Chapter-V

5.0 Conclusions

Since untouchability remains as part of the caste system it cannot be reduce unless caste system is destroyed. Dr. Ambedkar an excellent leader of the outcastes and who himself experienced the untouchability by the upper caste Hindus during his time once said.

“There will be outcastes (untouchables) as long as there are castes and nothing can emancipate the outcastes except the destruction of the caste system.”

The caste system cannot be destroyed in isolation because it has roots in the system of economic construction. It forms as a basic part of the Indian production system in the predominantly rural India. So an approach which embrace and absorb both the dimensions of class and caste of the Indian society must be changed. And only a movement which takes into concern both class and caste aspects of the Indian socio economic structure and which can mobilize the oppressed classes including the oppressed castes could have the potential to smash the inhuman practice of Untouchability. *Dalit* writings are converging towards the fact that they are form of resistance literature and narratives of pain and bind them together into an expected community which mainstream group calls it a marginalized group of people. All writings have launched their literary careers by first narrating their life-story i.e. making autobiography an institutional space through which they can first enter the literary public sphere. It has given these writers a way of uniting with a larger particular community to create a powerful group which can be used to fight against oppression and discrimination. Their narratives are based on the idea of the communal identity. These autobiographies have been used as a means of political assertion. As a way of gaining power and support in a group struggle against similarly experienced oppression. Dalit literature has its roots in the lives of the people who are downtrodden. The characters of its literary pieces work as manual laborers cleaning streets, toilets, and sewers.
The Outcaste is tangible autobiography by Dr. Sharankumar Limbale. It has depicted that Limbale has emerged as a revolutionary and awakening intellectual. It can be remarked that Limbale has disproved the authenticity of the existing caste system. His autobiography points out Savarnas are enemies of oppressed. Through his continuous struggle against all discriminatory forces however he has set an example of overcoming evil trends in the society. Author has disapproved the system and identified it as two faced and accountable. Therefore he has dared to go against it even if it is extremely powerful and deeply fixed. However the structure of the caste system is quite rigid and has yet to be dismantled forever for the equal social order and wellbeing of all the people in society. He has marked a position as an aware and radical Dalit in the history of the revolutionary transformation of the caste system by breaking the principles of the caste system.

The autobiography writers clearly show that how their lives are completely controlled by the society around them. There is an absence of self pity. It is his non subjective experience. It is the financial struggle of material. Dalit is a protest literature against all forms of exploitation based on class, race and caste or occupation. However, in several acts of incredible strength and bravery, he did not allow these socially constructed walls to stop him from getting an education and eventually publishing his story. He came to realize the depth of division caused by the conflict between Hindus and Muslims and chose a separate path for him in what he considered to be the warm embrace of Buddhism.

The present study of autobiographies discusses the past, personality, clash and awareness in a protesting voice. There is a sense in which all of them also attempt reconciliation with the facts that they may have to co-exist with the family and society at large. Although it is not only gender consciousness that dominates women’s autobiographies but women writers be different from men writers in their discussion of sex and sexuality. While women writers complicated only cautiously on their affairs and sexual abuses. Urmila Pawar and Shantabai Kamble have presented in details the problems of caste bias.
Mainstream majority people of society eliminate this marginalized group. In order to glorify certain sections and put them on a higher pedestal the dominant strata of society have portrayed and treated the outcaste as sub-human. Pawar has given a true picture of the caste and gender differences. She has narrated in her autobiography *The Weave of My Life* that her husband Harish Chandra’s example when he was posted at Ratnagiri. Harishchandra reacted very sharply for the caste discrimination due to low caste remarked against him and left the place without food. Urmila Pawar’s ‘Aaydan’, *The Weave of My Life* is marked with honesty of its narration told with a sense of irony and humor. Urmila looks at herself as a child, daughter, wife and mother with detachment as she does at Harishchandra as a husband. Weaving happens to be the central metaphor of the present memoir weaving of bamboo baskets the main profession of the protagonist’s mother indicts their low caste as well as their awful economic poverty as Urmila writes about the title of her memoir.

“My mother used to weave Aaydan. I find that her act of weaving and my act of writing are originally similar actions. The weave is similar. It is the weave of suffering and agony that link us.”

In her frank and intimate Memoir Pawar not only shares her tireless efforts to surmount hideous personal tragedy but also conveys the excitement of an awakening consciousness during a time of profound political and social change.

Dr. Narendra Jadhav's life is a story of struggle and progress. *Untouchables: My Family’s Triumphant Journey out of the Caste System in Modern India* is an edition by Dr. Narendra Jadhav from his own Marathi autobiography *Amcha Bap Aani Amhi* (Our Father and Us). At one level it is an honor from a son to his father and on the other hand it is the story of the Dalits throughout three generations. The story begins in the 1930s when Damu the protagonist of the story is constantly addressed as *Mahar* in his ancestral village in Western Maharashtra where caste determined one’s destiny.
Influenced by Dr. Ambedkar’s teachings Damu stands against the Police and the caste system. The book traces the extraordinary voyage of Damu from a small village at Ozar in Maharashtra to the city of Mumbai to escape harassment. It was a journey that brought back his self-esteem and touchability. In the city he earns respect in various jobs despite being a low caste and an illiterate. His rigid spirit inspired his wife who realized that their emancipation could be possible only through the pursuit of academic excellence. This is also the story of Sonabhai the author’s mother. Her innocence as youthful bride and horrified unwillingness to give up her trusted gods for the unknown Buddha are example of an ordinary Dalit woman’s experiences. In the book Sonu’s story alternates with Damu’s. At the other end of Damu's story is his sixteen year-old granddaughter's epilogue. Born in Bloomington Indiana she writes with confidence “Now I know who I am. I am just Apoorva not tied down by race, religion or caste.”[Ibid] Yet one among them, the educationist, economist and policy maker Narendra Jadhav has himself authored an autobiography, *Aamcha Baap Aan Amhi*. As the title indicates it tells the story of how he and his siblings grew up under the influence of Ambedkarite father Damodar Runjaji Jadhav. In this autobiography Jadhav drew on his father’s meticulous diary notes about the events of his life keeping his father’s dialect intact. Ten years later he published a prolonged description of the book in English incorporating into it stories related by his mother. This version ends with an interesting appendix written by his 16 year old daughter Apoorva.

Autobiography examines the Dalit awakening lead by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Ambedkar’s call for the Dalits to “Educate, Unite and Agitate” as a recurrent theme in the book. This is the first book to portray Ambedkar as a character in its story. There is a long note at the end of the book on untouchability the caste system and Dr. Ambedkar. Dr. Jadhav has retained many Marathi words in the text the essence of the story intact. Individual anecdotes keep the book live and easily readable. The book ends with a note of self realization in modern India dignity rests in the minds and hearts of people and those old prejudices do not really matter. Thus it gives an interpretation of caste which is amazing.
Daya Pawar’s autobiography Baluta the next landmark in Dalit literature was published in 1978 hitting upper caste critics and readers. Pawar’s graphic description of life in the Maharwada a place outside villages reserved for Dalits shocked readers. Baluta draws upon the quintessential symbol of the Dalit As humiliation having to beg for leftover food as baluta or his traditional village share as remuneration for performing stigmatized labor. Baluta inaugurated a stream of explosive autobiographical narratives. Dalits who had moved up the economic ladder into the middle class and who were ashamed of their past and present being made public were loud in their criticisms of Baluta. This class of Dalits has come to be known as Dalit Brahmin.

Dalit people and women also started to articulate themselves in various literary forms. Marathi Dalit literature has the confirmation of such type of writings but we have to wait up to 1980s to see the autobiographical work by these women. Women from Maharashtra are expressing various issues in the autobiographical form. Some exceptional life experiences on the part of the women have attracted the attention towards their autobiographies. Otherwise women’s autobiographies have common aspects which revolve around their domestic life. The noteworthy fact is that though the domestic life is the major aspect of their writing. The autobiographies of the main stream women are different than the Dalit women’s autobiographies. The basic reason is that the conversation in which they lived was different. It affected their literary composition. The rift of life pattern is visible in the autobiographies. The grounds for life struggle its philosophy and their perspective for life are totally different.

Our traditions have many ethnicity exploitations superstitions and detachment from education for the downtrodden. Buddhism has the potentials to give them recognition as human beings and rights of equality along with education.

Shantabai Kamble draws a picture of the practice of untouchability in the sacred temple of education where Dalit children were forced to sit outside the class-room and the teacher strictly keeping himself away from their touch. She writes,
“Patil Master was the teacher of Standard III. He forced us to sit outside the classroom. He did not let us touch either to him or the other upper caste students. He used to punish us from a safe distance with a cane. While checking our homework he used to make us put our slates on the floor and after checking he put them down. Only then we were allowed to take them back. He did not like to be touched by us.”

Shantabai Kamble’s *Majya Jalmachi Chittakatha, “The Kaleidoscopic Story of My Life”* is the first work in Dalit Literature which is written by a woman. It is the book deals with the two major problems of the society. Firstly the oppression and exploitation of the Dalit by the upper class secondly the discrimination towards women in a patriarchal society. Daya Pawar's *Baluta* the first Dalit autobiography covered the way for writers to share their pain and agony. Urmila Pawar's *The Weave of My Life: A Dalit Woman's Memoirs* belongs to the genre of autobiography which is presented the major issues of class, caste, and gender in the Indian circumstance. Apart from recording a woman's discovery of selfhood and assertion of identity it also offers a background picture of the Indian especially *Maharashtrian* culture including inter-personal and commanding relations, clashes, and tolerances. The two autobiographies Shantabai Kamble’s *Majya Jalmachi Chittarkatha* and Urmila Pawar’s *The Weave of My Life* speak not of a single person but the struggles of the entire society. Dalits women are subjected to tremendous forms of social, economic, physical and mental torture and exploitations. Dalit women are victims of caste based atrocities. They are raped when working in the fields. They are casually stripped and molested and even invite death if they dare to quench their thirst from a common well. The writings of Dalits women writers are based on the lives experiences and consciousness. Dalit women writer portray their outburst for justice. Their life is quite similar to their upper caste equivalent but the fact is that Dalit women have been victims of patriarchal society for ages and still have very little right over human rights. Their attempt to declare their rights are often met with strong resistance from
the higher castes resulting in inhuman torture rapes, massacres, and other atrocities. The images of reality come out the level of violence through Dalit autobiographies. The dalit autobiography stands as privileged ends where processes of self-investigation, examining awareness, assertion and identification display a quest of self.

In Dalit autobiographies the writers have expressed their positive attitudes towards work which helped them to conquer their enemy and achieve their own identity. Dalits are being exploited physically, mentally and socially by the Hindus. Naturally they refuse to accept their oppression. But it is not so powerfully reflected in Dalit autobiography as in the other forms of Dalit literature. Majya Jalmachi Chittarkatha in which the narrator write about the conflict between Dalits and Savarnas. But the nature of this conflict does not take the form of direct physical violence. The resistance in Dalit autobiography appears in the form of contradiction. These writers passionately deny all the traditions and taboos.

All these common features that are found in the autobiographies of the suppressed people irrespective of their caste, class, gender, race, region and religion have resulted from the common aspect of inhuman treatment they received from the hands of their oppressors. It is seen that all over the world and in all the ages the established groups have almost habitually suppressed the weaker sections and these oppressed groups have revolted against their oppressors in one way or the other literature being one means of such a revolt. Though these autobiographies share some of the features of the genre of mainstream autobiography they differ from it with respect to the purpose of writing it and the content which is specifically related to the sufferings in the lives of oppressed people.
References:

1. Ambedkar, B. R. Writings and Speeches, ed. Vasant Moon, vol. 5 and 12 (Bombay: Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, 1979)
