CHAPTER II

COMPARATIVE LITERATURE: A PERSPECTIVE

2.1 Preliminaries

Comparative literature is the theoretical as well as methodological approach to help the researcher to understand varieties of cultures, languages, literatures and other different aspects. The present chapter deals with the definition of ‘Comparative Literature’ by various scholars and critics. It is not only important for critics to understand the literary views but also to help to analyze the universal relation among the literatures. The chapter contains a journey of Comparative Literature in details. The chapter also postulates important roles of Comparative Literature in studying various aspects of a novel. Since the present study deals with class, caste and race issues in the selected novels, it is an attempt of the researcher to highlight the contribution of the writers to Jewish literature in America as well as emergence of Dalit literature in India.

It considers a variety of perspectives adopted by scholars from significant fields. Another important aspect is the historical one which concerns the role of various scholars and critics who contributed to Comparative Literature. Many critics from the beginning of Comparative Literature before the nineteenth century until the present day are thoroughly examined. The present study focuses mainly on texts expressly conceived as contributions to the development of comparative literature.
2.2 What is Comparative Literature?

The term ‘Comparative Literature’ is a very broad concept, which involves comparative study among different literatures and brings out the similar and dissimilar qualities of the writers. It contains dimensions of comparative literature; first is the linguistic, thematic, and social dimensions. The second is cultures, morals and ethics of the characters in the novels. The researcher, while studying comparative literature, considers different aspects of the literatures, their social, religious and universal aspects. In a simple way, one would state that the comparative Literature is a comparison between two literatures with the help of analysis of the similarities and dissimilarities. It is the main tool to study more than one literature. There are also notions against which comparative literature offers an alternative as well as a parallel field of study. Comparative Literature helps scholars and researchers to acquire in-depth grounding and knowledge in several languages, literatures as well as other disciplines. The scholars take interest in studying literature in relation to other forms of artistic expression and in relation to other disciplines in social sciences.

The comparative literature has its parallel identification to the study of languages and literatures such as English, American, Indian, and so on. Scholars and critics use English language as a means of communication and give information to others because it is an accepted world language. The researchers may study the political, social and intellectual contexts of literature with the help of comparative literature to emphasize the hidden meaning in the
writers’ linguistic expressions. The main objective of comparative literature is the proper appreciation of literature in a large perspective involving more than one literature especially those growing across the national boundaries. The comparative literature goes beyond the national boundaries; therefore, it rises above separate identities of single national literature as all embracing the concept of *Vishva-Sahitya* as visualized by Tagore Goethe and other prominent writers. It also visualizes *Welt literature* to realize an international understanding of the whole literature as a unique one. A comparative study helps establish contact with other literatures or streams of literatures in other countries and other similar bodies fostering interchange of ideas and information.

Comparative literature transcends the concepts, messages, forms and genres of the literatures at global levels such as the development of types and forms under the progressive relationships of different literatures. In other sense, it seeks to reveal relations of affinity within two or more literatures. Finally, through the discovery of similarities and differences by means of comparison, it endeavors to explain the inception and growth of individual works. Comparative literature helps the researcher to facilitate interchange of literary ideas and information among the different linguistic communities. Wellek and Warren, critics of comparative study in Das Bijay Kumar (2000), define ‘Comparative Literature’ in three different ways:

(i) “*Comparative literature means the study of oral literature, especially of folk-tale themes and their*
migration: of how and when they have entered higher artistic literature.” (p. 2)

(ii) “Comparative Literature is the study of the relationship between two or more literatures.” (p. 2)

(iii) “Comparative literature is by identifying it with World literature. The concept of ‘World literature’ comes from Goethe’s ‘Welt literature’, which means all literature should be studied and taken as one.” (p.3)

All these definitions help the reader and the researcher alike to understand the concept of comparative literature. In comparative literature, the researcher considers common concepts of authors, which they try to bring out with the help of wholeness or unity. The poetic justice in author’s work throughout his writing and universal qualities are considered in a comparative study. While comparing, the researcher has to keep in mind the common elements of the authors, their presentation of the types of characters which they try to project in their novels. Comparative literature comes out of the premise that literature is to be studied with reference to other literature within and outside the country.

It transcends the narrowness and unique qualities of national and international authors, their techniques of writing their literary works. Henry H. Remak (1971) is one of the researchers and scholars who state that the comparative study plays an important role in the interpretation of two or more literary works. He defines it in Bhaduri Sugata (2010) in the following manner:
“Comparative literature is the study of literature beyond the confines of one particular country, and the study of the relationship between literature on the one hand and other areas of knowledge and belief, such as the arts (e.g. painting, sculpture, architecture, music), philosophy, history, the social science (e.g. politics, economics, sociology), science, religion, etc., In brief, it is the comparison of literature with other spheres of human expression.” (p.xvii)

Another scholar and critic Johan Fletcher defines comparative literature in Chaudhari Indra Nath (1992) as:

“Comparative literature is analytical description, methodical and differential comparison, synthetic interpretation of inter-linguistic and inter-cultural literary phenomena through history, criticism and philosophy, in order the better to understand literature as a specific function of the human mind.” (p.70)

Johan Fletcher describes the concepts of ‘Comparative Literature’ and its various aspects. By considering this definition, one understands the perspectives of comparative literature.

2.3 Development of Comparative Literature

Comparative literature analyzes the similarities and dissimilarities between more than two literatures. Comparative literature is studying the impact of one literature, actually of whole cultures on others. On the other hand, it is really concerned with the appreciation looking
into similar and dissimilar aspects of writers’ various perspectives. Comparative Literature has been considered prominently as an important field due to the contributions of Transylvanian Hungarian Hugo Meltzl de Lomnitz the editor of the journal *Anta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum* (1877). The scholar H. M. Posnett’s *Comparative Literature* (1886) is one of the landmark contributions in the field of comparative literature.

Arnold has used the term ‘Comparative Literature’ for the first time in his letter to his sister in 1848. In this letter, Arnold presents his views about comparative studies as well as uses this term in a broad sense. He considers that comparative literature is imperative in literary studies rather than an eclectic indulgence. Arnold in Bhaduri Sugata et al (2010) says:

“No single event, no single literature is adequately comprehended except in relation to other events, to other literatures.” (p.xiii)

The great socialist and communist thinkers Marx and Engels have used the term ‘Comparative Literature’in the sense of national literature or world literature in their book *Communist Manifesto* (1848). In this book, they relate the importance of world literature in the capitalistic world. Bhaduri Sugata at all (2010) quotes Marx and Engels as follows:

“The need of a constantly expanding market for its product chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. The
bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world-market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country [a]nd as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature.” (p.XV)

This statement defines the crisis in the relationship of globalization and world literature. Comparative Literature also shows how the world literature potentially takes beyond narrow-mindedness. However, its root is found in the ideas of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s vision World Literature (Welt literature) and Russian formalist Alexander Veselovsky with laying the groundwork for this discipline. Viktor Zhirmunsky, for instance, referred to Veselovsky as the most remarkable representative of comparative literary study in Russian and European scholarship of the nineteenth century. Petersen Julius has immensely contributed to Nationale oder vergleichende Literaturgeschichte?” Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte, VI (1928), in which he narrates the importance of comparative literature. There are many scholars who give their valuable devotion to enrich the comparative literature such as Albert Guerard’s book What is World Literature?, Preface to World Literature. (1940), Renato Poggioli’s Comparative Literature (1943) Warren Austin and Rene Wellek’s Theory of Literature (1948), Van Paul Tieghem’s contribution to La Litterature
Comparee (1951), Gillies Alexander’s Some Thoughts on Comparative Literature, Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature, I (1952). All these scholars pave the way for modern writers and researchers to understand various aspects of the comparative literature.

The term ‘Comparative Literature’ and ‘World Literature’ are often used to designate similar and dissimilar aspects in the literatures. ‘Comparative Literature’ is the more widely used term by some scholars and critics and the alternative term used for Comparative Literature is global or world literature to indentify the common qualities of literatures and to study the literature from critical viewpoints. It is a very vast area dealing with the literature of two or more different linguistic, cultural, or nation groups. It also includes comparisons of different types of art, for instance, a relationship of a film to literature and so on. In addition, the comparative literature concerns itself with the relationship between literature and other spheres of human knowledge including history, politics, philosophy and science. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the scholars and critics realized the importance of comparative literature and they established different associations such as British Comparative Literature Association (BCLA), International Comparative Literature Association (ICLA) and American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA), etc.

International Comparative Literature Association plays the vital role in developing the comparative aspects and trends of comparative literature in the world. This association tries to expound the values of
comparative study with the help of different scholars and critics. Many scholars enrich the qualities, utilities of comparative literature through this association as well as share their thoughts regarding the importance of comparative study in the globalization era.

This association gives inspiration to the researchers and scholars to project their views with help of worldwide literature. There are fundamental principles which determine the nature of comparative literature such as international contextualism and comparative criticism. Comparative literature concerns with the binary study of literature without crossing the national frontiers. However, some researchers try to study the impact of western literature on world literature, and sometimes, world literature carries equal aspects of the society though their regions. Francois Jost in his *Introduction to Comparative Literature* (1974) explains the importance of applied comparative literature and supports Goethe’s concept of *Welt literature*. The linguist too studies the lexical field of comparative literature and includes the term ‘General Literature’ to that of ‘World Literature’ and *Welt literature*. Susan Bassnett is one of the scholars of comparative literature and criticism. Her books *Translation Studies* (1980) and *Comparative Literature* (1993) play an important role to develop the viewpoints of the scholars regarding comparative literature. The different schools also give their devotion to develop the qualities and aspects of comparative literature; among these schools, the French School of Comparative Literature plays a vital role. At the beginning of the twentieth century, comparative literature is thoroughly studied by the French School, in which scholars have
examined works looking for evidence of origins and influences in the works from different countries.

Most of the major researchers in French school such as Paul van Tieghem (1931), Marius-Francois Guyard (1965), Claude Pichois and Andre- Michel Rousseaux (1967) have contributed for the book called *La Literature Comparee*. In this anthology, these scholars have put forth their views, concepts, terms and notions of comparative literature. The term was further popularized by the French scholar Abel-Francois Villemain (1970-1870) who published the version of *Tableau De La Literature Francaise Au XVIIIe siècle* series of volumes IV (1828-29). Van Tieghem has contributed to the comparative literature to develop the field in the various parts of the world. Dhawan R. K. (1987) quotes Van Tieghem as follows:

> “The object of comparative literature is essentially the study of diverse literatures in their relations with one another.” (p.17)

American school focuses on the reaction to the limited approach and its beginning from the practitioners of comparative studies such as Harry Tuchman Levin (1912-1994) and Henry Remak. These two scholars consider that comparative literature not only deals with world literature but also emphasizes cultural production. Henry H. Remak is one of the members of American School and the scholar of the comparative literature who has written about the wide scope of comparative literature. In 1958, Rene Wellek delivered lectures on *Crisis in Comparative Literature* to explain the problems created by the French scholars in the study of literatures. Irving Babbit, one of
the scholars and researchers in America, expresses his views on comparative literatures in Dhawan R. K. (1987) in the following ways:

“Comparative literature will prove one of the most trifling of subjects unless studied in strict subordination to humane standards.” (p.31)

It deals closely with the original visions of Goethe and Posnett, for instance, the scholars refer to the universal truths based on the literary archetypes that appeared throughout literatures from all times and places. Charles Chauncey Shackford (eighteenth century) is one of the American scholars and the great contributors to comparative literature. He and his friend Georg Morris Cohen Brandes (1842-1927) are important contributors to comparative literature. They wrote about functions of comparative literature and its utility to the society.

In the French school, the scholars attempt to trace original sources of the particular literary form and motive coming from nations of the world. It promotes the binary study between two authors or literary criticism in contrast to the American school. Both schools have their different points of view regarding comparative literature. The French school deals with modes of transmission, reception, success, influence, source, etc.

On the other hand, the American school deals with contact or typological affinities in the field of comparative study. Apart from these two schools, there are also other schools, which play vital role in
enriching the qualities of the comparative literature. Russian formalists try to project the qualities, aspects and functions of the comparative literature quite differently from other scholars. The formalists such as Alexander Nikolayevich Veselovsky (1838-1906), Fedor Ivanovich Buslaev (1818-1898) have focused on belief in the myths and universal civilizing power of literatures in the cultural context. They have constructed different views and aspects of comparative literature. They look beyond European literature to oriental sources and non-literary modes of articulations like popular art, rituals, folktales, etc. The contribution of Russian formalist is immense especially as they give new directions to contemporary comparative literature and focus on its various dimensions. It not only moves beyond Eurocentrism but also overall world literature. In the last few decades, there has been a rethinking and paradigm shift in the agenda of comparative studies. In 1960, Russian researchers organized a conference in Moscow. They were misreading comparative literature simply as a forbidden subject under Stalin. In this conference, R.M. Samarin, I.G. Neupokoeva and N.S. Pavlova presented a paper on comparative literature. They projected the idea that comparative literature helps readers and scholars to understand various literatures and variety of writings.

The first journal of comparative literature was started by the German scholar Max Koch in 1877 named Zeitschrift Für Vergleichende Literaturgeschichte and the first chair in comparative literature was established at Harvard University in 1890. Like the French school, German comparative literature has its origin in the late nineteenth
century. After World War II, the discipline developed in the large parts of the country to connect one scholar with the other in particular comparative literature which is much influenced by East European literary theorists of the Russian and Prague schools of structuralism. Szondi is one of the German scholars who worked hard for German General and Comparative Literary Studies. His well known book *Allgemeine und Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft* is famous for guidelines to the readers of comparative literature. Rene Wellek and other American scholars visited Germany to deliver lectures on the notion of comparative study.

Besides these schools and scholars, there are many who have contributed to enhance the qualities of comparative literature. Considering the comparative field, the contribution of J. M. Degerando is very valuable. He has contributed to comparative literature in his book *Histoire Comparée Des Systèmes De Philosophie* (1804). Rene Etiemble in *Comparative Literature* (1963) has suggested that comparison is the main tool to study different types of literatures on the same platform. Herman Hasse and Arthur Waley have introduced non-European literature that fuses east and west boundaries of literature.

The second congress of the International Comparative Literature Association and its members had gathered at Chapel Hill in September 1958. They discussed the topic while the paper was being presented in the conference on *The Crisis of Comparative Literature* by Werner Friedrich. The first yearbook of *Comparative and General Literature* was published in 1952. Friedrich founded and served as an
early president for both the American and International Comparative Literature Associations. He also started the Comparative Literature section of the Modern Language Association of America co-founded the journal *Comparative Literature* and founded and edited the *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature*. The Marcel Battaillon Professorship in Comparative Literature was established in 1972 by Werner P. Friederich in honor of his friend Marcel Battalion, who was called the dean of French researchers.

Harry Levin is a devoted scholar in comparative literature in America and other parts of the world. From 1985, the American Comparative Literature Association began awarding the Harry Levin Prize for books on literary history or criticism and in 1997 Harvard University created the new chair of *Harry Levin Professor of Literature*.

In the journey of comparative literature, the International Association of Comparative Literature has played an important role. In September 1955, the first congress was organized at Venice without American participants called *Venice in Literature*. It was in this first meeting at Chapel Hill Congress, where the first time researchers and scholars officially were able to meet their European colleagues and thoroughly discuss the challenges of comparative literature. Fritz Ernst, professor of comparative literature at the University of Zurich is remembered as one the great masters of the comparative literature. His last enterprise was a collection of comparatist contributions from among his disciples, a common German-Swiss understanding.
Jean-Marie Carre tried to bring together researchers from all different countries under the hospitable roof of the *Institut de Literature Compare* at the Sorbonne; Professor Jacques Voisine of the University of Lille and professor Werner Friederich from the University of North Carolina. They conjured up a living encyclopedia of comparative literature in the shape of a transatlantic steamer with a crew of 43 researchers. Werner Friederich, one of the scholars and researchers suggested that the committee should consider one common purpose and the study of literature beyond the confines of one national literature. Jean Marie Carre’s brief introduction to M.F. Guyard’s little handbook, *La Literature Compare* (1951) is remarkable. Carre was the first president of the International Comparative Literature Association and restated some terms regarding comparative literature. He insisted on the old concept of literary study in general and comparative literature in particular. The branch of literary history should be considered in a proper way on the basis of the facts that the writers use during their writings, the inspirations and even the contexts that the writers give from several literatures.

In October 1962, there was another Congress at Budapest (Eastern Europe) on Comparative literature, which was attended by W.P. Smith. He was the president of International Association of Comparative Literature. There were some crises on the topic of denationalization. Madame Neupokoeva, one of the researchers, bitterly criticized Mr. Friederich. In this congress, the scholars of comparative literature discussed the issues of denationalization,
narrowness and limitations. Maria Janion, one of the participants in congress of the comparative literature, also supported the views of Mr. Friederich. German professor, Werner Krauss, severely criticized that American Comparatism is deeply committed to the task of reconciling the nations.

The comparative literature offers an almost limitless number of new topics and new problems. It plays a crucial role as a crystallizing subject. For the reformation of the research, the scholars must recognize the importance of comparative literature from an organizational point of view and emphasize the function and value of the different common enterprises, associations, periodicals, newsletters and conferences.

2.4 Role of Comparative Study

The study in comparative literature helps the readers and research scholars to understand the binary literatures of authors. It paves the way for them to study different contexts, interaction and views of the writers. Mainly, it seeks to study the interactions between literatures written in multilingual contexts and their notions. Comparative literature is a literary discipline. In the twentieth century, it is recognized as the most important academic discipline in the aera of research.

Comparative study helps to analyze the good and ugly aspects in the writings of the authors. The study includes all the concepts such as universal literature, international literature, general literature and
world literature. Comparative study is one of the prominent devices to analyze the literary works, viewpoints, similarities, differences and uniqueness of the writers. This study enhances the knowledge of the scholars and researchers as well as helps them to bring out different literary trends on the same platform. In the nineteenth century, the study flourished in various countries and it became a prominent field in literature. The comparative literary methodology can be extremely useful in developing a concept of unified literary history on a single level of organization. The scholars and critics consider the influence of one literature on others. Such studies help the scholars to convey the root culture to the people of other cultures. Comparative literature studies the impact of one literature on another. On the other hand, it is really concerned with the appreciation of cultures other than that of scholars’ opinions and presentation of it. In this sense, it tends to bring people together in this divisive world and to stress on the oneness of the human race rather than its differences. Rene Wellek in Chaudhari Indra Nath (1992) says:

“Comparative literature can best be defended and defined by its perspective and spirit, rather than by any circumscribed position with in literature.” (p.86)

This statement validates what Rene Wellek described as the utility of comparative literature. He is dedicated to the study of comparative literatures without considering national and linguistic barriers. It essentially contains the cross-cultural and interdisciplinary study of literature in different countries. It contributes to modern knowledge and different views of the writers. It is applied to literatures and draws
the universality in them. It is also important in the general context of
the literature and application of the theoretical framework where the
essence of any approach proves and disproves itself. Any
comprehensive account of the literary work should cover the entire
constituent of the literature and convey virtuous messages to their
readers and the world. The Nobel Prize winner Eliot who elaborates
the importance of comparative literature in Chaudhari Indra Nath
(1992) says:

“Comparison and analysis are the chief tools of the critic, but
Comparative Literature is explicitly comparative.” (p.3)

From the above statement, it becomes clear that while making the
comparative study, one has to consider the noble qualities of literary
works as well as different views of the writers. To study literary
works from critical viewpoints and to adopt the universal qualities
with the help of comparison is a great skill of readers and researchers.
One has to consider all contextual aspects regarding the subject so the
readers easily understand the comparison. The comparison between
two literatures is not about understanding of the language and cultural
differences but also the social point of views. Comparative literature
is an important way to compare and assist different types of literatures
by considering the language, characters, themes, and motifs in other
respects.

The common language of two writers in comparative literature plays
an important role. The literature is absolutely language-based
culturally and socially reflective phenomenon. It is considered that the
literature of given languages has its own specific character of forms, styles, images, symbols, nuances and associations. The literatures written in different languages only differ due to their languages but themes, contents and nature of the characters are the same as it reflects social reality and problems in different communities. The comparative literature postulates in and out of the study, pedagogy, and research of literature. The method is of crucial importance in comparative literature in particular and as a whole. It is the theoretical as well as methodological guide to move and to establish dialogue between cultures, languages, literatures and disciplines. Comparative literature, since its inception in the nineteenth century, claims of emotional and intellectual primacy. It leads subsequent institutional power of national languages, cultures and equality in the literature. The researchers have to acquire in-depth knowledge in several languages and literatures, which bring out the real comparison between respective literatures.

Comparative literature takes interest in studying literature in relation to other forms of artistic expression and other disciplines in the humanities. It focuses on the literature in the context of cultural and social problems. The comparative study is a socially constructive and necessary phenomenon in life as it brings wealth of knowledge to the readers. It is generally accepted that the comparative study is an activity that defines humanity individually, socially, politically and economically like every other branch of human knowledge. It underwent continual shifts and developed from its earlier stages to its
present form in concordance with the knowledge and cultural norms of the times.

Two fundamental laws determine the nature of comparative literature. These two principles play an important role in the study. These two principles are international contextualism and comparative criticism. The binary study of the literature either national or international helps the scholars in bringing out the different aspects of authors.

The comparative study develops the ability to read literature critically and responsibly, at the same time, it helps in projecting the variety of themes, characters, structures and their comparisons. It also helps the researcher to study both literatures in depth. Francois Jost in Chaudhari Indra Nath (1992) says:

“It is impossible to find in any library of the world one single book or one single essay on ‘Applied Comparatistics’ that would substantiate the assertion made in many articles and treatises on ‘Theoretical Comparatistics’ that not only the matter but also the method is significantly different in studies of comparative and national literature.’” (p.2)

It is evident from the above statement that Francois Jost tries to bring together Applied Comparatistics and Theoretical Comparatistics. From the viewpoint of comparative study, the scholars and critics can easily bring out the universal and unique qualities among the great writers such as Homer, Virgil, Dante, Valmiki, Kalidas and even in the writing of nineteenth century western novelists, Tolstoy.
Moreover, comparative criticism involves a larger field of literary study and encompasses other forms of human expressions having a bigger perspective. This is the role of comparative literature. The comparative literary methodology is extremely useful in developing a concept of unified literary history on a single level of organization. If there can be several national literatures written in a single language, there can also be single national literatures, but the unity of literature is not the language in which it is written. It is the entire cultural context in which it grows and develops.

The present research is an attempt to provide an objective and factual perspective on the discipline through a synthetic and comprehensive overview on the various aspects of the writers. The main object is to study the similar and dissimilar portrayal of the characters of the particular authors. It also helps to study the gross cultural aspects of two authors. The comparative study needs, therefore, to take into account several major features of related literature. The first qualification is to take into account various definitions put forth by scholars and critics of the comparative literature. It considers the variety of perspectives adopted by scholars from significant fields. Another important aspect is the historical one considering the role of various scholars and critics who have contributed to the comparative literature. Many critics from the beginning of comparative literature before the nineteenth century till present days may be consistent with one or more criteria. The present study focuses mainly on texts expressly conceived as contributions to the development of
comparative literature. The comparative method could be universally applied to the novels of the authors.

Comparative literature offers scholars and researchers an opportunity to develop their ability to read literature critically and responsibly. Secondly it studies one literature in depth and other in the same perspective area to see the relevant aims and interests so the scholars and researchers acquire a broader sense of literary history and tradition among the literatures. Matthew Arnold in the letter to his sister in 1848 further defines comparative literature in Bhaduri Saugata (2010) as follows:

“How plain it is now, though an attention to the comparative literatures for the last fifty years might have instructed anyone of it that England is in a certain sense far behind the Continent. While it has often been argued that the sense in which Arnold uses the term here is rather vague, that comparatism in literary studies was an imperative, rather than an eclectic indulgence for him.” (p-xiii)

The above view clarifies that Matthew Arnold narrates the values of the comparative literature in a letter to his sister which was not published till 1895. On the other hand, some critics consider that comparative literature helps scholars to enhance the qualities and characters of the author’s writing. It also helps to understand the similar and dissimilar aspects of the authors. Max Mueller, one of the critics and scholars of comparative literature, expresses his views in Dhawan R. K. (1987) as follows:
“All higher knowledge is gained by comparison, and rests on comparison.” (p.27)

The above statement makes it clear that comparative literature is the essential aspect to study different forms of literature. The comparative study plays a vital role to emphasize different aspects of the authors. It is one of the means to study the general theory of the literary evolution and the idea that literature passes through the stages of inception, culmination and decline. Van Tieghem, one of the scholars and researchers remarks in Dhawan R. K. (1987):

“The object of Comparative literature is essentially the study of diverse literatures in their relations with one another.” (p.17)

The comparative literature is to broaden one’s perspective by discovering certain dominant trends in the literature including culture to understand the precise relationship between the two or more literatures. This study originated as a reaction against the narrow nationalism of nineteenth century scholars in Britain. It tries to reduce the distance between writers and different literatures. Literature is the most humanizing force and internal realizations of the writers. It is appreciated on the basis of comparative studies. The basic function of the comparative study is to appreciate the deep structure and similarities between literatures as presented by the writers. It is desirable to have an unusual tolerance and uncommon competence. In the recent years, however, the comparative study seems to have drifted towards different directions as attempts are made all over the world to search and assert national identity through the literature. In
this sense, a group of scholars that prompt the comparative study and the comparative literature to maintain the world literature is one though written in many languages.

The scholars attempt to present the social, religious, political and other issues related to the human beings only through the comparative study. It has the power to calculate all these similar and dissimilar aspects of the authors. The nature of human beings is the same all over the world and one easily comes across universal, unique and equal expressions in different literatures as they are bound to have deep-seated similarities and affinities. The Comparative study focuses and pays attention to them in a systematic way. This validates that comparative study helps different countries to work together and try to create universal unity among the nations. Hudson, one of the critics and authors of the comparative study, considers that the comparative study is cooperative while considering the literature and historic study of the community.

The earlier efforts in the field of comparative literature placed undue reliance upon casual explanation of motifs, themes, situations and plots subjected to comparison and to accumulate occasional identities without paying any attention to real significant relationships. The comparative study focuses on various subject matters unknown to the readers and researchers. The function of the comparative study is to analyze different genres of literatures and to compare and contrast the core ideas and messages that particular authors want to convey with help of their works. In addition to manipulations of themes and characters, the comparative study should also take into account
different writers from the different countries. A suitable comparative study should define its boundaries neatly lest it should collapse from uncontrolled extension. Probably, the most revealing comparison is one that arises from the shock of recognition or has been accepted by writers’ selves.

Such studies of course do not depend on comparison alone but makes use of description, characterization, interpretation, narration, explanation and evaluation. Moreover, comparison cannot be confined to actual historical contacts alone. The comparative study, however, cannot be fully realized merely by clinging to factual relations and sources and the influences and intermediaries and reputations.

The comparative study keeps the balance between expansion and concentration. It also attempts to make use of new tools arrived to analyze features of a work. Comparative study derives many ideas, expressions, and conventions from the common sources and the great authors. This study is of considerable value to undertake in-depth studies of authors’ works, which makes use of themes, myths, motifs, characters and expressions supplied by the earlier masters. In literary work, one sees different qualities of human beings through the variety of characters, but it is somehow the same as the basic character of human beings is the same everywhere. Such qualities and characters include figures like Bakha, Lakha, Sohini, Munoo and Parbati in the novels of Anand; and Herman, Bess, Rabbi Bengelsdorf, Everyman and Phoebe in Roth’s novels. Furthermore, the western impact on Indian literature adds interesting dimension to the comparative study.
In addition to manipulation of themes and characters, the comparative study takes into account various writers in translation and adaptation.

The Indian literature affords a better opportunity for comparative studies since India is a multilingual country and this linguistic multiplicity proves a wonderful opportunity for the researchers to study different aspects of the writers. Thus, the study of literary form proves to be an important part of the comparative literature in India. The following are some major roles of the comparative literature. Henry H. Remak tries to induce comparative literary studies in relationship between literatures on the one hand and on the other area of knowledge in history, social science, and religion on the other. Comparative literature does not commit itself to one or other principle as the comparison is the most useful technique for analyzing the works of art.

An attempt is made to introduce the Jewish Literature in America and Dalit Literature in India.

2.5 Jewish Literature in America

The literature of the Jewish minority is deeply concerned with the Jewish roots in its entire dimension. As compared to the Dalit literature, the Jewish authors have attempted to present the racial problems of the Jews after the World War II. Today, the Jewish writers seem to have taken pride in defining the Jewish people with its cultural roots. In fact, after World War II, the Jewish fiction came under the tidal wave of the Jewishness and many Jewish authors came
forward to depict the pain and agony of their society. This was, however, the emerging phase of Jewish experience of American literature. Most of the Jewish writers have attempted to present the real picture of the Jews with the help of their fictional works. The postwar Jewish novelist, however in search of Jewishness, has emancipated himself from the fear and shame of being a Jew. Compared to Dalit literature, the Jewish literature has also tried to focus on the quest of the Jews. In the modern age, Philip Roth, Saul Bellow and Bernard Malamud are the major writers who deal with the new Jews in American fiction. These novelists are mainly concerned with the social problems and dehumanization of the Jews. They focus on the complexities of assimilation, the Jewish heritage, and the problem of identity.

Philip Roth’s first collection of a novella and five stories entitled *Good bye Columbus* (1960) gives an artistic expression to Roth’s Jewish sensibility and his sense of traditional Jewish values. His fiction illuminates the fading memory of what it meant to be a Jew, his sufferings and moral potential. Roth is not emotional and spiritual. His characters do not stand on the ground of emotionalism and illusions. They accept realities.

Saul Bellow is the most important Jewish novelist writing today. His fiction projects images of alienated Jews. His protagonists are victims of the American society. America is a barren land where Bellow has attempted to create the social picture with the help of his fiction. Bernard Malamud is one of the important novelists who is deeply involved with the Jewishness of the American Jews. He has created
the real picture of the American society and has tried to depict the true picture of humanity and civilization in his novels. Malamud’s fiction postulates two important paradigms: one, Jews suffer from the law in America; and two, the Jews are exploited in the corporate world. These two paradigms find their eloquent expression in all his novels, but *The Assistant* (1957) and *The Fixer* (1916) are important from the viewpoints of myths as well as Judaism. Both these novels project the image of the Jew as a man of suffering.

The suffering of the Jews is the main theme of his novels. His other fictional works too such as *The Magic Barrel* (1958), *Idiots First* (1963), and *The Tenants* (1971) portray and project archetypal images of the Jews and reaffirm his emotional involvement. Jewish-American literature has its essential place in American literature. The 1890’s was a dark decade for many Jews. After the outbreak of World War I, more than two million Jews came to America. They were poor and came from Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania and other parts of the Eastern Europe.

The origin of Jewish-American literature lies in the immigrant culture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The early Jewish-American novelists like Abraham Chan (1860-1951), Michael Gold, and Henry Roth (1906-1985) and others belong to the Jewish-American writers. Abraham Chan (1860-1951) one of the great novelists has written about the Jewish society and its struggle in America. His well-known novel *The Rise of David Levinsky* (1917) is about the clash between the traditional Jewish ethics and American materialism. Michael Gold, one of the prominent writers in the
Jewish-American Literature, has written a novel like *Jews Without Money* (1913). It is about the era of depression. He has explained economic misfortunes and prevalent anti-Semitism in the lives of the Jews. Henry Roth (1906-1985) in his novel *Call It Sleep* (1934) has introduced ‘David Schearl’ as the chief character. Anzia Yezierska (1885) has written *The Bread Givers* (1925). Sara Smolinsky is a character in this novel and a representative of the Jewish Society. After the World War II, some authors acquired place in the Jewish-American literature, such as Bernard Malamud, Saul Bellow, Elie Wiesel, Chaim Potak, Isaac Bashevis, Norman Mailer, J.D. Salinger, Arthur Miller, Norman Podhurtz, Mark Harris and others.

Bernard Malamud (1914-1986) is preeminent among the Jewish-American writers who have written *The Assistance* (1957). It depicts the social and economic problems of the Jews. Saul Bellow (1915-2005), the winner of the Nobel Prize for literature (1976) is one of the representatives of Jewish society. While serving with merchant marine, Bellow wrote his first novel *Dangling Man* (1944). It is about the intellectual and spiritual vacillation of a young man waiting to be drafted. His other novels are *The Victim* (1947), *The Adventure of Augie March* (1953), *Herzog* (1964), *Mr. Sammler’s Planet* and *Humboldt’s Gifts* (1975); and *The Bellarosa Connection* (1989). Elie Wiesel (1928) is one of the writers who was awarded the Nobel Prize for peace in 1986. His novels are based on his own experiences and personal events and life, the destruction of the Jews during the World War II. He wrote the novels like *And the World Remained Silent* (1956), *The Jews of Silence* (1966), *The Testament* (1981), etc. The
central themes of his fictions are men and their struggle against evil, man’s inhumanity towards man and silence versus verboseness. Chaim Potok (1929-2002) is another well-known author of Jewish Orthodox Judaism in the United States. The story of this novel is about the friendship between the son of Hasidic Rabbi and a more secular molded Jewish in Brooklyn. My name is Asher Lev is the next novel written by Chaim Potok. It is story of a young artist and his conflict with the tradition of his family and community. His other novels are In the Beginning (1915), The Book of Lights (1981), Davita’s Harp (1985), I Am the Clay (1992), The Tree of Here (1993) and The Sky of Now (1995).

Norman Mailer (1923-2007) is one of the scholars and writers in Jewish-American literature. At the age of nine, he composed 250 pages science fiction story called Invention from Mars. His First novel The Naked and the Dead (1948) is about the horror of battlefield carnage. His well known novels are Barbary Shore (1955), The Deer Park (1955), Advertisement for Myself (1959), and An American Dream (1965). These novels deal with the themes of politics, sex and violence. J. D. Salinger (1919) is one of the Jewish American writers. He wrote thirty-five short stories. His well-known short stories are A perfect Day for Benana Fish (1948). It is a tale of suicide in a despairing war. His second story is For Esm? With Love and Squalor (1950), The Catcher in the Rye with Nine Stories (1953). These stories represent the best of his works. Arthur Miller is one of the playwrights in the Jewish-American literature. His The Death of a Salesman (1949) is the well-known play about the tragic life of a salesman.
Modern Jewish American novelists have given way to the rediscovery of Jewish traditions and have made conscious efforts to depict the subtleties of Jewish culture and its long religious heritage in the contemporary novel. At the forefront of this movement are Cynthia Ozick, and Nobel laureate Isaac Bashevis Singer. Both of these have been maintaining the Jewish tradition from the beginning of their writing careers.

The themes of their novels are holocaust and the creation and continued existence of the state of Israel. The recent authors like Paul Auster, Michael Chabon, Jonathan Safran and Art Spiegelman have written about the problems of Jews in America. Their subjects are holocaust and the trends of both ongoing assimilation and cultural rediscovery in Jewish-American Literature. The modern Jewish-American novels often contain Jewish characters. The writers have written about the issues and themes of importance to the Jewish American Society, such as assimilation and Zionism in Israel along with the recent phenomenon known as ‘Anti-Semitism’. After the World War II, America became a dominant country in the world. A number of changes occurred in the country particularly in the fields of education, society, politics, and economics. Americans tried to discover new ways to improve their lifestyle. In the World War II, Hitler and his followers attempted to destroy the Jewish race and massacred a number of Jews in Germany and in others parts of the world.

They were influenced by the Nazis. In American literature, a number of writers attempted to describe the sufferings and the worst
conditions of Jews during the World War II, but in British literature, the writers like Shakespeare exposed the cunning, inhuman, money-minded, and business-oriented Jewish people in his play, *The Merchant of Venice*, through the character named Shylock. Shylock is a Jew, one of the representatives of Jewish society. Saul Bellow, one of the prominent Jewish writers expresses his views about Shakespeare’s character Shylock. Venkanteshwarlu D. (1993) had an interview with Saul Bellow, which runs as follows:

*D.V.: How can you be so sure?*

*S.B.: Because he has certain nobility in his characters.*

*D.V.: That’s Shakespeare’s dramatic instinct I think he wanted to make Shylock more human than a mere stereotype, and therefore, more villainous, as I see it.*

*S.B.: I think he wanted to make Shylock anything. I think he felt to give Shylock certain more quibles certain words for Shylock to characterize Shylock. It wasn’t just mechanical arrangement.* (p.22)

At the end of the twentieth century, most of the American writers used suffering and harassment of human beings as a subject for their fictions. The writers including Saul Bellow, Richard Sterne, Noam Chomsky, Elie Wiessel, Marshall Sklare, David Parkin, John Updike, Philip Roth, Bernard Malamud and Norman Mailer have made a significant contribution to the Jewish literature focusing on miseries, deplorable conditions and sufferings. After the World War II, Jewish
people developed their social, economic and cultural status in a tremendous way. Some sociologists, writers, and researchers studied the causes of their progress within a short period.

The writers such as Philip Roth, Bernard Malmaud, Saul Bellow, Richard Sterne and others have tried to show the moral, ethical, and spiritual powers of the Jewish characters. Some writers have created a new vision in their novels. They have applied a number of theories to the Jewish society to understand the socio-cultural background. In American Literature, William Faulkner, Saul Bellow, Philip Roth and Henry James have added something new to the literature to focus on different types of qualities of the Jewish society.

Philip Roth has given a new dimension and new vision to the Jewish-American literature. In the twentieth century, industrial development influenced American Society and slum area came into existence in cities and various types of problems cropped up in metropolitan cities. The Jews accepted new changes and modified their lifestyles. They rejected old traditions, social customs and the old sources of earnings. They are more interested in business than the jobs. They found their own business centers like local candy stores, grocery stores, jewelry stores, dress shops, furniture shops, service stations and others. Some Jews opted for self-employment such as plumbers, electricians, painters, etc. Such changes in professions of the Jews are found in The Plot Against America. Roth has also described educational development of the Jews. Among them, some became doctors, lawyers, and successful merchants and played important roles in American Society. All these incidents and events of the Jewish society
have been mentioned in the novels of Saul Bellow, Malamud and others. The Cold War was both political and emotional phenomenon and the world was divided into two parts as a consequence. One was the West Free World with America, as its unquestionable leader protecting military power and second was the East USSR, its allies and the democracies of Eastern Europe. All these events are reflected in American literature.

Some writers have used these events as a prominent subject in their novels. In the 60’s, the phase of cold war came to an end, but the existence of serious social problems like boycotts and marches under the leadership of Martin Luther King Jr. rose in America. The prominent movements like ‘Urban Movement’ and ‘Women’s Rights Movement’ flourished in the same period. All these movements influenced the American society and literature. Some political events are reflected in the Jewish-American literature like the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963, of Maloon in 1965, Martin Luther King Jr. in 1967 and Robert Kennedy in 1968.

Roth uses many political references in his novels to describe American politics such as the election of President, Charles A. Lindbergh’s policy about World War II, Roosevelt’s political reference etc. The Democratic Party nominated Lindbergh for the President’s election and other parties gave preference to Roosevelt. After the election, Roth introduced the imaginary victory of Lindbergh and his policies against the Jewish society. At the same time, a number of changes took place in the religion such as belief that it was America’s special and divine claim to be God’s country and the
nation with the soul of Church. It affected the Christian and Jewish theologies. The writers like Norman Mailer, J.D Salinger, and Philip Roth have used these changes and beliefs in their novels to bring out the social and moral changes in America. In America, New York City is the ideal place of education for the Jewish writers because atmosphere in this city motivates the scholars and upcoming aspirants. They emerged from the ghettos of Brooklyn, the Bronx, New York and so on. The Jewish writers have highlighted the immigrants, their historical aspects and cultures.

2.6 Emergence of Dalit Literature in India

The word ‘caste’ is derived from Spanish and Portuguese word ‘casta’ which means lineage or race. The word ‘casta’ comes from the Latin word ‘castus’ which means ‘pure’. In India, this word was used by Portuguese in the middle of the fifteenth century. The old spelling of this word is ‘casta raça.’ As the time changed, the spelling of the word also changed and it became ‘caste’. The great scientist Charles Darwin has also used the word ‘caste’ to classify insects. In his book ‘The Origin of Species’ Darwin classifies the insects (p.13). Nesfield, one of the social observers and critics, defines ‘caste’ in Bheemaiah (2005) as:

“Caste as a class of the community which disowns any connection with any other class and can neither intermarry nor eat nor drink with any but persons of their own community.”

(p.43)
The above statement expresses the views about the word ‘caste’ and its meaning in the society. Another well-known critic H. Risley also presents his views about the ‘caste’ in Bheemaiah (2005) as:

“Caste as a collection of families or group of families bearing a common name which usually denotes or is associated with specific occupation, claiming common descent from a mythical ancestor, human or divine, professing to follow the same professional callings and are regarded by those who are competent to give an opinion as forming a single homogeneous community.” (p.43)

Risley rightly mentions the concepts of ‘caste’ and its meaning. The root of Dalit literature goes back to the great social reformer and founding father of modern India, Jyotiba Phule (1828-1890) and Dr. Bheemrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891-1956). It is due to their efforts, the issues of Dalit came on the national and international platform. Later on, Mahatma Gandhi took up to the issues of Dalits. Dr. Ambedkar’s writings and provoking thoughts made Dalit community aware of their dehumanizing status in the Indian society. With education, they started thinking over their plight as an insult, injured and disrespected human beings. The term ‘Dalit Literature’ came into use in 1958 when the first conference of Maharashtra Dalit Sahitya Sangh was held. Prior to this conference, writers such as Annabhau Sathe (1920-1969) and Kusuma Dharmanna (1884-1946) contributed to Dalit literature. Annabhau Sathe has written thirty-five novels. His famous novel *Fakira* (1959) is about the sufferings of the poor and the oppressed. The characters in the novel attempt to fight against the capitalistic,
traditional and rigid old structure of the society. Kusuma Dharmanna is a South Indian Dalit writer who has written *Makoddee Nalladorathanam* (1921), which touches the heart of a Dalit and awakens him/her. *Harijona Shatakmu* (1933) is about the evil of the caste system, which humiliates and treats Dalit people no better than animal. The origin of Dalit Literature is deeply rooted in the realities of life, and hence, it plays a very important role in the making of life stories. It helps in building up the cultured society.

Indian literature, from nineteenth century, deals with reflection of sorrow and happiness of the middle class people where Dalit people were completely excluded. As Dalit community, they received inferior treatment from the upper class/caste people.

We find Dalit people or reflection of their problems in different novels and poems written by Dalit and non-Dalit writers. In 1950, the Women’s Liberation Movement was germinated. It took nearly two decades for Indian Women’s Movement to gather momentum. Though it is a modern western concept, it has different labels such as liberal, radical, environmental, Marxist and Socialist. In 1970, Dalit movement as a new social movement expressed itself through radical literature and action, but even this upsurge did not give vent to the mute voices of Dalit men and women in India. They did not figure anywhere. If we trace the background of Dalit literature, we find that in the pre-independence period, February 15, 1885 an eleven-year old girl student, Mukta Salve wrote an essay entitled *Dharma*. It is about the family, and social life of untouchables and nothing but pains, sufferings and agonies. She said that the Dalits were classless people
and due to utter poverty, their life was reduced to non-entities. She argues to revolt and protest against the established society, which rejects the basic human rights, equal status and human dignity in the society. On August 2, 1936, Ms. J. S. More, inspired by the Buddhist philosophy and Ambedkarian thoughts, wrote a short story entitled *Dharmanterprem* in the newsletter ‘Nirbhid’. On August 23, 1936, Ms. Anu Indurkar wrote a poem *Dharmantar Kaa Karave?* After a period of more than a century, Dalit women awoke and started writing memoirs, autobiographies, novels and dramas.

Dalit Literature has changed the face of Marathi literature and inspired similar literary movements in Gujarat, Karnataka and other states of India. In Maharashtra, there has been a steady stream of pioneering autobiographies from Mahar, Mang, Neo-Buddhist, Chambhars, de-notified tribes and other Dalits as the legacy of Mahatma Phule, Savitribai Phule and Ambedkarian movement. It naturally paves way to rebellious expressions first manifested in Maharashtra. In the 1960’s, Baburao Bagul, Bandu Madhav and Shankarrao Kharat were well known Dalit writers. As a renowned writer Baburao Bagul very aptly said: “Dalit literature not merely a literature written by Mahar or Buddhist people. Dalithood has universalized context. Dalit literature has not only economic but social foundation too. It is nothing but an expression of social awareness.” He was the saint in action because he not only preached but also practised. He sacrificed his life by the staying in Dalit society for their liberation. He liberated these people through social movements. Shantabai Kamble’s *Mazya Jalmachi*
Chittarkatha (1985) (The Picturesque Story of My Life) is the first Dalit woman autobiography.

The sacrifices made by Dr. Ambedkar for the sake of his own community paid rich dividends. He was a fine example of liberation and self-realization. He gave the knowledge that all are born equal and have the right of equality and it is the duty of every individual to practice this. He inculcated the revolutionary thoughts in the minds of the Dalits and the dark lives of the Dalits were filled with bright sunshine by his revolutionary thoughts. The impact of Dr. Ambedkar’s philosophy is a common characteristic feature of the Dalit literature.

Baburao Bagul is one of the well known Dalit writers who wrote about suffering, pain, and burning issues of the downtrodden. His short story Jenvah Mi Jaat Chorli Hoti (When I Robbed a Caste) is one of the famous collections of short stories. His other two novels Aghori (1980) and Kondi (2000) narrate the lives of downtrodden and their struggles in the society. Shankarrao Kharat is one of the prominent Dalit writers in the Indian English literature. His Footpath Number - 1 (1980) is very famous novel in which he depicts the anti-hero from Dalit society. His other novels such as Hatbhatti (1970), Gavacha Tinpol Guruji (1971) and Jhopadpatti (1973) all depict the poor, miserable and inferior status of the Dalit people in the Indian society. There are very few writers from other castes or religions who too wrote about the downtrodden and their sufferings. Among them Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and Arundhati Roy play significant roles to project the problems of the, poor and the untouchables. Mulk Raj
Anand’s well known novels such as Untouchable (1935) and Coolie (1936) are fine examples of depiction of the miseries of the downtrodden. He narrates the sufferings and pains of the weaker class and Dalit people in his novels. Raja Rao, in his novel Kanthapura (1935), explains the problems of the weaker and Dalit people through the characters.

The novelist Omprakash Valmiki’s Joothan A Dalit’s Life (1997) is about the caste and class struggle of the hero to find his identity in the society. Dalit literature acquired prominent place in the Indian English literature due to a few eminent writers like Arundhati Roy and Omprakash Valmiki. The God of Small Things (1997) is one of the popular novels in which Arundhati Roy describes the exploitation of Dalit labours by the owners of stone mines. Dr. Surendra Barlingay, the Chairman of Sahitya Mandal, writes about the Dalit society. In his short story Mepan Maze deals with the sexual harassment and suffering of a Dalit woman. In Durban Conference on Racial Discrimination recently organized (by NRI) Dalit International Conference has created awareness among the international community on the Dalit issues. Shantabai Kale’s well-known novel Against All Odds (1994) depicts the real social picture of Dalit people in the Indian society. The poet Namdeo Dhasal depicts the life of Dalits, the world that is totally strange, unfamiliar to the established literary circle and people. The Dalits always receive ill-treatment. Arjun Dangle gives a harrowing picture of their wretchedness in his Poisoned Bread (1992). Dalit Literature represents their agonies and searches for their identities. It is the literature of protest and social
commitment. It is the saga of suffering and pains and helpless humiliations. The rage and roar of Dalit writing is found in their writing as well as their own experiences of indignities and deprivation suffered by the downtrodden and underprivileged classes in Hindu society. Their experiences in their writings are not complete but fragment of total reality.


The woman writers have also enriched the Dalit woman’s perspective in Dalit literature. Baby Kamble’s *The Prison We Broke* (2008) is the first novel, which is written by a Dalit woman. It deals with two major problems of a Dalit woman. First problem is the oppression and exploitation by the upper class and the second problem is the discrimination and inferior treatment given to them in the patriarchal society.

Marathi Dalit women autobiographies enable us to accept the downtrodden and the oppressed as perfect sensitive human beings and not just helpless victims. The women writers such as Shantabai Dani, BABYTAI KAMBLE and Shantabai Kamble played an important role to enhance the quality of Dalit literature. Their writings contain great thoughts on education and Dr. Ambedkar’s teachings, which inspire
Dalit movement and ultimately the community. The Dalit women contributed a lot to Dalit literature. Venutai Bhatkar, Rangubai Shubakhar are famous poets and singers. Janabai Chaudhari, Tulsibai Bansode, Muktabai Sarrgore, Kausalya Baisantri, Meenakshi Moon, Vimal Thorat, Sulekha Kumbhare, Meera Kishore, Kusum Meghwal, and Rajani, etc. are writers and social reformers. The women writers such as Kumud Pawade, Jyoti Lanjewar, Urmila Pawar, Heera Bansode, Sugandha Shende, Surekha Bhagat, Asha Thorat, Aruna Lokhande, Susheela Moon and Meena Gajbhiya are some of them from Maharashtra who have provided useful insights on the problems of Dalit identity. Numerous writers started expressing social evils through various poems, stories, autobiographies and novels.

The autobiography and novels give facts and figures and provide useful insights on the search of Dalit identity. Through their writings, these writers speak not as individuals, but the universality of the society and literature. It gives society’s attitude towards poverty, discrimination and power politics. Most of the novels depict the strength to fight against the injustice imposed on them by the established social structure. The roots of the Dalit literature are based on the philosophy and ideology of Dr. Ambedkar. The main purpose of the Dalit autobiographies is self-exploration, self-attainment and self-realization.
2.7 Conclusion

The present chapter is devoted to the analysis of the definitions of ‘Comparative Literature’ given by the scholars. It also throws light on the journey of comparative literature from the 18th century to the present day in detail. Then, the chapter emphasizes the role of comparative study. Here, the views of many scholars have been discussed thoroughly. It also includes the nature of Jewish Literature in America since Philip Roth deals with the vital issues of the Jews in his novel *The Plot Against America*. Towards the end of the chapter, an attempt is made to discuss the emergence of the Dalit Literature in India as it is an important aspect of Mulk Raj Anand’s novel *Untouchable*. 