guest night. He told him that it was not a bloody funeral and that it was his duty 'to sparkle at guest nights', ( P.131 ) whether he liked it or not.

On another occasion, Kiran was not allowed by Bull Hampton to sit down and drink a lemon squash, even though he was thoroughly exhausted after marching miles. Kiran was asked to go back to the other men marching along with him and inspect their feet. When he came back after the foot inspection he was asked again to go and water the mules. Watering mules took a full hour and when he walked into the ante-room of the men for the third time he began to curse Bull Hampton. This occasion clearly shows Kiran's courage, ability, strength, tolerance and also anger.



Kiran used to feel angry like all Bum Warts and felt bitter in the beginning about the treatment given to them, but later on he realized it as ' a process which, despite all its crudeness, had been proved through the ages to achieve splendid results and had made the regular officers of the British army the fine leaders of men they were'. ( p.79 )

The treatment was harsh, crude and cruel, but it moulded the personality of Kiran. Later on, Kiran became the leader, a great man, a model and a pattern for his fellow officers and soldiers. Kiran learnt not only ' to take it' in the right spirit, but also to dish it out ' : It is a part of the proud tradition of the army whose motto is :

"The safety, honour and welfare of country come first. Always and every time : The Honour, welfare and comfort of men you command come next. Your own case, comfort and safety come last, always and everytime', ( p.80 ).

The Officer must give priority to safety, honour, and welfare of country first. The army's motto teaches the leadership qualities. It teaches devotion, sacrifice, brotherhood and selfless service. Kiran learns these things from his training under the British officers and he is turned into a leader. Kiran's personality was moulded by the British Officers. †

Even mentality and thought process were also moulded on the pattern of a British Officer-whenver confronted with a tricky problem, he would think only on the lines of a British Officer. At the time of inclusion of tanks in the T.E.W.T. for Brigade exercise, he thought, if British officers as Ropey Booker or Girgut were in his place, they would have fitted even an unwanted squandron of tanks in the most appropriate role and proved their professional competence. Kiran has a common sense, practical view and prudence. Kiran hero-worshipped the British Officer Ropey Booker, though he was an Indian at heart. Kiran was criticised and assessed by his fellow officers like Shantilal and Kamala Kant. He was called " a bootlicking dog '.

Such was Kiran's devotion to British Indian Army's Satpura Code that he did not hesitate to check and chastise Colonel Manners when he questioned the regimental loyalty. Kiran's character is remarkable for indomitable courage, magnanimity, manliness and commanding presence of mind. On the occasion with Colonel Manners in a mess, we observe these qualities of Kiran.

Colonel Manners did not like India or Indians and thought Indian Art, Music and Religion to be uncivilized and barbaric.

" Gandhi is a quack and Nehru an utter charlatan and the only thing to do with all senditionmongers is to put them against a wall,' ( p.23 ).

Manner talked further about regimental loyalty in the following words :

' If it came to that, I am not at all sure that the men of this bloody regiment could stand the test of loyalty.' (p.23)

Kiran could not tolerate this insult and he stood boldly before Colonel Manners and asked Colonel Manner's permission to leave the mess. It was only Kiran who could boldly ask Colonel Manners. It shows his courage, manliness, presence of mind, sense of honour and pride for his army and nation.

Kiran's experience of service under good officers like Ropey Booker and Spike Ballur was the foundation of his emergence later as a fine officer and the 'hero of the novel. In the eyes of Kiran, Spike Ballur could be compared to Russel Pasha, who was the Director of Military Training, a dedicated infantry officer. But he also hero-worshipped Thimmaya who looked like a General even in his swimming trunks. For Kiran, all the qualities required for a successful career of a military officer were - personality, a strong faith in personal judgement about any kind of military problem, a

good deal of swagger, three rows of ribbons which include both the D.S.O. and the M.C. not too high a degree of imagination, an ability to delegate authority and an undefinable attribute which make his men respect and dread without hating him. People like Russal Pasha, Spike Ballur, Roper Booker and Thimmayya seemed to outgrow narrow nationalism and their concern seemed to be discipline and the human problems of the service.

To Kiran, Kamala Kant, an officer, is a fanatic and he does not subscribe to his views. Kamala Kant's aversion to the British and his sense of nationalism are such that he wants the English names of the roads and the houses of the regiments changed and every thing British destroyed. Kamala Kant realised in the end of the novel that it was impossible to change and destroy what the Britishers had named and created. He does not like dances in the club, because he thinks that they would make their women immoral. He thinks that aping the ways of the British is nothing but a legacy of the British rule and a betrayal of our slavish past. He brands Kiran as one who grew with the old order which was nothing but the slavery of the Indians. Kamala Kant is a hypocrite he lacks the Satpura Code. He is cunning and shrewd, but he lacks prudence, gentleness, broadness of mind. He is a narrow minded person. He spoils the whole battalion in the end of the novel.

Kiran, however, maintains a balance between the old order and his sense of nationalism and he has loyalty to the Satpura Code, so he does not believe in mixing loyalty with politics. Kiran is generous, liberal and prudent. When the Satpura officers are brought together for the reunion of the Satpuras, Kamal Kant expresses resentment at having a Britisher ( Ropey Booker ) instead of an Indian as the chief guest. In his opinion there are only two types of Britishers : (1) Swines, and (2) Bloody Swines. Kamal Kant is a narrow-minded character compared to Kiran Garud. The character of Kamal Kant is a study in contrast to that of Kiran Garud. Kamalakant's attitude is bigoted and intolerant but Kiran's attitude is tolerant and broad. Kiran has a sense of understanding which Kamala Kant lacks. Kiran maintains a beautiful balance between the British and Indian social customs.

Malgonkar portrayed faithfully the typical Indian Army Officer in Kiran Garud. Kiran Garud identifies his life so much with the army that he treats the mess life as his second home and the cantonment life as a part and parcel of army life :

" Reveille, retreat last post even the kitchen call had their own meaning to each soldier." ( p.54 ).

Because of his great love for tradition, though some of traditional rules of mess are meaningless and a few are

even against the spirit of his own times, Kiran very rarely takes liberty with the traditional rules of the mess. He simply follows the established custom of the regiment in giving his officers an account of what he had learnt in the infantry commanders' conference at Shingargaon after a special dinner. He himself is a considerable commanding officer. He is a leader and commander of his battalion. He takes Rawal Singh to task when he finds him not wearing proper military uniform and wearing perfume when in uniform. It shows Kiran's courage, braveness, strongness and bold character. He did not hesitate to warn Rawal Singh to behave or dress like an officer. It shows his devotion and loyalty to his profession. Kiran knows every inch of his regiment and has such a sense of identification with it that he is moved to tears when he has to leave it.

Every experience in the battalion is calculated to bend and mould the character of an officer ( Kiran ) to an ideal man the eighteen months of training the life as a Bum Wart, regimental customs and mess etiquettes the training at the Military Academy and devotion to duty are all meant to process a soldier into an ideal officer. This, together with his life in the Burma and Kashmir campaigns and a desk job at Army Head Quarters mould him into a successful officer.

The life at the Army Head Quarters at Delhi is different from that of Regiment at Raniwada and it totters

the cosy illusion of the monolithic and glossy officer like character of Kiran. He is the chief commanding officer at Raniwada and he is one among others working in the office in Delhi. He has no reception, no transport, no accommodation in Delhi. He does not criticize them but he courageously and tolerantly accepts the fact. Life at Raniwada as the C.O. over-indulged his ego and increased his self-importance. His experience at the Army Head Quarters reduced the importance of his love affair and taught him to lose his identity in the crowds of self-important officers at the Army Head Quarters :

Kiran Says :

" Blast Army H. Q. : Here in New Delhi they make you feel like a Bum Wart all over again ". (p.82 )

He experiences many hurdles in his mission. He is unable to get co-operation from Namdar, the Co-ordinator, for he himself wanted to become the S.O.1, Border planning. Thus Kiran's life in the Directorate of War Planning is known as the ' Monkey House '. His life begins on a note of discordance, but he has a friendly guide in Mansingh who enlightens him on everything related to the Army Head Quarters.

Kiran Garud faces crisis in his professional career ; but he gets supporters, helpers at the time of tests and hurdles. One of the most unhappy incidents in the service of Kiran in his connection with the Accounts Department. It is an annoying incident in his life. The Accounts Department could make a mountain of a mole hill, and even the Brigadier, the Director of the Department, is afraid of them. Kiran encounters the Accounts Department very bravely. It shows his fortitude, firmness, strength and courage.

Kiran could not make the Accounts Department agree to the inclusion of rum and sugar in the ration of the experimental patrol to the unfrequented tracts of the Eastern Ghats. Kiran is advised by Mansingh to keep away from some military officers like Ramdeo who have an exaggerated idea of their own importance and are always ready to snub their juniors. Nevertheless, Kiran could not avoid a tiff with Ramdeo about the patrol, Ramdev is generally rude to his juniors and Kiran pays him back in his own coin by telling him that it depends on his mood, when asked by Ramdev whether he would behave rude to his seniors. The incident throws light on Kiran's courage, strong mind, adventure and bold nature. He is haughty and calm.

Kiran does not find the work in the Head Quarters agreeable either to his taste or mind. A matter of fact, there



is not much for him to do. It all seems to come in spurts and a week would pass with only a couple of hours of work per day and then there would be some 'flags' and army would be running in circles. Kiran has no instinct for such work. Pure military concepts have to be subordinated to non-military considerations. Every thing is looked at from the view point of those who are responsible for making policy decisions. Kiran is familiar with the purely military aspects-ground, distance and fire power which do not always rule the plans. He is trained to deal with the tactical problems a platoon, a command, or a battalion in attack or defence, pursuit or withdrawal and so, he feels inadequate for his task in the D.W.P. In a way it shows how things are mismanaged and right things are not put to right use in the army.

Kiran faces another hurdle in his office the redtapsim and procrastination, Kiran had only heard previously about the bullock-cart speed of the secretariat procedure and he now comes into direct contact with it. The aim of the elaborate, complex procedure may be good. It may be related with efficiency and speed, but in practice it could achieve only indecision and delay. The complex procedure is governed by baboo logic and it is not used to avoid mistakes but to avoid decisions. When a decision could no longer be delayed, someone else would be made responsible for taking it. The clerks and lower officers develop a negative

attitude of finding out reasons why something should not be done instead of why something should be done. However, the procedure is most inviolable and Kiran is taken to task by Namdar for short-cutting the procedure for getting the necessary maps without the knowledge of Namdar for preparing an appreciation of the communication requirements of Border Region, as instructed by the Brigadier. Kiran bravely and courageously faces the charges made by Namdar. It is a surprise to Kiran to know how people like Ramdev would bring in the name of the General to snub any opposition to proposal they made and claim equality with their superior to impress their juniors.

Mansing States :

<sup>4</sup> The Government of India has transformed delay into a science, it's absurd, that no one can do any thing about it, not even the Chief or the P.M. (p.109)

The red-tapism, procrastination, delay in taking decision had become an integral part of Indian army, after the Independence, which created hurdles in the ways of prompt, honest, loyal, devoted, hardworking, positive officers like Kiran. It becomes a test or a challenge for such officers like Kiran. The two Wars bring out the active soldier in Kiran. Though Distant Drum is not a war novel, Malgonkar gives a graphic account of the army in action by describing

picturesquely and effectively the war in Burma and in Kashmir. From the beginning, the whole Burma campaign was ill-fated. The Indian, the British and the Burmese troops kept up the fighting spirit. The killing confusion prevailed in various units. Kiran proved himself a very disciplined soldier in the series of defeats and he was lucky. He along with Hanbir Singh attacked the enemy. Kiran killed a man in hand-to-hand fighting. That was the only successful attack in that war which gave him a sense of fulfilment. It was the crowning achievement in an infantry officer's life. It shows his courage, bravery, adventurous spirit and chivalry. He acted like a warrior and killed an enemy. To go on war is an adventure. Kiran took part in it and got success. Kiran had the fortune of crossing the bridge again in the role of victor after the tide of war turned favourable to the Allies compared to the Burma war and the war in Kashmir front did not seem real. Kiran is an active and energetic soldier, but he feels uneasy due to the interminable waiting. A soldier experienced the feeling of exhilaration in Burma war where as there is the lack of it in the War in Kashmir. In an objective and professional way, a soldier could enjoy a war like Burma War, in spite of its cruelty, horror and constant companionship of death. The final test for a commanding officer is to handle a battalion in a battle. The success in the battle is the only sure test of the capacity of a commanding officer in a battle. Kiran felt a vague sense of sadness in the War in Kashmir. He did his job seriously with professional single-mindedness

in both the wars. Kiran here emerges as a warrior. He is a commander, he is active, strong-minded, firm, positive and brave, courageous and a bold leader.

Malgonkar takes the opportunity of criticizing the red-tapism of the government and various conflicts especially between the Satpura Code and political power. This is seen in the incident of Lala Vishnu Sharan Dev, the District Congress president who tries to brow-beat Kiran who in turns holds on to his strict code of army morals. Kiran's victory over Vishnu Sharan Dev proves him to be a man of conviction. The political leader Vishnu Sharan Dev is a fine contrast to an army officer in all respects in dress, speech, appearance, attitude and ideas. Professor Iyengar rightly comments :

'Now that the Army has'nt its backsheep too -- its 'bastards' and its boobies. But take it all in all, the Army is a cleaner thing than a mere political party. At least the Army has never to be ready to undergo ordeal by fire; and the ballot-box is a much tamer affair to the modern field.'5.

Kiran Garud politely and firmly refuses to lend the Shamiana for a political show :

'If the minister were coming ..... on an official visit and the shamiana was required by him or

the district officials, no doubt, I would have received orders to give you Shamiana. But for a political show, I am afraid, it is not at all possible'. (p.60)

Kiran appears here a bold, firm strict and courageous officer. Kiran proved to be a sincere and senior officer who disliked pleasing everyone who would threaten him with complaints to the higher authorities. He is not like Kamala Kant to mix politics with army affairs. Like Romantic hero, Kiran is a rebel and a critic of the society, its ills and evils. Kiran is like the Byronic hero who is against every form of tyranny and he has a deadly hatred for all cant and hypocrisy . He advocates respect for the Satpura Code values. Kiran takes the risk by challenging Vishnu Sharan Dev. Like the Revolutionary Hero in modern literature, Kiran faces the dilemma of relationship with the group or society. The choice in social and historical context is between the priorities of will or necessity. Thus being revolutionary, Kiran fights paradoxically against a social order, order in the army for a new society or an ideal Indian Army. Like the Modern Hero Kiran faces the problem with self. The inner split of Kiran's personality in his relationship with the objects, codes and values he encounters with, are the manifestation of the identity crisis. He rejects the political and cosmic order and searches for his own personality. He tries to create a new

image of his own.

It is only people like Kiran who, with their unbending sense of duty and loyalty to the army, are responsible for the survival of the army in the heart-rending partition and the sinister political onslaughts in the period of transition from political slavery to freedom. He rather risked a transfer from Raniwada to Delhi than gave in to the political upstart and preserved his self-respect and individuality like the Byronic Hero or Romantic Hero.

Kiran is terribly in love with Bina Sonal; but even then, he would not sacrifice his career, his devotion to the Army, for his beloved Bina. Kiran is free, fair and frank by nature. He never conceals his feelings.

Kiran's confrontation with Sonal, the senior servant, the Secretary of Department, the father of Bina whom Kiran loves very much, accentuates the clash between the Satpura Code and the civilian code. Prof. K.R.S. Iyengar rightly observes.

'... could be an odious and contemptuous figure, but one must still hope that men like Mr. Sonal are the exceptions and not the rule'.<sup>6</sup>

Being the father of Bina. Mr. Sonal thinks that his primary duty to see that his daughter is adequately possibly

sumptuously, provided for. He understands that his daughter Bina is in love with Kiran and according to him, a military officer is not a suitable match for his daughter. He makes odd remarks about Kiran saying :

'These people in the army now-a-days are very badly paid, you know, very badly. Then they get shunted about all over the country, many places they can't take any families. They ... can't afford to get married and ... er... live comfortably'.  
(p.195)

Mr. Sonal thinks that army officers of these days are notoriously rootless and have little money. But he would not have taken any objection if Kiran had private means or a highly paid job with one of their foreign firms or with the Tatas. As the father, he is justified in making every effort to remove all hurdles for finalizing a good match for his daughter. But he is not justified by any moral standard in trying to ruin Kiran's career. Mr. Sonal becomes a great hurdle in Kiran's love affair with Bina. In his love affair, Kiran gets helpers like Mrs. Leela Sanwal. He meets Bina in the house of Mrs. Leela Arun Sanwal and falls in Bina's love. Kiran's journey towards Bina is full of hurdles. Bina's father disapproves of Bina's love affair with Kiran. With all his tactics and influences of the army H.O., he brings about Kiran's transfer to Kashmir. Kiran is separated. Kiran's journey from Raniwada to Delhi to Kashmir and again to

Raniwada is a cyclic process. As mythological hero he travels to other world and again back. His journey was like a quest. He dreams about his love affair with Bina; he remembers her when he is away from her. He walks from Mr. Kagal's home to Palam Air Port. He drives a car and takes Bina to hotels. His quest is centripetal. He completes the journey and thus completes the cycle and proves his heroism or his place as a hero. Kiran's falling in love with Bina is an adventure. He is opposed by her father Mr. Sonal, he wins the charm and love of Bina in the end of the novel and finally gets Bina as a reward. He undergoes the supreme ordeal-he goes to fight wars. He faces the violent forces and tests. He gets supporters or helpers in his love and career like Mr. Abdul Jamal, Mr. Arun Sanwal, Mrs. Leela Sanwal, Shinde, Ropey Booker, Barkat Ram, Kotwal, Swarup Singh etc. and he is opposed by Mr. Govind Ram Sonal, Kamal Kant, Major. Rawal Singh etc., Kiran passes through the phases "seperation, initiation and return". Kiran is seperated from Bina, he accepts challenges, faces tests and hurdles and finally returns as a victor. He become successful in his love and his army career.

The army, the profession itself, is a great thing for Kiran although it might be the meaningless life in the eyes of Mr. Govind Ram Sonal. Boldly and firmly, he tells Mr. Sonal :



**"My career to me is more important than anything else more important than your daughter". (p.207)**

**Kiran is never uncertain in his movement. Intellectually more matured and rational in his approaches, he takes serious challenge of transfer with great ease and calm.**

**Kiran's character shines like a star here, he shows his courage, loyalty and devotion. Kiran sets his career at a higher level than his love for Bina. It clearly indicates his sacrificial quality, and love for army. He is ready to sacrifice his love for army career and Satpura Code. When Ropey Booker offers a good job to him, Kiran's love for army is put to test. Ropey Booker quit the army and joined Imperial Metals, an American concern which is spread all over the East, mining magnet and iron ore and bauxite in India, tin and copper in Burma and Malaya, He offers Kiran a job to head their sales organization for India. He offers two thousand rupees a month in addition to a generous expense account. Ropey Booker thinks that there is no future in the army. Whereas there is no limit to business which is more exciting than any other profession. He tells Kiran that he has done his bit of service as a soldier and that he has seen more battle service than most other soldiers in a life time**

and that he has the liberty to join the army when there is a war again. He explains that there is no glamour in peace time, soldiering as it is just like any other government job. Kiran replies to Ropey :

"Well, Sir, joining the army, becoming a soldier had been an ambition with me. It has not been merely a means of earning a living, it has been rather an end in itself. If they kicked me out, of course, I'd take on any job that I would get; but of my own will I don't want to leave", (p.250)

Kiran turns down the offer of Ropey Booker and plays a Pukka Sahib true to his own military code - Satpura Code.

Here Kiran's attitude is idealistic. He accepted the service in the army by choice, of his own will. He is very bold and firm in his decision and action. Like the Revolutionary Hero of modern literature, there is a problem of choice : The choice in social and historical context is between the priorities of will or necessity. Kiran Garud gives priority to his army service instead of highly paid private job offered by Ropey Booker. He wants to create a new society.

Kiran feels that he is one of the few officers of the

Indian army who have had the advantage of the proper grounding for all army officers and it is up to the people like him, the old guard, to mould the new post-War officers just entering into the army. They would be failing in their duty to the young new officers and to the future army if they are to quit. Kiran rejects the offer of Ropey Booker and proves that he is one who has outgrown his ideal-Ropey Booker, Kiran becomes an ideal example of army officer who is selfless, devoted and bold. What Alexander Welsh says comes true in case of Kiran Garud :

'Hero stands committed to prudence and the superiority of civil society'.<sup>7</sup>

Kiran has prudence, courage boldness, firm and strong decision power which make him a leader, a model, an ideal for the coming generations. Kiran and other officers as well as soldiers like him are called 'tigers'.

By rejecting Ropey Booker's offer Kiran becomes mature. Kiran has outgrown his 'calf love' and his blind imitation of Ropey. Imitation is the first step but assertion and self-realization is the final one. No material temptation can shake Kiran from his idealistic adherence to duty, Satpura code and values, hence Kiran becomes an ideal, a model or a pattern in the Indian Army. What Carlyle says about Heroes is quite true of Kiran:

"These were leaders of men, these great ones, the modellers, patterns and in a wide sense creators of whatever the general mass contrived to do or attain.'8

Ropey Booker is Kiran's ideal, a god. Ropey Booker initiated the Satpura Code in to Kiran Garud. Like the Greek Hero we find Kiran has intimacy with godly figure Ropey Booker.

Kiran could not give up his Army Code, his permanent code of honour - The Satpura Code just for Civilian Code. the . Professor Iyengar remarks :

"While the army civilian clash of codes provide the background , Kiran's love for Bina and his friendship with Abdul Jamal from the human foci that hold the action together".9

Kiran's love for Bina is more romantic than sentimental Bina loves him only for his martial qualities When he tells her about his rejection of an attractive and most remunerative job offered by Ropey Booker, she feels happy and all the more admires him for it. Though he could not keep away the thought of Bina from his mind even on the Kashmir front, it is always subordinated to his sense of duty

and devotion to army. Bina's love also is too pure and is not tempered by the money and the power of Arvind Mathur. At the end of the novel Kiran meets Bina in New Delhi on his way to Raniwada. He is no longer afraid of martial responsibility and he straightforwardly asks Bina :

"Darling, will you marry me ?"

To this, Bina says,

"Yes, if you love me. Do you ?" (p. 269)

Kiran admits unhesitatingly :

"I can tell you how much I love you. How much I have missed you.... these last three months have been torture ; I can tell you how miserable but please understand. I only wanted to make things easier for you....." (p.269)

Kiran expresses his love for Bina in words and he dreams of a successful married life full of joy and pleasure. Bina likes and loves Kiran Garud. She is in favour of valour, the strength and the sacrifice of Kiran Garud and rejects Arvind Mathur, the aristocratic wealthy man.

Kiran Garud is a perfect gentleman. He is not an

an opportunist who takes undue advantage of a situation. He has immense charm ; but he is never inclined to exploit his charm. It is his manliness and sexual charm that appeal to every attractive girl, Kiran is initiated into sexual knowledge by Margot Medley. It is Margot Medley who takes the initiative in sexual matters. She had even more pointed ways of attracting attention : "Gosh, My legs are getting all sunburnt". (p.26) when Kiran and Margot sit on the lawn near the tennis court in the evening, Kiran feels that 'one of the legs had come from under the bamboo table, reaching out like a snake, to play games with Kiran's bare ankle, and sent a delightful, electric thrill through him'. (p.26)

Kiran drew his foot back in embarrassment. He looked nervous and ashamed of himself. Later on when Abdul Jamal, an Army officer showed Kiran a nude picture of Margot Medley, he felt too hesitant to look at the picture and he refused to accept it, as he thought this unfair. Kiran is very polished and courteous. He never speaks coarsely like Abdul Jamal, He learns friendliness, courtesy and respect from the British officers. Abdul Jamal is rude, insensitive, anglophile like other Indian officers.

He believes that moral codes are based on decisions.

It is interesting to note that Kiran feels a sense of guilt when Col. Medley discovers him in his wife's flat. Kiran

was having an affair with Margot Medley when he was spending a few days in Calcutta in 1944 and it was a common war-time flirtation but feels morally responsible when Col. Medley kills himself. Though the incident awakens in him a sense of guilt, it does not, in any way, affect him personally. He sees the significance of the incident largely in terms of its impact on his own career. Kiran realizes his guilt, it shows his broadmind.

The friendship between Kiran and Abdul Jamal has proved Kiran secular and free from religious and racial prejudices. Kiran Garud is a noble, generous, free, firm and courageous hero in the novel Distant Drum. Kiran and Abdul Jamal both were together at the military academy and Abdul was a term junior to Kiran. Kiran helped Abdul several times to steer him clear of the mistakes which made his senior subaltern or Adjutant angry with him. But it is their affair with Medley that made them real friends.

Abdul saves Kiran twice - once in enquiry made about Bob Medley's suicide when Abdul gave evidence and cleared Kiran from any involvement in the Medley affair and secondly at the time of riot in September 1947. When Kiran was surrounded by a Muslim mob and about to be assaulted, Abdul threatened to kill the mob if they did as much as touch a hair of Kiran.

It is the irony of fate that these two friends who together participated in the Burma campaign were separated by partition and poised to fight against each other. But Kiran's debt to Abdul is only a private debt, as there is no room in soldier's code for divided loyalties. Kiran could not subordinate his soldier's code to his private loyalty or debt to Abdul. When they helped the victims of riots in Delhi they had no awareness of their different religions.

Distant Drum is a story of the painful separation of two friends and their dramatic reunion which creates regimental trouble in Kiran's life.

Kiran's meeting with Abdul Jamal created a problem before Kiran. Kiran and Abdul met on 21 December, 1949 after ceasefire under the bushy topped tree in No Man's land. The meeting was an adventure for Kiran. He firmly and courageously met his old friend but now an enemy. Abdul Jamal. It shows his valour and bravery. Kiran values his friendship more and is prepared to face the consequences of his action.

It seems this meeting will remain unique in military literature as a symbol of the human element in the face of a



national confrontation between two opposing communities, but the loyalties of the two friends remain unruptured. Of course, in the beginning, they did not attach much importance to their meeting, but subsequently realized the folly of displayed emotion in such a situation. To their superiors this was a serious irregularity on Kiran's part, though not a crime. Kiran was forced to go on leave, Kiran was warned not to repeat the folly. Loyalty to the nation is considered supreme by the soldiers and Kiran is divided. Kiran is found guilty, but he is saved by Spike Ballur who understands and appreciates Kiran's feelings. Kiran had been before this episode in the No-Man's land, a soldier true to his profession : 'A soldier could not remain friendly with some one who had now become an enemy.'(p.240)

Kiran could not talk with his friend frankly, which indicates that his relationship with Abdul is subjected to new values. But this confrontation finally results in shifting Kiran to the 4th Satpura which enables him to finalize his family affair asking Bina to accompany him to Raniwada, where they could enjoy every evening, hearing the drums sounding in distance.

In portraying the character of Kiran Garud, Malgonkar gives a fine and profound touch, full of vigour. The character of Kiran is dynamic, interesting and basically individualistic like a Romantic hero. Kiran is polished, dignified, realistic, powerful and delightful hero in the novel Distant Drum.

The few women characters in the novel play their part in the development of the hero, Kiran Garud. Leela, the wife of Arun Sanwal, though a minor character, is responsible for having introduced Kiran to Bina and is in a way responsible for their love. The only two women characters that are dealt with in the novel at length are Bina and Mrs. Medley. Bina is finally able to succeed in her love for Kiran after a lot of waiting and mental tension on account of her father's hostile attitude. But Mrs. Medley is a promiscuous and sex-hungry lady and has number of affairs. She initiated Kiran into the world of sex. His affair with Mrs. Medley is an indication of his sensuous and lustful attitude towards women-an attitude quite common in youth. However, this gives place to the deep and mature love he develops later for Bina Sonal. The difference is his behaviour towards Mrs. Medley and Bina records the shift in his character from the first flush of youthful exuberance for sex to the idea of romantic love.

In Distant Drum a host of characters parade before the reader; but three characters stand out - Kiran Garud Bina Sonal and Margot Medley; other characters remain secondary and flat. They are only introduced in the context of the development of Kiran Garud's character. The British officers Ropey Booker, Bull Hampton, Bertie Howard, Robert Medley and others appear briefly in the novel. They show friendliness, courtesy and respect for their Indian colleagues. Ropey Booker is an ideal for Kiran Garud. Kiran's prime ambition is to become very much like Ropey Booker and he always strives to live up to the code or the system of values that the British had introduced.

Kiran Garud's involvement with those efficient British Officers makes him a gentle, unselfish, naive, charming, hard working and conscientious army officer. Though Distant Drum has been described as a symbolic presentation of the

Indian character with the British army, in the army and its value to India, it is mainly a story of self-realization an individual's growing awareness of himself and his surrounding and the development of an assertive and practical philosophy of life. The novel is more a record of the maturing growth of hero, Kiran Garud, than a simple documentary of army life. It is a story of success of Kiran Garud in living up to the Satpura Code in army in a variety of circumstance and relationships. There is a steady and gradual growth of the hero. Kiran from an inexperienced, shy and awkward Second Lieutenant to a self-possessed and devoted Commanding Officer of a regiment, a man who tries to live up to the code. Kiran is shown as a finished soldier and a man who is initiated into a realization of life through the headway of life and experience. Thus the novel is considered as an authentic picture of army life, a conflict between the British tradition and the Indian ideals and a story of self-realization of the hero Kiran Garud. Kiran stands for certain positive values in life and achieves a sense of realization and success in love and career. In Kiran Garud Malgonkar symbolizes all the values he associated with code. Kiran feels that through decorum, restraint, discipline and moderation, a man can win control over the romantic and passionate impulses. He considers the idea that there are some concrete experiences in which a man discovers himself, not at odds with others, but in community with them the experience of togetherness.

Kiran Garud is a Code Hero, as we find in Hemingway's novels. Kiran's Satpura Code is the code of

manliness, gentleness, a code of courage and honour. Kiran represents a code according to which Kiran, by observing it, would be able to live properly in the world of violence, disorder and misery to which he has been introduced and which he inhabits. Thus being the Satpura Code Hero, Kiran offers and exemplifies certain principles of honour, courage and endurance which in a life of tension and pain make a man a man and enable him to conduct himself well in the losing battle that is life. He shows grace under pressure. What C.M. Bawra says about the Hero's achievement and character, is apt also in the case of Kiran :

".... in ablaze of glory which illumines his whole achievement and character. "10

The most important fact is that though Malgonkar's characters are very effective, they appear as types- the prototypes of officers and other ranks in the army. His close association with the army life helped him to create a special dialect which is expressive of the social life and philosophy of the service officers. There is an autobiographical element in the novel. Malgonkar was in the army, hence, he gives a very authentic and personal account of army life and lays emphasis on the growth and development of his Code Hero.. Kiran Garud who stands for the Satpura Code and positive values in life and who gets success and achieves a sense of self-realization. The novel is a human story of struggle for

positive values and the final achievement of a goal. Most critics and reviewers have referred to the novel Distant Drum as an 'epitaph of the British army'.<sup>11</sup> Symbolic presentation of the Indian characters with the British in the Army'<sup>12</sup> and It is about 'Indo - British relationships at the personal level ' ; in short, a documentary of life in the army.

Distant Drum is the story of the clash of personal and regimental loyalties. It is through the life of Kiran Garud that Malgonkar brings out the clash between the British army code - Satpura Code and the bureaucrats of New Delhi. It is the code which disciplined army, be it British or Indian.

Since the hero of the novel is out and out a soldier, he accepts the orders of the superiors and there is no scope for a deep conflict in his mind. The clashes are not fully developed into inner tensions and Kiran Garud reacts to them like a soldier. Even the memories of the past are narrated only to bring out the details of the military code and they are not linked up with the present. G.S. Amur calls Kiran's exploration of the past.

'a nostalgic act of memory and not a dynamic moral activity affecting the values of the present,' 13.

A deep inner suffering and anguish is protryed in the character of Kiran Garud. There is a confusion of values and he feels the conflicts of the emotional and intellectual tensions. Kiran

is pitied against circumstances beyond his control and training. He is rooted in his Satpura Code and nothing can shake him from those roots.

Malgonkar is more concerned with the moral examination of Kiran Garud's behaviour, moral in the sense that the actions of the protagonist are seen in the light of the ideas of wrong and right. Besides this personal story of Kiran Garud, the most outstanding quality of the novel, Distant Drum is characterized by its authentic note. The major concern of the novelist is the documentation of army life which he has captured with great maturity and transparent sincerity. The description of the battalions in action and the relaxed life are superb.

It is important to stress here that Malgonkar's treatment of the relationship between the British and the Indian officers is one of the most interesting aspects of the novel Distant Drum. In Malgonkar's novels, according to critics, there is a conflict between the sense of justice, fair play and integrity exemplified by the British in India on one hand, and on the other inefficiency and dishonesty which are typically Indian. It is true that the British public school conduct and the British system of values constitute the norm in Malgonkar's novels and the norm is maintained throughout. However, Malgonkar has not made any attempt to gloss over the dark aspects either of the Indian side or of the Britishers. With a perfect accuracy, Malgonkar explores the relationship between the Indians and the Britishers.

The major parts of the novel Distant Drum are related to the hero Kiran Garud's moral and intellectual evolution and the authentic documentation of army life. These two things are blended skillfully and are worked out with a fully creative involvement with the material. There is a concreteness in the sensibility.

Malgonkar's purpose of portraying the initiations and the development of Kiran Garud is perfectly expressed by the structure of the novel, represented in each part the progressive phases of his development. The hero Kiran's association with his own identity is an act of rebellion against injustice in the fields of service, society and personal life. The progress of events makes the novel realistic and impressive.

The presentation of realistic and unartificial events gives Distant Drum an appearance of life and the uncommon theme is dealt with extra-ordinary self-confidence. There is a well-planned and a smooth progression of the story which neither puzzles the reader nor diverts his attention, nor spoils the structure of the novel.

The principle of contrast and comparison is employed to make characters more effective. In Distant Drum, the character of Kiran the hero is contrasted with that Kamala Kant and Ropey Booker - the idealistic attitude is contrasted with the materialistic one.

#### 4.2 COMBAT OF SHADOWS : HENRY WINTON :

Malgonkar presents a wider range and greater variety of characters in his novels. In Combat of Shadows, the characters are palpable and dramatic ; like the hero in Distant Drum, the hero in Combat of Shadows is young and masculine. In Combat of Shadows Malgonkar makes his central figure an Englishman with the norm of the British public school code of conduct not very different from Kiran Garud's code of honour-Satpura Code. Henry Winton in this novel is the Manager of a British tea-estate the Brindian Tea-Company, Silent Hill Plantation in Assam. He is a healthy young man with active habits of hunting and shooting. In spite of the difference in race and nationality, Henry Winton is decent, clean, well-intentioned. But soon he finds himself in a demoralising and dehumanizing situation which leads him towards corruption and moral degeneration G.S. Amur rightly remarks :

' The moral disintegration and defeat of the hero is a process which put in motion and completely by his multi-pointed racial relationships involving conflicts with the Indian, the Anglo-Indian and the British.' 14.

The public School values which Kiran Garud in Distant Drum finds helpful in resolving his problems, prove to be of no help to Henry Winton.



Henry Winton is one of the major dramatic personae in Combat of Shadows, who can never forget he is English - a white man sent out to keep up the image of the English ruler. When the novel opens, Henry Winton appears as a dominant figure, a man of power, a man of strong will and a man greater than other men :

" SHOT GUN under one arm, retriever of his heels, two plump chukor partridges dangling from his game belt, Henry Winton began the steep climb up the bridle path, pleasantly tired, hungry for break fast, ready for his day, ready for anything !" (p.5 )

This appearance reveals his superiority. Being the manager he is very strong, courageous and brave. He has weapons with him as a warrior has. He is surrounded by a thousand labourers and clerks, supervisors, chaprasies, innumerable wives and children : He is their leader. What C.M. Bowra says about heroes is true also of Henry Winton :

" Leading parts are assigned to men of superior gifts who are presented and accepted as being greater than other men ! 15.

In other words Henry Winton, being the manager, the planter and the leader, differs from other men in the novel in the degree of his powers. He is a good administrator. He has in rich

abundance qualities which other men have , to a much less extent. He differs from other characters in the novel by his peculiar force and energy.

Henry Winton is an aristocrat. He has a sense of power to his nobility, There is the sense of aristocracy in his character, as his nobility. There is the sense of power and air of the fallen angel in his character. His character is like that of the Gothic villain.

His coming to India and working as the Manager of a British tea-estate in Assam is an adventure. He is a bachelor and lives a lonely life. The story of Henry Winton forms the centre and the core of the novel Combat of Shadows. He with his public school education determined to make a success of his job. After five years of experience as a planter, 'he was unshakeably convinced that this was his way of life, a man's way in a decadent, motor-car and radio civilization.' ( p.5 )

There is a deep-seated fear of failure in Henry Winton very early in life, with the death of his father, he had experienced an economic crisis and had to give up his ambition for higher education, Oxford and later, as a salesman in the used car business, he ended up a colossal failure. He was in the tea garden in Assam ' desperately trying to repair the ravages ten thousand miles away from the scene of his rout, determined

to make a success of himself at all costs, living up an altogether new sense of values aimed exclusively at success ! ( p.55 )

Henry Winton was determined to become successful in India. He had the motto in his mind. He wanted to live up the philosophy where there is no place for failures. He concluded that 'he, had chosen this life and he was making a success of it.' ( p.6 )

The incident which finally adds up to cumulative picture of failure is quite trivial . Gauri was stealing a sack of the tea leaves, he caught her red handed. From that trivial incident his attitude towards the Indians is totally changed. He threatens her and behaves rudely with her . He released her by giving a warning. His attitude towards Gauri never changed. He looked at her as a criminal and thief. He lacks understanding and a broad view. His attitude towards Indians is prejudiced, narrow, and bias.

Sir Jeffrey Dart, the Resident Director at the Brindian Tea company invites Henry Winton to spend an evening with them at Chinnar, On their way to Chinnar, Cockburn, the senior manager and Henry Winton stop at Tinapur where they attend a gala night, in which Henry meets Ruby Miranda, an Anglo-Indian

girl. Henry Winton is struck by the flashy and dark barnished hair, falling on the smooth tan shoulders, glowing olive skin, and impudent eyes of Ruby Miranda, Henry is full of such a weakness and has a lust for the feminine flesh. Cockburn's appreciation of Ruby's beauty and his encouragement of Henry to establish a relationship with Ruby makes Henry more passionate. It shows his manliness. Cockburn Suggests to Henry :

' That's the sort of women who would make the highlands club women turn green and envy.... why don't you take her on ? ... why, give her a job, a man. That's the sort of woman who will stop you from going crazy in that antiseptic bungalow of yours '. (p.19)

Cockburn's suggestion tempts Winton very much. He appoints Ruby Miranda as the Head Mistress at Silent Hill Primary School, though she is not qualified. Winton's involvement with Ruby Miranda makes everything complicated. Winton establishes a sexual relationship with Ruby Miranda. She gives Winton sexual pleasure but Winton's self-centredness and shallow attitudes prevent him from realizing the values of his relationship with Ruby Miranda. Ruby's assessment of Henry Winton is quite genuine

" Ruby looked at the raw-boned, heavily-built English man lying naked besides her and gazing at her with half-closed eyes., the man of lust without love, who was merely seeking physical fulfilment and paying her

a hundred rupees a month of the company's money for his private pleasure, and was asking about her family solicitously not because he was the least bit interested, but it was raining outside and he was making conversation, being polite because he was a well brought-up Englishman...."( p.101 ).

Ruby Miranda is satisfied with Winton and she is even prepared to sacrifice the love of Eddie Trevor, an exuberant athletic, for Henry Winton. Eddie is frank, natural and open. Henry Winton, however is a strange, complex and egoistic man.

Henry Winton betrays the love of Ruby Miranda. He rejects Ruby only because she is not an English girl. Henry is not amiable. There is racial prejudice and harshness in his nature. Like Colonel Manners in Distant Drum, Henry Winton hates Indians and Anglo-Indians.

Though Ruby Miranda is not qualified, she is appointed as the Head Mistress in the school. Henry Winton does not think about the teachers working in the school and one of them could be promoted, as Head Master- Mr. Sarkar. Henry Winton keeps the rules and regulations aside and decides alone to appoint Ruby as the Head Mistress, thus he makes injustice to the teachers in the school. When Jugal Kishore, ' the Chief Stockman, meets Henry along with Gauri his niece in connection with the teacher's job, Henry treats Jugal Kishore very badly and

taunts Gauri as a thief. He refuses to appoint Gauri as a teacher, hurts Jugal Kishore and thus he creates crisis for himself. By appointing Ruby as the Head Mistress and rejecting Jugal Kishore's proposal of Gauri's application for the post of teacher Henry comes into difficulties. Thus he invites danger and comes into awkward position as an Anti-Hero.

He becomes a complicated man due to his decisions and rude and bias behaviour. Henry had refused to employ Jugal Kishore's niece Gauri as a school-teacher and thereby as his mistress, because he was determined to have nothing to do with such low-bred women, though he found Gauri quite attractive. It is this attraction, he had felt towards Gauri, that forces him to let her go scot-free when he caught her stealing. Jugal Kishore with his cunning, twists the incident and gives it a political colour and thus becomes the arch-enemy of Henry.

Henry Winton seems to be a Modern Hero who rejects the political order and cosmic order and tries to search for his identity and to create a new image of his own; but he is a total failure.

Jugal Kishore's niece Gauri lodged a false complaint against Henry Winton that he attempted to molest her. Mr. Arkell, Police Officer and Sudden Dart brought about compromise and the case was withdrawn. Due to this incident Henry Winton's image was maligned. He becomes helpless, Jugal Kishore is

successful in his attempt to constitute a political threat to Winton's Career. Jugal Kishore resigns from his post in the tea-estate to contest the election to the State Assembly. He wins the election and ironically, he becomes the Minister of Plantations of the State. Then Winton is afraid of the critical situation and wants to leave the country.

Jugal Kishore stands in his way and makes it impossible for him to escape from India. Jugal Kishore is successful in his attempt to ruin Henry Winton. Henry is afraid of the situation. He tries to run away from the battle field, he is a coward. The struggle between Henry Winton and Jugal Kishore shows conflict between two individuals-the ruler and the ruled, white and black or brown.

Henry Winton is like the Passive Hero in the Waverly novels. He has fears about his career when he is warned by Sudden Dart not to fall in love with Ruby. Further he fears Jugal Kishore, when Jugal Kishore becomes a powerful leader and the minister. Henry becomes a victim of events as well as a victim in the hands of good and bad agents who both protect and deceive him. Jugal Kishore, Gouri, Pasupati, stand for bad agents and Sudden Dart, Cockburn and Ruby for good agents. Finally they deceive him and the result is his violent and tragic death.

The life of Henry Winton can be judged on two levels the material and the spiritual. If we consider his material side, he is most probably a success, whereas his predecessor Wallach had been a failure. Henry Winton has lived up to the reputation of a public school boy and a pucca sahib . His career as a manager of the tea garden is a success. Every forward step in his material prosperity shows his spiritual life a step back.

The Chinnar ' week ' festival is another incident, where Henry Winton saw Eddie Trevor - the half-caste-'chi-chi' breed. Henry was so contemptuous of Eddie Trevor and he treated him as his rival. In the encounter between Eddie, Ruby Miranda and Henry Winton, we see the implication of the tragic racial situation, as well as human situations of desire, prejudice, pride and failure. Eddie Trevor , the Anglo-Indian and Kistulal, the Indian are symbols of success in the spiritual and the material fields. Henry has high-brow attitude towards life, his life ends as a tragedy.

The choice for Henry Winton is between material success and moral success. He has to choose one. Though he is able to run the estate with profit and stop the labour strike successfully, he is unable to sense the relations between Sudden Dart and Eddie Trevor , which finally proves to be his ruin. Henry Winton is failure in his domestic and sex life.



Henry Winton accepts the challenge to kill the rogue elephant. He took Kistulal with him. It was a risk to take such a challenge. Kistulal was his the guide-shikari. When they encountered the rogue elephant., Kistulal was trampled over and killed by the wounded elephant. When Henry saw it, he started to run away from the wounded elephant and he forgot his gentlemanly code - the code of hunter. Henry Winton behaved like a coward. However Kistulal's death is an accident, something which Henry Winton has not expected but he has to cover up his own survival. Henry Winton failed too, as a hunter. It is his duty to check ammunition before venturing on the expedition. Henry becomes disillusioned after his encounter with the one tusked elephant, which destroys his carefully preserved image as a British hunter, who is always competent to shoot any mad wild animal. It proves him coward instead of brave.

Henry makes a false story of the death of Kistulal to the people, and he is successful in convincing them. This false story saves Winton's prestige, yet there are rumours, and Kistulal's son Pasupati nurses deep resentment against Henry Winton.

The crisis of the hunting guide's death provides a contrast between Henry and Cockburn, another company manager. Cockburn has accepted India and is considered unconventional in his treatment of Indians, while Henry following his own instincts as well as the established colonial code of conduct is high handed. However, it is to his credit that he realizes that Englishmen like him were an anomaly:

"There was no room in India, for Sahibs who failed that was overriding truth; they were despised even more by their own class than by the Indians. Failure was unthinkable". (p.90)

There is the conflict between Henry Winton and the absurd environment of India. So his existence becomes absurd and he behaves as an Absurd Hero.

In spite of his protests and honest admission to Cockburn, when it was a 'question of izzat' or 'face saving; Henry allows himself to be convinced to keep quiet about the accidental death of Kistulal and his own presence at and running away from the scene. Henry is disturbed and worries about the rights and wrongs of the whole affair, but instead of owning up his failure, he agrees with Cockburn that he must keep up his image as a hunter at all costs which means the image of the white- man -the British ruler's superiority.

Henry's fear of failure - his own and thereby the white man's failure, is stronger than his sense of guilt. After the death of Kistulal, Henry Winton, back in Cockburn's comfortable bungalow, is persuaded to give a completely different version of this gruesome incident. Henry Winton appears as the Intellectual Hero. He is committed to the British Empire and he revolts against his

his bourgeois background and *tragically* torn between the militant desires and the chronic guilt.

Eddie Trevor is an Anglo-Indian who plays an important role in Henry's life and in the novel. Henry Winton's involvement with Eddie Trevor rouses the passion of jealousy in him which finally leads him to heinous crime. There might be raging some storm of passion jealousy, vengeance and hatred which caused a hell within him. Henry's hatred for Eddie has two aspects: First he is Ruby's lover and then his wife Jean falls in love with Eddie. Henry does not appreciate the good qualities of Eddie as he is an Anglo-Indian. Henry lacks a broad mind. Henry does not understand how an all-white woman like Jean can fall for an Anglo-Indian. Eddie can be seen as the final blow to Henry's ego, and when he finds out about Jean's love for Eddie, he decides to kill Eddie. It does not show his courage and bravery, but cowardness. He gets an opportunity when Eddie volunteers to shoot the wild elephant. Henry clearly gives a few cartridges to Eddie, which he knew were faulty and would therefore, only wound the elephant; the wounded elephant would then crush Eddie to death. Thus Henry thinks that he can get rid of the greatest danger to his self-respect.

Henry has strength of will. He preserves evil to the end. He has forceful and ingenious mind. There is the air of satanic greatness perverted in his character. He is a typical mixture of individualism and satanism. His character seems to be that of Gothic Villain.

The death of Eddie Trevor is a cold murder, premediated deliberate, pre-planned act of a coward. Henry is a coward, he knows that he is a failure when he compared himself to Eddie Trevor. It is his sense of inadequacy and failure both with Ruby and Jean that makes him wish to destroy. He fails not only in his personal relations but also as a hunter. He fails miserably to hunt the elephant and he could not do anything to get rid of the python. Victory and triumph are on the side of Eddie as he managed to kill the python and would have succeeded in killing the elephant if he had not been given dummy cartridges by Henry. Henry is defeated at every stage.

When Jugal Kishore leaves the job of the chief stockman, he threatens Henry Winton as Henry taunts him boldly about the false complaint. Jugal Kishore warns Henry :

"We all have our failings, Mr. Winton, your failing is that you can not bear Indians, yet your tragedy is that you are doomed to work in this country. You can not even tolerate the idea of having an Indian mistress... a full blooded Indian Mistress." ( p.111 )

This remark makes Henry angry. Jugal Kishore blames Henry for the death of Kistulal. As Jugal Kishore passed bad remarks, Henry Winton lost his courage and balance. He is afraid

but he does not show it on his face. He starts to tremble with rage. While going Jugul Kishore declared that he is going to contest the assembly election and Henry gets into an awkward position and further faces the danger when Jugul Kishore becomes a minister.

On the one hand Henry Winton is happy as there is not any trouble from Jugul Kishore when he leaves the job; but there is a problem of substitute. He has to fill the vacancy. This creates a problem before him. Eddie Trevor is recommended by Sudden Dart for the post; but Henry is not willing to appoint Eddie Trevor as the chief stockman. He wishes the post should be filled in as per seniority. Henry behaves cunningly and shrewdly. He is unwilling to appoint Eddie Trevor. It becomes a prestige issue for him. It shows his courage and bravery when he tries to avoid Eddie Trevor. He takes several objections regarding the qualification and experience of Eddie Trevor. Henry is so prejudiced against Eddie that he turns down the appointment. However, Henry is made to employ Eddie Trevor by the express orders of Sudden Dart. Sudden Dart reminded him the incident when he appointed Ruby Miranda as the Head Mistress of the school instead of the seniority of Sarkar and the influence of Jugul Kishore regarding Gauri. Henry feels humiliated. It is a humiliation for Henry which is difficult to accept. In Henry's involvement with Eddie, racial prejudices are made to figure, to a large extent. It is because Eddie is Anglo-Indian that Henry is

jealous, contemptuous and callous in his attitude. Henry can not tolerate an Anglo-Indian to be his rival. Henry lacks gentleness and broad mind.

Though he had studied in the English public school, he lacked the Satpura Code-the gentlemanly code of behaviour. He becomes narrow minded and is blind with racial prejudices which becomes a great drawback in his life. Henry Winton's failure is due to his racial prejudices, and narrow vision of life.

Winton's relationship with the Indian stockman of the tea garden becomes so sore that his life as a Manager becomes a nightmare for him.

When Jugal Kishore left, the problem of substitute becomes acute. Henry Winton faces inner and outer forces. It shows his courage, bravery, boldness and straightforwardness, In the beginning when there is the application of Eddie Trevor, he behaves rudely with Eddie's father and shows that he is a pucca sahib. He faces bravely the criticism of Sudden Dart and boldly turns down the appointment, but when his personal matter with Ruby is exposed, he bends before Sudden Dart. He accepts Eddie Trevor as his new stockman. Henry is humiliated and his ego is hurt. As a Romantic Hero, Henry preserves his individuality. He revolts against the senior officer Sudden Dart. He becomes a rebel. Eddie Trevor's appointment becomes a challenge for him. Eddie's appointment leads workers to go on strike. He receives a notice of strike from the labourers. They demand

that the post of the chief stockman should be filled as per seniority. He knew that Jugal Kishore was behind the strike, Eddie Trevor's appointment creates a crisis in Henry's career. At the time of strike, Henry does not fear; he boldly faces the problem. He asks the labourers to withdraw the notice without condition, otherwise to face the consequences. It shows his courage power and determination. He becomes very strong and swift. He threatens to dismiss them. He calls the police force to crush the strike by physical force. During the strike period, Henry exploits his racial prejudice :

"That's the only way to deal with coolies. They are like animals once they begin their headlong stampede no one can stop them; before the stampede begins, you can whip them back"(p.143)

The strike becomes a bigger issue. It becomes a shows of strength between himself and his workers, the struggle between management and labour, the struggle between Jugal Kishore and his followers and Henry and Sudden Dart, the struggle between English men and Indians, the struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil.

Henry Winton has to fight with these forces. Henry is very rigid, rude and arrogant. He wishes to crush down the strike by force. Henry Winton becomes a powerful, dominant character who possesses immense power, determination, courage and

adventurous spirit. He is haughty and reckless. He dismisses the labourers who participated in the strike. He orders to vacate their living quarters. It shows his courage, strength and power.

Henry Winton is isolated from his society. In India, he is an outsider. He revolts against Indians and Anglo-Indians and treats them inhumanly. He seems to a Romantic Hero in his rebellion against Indian Society.

Though Eddie Trevor is Henry's rival, in the case of appointment and the crisis which followed his appointment, Henry upholds Eddie Trevor's side and protects him which shows his broad mind, courage, and tolerance. The drawback in the character of Henry is that he does not understand the situation and does not compromise at the time of crisis. There is a tragic flaw in his character :

"Sometimes, Henry, I don't know whether you act as you do, because you don't know any better, or because you deliberately wish to create difficulties".(p.123)

Henry's own character, his sense of pride and his sense of superiority lead him towards his tragic doom though he is an able, successful manager and planter, he fails in his human relations due to the lack of understanding of the environment.



Henry Winton is unsocial and introverted. He thinks over his universal difficulties. It becomes difficult for him to escape from the unpleasant and difficult' situation in his life and career. hence he becomes the Anti-hero.

Sudden Dart manages Jugal Kishore by giving bribe and solves the problem of strike during the leave period of Henry Winton. Henry Winton had gone off to his country on eight months leave and married an English girl, Jean Walters. He had gone off on leave quite unexpectedly and without telling any one of his plans. He is cunning, shrewd and pucca sahib. He returns as a married man, thus Henry betrays Ruby Miranda, the Anglo-Indian girl. The story of Henry's relationship with Ruby is one of betrayal : 'That was as he remembered Ruby Miranda, and that was the woman he now longed with all his being to get back to the rare mixture of the submissiveness and surrender of oriental womanhood with the freedom and gaiety of the West and of course the breath-taking figure and good looks and colouring which had been a gift of both the West and the East. She was not the kind of woman who analysed your shortcoming'....(p.116)

Yet Henry Winton betrays her and has no feeling of regret in marrying Jean, only because he desires to maintain his identity with the West. There is a dimension to the moral degradation of Henry Winton by involving him in still another kind of cultural conflict - his relationship with Ruby Miranda, the Anglo-Indian school teacher who becomes his mistress.

Henry is adverse to having any relationship with any Indian girl-wholly Indian or Anglo-Indian; for five years, Henry has remained aloof from the Indians, especially from the women, and is called by Cockburn 'a psalm-singing bastard'. But when he sees Ruby, he changes his mind and decides to make her his mistress. Ruby too is attracted to Henry and hopes to be the wife of an English aristocrat like Henry one day. Even more than any love that she feels for Henry, what she is driven by is her great dream of marrying Englishman and be considered English. Henry's offer to make her his mistress is to her a passport to this dream. But Henry has other ideas; he simply can not bring himself to admit that he loves a half caste- woman and making her his wife simply unthinkable to him. In fact, later on he would have nothing to do with her and throws her away like an old piece of furniture, when he marries an all white English woman from England. When Ruby is aware that Winton has lust for her and can keep her as mistress without marrying, she becomes violent. In her bitterness and intense hatred, she hisses like a snake being ferocious and she refuses to respond to Henry's passion. "I will kill you for this.... No matter how long it takes, I shall kill you for what you have done and what you have said. And as for Eddie Trevor, he will always be mine my own," (P.127) Henry's involvement with Ruby is deep he could not cross the thin line which separates the English man from the Anglo-Indian woman. He is self-centered and only thinks of his position and race. He never considers Ruby's feeling. Henry's obsession with the colour does not even realize that his attraction has developed into love.

It is only much later that Henry comes to understand the longing he feels for Ruby- too late, he realizes that -

'his chief reason for waiting to go on leave was to get away from Ruby Miranda, ... he no longer trusted himself not to cross what Sudden has referred to as the thin line that separated fun from serious involvement; he was deliberately preventing himself from falling in love with Ruby.' (p.13)

Henry becomes aware of Ruby and takes cautious steps to avoid her. He fights against his desire to marry her, to have children by her and be very happy man. He feels that he should not have listened to his English boss, Sudden Dart and should have told him, 'to hell with the Highlands club and the memsahibs of Chinnar.' (p229)

Henry Winton accepts the suggestion of Sudden Dart and tries to remain away from Ruby. As he is very much worried about his career, he does not revolt against his boss. But his obsession with the all-white woman, with his being British defeats him, corrupts him and ultimately destroys him both morally and physically.

On the other hand, Ruby refuses to take the insult to her woman hood lying down. Ruby strives to become Henry's wife. Henry is surprised and shocked when he knows of Ruby's violent

reaction to his marriage to Jean, for this means she has been discarded. He had never thought Ruby capable of such a strong reactions. In Ruby, Henry confronts face to face, his most cherished dream of the Anglo-Indian woman. There is a tension between Henry Winton and Ruby Miranda. Henry's expiration follows. He feels that he has an upper hand over the situation and tries to pacify Ruby by finding a job for her, but the scorned woman feels so insulted that she can find peace only, if she avenges herself for the time being, She seems to accept the situation, but when the opportunity presents itself, she joins hands with others in planning to destroy Henry. Ruby Miranda's interest in Winton has a selfish motivation; she reveals pendulum like shift from Eddie Trevor to Henry Winton . She is ready to sacrifice the love of Eddie for Henry Winton. She considers him a failure by comparing him to Eddie With Ruby, Henry Winton experiences a sense of failure and frustration when he realizes that her affection for him has a selfish motivation.

Henry had forgotten to take into account the fact that Ruby and Eddie, though half caste chi-chis, were essentially human beings. At the moment when he feels very generous and behaves graciously towards Ruby by presenting her with a bottle of costly French perfume, which he actually has bought as a present for

his wife Jean Walters. Henry Winton is shocked when Ruby contemptuously throws the bottle on to the carpet. Henry's reaction at this moment is most inhuman and cruel. However Ruby returns the some sort of treatment to Henry and humiliates him by comparing him with Eddie. Henry realizes his failure when compared to Eddie :

"You can never understand a woman's infatuation for a man like Eddie. His is not pale, bloodless, love, but fierce and burning and unbridled. No girl has once been loved by a man like Eddie Trevor can love any other man, least of all someone like you. You, who will never be fit wipe his shoes..."(p.153)

Henry Winton feels humiliated. Ruby Miranda challenges his manliness, courage, strength and power. Henry is living self-satisfied in a white man's world, carried away by a feeling of success. Ruby's confession destroys Winton's vanity. The thought of man like Eddie is intolerable to him as rival.

Eddie Trevor's energy, youth, vigour, manliness, sincerity, innocence attract Jean. Henry's marriage with Jean Walters becomes a failure, as she is assured that Winton is still in love with Ruby; naturally, she is attracted to Eddie Trevor.

Jean is unfaithful to Henry as Henry is to her, Henry realizes that his wife Jean is in love with Eddie Trevor. He is jealous of

of Eddie. It is a great shock to him. He becomes nervous and bruised. His reaction is dreadful and his action desperate and merciless. He plans Eddie's murder carefully. He listens to Jean's confession about love with Eddie, very coldly. He tolerates the humiliation. Gauri exposes the love between Eddie and Jean. It is intolerable, Henry Winton burns with rage and becomes violent. He realizes his failure in his domestic life. He bravely faces the situation. Though he is torn, he shows determination and courage. His wife prefers Eddie to him and finally announces that she would marry Eddie. Henry is totally ruined. His domestic life is a failure; so is his social life. It is a strong blow to Winton's manhood. Gauri gives Winton a thunder like blow. She taunts him as a scorpion before a lizard.' Thus she takes revenge on him. As the life of the Mythological Hero, Henry's life includes a love life - his love for his beloved Ruby as well as his love for his wife. His married life is a failure. It is disastrous. His beloved Ruby Miranda finally betrays him. His social life is fatal, finally he meets tragic and violent death.

Gauri taunts him by calling him impotent and challenges his manhood, manliness. Henry is hurt like a cobra; he rages and rages and decides to take revenge upon Eddie Trevor. Everybody talks about the relationship of his wife with Eddie. It becomes a challenge for him Henry had rejected the idea of

marriage with Ruby, because she was an Anglo-Indian; but Jean wants to leave him and marry Eddie Trevor, an Anglo-Indian, a half-caste.

This is an insult that is too hard to bear, as it throws up the inherent deep-rooted hatred of the colour 'snob'. Henry Winton, the white sahib. Jean-Eddie love affair stamps Henry Winton's moral degradation. The character of Eddie Trevor is positive, whereas Henry's character becomes negative when there is comparison between them. Henry Winton is anti-social, anti-tradition. He does not mix up with Indians and Anglo-Indians. He hates Indians and Anglo-Indians, their ways of life. He lacks good manners. He is rude, arrogant and wicked. He is associated with the bitter reality that he realizes there is no room for Sahibs (white) in India and he fails in his career and life and thus, he proves to be Anti-Hero.

Eddie can be seen as the final blow to Henry's ego and when he finds out about Jean's love for Eddie, he decides to murder Eddie. He gets an opportunity when Eddie volunteers to shoot the wild elephant. Henry gives Eddie faulty cartridges, as a result of that, Eddie is killed by the mad rouge elephant. Thus Henry gets rid of the greatest danger to his self-respect.

To preserve his self-respect, honour and status he plans to murder Eddie Trevor and becomes successful in his mission : Henry's success in killing Eddie has a sense of corrupt failure which makes him anti-hero. F.R. Karl rights observes :

"In England, the anti-heroic type is found, curiously, one is tempted to say within the works of Dickens who despite his 'soft' young men and women, often qualified their romantic success with a sense of corrupt failure." 16

Henry's wife Jean now completely withdraw herself from her husband and she leaves him forever. Henry wants to marry Ruby as he feels isolated but she rejects him with all her hatred and plans to avenge Eddie's murder. Ruby realizes that Henry Winton is totally corrupt, selfish, vulgar and vicious. He is an inefficient administrator and has no command presence of mind to handle a critical situation. His public school education is fruitless as it has not prepared him for the world of commerce. Henry is preoccupied with the amorous sufferings as the Modern Hero. so his tale becomes a tragedy of unrest, possession and destruction. He loves Ruby in the end but in vain. Victor Brombert comments :

'The great lover heroes of Literature are victims of destruction and degradation'. 17



Henry would have been a different man, if he would have realized that love has no barriers of colour and he had accepted Ruby's love and had understood Jean's love for Eddie. But his gods had failed him. As Harvex points out :

'Winton's tin-gods failings are those of the undeveloped Sahib heart of Forster's definition: lack of compassion, arrogance, prejudice, class consciousness, sychophancy.' 18

Malgonkar has thus shown how the Englishman's prejudice and hatred against Indians and Anglo-Indian disintegrate the whiteman and ultimately bring nemesis to him.

The life of the Anglo-Indians has been dealt with at some length in the novel by Malgonkar with sympathy and understanding. The novel Combat of Shadows throws light on the living conditions, aspirations, attitudes and activities of Anglo-Indians and their role in the novel is important. The Railway Institute at Tinapur is the centre of the life and activities of the Anglo-Indians. There is all the buzz and noise of a typical institute. There is the badminton court in the central hall for the young people. The elders play bridge, bazique and rummy at the tables placed on the stage in the central hall. Every Saturday night the

younger people dance, while the elders sit on chairs and watch. Galas are held once a month when the band plays till late in the night. There are games like housie housie and escalado for those who do not dance. A rum bar is run on a gala night in one of the back rooms though they do not possess a licence for it. The members of the railway institute can dance any kind of dance from the hala hula to the belly dance with great enthusiasm, spirit, vigour, zest, careless freedom and skill.

Henry Winton recalls the above incident of gala as 'cheap and noisy', something unrefined and something like the romping of drunken sailors with blind dated girls in water front joints. Gala is something like 'chichi' and 'honky tonk' the currency of pidgin English.

Anglo Indian accent and speech are different from that of a pucca Sahib. Most of the Anglo-Indians have great difficulty when they pronounce 'th' sound, most them pronounce it as 't', But Eddie is an exception to it. Henry expresses his horror and disgust of the Anglo-Indian's social life at the Railway Institute : "The atmosphere: You could have cut with a knife; the accent and chalk-powder and the perfume ... Anglo-Indian at play!" ... ugh."(p.18)

Henry can not appreciate Ruby's , beauty Cockburn, another pucca sahib admires the girls in the Railway Institute ;

'A single girl-like that Ruby Miranda is worth the whole pack of your ice-cold Highland Club females, cats without claws and all the fun drained out.'(p.19)

The Anglo-Indians keep up appearances and try to hide their poverty as well as their genealogy. They think of themselves as whole English. They try to seek living kinship with the West. They desperately struggle against separation from the sahibs and further assimilation with the Indians. Kai Nocholson rightly observes :

'Mr. Malgonkar has at least, described the inner conflicts of the Eurasian and in Ruby's ardent wish to become and live as an English woman, the reader is in a position to notice a spark of sympathy expressed by the novelist.'19

Winton's energy springs from the anxiety and agitation of his mind. He is absent and perplexed in his thought, sudden and desperate in his act. When Ruby refuses his love, he reveals his bitterness and prejudice against the Anglo-Indian community :

'You half caste slut.... you don't deserve anything better than your colony and your half-breed, lovers your Eddie Trevor and God knows who else'(p153)

The racial conflict is brought out prominently in Henry's confrontation with Ruby and Eddie on one hand, Jugal Kishore and Gauri on the other. Henry is a failure with the Anglo-Indians also with the Indians. Henry fails as he insults the feelings of women. In the beginning of the novel Henry insults Gauri. Then he betrays and rejects Ruby's love and Jean's womanhood. It is significant that both Gauri and Ruby threaten to kill him in order to take revenge on him. Henry's arrogant contempt for the Indians and his race-consciousness have a corrosive effect on his character. There is a dramatic situation in the novel : A coolie strike is organized by Jugal Kishore. To show his brutal strength in breaking up the strike, of which Gauri is the leader, Winton strikes her brother and then Gauri. Winton hits her brother black and blue. Gauri gets so angry then that she looks like 'a hooded cobra about to strike or an outraged temple goddess, and hisses 'I shall kill you for this,; you white monster, I shall kill you'.(p.131)

Though Henry poses as a strong, powerful man, he knows that he is afraid in the privacy of his bathroom he feels his defeat. He wants to go away before he is irretrievably sucked in by the evil within himself. He can talk publically about British Justice and of the limitless power of the British; but he is afraid of the British self-righteousness in himself breaking him down. the predominant sense of fair play of which the British consider themselves to be champions, is broken down.

Henry is a perverted man. After his marriage with Jean Walters, he continues to lust after Ruby Miranda. When he pulls Ruby arrogantly into his arms and forces her for sexual gratification, she becomes turbulent and thunders at him;

‘No, you brute. You white Swine . I hate you, I hate you, I don't have taken any thing from you any more that or anything else you go and do that to all white English bitch you have married not me’(P.152)

Ruby also has sworn to kill him as Henry attempts to get rid of her before the arrival of his wife, Jean. Ruby feels insulted with the hypocritical British attitude, and cannot tolerate it.

Henry's wife Jean falls in love with Eddie Trevor. She challenges his manliness. The name Gauri is a symbol of feminine strength and power in Hindu mythology. As the Greek Hero, Henry is defeated by gods, goddesses and divine powers. It is also relevant that Henry's downfall starts with the elephant hunt. The elephant is treated as Lord Ganesh by the locals. Lord Ganesh is worshipped as the destroyer of evil. It is again as Greek gods that here the elephant, Lord Ganesh, has defeated Henry Winton.

Henry is able to save himself by sacrificing Kistulal in the

first encounter with the elephant. It is the instrument of fate which causes Henry's tragedy. In his first encounter with the rogue elephant Henry. Winton becomes morally corrupt. The second encounter with the rogue elephant makes him a perfect villain.

Henry Winton's destiny is very harsh, as he is rejected by everyone including the members of his own community, his beloved and his wife. Henry's murder is planned perfectly by Ruby Miranda, Sir Jeffrey Dart and others.

Henry is the instrument of his own nemesis and fate like the characters of Conrad. Some of his own actions hasten him to his end. Henry's cool villainy is repaid in its own coin at the end of the novel by trapping : Henry in the game of cottage on an Amavasya day on the reason of repairing the artificial moon and letting him burn.

Henry's fear of failure his own and thereby the white men's failure, is stronger than his sense of guilt. This incident of elephant shooting haunts him all his life. It becomes a sort of symbol for the wounded animal like an insulted Indian is :

'A deadly and cunning adversary, equally determined to seek him out and destroy him', (p.237)

The elephant also symbolizes the powerful destiny that is out to destroy Henry. Henry's failure to kill the elephant signifies

as S.C. Harrex rightly puts it, 'his inability to come to terms with India'. 20

If it were not for the notion of race superiority, Henry would have owned his failure and could have saved his soul. His confrontation with the one-tusked elephant resulting in his defeat and failure character-fate confrontation, as S.C. Harrex compares it to : ' Kind of Lord Jim situation in Conrad'. 21

In the case of Henry, fate is more powerful since it is one-tusked elephant Lord Ganesh, India itself, that the British have to face and then run away from. It is significant that the period of history that is depicted in the novel is about 1938 to 1940, when India's freedom struggle was at its peak. Henry is burnt along with the burning cottage which has been used by Henry for satisfying his sex. When the fire spreads and no one answer his frantic call for help, he is shocked to find in the basket that he pulled up the two saphire and goldearclips he had given to Ruby and the hard cigar-shaped shell which he lost at the time of Kistulal's death. Henry meets his tragic and violent death in supreme agony and despair. Henry realizes everything and he is confirmed about his violent end :

'And that, as far as Henry Winton was concerned, was the moment of truth; bringing with it a fleeting spasm of realization, steadying his mind and restoring cold

reason as though for a quick summing up centring his thoughts on essentials.' (p.289)

Henry is not redeemed. He is unheroic in his love , career and society. His life is imperfect and absurd. He is a rogue. He wanders in search of his identity and career, but fails in his every attempt. He seems to be an anti-hero.

The Plot of the novel Combat of Shadows, from the beginning to the end, moves round the dark aspects of human life. The plot of the novel begins with Henry's love-making in the game cottage and it ends in the game cottage with his violent death. A focus of the inner action is the game cottage, and what begins in the gun-room is concluded in the game cottage. With its artificial moon, the game cottage is meant to lure wild animals at night for a kill, Like the ferocious beasts of the jungle, the human beings are trapped too, people like Kistulal, Eddie and Henry Winton himself. K.R.S. Iyengar comments on this scene :

'There is an implied casual chain of commission and is namesis but one of the characters is self-poised to be able to move beyond the combat of the shadows of desire and aversion and rise to a knowledge of reality.' 22

Henry Winton has self-destructive nature. His deeds, actions and nature lead him to his death end thus he becomes an anti-hero.



Henry's relations with Jugal Kishore, with Eddie, with Ruby and with the one-tusked elephant are all inter-woven neatly and they form a composite design which is instrumental in bringing about his fall and ultimately his cruel death. Instead of striving for life-enhancing relationships based on love, friendship, compassion and sympathy, Henry allows himself to be led by the ghostly shadows of prejudice, colour consciousness, arrogance and jealousy. Henry Winton finds completion in opposing the society, love, sex, friendship and passions as the Romantic Hero finds.

The novel is unique in a sense, for Malgonkar has an Englishman as his central figure and has delineated him skilfully, making him an anti-hero. In this connection Paul West observes :

'The anti-hero both unsocial and introverted tends to brood on his cosmic predicament. The anti-novel, so called reflects the novelist's sympathy with his own anti-heroes'. 23

In his portrait of Henry Winton, it is cultural and racial conflict at its most complex that Malgonkar has dealt with. Malgonkar makes a strong indictment of the British by projecting that hatred and ignorance of India, an attitude which conflicts with the necessities of their own existence in the country. It is clear that Combat of Shadows depicts not only the internal conflict of

desires, but even more strongly, the external racial conflict and the hero's sense of realization.

While presenting the private world and the failure of the white man in India, Henry Winton is a symbol of white men who do not understand what India is. He represents a generation of the white sahibs who hate Indians, India, Indian traditions, Indian past and Anglo-Indians. Malgonkar has portrayed the weaknesses of Anglo-Indians and their virtues also. He depicted their anxieties and conflicts in such a manner that they are able to attract sympathy. Malgonkar has focussed on the weaknesses of the sahibs. The sahibs are not paragons of virtue. Jealousy, envy, anger, revenge, love, ambition such basic emotions and feelings are all common in any race or religion.

There are various themes in Combat of Shadows: themes of racial conflict; big game hunting, search for identity; but most striking and important is the personal relationship, the combat of human values and essentially the failure of an individual Henry Winton who is engaged in the 'combat of shadows' with realizing the truth.

Combat of Shadows presents a panoramic view of various types of human relationships, but it finally shows the failure not just of Henry Winton, but of any man who cheats himself and lives in a false world of moral depravity. There is a certain poetic justice in the death of Henry. He receives the great punishment

for the betrayal of human values. He is neither too unexceptional nor completely deprived, but a mixture of good and bad qualities. In Combat of Shadows, Malgonkar pays more serious attention to his characterization. Naturally, the characters are deeply sketched and lasting and well-defined individuals. Besides the character of the Hero Henry Winton, Ruby Miranda plays an important role in the development of the hero's character. Every character and situation derives its function and meaning through its impact on Henry Winton's physical and moral life. Henry's failure and tragedy gives the unity to the diverse world portrayed in the novel Combat of Shadows.

The values a cultured man lives upto are the same everywhere. Henry Winton the powerful anti-hero is too rigid to reconcile the differences between the cultured milieu in which he has been brought up and the one in which he finds himself in the novel. He is arrogant and conceited. Malgonkar seems to have an uncanny skill in bringing life characters who are weak and wicked, who can and are killed. Henry Winton appears pale and weak and does not arouse any sympathy or strong antipathy. Henry Winton is obsessed with the problem posed by an alien culture and to the end of his life, is involved in a struggle to reject the demands made on him by his situation.

In Combat of Shadows the theme of hunting becomes dominant and very much relevant, as there is a close connection

between hunting and the Indo-British relationship. The world of lions, tigers, elephants, foxes and other animals contribute to the tone and atmosphere of the novel. Henry is compared with the wild animal; so he is 'trapped' in the end of the novel.

From the beginning to the end, the plot of the novel moves with the theme of hunting. Malgonkar explores through the theme of hunting the moral disintegration which takes place in the mind of the hero Henry Winton. Henry's desire for hunting and feminine flesh is effectively brought out in the novel.

In Combat of Shadows, the myth of the elephant, god Ganesh and the call of the python play quite a significant role in the story. Malgonkar uses the principle of contrast and comparison to make characters more effective. There is a sharp contrast between the characters of colonial English man Henry Winton, Anglo-Indian Eddie Trevor and the compromising attitude of Cockburn.

Jean's attitude towards Indians and Anglo-Indians is social and humane, she appreciates Indian boys who actively participated in the war. she refers to them as 'our Indian boys'. Her love for Eddie is pure love. It shows that love has no barriers of caste, creed, religion and nationality and that love is the supreme power. Henry Winton is unsocial. He dislikes Indians and Anglo-Indians and nourishes hatred, jealousy and

envy. Henry is reserved, cool-minded, scheming, unsocial, and unheroic, whereas Jean is frank, and free. Henry lacks the sense of understanding and also sympathy. His attitude is inhuman, callous and wicked. Henry Winton fails to understand human beings, human relations and the alien land so he is a failure in his life and career. He rejects the reality, the Indian past, the Indian tradition and proves to be an anti-hero. His actions behaviour, attitude and deeds make him an anti-hero who meets his violent and tragic death in the end like Conrad's hero, Lord Jim.

Through the character of Henry Winton, Malgonkar portrays the weaknesses and wrongs of man in the alien land.

4.3 THE PRINCES : ABHAYRAJ :

The imperial theme has inspired many authors to portray the glamour and glory of the a feudal past but not many writers have been able to portray the inner story the inner life, the conflict within a prince caught in an age of change and crisis. Mulk Raj Anand's Private Life an Indian Prince, and E.M. Forster's Hill of Devi attempt at a depiction of princely India, but have not been able to portray the human story of the Princes. Malgonkar perhaps has an edge over other writers, as he had quite a long and a deep association with the princes. We are aware of the genesis of the novel from what he states in the Literary Guild Review. He raced through the book working for twelve hours a day and finished it exactly in forty-nine days.

The Princes gives a bold, vivid and precise picture of the last phase of princely India. It gives a representative picture of almost all the princely states. The Princes is a history of the disintegration of the princely state of Begwad, from the early days of political unrest in 1938 to its merger in 1949. The other movement in the story is of a young prince's education. The Princes is initiation story of Abhay, his growth from boyhood to manhood. The story follows in detail the formula of the myths. The progressive movement of the hero, Abhay, as in all myths, is that of seperation, initiation and return. Malgonkar has taken care to make it clear in several places in the novel :

"What was happening in Begwad was happening everywhere else in Padmakoshal and in most Indian States " ( p.287 )

Though a close resemblance can be seen between the characters in the novel and real people, between the incidents in the novel and real events, Malgonkar is able to camouflage the real people by creating composite characters and he takes no liberties with the historical facts connected with the princely states. Though there are many differences, the characters of Hiroji and Abhay appear to be moulded on Sir Tukojirao III, K.C.S. Maharaja of Dewas State Senior and his son Maharaja Vikramsimharao respectively.

Hiroji Maharaja stands as the symbol of princely India which is ' feudal,barbaric, impoverish and at the same time a repository of India's tradition and culture and he represents the crumbling old world. He is aged, ' reactionary, and taboo hidden' whereas Abhay, his son, the only heir to the throne of Begwad, is young, progressive and righteous. If Hiroji represents one extreme of absolute feudal powers, Kanakchand signifies the other extreme of democratic and nationalist forces who has pledged to see the end of feudalism and bring in freedom. In between, we find the character of Abhay alienating himself from both the extremes and accepting situations in their natural order of the present, but unable to have the future he likes.

According to Prof. Dayananda, Malgonkar's The Princes falls almost naturally in line with other great stories like Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn, Stephen Crane's The Red Badge of Courage, Hemingway's The Killers, or Anderson's "I want to know why". We find in The Princes, Abhay goes through all the stages of initiation and finally blossoms into manhood and experience from a state of childhood and innocence. Abhay is the central intelligence of the novel through whom the action of the story is presented. Abhay is the narrator-hero of the novel.

The story of the novel is narrated by Abhay, the hero and protagonist of the novel. He has lived through turbulent period of his life, as well as the life of his state which gets merged in the Union Republic of India, after 1947. The recreation of this life, retrospectively narrated by the I-narrator, takes also the form of an autobiography. Dr. Amur has characterized the novel as 'an epic and autobiography.' 24

The I-narrator of the novel is a prince and he (Abhayraj) occupies an important seat in the drama of the dissolution of the erstwhile princely states in India. It seems, Malgonkar emphasizes the positive, commendable qualities of the princes which might appear contrary to the general belief that the princely rulers lived only for hunting and wenching. The Prince, Abhayraj is to be portrayed as a defender of his class and the high values of courage and manliness and loyalty and courtesy. Abhay has got to be an insider to know the real



princely India and defends forcefully the vanishing rulers.

Abhay, being the narrator of the novel, takes a long range view of his childhood and youth, and presumably he is writing the story of his life in the year 1958, plunging backwards into the past of 1938, and beyond, Abhayraj begins his version of history :

'One day we were ruling princes, the next we were frogs shrivelling under a burning sun ', (p.11 )

And the story moves further :

' As late as the summer of 1938, I remember my father himself pronouncing in a trembling voice ' : " There will always be a Begwad and there will always be a Bedar ruling it- so long as sun and the moon go round " ( p.11)

and then he ends the story near 1958 with the Epilogue which announces the dedication of the ' Bulwara hydro-electric dam' by the President of India-the dam which swallows the picturesque valley or the most loyal Bhill's of the rulers of Begwad and all that Begwad State stands for.

The attitudes and values of Abhayraj are forcefully dramatised in the story of the Prince and the Maharaja of Begwad which stands as a prototype of the six hundred and odd princely states in India. Being an insider, Malgonkar could lend his knowledge of hunting and war and courtly life to

his narration and create a persona, a convincing representative of the princes.

Abhay is so much of a self-conscious narrator. He is not only a participant in the action of the novel, but also a spectator of his own actions. This becomes obvious when I-narrator ( Abhay ) makes an explicit reference to the ' drama' of his personal as well as national life.

In The Princes Hiroji the Maharaja and his son Abhay represent the two views which come into conflict with each other throughout the earlier half of the novel. Hiroji is the spokesman of the traditional codes of kingly powers, while Abhayraj believes in the democratic way of life. The father is a passionate, arrogant bad tempered and sensual, Maharaja, the son, Abhayraj, is a man of the modern world, educated in a British school and having regard for democratic values. Abhay has no illusions about the future of the princely states and considers them ' ripe mangoes all ready to fall with a single shaking of the tree' (p.244) that they are an anachronism, Abhay understands well. Abhay has a broadview and prudence. Hiroji is a despot and hates both the British and the Indian nationalists and hopes that his state Begwad would remain independent ' as long as the sun and the moon go round,' the clash between the two is thus inevitable and is presented at the very opening of the novel. The first chapter constitutes the novel in miniature presenting the problems that are going to be solved in the course of the novel.

Hiroji and Abhay are poles apart in several matters, especially in political matters. Abhay bravely confronts his father, the formidable Maharaja ; he says :

" Somehow, as I sit face to face with my father in that room with no chairs only the tiger rug and, along one wall, the white mattress and the bolster covered in pale brocade - I could not help feeling that we were acting in a play ". ( p.13 )

It is Abhay's last year in college and he is full of ideas. He is bubbling with enthusiasm and idealism under the influence of a liberal education. He revolts against his father openly till he is forced to leave. Abhay takes risk in challenging his father. He is courageous, firm minded, brave and rebel. He challenges his father about the new constitution of the state which claims to be democratic, but is, in fact, a mere pretence being a democratic, because it provides for a council of six, out of whom one is an elected member. The council has no power to discuss his privy purse except to increase it and Hiroji Maharaja always has veto power : " But naturally, that is the power of veto; a ruler's privilege " ( p. 12 ).

This scene between Abhay and his father is very painful and brings into open the resentment which has been

growing within the young man for a long time. Abhayraj shows open resistance to his father's ideas, challenging princely order itself. He feels that the Political Department would consider the constitution quite adequate, but that the nationalists would not accept it. But it is not so much the nationalists' acceptance, as Abhay's own feelings about the princely states, that disturbs him. He could see clearly and objectively the anomaly of states governed by sovereign rulers in Independent India and calls them 'a jest of history'. Hiroji, however, is not prepared to accept the harsh facts of history and can not understand Abhay's stand. The new constitution has no power to do or undo anything, since all the members are actually chosen rather than elected. It is a mere mockery of the people of the state. To Hiroji his state is sacred and he is annoyed by Abhay's indifference and opposition to the new constitution.

It is Hiroji's cherished dream that Begwad should forever remain their own the descendants of the Bedars. To Abhay belonging to India is far more important than the inheritance of a small state like Begwad. The clash between the two views, to begin with, is between the modern public-school-minded young prince and the proud tradition-rooted Maharaja. Hiroji is deeply shocked and hurt when he realises that Abhay could consider Begwad something to be thrown away on the streets for 'a feast of crows'. In spite of the British treachery in taking away the raj, Hiroji prefers the British to the Gandhians of the Kanakchand type to preserve the integrity of his state and so he is prepared

to support the British against the nationalists. To him, nothing is more sacred than his heritage and he believes that there would always be a Begwad and Bedar to rule it. Remote from the patterns of thought in the twentieth century, he clings pathetically to visions of glory of a time when, -

" Our fortunes were at their highest and our kingdom had reached its greatest extent ". ( p.17 )

It is a rosy intoxicating picture of wealth and achievement he carries within himself but it is very real to him. To Abhay who does not believe in falsifying history, it is a world built on make-believe and half truths and legends, Hiroji lives in past and does not wish to accept the present or face of the future.

Both father and son take extremely opposite stands regarding the nationalist movement. Hiroji has nothing but contempt for the nationalists who are according to him 'goondas led by traders and lawyers'.( p.13 ) As far as he is concerned, 'they just don't exist.' In the opinion of Hiroji, the nationalists are the worst enemies because they are out to grab powers by subverting the loyalty of the people towards their rulers, which even the British were not capable of doing. According to him, the national movement is but a fight between the nationalists and the British, and in the fight, the British would get weakened and turn to the princes for help because they are afraid of nationalists. He any day

prefers the British bayonets to the Gandhites if only they preserve the integrity of his state for all times and retain it for the Bedars, for it is more important than anything else ' more important than our lives'. ( p.16 )

But Abhay has sympathy for the nationalists and condemns all his father's political views. Abhay is convinced of the inevitability of the disappearance of the princely states from the map of India. Somehow, he is unable to rise from a purely selfish sense of loss and often catches himself longing for those old days. The suddenness with which the change takes place stuns him as does other princes. It is the only irritating point in the great drama of the emergence of India as a Republic after the integration of states that causes a lot of discontentment and disappointment in Abhay.

Hiroji's tendency to reduce the national movement to a sordid personal level is fully exposed and he is shown as the typical Indian king who could not comprehend the true spirit of Gandhian movement for freedom. His son, Abhay is a rebellious individual who does not share those beliefs and hits hard against them. Malgonkar brings out the conflicting ideologies of the princes of the older generation and the young generation brought up in the public school tradition, of a man who does not see the glaring facts of life but lives in the glory of past and a young man well-versed in the principles of democracy. Kai Nicholson aptly describes Hiroji's attitude to the politics as

'bordering on Schizophrenia'<sup>25</sup>

Malgonkar makes it quite clear that the world of Maharaja was quite different from the world in which Abhay grew up. It was a dim sealed - off world, a sort of island removed from the earth. Hiroji still inhabits that world, continues day-dreaming and does not wish to come to the grips with reality. Abhay does not understand this and attacks boldly and courageously, this attitude and wants his father to at least acknowledge the changing times if not accept them.

Malgonkar has shown that Hiroji is a man living in past, in touch with conditions and the currents in the other parts of the country. Under him and Princes like him, the people of the state were likely, in course of time, to rebel but things would have been different under man like Abhay.

The clash of views between father and son has, of course, another aspect-the personal, for Malgonkar portrays not only the crisis of the state but also the crisis in the life both of Hiroji and Abhay.

The Clash is seen in matters of money and expenditure Abhay is unlike his father for whom the money is there only to be spent and izzat is more important than money. Hiroji does not hesitate to pay twenty thousand rupees to Amina, one of his concubines. He is prepared to spend thirty thousand rupees on a tiger hunt in honour of Northwick who is supposed to be the future Governor General, and purchase a new 'Rolls' even though people have to walk in the streets without shoes. He has brought

the financial affairs of the state to such a sorry pass that the Political Department desires to appoint a committee of inquiry. Of course, the committee is never appointed as the British would not like to make a fuss about a prince who had been loyal to them in the context of the wide-spread national movement. Abhay boldly and courageously asks the C.M. of the state about the financial condition of the state. He disliked to spend money on lavish entertainments when the revenues were dropped.

On other issues, too, there is a clash between Hiroji and Abhay. Abhay believes in improving the lot of the tribal people who have been their subjects for centuries. They are backward and illiterate and are unable to respond to the pressure of times. Steeped in illiteracy and almost medieval ignorance, the people of the princely states and especially the tribal people were not very conscious of the political currents in the rest of the country. The Bhills of the Bulwara district of Begwad are a primitive, uncivilized race who trust their rulers implicitly and opt for darkness and squalor rather than for the dams, schools and roads which Independent India promises. Hiroji believed that the princes give the people roots, the relationship between the ruler and the ruled is one of affection. Without fully understanding how his father was capable of evoking a sentiment of loyalty to himself both for good and evil, His father is against the spread of education, because he feels that there will be a greater danger, if education is put in the hands of all and sundry. He believes that education



is responsible for all the problems of the British in India. His opposition to the construction of a dam over the valley of Bulwara, which is a symbol of progress and prosperity, exposes nothing but his stark reactionary attitude. His world is remote from the twentieth century. Abhay could not share his father's feeling. Abhay disapproves of his father's action. He feels that Hiroji should have persuaded the people to see their own interest in agreeing to have a dam built and to learn to be one with the changing pattern of India. Bravely and courageously he confronts his father. He doubts the justification of Hiroji's stand in keeping the Bhills fenced off from the outer world. Abhy recognizes a fact his father does not seem to know that the tribal Bhills who constitute the largest part of the population of Begwad, are human beings who should have a say in the shape of their future. As H.M. William puts it :

'Malgonkar pierces beyond political and even moral attitudes to human depth beyond' 26.

This divergence in the views of the old king and Abhay, it is interesting to note, survives only as long as Hiroji lives. When Abhay takes over as king for a short period before Begward merges in the Union of India, we see in him a surprising similarity to his father. While Abhay as prince seemed a model of public-spiritedness, as Maharaja we find him thinking and acting exactly as Hiroji had done. Abhay is brave, strong, swift, courageous and noble, like his father. Malgonkar portrays Abhay and Hiroji as men of action and passion who belong to the heroic tradition,

but fully know that the tradition is doomed.

Abhay who once opposed his father's ideology with vehemence and who wanted to change institutions which he considered out-dated, and false, later behaves in a contradictory manner; but this paradox does not reflect any inconsistency of characterization, it represents a conflict within Abhay's mind. Educated as he is in the democratic values of life, he could not but be critical of his father's outlook and values. When he becomes king himself, he finds out how deeply rooted he is in the very princely traditions that he had found fault with. Abhay sees his father's Cruelty and tyranny, at the same time, he admires his dignity, frankness and courage. It shows Abhay's generosity and broad mind.

Abhay is divided between the two outlooks, rather he embodies the two ideologies with one foot in each world, His father Hiroji, the Maharaja is royal every inch and full of princely instincts. The medieval sur is around him. He keeps up the past glory of the old world. His heralds in their green and gold cloaks would announce the arrival of Maharaja by calling at his titles in English, Sanskrit, Persian, and Hindi in their rhythmic chant as the Maharaja goes down the steps slowly, so as to give them time to run through the list. ' Valorous as the sun, the chosen of the gods, the source of light ... Wazir ....e. Ferzand, Intezam...e.... daulat, Sar-e-sarband, Prithwinaresh, Sena dhurnandhar....' (pp.31-32).

The past glory of the royalty can be seen at the banquet on Dassera, the most important festival in all Maratha States. Hiroji's prayerful trance to the Goddess Ambica on Dassera for her protection in the ensuing campaign for war though it is unthinkable to have such campaigns in twentieth century is in keeping with the old world tradition. His boisterous and noisy religion and fasts, his lavish parties and dinners, his costly tiger hunts and duck shoots and crocodile hunts, his concubines and colourful costumes, authentically presented, only intensify the picture of princely India. Hiroji is very religious, his wife Maharani is also very religious, but Abhay is quite different from them.

The differences between Abhay and his father have still other manifestations which complicate their relationship; Abhay both adores and hates his father. The treatment meted out by Hiroji to Kanakchand is an accident which brings this to the fore; Abhay finds himself divided in his loyalty to his father as his faith in the values of fair justice makes him rebel. The tyrannical attitude of Hiroji is not acceptable to Abhay. Hiroji flogs Kanakchand in public and tries to suppress the national movement in his state by introducing more repressive measures than in British India. He believes that order can be maintained only by baton and whip and exemplary punishment. Abhay is ashamed of Hiroji for his rough treatment of Kanakchand, though he believes in the code of not squealing in public.

Abhay had helped Kanakchand in his education. He had sympathy for Kanakchand. His sympathy and understanding of Kanakchand's attitude based on his own training in a public school - Satpura Code values. Mr. Moreton, his English tutor, appreciates Abhay's generous act. When he offered Kanakchand his books, he gave Kanakchand a chocolate and invited Kanakchand for the the annual party for the children of the palace staff. It shows how Abhay is friendly, generous, good and broad minded. Abhay is so generous. When he invited Kanakchand for the party , his half-brother Charudatt disliked it, taunted and threatened him. Abhay with firmness and courage boldly told Charudatt to mind his own business. Abhay was ready to face the consequences. Abhay is bold, generous, firm and secular. By inviting Kanakchand for the party he has passed the borders of caste, creed and religion.

Charudatt's relations with Abhay were not amiable. Charudatt was his half-brother. Kanakchand called Charudatt a bastard. It is Mr. Moreton who initiated the gentlemanly code into Abhay. He advised him how to behave as a prince and not to use the abusive language but polite language in talk. He told Abhay - ' Charudatt is a half-brother of yours and that is how you should regard him.' (p.42) He further warns Abhay : ' ... a prince is, first and foremost, a gentleman and no gentleman uses such words in polite conversation.' (p.42) Abhay is very much influenced by his teacher Mr. Moreton and his gentlemanly behaviour. Malgonkar calls it Satpura Code, a gentlemanly code.

Abhay had helped Kanakchand, the cobbler's boy to get prize for essay writing. He hates his father for whipping Kanakchand in public for no fault of his. This turns Kanakchand against the Maharaja and also against Abhay permanently, for Kanakchand believes that Abhay had betrayed him. Kanakchand is a devotee of Gandhi and later becomes the President of the Praja Mandal of the Maharaja's state. Malgonkar presents Kanakchand in not a very favourable light. He is Abhay's friend and Abhay admires his intelligence and hard work. It shows Abhay's boldness, broad view, and generosity. They used to help each other in their studies and sometimes give small presents to each other. Kanakchand is Abhay's first encounter with real poverty and the day-to-day life of poor people.

'I did not realize it then, but Kanakchand was my first direct contact with the quivering poverty of India, and one day when he showed me what he had brought with him for his mid-day-meal- a single black roti smeared with mess of oil and chillies and a whole raw onion-for no reason at all I felt close to terms!(p.47).

Inspite of this friendliness and the Maharani's help to Kanakchand for his studies, Kanakchand later gives the Maharaja a lot of trouble and when he becomes a minister, he does not miss any opportunity to insult Abhay. Abhay hates Kanakchand,

because he could not take his punishment properly, and feels that Kanakchand should have acted bravely and defied the Maharaja when he was whipped instead of bearing a life-long grudge shown in so many petty ways. But neither can Abhay forget Kanakchand's public disgrace at the hands of his father and hates Hiroji for whipping Kanakchand, which he feels, was not justifiable. He feels responsible for having betrayed his friend, though as a matter of fact, it was Abdulla Jan and not Abhay who had informed his father that, in order to help Kanakchand win the prize, Abhay had written the essay and given it to Kanakchand to copy out for competition. Abhay is generous and courageous in helping Kanakchand to win the prize.

Malgonkar thus clearly brings out the love-hate relationship Abhay has with his father and with Kanakchand. If Abhay detests his father for disgracing Kanakchand, he is equally disgusted with Kanakchand for breaking down in public. Abhay had learnt that princely code for suffering without bending. Hiroji had taught him not to squeal, not to show hurt. Hiroji has never shown himself weak, cowardly and womanly. The one thing Hiroji hates in himself and in others is squealing and breaking down like a woman, he advises Abhay not to squeal at least when he is not alone. This is not to say that Hiroji has no human tenderness and delicacy; he tells his son that man has in life to come across many a whipping. But he does, make a show of it and if he suffers any agony, he weeps when he is alone, He cites the example of

well-bred dog which does not bark when it is hit. Shedding tears in public and making a public show of one's grief is not sign of good breeding. His father took the opportunity to initiate Abhay into life by asking him to grow into a true man by not showing his suffering in public. Abhay has several clashes with father. As a boy of eleven or twelve years, he had a clash with his father over the death of his pet ram Cannonball. Abhay himself accepted Hiroji's challenge not long ago and had eaten bravely and courageously his favourite ram's eyes, telling himself that it was a challenge from a 'hated adversary.' Abhay battles bravely against his personal and even sometimes against princely tradition, but he never breaks down and remains a fearless Bedar, a lion who does not weep for dead lambs or even dead lions. Abhay is compared with the wild animal a lion. Abhay thus hates his father but at the sometime he wishes to be considered a true Bedar, the son of his father. Abhay is fearless, tolerant, brave, courageous and noble like his father Hiroji. Though he had often reached a point where he was on the verge of a flight of his father, he not only admires Hiroji but stands by him staunchly; by a strange turn of events, later, the Prince feels the same way Hiroji had felt about the state and about the Bhills. Realizing the advantages of progress for the Bhills, he had advised them not to fight the new rule but later he has doubts about this progress, for the new values of freedom and democracy no longer dazzle him. What he had strongly defied, he himself now openly advocates. The conflict is revolved and he returns to his father's unfashionable traditional virtues.

The youthful Abhay could not accept his father's cruel treatment of his mother. As the Byronic Hero, Abhay is against every form of tyranny.

"He is against.... every form of tyranny and he has a deadly hatred for all cant and hypocrisy. He advocates a respect for the right of individual man."<sup>27</sup>

According to him, all the good qualities of Hiroji are shadowed by his open infidelity to his mother and his infatuation for his concubines. In a way his family background seems to be responsible for the wayward behaviour of Abhay. Only later in life, Abhay is able to understand how even the loveliest of women can make themselves hateful to men.

When his mother finally unable to bear her husband's cruel neglect any more she leaves the palace and openly accepts Abdulla Jan as her lover. Abhay really is confused. At times he feels that what his mother has done is the right thing; but at the same time he feels ashamed of her. He had always worshipped his mother and considered her a goddess and it is difficult for him to believe that mere physical needs have driven her to size up her position as Maharani and as his mother. Abhay is shocked as 'Maharani had taken a lover. She had desecrated the Satis she worshipped, she had blackened the name of Bedar women for all times.'<sup>(p.175)</sup>



After the death of Hiroji, when the Maharani comes to bid farewell to Abhay, to tell him she is going away to Pakistan with Abdulla Jan whom she has married, he can not restrain himself. All his learning and experience of life tell him to accept Maharani and her action as normal, as he himself had once advised her to go away and find her own happiness. He had come to understand his mother's humiliating position in the palace and had full sympathy for her, he knew she was a Sati, though in the land of the living.

He had quarrelled with his father when Hiroji had flung an insult at her. Since he could not bear to see her dying every moment of his life, discarded by her husband like an old shoe, he had told her boldly and courageously to go and live her life in the land of living.

The Maharani's elopement is a crucial moment. It reveals the impact of modern influence on Abhay, he ungrudgingly accepts the major assumptions of his Satpura code. The change in Abhay, brought about by a strong sense of loyalty to his father, is nothing more than a recognition and a return.

Abhay hated Abdulla Jan, the Palace Officer. When Abdulla Jan used his gun in his absence, Abhay became haughty and fired Abdulla Jan. He encountered Abdulla Jan, bravely and courageously and insulted him and called him a thief. It was Abhay's mother who made compromise and taught him to learn to forgive.

Abhay encounters Abdulla Jan in Simla at the Gallico. He found that Abdulla Jan was telling something about Abhay's parents and Abhay to his other friends in the Gallico bar. Abdulla Jan showed them the watch given by the Maharani of Begwad to him as a token of love. Abdulla Jan passed some bad remarks; so Abhay pounced on him. He pushed Abdulla Jan away with all his strength. Abdulla Jan's other friends attacked Abhay. Abhay fought with them bravely. It was Punch Farren who came to Abhay's help and rescued Abhay. Abhay behaved in bold, brave and courageous manner. Abhay hated bitterly Abdulla Jan when Maharani eloped with him.

When Maharani really leaves the palace and decides to leave her religion and her country to live with her Muslim lover, he is pained and disturbed. Though he knows fully well what is right according to his understanding, his knowledge and his experience of life, he cannot restrain himself from uttering the worst words to her. He is angry and haughty. He is divided between the right and the wrong of the situation between his love and his pride. Abhay is caught between conflicting feelings. At the last meeting between mother and son, all their pent-up, unspoken feelings of many years come into open. Abhay's hurt and his anger bursts out; 'You are nothing but a bitch, a shameless woman of the streets, you cheap whore'(p.319).

The Maharani is calm and unruffled almost as if she had foreseen this stormy scene. She replies with dignity' :

'I may be a bitch, but I am no longer a shameless woman of the streets. I was one, all these years when I lived with a man in sin. But remember I had been abandoned by my husband. I was a discarded woman' (p.319)

Her answer humbles and chastens Abhay and he can only say "I hope you have found what you were seeking" (p.319)

Abhay is thus caught in conflicting emotions. His love for his mother clashes with his upbringing as an Indian male of the princely class to whom the women of his family are just sheltered chaste dolls, waiting in the wings, may be for ever to be called by their men, to be seen only their men, devoted to their husbands to the extent that they may not even lift their eyes to other men. The male in Abhay demands from his mother this unquestioning acceptance of her utterly degrading position, while all the time he is painfully aware of the great wrongs done to her by his father. The nightmare of his childhood comes true when his mother tells him of her resolve to leave the palace. Then there is turmoil in his mind between his rational self and his emotional self.

Malgonkar has clearly shown how a modern man feels, first as a man, an Indian who cannot accept his mother's decision to live a life of her own and then as an individual who believes in a woman's right to live and be loved. Thus Abhay's

conflict goes through a phase of intense unhappiness of blind anger and then of mature sympathy leading on to peace and understanding. Abhay emerges from this experience a better individual, a man who can set his own interests aside to feel the agony of another .

Another conflict arises in the life of Abhay - his marriage. Hiroji and Maharani hold the opinion that the marriage in the case of princes is not a private affair but a matter of duty. They dissuade Abhay from his attempt to marry Minnie. Abhay was not ready to choose a wife by seeing a photograph, he revolted against his father. He boldly and bravely confessed that he was in love with Minnie Bradley, an Anglo- Indian girl. He desired to marry her. 'Miss Bradley is a wonderful girl and I am in love with her,' (p. 169). Being a rebel, he rejects the two proposals of marriage of his father and remains strong and firm to marry Minnie. Though his father advised him to swim against the current, he decides to swim without thinking of consequences it shows - he is brave, courageous and adventurous. His father sent Lala Hari Kishore, the Chief Minister of the state to Minnie and bribed her giving fifteen thousand rupees to remain away from Abhay. When Abhay knows the fact from Minnie, he is angry with his father. Hiroji Maharaja solves the Minnie problem very tactfully. Abhay's anger is reasonable; he has great strength and he displays courage when he fights the corrupt world. It shows Abhay's greatness as Heracles. Abhay realizes that Minnie is in

love with Tony Sykes, an army officer; after his death she marries Punch Farren and lives happy life. Abhay generously sends her marriage gifts. Minnie is a shrewd, cunning, and practical girl. Abhay realizes her true nature later on.

Minnie is an ambitious lady. To fulfill her ambition she deceives her husband Major Farren. It is she who takes the initiative in sexual pleasure after her marriage. Minnie always had an instinct for business. Earlier when Lala Hari Kishore had handed Abhay the packet of his letters to Minnie which cost fifteen thousand rupees. Abhay knew the corruption beneath the glittering surface. Abhay is aware of Minnie's betrayal and he understand the difference between lust and love. Abhay is portrayed as a great lover, as the Herculean hero.

After Minnie's marriage Abhay accpets one of the proposals of his father and he gets married with Kamala who is so affectionate and lovely. Abhay comes to appreciate and love his own wife Kamala whom he had married simply to please his parents. In contrast in Minnie Bradley, Kamala is domestic in her manners and in the centre or the family circle. Abhay's marriage with Kamala was conventional Hindu-marriage like that of his parents. Abhay's marriage with Kamala turns out to be a happy one. Abhay loves his wife Kamala and they have two children. Kamala knows that her husband is her life partner and so she does not want to go away from Begwad with the children leaving her husband at the time of surrendering of the title of Abhayraj

and the inauguration of the new administration. In the end, Abhay persuades her to go away with children; she gives courage and strength to her husband, Abhay.

Malgonkar comments on the system of marriage in the princely families of other strata of society. The Maharani most forcibly brings out the most miserable situation of the princesses in the case of marriage. They are not allowed to see the face of their husband's even in the ceremony of marriage. As a matter of fact, it appears as if they were married to a pair of feet. But the tradition is inviolable. Though she accepts her marriage a failure, she does not hold against the traditional marriage. For youthful Abhay the whole thing seems to be foolish and meaningless. Malgonkar seems to stress that it is not the tradition that is in fault but the people who are to follow it. If people do not have basic human understanding, any marriage, traditional or non-traditional, old or modern, breaks on rocks. In the case of Abhay, love appears to flow out of marriage.

Abhay has always regarded Hiroji as one who is more at home with the past than with the present, whereas he is connected with present and interested in the future, though he also can not avoid nostalgically looking back on the past. He is unable to make his father realize the hard facts of the times, as Hiroji has never tried to listen to him and he is never free from day dreaming about winning back the past glory, so he does not like to lift the white flag between him as his father and disturb his

father and disturb his peace of mind.

Abhay praises his father for his extraordinary courage and personality. He has contagious high spirit. He has his pride in heritage, he is devoted to his values. The disdain for danger, the coolness under stress, the readiness for taking any responsibility and almost stupid refusal to bend under pressure mark the heroic stature of Hiroji. His sense of values is found to be anachronistic in the context of new development in the country, he goes unarmed and alone after a wounded tiger and gets himself killed. Instead of accepting his fate of a dethroned Maharaja, he decides to die a free man. A hunter, he dies not wishing to be hunted and humiliated, he faces the situation squarely. To live the life as an ex-king, as a helpless, powerless, individual or to die fighting. It is not an easy choice to make, Prof. Harrex says;

'There is no suggestion that his way out is sordid melodramatic or cowardly; unlike his fall, death adds to his stature' 28.

Hiroji's character is simple—a man of passion, he is guided by his instincts and emotions and does not suffer much anguish as he prefers death to disgrace, humiliation and insults. He resolves his conflict in death. Whatever happens, he does not accept life in a world where he is a non-entity. He has one way of looking at the world and if that world dissolves, he too must disappear from the stage of such a world. He lives as a king and dies a king. He leaves it to Abhay to handover his kingdom and accept the merger of Begwad in to the Union of India.

Malgonkar shows how the Maharaja, with all his vices, is still an admirable character, as Hiroji prefers death to submission to the central government of India. He belongs to the Classical tradition of Heroes who would not bend even if they have to die. Abhay, who once was against all that Hiroji considered right, is now with Hiroji, admiring what Hiroji stood for and died for.

Abhay has a greater burden to bear, He is a rebellious individual and at every stage in his life finds himself at war not only with the outer forces but also with himself. It seems Malgonkar has created Abhay a Rebel Protagonist or a Conflict. Hero as Milton's hero. Abhay bravely and courageously faces and fights the forces. Another clash with his father he has is about his involvement in war. His participation in war serves not only as a maturing influences enabling him to understand the hard facts of life and death, love and hatred, the need of the present moment and the desire of the distant future, but also gives him an opportunity to get greater insight into his father's personality. By observing his officer in the war, Tony Sykes, who was also his rival in love, Abhay is able to realize the real character of a prince. The war has helped him grow up, to broaden his vision, and acquire a civilized tolerance for human frailties, and he learned to free his mind from the petty loyalties of his childhood youth. Abhay is young, progressive and rational. After Abhay's return from Simla, he is made a Cadet Sergeant and is posted at the Satpura Ragimental Centre at Raniwada. After six weeks



in the Regimental Centre, he is posted in a battalion in the fourteenth in the Chindwara. Later in the year 1941, Abhay is transferred to the Intelligence School at Karachi. Abhay wins a military cross for his bravery in the war. Abhay returns home with a new experience of war and travel. Abhay is portrayed as a Warrior Hero. It is during the hour of crisis in princely India that Abhay resigns his commission in the Army and assumes his responsibility to the state. Indeed, Abhay accepts the conservative and traditional values of his father.

Although Abhay's character seems to be in striking contrast to his father's, he is not altogether free from his father's influence. Even from his childhood he has attempted to get the appreciation of his father, though there are always occasions when he wishes for the death of his father. He is fully aware of the backwardness of Begwad and the lack of enthusiasm on the part of his father to bring progress and prosperity to the state. However, he comes back into the fold. Abhay shares with his father the love for riding and hunting. He is not different from his father in having extra-marital relations. He is also possessed by a desire to save the state. The irony is that he has that desire at the time when the princely states are vanishing from the map of India. Both father and son have failed to estimate the political situation, if Hiroji did not succeed in gauging the political situation correctly before the Accession, Abhay could not grasp the cunning behind the promises given by the nationalists that time. When his father's character is maligned by Kanakchand and finds fulfilment in

flogging Kanakchand when Kanakchand referred to the flogging incident of his childhood and it was this that eventually forced Abhay to whip him again, bravely and courageously and his character becomes more dominant.

'I felt a black rage sweep over me, hitting me almost with a physical force and I was conscious of nothing except the snarling, insolent face on the platform. I only vaguely remember pushing through the throng of applauding men and children and rushing up the steps, clutching the riding crop in my hand. I saw him close, staring at me in utter disbelief, insolent no longer but cowering, shrinking, frightened, the face of a schoolboy in the grip of terror. I raised the crop high. I brought it down' (pp.342-43)

Thus, Abhay finds completion in opposing the society, love, sex, friendship and passions which get in his way as it happens in the case of the Romantic Hero. This finally brings an end to Abhay's struggle between the human attitude nurtured in school and his hatred of an ungrateful wretch. He feels at peace with himself, Abhay no longer has any doubt as to how to treat Kanakchand. It shows his courage, manliness and bravery, His mother finds in him a replica of his father, while Kamala his wife says,

'Sometimes you act so much like your father that it makes me feel frightened. Darling you are not alone.

There are your children, there is me. We are not  
outsiders'.(p.316)

Kai Nocholson is of opinion that Malgonkar seems to suggest that an enlightened prince like Abhay can be a substitute for the old feudal Hiroji.

Finally one finds him going a long way towards sharing his father's views and values. Malgonkar analyses the character of the old Maharaja, Hiroji and the young prince Abhay in many facets. Their views and attitudes differ not only in political matters but also in religious matters and rituals. Abhay, inspite of his individualistic vision is not essentially a modern figure. He has deep roots in his tradition and culture, through it takes him sometimes to recognize this naked truth about himself, his public school education and service in the army cannot convert him into a modern and progressive man.

By comparing and contrasting, Malgonkar makes both the characters of Hiroji and Abhay crystal clear. With a deep insight he depicts the characters of Hiroji and Abhay. It seems, there is an archetypal ambivalence, inconsistency and confusion of values in the character of Abhay. He is conceived to represent the princely order like his father. But with a difference his exposure to liberal education, war, city politics and a love affair with Minnie naturally made us to think of Abhay as a rebel against the old order and tradition.

He can, however, never be a rebel in the real sense of the term, as G.S. Amur says, because he is never out of the magic circle of his class, the princes. That Abhay is an extension to Hiroji Maharaja, his father is proved in so many ways - the repetition of the flogging incident, the beginning and closing of novel in the same room with tigerskins and choosing of the pistol from a pair. War helps him come closer to his father and satisfy his love for adventure, his affair with Minnie is nothing strange for a prince. Abhay has a sense of inadequacy of his desperate attempt to make adjustments with the world outside. His problems were 'by and large the problems of every growing boy, the problem of facing up to the process of stepping into manhood, demanding adjustment in my relationship with my parents and friends, replacing the wide-eyed vision of a boy with the ever narrowing one of a man'.(p.97)

But he is unable to find out the new objects of affection, even though the little world around him is falling apart. As a youth; he goes away from his father, because he could not feel natural in his presence. As he grows older, he begins to realize that they are no longer father and son, but the Maharaja and his heir. However, his father's hold on Abhay remains forever on his every stage of life. The Settlements Minister wrote in his memoirs

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'Maharaja, Abhayraj proved to be just as much of a reactionary as his father,' (p.18)

But the main difference between Abhay and Hiroji is that Abhay does not have stupid or foolish refusal to bend under pressure which is found in his father who fulfilled his wish in dying before power passed into the hands of people like Kanakchand. Abhay is not a revolutionary type and as he has learnt to take things as they are; he could survive the change in power. There is the development of the hero Abhay from a state of personal and social alienation caused by emotional problems of childhood and adolescence through a maturing process which involves the experience of sex and war, to fulfilment of personality in the realization of human relations and affirmation of traditional values. Abhay shares his father's views and values;

'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'. (p.18)

Abhay becomes the representative of his people, their spokesman and exemplar. Thus, he is the hero', as defined in A Dictionary of Literary Terms,

'Traditionally a Character who has such admirable traits as courage, idealism and fortitude, The hero embodied the cultural values of his time and functioned as defender of his society.' 29

As the Warrior-Hero of antiquity, Abhay offered himself as a noble sacrifice in defense of his culture in the end of the novel. As Thorslev remarks :

'The hero gives one the broader, and deeper perspective of the spirit of the age which he represents'. 30

Abhay shares his father's bravery and simple code while inheriting his mother's more civilised manners. In the end of the novel Abhay is firm, courageous and noble. He takes decision to abdicate his title and renounce his privileges as an ex-Ruling Prince and prefers to submit to a commission of inquiry into his conduct and his part in the violent agitation carried out by the tribesmen of the Bulwara Valley. As the hero of Waverly novels, Abhay returns to the peaceful society in the end of the novel. Alexander Welsh observes :

'Hero ventures to explore the opposite side of that ideal boundary, but returns safely to peaceful society'. 31

Abhay is brave, chivalrous, adventurous, as the Tragic Hero whose fate is tragic. Abhay exhibits his own understanding of the meaning of life and its meaninglessness as the Ancient Hero.

Minnie Bradley has surely a vital importance in the development of Abhay's personality. It is his encounter with Minnie which assures him of his romanticism and reveals him his real

identity. Minnie plays an important role in the sexual and emotional maturity of Abhay. Minnie is essentially an object of sex and she fulfills the sexual desires of Abhay when Abhay is presented with Zarina, a young concubine, he refuses to accept her as he was in deeply love with Minnie, his first successful encounter in the war of sex. Abhay's longings for Minnie formed the background to all his thoughts, he desired her and loved her with a passion and he was determined to marry her, but he was shocked when he discovered that she was in love with Tony Sykes, an Army Officer. Minnie pretends to love Abhay and her interest in Abhay has selfish motive. Abhay's real love for her is contrasted with Minnie's self-motivation. Actually his relationship with Minnie brings about a revolt in his mind towards, the traditional attitudes. But it is the heroic death of Tony Sykes in war that makes him discern the truth. However, he remains grateful to her for she is the person who initiated him into sex.

The Maharani also plays a very important role in the development of the character of Abhay. She is incredibly beautiful and looks like a goddess in pastel saris, small fair and slim, with a well set small-boned figure and finely chiselled features, graceful charming and dignified. She revolts against her husband, family and tradition due to the worst treatment of her husband and encouragement of Abhay.

Another dynamic character who develops alongwith Abhay

the hero, is Kanakchand, untouchable cobbler boy. Malgonkar keeps back his sympathy from his nationalist character Kanakchand. He depicts Kanakchand as a selfish, narrow-minded, power-crazy politician. Kanakchand does not share the British public school virtues or Satpura Code and naturally he is arrogant and untrustworthy in comparison to Abhay who is rich and well born. The narrow mindedness of Kanakchand is sharply in contrast with the nobility and magnanimity of Abhay.

Malgonkar's fictional world is a purely masculine one and is devoted mainly to the characters of men. It is an undeniable fact that his own women characters are women of action, individualistic, and temperamental, and rebels against tradition. They belong to a type. The function of the other characters in the novel is not subsidiary to the character of Abhay or rather it may be said that it is not subsidiary to the development of the character of Abhay. For Abhay, the image of his mother is that of goddess and such in his feeling and reverential attitude towards her that when his father spoke in a disparaging manner about her, he protested violently.

One finds almost all the characters in the novel being metamorphosed. The character of Hiroji, the Maharaja is an exception and his heroic death is a result of his incapacity to alter and adjust himself to the new pattern of values, whereas Abhay is able to survive the merciless march of times only because of his capacity to compromise with the new circumstances. We find



this transformation in all other characters. The traditional heroism is fed on the steadfastness of a hero to a particular virtue or an ideal and this idealism has its roots in one's capacity to follow a particular ideal at any cost.

Malgonkar's novel The Princes is called an epic; it is true chronicle of the decline and fall of the princely states covering a crucial period of the history of India from 1938 to 1949. As an autobiography, it portrays the rising movement of growth and development of the character of Abhay through several phases of change, from a sense of alienation and loneliness and innocence to a sense of experience, fulfillment and identity. The plot of The Princes can be described as the initiation story of Abhay his growth from boyhood to manhood, his transformation. 'through a series of rites and revelations into a hero.' 32

Abhay is a man who could leave the ivory tower of a princely isolation and alienation and identify himself with the common man and understand full implication of human values in life. As the Romantic Hero, Abhay is isolated from the society of his day. He is a rebel. He separated from common people, but finally returns to the peaceful society.

Malgonkar succeeds in portraying Abhay's initiation, the crisis and encounter with experience in the life. The internal, emotional and intellectual development of Abhay as well as the

external chain of events is moving, compelling and convincing. Abhay's life is marked by great troubles, difficulties and conflicts which he overcomes eventually and establishes himself as a hero finally. He takes such decisions like fighting enemies and defying the whole system and tries to behave true to his heroic nature.

Abhay is found preoccupied with the amorous suffering; so his tale becomes a tragedy of unrest, possession and destruction. Abhay is the Modern Hero, Being the modern hero, he carries with him his rebellion, views, ideals, values and through them he suggests a way out at the time of crisis.

#### 4.4 A BEND IN THE GANGES : GIAN TALWAR :

A sensitive novelist like Manohar Malgonkar can not remain unresponsive to contemporary events. Malgonkar is a close and honest observer of the Freedom Struggle, Gandhian Policies and their effects on people. Malgonkar is a downright, straightforward, uncommitted critic of men and matters, so, he chooses to deal with the problem of non-violence and violence. A Bend in the Ganges holds up the mirror to the explosive problem of mankind and of nations. It gains epic grandeur and universal significance. Richard Church rightly comments :

"A novel could not convincingly contain more violence than this tale of the sub-continent during the past quarter of a century. It is not likely that we shall be given a more revealing, more sanely balanced, or more terrifying account of those years, The paradox of life is there and out of it the author has made a work of art". 33.

A Bend in the Ganges raises many questions about Gandhi's non-violence and truth, and it finally affirms and celebrates the victory of love over self-destroying violence. It is significant what Malgonkar says in Author's Note :

"Only the violence in this story happens to be true; it came in the wake of freedom to become a part of India's history .... Nothing else is drawn from life."  
(P.06)

In A Bend in the Ganges, Malgonkar exploits the charged atmosphere of the pre-Independence days to probe the mind of young man involved both in the political drama and in his own personal conflicts. The attention in the early part of the novel is concentrated on two groups of people with one aim, the freedom of India, on the terrorist movement and the non-violent followers of Gandhi. Malgonkar seems to say, men like Gian (and there were many of his kind) could not and did not follow the spirit of Gandhiji's principles and were cowards at heart.

The Princes and A Bend in the Ganges are similar in some aspects, as both novels deal with young men and their growth towards self-discovery, maturity, understanding of the world, conflict with self and conflict with ideology. The Princes deals with the initiation of a prince Abhayraj, his search for identity in a hostile and uncompromising world, his conflict with self and with ideology and the final achievement. A Bend in the Ganges is concerned with three young men: Gian Talwar, Debidayal and Shafi Usman and the process of their self-discovery, and maturity. There is conflict with self and ideology.

Gian Talwar is the central character of the novel. It is now over three decades that A Bend in the Ganges was published;

since the most talked about character in the novel is Gian Talwar. It seems Gian is a puzzle for critics and scholars. Many critics have treated Gian as one of the two protagonists (Gian Talwar and Debidayal) in the novel. Some critics have portrayed him as a totally negative character who grows in the course of the novel from the lower depth and redeems himself by endangering his life for the sake of love. These critics quite rightly see this growth of Gian as the central action of the novel.

There are all sorts of people who are the inhabitants of A Bend in the Ganges: individuals, groups, villagers, city dwellers, bureaucrats, administrators. They belong to three different nationalities - Indians, Japanese and Europeans. Thus the world encompasses the world in itself. In spite of their different backgrounds, one thing - petty selfishness is common among them. This is seen in the hour of crisis. This world has grand and magnificent ideals. The world professes to cherish them but these ideals crumble the moment they meet a major test. Malgonkar condemns people's superficial adherence to the ideals and idealism, but he does not condemn them. There are three young men in this world. Gian Talwar, Debidayal and Shafi Usman. The world can be studied through the lives and fortunes of these three young men. These three young men belong to different family backgrounds, Gian Talwar comes from a landlord, orthodox Brahmin family of village Konshet; his family was once prosperous, but it is now a wreck financially. His great grandfather

was a Raisahib, Debidayal is the son and heir of Deewan Bahadur Tekchand Kerwar who was a prosperous business magnate of Duriabad. Shafi Usman is a common Muslim youth. In spite of these differences, these three young men have one thing in common, they are all Freedom fighters.

Malgonkar exposes the pervading nature of violence and its roots in his novel by analysing the life and growth of three individuals going through the gruelling mill of horrible event. The whole story of the novel is spun around the three characters Gian Talwar, Debidayal and Shafi Usman. Malgonkar seems to have paid more attention to the character of Gian than those of Debidayal and Shafi Usman, and hence, Gian has emerged to be more heroic and impressive. They offer a perfect study in contrast. They are symbolic of two different ideologies non-violence and violence.

Gian has the native rural background of traditional Indian marked by superstitions and taboos. He comes to Duriabad from a remote village Konshet for his higher education and finds himself exposed to a different world that of conflicting values and emotions. Gian is the initiated hero who passes through a series of ordeals or tests as a Greek Hero passes, and finally achieves a sense of self discovery and learns to accept the social problems of life.

The story begins with Gian's initiation as a disciple of Gandhi. We see Mahatma Gandhi in the market square. It is Monday, there is a fire in front of him into which the group of people standing around are throwing British garments. Gian is present there. In the beginning, he is troubled by the conflict between his heroic image of self and the fleeting glimpses of harsh reality. Gian Talwar being an educated; young man, courageously flings his elegant blazer in a moment of irrational impulse, the blazer which is his most prized possession, into the bonfire of foreign goods.

His act is not a deliberate one inspired by strong conviction, but it is based on an impulse in an atmosphere of public enthusiasm, since he has a 'sudden desire to turn back'- to fight down his irrational impulse. Gian repeated the slogans 'Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai' ; 'Bharat Mata ki jai" He represents the general mass of followers, educated or uneducated , of Gandhi's non-violence and truth. He is 'typical of the youth of India, vacillating, always seeking new anchors, new directions, devoid of any basic convictions.'(P.155)

When Gian flings his blazer into the bonfire of foreign goods, the tone is set by a slim young man who looks like Jawaharlal Nehru addresses the crowd referring to those who believed in non-violence as a means to achieve freedom of the country, emphasizing :

"Our non-violence is the non-violence of the brave, arising not from cowardice but from courage, demanding greater sacrifices than ordinary fighting men are called upon to make"(p.8)

Gian is deeply impressed and repeats to himself, "The path of Ahimsa is not for cowards". (P.10)

This is the non-violence of Gandhi and in order to show his total adherence to it, Gian not only gives up his foreign garments and dresses in khaddar, but also becomes a follower of Gandhi.

The next we see him is when he answers the rich young men of his college, Debidayal's group. Debidayal had invited Gian, the poor but scholarly peasant youth, to picnic with the purpose of converting him to their own creed of violence. Devidayal's friend Singh who turns out, later on, to be Shafi challenges Gian's belief in non-violence and says that non-violence is the philosophy of the sheep, a creed of cowards. Gian defends bravely non-violence and Gandhi. He firmly points out that he is a follower of Gandhi. He believes that India should be free from British rule through the Gandhian way- the way of non-violence. It is Gian's first test when he is invited to a picnic by Debidayal and his friends. Gian passes that test and remains true to his faith in non-violence. It shows his courage, strength and power.



This is how Malgonkar introduces the central conflict right at the start, for this is going to be the major theme round which is built up all the action of the novel. Characterization too has been made to serve the end of the plot and thus two philosophies - violence and non-violence - are presented clearly and pointedly. This sharply drawn ideological conflict is projected through Malgonkar's two characters in the novel Gian Talwar and Debidayal, Gian and Debidayal are in constant anti-thesis and criss cross each other's destinies for a long time. Gian begins as a Gandhian pacifist burying his foreign clothes, though even at this stage, he is shown as being hesitant. But the crowd was cheering him as he advanced to throw his precious blazer into the bonfire and he has no option but to hurl it in. Malgonkar seems to say that young men like Gian are not true followers of Gandhi or of non-violence, they are merely impulsive and emotional. When it is a question of discussion and argument and under the strong provocation provided by Debidayal and his friends, Gian does not even reply convincingly. Gian is innocent, ignorant and man of head and heart. Gian is naive, unsophisticated, impulsive and aggressive. Gian belongs to the type of Byronic Hero. Thorslev observes :

“The child of nature I mean to include all the naive,unsificated, usually inpulsive and somewhat aggressive types". 34.

Gian's resistance is not founded on strong faith in non-violence. His inadequacy and cowardice come to the surface when he encounters a real situation in life. Gian believed himself

to be a true follower of Gandhi's movement of non-violence; but the moment he confronts a situation in his personal life, it provokes hatred and anger in him. Gian's creed of non-violence crumbles when he meets a major test, as illustrated by Malgonkar in the chapter entitled 'Home-coming'.

Gian's brother Hari has won the case against the Big House where another more prosperous branch of their family stays, for the possession of land which was given to his father. Even though he wins the case, the Big House is not prepared to give him possession of the land. When Hari with his brother Gian and their servant Tukaram, tries to take possession, he is attacked and killed by Vishnudutt of the Big House, Gian is frightened and does not know what to do. All his theoretical knowledge of the philosophy of non-violence fails to find an answer for him. He feels helpless. He does not fight with the people who do not care for law and who do not have the fair principles of right and wrong. Vishnudutt had threatened to kill Hari, yet Hari had dared to step into the hut and Gian could do nothing to save his brother's life. When Gian hears a cry from Hari, he is afraid that Hari will be killed, but he can not do anything. He stands humbled and stupified. Gandhiji himself had said that if one has to choose between fear and violence, one should choose violence, and not be a coward in the name of non-violence. But Gian simply stands there spell-bound doing nothing, his eyes blind, his knees trembling and his brother is killed. His belief in Mahatma Gandhi's

creed of non-violence is shaken. He knows that it is not for the weak who avoid violence out of cowardice but it is for really courageous with the strength to resort to violent action but who will not, on principle. Gian's belief in non-violence is not firm. There is no clear understanding of a mature man.

This first encounter with life is fully exploited to examine the creed of non-violence. He makes ruthless self-criticism and admits to himself that it was really his cowardice and not any strongly held faith that held him back and that he was paralysed with fear.

This first experience with violence, his brother's murder before his own eyes completely changes Gian. This episode is the turning point in Gian's life. He is tortured by thoughts of failure to act at the right moment. "Coward ... Coward" he kept accusing himself. He asked himself, "Was his non-violence merely that of the rabbit refusing to confront the hound?" (p.50) This incident reveals to him his cowardice and the unreality of non-violence as a way of life. He realises that he could have averted the bloody incident, he behaved as a brother should have. He feels that he has failed his brother in life and the only way in which he can show his love and loyalty to his brother and at the same time win back his self-respect was to avenge his death.

Gian's cowardice leaves him thoroughly disturbed and with a deep sense of guilt; he knows that if he is to find peace, he must redeem himself. So Gian finally resolves the dilemma in his mind by deciding to avenge his brother's murder, for now it is clear that non-violence can not help him. His determination is strong and he has a great courage and patience.

When the police torture his servant Tukaram, who later on becomes hostile in the court, Gian becomes very angry and throws out Tukaram. Vishnudutt is acquitted for want of evidence. Gian's faith in the laws of his land is shaken thoroughly. Police and the priest exert pressure on Gian to withdraw the murder charge; but Gian is firm, determined and courageous; he does not withdraw the case and he does not think about consequences. When he sees that what is right and true is defeated and what is false triumphs, he comes face to face with the bitter truth that the right can not win over the wrong by any intrinsic quality. The right must have the backing of evidence and witnesses too. Gian could not get justice from the court, as the police supported the murderer and suppressed the evidence. This forces him to decide that the only way of confronting the evil and the feudal strength of the Big House of Vishnudutt is through violence. Like Tukaram's loyalty, Gian's idealism crumbles in an hour of crisis.

Gian becomes calm and haughty after the murder of Hari, He day and night searches for the axe by which Vishnudatt killed

Hari. This search shows his courage, adventurous spirit and prudence. He fishes out from the tank the weapon (axe) of his brother's murderer. Gian's pseudo-idealism leads to the destruction of the Little House.

He gets his inspiration from Lord Shiva who had danced the dance of destruction (Tandav Nritya) to avenge the death of his wife, the goddess Parvati. His dilemma is resolved when he kills courageously Vishnudutt with the same axe which Vishnudutt had used to kill Hari. It is an act of bravery. It is like the primitive spirit of revenge, Gian says :

"I have just killed Vishnudutt. .. killed him with the same axe with which he murdered my brother.... you see, it is important, that he should be killed with the same axe".(p.67)

Though Gian knows that the Big House is powerful, he fights with Vishnudutt heroically and bravely and kills him. We are reminded of the fight between Achilles and Hector C.M. Bowra observes :

"Achilles" is like some irresistible power of nature, a fire capable of burning cities 'Hector' knows Achilles's powers are invincible, but he decides to fight him".(p.35)

Gian is no longer a coward sheltering behind the lofty principles of non-violence. Gian emerges stronger after he gives up the creed of non-violence and squarely faces life. After this Gian never mentions the creed of non-violence. It is clear to Gian that once he murders Vishnudutt, he can not proclaim himself as a follower of Gandhi. In fact, as G.S. Amur points out :

"Violence, in his case, proves to be an act of liberation and self-fulfilment." 36.

Gian murders Vishnudutt even against the wishes his grandmother. He sacrifices his college education to take revenge on Vishnudutt. In his brother-battle he finally succeeds in taking revenge on Vishnudutt, his cousin. He has destroyed evil in the form of Vishnudutt and he becomes a follower of Shiva. From this point in the novel, Lord Shiva takes charge of the action, as it were, as its presiding deity. Gian purges himself of his guilt of his brother's death by killing the murderer Vishnudutt and is at last at peace with himself. By murdering he proves the corruption of the police and by surrendering to the police with the bloody axe he proves his sense of justice and law. Though he gives up non-violence, Gian's character remains heroic. about the family feud in the village Professor Iyengar remarks :

....Like a prologue to the main act, this story of family feud- suspicion rivalry, hatred, vindictiveness, murder is to be viewed as the advance micro-tragedy for

shadowing the macro-tragedy on a national scale  
in the year of the partition'. 37

Like the Asiatic Hero, Gian gets call to fight, he murders Vishnu.dutt and returns as a victor. For the sake of brotherly love, and duty, family prestige and sense of justice and revenge Gian sacrifices non-violence. Gian is sentenced to transportation to the Andamans. He is not a political prisoner but a common criminal; and he ceases to take any interest in politics after the murder of his brother Hari. Gian has the quality of self-destructiveness like the Greek Hero. His doomed actions leads him to his destruction of the Little House. He was the Karta (leader) of the family. He murders Vishnudutt and accepts the fate.

Fate brings Debidayal and Gian Talwar together as 'D' class prisoners on the ship to the Andamans. when Debidayal sees Gian in the ship on the way to the Andamans, he wonders :

<sup>6</sup> Was Gian the man.... the non-violent disciple of Gandhi who has been convicted for murder? He had been dedicated, so he had told them, to truth and non-violence, He had already... non-violence how far would he go with truth ?<sup>3</sup> (p.155)

Gian and Debidayal are the victims of circumstances and their upbringing. It is Gian's attachment to his family and land and his devotion to his brother that turns him from non-violence to violence. Gian's life in the Andamans where he was transported

for life bears testimony to his rejection of truth. Gians nationalism wavered. This thought does not disturb him because India's problems are no longer his problems, since he is leaving India for ever. He is the 'D' class criminal and the 'D' Class criminals are allowed to settle down in the Penal Colony, so there is no escape from the jail. His main concern there is survival and he wants to settle in the Andamans. Though he is convicted, he is overjoyed to know that his sentence is mitigated to life because of his British Principal's certificate about his good record in the college. This makes him appreciate the justice and fair play of the British and he develops a natural admiration for the British, as it is an English judge who decreed the land dispute in their favour. This, together with his experience of the Indian Police, turns him from his non-cooperation to British in India to cooperation with Patrick Mulligan, the British Officer in the Andamans. Gian is treated like a man by them and not as an animal. Gian's good conduct gains him favour of jail superintendent Mulligan. Debidayal, however, refuses to bow to Patric Mulligan and is determined to escape from the Andamans. He looks down upon Gian for giving up his principles of non-violence and nationalism and for becoming a ferri, a sort of a clerk to Mulligan, so Debidayal hates Gian.

Gian remains confused and dissolute in the Andamans prison. Gian has no scruples in cooperating with Patrick Milligan to act as an administrative spy on other prisoners, especially on



his own friend Debidayal. Here unwittingly Gian alarms the sentries when he finds Debidayal beating Balbahadur, the Gurkha Guard of the jail and trying to escape from prison. Debidayal is his friend of the college days, and belongs to the rich class of society. Debi is undergoing life-sentence for sabotaging the air plane; Debi's contempt that he feels for Gian turns to deep hatred when Gian almost unintentionally betrays Debi, who is trying to escape from prison. Gian is ashamed of his act for, he actually wanted, not only the good opinion from Debi but also to help his escape. But Debidayal always despised him and never talked to him even though once he had invited Gian to his house and had tried to convert him to the terrorists' creed.

Gian hates himself for unwittingly betraying Debidayal and feels very small before Debidayal whom he worships. Though he is rewarded by the British, the Indians mock at him and he becomes a lonely man. His behaviour is such that he is considered to be a leper in a world of criminals. He becomes the most hated person in the Penal Colony. He is the most unreliable, untrustworthy and dangerous person for the Indians. Gian wants to make amends and tries to speak to Debidayal; but Debi lashes at him and calls him scum. The irony of the situation is that Gian was, in fact, trying to please Debi and had included him in his own escape which is an adventure. Debidayal does not believe in his plans and criticizes him bitterly. The unfortunate incident puts the unbreakable seals on their enmity; they can never again be friends. Malgonkar here present

in Gian an ordinary criminal and in Debidayal a martyr. Gian is shown a weak person as contrasted to Debidyal who does not even salute the jail officers. Gian never considers himself good enough for the companionship of Debidayal, a man who belongs to the rich cultured family and who sacrifices his life for his principles and country. It is only that once Debidayal had invited him to his palace-like house at Kerwar and his sister Sundari had shown him the museum of the statues that he dares to talk to Debidayal. Though he is a friend of Debidayal, he has no hesitation to steal money and the photographs of Sundari. He forgets truth and betrays Debidayal and becomes a liar. In his second test in Andamans, his faith in truth crumbles down as he betrays Debidayal and others, Gian Talwar is a part of the world where ideas and idealism are the matter of convenience; but he differs from the world in one important respect : He has two contradictory selves one resembles this world and other is capable of rising above it this duality in his personality. In connection with G.S. Amur argues :

"Gian who survives is not the Gian who built his life on falsehood, but a morally regenerated individual." 38

Gian's character and his growth from an innocent and impulsive young man, through a process of decline and moral degradation, to a decisive and mature adult is the central action of the novel. Malgonkar creates sympathy for Gian, especially because Gian searches in himself and admits his own selfishness and weakness. It shows his prudence and broad mind.

He is a man without future, a man who must live in present. He has no tomorrow which would bring meaning to his life. Life which would mean something to him and others is denied to him. He lives as an Existential Hero. But after coming to the Andamans, life again loses all meaning to him. Back in India, there is no one, nothing that waits for him, since he is quite sure that by the time he is free to go back to India his grandmother would have died.

Malgonkar shows how it is society and circumstances that are responsible for the fall in the character of Gian. Gian's relationship with the group of the society shows that there is tension between his private will and the collective order of the society. There is the problem of freedom and morality. Gian's dilemma is that of a Revolutionary Hero. His life in the penal settlement at the Andamans teaches him the laws of self-preservation; he deliberately associates himself with Mulligan and Major Campbell; he commits the contemptible act of dismembering the dead body of Ramoshi to acquire gold.

When the Japanese attack the Andamans, Gian gets the opportunity to return to India, He does not know where to go. He has lost his roots in his native place. His grandmother is dead and he is not wanted by any one. A lonely man, he is now nameless, since he has escaped from the Andamans. He comes to Madras from the Andamans. He lives there solitary and poor

life and he searches here and there for the job, but in vain. He changes his name in Madras as Maruti Rao to prevent recognition. Gian goes to a jeweller's shop in Madras to sell Ramoshi's gold-coins. The shopkeeper was ready to give him thirty rupees for per coin. ;Gian was not ready to sell; he demanded fifty, as there were fifty-eight rupees on the board. The shopkeeper told him it was impossible to give fifty and warned him other shopkeepers would call the police. Gian here behaved courageously and bravely like a seasoned criminal; he pulled out his coconut knife and placed ;it beside him on the bench and threatened the shopkeeper by saying : "Send for the police, then. I will tell them you offered thirty rupees for a sovereign." (p.223)

Gian's practical behaviour helped him. He got fifty rupees per coin. It seems to sell the stolen stuff needs courage. This incident indicates Gian's courage and adventure in an alien land where he is a stranger.

He chooses the false name Maruti Rao after a great deal of thought. It is the name that would not sound outlandish in South India. It shows his prudence . "There must be hundreds of Raos in Madras itself, he had told himself, thousands' 223).

Gian leaves Madras and comes to Duriabad, On the way to Duriabad, he alights at Pachwad junction and plans to visit

Konshet, his native place. He walks down the villages street and enters the Little House; he realises that everything in the house is taken away by the Government's Revenue Collector and Tahsildar's office as there is nobody to remit the revenue of the land after the death of Aji. He feels shame when he remembers Debi's flogging, and he becomes angry with the Japanese who occupied the Andamans. He was happy in the Andamans. His past in the Andamans bears a legacy of shame. He realises his guilt and repents over it. When Gian goes into the prayer room he lifts the statue of Shiva. He creeps away from the house with Shiva cradled in his arms.

Gian has no job or means to survive . He must find a new identity to find a job to keep away from starving just to survive. He feels like a ghost, haunting the scene of past. And yet life must go on and he must live. He is desperate because he has neither the qualification nor the connections to get a job. Then he suddenly remembers Debidayal's influential father and, after much debating, decides to take his help.

Gian goes to Debi's house and meets his father. Gian's consciousness is still active enough to pause for a moment before he finally decides to deceive Tekchand into giving him a job. Gian's inadvertant betrayal of Debidayal in the Andamans is what holds him back momentarily :

"Deep down was a tiny ember of guilt, perversely alive, which made him hesitate before the gate.

A hardened criminal had no business harbouring a conscience, he reminded himself, the choice was between security and long years in jail".(p.231)

Malgonkar clearly presents the dilemma Gian faces. If he is to survive, he must lie. He had given up his principle of non-violence when he decided to avenge Hari's murder ; here he must give up Gandhi's other principle of truth if he is to live. Gian become a very practical man. He brings to Tekchand a rare statue of Lord Shiva, as a gift from his own household shrine and confesses the truth of his own escape without details of his life in Andamans. Gian confesses firmly and straightforwardly that he is an atheist He says : "I am not very religious, few things are sacred to me." (p.228) Even when he had gone for picnic with Debidayal and friends, he removes his sacred thread (Janwa) when everybody laughed at him. Then, while going to the village Konshet, he wore the janwa as he had respect for Aji and Hari. Gian is a typical Indian youth who never bothered about the religion. Gian kept the statue of Shiva with Teckchand to consult the experts and he did not give any chance of suspicion to Tekchand.

he left the statue in Tekchand Kerwar's house courageously. There <sup>371</sup>  
Gian met Sundari, Debidayal's sister, It was a second meeting  
and felt love for her, but he realised that she was married. Gian  
does not hesitate to deceive the innocent and credulous parents  
of Debidayal.

Gian gets the job of a shipment supervisor in Bombay in  
Tekchand's Kerwar Construction Company. The job is specially  
created for him. The pay is four hundred rupees a month.  
He possesses an identity card. Gian adapts new name  
Gian Joshi :

"It was like leaving half you past behind, Gian  
thought, for he was Gian still; but not Gian Talwar from  
Konshet village, but Gian Joshi ;with a job and a bank  
account and a small, two-roomed flat just Outside the  
Yellow Gate" ( P. 249 )

Gian discards the Andamans chain, the caste-mark of the  
convict, as he had discarded his Brahmin's Janwa ; now he carries  
an identity card.

Gian is satisfied with what he gets and does not ask more  
from life. He now decides to live a simple, secure, sheltered and  
free life in Bombay, earning his living by honest labour. But life's  
little ironies play tricks with him and once again he is entangled in  
new falsehoods. The one lie he has told to obtain a job leads to  
other complications. One day, Sundari brings a message from  
her father to him and Sundari meets him there and she finds he

is honest and sincere in his work. When she asks him about Debidayal and prison life, Gian's face is pale and he is afraid. Gian felt trapped. Sundari's visit had left a mark on his colourless existence. Her talk, artless and gay, her easy laughter, her familiarity, her casual invitation to visit her house, had sparked a new desire with Gian. He rang her up and wished to meet on Sunday. He dressed like the Maharaja of Pusheli and wore dark glasses and white sandals. He felt, "gay and debonair, a young man in search of romance, in tune with the glorious early winter afternoon" (p.257) He becomes romantic like the Romantic Hero, Gian wishes to express his love to her. He wants to tell her the truth about his relationship with Debidayal; but he can not bring himself to do so.

Friendless, now Gian feels like a stray dog discovering the blessings of home. For Sundari too, this new relationship opens a new vista. Her marriage to Gopal is merely conventional and there is emptiness in her life. Gian fills this void in her life. All the ingredients of a tempestuous exciting love affair conducted in secret are there ; but to Gian, the happiness this bond brings, is deeply flawed by his sense of guilt. The unparadonable crime of having betrayed Sundari's dearly beloved brother, Debidayal lies like a heavy shadow between them. A new conflict is born within him. He wants to tell her everything about his relationship with Debidayal before confessing his love to her; but she is not prepared to listen to him. The thought that his romance is built upon a foundation of deceit torments him. Though he had not



hesitated to take advantage earlier by deceit, he no longer wants to continue this deceit and decides to thrash out things openly. He feels elated that he could at last face the situation and rectify the corrosive damage suffered in the Andamans. Boldly and bravely he tells her:

"I don't know about the love of poets, I know my own love and it is like a fire, something that keeps a lonely man going" (p.277) Like the Platonic Lover he confesses 'I've loved you ever since I first saw you I swear I've never thought of another girl.' (p.278)

After confessing his love to her, begins to tell her of his relationship with Debidayal in the Andamans and shows her the photographs which he had stolen from Sundari's letter to Debi. But when Sundari inquires about the photographs, he lies to her and tells her that Debi had given him the photographs. The lie comes easily to his lips, but he suffers from his own sense of guilt :

Gian's love is like the great love of the Herculean Hero. For him it is important to make her realise that his love is pure. Sundari is not quite sure of what she wants, for though she loves Gian, she is not prepared as yet to give up her marriage with Gopal. To Gian life means nothing without Sundari. She has given meaning to his life and he wants her to share his life openly. He tells her that love is something special to him. Courageously he confesses :

'There is something shameful in what I have done taking advantage of you, forgetting myself, I want to be able to hold my head high, if such a thing is still

permissible to someone like me, to be able to go and tell everyone—the world—that we are in love'(p.280)

If Sundari rejects his suggestion, Gian will go back to the Andamans and live out his lonely life there. Malgonkar here shows Gian's weakness; but at the same time he shows how Gian is prepared to sacrifice everything for Sundari's love and companionship. The sacrificial quality of Gian makes him a noble character.

This is the turning point in Gian's life, he gives up deceit and becomes truthful. This is his heroic deed. However, he is still not courageous enough to tell Sundari everything that happened in the Andamans, between Debidayal and himself. Obviously, Gian's need for Sundari to share his life is so great that he can not take this one last step towards complete truthfulness. But Gian realises that the process of redemption has begun. He must eventually not only own this guilt but also repent and purge himself fully before he can claim the pure love he talks about. And time will test him, purge him and purify him ultimately to be acceptable to Sundari and to himself, to be proud of himself, to redeem himself of all his guilt and be a whole man. In the meantime, Gian decides to keep away from Sundari.

Then an incident happens which totally shatters Gian's world. Debidayal secretly comes to Bombay with Mumtaz, meets

Sundari, his sister and tells her about what he believes was Gian's treachery. Sundari sends for Gian to tell him how much she detests him. She insults and abuses him. He feels unspeakable distress. He is shocked and pained. He knows of course, that he had lived in deceit ; but he had practised deception only to get a job. His love for her is pure and the way he removes himself from her presence for one whole year and only returns when she calls him, shows how much he wants her to return his love. Sundari lashes at him where it hurts most :

"You, a common thief .... even despised by other prisoners, talking of love!" (p.329) and later she adds :

<sup>6</sup> Love ! How grotesque the word sounds in the mouth of someone like you... an insult to kind of love than even a woman in whorehouse can achieve. Love for what? My father 's money?"(p.330)

It is a great humiliation to Gian; but he tolerates it calmly, She pricks his ego by calling him a "male whore". Sundari is the only character who is able to see through the cloud of his treachery and deceit.

Gian knows he was at one of the crucial moments of his life; it is almost the same feeling he had experienced when he had set out to kill Vishnudutt after finding the axe and later again, when he had got off the ship at Madras. He knows, his old life is

over. This experience of defeat at the hands of Sundari, however further purifies his love. Gian is determined to prove the sincerity of his love and when the opportunity comes, much later, he takes up the challenges or risk and rescues Sundari, at the time of the holocaust accompanying the partition of India. He comes all the way to Dariabad from Delhi when he learns that Sundari and her parents are caught up on the other side of India where Muslims were molesting Hindu women and killing Hindus. Though he has come to help, Sundari at first does not believe him and wants to drive him away. She is bitterly sarcastic of his decision to help her parents and accuses Gian of selfishness, but he evenly clarifies his motive :

"Since we are talking about my degradation , may I tell you that is partly the reason why I have come to try and prove, if only to myself, that there can be some good in the weakest of human beings .... don't you see that I am trying to make up?" (pp.351-352).

Gian is no longer in a state of confusion; further he gathers all the confidence in the world - no longer the man whose non-violence, patriotism and truth crumble even at the first encounter. He braves the ridicule and abuses of Sundari and tells her that he has come there to try and prove, if only to himself, that there can be some good even in the weakest of human beings and further explains:

"... It's same feeling that you come looking for me in the docks; I am certain that. It might even be love".(p.352)

As a man of maturity, wisdom and experience, he dismisses her saying " you are a silly, spoilt girl." Gian is not upset or agitated by Sundari's anger, for he is now quite sure of himself, He feels that he has redeemed himself of his guilt. He loves her and even if she does not want to be there, he is determined to stay and help the family to cross the borders. It is quite plain that Gian has no other motive in coming to Kerwad House. Gian resolves his conflicts, his guilt of betrayal and his love for Sundari by sacrificing his safety. His courageous act of coming to Kerwad House and fighting off Shafi leaves no doubt that he has finally realized his own identity. Gian had betrayed Debidayal, but by rescuing Sundari from the clutches of Shafi and his friends, he makes enough amends to arouse admiration. He is a morally regenerated individual and he seems mature and confident. Gian takes risk in rescuing Sundari and her family from a critical situation. Gian admits that he is weak. Once he had redeemed himself by avenging the murder of his brother, now he redeems himself by saving Sundari and her family. The character of Gian, however, is redeemed from the depths of moral depravity and servility to the heights of nobility and love towards the end of the novel.

Gian is a man who suffers agonizing conflicts all his life. First it is his cowardice. From the ashes he rises like a phoenix

and realizes his self-respect and courage next it is his betrayal of Debidayal and deception of Tekchand and Sundari. From this he redeems himself by his courage in coming to a place where Hindus were in great danger. He has done the right thing according to his rights and whether he would be acceptable to Sundari, now does not matter much to him. Gian's search for his identity thus takes him through the dark caves of cowardice and deception and ultimately brings him out in the bright sunshine of freedom- freedom from all the conflicts of his life. At the end of the novel he emerges as a noble character, a hero who leaves his past and forges ahead to a new future. Malgonkar clearly brings out Gian's freedom from all the conflicts of life at the end of the novel, Gian comes face to face with Patrick Mulligan who gives him true identity : "Get a bloody move on ! You there ! You Gian Talwar !." (p.381 )

It is symbolic that he starts the engine of his car and releases the clutch. His old feeling of guilt is left behind and a new life with Sundari opens out for him. According to James Dayanand , Gian grows before eyes from a naive and impulsive young man in the first scene to a decisive and mature adult in the driver's seat . The story of Gian is one of progressive maturity and growth from a shy, simple and emotional young peasant through varying phases of non-violence and violence

to a mature adult who is able to reconcile to a thorough understanding of human values and achieve a degree of self discovery.

Gian's problem is his relationship with 'self'. The inner split of his personality in his relationship with objects and values-violence and non-violence, he encounters with, are the manifestations of the identity crisis. He rejects the political and cosmic order and stresses on the psychological concept of search for his own personality. He emerges as the Modern Hero-a Psychological Hero. He is faced with a quest of the identity which leads to the problem of salvation and redemption and survival in the spiritual sense. Gian is the Modern Hero who is in search of identity and he achieves self-discovery and he gets redemption from his guilt by saving Sundari and her family in the end of the novel. Gian and Sundari leaves their past and march in future. They realise the existential values of future life. They survive, because they forget or leave the past and head towards future.

The Bend in the Ganges presents deep and shelteing visions of life and these are seen through the agony of the soul of the chief characters of the novel, especially of Gian. It is journey from humiliation and cowardice, betrayal and deception to strength and tranquility. In Gian, Malgonkar has portrayed a character who battles against his own weaknesses, who knows quite well his own shortcomings and succeeds in overcoming

them. He is constantly at war with himself, for in him weaknesses and strength live together. What Malgonkar presents, is Gian who could finally rise above his weaknesses and redeem himself totally. The novel begins and ends with Gian. Malgonkar takes Gian through all the stages of development and his growth towards his moral maturity. Among the masculine protagonists of Malgonkar, Gian Talwar in the novel A Bend in the Ganges becomes very prominent particularly for his long and unmitigated sufferings. Gian, the hero of the novel, develops the traits of courage and perseverance and he achieves sublimity slowly and painfully. Gian remains superior even though he lies, deceives and forgets the principles of truth and non-violence. His final act of rescuing Sundari and her family makes him noble, powerful and superior to the other characters, in the novel. Welsh observes about Hero in Waverly novels :

' Hero ventures to explore the opposite side of that ideal boundary but returns safely to peaceful society.' 39.

In the end of the novel Gian returns along with Sundari to free India.

There is a sharp contrast between Gian Talwar and Debidayal. Gian is an opportunist, servile and dubious. In this context, Gian's self-estimate is worth taking into account :



"... was it a part of Indian character itself ? Did he in  
someway represent the average Indian, mixed up,  
shallow and weak ? ". ( p.128 )

Debidayal is the son of a rich industrial magnate Deewan Bahadur Tekchand who is known for his Pro-British feelings and fine collection of art pieces. As a boy, Debi was so sensitive that he did not like to construct a badminton court at the cost of an anthill, for him the general Muller is a butcher as he tried to drown one of the four pups because the mother could not only feed more than three. Debi not only refuses to hold the little dog down in water, but also shouts at his sister Sundari for agreeing to hold it. For Muller drowning the little dog is an act of kindness, but for Debi it is an act of unbearing savagery. Such a sensitive, tender-hearted, innocent boy is transformed into a tough hard-boiled terrorist after a traumatic experience at the age of thirteen when he saw his mother about to be raped by a British soldier who scolded him for spoiling his fun.

Debi felt sorry then for his inability to teach the British soldier a lesson. For six years he has learnt judo and prepared himself for any physical confrontation. He is able to find a larger base for his individual bitter hatred for the British in the activities of revolutionaries who embraced violence as a means for sending the British out of India. He supplies explosives from his father's store to the terrorists who are all men of courage and resourcefulness. Like all other terrorists he does not believe in

in Gandhi's non-violence. The terrorists group of Debidayal believes firmly that non-violence is the philosophy of sheep and it will emasculate, the entire nation. This violent terrorists struggle for freedom is led by Hafiz Khan. Shafi Usman is the member of Hanuman Physical Cultural Club ; for Debidayal and other members Shafi is their leader. The members of this group are young boys, they are Hindu and Muslim. They want to overthrow the British rule in India and establish Hindu-Muslim unity. The group has carried out its activities undetected and it has a record of achievements. Shafi Usman is the most wanted man; so he disguises himself as a Sikh. Debidayal is the deputy leader of this group.

Like Debidayal, Shafi Usman has had a personal cause for his hatred of the British. His father, who was only an innocent spectator, was shot down during the Jallinwala Bagh massacre. He and his mother were insulted by the Britishers. This experience has embittered him against the rulers.

The reasons for joining this group may be different ; but all Hanuman Physical Cultural Club members are dedicated freedom fighters. They sign their oaths in blood and surmount the barriers of religion and faith. The test of these young men comes soon. Debidayal and Shafi burn the military plane. The burning of the military plane gives Debidayal great satisfaction and a sense of fulfilment.

A turning point takes place when Debi's father Tekchand lodges complaint about the missing sticks of explosives from his stores. Police start inquiry into the matter. Shafi deceives and betrays his friends; as a result of that, the Hindu members of the club are arrested by the police. Shafi leaves Hindus to their fate. His commitment to patriotism is superficial. Basu and Debidayal are arrested, trialed and Debi is sentenced to life imprisonment and deported to the Andamans.

Fate brings Debidayal and Gian Talwar together as 'D' class prisoners on the ship to the Andamans. Debi is not broken and ingratiating like others, but he is proud, straight and haughty. Shafi's betrayal has not dampened his spirit or shattered his mission. Gian's trial has broken Gian. Debidayal has retained his fighting spirit and he directs it against the haughty, subordinate Indian Head Sentry Balbahadur.

Though he knows the consequences, Debidayal refuses to disown his activities. Even during his journey to the Andamans and his stay there, he did not bow down to the authorities at the cost of his self-respect. By his up-right behaviour and spirit of independence, he was able to maintain the image of a defiant hero in the jail. The convicts treated him as their leader. The arrival of the Japanese in the Andamans bring about a change in the life of Debidayal. Taking into consideration his background, the Japanese want to use him as their secret agent and a fifth

columinst in India to commit all types of activities of sabotage in order to subvert the war muscles of the British. The way in which the Japanese soldiers behave disillusion him : 'They were ruthless, overbearing, and cruel far more cruel than the British could ever be.....'(p.260).

Debidayal could never become a part of that particular form of degradation. He accepts to get back to India to continue his interrupted work than to join the Japanese march to India. He is betrayed by the Japanese. He becomes neutral when he finds the Japanese ruthlessness.

He goes to Calcutta to meet Basu and becomes aware of the rise of communal hatred in India. India has changed the people are divided. Basu lives the domestic life , he leaves politics and joins Hindu Mahasabha. Debi is unaffected by these communal feelings. He insists on meeting Shafi. Shafi again betrays him. To pay back Shafi, Debidayal takes away Mumtaz, Shafi's favourite girl and beloved, a prostitute. He marries Mumtaz. The entrance of Mumtaz into the life of Debi changes the course of his life towards the healing touch of love which goes beyond violence and non-violence, the rational and the irrational, and beyond all prejudices.

Debi reflects on the unprecedented tragedy caused by the non-violent movement of Gandhi for freedom:

"Yet, what was the alternative ? Would terrorism have won freedom at a cheaper price and somehow still kept the Hindus and Muslims together ? Perhaps not. But at least it would have been an honest sacrifice, honest and manly -- not something that had sneaked upon them in the garb of non-violence ". ( p.355 )

According to him, both Gandhi and the British have lost by not having allowed for the structural flaws in the human material they were dealing with, just when India got freedom, Debidayal and Mumtaz are caught in communal riot on their way to Pakistan. Debi, disguised as a Muslim going to Pakistan by train alongwith Mumtaz, is killed by the fanatic Muslims. Debi becomes a martyr.

While their love, which springs from a humane, sympathetic and real understanding of the fellow human beings, triumphs over the petty prejudices of religion, morality and class, their death celebrates the victory of the celestial love over the brutal forces of the communal virus all destroying violence. It seems that Malgonkar wants the young to be like Debidayal - idealistic, broad-minded, bold, honest and heroic.

It seems that Malgonkar makes Gian the hero of the novel because of his high class Hindu-Brahmin background.

Through the character of Shafi Usman, Malgonkar exemplifies how religious fanaticism poisons the very roots of idealism. Shafi betrays the members of Hanuman Physical Cultural Club especially Hindu members. Shafi is engaged in acts, of terror, violence and communal disharmony. He feels hurt when Mumtaz is taken away from him by Debi, and as a matter of vengeance, he throws an acid bulb on her face which is prevented by Debi ; Shafi takes this as a personal insult and that is why during the holocaust of the partition he goes to Duriabad and attacks the family of Teckchand. He kills Mrs. Tekchand and dies a violent death at the hands of Sundari whom he wants to take away and molest as a measure of retaliation against Debi.

All the chapters of the novel centre round the theme of violence, Malgonkar has succeeded in weaving a fitting atmosphere for the exposition of the theme of violence which is the background for the exposition of the three main characters- Gian, Debi and Shafi. It is a story of blood, hatred, and revenge, horror and terror. It is a sense of shame that makes Gian to forget the past and march towards hopeful future.

Malgonkar uses the myth of Shiva. He introduces the idol of Shiva whose face is calm in celestial repose, his pose caught up in a moment of the 'Tandava' dance, angry, threatening, malevolent. Shiva is a god of renunciation, non-violence, and love. He does not want anything for himself and takes only what other leave. At the some time when he is provoked and when it

is necessary, he can be a terrible god causing destruction. Malgonkar implies in using the symbol of Shiva that life is full of contrasts like non-violence and violence and it is up to us to live with them. Sometimes violence is justified to root out evil forces. In Bhagwat Gita, Lord Krishna says that he incarnates himself again and again to destroy evil.

The idol of Shiva was found by Gian's grandfather while tilling the land. He brought it home and defected from the worship of Vishnu to the worship of Shiva. After Gian's return from Andamans he presented the God of the Little House of Konshet, to Tekchand as a gift to secure a job in his company at Bombay. Thus Gian is blessed by Shiva indirectly. It is the intimacy of the Little House with Shiva which helps Gian in the end when he gets redemption from his weaknesses and guilt, as in the case of the Greek Hero. Robertan prefer Debidayal as hero; he argues :

".... Modern India was made by heroes like Debidayal and consists of nation of Gians". 40.

Malgonkar, however, pays more attention to Gian than to Debidayal or Shafi Usman. The character of Gian is developed in depth. In the case of Debidayal and Shafi, their characters are not developed in depth.

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