CHAPTER – 3
SELF-REALIZATION AND LIBERATION

3.1) Introduction: -

This chapter will also have six sections similar to the previous one. The aim of this chapter is to see how the selected writers have used writing as a means of expressing self-realization and liberation. As seen in the second chapter, the entire life of these women writers is a continuous battle of survival, growth, search for identity and to achieve something higher in life, despite of any unfavorable conditions in the family, society or surroundings, in the general belief, traditions or the accepted laws of the country.

These women could progress through struggle and firm determination. The very striking and historical aspect of these transitions lies in the fact that this transformation was possible after thousands of years. The inspiration came from the great sources like, Gautam Buddha, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Jesus Christ, Dr. Martin Luther King (Jr.) and other social reformists existed in the same society. The success of these women-writers is the fruit of the knowledge and the right philosophy with which they could overcome the chains of ignorance, which is responsible for the caste, color, class and gender discrimination discussed in the second chapter.

The reformers, saints and very active, practical crusader and revolutionary leaders born in the same communities imparted the knowledge and philosophy. The historical landmarks and events discussed in the second chapter and also the philosophy of equality and brotherhood passed on by generations to generations by the good people in the society consolidated and strengthen the desire to liberate.
3.2) Self – Realization:

It is the study of solving problems or finding the solutions of the present and future issues on the basis of the information and knowledge acquired by some successful people in the past. Of course the process of civilization of human beings has been gradual and the knowledge has been passed from generation to generation to acquire peace, harmony, homogeneous and symbiotic living in the modern civilization, for example landing on the moon is the result of gigantic team – work of the scientists and the vision of the leaders like American president Mr. Kennedy who had declared this achievement ten years before it happened and it also required the multi – disciplinary knowledge and efforts for exploring new horizons for the betterment of mankind. It is the efforts of making the world more beautiful so we study the history of different countries and communities, the lives of the saints, reformists, scientists and also the lives of the writers who seemed to have understood to the world better due to their keen observations of the environment around them and due to their sensitivity towards the human nature.

Self – realization means ‘Self Recognition’ or ‘Know Thyself’. It is the ability to understand the role of the self to the maximum capacity and aptitude to develop oneself so that ‘He’ or ‘She’ in a position to do something for the society with the attitude of gratitude. It is the process of giving back to the society to the best of the ability rather than taking from the society. The knowledge and wisdom given by Mahatma Phule and Dr. Ambedkar based on Buddhist philosophy emphasizes equality, brotherhood and freedom, awakening to this truth and knowledge and overcoming all the desires and temptations of the worldly things but ultimately enjoying the bliss after the enlightenment is achieved is nothing but the Self-realization. To be aware of the potentialities and talents of the self to get the confidence to achieve your goals is self-realization. To struggle and strive hard to achieve the goals is the Liberation.
3.3) Liberation: --

Liberation means to overcome the obstacles like ignorance* and poverty with determination, hard work and selfless service to the society. It is reflected in achieving knowledge and status in the society. Liberation is a process of achieving higher status with respect to knowledge, identity in the society by overcoming the obstacles and conquering the fear. Liberation and self-realization are complimentary to each other. In fact it is a continuous process, which has growth, dimensions and magnitude of external and internal nature.

These women writers under study felt that writing is the means of liberation and explored the fast progress of neglected components of the society. Liberation reflects in outward progress and achievement in status, position and popularity while self-realization has internal aspect, which enriches the soul and brings about the blissful fulfillment, sense of achievement and a positive feeling by the person. The self realization can be compared with sowing the right seed at the right place and liberation with the nurturing the growth and struggling to grow to that size to enable to bear the fruits to benefit the society. There is the attitude of gratitude and giving back to the society willingly.

3.4 SECTION--I
AFRICAN—AMERICAN LITERATURE
MARIAN ANDERSON: MY LORD! WHAT A MORNING (1956)

3.4.1) Life before realizing self: -

In the earlier chapters it has been discussed in detail how in 19th and 20th century the African-Americans were subordinated, marginalized and devalued in every possible ways in the racial hierarchy of the American society. Harlem Renaissance writers, artists and activists found a need to articulate the issues of African-Americans human rights in order to emancipate from the bondage of social injustice
and cultural exclusion. Harlem Renaissance changed the attitude of helpless and exploited women into self reliant, sophisticated and independent African-American women with racial pride and identity.

Marian Anderson was the gifted, trained singer of 20th century and an important figure in the struggle of African-American for racial equality. She became the role model for other black artists. Through her singing she urged the nation to overcome prejudices and intolerance through perseverance and strong faith in religion. Her magical voice and quiet determination helped in breaking the walls of inequality and injustice during a challenging time of her life. Marian, the popular and brilliant singer struggled through out her life in poverty in South Philadelphia. She remembered a home full of love affection and warmth even in poverty. She lost her father at the very early age of ten. Her mother took the work of cleaning and doing laundry to support her three daughters. Her hard work and sacrifice in the interest of her daughters had a great influence on Marian. So she decided to help and give something back to her mother. As a child, Marian scrubbed steps ran errands and worked as a domestic maid for the White families when the school got over.

3.4.2) Self - realizing process: -

Her talent for singing was noticed at the very early age of six. So the chief director of Union Baptist Church selected her to sing a duet for Sunday school and later at the regular morning service. She had to give up her schooling but deep down her heart she had a unique love for education. In High school she tried to enroll herself at a local music school but was rejected with the curt statement, 'we don’t take colored.' At that time she did not react but after some years in her autobiography she writes,

“I don’t think I said a word. I just looked at the girl and was shocked that such words could come from so young.” (P.57)
This indicates her curious mind and independent thinking. Then she applied to the Yale University School of Music but this could not enroll herself due to lack of money. She continued her singing in church and schools related events.

At the age of eight she earned her first singing remuneration of 50 cents. At the age of ten she learned different musical parts. When she sang in the High school event, the Philadelphia actor, John Butler arranged an interview with a voice/singing teacher and there she received her first music training. It is clear from this incident that only with the support of some good people like the teachers and well-wishers she could gather confidence and realize the talent in her and take steps towards success.

She continued to earn small amount by singing solos, in church meetings and just for segregated audience. She became popular and talented singer at a very young age so her well-wishers made contribution for her music training. Her efforts boosted her confidence and thought that she could go out for greater public performance. This realization helped her to continue her struggle to learn more in spite of the difficulties she faced.

In 1924 she made her debut at Town Hall. But that experience was very disappointing due to poor attendance and her poor performance, which was highly criticized by the Press. She thought of giving up her professional career. She felt lost and defeated. Somehow her mother, friends and well-wishers could give her confidence and she was introduced to Giuseppe Boghetti, a well-known voice teacher. He heard her song “Deep River” and said, “I will make room for you right away. After two years you will be able to go anywhere and sing for anybody.” (P.38) This helped her self-realization process and got control and confidence in singing.

The vision of the good teacher Boghette helped her to use her potential talent to make progress in her singing career. This proves the equal nature of the human beings and one should realize the talent and the call in our own life and strive to
achieve the maximum to fulfill it. Like any other art, music has no boundaries or walls of cast, gender or colour hence a person such as Boghetti only could notice clearly the potential talent in Marian without any prejudiced attitude. The good music and singing is beyond human limitations and it helps human being to rise above the narrow walls of discriminatrions. This was like discovering oneself by the swan duckling after watching the mirror image /reflections in the water or the discovery of the birdy that it can fly higher and higher in the sky. This is the realization process for Marian. This is like discovering a swan by a bird in itself.

3.4.3) Life after Self- Realization: -

Only after she realized her worth she began aspiring higher and struggled until she achieved it by becoming world-class singer. Her music training was not possible without solid financial help. So the Principal of her High school, Dr. Lucy Wilson, her neighbors and people at the Union Baptist Church arranged a concert at the Church and raised 600 dollars. She resumed her career with the grace and help of God. Under the guidance of Mr. Boghetti she received training for a contest and the privilege of singing with Philharmonic Orchestra in New York City and chosen from 300 competitors.

Soon she started her outdoor concerts as soloist. Various glee clubs, choirs and Negro Organizations invited her. She was the only young Negro artist. Due to her talent in music, determination and hard work, National Association of Negro Musician granted a scholarship as she wanted some special voice and language training. In 1929 she participated in a recital at Carnegie Hall in U.S. She received Julius Scholarship for study abroad. In 1933 a German concert manager arranged a debut for her in Berlin at the cost of 500 dollars to the singer. He arranged a series of six concerts. By that time she was popular world wide so instead of six she could do total fourteen concerts before she left for Scandenevia.
During the two years she traveled across the Continent. Every time the people and the Press enthusiastically received her. Mr. Toscanini heard her and remarked, “a voice like her’s is heard only once in a hundred years.” (p.158) This remark shows the tremendous gift of god in her. Like Mr. Toscanini everybody must learn to see the best in everyone and help to grow by helping each other to make the life better. This discovery of her unique talent by people helped her to realize the potential and strengthen her to make progress in spite of the difficulties. This is the point of self-realization in her life.

During 1937-38 she gave 70 recitals described by her management as the longest, most intensive tour in concert history for a singer. In the next season she gave 75 concerts in 60 cities. Each season at Carnegie Hall, outdoor summer recitals and in most of the cities of U.S. she used to give 60 concerts. By 1949 she could complete her 14th annual concert tour of the U.S. But her fame could not entirely eradicate the prejudices she confronted as a young black touring U.S. This fact shows it is difficult to change the mindset of the people. She continued her struggle to overcome the hurdles as her life mission to go ahead on her path of progress, which is the part of her struggle. This is the liberation process.

In 1939 the most disgusting, embarrassing and humiliating incident took place. After receiving national and international fame and popularity, Mr. Hurlok thought that it was time for Marian to perform in the capital of Nation, at a major auditorium, that is, Constitution Hall. Before that many times she had performed at Washington D.C., Churches, schools, Howard Universities and many civic organizations but not that particular hall owned by Daughters of American Revolution (D.A.R.). There was a clause in the contract that ‘a concert by White artists only and for no other purpose.’ The manager told Mr. Hurlok over the phone ‘no Negro will ever appear in this hall while I am manager.’ She wanted to perform there because “I felt I had that right as an artist.” (P.193) So in February 1939, D.A.R. denied Marian the right to sing at Constitution Hall simply because she was Black.
The incident was highly criticized all over the world. The first lady Elenor Roosevelt resigned from D.A.R. At last on 9th April with Mrs. Roosevelt’s efforts she performed on the steps of Lincoln Memorial in front of the audience of 75,000 and became a symbol of the struggle for the racial equality. She reacted, “I could see that my significance as an individual was small in this affair. I had become, whether I liked it or not, a symbol, representing my people. I had to appear.” (p.198) This fact indicates her oneness with the society to which she belonged. Her life is a symbol and has a purpose of giving confidence to her people that we are equal to the whites and we can overcome and be successful. The life of Marian became so large that it had taken the responsibility of proving that blacks are equal to the whites. The sense of this responsibility gave her the strength and a purpose in her life.

3.4.4) Racial discrimination: --

As a black woman in United States, Marian was almost a life-long victim of racism. When she was in High school, she made her first long concert tour in a Jim Crow train car, segregated railroad cars from Washington to Savannah. She was saddened by the humiliation of segregation. For many years she found traveling by public transportation insulting. She was always told there was no reservation even if there were. She learned it was better if she did not arrange for her own accommodation. In Europe she was welcomed into the hotels and restaurants but in U.S. she was shifted to 3rd or 4th class accommodation. In the South, some simple tasks as arranging for laundry, taking a train or eating at restaurants were often difficult. She would take meals in her room and traveled by night trains. She modestly says,

“If I were inclined to be combative, I suppose I might insist on making issues of these things. But that is not my nature, and I always bear in mind that my mission is to leave behind me the
kind of impression that will make it easier for those who follow.” (P.244)

She had the right attitude and community consciousness.

It was her practice that when she appears on the stage of any concert hall that segregates Negro, she would bow her own people first and then rest of the audience. In segregated cities she demanded ‘verticle’ seating. It means Negro ticket buyers, though seated apart from others, must be allotted seats in every part of the auditorium. Many times at her performance it was for the first time blacks would sit in the orchestra sections. By 1950, she would refuse to sing where the audience was segregated. At the end of the concert she would worry about the offending audience when she took her White pianist’s hand to bow.

Throughout her career she became the victim of the unspoken bias of Opera companies. She faced racial prejudice throughout her life and career. But she overcame it through perseverance, grace, pride and dignity. In fact at that time almost in 1955 she became the first black soloist to perform with the Metropolitan Opera in New York City. The audience gave her the standing ovation. Despite challenges and barriers of oppression and marginalization, she made her dream come true. In 1957 she made 12 nations’ 3500 miles tours sponsored by the Department of States, the American National Theatre and Academy and Edword Murrow’s television series “See It Now” and in the same year published her modest autobiography, My Lord What A Morning (1956)

Thus the life of Marian was a constant struggle in which she realized the gift of God to her of good voice. She developed it with the help of right truthful people and established herself as a world-class singer. This achievement of a black fatherless girl proves that all are born equal and given the opportunity can be successful in life. The realization of the talent in herself and the struggle to be a world-class singer bears the testimony to the fact that all human beings whether black or white, male
or female are equal in birth and it is the birthright of everyone to live and progress to make own life and others better and beautiful.

Although Marian started her career when she was just a black girl singing in the school and churches and a victim of social discriminations, she achieved great heights in singing career. This was possible due to encouragement; support and timely help from teachers and other social workers. The most important single reason is the fact that the realization changed her attitude to believe in herself that she had the call and had the potentials required for the career. She had the passion for singing and she enjoyed it and that made the struggle easy and natural tendency.

The black girl in agony without identity became the epitome of the community and got the much-coveted Identity, which may be envied by an aspiring white lady too. This identity in the divided world of discrimination and bias of the black woman and the reaction of the world to it, is elaborately discussed in the next chapter with examples, like which include her being invited as a delegate, appointed ambassador, awarded numerous honorary degrees and awards which I will highlight in detail in the next chapter.

3.5. SECTION—II

ANNE MOODY: COMING OF AGE IN MISSISSIPPI (1968)

3.5.1) Initial Stage: -

The Black community suffered severely due to racism, resistance and protest of white supremacy. Due to their colour and race there was a separate arrangement for them in schools, colleges, restaurants, buses, railways etc. They were badly insulted, attacked and murdered brutally. As citizens of America, Afro- Americans had no protection at all in the society. They were forced to accept the social belief that they were inferior so that they should be humble and respectful to whites. In 1910 NAACP established the rights of the oppressed and exploited black community
against Whites's violent community into strong, self-assertive community. The period of Harlem Renaissance (1920-1930) was extremely uplifting to Afro-Americans as dignified people. It changed the attitude of helpless blacks.

After World-War II they became more concerned about human and civil rights. The Civil Rights Movement took place from May 17, 1954 to March 1965. The Black Civil Right Movement in the 50's and 60's was a political, legal and social struggle of the Black Americans to gain full citizen's rights. It created the interest in the thoughts and behaviour. It was the social protest against segregation, liberty and the denial of civil rights. Blacks adopted the means of non-violence to protest. They stood up with determination to fight against segregation. The Movement gave the marginalized and neglected a better future for their community. They started getting their voices heard. These people, with Martin Luther King's non-violence and Malcom X's militant force motivated politically and received social, economical changes in the society. The social revolution ended with the removal of all barriers, which were restricted for black community.

The social and political events like the CRM, the assassination of Mr. John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcom X and Robert Kennedy brought the consciousness and commitment to Black community. CRM ruled out racism and segregation and implemented Federal Government. By late 1960's, the significant anti-discrimination legislation was passed and in 1965 Voting Right Act was also passed.

3.5.2) Life before Self-Realization:

Anne Moody's *Coming of Age in Mississippi* (1968) gives us a bird's eye view of Civil Right Movement. She gives us a detailed account of poor, black woman's experiences of racial prejudices. She struggled through the insecurities of being black and constantly faced racism and harsh realities of segregated life in the rural South. She depicts vividly her poor childhood, color bias even in Black community,
internal racism of light and dark complexion (even faced by Marian Anderson and her husband), racial equality, the instances of fear of White’s violence, vanity and arrogance of White people.

Anne Moody during her agonizing childhood was exposed to the very severe discrimination as a child of poor sharecropper. She saw her parents toiling whole week since early morning to late evening just enough to feed themselves. They had to stay in a very dingy, rotten and congested house. They lived in a shack that had either one or two rooms. She describes,

“We didn’t have a toilet. Mama would carry us out at back of the house each night before we went to bed to empty us.” (P.21)

The only decent house near the plantation belonged to their White master, Mr. Carter. Her mother’s brother, George Lee, a young boy of nine looked after them but often tormented them by beating and harsh treatment. Her father often frustrated due to constant poverty and labour, he took to drinking and gambling, frequently lost large amount in that. Moreover the death of his close friend disturbed him deeply. He left the family for his friend’s widowed wife. The brunt of poverty and discrimination had to be borne by the women only.

Mr. Raymond, a White soldier had illegal relations with her mother. She had seven children without marriage. Mr. Raymond’s mother did not approve this relationship and always looked down upon her mother and the children. At that time only she realized that just because of their colour of skin, she had no place in ‘white’ community. . Her mother was a woman of strong conviction. She did all the odd jobs, changed many houses as a maid but never gave up. At times she used to steal from the cornfields by using different tricks. Her mother had a great laugh to see the scarecrows by the Whites next day on the field. It indicates that the poverty-sticken life also had a silver lining due to her mother’s indomitable spirit and sense of humour. Her mother faced every problem courageously with the right attitude.
At the age of nine, Anne Moody worked as a domestic servant for White families and earned six dollars a week. She helped her mother a lot so that they didn’t have to depend upon either bread or beans and water.

3.5.3) Self Realization: -

Initially She went to a very simple school. In the school also she was judged as the brilliant student quite ahead of her white cousins and even other white children. Her white classmates admired her for being a smart and clever student. Her mistress also used to tell her to teach Maths and other difficult subjects to the white children. She experienced the gender and racial discrimination when she went to watch movie but found that she could not sit in the regular seats with other white children. Before that she was always surrounded with White children and people also who saw the best in her and treated her with equality still she was not considered to be equal. The opportunity of studying together and better performance boosted her confidence.

She was selected in the Basketball team and her good performance not only gave her scholarship to help her financially but it also boosted her confidence in her school and college life. In spite of her good performance she was often disturbed to receive segregated and inferior treatment. The segregated treatment given in the school, college, restaurant, church awakened her curiosity and she realized that the slavery and discrimination had been forcefully imposed on Blacks, which they did not deserve. She continued with her domestic help to white families. At the age of fifteen she worked in the restaurant while the workers were supposed to be the age of eighteen and above. She was warned and dismissed by the owner. She also worked in chicken factory, which was very tiring. It was very torturing to have poverty-stricken and segregated life.
3.5.4) Life after Self Realization: -

The realization on Moody's part about the discrimination and enslaved life gave her energy to struggle and change the wrong things to right around her. She always stood confidently and steadfast against the challenges in the college and in the society to protest against every injustice. She left Mr. Raymond’s house when she realized that her self-respect and liberty were not safeguarded in her stepfather’s house. She realized as she had grown into a young, charming woman; his intentions were also not good. She revolted against her stepfather and left the house with the help of Mayor Mr. Leon against her mother’s wish. She had an independent, self-righteous and bold nature. She did not tolerate any misbehaviour.

She witnessed the ‘marches’ and riots where the buses were burned. Blacks were beaten, jailed and mercilessly killed. She joined Congress Of Racial E, SCLC, SNCC organizations which organized positively peaceful non-violent protest of students sit-ins, marches against segregation. She had a good quantity of intolerance towards the injustice. She also had good courage and conviction against injustice.

At Tougaloo College Hostel she fought against the injustice of punishment and sub-standard food. The atmosphere in the college gave her a sense of duty to change the situation in the society by joining the movements. Her mother was against all her social activities. As a student, she was a very active member in the movement. She was busy in canvassing of Black community and tried to get more and more people to register for voting list. She arranged for the free supply of food and clothing for the Blacks. She received less amount as a social activist that also she spent on the poor neighbor’s children school uniform.

She was very angry towards the Whites’ hatred for them, their discriminating tendencies and very timid approach of the Blacks. Her criticism of the national leaders, ‘not the leaders but only dreamers.’ Her role leading from the path by leading from the front, the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X
was the great setback to the movements and her frustration to go into the shell. But at the same time her very healthy and living consciousness germinated into the creative writing as writing autobiography. The source of inspiration and a perennial hope for finding the solutions to remove the cancer of gender and racial discrimination, 'We shall overcome' in a positive note on which she gave a pleasant stroke to the readers and the seeds of realization planted successfully also in the hearts and minds in the millions of readers of this immortal idea. This indicates consciousness and commitment towards the community and positive attitude to change the situation for better. That was the main purpose of her writings.

3.6. SECTION—III: SISTERS OF THE SPIRIT

3.6.1) Role of Religion in 19th Century: --

In 19th century religion had the greatest impact on both private and public life. Though Afro-Americans were an inseparable part of Christian heritage; initially in the South slaves were prohibited from gathering in Church meeting. It was considered that the Afro-American people were not pure and they are without the soul. It had affected many souls. The period, in which many sects were taking roots, e.g. the society at large was awakening to some positive changes in the light of religious activities. The Church of England reorganized in 1789 as the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA. The Methodists formed their own sect, known as the Methodist Episcopal Church, which became the largest Protestant body in the nation over the following century (Wacker, 14).

Many practices of discriminations of class, colour and gender bias observed in the society. The White and Black had different sects. Gender bias was observed even in the White society. As a result the White women were also not allow to preach. The Blacks, from Brazil and Africa brought as slaves for the sake of cheap labor so the men, women and even children were treated worst than animals. These women were exploited sexually and their children were forced into child labor of doing all the
odd jobs for the White community. This was the usual practice in the slave system. The children were often sent to other’s plantation to be playmates to White children or to be housemaids or servants for the mistress. The White masters and mistresses treated Black people so inhumanly that often some killed them for simple mistakes. The White people believed that Blacks, being impure souls; they could never do well spiritually.

But the Church groups like Methodists took momentum and Black became aware of the God’s kindness and Grace. The new idea for them that the God and His son Jesus Christ belong to the whole world, the Saviour Jesus Christ came to this world in the form of a man, died for cleansing their sins and in the eyes of God all human beings are equal. It spread like a fire removing the darkness of ignorance and giving confidence to the Black community that the God belong to them also. This knowledge and wisdom of Christian spirituality awakened a sense of equality among the blacks, which gave them confidence.

These women played a major role in Black Church. They were not allowed to preach but with their strong faith and belief in God, they found their ways. They fought for the issues of race, sex, class and education. They felt that they had been called by God to preach His word and the followed the vocational call.

3.6.2) JEREENA LEE

3.6.2.1) Before Self Realization:-

Jerena Lee was born to free parents in the orthodox society. Jerena Lee as a young girl of seven has observed these changes in the society. She used to attend the prayers and services even in her agonizing life. She was a live-in maid in the Sharp, a White family for eight years; she carried her duties of a child labor in the most inhuman, insensitive and painful condition for the White family. When she was not allowed to touch the Bible, she became aware that there is someone who is there to
listen to her sorrows and agonies, "I cried out and none but Jesus heard" (p. 38). She was going through the hell and fire of the agony as a person who is treated like an object and not as a human entity. She dwells in the atmosphere that is filled with the vacuum of love and hatred by the people around. She wanted to get rid of the situation and wanted relief from the life of slave, agonies, torment and sinfulness.

From one side Jerena was introduced to prayers and religious activities and on the other hand she was treated like an animal and lack of love. This made her very weak that led to frustration. She could not tolerate her subhuman, pathetic, miserable conditions. She felt worthless and wanted to get rid of the situation by committing suicide twice as for her such life was unbearable and unnatural. Initially she was haunted by negative thoughts but curious mind and her desire to change her plight she took some positive steps, for example, she tried to read Bible that was hidden from her by the English lady. She tried to change the environment in the Church as the present company of the people was like a wall to her. The initial and superficial knowledge of spirituality also gave her a new mindset to turn to God and his ways.

3.6.2.2) Self-realization Process: --

The sermons of the dynamic priest Richard Allen was a turning point of her spiritual life that turned her on spirituality and she saw God in the new light of knowledge. She got the correct guidance to know the stages in her quest to attain God’s grace. The stages were ‘conversion, Justification and Sanctification’ (p. 33). This knowledge showed her in the right direction to attain the positive results. She realized her sinful state and positively tried to get rid of the vices like pride, anger and malice with the help of the Holy Spirit. Her attitude changed completely and she saw the world in a new light of wisdom.

Now she knew the difference between good and bad, darkness and light, ignorance and knowledge like black and white she realized and feared greatly this sinfulness
that would attract her to the wrong path. She continued praying for Sanctification, as Brother Scott guided her whenever it was necessary. Once at her secret places of praying, as she was about to wind up her prayers and rose from her knees to stand up and go away, she heard a Divine voice speaking into her ears and as she was still in leaning posture “ask for Sanctification” (p.34) She recollected that she had not thought about this in her own prayers that is forgetfulness, attributed to the Satan. She thought that Satan had hidden the very object from my mind. (p.34)

Actually she wanted to pray for sanctification but surprisingly had forgotten all about it. She bowed again at the same place, same time and said, “Lord, sanctify my soul for Christ sake” that very instance, “As if lightening had darted through me. I sprang to my feet and cried,” the Lord had sanctified my soul”(p.34) She also heard another voice saying, ”No, its too great a work to be done” means such a great work can not be possible. But again another voice of the Spirit saying, “bow down for the witness” and she received the blessings when the voice said, “Thou art sanctified”(p.34)

At this moment she experienced a great joy, she was filled with ecstasy and cried out happily. She felt as if she is in the ocean of light and bliss. During this experience she stood perfectly still, the tears rolling in a flood from her eyes, “So great was the joy that is passed description and there is no language that can describe it, except indicated in the St. Paul’s life-story in which he encountered the holy Spirit.” (34). This was spiritual awakening and self-realizing which made self-recognition and empowerment possible. It gave new knowledge and direction to her life. It made her feel chosen.

3.6.2.3) After Self-Realization: --

After Sanctification, almost four and half years she spent in silence and meditation. She saw another vision while praying voice in which she heard a Divine voice saying to her, “Go, preach the Gospel”, to that she replied, “No one will believe me” same
voice replied, "preach the Gospel, I will put words in your mouth and will turn your enemies to become your friends."(35) In order to confirm this fact she immediately went to her secret place to confirm the God’s call. There with her spiritual eyes she saw the form and figure of a pulpit with a Bible lying there on, the back of which was presented to her as plainly as it had been a literal fact. As great was the impact as if she preached in her sleep before a great multitude expounding to them the things of religion. It was like a new life discovered giving a new meaning to her life.

So violent her exertions and so loud were her exclamations that she woke up due to her own voice. The other family members also woke up. At that very moment she felt the great intensity to start preaching so many times she went to the preacher in charge of the African society, Rev. Richard Allen to seek the permission for preaching the Gospel. But she hesitated, at last she overcame the fear and she was tranquillised and told the priest about her vision and desire to preach. He told her, “Our discipline knew nothing about it at all that it did not call for women preacher.” (p.36)

This semi positive and uncertain answer made her happy and improved her confidence to overcome the fear but raised many questions in her mind. She believed nothing is impossible with God. Why should it be improper for a woman to preach, as the fact is Savior had died for a man as well as a woman? If a man is allowed to preach because Saviour had died for him, then even a woman should be allowed to preach because Savior had died for her also. Otherwise that would make the Saviour appear as the half Savior instead of a complete Saviour. If Mary Macdenayl can preach about the risen Saviour, if a unlearned fisherman could preach the Gospel, why not me?” (p.37). She herself could overcome her complex and the barriers to be fearless and free.

She was very confident about her call because her labours were very effective with respect to awakening and converting the sinners. Many people told her from black and white with signs of repentence like shading tears, the change brought up in their
lives due to Lee’s prayers and efforts. It was like sowing the seeds of Lord’s love in the hearts of people. Whenever she felt perturbed she used to get the vision to clear the doubts in her minds. She saw with her eye of faith a form of fire equal of man’s hand and she saw a man rebel in the White garments from shoulders down to the feet and he said to her, “Thou shalt not return from the Cross.” (p.37) After this she never doubted her actions and she continued with the God’s work. The spiritual awakening and visions gave her confidence, strength and conviction.

In 1811 she married pastor Joseph of a Coloured Society from rural area of Philadelphia. She wanted to move to a Urban area with her husband but he refused that. In her dream she saw a man of great countenance, dressed in white robe who said, “Joseph Lee must take care of these sheep or the wolf will come and devour them.” (p.39) Through this vision she came to know her mistake and understood the will of God that she stood stay in the rural area with her husband. It is the realization on her part of her duty towards the poor and needy. She became aware of her strengths and duties to take right decisions.

Once she was sick and felt that she would never recover. But again she saw a dream as she saw the sun rising in the morning about half an hour then getting obscured due to cloud up to three quarters of the day and then at the end of the day the sun rays burst open with complete splendor. She interpreted this dream comparing it with her own life. The clouds covering the sun are compared to her sickness, bursting of sunrays signified the end of sickness. Thus she saw the God’s will in every thing of her life. She lost five family members including her husband that was a great loss for her. She was left all alone in the world with her two children. She consoled herself with the promise of (Jesus) Him, “I will be the widow’s God, and a father to the fatherless.” (p.41)

In her most difficult period of her life she carried on God’s will and word. She acquired the power and strength by remaining unmoved with God’s love and grace and there she found herself liberated. In this way she had described the struggle of
conviction, justification and sanctification in order to achieve her goal, i.e. to preach a Gospel. The struggle to achieve her goal is the liberation and the conscious efforts to be aware of the potential to give her confidence to choose the right path is 'self-realization'. Recognizing oneself and knowing oneself is self-realization. It was a turning point in Jerena's life.

3.6.3) ZILPA ELAW

3.6.3.1) Before Self Realization: --

Mrs. Zilpa Elaw, 19th century African-American woman writer was born in a very religious family. That was a time when color, class and gender discrimination were very strongly practiced and deeply rooted in the white dominated society. The Black were treated inhumanly and enforced into slavery by the White masters. They were considered as the unequal, subhuman, impure souls incapable of understanding the intellectual, educational and religious matters. The white masters never treated them equally but treated them worse than stray animals. The Blacks were really ignorant and struggling to survive, earning only for their survival and for the basic needs and kept isolated from private and public life and from educational and religious institutions. The ignorance, lack of hygiene was the part of their life.

Mrs. Elaw was born in such an environment. At the age of six, her grandparents took away her elder brother so that at least they can feed him. When she was twelve years old, she suffered a loss of her mother who died while giving birth to her 22nd children. Her father had kept her younger sister to her aunt and she was sent to Rebaca and Micheal family as a live-in maid. Just after one and half years stay with that family, her father expired.

Although her parents were very religious, the environment in the family with whom she stayed was entirely different. They had a very different ways of worshipping and praying. They never expressed their religious feelings openly. She felt very lonely,
missed her parents and often she wept in front of God in her prayers. She picked up some bad habits. She admits, "I soon gave way to evil propensities of an unregenerate heart, which is enmity against God, and heedlessly ran into the ways of sin, taking pleasure in the path of folly." (p.54) She always felt very sinful and thought she would meet with the condemnation at the bar of God. She started realizing the difference between good and bad.

She could not share her thoughts and feelings with anybody. She was deeply affected by penitence. She was more and more confused. Being helpless she used to take God's name in vain and showed no respect towards God. But one day she felt very guilty for swearing falsely by the name of God because she felt that God is watching her. When she slept with a guilty mind, she saw a dream, which according to her was prophetically omenious. She dreamt of the angel Gabriel proclaiming the end of the time and arrival of Jehonah for executing the judgement of the world. She was terrified and horrified because she was not ready for the judgement day as she was aware of her sinful life. She was horrified beyond description. Even at the tender 14 years of age, she felt that this was a call to her soul. She wept excessively and pondered over her life. The belief in Christian philosophy and God's judgement changed her completely.

3.6.3.2) Self Realization process: --

Although she was a very lively and happy go lucky girl, this shocking dream changed her nature, which was noticed by her mistress also. But nobody could understand Elaw. This had a very deep impact on her mind and nature. She started praying to God. She used to attend prayer meetings regularly in newly started American Methodist Church. She felt guilty about her sins but continued with her prayers with her belief, 'They that seek shall find.' (p.56) While singing a song of Zion she saw a vision. Lord Jesus approached her with the open eye and said, "Thy prayers are accepted lower thy name." (p.56). That improved her confidence. Again
one day she was milking the cow and singing, "Oh, when shall I see Jesus, and dwell with him above; and with my blessed Jesus, Drink endless pleasures in? (p.56)

She saw that a tall figure approaching who came and stood in front of her with a long parted shoulder length hair wore a long white robe, as he stood with open eyes smiling upon her and disappeared very soon. She was so sure of this vision that she thought this was not seen merely with an eye of mind even the beast has turned his head to see Jesus. Even the cow bowed her knees. Mrs. Elaw was overwhelmed at this sight. This vision made her happy like an ‘Eutopian Enunch’ (who after learning of Jesus, was converted to Christianity through the ministry of the Apostle Philip, 240) This is how she was converted to God. This vision entirely changed her nature. She felt peaceful and joyful, her work and duties became easy and pleasant.

3.6.3.3) After self- realization: --

In 1808 she joined the Church. Rev. Polhemos, a preacher, after sermon asked whether anybody in the church was ready to join the society, at once she rose and expressed her desire to be the same. After seeing her confidence, he said, "this seems a bold champion indeed.” (57) He enrolled her name in the classbook of the Society. She really felt sanctified in her own words, "Truly, in those days, my peace flowed as a river, and the light of God’s countenance continually shone upon me; my path grew brighter and brighter, and my soul was stayed upon his gracious word and promises.” (p.58) All this brought a total change in her life. The self-realization gave her confidence to act in the right direction and struggle to achieve what was best for her. She realized the will of God in her life and did his will and call.

Her young friends used to try to distract her from the religious path and her own mistress used to rebuke her severely. She reacted very differently and did not show any reaction or spicy replies. Elaw was timid and fearful but later derived the strength by communion to God and obtained sympathy and succour from God. Through these mystical experiences are sparkeled eliminated her quest of
knowledge and wisdom to empower herself to do her duties and carry them out as if to do the will of God and to do the right things to fulfill her life and attain liberation. After recovering from the sickness, she was not only empowered but her relationship with God became stronger. A poor, black and female empowered by the word of God to do His will fearlessly.

The realization made it possible for her to experience the love of God to the highest degree. She experienced the bliss and felt like leaving this sinful world and immediately go to Heaven to meet God. This wonderful experience she could not share with anybody except her master because nobody had this type of experience. After this vision her behaviour, her attitude, her response changed completely. Before the realization, she had the misconception about the religion. She used to fear dark and graveyard but later on when the Lord visited her, she gained the confidence and wisdom. She thought and believed that God has control and power over everything and she was very safe under the protection of Almighty. In her own words, “I enjoyed the spirit of adoption: knowing myself to be an adopted child of Divine love, I claimed God as my Father, and his Son Jesus as my dear friend”.

(p.60) She became the member of the Society and received communion.

In 1810 she married a non-Christian, Joseph Elaw. Due to his different nature and belief she suffered a lot of resistance and obstacles. Although she believed that women must obey their parents before marriage and afterwards the husbands. She believed the marriage with the non-believer could never get sympathy and affection. She also experienced the sufferings of misunderstanding and unhappiness because of her husband. In addition to this kind of life the other obstacles like her husband trying to induce her to renounce her religion and always told her to leave Christianity. Once he took her to the ballroom where only entertainment and merrymaking was going on. She did not like that she says, “all is vanity and vexation of spirit!” (p.63) She prayed God for saving her from all such temptations.
Soon after that her fuller husband had to shift to the city Burlington, New Jersey where the church and the class were in the close proximity. She saw a hand of God in this situation also. Her attitude changed and she longed to achieve higher things. In 1817, she attended an American camp-meeting in a very pious atmosphere. The Methodist Church activity was in full swing. People used to gather in a large number around 5 to 10,000 to get converted to God. This process would give them the feeling of equality and of some identity. The sense of belonging to one common group of large congregation empowered them.

In one of those prayer meetings she received the Grace of Lord and she remembered after a powerful sermon by one of the priests on the platform, being overpowered with the presence of God, she fell down to the ground in the prostrate position. There she experienced that her spirit seemed like ascending upward into the clear circle of sun's disc surrounded and glorious effulgence of rays and heard a voice speak to her that said, "Thou art sanctified. I will show you what thou must do." (p.65) She felt very much elevated far above the world. When she recovered from the trance many people were surrounding around her and weeping. She saw the light of the Holy Ghost that her heart and soul were spotless i.e. as plain as sheet of white paper. She felt very pure as if she had never sinned. A solemn silence responded on her soul and she felt the presence of God nearby. This spiritual experience made her feel very special, pure and enlightened. She thought she is special, chosen and a dear child of God. This feeling is empowering and confidence building.
3.6.4) MRS. JULIA A. J. FOOTE

3.6.4.1) Before self-realization: --

Mrs. Julia Foote was born into an A. Methodist E. Church. Since her childhood she has experienced the agonies and exploitation due to race and gender bias. Once she saw that the man who was known as her mother's master, whipped her mother because she refused to submit herself to him sexually and reported his conduct to her mistress.’ (166) Till the age of eight she was ignorant to the religious knowledge. At a church meeting she refused to pray and got frightened. Her mother told her that if she wanted to go to heaven, prayers are important. She was unable to read as Black children were not allow to go to school so she learned the prayers from the White woman who come to them to sew. Her father taught her what he knew. After learning the Lord’s prayers, “She felt that at this moment she was converted.” (p.169) Due to ignorance and lack of knowledge she felt that she could not prove herself as faithful to God as she should have done. She felt very close and dear to God.

At the age of ten she was sent as live-in maid to Prime family. The institution of slavery prepared her to preach a social Gospel. (W. Andrews, p.9) That family arranged for her schooling in country school which was quite far. In the school she saw that her first teacher, Mr. Van Patan was hanged publically just because his fiancee’s best friend just said that “Mr. Patan was not very smart and she did not see why this young lady should wish to marry him.” (W. Andrews, 1986, 21) This incident had a lasting impression on her mind.

Her parents shifted to Albany and gave her the responsibility of her four brothers and sisters. As a grown up girl she was attracted towards the worldly pleasures like party and theatre and other things tempted her. The mother punished her when she came to know about that. In one of the parties while dancing she fell down twice. She told her friends that it was wrong for her to dance because it is
against God's wish. All of them called her 'little Methodist fool' in the 2nd chapter. It has been already described in detail the incident when she was converted.

She prayed for God's mercy day and night. Her mother in order to divert her attention encouraged her to attend another party. She enjoyed but repented to save her from the sinful ills of the society. She said to her mother, "Mother you know not what you do when you urge your daughter to go to parties to make her more cheerful. You may even be causing the eternal destruction of that daughter. God help you mothers, to do right." (p.179) She warns the mothers and instructs them about the consequences of their actions.

While working for the family she studied the Bible faithfully. In those days due to prejudices and racism she could not receive the formal education. At the age of eighteen she got married to a sailor, George Foote and moved to Boston and joined A.M.E.Zion Church. She proclaimed the wonders of sanctification. Her husband oppressed her strongly and threatened her to send her back to her parents. She told him that she has been called by God to preach and teach the ways of Lord.

3.6.4.2) Self Realization: --

Once on Sunday evening meeting she was listening to the minister in the Church. She says, "I beheld my lost condition as I never had done before. Something within me kept saying, 'such a sinner as you are, can never sing the new song.' I suffered, I fell to the floor, unconscious and was carried home." She was unconscious for 20 hours. But suddenly in a great terror she cried, 'Lord have mercy on me, a poor sinner! She says, "the ray of light flashed across my eyes, the light grew brighter and brighter and soon I caught the words, 'this is the new song – Redeemed, Redeemed.' I once sprang from the bed commenced singing, 'Redeemed, Redeemed' Glory, Glory!' Her heart was filled with peace and joy. Such was her response to this. Thus I was wonderfully saved from eternal burning." (P.180).
The process of self-recognition as a special, chosen child of God who has been blessed by eternal life and saved from the hell is self-realization.

3.6.4.3) After self-realization: --

After conversion she wanted to be sanctified. But the Church authority told her that only old people could be sanctified. All the time she continued with the reading of Bible. She believed that “If I were educated, God would make me understand what I needed.” (p.184) She took His words and her spirituality as the foundation and guiding force for preaching and teaching the lost and unsanctified. To preach the Gospel she traveled to all the directions. She neglected her health, as God’s will was important for her. Mrs. Foote was ill for a month in her journey. Her response to that, ‘Grace wonderfully sustained me. Bless the Lord!’ (p.221) She continued her journey with strong oppositions.

In 1851 she was invited to speak in the White Methodist Church but they did not want colored people to attend the meeting. But she did not speak for Whites because she knew, ‘Our benign Master ans Savior said, ‘Go, preach my Gospel to all’ (p.222) She wanted all the people of different colour, race and creed to participate. His word was not created just for a few. She argued vehemently and with her labor she convinced the Whites to accept colored for the meetings. She instructed people very clearly what one can and cannot do as a Christian. She took extra efforts to be Christ like and at the same time she worked tirelessly to teach others how to become more Christ-like. She empowered the society through her conversion experiences, songs and musical inferences.

Through religion these women acquired the highest position of responsibility and authority in both religion and public sphere. After the Renaissance period, the Black women writers got the opportunity to educate themselves and learn more about the Christianity through Methodist Church. As education is the greatest equilizer, they acquired greater confidence like in case of Anne Moody the chance
to get exposed to Christianity culminated into spiritual awakening that built up their confidence that solidified, reinforce their confidence. They realized they are the ‘chosen people’ for whom they’re God, Saviour; Jesus Christ died on the cross to free them from the sins of the world. This proves that they are also special, loving and equal children of God. This gave them confidence and realization of their equal status. They realized the potential and latent talent of the self. They were charged and motivated to empower themselves and continued the struggle to achieve better and dignified life. They acquired the status of women preacher, social activist. Thus realization that is ‘self-recognition and ‘liberation’ that is the struggle to achieve better life by overcoming the fears was an important process in their life journey from ‘Agony to Identity’. Thus realization and liberation are the landmarks and milestone in their life.

It was historical, pioneering and hence exemplary and confidence building journey. Although they were the weakest components that is ‘Dalit of dalits’ and tripally exploited, they were charged and empowered by seeing the achievements of Dr. Babasaheb and his thoughts based on Buddhist philosophy. They got educated, stronger, realized their strength and successfully achieved their status. Thus education, religion and spiritual awakening were responsible for realization and liberation, which ultimately led to the empowerment of these women writers.

3.7) DALIT LITERATURE

3.7.1) Factors helping Self Realization: --

The sacrifice by and achievements of Dr. Ambedkar for the sake of his own community paid rich dividends. He is a fine example of liberation and self-realization. The knowledge that all are born equal and have the right of equality and it is the duty of every individual to practice this is the inspiration. To bring harmony in the world for liberating the society, through their own life example and preaching, he spread the revolutionary thoughts, the dark lives of Dalits were filled
with bright sunshine by his revolutionary starts. This realization is due to the knowledge and inspiration given by Phule, Ambedkar.

Dr. Ambedkar wanted revolution so he asked Dalits to quit Hinduism and go in for conversion. Religious conversion has proved to be the surest and the most nonviolent way of liberating the untouchables. (Rajshekhar, 2003, 20) The Buddhist rational philosophy, its democratic and socialistic approach changed the mindset of Dalits. Dr. Ambedkar's revolutionary thoughts enabled these people to know their potential and inspired them to educate themselves in order to pursue their goals and there only the seed of the self-realization was sown and started germinating in terms of educational, economical, social and religious progress. Lord Buddha highlighted this philosophy for the true liberation of mankind himself in his life.

The impact of Dr. Babasaheb's philosophy was so strong that Dalits became aware of their plight due to this self-realization. They received the strength to fight against the injustice imposed on them by the established social structure. This voiceless and faceless community raised their voice for the first time. His philosophy and ideology is the main foundation of this social transformation. He set fire among untouchables by giving what he had inspired them. He was not only the leader for them but also the defender of human rights. His leadership was for the special cause for achieving dignity and self-respect and also to bring about the awakening and self-realization among the Dalits.

These women realized the intense and acute realities of their lives. The main purpose of Dalit autobiographies is self-exploration, self-attainment and self-realization. These writings consider human being at the core who denies caste, class system. It gives priorities to human values and human dignity by rejecting social discrimination. It emphasizes equality and brotherhood along with freedom and social justice. It is the voice of the leadership, which is trying to battle to emancipate the society from the slavery and predicament of social structure. It is the literature
of social awareness and Dalit sensibility. Hence it is not a literature of Power but a literature of Knowledge and wisdom. Therefore it leads to self-realization.

There are three theories that could be understood for this transformation. 1) Atta – Deep – Bhav theory based on Lord Buddha’s philosophy 2) Social – awakening by the reformists and 3) Natural Inquisitiveness or curiosity. Every religion has a message of universal brotherhood in it. Hence it has the capacity to unite the people harmoniously. But in the same period of the history, every religion suffered from misunderstanding due to the limitations and self-centeredness of the people.

Religion is the means to achieve liberation and fulfillment. It is not the goal but some upper caste people in our country used religion not for the benefit of the mankind but used it for their personal interests and identities. At the same time there were also some people, saints and reformists to interpret it in a right way and gave the mantra/message of brotherhood loudly and boldly. Although by doing so they suffered by the class, which was in power, e.g. Tukaram, Dnyandeo and many others because the discrimination was manmade. The people in power misinterpreted religion at their capacity differently to preach brotherhood. Every time they were strongly opposed by other people in power.

It is due to this truth reflected in above theories the world exists in peace and harmony and even after the two world wars man has realized that it is not the wars but non-violence and love is the solution for the world problems. In the light of these philosophies the study of these writers is important. It explains the process of growth, self-realization, identity and attitude of gratitude towards the society. The progress of these women writers was possible due to this realization and liberation. The path they followed must be followed in order to make fast progress.

The Buddhist philosophy adopted by Phule and Ambedkar had this multidimensional aspect. Therefore it had the strength of changing person holistically, spiritually, philosophically and practically. Babasaheb had both of these
qualities 1) the spiritual quality of sacrificing everything for these people 2) the capacity, knowledge for changing the economical and the social structure. He fought for their dignity and gave them solutions also. People all over the country and abroad were awe-struck by his multidimensional ideology that was very modern and revolutionary approach. With his own life example he led the path for people to follow and awakened confidence, self-respect and dignity for the first time after thousands of years.

So in this chapter these moments of paradigm shift to achieve equality and identity by overcoming all the unfavourable components are highlighted. All these women followed the path at their capacity; they got themselves educated and achieved status and identity in the society. Thus the enlightening process started by Ambedkar changed the society that was in hibernation, dormant and transformed completely into a new metamorphosis, rebellious society touched by his wisdom and philosophy.

So Dalit women writers like Shantabai Dani, Babitai Kamble and Shantabai Kamble transformed their lives through hard work and perseverance and decided to devote their life for the noble cause of helping others from their own community by following the footsteps of Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar. This Journey from agony to Identity in the light of Realization and Libertion is discussed through the following sections.
3.8) SECTION-IV

SHANTABAI KAMBLE:--
MAJHYA JANMACHI CHITERKSTHA (1986)

3.8.1) Childhood agonies

The autobiography of Mrs. Shantabai Kamble is a unique life-story. It describes the journey from inhuman status like slave to a progressive educational extension officer. In her childhood Naja, a school-going girl has to face the numerous agonies of social discrimination, gender bias, casticism, and economical backwardness. She led very miserable life, which was worst than an animal. She describes how she managed to earn her living by eating the grains collected from cow-dung and mud; after working on the farm for the whole day, she could barely earn enough raw groundnuts (the common crop) to keep her family alive. At times she ate only groundnuts or dry bhakeries (Bread prepared from grain floor) or stale food collected from the upper-class villagers. Most of the times she had only a glass of water before going to bed.

She remembers her parents’ struggle to keep the two-end meet. They worked so hard but could hardly earn a full meal a day. The castism and social discrimination was on rampant and deeply rooted in the minds of people and had plagued the society. The inhuman treatment given to lower class always isolated them and put barriers for their all sorts of progress. She remembers her parents discussing about miserable state of her clothes and their heart breaking planning for buying clothes by sacrificing their food intake. She remembers her mother’s last wish on the deathbed and her father’s tearful eyes promising her mother to educate the daughter naja and to marry her to a school teacher, speaks about their dreams. The inspiring and enlightening force for creating a tremendous drive for education and to rise above the poverty was none other than the ‘Yugpurush’, the mighty human being Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. He has stunned up the whole society and lit a fire in their
minds to break open the shackles of the slavery. He taught them to pursue the dreams and aspire high.

3.8.2) Education: --

In this struggle of achieving the dreams, instead of her ragged clothes sometimes she had to wear her father's 'dhoti' while going to school. She digested teasing and mocking by the upper class students but carried forward relentlessly to fulfill a dream of her dying mother and her father. Even after a gap of a year, as the only girl student in the class completed her education up to Vernacular Final with the help of her teachers like Patil sir. Being a third girl child in a row, her father had cursed her at her birth-time and wanted her to bury alive to get rid of this unwanted girl child.

The same father felt proud for the same girl when she became the first girl to pass Vernacular Final in the whole district to make him a proud father. In fact she was like a manifestation of the aspiration and dreams accomplished of her parents and perhaps of the community she comes from. Her achievement lies in the fact that she completed her education during the time when education was strictly prohibited for women. Although the society despised and criticized the school-going girl, she very boldly and courageously completed her education because she believed in herself very strongly. The treasure of right thinking and guidance from Babasaheb, she achieved her destination due to her iron will and untiring efforts.

3.8.3) Married life: --

She went through the ordeal where she had to battle against both the familial and social evils. In the first year of her marriage when she was pregnant, her husband ditched her for another woman. She had to carry on all alone for twelve long years. People made her life miserable by taking advantage of her foresaken life. Those
twelve years without a support of her husband maintaining a family was very tormenting for her.

3.8.4) Social Discrimination: --

Wherever she was transferred, she had to face the hardships and social evils like casteism and gender bias. Being a woman, she was asked and threatened by the villagers where she would survive the wrath of the people because two lady teachers were beaten and driven away already before her appointment. She accepted their challenge. They were surprised by her confidence. She was even denied a potful of drinking water and was insulted even though the people knew that she was a teacher. But she was very hard working and sincere in her work. She was sensitive enough to understand the students’ problems. She implemented innovative teaching methods, taught the adults songs, bhajanas, reading, writing, give speeches and molded them into all round personality.

The good work brought her name and fame and within a short time she was not only accepted by the society but was most sought after teacher. She changed the life for the better and made their lives beautiful. She inspired the children of illiterate people to attend school. In their difficult situations she provided them food and shelter in their examinations. Wherever she was transferred she tried at her best to improve the conditions of school with respect to discipline, environment and the enrollment. But to do so she has to work beyond her stipulated hours and could eat only once and that also late night.

3.8.5) Self- realisation: --

Attending Babasaheb’s public speeches and readings of his books and newspapers initiated self-realisation for the oppressed community. Before that the society was drowned in superstitious beliefs and socially accepted customs and traditions. When she was in Women’s Training College, in her trip she made a ‘Navas’ (praying to
God and promising some offering if the wish is fulfilled) for getting a child. This was just out of the strong natural desire for getting motherhood. (p.114) It indicates the superstitious mindset and impact of traditions and culture.

But the same Shantabai after a few years takes her sister’s ailing son to the doctor. Her sister who was very poor and ignorant willing to take her son to the Devrushi, (a self- proclaimed spiritual healer of diseases, epidemics and other problems of the poor people, in return accepts gifts and other favors in the form of food and money.) An educated Shantabai who had overcome the superstitious believes, strongly believed that the disease could be cured when the child could be healed only with the help of the doctor and medicines. (P144)

She was promoted as an education officer just six months before her retirement. She became successful by implementing innovating schemes in order to spread quality education. After retirement she wrote her autobiography that was inspired by other writers like Mr. Shankarrao Kharat, it served as knowledge management. It serves as planting seed of realization so as to taste the fruits of liberation by the next generation also. Thus writing the autobiography is the realization to pass on the knowledge of the cultural, social, economical and psychological perspectives to the next generation.

This is the attitude of gratitude of the writer towards the entire society for giving the right help to the poor and showing them the right path so that it passes forward to the next generations. “Regardless of the literary forms or particular writer, Dalit literature is the declaration of Independence. It is impossible to understand the revolutionary qualities of Dalits without understanding the people to whom it is addressed. It speaks for them and to them.” (Pantawane, 1986, p. 86) This treasure of realization and liberation must be carried forward and must be spread all over the world to achieve brotherhood, equality and liberty in order to make the world better place that the enlightenment from one person to another with the Atta- Deep-Bhav is their only desire very much reflected through the writing.
3.9) SECTION-V

BABYTAI KAMBLE: --

JEENA AMCHE (OUR WRETCHED LIFE 1986)

3.9.1.) Childhood: --

Baby Kamble lived in the same community and society that was deprived of status of human being and human dignity for thousands of years. She lived the same subhuman life in the same community. She experienced the same agonies of discrimination right from her childhood. That was the time when this community had seen and even experienced the enlightening process through Babasaheb's strong electrifying thoughts. It was very strongly expressed with firm philosophical base of Lord Gautam Bouddha, Kabir, Mahatma Phule and Shahu Maharaj. Their thoughts and speeches exposed the grim realities of Hindu religion and customs. It also rekindled the confidence and passion to fight against the inequalities imposed on this community for centuries.

Babytai by living in the same community observed minutely the social transition period which was not only important for the country going through slavery to freedom, from social transition as equality of women but also backward classes. It was the time when the state of denial and slavery and its agony was experienced not only by the depressed neglected communities but also by the upper classes. Even the upper class people wanted to come out of that degrading situation that was unbearable to whole country, which took a form of National movement of Freedom. National leaders like Lokmanya Tilak roared in the court, “Freedom is my birth right and I will have it.” For the first time the whole country united in this freedom struggle. Even the backward community under the able guidance and leadership of Dr.Babasaheb joined hands to contribute in the National movement of freedom struggle.
Dr. Babasaheb raised his voice against the inhuman treatment and pointed out the atrocities carried out by the upper caste people. In Round Table Conference he vehemently told that our community is experiencing this inhuman slavery for the centuries pleading for democracy and freedom. He was fighting the double battle against in his own country – men in order to give justice to the women and the Dalit community and women who were exposed to multiple discrimination and injustice. It is not possible for a self-less, righteous and enlighten super human being i.e. Babasaheb who had digested and preached the great Indian philosophy given by Lord Bouddha, Kabir, Phule and Shahu Maharaja came to him as a legacy. His strong conviction and intense and fiery speeches were an attack on inhumanity and injustice to one particular community by the established community.

These oppressed people for the first time in thousands of years realized that as complete human beings they have a right to fight against the slavery and they could live the dignified normal life. Through his own brilliant, sparkling and scholarly achievements he became the role model and an idol. He is the role model for any countrymen for achieving the highest success in education field, social service, selfless leadership and spotless character. This multifaceted personality increased the confidence of Dalits by thousand folds. Hence they were ready to fight against the slavery and to achieve freedom from the social injustice and discrimination.

3.9.2) Social work by Babytai

Babytai Kamble was witnessing these changes and was completely transformed by the revolutionary thoughts and conviction. In her own words “With the influence and impact of Babasaheb, all my veins and capillaries became Ambedkarite.”(Mind Speaks,) Therefore she throws herself into social transformation process. Her husband Mr. Kondiba was also with her in the double battle of social and political transformation. Her brother Babu Kakde was a born poet and social activist. He was very closely associated with Babasaheb’s movement and he was fully committed
for spreading education among Dalits. He started the first students hostel with the help of upper class people in Phaltan. He was awarded ‘Kavi – Kishor’ title by Mr. Nimbalkar for his poems and stories. All these things influenced her life since the childhood.

In Phaltan at Mangalwar Peth she ran a grocery shop along with her husband. She nurtured her hobby of reading and writing while managing the shop. She had a power of minute observation that was very explicit through her writing. She had described her customers in the grocery shop such as their life style, the tendencies and behaviour of the community. Her shop was in front of Samaj Mandir that is, Community Hall where politicians, leaders, social workers and Sadhus would visit frequently. The meetings and gatherings would hold while she would arrange for carpet, water and other requirements. Sometimes she had to keep her shop closed for many days. She formed the bhajan choir related to Ambedkar’s social work and movement.

Her autobiography is the reflection of the community that was decayed with age-old inhuman customs, superstitions, lack of confidence and never ending poverty due to slavery. It is Babasaheb’s influence that made her aware of all these negative forces. She made the conscious efforts to educate her children and acquired social and economical status. She is very compassionate and kind like her father to the needy and poor. She inherited the attitude of ‘sharing’ from her father. Therefore the life of Babaytai is in her own words “the life of Baby is not different from the community she lived.” Babytai, the product of such community acquired social status and through her creative talent of writing recorded the true picture of her society.

3.9.3) Dr. Babasaheb’s influence

In 1937–38 Babasaheb had come to Phaltan. Babytai was overwhelmed by his personality and the thought provoking speech. She had made keen observations of
the changes of the society due to Babasaheb’s revolutionary teaching but at the same time her heart pains to see the educated masses following the same rituals of the upper class people which is not in accordance with the teachings of Babasaheb, but it is the association with the upper caste people for the personal gains. The educated people after progressing educationally, economically and socially had gone away from their own community and started associating and imitating upper caste people and forgetting their duties towards their own community to give time and work for their upliftment. This leads to the neglect and forgetfulness of the basic duties of true followers of Babasaheb and made the revolution weaker. She is very strong believer and staunch supporter of Babasaheb’s philosophy so she could not tolerate any diversion from the main ideology led by Babasaheb Ambedkar.

Because of her keen observations of the miserable life of a dalit woman, she could describe the odysseys and predicament of Dalit woman in the society and she was disturbed and shocked to see the discrimination and inhuman treatment given to these women in their own family and society as well. The life of dalit woman depicted by Babytai Kamble is a horrifying picture of agonizing hell of untiring, unceasing hardships, full of torture of her own husband, nagging mother-in-law and never ending battle of poverty and slavery. With this miserable situation in the society Dr. Ambedkar presented the Hindu Code Bill in the parliament, which she considered as ‘declaration of women’s liberation.’ This historical feat was a turning point in Babytai’s life.

It inspired her to realize the life of slavery, injustice and discrimination on one hand and the life of equality and potential on the other hand. She realized that the dalit woman deserves a much better life of equality, identity and freedom. This incident sparked the triggered and fueled her passion to start writing and to realize the truth of life. Babasaheb’s life and work gave a voice to the agonies of the Dalit woman for the first time since centuries. She was very grateful to Babasaheb for the same. So this is the realization she experienced. She belonged to the society that took pride in the customs and traditions, which were imposed on them by the established society,
e.g. all the hard work for preparing place for keeping grains, cleaning the garbage after the ceremonies, collecting fire woods from the forests by pouring their blood and sweat after toiling they were offered very negligible compensations in the form of stale food. Their lives were captivated by the rigid caste system.

But it was Babasaheb’s thoughts and inspiration as stated earlier, fired and fueled the passion of the dalits. She recollects that a few literate people would gather and read from the newspaper ‘Ostracized Bharat’ Baba’s fiery speeches with pride and concentration. It made the people aware of their basic human rights so they started making concrete plans towards achieving the same, e.g. a group of 25 young boys stormed into Vithoba’s temple and touched the idols. So rigid and strong were the customs and traditions followed due to the caste system led by cruel orthodox, religious people. So they showed very strong reaction as if some very unusual thing had happened. They ran behind the boys to beat them with sticks and spread the false rumors that Goddess Rukmini is shading tears and Vithoba’s mouth became distorted because whole temple is polluted and they started chanting Mantras for the whole month in order to purify the temple. So strong was the discrimination and so rigid were the religious norms those were established and protected by the upper caste people.

3.9.4) Self- Realization by Babytai: -

The realization on the part of Babytai is reflected in inquisitive minds of these writers but the rigid traditions did not allow them to express. But it was Babasaheb’s thoughts, ideology that comes from Buddhism gave them the courage and confidence to struggle and unite to achieve the equality, freedom and brotherhood in their own capacity. Babytai had also realized that in order to change this picture the contribution of the individual from the same community is essential as compared to the help from outside agency in compliance to Atta –Deep – Bhav theory. Hence ‘self – realization’ is the ability of knowing your capacity or potential to achieve your goals and dreams and ‘liberation’ is a process of struggling and
exerting to achieve those goals and dreams. Writing an autobiography serves the same purpose and mission to immortalize the lives of these women writers.

Babytai Kamble was awakened to the historical call of Babasaheb, which in brief is told in his words ‘Educate, Agitate and Unite’. Living up to this message, she joined the struggle and contributed in the following manner –

1) She along with her poet, social activist brother actively participated in social work, established bhajana choir group traveling from one place to another singing, educating, motivating and enlightening people to follow the teachings of Babasaheb.

2) She opened the school for children with free lodgings and boarding. 3) She is more concerned not of her life but of other women from the community so she had recorded the incidents and observations from day to day life so she took up the writing. Therefore Maxin Burnson in the preface had said that: --

“It won’t be an exaggeration if we say that the book is invaluable mine of the informations for the social scientists and historians.”

Any wise reader will agree with the opinion given by Maxin Burnson. (Mulate, 1999, p.220)

After realizing the self, this writing of an autobiography a remarkable documentation of the society is an attempt to know your own self, being an inseparable part of the society; your life is the life of the society in general. This thought emerges from the feelings of empathy, sympathy and synergy meaning there by the interest and the well being of the individual that is, Babytai and the other people in the society at large are one and the same, they cannot be different. Because in the well-being and the prosperity of the society alone lies the happiness as it appears in our National pledge.
As a sensitive and responsible citizen cast in Babasaheb's philosophy mold, Babytai considers her life and the life of other Dalit women in the society is equally important as she pained to see how much they have suffered, agonized by the privileged established society and desires to change this picture. The Desire, confidence and struggle to change the life of the dalit women around her is the essence of this realization and the liberation they experienced.

3.10) SECTION-VI

SHANTABAI DANI: --‘RATRANDINA AMHA’ (1980)

3.10.1) Childhood of Shantabai Dani:

Shantabai Dani is an epitome and symbol of an ideal modern woman of backward community. Her autobiography is a success story of an iron lady who started her life near a mere stack of grass on a rocky arid island situated at the outskirt of the village but ended at the highest peak of educational, social and political success. Her journey from agony to identity is a constant battle against illiteracy, poverty, rigid traditions and customs, adultery and addiction of her father, social discrimination, gender caste bias, political complexities, corruption and selfish politics.

Among all these things the beauty of her life is that she lived up to the ideology, philosophy and principles led down by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and she never ever drifted away from these till the last day of her life. So beautiful and honored was her life that the poet Laurel Shirwadkar considered it an honor to receive the felicitation at the hands of Shantabai. This reflects the high esteem and respect she received from the leaders and intellectuals of the society. Her life was refined and invaluable due to her constant struggle and battle against the negative forces of life like poverty and social discrimination.

Shantabai's life started on a negative note in the sense that she was born when every member of her family, especially her father was expecting a son. Her birth created
lot of agonies that everyone lost peace of mind but paradoxically she was named Shanta meaning ‘peace’. She was being brought up in an economically and socially stable family as her father was engaged in milk business supplying milk to the European officers. Her father was lucky to be educated up to fourth standard so conversant with the English language and aware of the importance of education. He could help his daughters in their studies. Her mother had the foresight hence she admitted Shantabai in the Expensive Missionary school instead of Economical Corporation school. The untimely death of her brother changed her father completely because he got addicted due to the death of a son and neglected his milk business, the only source of money.

The family suffered badly so her mother took the responsibility of the family since her husband had left shanta’s mother for another woman. She used to toil hard to collect grass that used to fetch her only two annas per day. She never accepted any kind of favours from the strangers, friends or relatives and taught her daughters to live with self – respect. She taught Shantabai that education and character is the only ray of hope for the poor. (p.7) She had seen the consequence of lack of education, which was responsible for the plight of the elder daughter living in perennial poverty. Mr. Dani, a bramhin teacher had supported shanta’s mother when he observed her concern and passion for education.

3.10.2) Social Discrimination:-

Shantabai had a very inquisitive mind. She asked her father many questions when they were made to sit and eat separately, that also in the stable where the animals were kept. Her father could not answer her queries satisfactorily. Her mother was very social and always ready to accept new things of life. She attended good programs and festivals of Hindu Muslim communities. They liked to attend singing programs, Tamasha, Urus (Muslim fair) etc. This moulded Shantabai to have insight of social, political and religious issues even in her poverty-stricken life.
Dani Teacher helped her to get admission in the Women’s Training College in Pune where she experienced inequality in equality. After the completion of the training program she got an appointment in Winchoor School. Being a teacher there also she experienced strong discrimination due to the rigid class system. Once she inadvertently touched the idol in the temple. The priest and the upper caste people reacted and reprimanded her by giving her a warning very strongly. In the other incident she was treated very inhumanly and insulted for taking water from the farm well only due to her backward status. She was a teacher in the village school. But even then she suffered discrimination. She was not accepted directly by the society.

3.10.3) Her Mother’s Influence:-

Her mother was very kind, loving, honest and compassionate. Her elder brother, Anna and herself inherited the same qualities. Her mother always promised them nice clothes and sweets and some special things like fire crackers on Diwali. Due to poverty she could never fulfilled their expectation as children but these hopes only made them feel good. Thus the mother with her special qualities lived life gracefully even in poverty. Her mother was very particular about the good habits of her children. She had given them very important lessons of moral values so that they could lead dignified life. Once small Shantabai had gone to buy a snuffing tobacco for her mother. She looked quite fair with her brownish hair like an upper caste girl. A Parsi man lovingly gave her four annas. In those days her mother had to toil for barely two annas but she strictly told her daughter not to accept such things because often the intention of a person is not good.(p18)

Her mother liked singing and music. She never missed a chance to visit the social gathering like ‘Urus’ (the Muslim Fair) Her parents used to sing Bhajanas, preach through Kirtanas. She encouraged Shanta for education against all odds. She says, “My mother is the one who kept the flame of knowledge burning in my mind.” (P40)
Her father had an extra-marital relation with another woman. They both were staying at the adjacent hut with that lady. She would complain about Shantabai’s mother. It resulted in daily fights and her father beat her mother severely.

Dr. Londhe’s co-operation and blessings made every impossible thing possible. She admitted Shantabai in the reputed college, H.P.T. She was funding for her college fees and books. She had also given her a bicycle. In Dadasaheb’s office she observed how Dadasaheb talk to the people and solved the innumerable problems like the conflicts, fights, court-cases, atrocities by the upper caste people and many others as denial of basic human rights of drinking water and so on. After hearing all the agonizing stories of the poor but honest people. She felt desperately motivated to do something for these people and she always thought of sparing her knowledge and time for these people.

She was also getting the informations about the movements carried out by the leaders under the influential leadership and guidance of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar in Mahad and in Nasik. Shantabai had adopted such difficult path and through this writing narrated the fierce battle of the contemporary movement of Dalit social change. These words are the true reflection of her life. It means situation of battle is the daily affair, every day and night. It is a continuous battle against the unfavorable condition existing in the society for Shantabai.

3.10.4) Struggle for acquiring education:-

When Shantabai was looking after her ailing mother in the hospital, she happened to meet Dr. Ms. Londhe. She had a very intimate conversation with Shantabai. She was impressed by Shanta’s love for education when Shantabai said, “I consider education as my religion.”(P.37) Dr. Londhe showed her willingness to help her for her further education. Shantabai was staying with Dr. Londhe in the campus of the Hospital. There she was surprised to receive very cordial, equal and kind treatment. Dr. Londhe took her whenever she was transferred. That was totally new world for
her where she learnt new languages, received special coaching of English, read English magazines and newspapers, attended various programs, watched English movies in order to develop her own personality.

Her mother's sudden death just after her matriculation examination was very traumatic for her. She received her result and became the first member of the Dani family to be matriculated. But there was an eternal vacuum created by her mother's demise and she missed her intensely in her life. Dr. Londhe persuaded her to continue with her education and admitted her in the H.P.T. College in Nasik.

3.10.5) The influence of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar:

She got an opportunity and considered herself very lucky to listen to Babasaheb's speech in the opening address of H.P.T. College of Nasik. She was impressed by his magnetic personality, intelligence and conviction towards the social issues. His intellectual and thought-provoking speech and his call to the young students for contributing in the social service made a permanent mark on her mind. (p.51) There itself she decided to commit her life for the social cause.

Babasaheb was an example of highest achievement in educational, social activities for the upliftment of the neglected community who presented and fought fearlessly for the social cause right at the national and international level. This intellectual and strong leader boosted the confidence and morale of the backward community. He proved not only to his own people but also to the world that a person from the backward community can achieve the higher success in any field. His sacrifice for achieving the social and political goals had driven the backward community out of the shell.

Babasaheb criticized the very Hindu religion and the traditions very logically and systematically and exposed the true selfish and cruel nature of the upper caste priests. He enlightened Dalit people to realize that they have every right to enjoy
equality, brotherhood and freedom envisaged in Buddhism. He made them aware that there is an alternative better religion originated from the same country, which treats every human being, equal and also exposed the drawbacks of Hindu religion. This ideology convinced Dalits to leave Hinduism and to join Babasaheb in the hope of achieving life of dignity and equality. It was like being born for the first time as normal human beings and possible to live life like normal human beings. This philosophy awakened the young educated people like a thunderbolt and Shantabai Dani also felt the similar impact. Babasaheb’s motto make the slave realize that he is a slave and he will revolt against it.

So this realization and awareness among the backward community united them very strongly and got ready to fight against the established society for the basic human rights and dignity. This happened only when they overcame the fear of execution by the upper class. They had realized the truth now that gave them confidence and courage to fight against injustice, discrimination prevailing in the society. Shantabai decided to throw herself in the social revolution that had the capacity to change the social structure and bring the backward class out of the darkness of superstitions, poverty and inhuman treatment due to casteism. Dalit people worked very hard to achieve their dreams those were enticed by Babasaheb, e. g. the Mahad Satyagraha, Kalaram Temple entry.

When she realized her potential and capacity, she made positive efforts to join the political activities for social cause. She joined Dadasaheb Gaikwad, her guru, brother – in – law’s Republican party. Every Saturdays and Sundays she visited the office on bicycle and observed that how he talks and helps the people of the community to solve all kinds of problems. She worked honestly and selflessly for those people that she had to abandoned her studies and dedicated herself completely for the social and political cause. Babasaheb and Dadasaheb saw her devotion to her social problems and she was appointed a President of Scheduled Caste Federation. She was the first lady activist of the Party so her speeches were attended by the huge audience and appreciated her courage, confidence and talent.
She was very firm and fearless because of her clean, transparent, selfless nature and spotless character. She used to speak confidently with conviction. The result of this she was elected as the Member of Parliament. She dedicated her life for the social and political cause and never used her position for personal gains. Thus she made a permanent mark in social and political areas through hard work and selfless service. She joined Dadasaheb Gaikwad for getting justice to the landless peasants in order to get land from the Government for their rehabilitation in a countrywide movement.

She realized that politics is a complex phenomenon and people had all kinds of vested interests. She observed that backward students are admitted in the divisions like ‘D’, ‘E’ or ‘F’ but not in ‘A’ or ‘B’, since she has chosen education as her religion, she opened two schools and a hostel in order to provide education to the neglected but deserving students. The Education officers and ministers also because of healthy practices always appreciated her schoolwork and various activities carried out by her and the teachers. She had to struggle for maintaining the administration and getting permission for her school and sacrificed a lot for the hostel. She even sold out her only one gold bangle gifted by Dr. Ms. Londhe in order to feed the hostel students. This war she carried out with the belief and teaching of Mahatma Phule that if a girl is educated the whole family is educated and if all the dalit women are educated then the entire Dalit community will be educated and make progress.

3.10.6) Self Centered politics:-

She had very painful experiences as the political leaders of her community had joined different parties for their personal benefits. Even within the party there were many conflicts for the power. Although she had taken initiative for arranging two meetings in Nasik for uniting the various parties in alliance, she was neglected and not invited for further meetings that were held in Mumbai. She had an opportunity
to visit Japan, Malaysia and Sri Lanka during her tenure as M.L.A. She was invited to attend the ‘Peace Conference’ to commemorate the 25th year of Hiroshima bomb explosion. She was enlightened to see the progress, discipline, cleanliness and commitment of the people to their religion and nation in these countries. She was also touched by the honesty and compassion of the people, she came across during the tour. She was honored with Savitribai Phule Puraskar for her lifetime achievement in the political, social and education fields.

Shantabai’s life is a constant struggle to achieve her goals. She is happy that she never diverted from her path led down by Babasaheb. She reminds the future generation of Babasaheb’s concern and anxiety about the young educated people to unite for the common cause. She had to leave the political career due to selfish and wrong, dirty approach of her own people but she did not regret that because she is quite satisfied with her contribution in the education field. The schools and hostel founded by her are rendering good service to the society. She takes special pride in the fact that Poet Laurel Kusumagraja expressed his willingness that Shantabai would be the only person from the entire Nasik City to felicitate him.

3.10.7) Purpose of Writing the Autobiography

The journey from the side of the grass stags to the prestigious world touring, Member of Parliament, was in a true sense a battle for every day and night. At the end of her life, at the age of 72-73 also she has a dream and resolution to build Ambedkar Dnyan Vikas Kendra. Her writing of an autobiography with the help of her life-long friend Mrs. Bhargave is an attempt to immortalize her life story that is nothing but a message given by Babasaheb and passed on to the next generation through her that this message should be passed on from person to person on the basis of Babasaheb’s ideology and philosophy.

Thus we can say that the social transformation like the one which is observed through Shantabai’s life to become a selfless social activist, M.L.A. even after
starting as low a point as the girl sleeping outside near the grass stags and living in a hut struggling to survive is possible only if there is a realization that it is possible to achieve the dream even in the battle situation. The natural tendency and the curiosity to think the support from the parents and teachers, the enlightenment and the motivation from Babasaheb, the timely help from the philanthropist, Dr. Ms. Londhe, strong support from the leaders like Mr. Dadasaheb and some honest and loyal followers made this achievement possible. Therefore the realization of her strength, potential and struggle to achieve her goals made it possible for her liberation i.e. achieving her goal in life.

All these women realized their duty towards the community and the nation as well. They are very sure that it is their duty to carry the same ideology and philosophy to the next generation. Their self-realization helped them to liberate themselves from poverty, ignorance and slavery through hard work and relentless efforts. They educated themselves in the most adverse conditions and achieved status in the society. They passed on the same message that helped them in their own life to educate, agitate and unite for the betterment of the society. Their intention was not to highlight their own achievements in their life but to motivate the people of their community to follow their example like they did in their life so that more and more people will achieve liberation from the agonies and ultimately as the final analysis of the study indicates, the entire society will change for the better and the dreams of Phule – Ambedkar will be achieved.

This is the purpose of these selected women writers behind writing their autobiographies. These Dalit women realized the fact as per Buddhist philosophy and ideology was the same realization of the self, which indicates that the ultimate goal of a person is to educate, acquire knowledge and apply it for the betterment of the society. Each one of them has a role to play in her own capacity to make the world a better place. The lives of these women are a fine example and the success story for the other people of the community to follow. The Autobiographies are like
the seeds sown so that the future generations, the dalit women still in agony, can taste and avail of the fruits in future.

These women had seen the agony of living being dalits and the liberation of achieving education, status and identity in society. It is a sense of duty towards the coming generations. These Dalit and Afro-American have recorded their life stories because they believed that these life stories would be a key for the success of other women. They know that it is going to be like planting a seed of self-realization in their hearts and minds of the millions living in the poverty and social discrimination. One day this seed will grow and manifest itself into big trees of liberation bringing about the social change envisaged and dreamt by the leaders like Phule and Ambedkar.

The wisdom to realize, I can and must come out of the agony to overcome miseries is self-realization. To think and to struggle to overcome the obstacles to attain a better position or goals is liberation. When the iron or gold is refined in fire or pressures of the hammer its value improves. These women writers were subjected to lot of struggles and hardships, which led to realization and liberation. The agonizing stories of these women and the discrimination and castism helped them to be strong and the philosophy of Dr. Babasaheb moulded them in the right cast to liberate and bring about the Social Change. The process of educating, uniting and struggling to achieve the goals in the light of Babasaheb’s philosophy has resulted in Realization and Liberation.

The life of these Dalit Women Writers has been a constant struggle right from the childhood. The Influence of their parents, teachers, and social workers and most significantly Dr. Babasaheb in the light of Buddhist philosophy has been like the metals as Iron or Gold in fire to get them refined. The ability to be curious, open and follow babasaheb’s principles was the turning point to achieve this self-development. So thus these autobiographies are an instrument for planting the seed
of self - realization and liberation to bring about social awakening and transformation of the Dalit of Dalits, the Dalit women.