

## CHAPTER - V

### CONCLUSION

Manohar Malgonkar has established himself as a writer of great repute after publishing ten novels. It is important to note that Malgonkar's four significant novels were published during the sixties: 1) Distant Drum, 2) Combat of Shadows, 3) The Princes and 4) A Bend in the Ganges. These four novels elaborate Malgonkar's major concerns as a novelist. One can not deny the fact that these novels; taken as a whole, constitute a consistent and unified statement about life and they present a particular vision of life. His novels are vigorous; his material and the realism were his own. Generally, an author's life has a direct bearing on what he writes. Malgonkar is among the most autobiographical of all Indian writers, exploring and articulating every snap of his personal experience and intimate knowledge that he acquired. He shows his profound power of sympathetic observation, applied to the compassionate delineation of persons living within the boundaries of polite Society.

It seems unlike Anand or Narayan, Malgonkar is an upholder of aristocracy. He presents entertaining and still valid portraits of sophisticated men and women and they suggest, some basic and still valid criticism of life.

In other words, Malgonkar upholds conservative values in all his novels; and he takes meticulous care to pen the unpalatable aspects of both the aristocrats and the middle classes in equal proportions, without an attempt to gloss over the dark aspects of the upper class. Perhaps this is Malgonkar's one of the most interesting characteristic features is his heroes like Kiran Garud, Gian Talwar, Henry Winton and Abhayraj are aristocrats; they stand for values; They fight for values.

Malgonkar is very class-conscious. His works demonstrate the Marxist point <sup>of view</sup> that there is a co-relation between a writer's class and his vision of life. He has been financially well-off with a comfortable and independent income from his ancestral family land to support his career as a writer. This explains the class character of his work. He clings to the ideas, the attitudes, the values and the assumptions of his own property-owning, wealthy middle class and does not feel called upon to present the experience of another class. He chooses generally his principal characters from his own class and he rarely steps outside of his class for his literary material.

Malgonkar is an artist with a total vision of life. In most of his novels, the preoccupation with the theme of good and evil is recurrent. His novels show evidence of his being influenced by some American and English writers like John P. Marquand, Kipling, John Masters and E.M. Forster.

Malgonkar's incidents, characters and themes have some resemblance with those of writers.

Malgonkar's characters cover a large panorama, as the action takes place every where - in a Punjab village, the Andmans, Assam, Calcutta, Lahore, Madras and Bombay. The Central characters in Distant Drum, Combat of Shadows, The Princes and A Bend in the Ganges are developed in such a way that the action ascribed them is never inconsistent with their bearing or inappropriate to their convictions. The action is always the result of, or at least not in conflict with, the apparent motivation. There is a complete fusion of these elements; so the plot and character are identical. The main purpose of Malgonkar's novels is to portray the development of the protagonist's personality in a convincing and realistic manner.

There is plenty of sex in Malgonkar's novels and it plays a vital role. Sex is a dynamic part of the plot mechanism in his novels. At the same time, it shapes the characters and indicates how exactly, they, form themselves and interact with others.

Malgonkar is a keen observer of manners and mood of his men and describes in detail the workings of the mind of his characters in his novels and that's why, his characters present an astonishing variety. They are alive in every

limb, both cosmic 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, the protagonists are male. Kiran 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, Jaikumar in Open Season are the masculine heroes of Malgonkar's fictional world. Malgonkar's central characters, the masculine ones, reveal his vision based on what Henry James terms in his The Art of Fiction as 'the author's sense of reality' and 'a pattern of life.'

In Malgonkar's novels, he has taken up the most crucial movements in the life of nation and portrayed them in terms of human situations. His canvas is wide and his characters are heroically fighting odds and struggling hard with inner conflicts and outer circumstances through a period of transition. His characters are not opposed to progress if it can be had by degrees, but not by revolution or at the cost of good things in the past and tradition. His fictional world is a world which does not fight shy of conflict, action and ideas. His novels have a rhythm of transition and a pattern of myth. They have a vision to reveal and a story to tell. This Malgonkar does through his heroes around whom he has woven his stories. They pass through confusion

in the times of transition when the old world, the old pattern, the old values, good or bad, were destroyed and the new world is not yet born. His heroes have an irresistible urge to fulfil themselves and their heroic struggle is most graphically portrayed. Malgonkar does not deal with character or characterization; but he deals with personality.

A close study of Malgonkar's heroes shows that though they are mainly princes, officers, bureaucrats, aristocrats, there is also a Gian and a Jaikumar who come from middle class society. James Y. Dayanand comments :

'As a novelist Malgonkar is deeply interested in characters living in a period of momentous change'. 1

Moreover, his heroes undergo conflicts and crisis which are universal, which try them and mould them into fully developed personalities.

Malgonkar's ~~is~~ world presents a fascinating study of the human beings torn between two worlds. The heroes act and react against the background of the social upheavals, national crisis and conflicts. Clash of ideologies and of individuals, clash of cultures and of institutions, conflicts between the forces of life and death, between good and evil, between right and wrong all these contribute to the personal development of the hero.

Malgonkar presents his masculine characters as superior to his women <sup>Characters.</sup> The women are, primarily objects of entertainment, playing a subservient role. Malgonkar never chooses women as central characters of his novels. When he portrays the corrupt manipulation of the bureaucracy, generally women appear as commodities. His novels are men-oriented where women play just secondary roles. They may be educated, enlightened or independent; but they are generally beloved or sex objects. He looks at women as forming a unique and separate class. The women function within their orbit. They are hardly courageous and discerning and leave no impact on us as does his more masculine male-characters. Malgonkar's novels never project a woman's world view but project a man's world view. His heroes are rebels, thinkers, independent individuals. They are conscious of their identity. Malgonkar's images of women are stereotyped. Generally the female characters are sex objects, sensual women and concubines. Their names change but their identities remain unchanged. Malgonkar lacks the sharpness of vision in feminine characterization. In his approach to women they are limited to the physical aspects of their relationship with men. The sensual women are described as warm, naked, deliciously wanton, docile as Chinese concubines, earthly, raw-boned Chandani-Chowk whores, In sexual matters however women are more aggressive than men. Malgonkar does not shut eyes to the facts that the roots

of corruption and depravity in high society lie in the capitalist ideology; but as matter of fact he plays on surfaces, simply highlighting the lust and cupidity of the aristocratic life. Malgonkar defends the kings and princes and exhibits his indirect admiration for the ruling class or its ideology. His heroes are drawn directly from the strata of life he knew, so well. His portraits of army officers, soldiers, bureaucratic officers, princes and westernized men and women are truly remarkable. With a deep insight and keen observation, he presents a fine gallery of portraits of well-polished characters. His heroes represent the chivalry and valour of the anglicised upper class, the new aristocracy of British India which is the main staple of his novels.

One of the important charges levelled against Malgonkar has to do with his choice of characters. V.S. Naipaul mentions that Malgonkar does not portray the common Indian life and its realities, that his characters are princes and ruling class people. Malgonkar himself is ~~conscious~~ of this fact and he has asserted that his own experiences are of this society and he cannot present the experience of another class of society. At the centre of each novel are conflicts, the hero faces as a member of a society or as an individual-cultural or ideological, social or philosophical conflict. It is the hero against himself, his roots, his culture, his society. Examined from this angle Malgonkar's novels depict life in all its varied colours.

Malgonkar is concerned with all the multifarious experience in the hero's life and values evolving from these and from his racial culture. If Malgonkar upholds the traditional princely virtues he also presents the vices and weaknesses of the princely order. If his heroes are conservative and rebels, there is certainly a fine balancing of the traditional virtues and liberal attitudes. Malgonkar's art of characterization is superb. His heroes are often types, but at the same time, they are individuals with strongly defined personalities.

Malgonkar's design is to tell a story well to entertain but also to present a tangible pattern of life. He is quite optimistic about the traditional form of the novel-the realistic school of fiction. In his novels, it seems that, Malgonkar searches for a code or heroism that is capable of sustaining men in the critical time of war (including civil war) and revolution.

It is perhaps this consistent pattern in the author's mind that brings about a similarity in all the heroes. Referring to this aspect, Prof. James Dayanand remarks :

'All the protagonists are young men; all the novels are set in particular parts of India, generally northern India; and all the novels deal with period of Indian history concerned with India's struggle for



Independence. The young men go through more or less the same period in all novels (except the Devil's Wind) in more or less the same geographical area in India'. 2

This point of similarity is notified by almost all the critics of the novels of Malgonkar. A sort of common code of conduct for the heroes, can be formulated from his novels. It seems that Malgonkar's ideal code the Satpura Code is that of the ex-British Indian Army combined with the heroic virtues of the old Indian aristocracy. In this connection Prof. James Dayanand comments :

'Malgonkar's ideal code is that of the ex-British - Indian Army combined with the heroic virtues of the old Indian aristocracy'.3

As per the elements of the code, a Satpura Code hero is, first and foremost, a gentleman. he is not expected to do anything against the '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'; because he should take his professional responsibilities very seriously. The code is wide , elastic and rigid too. Every Satpura Code hero 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.

The name Satpura seems to have been derived from the Satpura Hills, difficult to cross because of its impenetrable jungles and valleys. Kiran Garud is a staunch upholder of Satpura Code. Abhay is a gentleman Mr. Moreton and Tony Sykes initiate him into the Code-the gentlemanly or Satpura Code. In Malgonkar's novels :

'Malgonkar searches for a code of heroism that is capable of sustaining men in the critical testing time of war (including civil war) and revolution'.<sup>4</sup>

Distant Drum is an exposition of a story of success and a narration of the process of self-realization of the hero, Kiran Garud. It is a human story of struggle and success and the final achievement of the goal of the hero Kiran Garud. Kiran Garud is young and masculine. The novel deals with the education of Kiran and the development of Kiran's personality as an Army Officer. The major parts of the novel are related to the hero's moral and intellectual evaluation and authentic documentation of Army life. Kiran is portrayed as gentle, brave, courageous, manly and adventurous. He is a staunch upholder of the Satpura Code values. He tries to follow the code. He is dominant, dynamic and active. He is influenced by Roney Booker, an ideal military officer and wishes to live like Roney Booker. Kiran faces hurdles, passes tests in his career and love. He is a devoted officer. He is tolerant, calm and patient. The army's motto teaches him the leadership qualities, devotion, sacrificial qualities, brotherhood, and selfless service. He learns these things under the training of the British Officer and he is turned into another British Officer. Kiran's character is remarkable for indomitable courage, manliness magnanimity and commanding presence of mind. He has a sense of honour and pride for his army

and nation. We find these qualities when he encounters Colonel Manners in the mess. Kiran is bold, firm and courageous in his action.

Kiran faces hurdles in his career. He is transferred due to his love affair with Bina Sonal. He gets supporters, helpers, at the time of tests and hurdles. Kiran's encounter with the Accounts Department shows his bravery, fortitude, firmness, strength and courage.

Kiran faces the problem of red-tapism in the Accounts Department. Red-tapism, procrastination and delay in taking decision, which became the integral part of Army after the Independence, created hurdles in the ways of prompt and honest officers like Kiran. Kiran accepts the challenge and finally wins.

Kiran is 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.

Kiran's confrontation with Govind Ram Sonal, Bina's father whom, accentuated the clash between the Satpura Code and the Civilian Code. Though Mr. Sonal arranges transfer of Kiran, Kiran neither blames, him nor complains against him. It shows his broad mind, courage and nobility.

Kiran's friendship with Abdul Jamal is a unique one; it shows Kiran's liberal views. He meets Abdul Jamal after the partition of the country in No-man's land. It created a conflict in Kiran's life, but Kiran is saved by Spike Buller. The friendship between Kiran and Abdul Jamal proves Kiran secular and free from religious and racial prejudices. Kiran helped Abdul Jamal and Abdul Jamal helped Kiran twice by giving evidence in Bob Medley's case and in the communal riot. Kiran takes risks in meeting Abdul Jamal when Abdul Jamal is his enemy Army officer of Pakistan.

Kiran's encounter with Margot Medlely creates a conflict in his life. Kiran rejects the proposal of Ropey Booker for a private job and remains a true soldier, an Army officer forever. He becomes more matured. In the end of the novel, Kiran gets success in his love and career and he achieves a sense of self-realization. Kiran, due to his Satpura Code and positive values in life, emerges as a Code Hero. The novel Distant Drum shows the growth of a 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, the gentlemanly code the Satpura Code.

In his second novel, Combat of Shadows, the hero is young and masculine. Malgonkar makes his central figure an Englishman with the norm of the British Public School

code of conduct. The novel portrays Henry Winton, the manager of the Brindian Tea Company. He is young active and healthy. He has 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 demoralizing and dehumanizing situation which leads him towards corruption and moral degeneration. Henry Winton appears as a dominant figure, a man of power, a man of strong will. The Public School values which Kiran Garud in Distant Drum finds helpful in resolving his problem, proved to be of no help to Henry. Henry Winton fails in his career and life due to his lack of gentlemanly code. Henry's conflict with Gauri, Jugal Kishore, Ruby and and Jean Walters created hurdles in his ways. He lacks prudence and understanding. His relations with Indians, Anglo-Indians and even with <sup>his</sup> own race proved to be failure. Henry Winton betrays Ruby and marries Jean Walters a white woman. He hates Indians and Anglo-Indians. His marriage proved to be a failure when he found his wife Jean Walters, in love with Eddie Trevor, an Anglo-Indian youth. Though Henry Winton is a successful manager, he has failed in his human relations. He refuses to appoint Gauri as a teacher, he hurts Jugal Kishore and thus he creates crisis for himself. He becomes a complicated man due to his decisions and rude behaviour.

Henry Winton is responsible for the death of Kistulal, a hunter-guide. He takes risk to kill the rogue elephant. He tries to maintain his status by telling a lie. Henry Winton gives faulty cartridges to Eddie Trevor. Eddie's murder is deliberate and cold as he was rival in his love. Henry Winton could not tolerate the humiliation that his wife was in love with Eddie Trevor. The irony of the fact is that Eddie was Sudden Dart's son. There is tragic flaw in Henry Winton's character which leads him to his nemesis. In the end of the novel Henry Winton is burnt alive. His death is tragic and violent. Henry is trapped like a wild beast by Ruby, Pasupati and Sudden Dart. Henry's fate is a tragic fate. Malgonkar makes him the 'anti-hero' of the novel.

In the novel The Princes, Malgonkar shows the conflict between Abhayraj, the prince and his reactionary father, Hiroji Maharaja. There is an ideological conflict and conflict with self. Both father and son take extremely opposite stands regarding the national movement. Hiroji Maharaja hates the nationalists whereas Abhayraj is sympathetic towards them. Abhay does not approve of his father's opposition of a dam over the village of Bulwara, his ill-treatment to the Maharani, his lavish expenditure on concubines and hunting, he stands exact opposite to his father. He hates his father who whips Kanakchand, the cobbler boy. Abhayraj is generous, courageous, bold and a rebel. But he appreciated the good

qualities of his father. After the heroic death of his father Hiroji, he becomes the Maharaja of Begwad and behaves as his father. His behaviour proves him a reactionary like his father. He whips Kanakchand when Kanakchand utters wrong words about Hiroji Maharaja and his family.

Abhay's princely education, his love affair with Minnie Bradley gave him a sense of realization and identity. Malgonkar uses the myth of initiation, separation and return in his partrayal of Abhay's character.

Abhay's relationship with his Mother shows her impact on him. Abhay dislikes his mother's elopement with Abdulla Jan. He hates her, but also understands her dilemma. Abhay is influenced by his father. He advises his mother, Maharani to go away from the palace. Abhay participates in the war and wins a medal for bravery. Abhay resigns from the Army and helps his father in his administration.

When Abhay is betrayed by Minnie. He marries Kamala and lives happy life. Abhay sacrifices his title and lives the common life in the end of the novel. Abhay leaves the ivory tower of princely isolation and alienation and identifies himself with the common man and understands the full implication of human values in life. Thus, Abhay becomes a Modern Hero. The novel The Princes describes the growth and

development of the character of Abhay from boyhood to manhood through several phases of change, from a sense of alienation and loneliness and innocence to a sense of experience, fulfilment and identity.

In Mangonkar's fourth novel A Bend in the Ganges, Malgonkar describes the growth and conflict of three young men ; Gian Talwar, Debidayal and Shafi Usman. Malgonkar describes the character of Gian who is non-violent and a disciple of Gandhi.

In the family feud, Gian kills his cousin brother Vishnudutt who had murdered Gian's brother Hari and thus violates the principle of 'non-violence'. Gian is transported to the Andamans where he acted as a spy to Mulligan and became the most hated among the criminals and the Penal Colony. Gian betrays Debidayal, his college friend. He runs away from the Andamans when the Japanese invaded the Andamans. He gets the job in the Kerwar Construction Company in Bombay by telling a lie to Sundari and Debidayal's father. There he violates the second principle, the principle of truth professed by Mahatma Gandhi. But in the end of the novel, Gian goes to rescue Sundari and her family from the clutches of the fanatic Muslims and behaves courageously and saves Sundari from molestation. He emerges as a hero in the end of the novel. He is brave and courageous. He is presented



as Modern Hero - a Psychological Hero. He is faced with the quest of identity which leads to the problem of salvation and redemption 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 gets redemption from his guilt by saving Sundari and her family in the end of the novel. Gian and Sundri leave their past behind and march ahead in future. The character of Gian is developed in depth, whereas Debidayal and Shafi's characters are not developed in depth. The final act of Gian makes him nobler than Debidayal and Shafi, Gian accepts life with all its problems.

Malgonkar's main interest is the human involvement and the progress of the hero who either emerges victorious or is crushed and defeated in the process of life. The pattern of the hero's moral growth either culminates in his self-realization, or his realization of the inadequacy of his individual dream and his future in life. One has to assume that it is only ~~the~~ design that there evolves slowly through the novels of Malgonkar a clear image of his hero. He unfolds an image which includes almost all aspects of human endeavour. None of his heroes can be called extraordinary and exemplary characters, they are just normal human beings through whom Malgonkar uncovers his particular vision of life. No doubt there are similarities. What is most characteristic and

noticeable in his novels is the theme of initiation and self-realization with regard to all the heroes Kiran Gaurd, Henry Winton, Abhayraj and Gian Talwar.

Malgonkar's heroes are certainly expressions of his own attitude towards life—a philosophy drawn out of his rich and varied experience of Indian life. Malgonkar's novels show that the heroes move and develop in a systematic and logical manner in a distinctive pattern, revealing a consistent pattern of experience which embodies Malgonkar's affirmative view of human life. Each hero begins as an immature individual, searching for identity and self-realization and in the end he grows into a self-possessed and mature character. This is more or less, with a slight variation in each case, the pattern of development in each novel. It is this recurrent theme or pattern in the novels of Malgonkar that finally shapes his particular vision of life which is embodied in the development of the hero. Malgonkar portrays the heroic struggle of his heroes graphically as we find in Kiran's, Henry Winton's, Abhay's and Gian's cases.

One finds Malgonkar sure of himself in delineating the characters from the upper strata of the society from which he himself hails, proving the theory of Karl Marx that a writer can not be free from his milieu. } 2

The principle of contrast and comparison is employed to make the characters of the heroes, more effective and impressive. In Distant Drum the character of Kiran is contrasted with that of Kamala Kant and Ropey Booker's idealistic attitude is contrast with the materialistic one. In a Combat of Shadows there is a sharp contrast between the characters of the colonial Englishman Henry Winton and the Anglo-Indian, Eddie Trevor and the compromising attitude of Cockburn. In The Princes the triple contrast is continued with Hiroji, Abhayraj and Kanakchand and in A Bend in the Ganges with, Gian, Debidayal and Shafi.

The heroic qualities are so skilfully and emphatically highlighted that Malgonkar's ~~principle~~ characters gradually develop, quite convincingly into proper Heroes. In the historical novels under study, Malgonkar Heroes make memorable human beings as they are endowed with significant traits of classical Hero, Romantic Hero, Byonic Hero, code Hero, Modern Hero and also Anti-Hero.

## REFERENCES

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