Chapter V

Conclusion
African Americans in America and Dalits in India are the marginalized and exploited people, their marginality being primarily social and economic. Cruel slavery was imposed on the Blacks in America for more than three centuries. The White people and plantation owners of America bought Blacks like cattle for farming purposes from Africa. They were always sold off for the fear that they could rebel if their numbers increased. The slaves were beaten to death for disobeying orders. They had no right of education. White masters were afraid that, education would bring revolutionary change in Blacks and they would rebel and throw out the cudgels of slavery.

After the Civil War, separate schools were established for Blacks, and they started getting educated and very soon they captured every field. Education became an important key for the Blacks to gain their lost identity, status and honour in the America.

Dalit society on the other hand, experienced slavery since ancient times because of the Varna structure. They were treated as untouchables and untouchability got institutionalized over the social norms, customs and traditions.

For Dalits, their motherland is India, but in their motherland they were treated like animals. Very cruel treatment was given to them which is unimaginable and one cannot think that such kind of oppression, exploitation can be done in this holy land i.e. India. After experiencing maltreatment and oppression for generations, Dalits started feeling haunted with questions like whether India is my motherland or not? If India is my motherland, why have I undergone exploitation, untouchability?. He is in search of answers to these questions. African American writers were same like Dalits. They also faced the dilemma whether Africa was their
motherland or America. African American’s motherland is Africa but they were brought to America as slaves. They were treated like cattle, they were not able to come together, they were away from civilization, and they were intentionally kept ignorant for the fear that if Blacks became aware of their condition then they would rebel against their masters. This treatment made Blacks to think what is America to me? Full of sorrows? A land of exploitation, suffering? Why do have I to live a miserable life?

Blacks played a vital role in the upliftment of America as the land of liberty and prosperity. With this their motherland Africa, could not be vanished from their memories, their heart always asked them to return to Africa. Hence they called themselves African Americans. Dalits in India and African Americans in America are the victims of graded inequality.

Education played a very important role in Dalit and African American Autobiography. Education enabled them to rise and they rose up from the darkness of illiteracy, exploitation and maltreatment. Words became their weapons and with the help of words they fought against inequality, injustices and exploitation. They achieved their lost identity and liberty. The protagonists of all the selected autobiographies for the study suffered from hunger for education, hunger for love, and hunger for equality.

Dalit Autobiography is the imitation of life story of an individual who have experienced maltreatment, sufferings and sorrows on the basis of caste hence, it becomes an authentic tool to depict the contemporary social conditions. Dalit Autobiography thus becomes an important historical context. It depicts the hegemonic caste structure that emerged in the early phases of Indian civilization. Dalit society was forced to stay away from the historical mainstream, peripheral as they were deprived of access to education and surrounded by terror. They were not only forced to stay
away from history but also from any kind of leisure which is indeed a critical source in the creation of the culture of community. The very nature of their jobs and social functions that they were concerned to perform prohibited them from owning and developing any cultural compartment for themselves or their community. They were not allowed to carry or own any weapon, even for self defense and as such the idea of social assertion never arose in them. Thus, doomed to serve and comply, they were never in a position to be either donors or recipients of the contents of existing civilization and culture. Orality was the only possession or medium of communication of their anxieties, tribulations, deprivations and anguish. They did not even have their religion to console themselves and in such an alienated state, they even feared to entertain the idea of expression of their woes in the world after death, for it were their evil actions in their previous life that had placed them in such a precarious social position. They also came to mimic the customs and the traditions of the later. It reached such an extent that even untouchability came to be practiced by certain castes, vis-à-vis others within the hamlets of the untouchables. They would not marry across castes or dine with other castes and would follow segregated living within their own cocoon. The intrusion of castes onto the untouchable community fragmented them so hopelessly that despite living a common administrative identity imposed upon them, first during the colonial rule and subsequently by the constitution of India, for nearly seven decades, they do not reflect any kind of unity, so much so that even an emancipatory identity like Dalit is rendered nearly meaningless. The mirroring of the hierarchical structure of the touchables within the untouchable hamlets was the shrewdest strategy or the worst accident that lent the entire caste system its self-sustaining character. In course of
history, the demographic balance of castes was disturbed with the changes in occupational structure within the production system of villages.

African American Autobiography occupies a unique position in the American Literature. African American Autobiography is mostly anguished, groping for the identity of those who are caught in a rootless limbo. It tries to solve the dilemma of the split self and find an answer to the cultural schizophrenia of the African Americans. It is written to avoid their folk from becoming an emasculated tool of the whites in power. African American Autobiography debunks the stereotype about blacks and asserts blackness as a positive cultural tradition. It insists that they accept their blackness as a subject of pride. African American Autobiography asserts an elemental human right, the right to live and grow. It is a bid for freedom, a bleak hope for cracking the shell of slavery and exploitation.

African American Autobiography though distils the story of the self, represents more than individual experience. In it, we find the collective self, the sense of cultural definition. Such autobiography is presented as representative or reflective of a group at the same time, the narrator as an individual and his/her pride in an inimitable self comes through strong and clear. Here the individual and the community are not separate entities. The writer breaks down the difference between I and we. The voice of the individual becomes the voice of the community. This thread of communal responsibility runs through all African American Autobiography. African American Autobiography speaks with a rich variety of voices and possesses two common elements:

1. The desire to live their lives as they choose and not as the dominant white environment dictates.
2. A criticism of society that has, from its beginning sought to limit the freedom of Blacks.

Autobiographies expose the gap between ideals and the realities of American life and that as a kind of national conscience, persistently calls the nation to honor its premises of equal opportunity, equal justice, and equal freedom.

African American Autobiography can be classified into three steps viz: bondage, flight and freedom – a birth into social and economic bondage, a struggle to escape such constricting circumstances, and the shaping of a free adult self removed from the negative circumstances of childhood and youth.

Bondage, flight and freedom express the patterns of many lives, not just those of black men, for all the people are challenged to establish their own identities distinct from the communal identity of family and cultural group. It also implies on a broader level to all lives that aspire intellectual, emotional and spiritual freedom.

All the autobiographies discussed here are works of reaction or protest literature. Every autobiographer protests against the realities of the world in which he is born, and in every case, those realities are embodied in a dominating father figure. These writers, through the act of writing, emerged from the invisibility that had been for so long imposed upon them. George Gusdorf asserted:

“The man w’ho recounts himself is himself searching his self th’rough history, he is not engaged in an objective and disinterested pursuit but in a work of personal justification”. (2)
Autobiography has been a favorite form of disposition of the American Blacks, about their experiences as members of a community of the despised and their struggles to solve what Maya Angelou calls ‘the humorless puzzle of inequality and hate’ in their encyclopedia of social wrongs.

Against the mental darkness and systematic pathology of racism the blacks forged various weapons of survival, armed insurrection, crime, wily accommodation and fearless self assertion. African American autobiographies offer remarkable portraits of men and women under siege who create dynamic identities, despite social handicaps that would have stopped less resolute persons in their tracks. In the struggle for personal, political and cultural independence, these and other autobiographies play a major role in the communication network by linking the African American writer to his or her audiences. These narratives also articulate emerging forms of personal identity which pose new issues for social scientists and philosophers of personality, race, and culture.

The African American autobiography is a powerful force and a characteristic form of contemporary culture and it has attracted a growing number of critics and commentators. These came in picture from several perspectives, historical and ideological, literary and philosophical, sociological and psychological together. This diversity attests to the general complexity, the difficulties in defining its varieties and the mines of information and insight contained.

The African American Autobiographer, in a sense spins off his circle and is carried by the centrifugal force of the life he has led to a state that anticipates grace. Despite the fact that he has been traveling in a circle, the black autobiographer, by the invention of the autobiography itself managed
to get somewhere. The future, which is not solely his own but that of his people and national ideals generally seems more important to him than the life that he has gone to such pains to record. In fact, he seems to care very little for his life regarding it has as the product of molting an aspect of the narrative past. Every cosmology begins in self knowledge. African American autobiography annihilates the self because, by so doing it takes the world with it and questions pertaining to their existence would be considered to be a violation of the divine design.

Dalits are the victims of Hindu religion and Hindu society. They were historically excluded from the Varna (system) or structure of the Hindu society as the untouchables, who came to emulate this structure with loose identity of a Pancham or Fifth Varna. During the last century, the glorious Dalit movements that sprouted during the colonial times variously sought to forge a separate identity for themselves from the one ordained by the Hindu Society. Dalits performed all kinds of menial jobs and provided sanitary services within a largely self-sufficient village unit and received, as quasi alms, just enough from the village elites to subsist on. Unlike tribals who had their own world in the forested lands, geographically distant from the mainland settlements of the so called civilized. Dalits were a part of the village system, living in relative proximity to these people, albeit in carefully segregated settlements. The settlements for the touchables practically did not have any social transaction except for primary one which was providing vital labour and getting some morsels as alms for its reproduction. Even these restrictive transactions were regulated by an intricate code that claimed divine sanctity. This code practically reduced them to a structure worse than
animals. The social oppression and exploitation of Dalits was co-terminous with their life and it flowed integrally with their living.

Curiously, the segregated Dalit settlement came to replicate similar hierarchical caste structures like that of the touchables.

The autobiography is an example of its own thesis, which places trust in the word and invests it with a life of its own. The self in the autobiography is alone, but so is the reader to be alone and counts on it because whatever else may separate them from each other, their states of loneliness are mutually recognizable. For the African American autobiographer this is a central connection, he is after all not a minority in relation to his lonely reader. They are equal in the exchange, equal because of the experience of the artifact and on this level men may help each other-the artefact and the polemics are one.

The African American Autobiographers were torn from their families, under clothed, overworked, whipped, starved, chained, tortured, made to watch atrocities against loved ones, sexually assaulted, hunted by dogs, deceived and betrayed under all kinds of circumstances by whites from every social class. They won their freedom past slave catchers and patrol terms and then wrote as a means of fighting back their enemies.

They were frequently barred from practicing skilled trades, not allowed to use hotels, go to museums, travel on public conveyances, attend white churches, denied legal redress for attacks on person and property. The whole system had been devoted to keeping them ignorant and fearful, and they had to discover some means within themselves to free their minds as well as their bodies from this legacy. The identity of the narrator grows around his desire for freedom. The act of resistance is the backbone of his selfhood, and his opinions, goals, politics, dreams, and accomplishments
extend from that act like the bones of an embryo, like a new heaven and 
earth from the words ‘let there be light’.

I have selected three Dalit and three African American 
autobiographies from different decades and found that all the six 
autobiographies have similarities of homelessness, poverty, hunger, protest 
and struggle. With changing times their conditions are changing but its 
growth rate is very low. With the efforts of revolutionary and an apostle 
Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Mahatma Jyotirao Phule the Dalits received 
facilities of education and attention from the whole society. African 
Americans received inspiration with the efforts of Black Panther 
Movement and Negro Association. Dalit and African Americans got 
educated and felt that their past must come in front of the society and both 
of them received autobiography as an important tool to express it. In a 
short period number of autobiographies were published. Initially publishers 
were not ready to publish their autobiographies, so, they themselves 
published their life stories.

Dalit and African American autobiographies proved important on 
historical, cultural and social levels and proved an inspiration to many 
others.

Dalit and African American Autobiographies possess the following 
unique features:

In all the six autobiographies various details about the life or 
the personality of the autobiographer took a particular shape or form, for 
example – first comes historical background then family surroundings, 
birth of the individual, early childhood, education, youthful exploits and 
finally the internal and external conflicts. Laxman Mane's autobiography 
opens with childhood description, family conditions, customs and
traditions of the Kaikadi community. The author narrates his school life, efforts to cope with hunger and unequal social conditions and his struggle for education. Laxman describes his experiences of youth from his college life, his parents insistence for marriage and his elopement from home to complete graduation, intercaste marriage, problems after marriage, married life, parents stand on intercaste marriage, efforts to manage day to day expenses, joblessness and thought of suicide, remarriage according to customs and traditions of Kaikadi community. All these incidents are very simply and in a straight way described by Laxman Mane. Laxman's entire life is struggle against his own family members and the whole society at large.

Laxman Gaikwad starts his autobiography with his birthplace describing his family condition and place of residence from which one can understand the intensity of oppression. The protagonist describes his school life, oppression, and struggle for education in unfavourable conditions. His Journey from a worker to union leader, up and downs in youth, oppression and suppression due to low caste, social work for upliftment of community, married life, problems in married life because of unnecessary interference of family members, selfishness of family members, struggle to achieve equality, identity, dignity and pride, internal struggle, harassment by police, prejudice of thieves. Laxman very artistically described each and every incident from his life in the autobiography. Laxman is the first person to bring to the forefront the problems of Uchlaya Community.

Kishore Kale opens up his autobiography with description of Jiji. Jiji was the woman who took care of Kishore like her own son. Kishore was not her child. Kishore was an illegitimate child of Shantabai Kale – a
tamasha dancer. Kishore's love for his mother and his separation from her mother, customs and traditions of Kolhati community, oppression and suppression by family members and the whole society, school life, experience of oppression because of low caste and illegitimate birth, struggle for education, extraordinary efforts to complete education, success in the examination, poverty, turning towards whorehouse, life of a tamasha dancer and an illegitimate child, attempt to commit suicide and working for others. All these incidents are described by Kishore very honestly and without any hesitation.

Frederick Douglass starts his autobiography with the description of his birthplace, then he talks about his childhood, separation from grandmother, his love for his mother, father and family, description of plantation culture, slavery, protagonists youth, his struggle for education, influences of various characters, struggle for freedom, fight with Master Covey, running away from slavery and various incidents of oppression from America. Life as a lecturer, an orator, speaker and autobiographer, working for society have been described by Douglass without any hesitation in *My Bondage My Freedom*.

Booker T. Washington opens up his autobiography with description his of birth in a log cabin, early childhood, about slavery, life after freedom, the author’s efforts to manage expenses and to get education, way to Hampton Institute, importance of Hampton Institute, experience of oppression, efforts to start Tuskegee Institute, gaining faith of community members, collecting charity, married life, up and downs in Tuskegee Institute, faith in industrial education, experience of oppression and suppression. Booker T. Washington's life proved a landmark and inspiration for many as he had converted bare land into fertile. Washington
converted Tuskegee Institute into 40 buildings having two twenty-three acres of campus.

Richard Wright opens up his autobiography with his childhood incidents, describing his naughty nature, his father deserting the family, his mother's description and her struggle to survive, her sickness, his struggle for education, for survival, for identity, his life at the orphanage, experiences of oppression, exploitation by the family members, youth, life in America, as a worker, whipping by the Whites for no reason, struggle for job, protest against inequality, injustice, strong desire of becoming a writer and hunger for reading. Richard through his autobiography presents the life of a Black Boy in America and how it became difficult for him to survive because of his race and colour.

The chief function of the autobiography is the liberation of personality. It not only offers unlimited freedom to the author for the liberation of his personality but also because it may highlights on the autobiographers' contemporary life. All the six autobiographers have thrown light on the social, economical and cultural conditions of Indian and American society.

The writings of these authors have valuable social and cultural context apart from their personal tragedies because it depicts the whole strata of society than had been mutely suffering for ages: found voice in these works. It is the suffering of the millions who have suffered along with them. Through the narrators can be heard the undertone of those who lived and died in suffering, if suffering is permanent, the anguish of the ordinary attains an extraordinary lasting and universal significance.

Autobiography is the representation and product of full consciousness and memory that is, possession of the past. The autobiographer, through autobiography not only describes the past but also struggle viz.
achieving the desired goal. Dalit and African American autobiographers desired to obtain identity and dignity in the society from which they were intentionally kept away from ages. They, along with struggle portrayed social conditions. All the six autobiographers achieved those desired goal. Laxman Mane became a teacher, successful author, received name and fame in the society in which he and his ancestors were denied to take education and treated beyond animals. Laxman Gaikwad who was branded thief became a social worker, writer, orator and received name and fame. Gaikwad is currently working for the upliftment of Adivasis and other tribal communities. Kishore Kale, an illegitimate child of a tamasha dancer became a doctor, set up a dispensary for the Adivasis and tribal people at Kuderan near Thane and worked for the sex workers in Mumbai. Frederick Douglass worked for the upliftment of African American community. Douglass achieved name and fame as an orator, speaker, writer, novelist and autobiographer. Booker T. Washington proved as inspiration to all the people by setting up Tuskegee institute. He is also famous for his speeches as an orator, writer, novelist and autobiographer. Richard Wright from early childhood wanted to become a writer and he fulfilled his dream.

Dalit and African American autobiographers have expressed humanity's approaches in totality and to a full harmonious perfection. Dalit and African American autobiographers through autobiography demanded humanitarian treatment for them and described their struggle to achieve it. The whole logic of African American and Dalit autobiography is based on the notion that a person is what he is because of and through the other
people. There is a collectiveness, an union among the citizens of the state, a class of tribe formed according to class, caste and race. African American and Dalit autobiographers executed portrait of life shared by the group, who lived countless times before, in their exploitation, maltreatment, sufferings and sorrows.

A very important aspect of all the six autobiographies is that, autobiographers were born in poverty, struggled against injustices and rose from unfavourable conditions. Dalit autobiographers were born out of the villages without proper medical treatment or facilities. They spent their childhood playing on dung hills where all the villagers went to relieve themselves. On the otherhand, African American autobiographers were born slaves except Richard Wright. They were born in log cabins and in huts. They spent their childhood on plantations doing small jobs like serving water to workers, working in coal mines and salt furnaces.

Dalit and African American autobiographers could not enjoy their childhood. Their childhood was snatched away from them by slavery, caste and racial discrimination. When they saw other children playing around them their hearts wept to play like them but they were helpless. There was a wall of racism and castism between them. All the autobiographers were born in poverty and they had to work to survive from childhood. Laxman Mane worked along with his parents. He used to collect twigs for firewood, weave baskets and sometimes went along with his father to play music in marriage bands. To manage school expenses, Laxman worked in hotel and in grocery shops.

Laxman Gaikwad had to forge his education because of poverty but with the job as a worker in a mill he continued his education in a night school.
Laxman also worked in a hotel to manage his expenses. Laxman sold bread and butter early in the morning, newspaper, ground nuts and also worked in restaurant and because of these chores he did not get time to play.

Kishore Kale's childhood was snatched from him by Tamasha. Kishore had to do all the chores like women for instance chopping onion, peeling garlic and sweeping for earning a meal. To manage the expenses of schooling Kishore worked for tamasha dancer. He used to give water to women for bath and take care of their customers by bringing them pann and liquor.

Frederick Douglass was a born slave. He rendered his life from childhood to youth in slavery. Though Douglass had a family he was not allowed to meet with his brother and sister and to play together. He had to work hard and did not have enough food to eat, most of the times he was half starved and many times was whipped by his Masters for no reason. Douglass has narrated various incidents of oppression and the cruel nature of Masters.

Booker T. Washington was born in a log cabin. After freedom Booker went with his family to Virginia where he worked in coal mine and salt furnace and attended night school. Later, Booker went to Hampton Institute for education and his life completely changed. There he had to work along with studies to support his education.

Richard Wright was born in Jim Crow culture in America. They were living in White locality. Richard had seen his fathers' cruel nature early in the childhood. Richard had seen his mothers struggle for survival and her sickness too. Richard worked on platforms and in restaurants, in brick mills but his earnings were very low to manage expenses. Then he went to his Granny's house there he sold newspapers and also worked as a servant
for a White family. All the autobiographers taken up for study, lost the happiness and innocence of childhood in their struggling for survival.

All the six autobiographers are victims of poverty and hunger. They are born in poor families and had no jobs to fill their bellies so they were unwillingly forced into thieving. Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, Richard Wright and Laxman Gaikwad defended themselves against the charge of thieving – according to them no one born thief from the womb of his mother, it is the circumstances that force a person to steal. Dalit and African American autobiographers were forced to steal because of poverty, hunger and oppression.

Dalit and African American autobiographers have faith in education; they understood the reasons behind their desperate condition. They acquired education and stood on an equal footing with high caste Savarna and white Americans. Laxman Mane, as a child from Kaikadi community attended school from different villages Kaikadi's never settle in a particular village, as their source of income is selling baskets and articles made up of cane they wander from village to village. Laxman was admitted to school in the villages where his family came to sell baskets. In school, Laxman was always teased by schoolmates and villagers that a child from a Kaikadi community was attending school. But Laxman very persistently attended school and took education.

Laxman belongs to the Uchalya community the community that was branded as ‘thieves’. Laxman's father worked as a watchman in a village chief's farm where Martand, Laxman’s father saw his master's children going to school. Martand sent Laxman to school, but he was protested by his community members and also by the villagers. His community members told Martanda that education was not meant for them and it
suited only the high class people. But Martanda sent Laxman to school. In school, Laxman was not allowed to sit with the other students and he had to sit out of the classroom. All the students always teased Laxman because of his appearance and sometimes they threw stones at him but Laxman never missed school and became popular in school because of his speech on Independence Day. It brought out Laxman's leadership qualities which was an eye opener to the villagers. Laxman became a union leader at the spinning mill, but there also caste proved to be a barrier in his way and he was expelled from the spinning mill. Laxman now works as a social worker. Against All odds depicts the problems of a livelihood by performing stage shows called 'tamasha'. Kishore Kale went to school by himself because his grandfather wanted him to learn to play tabla and perform in tamasha. Kishore's mother left him to her father and went with Krushnarao Wadkar. Kishore was an illegitimate child of Shantabai Kale. Kishore was admitted to school by his mother's name, as his father's identity was unknown. It is common in the Kolhati community that a child is known name by his mother's name. Kishore was always teased by his schoolmates because of the unknown identity of his father. Schoolmates always asked him about his father. Like Laxman Mane and Laxman Gaikwad, Kishore Kale had to sit out of the classroom, yet he went to school regularly and became doctor.

African American autobiographers are not far away from Dalits. They have faced the same problems like Dalits.

Douglass experienced the horrors of slavery from early childhood. Douglass was shifted from owner to another. He received humane treatment at Mr. and Mrs. Auld’s home and Mrs. Auld taught Douglass to read the Bible which encouraged Douglass to acquire education. Douglass
himself learned to write letters by copying them from his master's notebook. Very soon he realized that the White Americans intentionally kept them ignorant. They believed that teaching and educating slaves would make them aware of their miserable condition and they would throw away slavery. Douglass tried his best to learn, read, write and succeeded in it. It is because of the education that Douglass received that he could think about freedom from slavery. Douglass at first became free by fighting with Covey and later he purchased his freedom from his master. Like Douglass, Washington was also born a slave but Washington did not experience slavery like Douglass. African Americans were declared free when Washington was six years old. Though he never faced the cruelties of slavery, his sufferings were similar to the sufferings of Douglass. After freedom, Washington and his family members worked in a coal mine and in a salt furnace. Washington attended night school. During the day, he worked in a coal mine and studied at night in school. Washington used to walk for kilometers together with his brother reciting homework, so that he could complete his homework and also pay attention to his brother. Washington, with hard work achieved admission at the Hampton Institute. Working in a restaurant, Washington completed education and after that he started the Tuskegee Institute. Tuskegee Institute proved to be a milestone in the life of many African Americans as well as White Americans.

Richard Wright was not a slave, he was born free and his problems were different. Richard's father deserted his mother. His mother worked as a cook in a white family, but her earnings were not enough to maintain the household. After few days, it became very difficult for her to pay the rent of the house which forced them to leave the house and shift to another. Richard started doing small jobs but his earnings were not enough to
maintain the household. Meanwhile his mother was paralyzed. Richard went along with his mother to his Granny's house. Richard was not provided with good food and clothes. Richard sold newspapers and also worked in a cloth store where he was oppressed because of his colour.

All the six autobiographers overcame poverty, and acquired education with hard work. They protested against the social system by acquiring education because they were denied education along with White Americans and the high class people.

All the six autobiographers realized that education was the only key with which they could open up the locks of illiteracy and superstition so they educated themselves and proved to be source of inspiration for others.

They have documented their past life without any hesitation which proved very important to study social, economical and cultural conditions of caste and race ridden in India and America.

In Dalit and African American autobiographies social conditions are same. Dalits in India and African Americans in America were socially, culturally and economically exploited. Dalits were the victims of caste system whereas African Americans were the victims of colour and race. All the six autobiographers have very keenly, pointed out all the incidents of hate in their autobiographies. These autobiographers, Laxman Mane, Laxman Gaikwad and Kishore Kale were denied education by the villagers as well as their own community members. The roots of caste system are so deeply rooted in the social structure of India that one has to perform as per his caste; otherwise it would be a cause of punishment by community members and the society as well. No one was ready to accept that Dalits also required to educate themselves and become civilized. They also have the right to avail all the facilities and happiness like others. Even the old
generation Dalit community believed that it was because of the sins of past life that they were living in a desperate condition and they even did not tried to get rid of it. They spent their life in a very desperate condition, experiencing maltreatment, exploitation by the upper caste people.

African Americans were not slaves. They were enslaved by the White Americans. Booker T. Washington, Frederick Douglass and Richard Wright gave the accurate picture of social conditions of America. African Americans were denied to live as human beings. Their masters treated African Americans beyond animals. Masters took care of their dogs – they gave good food to dogs, but not to the slaves.

Frederick Douglass, at one instance in his autobiography described that he had fought with his master's dog for single bread. Richard Wright described the prejudices of Americans possessed about African Americans.

Americans intentionally kept their slaves ignorant. They believed that education would unite the slaves to rebel against the slavery. Slaves had to work so hard that they lost their energy in work and they did not have time to discuss their problems with others. Masters were always trying to prove that they were taking care of the slaves and thought of their welfare. So they gave holidays to their slaves on the eve of Christmas. Douglass has very forcefully condemned the nature and tendency of White Americans behind the holidays.

Both the communities, Dalit and African American have similarities between them. They were brothers and sisters to each other. Both the communities were the victims of caste, colour and race.

Dalit and African American autobiographers protested against inequality and injustices meted out to them.
In Dalit and African American autobiographies we see a protest against the contemporary social conditions, protest for the right to education, right to vote, right to speak and protest to gain identity.

Laxman Mane, protested against the social system by marrying outside his caste. He married a high class, Maratha girl. Laxman Mane's intercaste marriage proved to be a revolutionary incident in the history of Dalit society. Laxman ran away from his house for education and completed his post graduation. This also signifies protest against the society in which Laxman was not allowed to take education. Like Laxman Mane, Laxman Gaikwad and Kishore Kale protested against their own society, their family members and the entire high caste society. Laxman Gaikwad became a social worker and Kishore Kale a successful doctor.

African American authors also protested against the society. Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington and Richard Wright have cited various incidents of protest in the autobiographies.

Frederick Douglass fought against his master, Covey for freedom. That fight built up confidence in Douglass. Douglass became free from the clutches of slavery. It was not possible for everyone to fight with their masters because, for a single mistake the masters shot dead the slaves. But Douglass fought courageously with Covey and won his freedom.

Washington's entire life is calculated as a protest against the contemporary system. Washington set up Tuskegee Institute for African Americans at the time when African Americans were denied education. Washington, along with his wives collected charity from the Americans and built the Tuskegee Institute. Some of his community members called Washington beggar because he collected charity. But Washington never paid attention to them and concentrated on his work. Tuskegee proved to
be a crucial opportunity for all the African Americans and Americans as well.

Richard Wright protested against the society, against his family members his father and Granny. Wright from his early childhood received a lesson of protest. He was robbed many times by the white boys, of the money he needed for buying groceries. His mother, then, gave him a stick to fight. Richard fought with the boys and taught them a lesson. After that they never dared to rob Richard. This motivated Richard and he protested at each and every level; against inequality, maltreatment and exploitation. On the very first day of school, Richard fought with White American boys courageously and after that they never tried to play tricks with Richard. All the six autobiographers have protested against inequality.

All the six autobiographers possess similarities of separation, division, alienation and isolation.

They were separated from their families because of slavery. They were not allowed to live together, on the other side Dalit autobiographers were separated for education. They had to live alone in boarding schools and in colleges. Laxman Mane, Laxman Gaikwad and Kishore Kale had to live in boarding school because of lack of facilities of school in their village. Kishore Kale was separated from his mother because of his illegitimate birth and because of customs and traditions of Kolhati community. Kishore starved for his mothers love till end of his life.

Richard Wright starved for father's love. His father went away with land lady and left his mother alone which permanently scarred Richard on an emotional level.

Dalit and African American autobiographers re-lived their minds by writing autobiographies. They were carrying the burden of agonies,
sorrows and sufferings of many generations and the autobiography proved handy to relieve their burden.

African Americans and Dalits lost their identities as they were treated beyond animals and very inauspicious names were given to them. African Americans were named after their master’s name – Dalits were called as Harijans, untouchables, and shudras. African Americans were called as Black, Negro, Afro-American and now they are referred to as African Americans. All the autobiographers have struggled to achieve dignity, identity and pride and their struggle started early in their childhood.

Dalit and African American autobiographers worked for community development. They strongly wanted their community members to break free the clutches of slavery and caste system. Through speeches and write-ups, they very strongly urged their community members to learn, to educate and to unite. They have written autobiographies to demonstrate their efforts to cope with unfavourable conditions and to inspire many others to demonstrate their agonies, sufferings and sorrows.

The important characteristic of the Dalit and the African American autobiography is that all the six authors belong to the same background. Dalit autobiographers are from the lower caste i.e. Mahar and from tribal communities. They had to work like slaves. The African American autobiographers belong to the 'Slave' background and they were facing imprisoned t by white Americans. Through autobiography they represented their marginality; hence it is called as literature of marginality.

Dalit and African American autobiographies are socially similar but culturally there is a difference in them. Dalits are from India, their mother land is India. But African Americans are from Africa, they were brought to America as slaves, hence there is cultural impact of both Africa and
America on them. There is, double consciousness in African American Autobiography because of the American and African ethos. For Africans their mother land is Africa and they lived in America as slaves and were influenced by the American culture.

The language used by the authors is the vernacular and they have very artistically used it to express their life stories which are sagas of agonies and oppression.

As discussed above Dalit and African American societies and literature have similarities because of their share common emotional worlds. Pain, rebellion, poverty, hunger, homelessness and struggle are the common factors of Dalit and African American societies. Both the communities demanded humanity. Though their culture and language is different their emotions are similar. Their emotions bring them closer to each other. They are brothers and sisters to each other who experienced oppression, suppression and maltreatment generation after generation. Dalit and African American literature is a movement of human liberation.

Experiences conveyed in Dalit and African American Autobiographies have several characteristics. They constitute an engagement in self search to achieve self-respect; and the rejection of traditions and a religion that are opposed to such self-respect. They mark a rebellion against overbearing religion and tradition, as well as hypocrisy masquerading under seductive names such as freedom of democracy. They express the pain of human beings who are not treated as human.

The autobiographies analysed in the earlier chapters very clearly indicate the writer’s intellectual struggle and the social fervour to bring to the front the acute sufferings of the oppressed classes, their psychic disruptions and very systematic strive to create a space for the suppressed
ones in their respective cultures and communities. At a larger level, these autobiographers open up ideological debates and sharply criticize the violation of human rights and human dignity in a global society that is, ironically, supposed to be highly advanced and highly civilized society.