REREADING DENIED CITIZENSHIP: A COMPARISON OF DALIT AND AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL LITERATURES

Ph.D. THESIS

by

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INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ROORKEE
ROORKEE-247 667 (INDIA)
JUNE, 2017

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A THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree

of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

ENGLISH

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ROORKEE

CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I hereby certify that the work which is being presented in the thesis entitled **"REREADING DENIED CITIZENSHIP: A COMPARISON OF DALIT AND AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL LITERATURES"** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy and submitted in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee, is an authentic record of my own work carried out during a period from July, 2013 to June, 2017 under the supervision of Dr. Smita Jha, Associate Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Roorkee.

The matter presented in the thesis has not been submitted by me for the award of any other degree of this or any other Institute.

(RIYA MUKHERJEE)

This is to certify that the above statement made by the candidate is correct to the best of my knowledge.

(Smita Jha)
Supervisor

Dated: _____

ABSTRACT

The present study attempts to understand how the dalit autobiographers, Baby Kamble and Aravind Malagatti in their respective works, *The Prisons we Broke* and *Government Brahmana*, and the aboriginal autobiographers, Alice Nannup and Gordon Briscoe in their respective works, *When the Pelican Laughed* and *Racial Folly,* imagine the manner in which full citizenship had been and continues to be denied to the dalits and aboriginals. Using the time frame of the discursive grant of citizenship as a point of reference, the study looks into the discursive denial of citizenship which implies a lack of discourses pertaining to or granting of equal citizenship status, and the performative denial which talks of the denial of participative citizenship even when the discursive rights have been granted to the dalits. While doing so, the study attempts a comparative study of the literatures of the two communities in their projection of the state of a continuous denial of citizenship that the dalits and aboriginals have to face.

The study uses the dominant tropes of the individual autobiographies as a background to unfurl the denial of citizenship, both in the discursive and the performative form, using the parameters of equal citizenship as laid down by Marshall. In doing so, the study in no way deviates from the individualistic struggle of either the dalits or aboriginals, and does not conflate the boundaries of their struggle. The comparison then opens up unexpected avenues of political thought and praxis, which the chapters of the thesis elucidate upon and illuminate. The study then depicts citizenship as a centre of political activities, whose very existence becomes distraught when it has to be extended to the dalits in India and aboriginals in Australia. The narratives of equal citizenship, followed by the frequent assertions of homogeneous treatment to all irrespective of internal differences by the state machinery goes on to reveal how the caste-based differences in India and racial differences in Australia have destabilised the category of citizenship. The narrative frame of citizenship is then used to underlay the idea of the political subjectivity of citizenship, and using it to understand about the membership of a citizenry or the extent to which this political subjectivity is realized by the dalits and the aboriginals through the literary counterpublic sphere. However, the study while talking about the changing forms of denial of citizenship would refrain from forming a genealogy of the denial of citizenship meted to the dalits and the aboriginals, but would instead look at the way the dalit and aboriginal literary studies have reformulated the debates of dalit and aboriginal citizenship at critical historical moments.

The study then questions the liberal legacy of political, civil and social citizenship while raising some important issues: How is the performativity of citizenship foregrounded by the dalits and aboriginals in the literary counterpublic? How does this foregrounding evoke violent retribution from the dominant sections? And does the continued violation of performative citizenship point to the dysfunctionality of the performative citizenship status accorded to the dalits and the aboriginals?

ACKNOWLEGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Smita Jha for her continuous support of my Ph.D study and related research, and for her patience and motivation. Her encouragement helped me in all the time of research and writing of this thesis.

Besides my supervisor, I would like to thank the rest of the members of my Student Research Committee: Prof. S.P.Singh (Head and Chairman), Prof. Rashmi Gaur (Internal Expert), Prof. D.K.Nauriyal (Ex-Chairman), and Dr. Anuj Sharma (External Expert) for their comments and encouragement, and also for the precious insights which incented me to widen my research from various perspectives.

I also acknowledge the support of all the faculty members of the Department of the Humanities and Social Sciences, Prof. Pashupati Jha, Prof. Nagendra Kumar, Dr. Binod Mishra, Dr. Rahul K. Gairola, Dr. A.J.Mishra, Prof. Renu Rastogi, Dr. Pooja Garg, Dr. Subir Sen, Dr. Rachita Gulati, Dr. Falguni Pattnaik, Dr. Ram Manohar Singh, Dr. Pratap Mohanty, and Dr. Deepti Naik. I am also thankful to all the staff members of the department for their help and co-operation at all stages of my research.

My sincere thanks also goes to my husband, Suraj Gunwant, for the stimulating discussions, for the sense of adventure that he imbued in my research work, and for all the support he provided me with in the last four years.

I thank my fellow batchmates and friends Akansha Dwivedi, Richa Khurana, Soujit Das, Sovan Chakraborty, Sukanya Mondal, Vijayraj Kumawat for the discussions that has added quality to my research. I would also like to thank Krishna Pandey, Rachna Arora, Avanish Patel, Swati Sharma, Vikrant Panwar, and Shilpi Tyagi without whose precious support it would not be possible to conduct this research. I also thank all the research scholars and colleagues whose name I might have missed out.

There are no words to communicate my gratitude to my family: my parents, my parents-in-law, and my brother and sister-in law for supporting me spiritually throughout writing this thesis, and my life in general.

I would also like to thank the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), India for providing me with financial assistance in terms of a research fellowship for pursuing my Ph.D at IIT Roorkee. Finally, I would like to acknowledge and express my deepest gratitude to all those who have been of great help and support during my research endeavour.

RIYA MUKHERJEE

CONTENTS

Chapter I

Introduction

The concept of citizenship had its beginning in the Greek thought and practice and was treated as a bequeathed privilege of political liberty distinguishing citizens and non-citizens on clearly defined territories. The concept of citizenship was thus exclusionary, exclusion in the form of "subordination to the non-citizen status" as was the case with slaves, women and children (Delanty *Citizenship in a Global Age* 11). The restricted status limited the social rights and resources of the state to a closed group of people. The construction of citizenship thus entailed exclusion of people. These homogenous city states disappeared and were replaced by the feudal states or the absolutist state in the fifteenth century, which were the precursors of the modern state in terms of its disparate composition with the consolidation of one dominant group at the helm of affairs over other subservient groups. There was also a shift from the duty model of citizenship that prevailed in the Greek era to the right model of citizenship that was to rule the roost in the modern nation-states.

With the advent of the modern state and the civil society, the foundation of the modern concept of citizenship or universalist citizenship was laid. T.H. Marshall defines three types of rights that constitute modern citizenship: the civil, political and social rights. Marshall considered the endowment of social rights as the model of integration for the working class in the British society which was later hailed as the universalist model for granting of identical opportunities to all members of a nation-state worldwide. The concept of universal citizenship adopted social equality as its watchword, where the differences of caste, class and race was absolved. This concept of citizenship can be better defined using Delanty's words as "a constitutionally based relationship between the individual and the state ("Models of Citizenship" 285). However, such a legally encoded definition was highly criticised by sociologists like Yuval-Davis and Werbner who stated that citizenship needed to be viewed as a "more total relationship, inflected by identity, social positioning, cultural assumptions, institutional practices and a sense of belonging" (4). In other words, the difference-blind policies of citizenship came under heavy criticism. This led to a questioning of the valourisation of the concept of the discursive equality of modern citizenship, as performative citizenship or the functionaries of citizenship still lay with a limited group of people.

An explication to the above can be provided using Delanty's words that, citizenship in the modern age "entails membership of a legally constituted political community, which may be called civil society" and not the nation-state at large (Delanty *Citizenship in the Global Age* 4). Fujiwara mentions in this context that, "(t)he issue around membership – who does and who does not belong—is where the politics of citizenship begins" (23). This question of belonging affects the performative rights of citizenship of certain disenfranchised groups as these rights are limited to a closed group, the civil society in this context. And it is in that context that it becomes essential to distinguish between the two forms of citizenship, one which is a formal, legally coded status and the other where it necessitates a participation in the community.

The concept shows a rupture between the rights and duties as against participation and identity. The performative aspect of citizenship has been ignored in the process of discursively upholding the rights model of citizenship, which rules out an active participation in citizenship. Citizenship has so often been considered to be a part of the pre-political and natural rights, that the question of the subaltern (here the dalits and aboriginals) with respect to the functionaries of citizenship has been subsumed into the larger discussions of the state-citizen relationship leaving a huge disparity in the process that the present study seeks to address. Touted as a dry area of study, of interest to only lawyers and students of politics, the concept of citizenship has received much attention in contemporary studies on social justice and well-being of people. The present study, however, intends to extend the scope of citizenship studies by concentrating on the concept of citizenship not just as a realm of political activity but presumes a wider context by looking at the reflection of this concept in literary studies. The following two sections would trace the development of the trajectory of citizenship for both the communities (Australian aboriginals and dalits) from the position of denial to the state of reconciliation, and how the latter has still failed to provide performative equality to the groups in question.

1.1 Aboriginal Citizenship

The concept of citizenship has become a key problematic area in the melting pot called Australia especially with respect to the aboriginals. The question of 'belonging' to a 'nation-state' is challenged by the aberration of the civil, social, political and economic rights of the aboriginal people. Innumerable cases have sprung up where the very basis of aboriginal identity like the rituals and customs have been challenged and even nullified, thus interrogating the notion of

'belonging' to a nation-state. The homogenized narrative of a nation-state is brought under scanner by the depreciative attitude shown to the aboriginal tenets of identity formation. There have been pre-fixed categorisation of the aboriginal communities, stripping them off their mobility, relegating them to the territory of the barbaric natural world, while denying them a reterritorialization, and in the process conferring upon them the status of second-class citizens. The aboriginal fight for citizenship went through three distinct stages.

In the first stage there was a clear differentiation between the aboriginals and the Europeans in their demand for citizenship. Since 1788 itself, the non-British Europeans were deemed worthy of citizenship as they could obtain 'denization' from the governors of each colony, an act that closely resembled the British system of conferring citizenship on aliens. The naturalization laws soon followed stead with the grant of self-government to the colonies. However, the aboriginals who were the original inhabitants of the land and the non-Europeans were excluded from the 'denization' process, and later in 1861 when the naturalization process was introduced they were not deemed worthy of it "showing that the first marker of exclusion was racist" (Davidson 60). The Naturalization Act passed in 1903 by the commonwealth pronounced all people in the colonies as naturalized into the commonwealth, excluding the aboriginals. The problematics of citizenship represented the existing colonial relationship between the settlers and the colonized with the settlers in a privileged position. The first phase can be aptly described using Jeremy Beckett's words as he states, "the Australia that came into existence in 1901 was emphatically a White Australia" (5).

The second phase of the struggle/denial of citizenship can be traced to the period from 1920s to 1940s. In 1920, the *Commonwealth Nationality Act* was passed which remained in force till 1948. The word 'alien' was used in this act for the first time, where alien particularly denoted the aboriginals. This phase fought against the conventional partial wisdom of aboriginal identity that became the basis of denial of justice and equality to the aboriginals. The formation of the commonwealth, however, did not denote the aborigines as citizens as one of the primary characteristics of citizenship, namely, the right to vote was still denied to the aboriginals by most of the states. They were relegated to the position of 'subjects' and denied the right to vote. During the second phase the aborigines were largely kept in institutions under the law of 'protective segregation' with the church and other government institutions playing an important role in it. The way in which these institutions deny/destroy the citizenship rights of the aboriginals can be vividly

described in the words of Beckett that these institutions "had something in common with the Anglo-Celtic inmates of orphanages or asylums for the destitute, inebirates and the insane, who might be confined involuntarily" (Beckett 8).

The fight for aboriginal citizenship, however started in this phase and this fight began with the reasoning that "…Aborigines were very much the same as Whites, except that they were treated more poorly" (Stokes 160). In 1919 the returned Aboriginal servicemen petitioned for 'civic rights'. The shortage of military reinforcements allowed the aboriginal half-castes to be a part of the war, who returned from the war with the expectation of equal treatment and were dismayed and appalled at the condition back home and joined the fight for equal privileges as the whites. The contradiction in the attitude of the commonwealth towards aboriginal citizenship was soon unmasked by the activists as they brought forth the "contradiction that, whereas Aborigines were treated either as a criminal menace to the community or as incapable of looking after themselves, they were still given a vote and allowed to serve in the armed forces" (Stokes 161). However, the power to make aboriginal decisions and legislations were still in the hands of the states constituting the commonwealth and the term 'aboriginal native' became synonymous to exclusion (Peterson and Sanders 8).

The commonwealth had designated the aborigines as 'subjects' without specific references to rights and obligations. It is in response to this apathy showed by the settler whites, in 1925 the Australian Aboriginal Progressive Association (AAPA) was formed and it demanded full citizenship rights along with land for compensation of the wrong done to the aborigines. There were major names associated with the fight for citizenship and William Cooper of Victoria was one of them. In 1936, he formed the Aboriginal League which called for full economic and social rights. Yet these campaigns of the second phase failed to evoke the desired response from the White state. This caused them to celebrate the Australia Day of 26th January 1938 as a 'Day of Mourning'. This dissatisfaction with the white government led the fight for equal citizenship onto the third phase.

The third phase begins post 1940s when the stereotypes of racial inferiority was rejected and a distinctive aboriginal identity was created with the help of ideologies of a pan-aboriginal making. The identity thus constructed was a stark contrast from the identity imposed upon them by the white state. However, this phase of the fight for equal citizenship rights not just focused

upon the unique and homogenized aboriginal identity, but also the regional and local identities. The aboriginals had till then been excluded from the franchise, they were denied the legal rights, their participation in the economy largely deriving from the contribution towards unskilled labour and were also excluded from welfare activities. It was only in 1939 that citizenship was declared as the natural rights of all aborigines. Inspite of naturalization of citizenship, the divide between citizens and non-citizens was clearly demarcated.

In 1944, A.P.Elkin, published a book titled *Citizenship for Aborigines: A National Aboriginal Policy* which while breaking the old stereotypes vouched that the aboriginals were capable of logical thought as the whites, yet stressed on the need of cultural acclimatization of the aboriginals to the performative dictates of a white modernity. Elkin suggested a full citizenship status for the aboriginals on the basis of "training and moral 'uplift', a movement from nomadism to civilization" (Peterson and Sanders 11) or in other words a citizenship based upon absorption into the white society also known as the policy of assimilation. Assimilation then became "the principal term on which aboriginal people could redeem themselves and become citizens of the settler society" (Peterson and Sanders 5). The policy of assimilation suggested by Elkin was seen as a two-faced entity by the aboriginals, who felt that the emancipatory intentions and cultural arrogance needed to be viewed simultaneously. The greatest drawback of this policy was the lost sight of the 'surviving social order' ---- where "only commonwealth and state citizenship mattered for indigenous Australians, not membership in indigenous societies" (Peterson and Sanders 15).

Though the policy did not fulfill the demand for equal rights and the concept of conceding rights to the aboriginals had been painstakingly slow, yet this phase saw some notable changes in terms of acceding rights to the aboriginals. The third phase witnessed three key changes in the development of aboriginal citizenship ---- the first is the legal recognition of indigenous rights over land, the second was the prohibition of racial discrimination against aborigines and the third was the increasing facilitation of aboriginal self-determination. There was also an increasing demand to shift the responsibility of the aboriginals which was until now entrusted upon the states, to the commonwealth. In 1958 the Federal Council for Aboriginal Advancement was set up which fought for equal citizenship rights as well as proper living conditions for the aboriginals. By the 1960s, the government infused funds into the worsening condition of the aboriginals. In 1964 social welfare legislation was passed which gave a certain number of full blood aboriginal full citizenship rights including right to own property, to manage wages, to control their children, and

to mix with non-aborigines. The 1965 Freedom Ride modelled on the American Civil Rights movement also aimed at fighting the exclusionary references to the aboriginal people in the Commonwealth constitution of 1901.

Though citizenship rights were granted to the aboriginals by the 1948 *Act of Nationality and Citizenship*, the performative aspects of citizenship was till then almost non-existent. The demand for citizenship hence was modified into a demand whereby the performativity of citizenship was supposed to be manifested in a manner in which the general rights of the people of aboriginal descent and aborigines to be a part of the society at large would not be hampered in any way. This would include freedom of participation in public activities or even basic freedom of moving about freely without being victimised by the prejudicial feelings harboured by the white society. These demands were somewhat met by the 1967 referendum as it gave them the same rights as the settler white citizens. The Whitlam labour government in 1972 brought a respite for the aboriginals as the aboriginals were then regarded as a community. With the coming to power of the Whitlam government, the aboriginals were transferred from "colonial subjects situated outside the nation to citizens who are a minority" (Beckett 17). The United Nations Convention on the *Elimination of Racial Discrimination* was adopted by Australia in 1975 when the legislation prohibiting Racial Discrimination was passed as the Racial Discrimination Act. Another landmark addition to the aboriginal citizenship rights was the movement from the philosophy of *terra nullius* to the Aboriginal Land Ordinance, which forbade any unauthorized entry into an aboriginal land, a move that was strengthened with the *Mabo* case of 1992 and went on to be hailed as an important achievement on the part of the aboriginals with respect to the citizenship rights.

The discursive grant of equal citizenship, however, did not manifest itself into a performative status and aboriginals even to this day are denied their right to partake in the functionaries of citizenship equally as the white settlers. Davidson comments on this performative denial of citizenship to the aboriginals as he states after reflecting on the data of Amnesty International,

> It is regrettable, given the contribution to understanding of citizenship,that Aboriginal citizen rights continue to lag so far behind practically. Australia has become a cause for international concern in the 1990s for its failure to meet human rights standards which are the basis for democratic citizenship. (203)

The tussle with the notion of belonging to the national community or to be more specific the Anglo-Celtic community makes the formal labelling of citizenship a problematic affair, and despite the numerous institutions to oversee the grant of equal citizenship rights to the aboriginals "the reality of the denial of equal citizen rights to Aborigines is still great" (Davidson 203).It is this hiatus between the formal granting of citizenship and the practice of it that the study problematizes. The scene of aboriginal citizenship also saw no granting of special rights or distinctive rights to the aboriginals to help them catch up with the lost opportunities of being the part of a common society. The trajectory of dalit citizenship is singularly different from the trajectory of aboriginal citizenship and the following section would chart the trajectory of dalit citizenship in order to understand and trace the pattern of the problematic associated with dalit citizenship as well map the correspondence between the denial of performative or participative citizenship faced by both the dalits and the aboriginals.

1.2 Dalit Citizenship

The problematic of dalit citizenship can be theorized with respect to two positions, one being the colonial period, and the other being the post-colonial period. These two specific time periods that the problematic of dalit citizenship is divided into cannot however be divided into separate silos, but needs to be instead treated as a continuum where the trends of dalit citizenship in the colonial era spills over and influences the shaping up of dalit citizenship in the post-colonial period. And inspite of the problematic of dalit citizenship being a part of the continuum, it is essential to characterize the trend in dalit citizenship that each period witnessed, so as to be able to excavate the changing poses of universality that the hegemonic forces (the upper caste) undertook, in order to foreground the denial of equal citizenship to the dalits.

To speak of the concept of citizenship in colonial India according to sociologist Niraja Gopal Jayal is "conceptually implausible, legally dubious and historically anachronistic" (27). And yet the status of subject-citizen stoked the fire of claims of citizenship among the subjects of the empire. In recent times sociologists like Daniel Gorman in his book *Imperial Citizenship: Empire and the Question of Belonging*, Rieko Karatani in his *Defining British Citizenship: Empire, Commonwealth and Modern Britain* have made current the concept of "imperial citizenship" in order to denote the former subject-citizens of the empire. However, the concept of imperial citizenship in the Indian context can be conveniently replaced by another form of

citizenship that was more direct, and was functional between the colonial government of India and the Indian subjects, that is colonial citizenship. Colonial citizenship did ensure legal subjecthood to all but did not bestow them with the same set of rights throughout the empire and also did not provide with an equal status as the British nationals. A belief in the myth of inclusion, however, made a section of educated and upper caste elites fight for equal citizenship as the British. This led to a set of de facto citizens being identified who can also be termed the putative citizens or protocitizens comprising a fractured franchise that opened the door to a limited number of upper caste people, either by virtue of their wealth or by virtue of their education. Though dalits, like the aboriginals, lived under the subjugation of the British it was the upper castes who acted as principal agents of denial of equal rights to them. This is supported by the fact that the putative bearers of citizenship while struggling for their right to citizenship threw the question of subaltern citizenship in India out of the window so that "subaltern Indians within India were rarely part of the discursive realm of colonial citizenship claims" (Jayal 29). The dalits were subsequently left out of the claims of putative citizenry and there was "a tacit agreement between the colonizer and the colonized on a subtle differentiation between Indian subjects who are citizens or putative citizens, and those that are neither" (Jayal 39). That the discursive denial of citizenship to dalits was not addressed by the upper castes, and the denial had been somehow influenced by the deprecating attitude of the upper castes towards the dalits is clear as Jayal states that the upper castes viewed "the citizenry as comprising little more than their own social class" (Jayal 41). The insignificance of the peasant or dalits in the voicing of public opinions is expressed by Sisirkumar Ghosh, "Sisirkumar Ghosh's explicit championship of middle-class democracy rested on the argument that…the Ryots (peasants) (could not) be entrusted with a voice in public affairs, because of their deep ignorance" (41).

Shailaja Paik in her book *Dalit Women's Education in India: Double Discrimination* also shows how the upper castes have been the main perpetrators of the denial of discursively equal citizenship to the dalits by depicting the more iniquitous attitude of the upper castes towards the dalits as compared to the British. She mentions the Hunter Education Commission and how it "favoured the admitting the lower-caste children to government schools *as a matter of right*" (39) (Emphasis original). The commission also seems to be aware of the fact of "upper castes' opposition to their education" (39) which

> was not generally due to religious sentiments alone, but in a large measure to the unclean habits and the unpolished manners and conversation of the low-caste boys. They are also occasionally due to the desire of the upper-castes to keep the low castes in a state of subjection and servility (Indian Education Commission qtd. in Paik 40).

Some rural committees also raised their voice against the inroads being made to include the dalits in the government schools "on the ground that education would advance them in life and induce them to seek emancipation from their present servile condition" (Paik 40). The role of the British in the direct subjugation of the dalits is less pronounced as in their urge to appease the upper castes they did not attempt to effect a revolutionary social change in India. One can then conclude that in the doubly denied citizenship of dalits in colonial India, picturing the upper castes as the primary agents of the denial could only provide a true picture of the denial of discursive citizenship that the dalits faced in colonial India. The present study would focus upon how the dalits were discursively denied the claims to citizenship, and excluded from the bracket of putative citizens where the upper caste were the active agents in denying dalits the chance of being a part of the citizenry. The act of denial was escalated by the inaction and refusal of the upper castes to let the dalits be at par with them. This refusal took on another form in the post-colonial Indian scenario, and the following section would address this (un)changed status of dalit citizenship.

The concept of citizenship in postcolonial India was intricately bound to the idea and existence of nation-state, borrowed from the rubrics of western modernity. In borrowing from the European model of nation-state, the moral-intellectual leadership however, confined it to the outer sphere or the sphere of the nation-state, which can be alternatively termed as the discursive arena, where the plank of equal citizenship was used to incite nationalist feeling in the people of the country and conform to the requisition of western modules of modern nationalism. The individual through its right of equal citizenship would thus constitute the nation-state. The individual in the process gained prominence over any caste or creed which in parenthesis can be noted as the "abstract, unmarked citizen – universal man" and in the process the existence of caste was totally negated (Nigam 4256). The Congress-left and the Marxists declared caste to be "a feature of the superstructure of Indian society…as the ideological products of the specific precapitalist social formations that have made their appearance in Indian history" (Chatterjee 173). The Hindu reformists, like Mahatma Gandhi, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, on the other hand declared the

problematic of caste to be a harmonious systematic order gone wrong. The existence of discrimination on the basis of caste was thus totally wiped away. What remained was the inner sphere or the performative arena, which is the sphere of the people where the nationalist forces did not exercise any domination. The influence of the modern-intellectual leadership of the anti-colonial forces could not denormalise the differences of caste, class and religion in the latter sphere, and the discourses of western modernity and the rule of colonial difference went unheeded, which led to a situation "wherein dalits were accorded citizenship status in the constitution but were denied the same status in the realm of civil society" (Guru 263). The dalits were discursively granted citizenship rights and were stripped bare of it performatively in the public spaces. This truth was apparent to Babasaheb Ambedkar who was the principal force behind the organization of the dalits, and had demanded and succeeded in incorporating special political privileges of citizenship, which the study terms 'differential citizenship', for achieving the demands of equal citizenship in the Indian constitution.

The concept of 'differential citizenship' was, however, not new as the British government had already tried out differential citizenship in Punjab in the 1880s, where "separate electorates in local government and communal representation in the bureaucracy" was prevalent (Jayal 205). Differential allowances based upon the identities of social groups generally functioned on the assumption of the lack of commonality due to the wide cultural gap between the groups, resulting in a necessity of separate representation of those groups. The grant of differential state entitlements had a didactic colouring and served the purpose of protecting the vulnerable sections of the society. Though the representation of the diverse social groups by the means of separate electorates initially did not appear to have any connection with the question of citizenship, however gradually there appeared an official, steady, and clear connection between citizenship and differential allowances. This would term the construction of nationality in terms of "national-ethnic" to be problematic as citizenship would be constructed on the basis of inequality of wealth and power and to a large extent on the basis of denial of facilities to the lower caste, that were allowed to the upper caste. The citizenship functionary was initially embedded in discourses of universalism propagated by the Congress-left and the Hindu Mahasabha. The universalist tendencies represented by these groups showed tendencies to subsume the welfarist notions of the minority groups under the broad umbrella of the universal citizenship. What these tendencies failed to acknowledge is the merits of differential citizenship in bestowing equality upon the dalits.

The demand for differential citizenship for the dalits began with the demand for separate electorates for the dalits, a demand that was silenced with the Poona Pact of 1932, whereby the dalits were not to be given the right to separate representation through separate electorates. Not only was the communal division between the Hindus and Muslims hog the limelight, but the demands of the dalits for separate electorates was pushed to the background with the Poona Pact. The colonial government was also evasive and unreceptive of these demands of the dalits (Zelliot 90) because of its policy of appeasement of the upper castes. Though himself a firm believer in the quality of individualism, Ambedkar fought for the political rights of the dalit community, often homogenizing and glossing over the fissures of the different groups that constitutes the community.

The representation of the dalits in the various offices of power including the bureaucracy, cabinet, legislatures with the power to choose their own representatives was seen by Ambedkar as essential to the acquisition of citizenship by dalits. The hence-termed "political safeguards" in the form of separate electorates for the dalits was replaced by reservations for the scheduled castes (SC) and scheduled tribes (ST). However, even the reservations provided to the minorities was the result of a strong contestation in the debates of the independent Indian assembly, as the upper castes were not willing to provide the SC and the ST with reservations in legislatures, education and public employment. A set of distinctive/differential rights were with much effort granted to the dalits on January 26th, 1950 when India shed its dominion status and became a republic. The constitution dedicated an entire section to fundamental rights abolishing any discrimination based on caste, class, race or religion and at the same time added a clause empowering the state governments to make any special provision needed for the advancement of the socially or educationally backward communities and also allowing the reservation of seats in educational institutes and employment spaces for the advancement of the minorities. A set of distinctive rights was thus granted to the dalits in contrast to the aboriginals who were not granted any such rights. However, not many changes were recorded in the citizenship status of the dalits inspite of the affirmative action policies in favour of the dalits as only a handful of dalits have actually benefitted from this policy. And the social status of these people have not undergone much change as the differential citizenship functionaries have not achieved much in terms of removing the caste based prejudices in the society, but instead has created a different kind of prejudice that derives exclusively from the affirmative action policies or the differential citizenship functionaries

(Mukherjee and Jha 41). The performative citizenship of dalits which were supposed to be aided by the positive discriminatory policies witnesses a setback due to the same policies, and a yawning gap remains between the discursive granting and performative reality of equal citizenship in case of dalits, which the study seeks to address.

Though the trajectory of citizenship of the aboriginals and dalits singularly are different, yet the commonality they share is how equal citizenship inspite of being discursively granted is performatively denied to them. In other words, the commonality they share takes into account the difference between the "dimension of citizenship as status (or "thin" citizenship) rather than citizenship as practice (or "thick" citizenship)" where discursive citizenship "does not provide an account of how status might translate into practice" (Jayal 202). The term discursive citizenship here means the "codes, categories and modes of classification that reflect a governmental strategy into which individual citizen is inserted" (Delanty *Citizenship as Learning Process* 599). In other words, it denotes an act by which the government machinery bestows the category of equal citizenship upon its inhabitants, which necessarily does not include how that grant might translate into practice.

Discursive citizenship while depicting the constitutional grant of equality also problematizes the grant of equal citizenship by "reformulating our understanding of the relationship between citizenship and citizen; by revealing how enactments of citizenship are differently available to people situated by social hierarchies and political and economic inequalities" (Asen 203). This hiatus between the grant of citizenship and its manifestation in actual practice can be summed up using the concept of performative citizenship or citizenship in practice. So performative citizenship "reaffirms and rearticulates the rights of citizens by pointing out the disjuncture between citizenship in theory and the everyday practices of citizenship" (Gilbert and Phillips 313). Performative citizenship ought to be seen as the larger politics of recognition constituted by the marginalized who have been "excluded and suppressed by constitutional state building and that seek different degrees of cultural recognition and self-governance within and across the existing polity" (Gilbert and Philips 313). Discursive and performative citizenship then foregrounds the gap between the formal granting of rights and the actual practice of it. The denial of performative citizenship to the subordinated groups calls for a unified action on their part, where the pain of subjugation and oppression faced by the minority communities transcend the particularistic struggle, to form a unified whole. The unification

inspires reclamation of citizenship which can be situated in the comparative study of the literary output of the dalits and the aboriginals.

1.3 Citizenship and Dalit Autobiographies

The course of dalit citizenship and the problematics associated with it has been addressed by several studies. V. Vijayalakshmi in her book *Citizenship, Differences and Identity: Dalit Women and Political Inclusion* (2004) specifically talks about the differences of caste, class and gender that pervade the political representation and performative citizenship of dalit women resulting in a differential citizenship status of these women. The question of the doubly denied citizenship status of the dalit women has also been focused upon by Baishali Chatterjee in her research article titled "Political Theory and Citizenship Discourses: Cast(e) in the periphery: Understanding Representation of Dalit Women and Politics in India" (2010), and by Smita Patil in her paper titled, "Apparitions of Citizenship: Trajectory of Endless Struggles of Dalit Women" (2010). Published in the same year, the papers encapsulate different points of view of exclusion of dalit women. While the former looks at the situation of exclusion of women from citizenship, through a feminist lens, within the context of the 73rd Amendment Act that reserved thirty three percent for women, in the village panchayats, the latter states how the social bodies of dalit women are marked by the functionaries of citizenship, and the manner in which it reconstructs the stigmatized existential predicaments of dalit women.

Scholarships emphasizing upon the denial of citizenship to dalits without privileging the context of the dalit women are numerous. Gopal Guru's essay "Citizenship in Exile: A Dalit Case" in Rajeev Bhargava and Helmut Reifeld edited *Civil Society, Public Sphere and Citizenship: Dialogues and Perceptions* (2005) underlines the abysmal gap that lies between the narratives of equal citizenship and the practical nonfunctioning of it. Published in the same year, *Untouchable Citizens: Dalit Movements and Democratization in Tamil Nadu* by Hugo Gorringe, pivots around the question of citizenship in Tamil Nadu, and deviates slightly from the earlier studies by using large scale methods to map the trajectory of dalit citizenship while offering extra insight through the method of social anthropology used to gather first-hand information of the problematics of citizenship in the state. In another paper titled "The Caste of the Nation: Untouchability and Citizenship in South India" published in 2010, Gorringe depicts the contested status of the national identity of the marginalized and breaks the myth of the unified citizens of India against the

backdrop of the continued caste discrimination even after the devastating effects of Tsunami in 2004. Neerja Gopal Jayal in her seminal work, *Citizenship and Its Discontents: An Indian History* (2013) undertakes a Herculean task as she outlines the history of the development of the concept of citizenship in India and devotes especially the third section to the concepts of universal and differential citizenship where the pros and cons of the latter and its effect on the status of dalit citizenship is discussed.

Published in the same year, Suryakant Waghmore's *Civility against Caste: Dalit Politics and Citizenship*, highlights the mahar and for the first time even the non-mahar political citizenship, while providing an in-depth review of the ethnography of the dalits. Dalit citizenship is also talked of in context of creation of civil society and the disparity in the formation of democracy and the grant of civility. Ronki Ram in her paper "Sacralizing Dalit Peripheries" (2016) problematizes the public spaces by foregrounding the concept of dalit counterpublic spaces, where the dalit peripheries in the vicinity of the villages of Punjab have become the sites of dalit protest resulting subsequently in the recovery of dalit citizenship. Gorringe in his paper titled "Out of the Cheris: Dalits Contesting and Creating Public Space in Tamil Nadu" (2016) depicts another aspect of the denial of citizenship to dalits with respect to the use of public spaces. The dalits have historically resided in cheris or settlements which lack amenities, unlike the public spaces occupied by the upper castes. The political mobilization of the dalits in Tamil Nadu seeking to create new public spaces accessible to the dalits underlines how full citizenship status evades the dalits when certain public spaces and places are divided along caste lines.

Numerous studies of great value have been undertaken by various scholars to outline the track of the growth of citizenship for the aboriginals of Australia. John Chesterman and Brian Galligan in their first of a kind of work, *Citizens without Rights: Aborigines and Australian Citizenship* (1997) plot the development of Australian citizenship since the last hundred years drawing mostly upon archival material. The book also documents the government policies from the 1880s to 1990s and argues that the denial of citizenship to the aborigines was not based upon any constitutional reason. In his article also published in 1997, titled "Citizenship and Aboriginality: Two Conceptions of Identity in Aboriginal Political Thought" and published in the book *The Politics of Identity in Australia* edited by himself, Stokes, interprets the conception of aboriginal identity with reference to the quest for citizenship of the aboriginals which occupies an important place in the interaction of the aboriginals with the Australian state. Published in 1998,

Nicholas Peterson and Will Sanders' edited book *Citizenship and Indigenous Australians: Changing Conceptions and Possibilities*, contains several essays dealing with the issue of the quality of citizenship conferred upon the aboriginals in practice. The book also debates the issue of the necessity of allowing the aboriginal Australians a set of distinctive rights to compensate for the inequalities faced and bring them at par with the white settlers. "Indigenous Citizenship" (2000) by Tim Rouse appeared in Wayne Hudon and John Kane edited book, *Rethinking Australian Citizenship*, and views citizenship as "capacity" over citizenship as "rights" with respect to the aboriginals of Australia, and also depicts how in the process the government has been forced to reconstruct citizenship doused in communal flames rather than projecting it as a separate category.

In a paper titled "Citizen Minus? Indigenous Australians and the Citizenship Question" (2003), David Mercer harps on the fact about how the grant of full citizenship status to the aboriginals has invited a backlash against the aboriginal rights, resulting in continuation of contradiction and discrimination against them. In a book chapter titled "Citizens or Denizens: The Stolen Generations in Australia" published in Leena Dominelli and Mehmoona Moosa-Mitha edited *Reconfiguring Citizenship: Social Exclusion and Diversity Within Inclusive Citizen Spaces* (2014), Linda Briskman brings out the role of social workers in dispossessing the aboriginal children of their home, family, heritage, and culture which she interprets as treatment of uncitizens as they were not allowed to assert what was good for them. Briskman also provides parallels of similar treatment meted out to the indigenous people elsewhere.

As can be noted from above, a channel of enquiry dealing with the problematics of citizenship of the oppressed people has been common and has brought about influential ideas. However, it has overlooked other frames through which the question or constitution of dalit and aboriginal citizenship could be understood. Aboriginal and dalit citizenship being a multi-layered, complex and a problematic aspect needs to be studied closely. Most of the reading of dalit and aboriginal citizenship has taken place in the context of social work theory, practices and political sciences in an "empirical void" (Lister et al. 114). The study deviates from the earlier studies in its claim to depict the functionaries of aboriginal and dalit citizenship with respect to the transnational literary counterpublic sphere using the comparative study of the literatures of two oppressed groups. However, this also brings with it the question of the appropriateness of using literature as the medium to compare the changing forms of denial of citizenship meted to the dalits and the aboriginals.

The theoretical positioning of citizenship in literature or specifically dalit and aboriginal literature is an issue that haunts the study throughout and at first glance might seem an aberration. But one has to keep this fact in mind that dalit and aboriginal literature abstains from being essentially a literary exercise. The primary function and role of it is pertinently expressed by Poitevin with the following statement that he makes with regards to dalit literature and one that is equally applicable to aboriginal literature, "(T)he practice of writing does not aim at achieving an aesthetic performance in literature as an art. It serves purposes of social intervention and accordingly carries strong militant connotations" (n.p). The social intervention and military connotation in the dalit and aboriginal literature has been caused by the politics of containment of the dalits and aboriginals by dominant literatures of their respective nations that have focused upon demarcating groups in the society, where one becomes the dominant class or equal citizens and in relative terms the subjugated class becomes 'otherized' or second class citizens. As Behara succinctly states, "(t)hough homogenization is the strategy of control employed by the dominant groups, ironically they often resort to the strategy of difference, difference from the powerless to maintain their hierarchical superiority" (n.p). The difference has been expressed in terms of the dominant group where the other encapsulates the meaning of the term different, and it is through this cycle of dominance and subordination that the power has been legitimized and perpetuated. The political emancipation (which has become the watchword of the majority communities of all countries) of the oppressed, the dalits and the aboriginals, one that would entail uniformity in differences verges on impossibility. The problem of dalits and aboriginals is that their identity cannot be completely separated from the mainstream identity, and only certain aspects of their existence are stripped apart. Both the communities share the same agendum in which the main objective is to validate and secure indigenous difference against the cultural hegemony imposed upon them. Dalit and aboriginal literature becomes the stage where this social protest is enacted. The literatures of both the communities have a conflicted relationship with the literature of the mainstream and reject "the tradition, the aesthetics, the language and the concerns" of the mainstream literature (Limbale). The otherized status of these communities cannot be ignored while taking into purview their literatures. The inequitable systems of which the dalits and aboriginals are a part thereof needs to be taken into consideration while critiquing the literatures of the two communities, which makes the study largely sociological. Arun Prabha Mukherjee in her introduction to the English translation of *Joothan: A Dalit's Life* cautions that,

> a literary critic, reared in an educational system that taught a canon of literature focused solely on the privileged sections of the society, whether the India or the West, must tread cautiously in this new territory, using the benchmarks provided by Dalit literary theory and continuously on guard against those kinds of formalist analyses that privilege from over content (xxxix)

Raj Kumar in his book, *Dalit Personal Narratives*, a first of its kind also suggests heedfulness as he states, "(d)alit writers feel that mere literary interpretation or an academic point of view cannot do justice to comprehend the true spirit of Dalit literature" (148). Both these literatures are based in inequality, are the products of social commitment, employs the language of life-affirmation and looks towards defining new cultural values. What Prabhakar Mande opines about dalit literature is equally applicable to aboriginal literature;

> The event of the development of Dalit literature is not just a literary event. Therefore, this literature should not be viewed only from a literary perspective. Unless this literary chain of events is seen from a sociological perspective against the entire background of the changes happening in society, its significance will not be grasped. (Qtd. in Limbale xiv)

Aboriginal literature, too, consider themselves as "mouthpieces for their people expressing grievances and concerns felt collectively by the entire Aboriginal community" (Shoemaker 179). And they likewise reject the "art for art's sake argument and feel that their work at least has some social utility" (Shoemaker 180). Davis and Hodge in their edited book, *Aboriginal writing today: papers from the First National Conference of Aboriginal Writers held in 1983,* elaborate upon the status of Indigenous literature as different from the mainstream. Robert Ariss, too, in his aricle "Writing Black: the construction of an aboriginal discorurse" talks about aboriginal literature, its dissimilarity from English literary inheritance and tradition, as well as opposition to the dominant settler literary trends and types. Candida Baker in her three part book *Yacker, Yacker 2, Yacker 3* published over a period of three years records her interviews with thirty six aboriginal authors. These works sounded the bugle of the arrival of the aboriginal literature in the scene and also helped to ground the distinctiveness of the aboriginal writers from the mainstream Australian writers. This distinctiveness of aboriginal literature is however not new and was foregrounded since the early twentieth century by critiques like Judith Wright, Stephen Muecke, Penny Van

Toorn, and Emma LaRocque. This distinctiveness finds the most appropriate voice in the aboriginal and dalit autobiographies, which defy the norms of traditional autobiographical writings.

An overwhelming majority of dalit and aboriginal literature is constituted by autobiographies. Sharmila Rege's *Writing Caste/ Writing Gender* suggests that a great deal of sociological and activist connotation of dalit literature derives from the autobiographies as their "intention is not one of literariness but of communicating the situation of a group's oppression, imprisonment and struggle (13). The autobiographies then fulfill what Limbale terms the "purposive" function of dalit literature (13). The genre of autobiography also holds a significant place with respect to aboriginal writings in terms of depicting the question of belonging. Autobiography is the most dominant mode of writing in Australia and as David McCooey would like to characterize, aboriginal autobiography "is nothing less than the source of Australian literature, the prominent mode of…indigenous writers, minority writers, refugees and lyric poets" (323). Through these writings (which echo not just the feeling of an individual but that of a community) the aboriginals and the dalits give voice to the experience which was till now hidden and repressed. Their task is not just a confession but a transformation of silence into literary tropes. They serve not just the function of social history, but also the function of social discourse, not just as a cognitive intervention in the field of mainstream writing, but also a social phenomenon, that influences the dalit and aboriginal movement in general. They constitute not only a socio-cultural process but also a literary performance making it a fit object of analysis.

Autobiography originated in the West and became popular in the eighteenth century due to infinitesimal outpourings by the dominant bourgeois class and is defined as a "retrospective narrative in prose that an actual person makes of his/her own existence when he/she focusses upon his/her life as an individual, in particular upon the history, genesis and evolution of his/her personality." (Lejeune 4). The bourgeois studies on autobiographies in general focus upon the socio-cultural dynamics which has been the dominant mode of reading. In contrast, the subaltern autobiographies, ground and focus upon the aspect of its functionality, and inspire the readers to focus on its social function. The present study refrains from making any vague generalizations about the structural properties of the aboriginal and dalit autobiographies which would be reductive, and instead focuses upon its practical relevance and function. The study would draw upon the interrelatedness between autobiographies, the class indulging in the writing of

autobiographies, the social function achieved, and social interaction initiated by these autobiographies. As the dalit and aboriginal autobiographies represent not just an individual, but the entire community, the autobiographical subject is not different from the subaltern society at large, and unlike the bourgeois autobiographies where the autobiographical "I" is standing up as one individual against the entire society, it depicts the struggles of an individual who becomes the representative of the community. The individual is one from and one with the whole community.

The dalit and aboriginal autobiographies then stage the social function of the struggle of an entire community against the oppressive structures of the society. The resistance against these oppressive structures and dilemmas of belonging is organized around the focal point of citizenship and its exigencies, and the dalit and Australian aboriginal autobiographies become the literary sites where these dilemmas are staged. Autobiographies in such a scenario become an appropriate vehicle for carrying the idea of citizenship, and the relationship between social context and the protagonist is nowhere more stronger than this, especially in case of the literary works by the marginalized (dalits and aboriginals). The study of citizenship in political studies finds its ablest counterpart in the literary realm as it "represent(s) new forms of citizenship and new political modalities" (Ho 3). The literary realm in the form of autobiographies through its saga of denial unites the minorities of both the nations through the long history of denial of citizenship, first discursively and then performatively. Also as the literature of the oppressed is based on the inferior status of these oppressed people and becomes a reflection of the secondary position that these people are assigned in society so this literature needs to be analysed with respect to the society, as their aestheticism and significance in a pure literary analysis would be defeated making it reductive.

What the study would focus upon then is not the prosaic rhapsodies of the literature, but the sociological significance of it. In doing so the study would not altogether denounce the aesthetic character of these works. The denial of citizenship would be studied with a close focus on the narrative tropes that pervade these autobiographies. The study would focus upon the narrative tropes of alienation, space, and journey from the rural to the urban space in context of the dalit autobiographies. In the aboriginal context the study would focus upon the narrative tropes of place, trope of the stolen children, trope of home and alienation to drive home the point of the denial of citizenship. In doing so the study claims to walk the fine line between political content and aesthetic experimentation preventing from reducing it into a “document of pain, as a weapon

of struggle and a force of democratization in the cultural arena" (Hunt 212). The proposed study seeks to compare the two literatures by comparing the depiction of social exclusion in terms of the changing forms of denial of equal citizenship, in dalit and Australian aboriginal literature, while focusing upon the aesthetic content that brings the debates of citizenship to the forefront with more force and vigour.

1.4 The Transnational Counterpublic Sphere

The comparative study of the literatures of the two groups is made viable with the theoretical positioning of the dalit and aboriginal literary sphere as a subaltern transnational counterpublic, an extension of Nancy Fraser's concept of the subaltern counterpublics forwarded in the essay, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy". Fraser in her essay highlights the importance and indispensability of the Haberms' concept of the public sphere denoted as places where "the sphere of private people comes together as a public…when they are open to all, in contrast to closed or exclusive affairs" (Habermas 24,1) in the formation of public opinions. In other words, the chief characteristic of public sphere was supposed to be inclusivity with little regard for the status of the participants in the sphere. However, Fraser highlights in her essay how the public sphere in contrast to its claim was not based upon inclusions, but exclusions, a practice that was aggrandized with the development of the democratic nation-states (mostly capitalistic in nature), when the concept of public sphere undertook a "problematic construction" (Marston 457). The capitalist democracies like America excluded by "nature (though really by custom, economics, franchise, law and sometimes outright force) women, non-white men and the propertyless (Mitchell 133). The aggravation of exclusions in the public sphere that happened with the rise of capitalist forces challenged the westphalian political imaginary and inclusivity that informed the debates on public sphere. The role of the westphalian imaginary and inclusiveness in the public sphere has been further challenged by the rise of globalization and globalized resistance that ultimately leads to the concept of the transnational. Hence the conceptualization of the public sphere needs to move beyond the westphalian dictates of a citizenship of a common political community, where political efficacy and normative legitimacy of public opinion is turned on its head.

The concept of shared citizenship of a westphalian democracy then undergoes a change into what Fraser calls, "co-imbrication in a common set of structures and/or institutions that affect

their lives. For any given problem, accordingly, the relevant public should match the reach of those life-conditioning structures whose effects are at issue" (Fraser n.p). Regarding the problematic of the legitimacy of opinions which now no longer applies to the boundaries of nation-state, Fraser states "public opinion is legitimate if and only if it results from a communicative process in which all potentially affected can participate as peers, regardless of political citizenship" (Fraser n.p). The concept of the transnational then elucidates how shared citizenship of a westphalian imaginary cannot be viewed as a commonality to hold people together, but the institutions and problematics that affect their lives and heed their opinions are supposed to tie them together irrespective of the geopolitical territories. Or one can use the definition forwarded by Steven Vertovec to define transnational as "the sustained cross border relationships, patterns of exchange, affiliations and social formations spanning nation- states" (qtd. in Alam 1). Counterpublics, on the other hand is defined by Nancy Fraser as "parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses, which in turn permits them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs" (Fraser 60).So, the spaces where the parallel discursive arena is not necessarily restricted to the boundaries of one geopolitical territory, where lives intersect at some common juncture of structures and institutions that affect them equally while transcending the difference of boundaries and spurring the need to construe their own identities, desires and needs can be termed as the transnational counterpublic.

The reason for choosing this theoretical standpoint is clear. The literature of the oppressed in both India and Australia do not relate so much to the literature of the mainstream of their countries as they imbricate with the literatures of the dispossessed elsewhere. As outlined in the above section there exists a schism between the mainstream literature and literature of the marginalized. Mainstream literature focuses upon the "consciousness expressed in poetry [and literature in general] determines the character of literature" (Satyanarayana 453). In the literatures of the marginalized, on the other hand, religious, racial or casteist identity and the recounting of the horrors of subjugation form the central theme of imaginative playfulness. These shared features align the literature of the dispossessed and minorities in the same order and even beyond the boundaries of the westphalian imaginary as compared to the mainstream literature of their respective nation-state. The literatures then constitute the transnational counterpublic to the mainstream literary sphere, making a comparative study between the literatures of the two

communities possible. The use of this frame of reference to study the changing forms of denial of citizenship, from discursive denial of citizenship to performative denial of citizenship, with respect to the literatures of the two communities will create a new discourse of denial that has not been much talked of. The study questions the taken-for-granted aspects of citizenship, both in theory and in practice and also challenges the universalist readings of the both the dalit and aboriginal literature through their localized lenses by indulging into a comparative study of the two literatures in the literary counterpublic to urge the creation of more inclusionary forms.

1.5 Comparison between Dalit and Australian Aboriginal Literatures

The history of the oppressed throughout the world whether in the name of race or caste has not run an identical course. Yet the broad framework of the struggle for liberation, both in life and literature, has been more or less the same. The minor differences are caused by their existence, ideological formation of the ruling class and the ways devised by them to keep the oppressed in their place. The most obvious thing that both the communities share is the history of having suffered under the ethnocentrisms of the British (in the case of the aboriginals) and the caste Hindus (in the case of the dalits) and the resulting denial of rights by them. The comparison of the literature of two groups of people of different locations and history encapsulating a wide variety of private narratives in the first instance poses two significant problems. First, the collation of the struggle of people, the dalits and the aboriginals, belonging to two very different societies with no shared history and struggle in a simplistic manner calls for skepticism, and is indeed problematic. Second, the comparison of dalit and aboriginal literature also brings forth the problem of comparing caste discrimination with racial discrimination. The second problem is taken care of by the fact that the dialogue between race and caste is not a novel phenomenon. The anti-racial discourse of the United States in the antebellum period gave a fresh leash of life to the problematics of caste which was long trapped within the threshold of (post) colonial India. Though caste never became the focal point of discussion, it became a familiar point of understanding in the writings of opponents of slavery like Fredrick Douglass, William Lloyd Garisson, Charles Summer, and the like. The atavistic nature of caste was compared to racial segregation in the US. At the face of an uprising of the Dalits in the Punjab, an American missionary in an obscure report wrote that the landowners "dread the loss of their own power and influence over [the Dalit landless workers], they have very much the same feeling as that which one may suppose animated the slave holder in America at the prospect of the liberation of the negro" (Prashad 196). Not just

the abolitionists, but the anti-caste activists of India like Jyotirao Phule also took up arms against the vicious nexus of caste discrimination. Phule titled his radical work *Ghulamgiri* (Slavery) (1873), dedicating it to the people of United States for their devotion in the abolishment of Black slavery. The relation between race and caste stood strong as the African American columnist George Schuyler pointed out that "the social and economic position [of African Americans] are somewhat similar and in some respects identical" to those of the Dalits (Kapur 64). In 1935, Howard Thurman wrote that as an African American, he can "enter directly into informal understanding of the psychological climate" of the dalits and that African Americans and dalits "do not differ in principle and in inner pain" (Kapur 82).

Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, a passionate dalit activist, also linked his ideas on racial segregation to caste discrimination and drew similarities between the African-Americans in and dalits in India. S. Katherine Mayo in her book *Mother India* (1927) pronounced casteism as a worse form of slavery. Her work gave rise to the caste school of race relations in the 1930s (Immerwahr 280). W. Lloyd Warner in 1936 launched the caste school with an article in the American Journal of Sociology (Immerwahr 280). He claimed (without making any direct reference to India) that the meritocratic system in South America was replaced by a caste system where the black elites enjoy fewer privileges than a middle class white. The mediations between race and caste can be further located in the writings of Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, Horace Greeley, Harriet Beecher Stowe, who invoked the idiom of caste to attack the presence of race relations in America. Scholars such as Ivan Van Sertima, Runoko Rashidi, V.T.Rajshekar have also formed a submerged network of Africans and dalits, which works towards a political solidarity of the two groups. The United Nations Durban Conference on *Racism and Racial Discrimination* (2001) also addressed the cause of societal stratification equating race and caste based discrimination as strong cases of human rights violation. Similar efforts have been made by Gyanendra Pandey in *his History of Prejudice: Race, Caste, and Difference in India and United States*, S.D Kapoor in *Dalits and Afro-Americans: A study in Comparison* and Nathan M. Aston in his book *Literature of Marginality: Dalit Literature and Afro-American Literature* make a comparative study of two distinctive groups, while equating discrimination based on race and caste. What can be seen common in all the above quoted instances is an attempt to create a commonality of oppositional emancipatory ideology that transcends the barriers and fixed categories of race and caste. The formation of multiple minority

groups puts forward the necessity of looking at the matters of race and caste, racism and casteism with a different perspective (Pandey 9). The study while establishing a link between race and caste looks at the concepts of race and caste as deriving from the perpetuation of the social and political structures of casteist and racial discrimination. The point is made amply clear by David Chioni Moore, in an analysis of Langston Hughes's trip to Soviet Central Asia, notes that Hughes developed an "afro-planetary vision" which sought linkages "based not on biology but on 'experience,' experience that is not internal but rather contrapuntal, and that does not result from an a priori colored skin but that rather causes color 'consciousness'" (Moore 64). So discrimination as the ultimate reality transcends and outlives the distinctive ideas of race and caste making it possible to compare two literatures which narrate racial and casteist discrimination.

However, inspite of the flourishing and persistent dialogue between race and caste (albeit through the greater pervading truth of discrimination) the comparison of the literature of two communities without any historical overlapping includes the danger of causing a displacement of the individuals from their original locations, and their representation not being true to their own selves. Historians like Ranajit Guha argue about the pointedness of such comparisons which relies on the "most slender touch of analogy here, a touch of resemblance there" (37). And as Pandey fittingly mentions "for any comparative study that consciously or unconsciously proposes a supposedly 'neutral' standard…and hand out prizes on that basis…is liable to be reductionist, if not deceptive or indeed disingenuous" (Pandey 5). However, inspite of such shortcomings, the historian, Micol Seigel, iterates the necessity of such comparison and states that there are "clear visions of connections over encumbrances of borders", and "comparison is the process of relational self-definition" (65). Siegel's intervention in the discourse of yoking together varied subaltern communities implies that the subaltern societies emerge and define themselves with respect to other such groups. So such comparisons instead of limiting or distorting the historical reality of any subaltern community cause mediation between different social systems ---- different cultures, races and linguistic systems. Marcus Garvey in his "An Appeal to the Conscious of the Black People to see itself" writes, "Wheresoever the cause of humanity stands in need of assistance, there you will find the Negro ever ready to serve" (Quoted in Limbale 98). And in a similar vein Baburao Bagul, a dalit activist equates dalit literature to the literature of oppressed people in general, "Dalit literature is precisely that literature which accepts the liberation of humanity, regards the greatness of the human being, and strongly opposes the superiority of race,

varna and caste" (quoted in Limbale 98). The study acknowledges the distinctive histories of the dalit and aboriginal and in doing so intends to pay tribute to the already prevalent universalist impulse of a locally embedded dalit and aboriginal histories, which have with repeated iterations become ahistorical and mythical. In doing so, the study challenges the universalist assumptions of these local histories and views them via diverse lenses to discover the aberrations in them. These aberrations then become the site of fractured identities, something that had been overlooked in the universalist assumptions, and lays the basis of a new history and politics, and new locations for them, found in the struggles and histories of similar subaltern constituencies. This entails the construction of a discourse of pain and suffering limited not just to the individual groups suffering due to the problematics of race or caste, but forms the reality of the discrimination, be it racist or casteist, as the basis of reformulating a new narrative of shared struggle and history. The study would then challenge the absolute categories of race and caste and transcend such specificities to connect to the oppressed people all over the world. The present study claims not to distort the particularistic struggle and discrimination faced by any of the minority groups but transcends the local instances of struggle against discrimination to take it to a transnational and universal level. And in the words of the historian, Gyanendra Pandey, "to make for a new kind of comparative history, one in which we deal not in universals already understood but in the assumptions that underlie our individual histories and our particular universals" (9). The present study in creating a new kind of history would pit the so-called distinctive dimension of exclusion on the basis of the changing forms of denial of equal citizenship against each other to create a literature of the subjugated that transcends the narrow boundaries of caste and race and instead coalesce to form a whole that fights unitarily against the discrimination that constitutes their social reality. This social reality is reflected by the literatures of the two communities paving the way for a comparative study between the two.

1.6 Objectives:

The proposed study seeks to analyze how the dalit and Australian aboriginal literary counterpublic sphere, through select autobiographies, imagines the changing forms of denial of equal citizenship that the marginalized face. In talking about equal citizenship in the subaltern literary counterpublic, the study would highlight the denial of equal citizenship rights, the demand and struggle for it, discursive granting of equal rights and the stripping of the performativity of those rights. In other words, the study would look into the transition of the denial of citizenship from

discursive to performative, where discursive denial implies the denial of granting of equal citizenship status to the dalits and subsequently a denial of a right to participate in the functionaries of citizenship while performative denial means the denial of participative citizenship even when the discursive rights have been granted to the dalits, as depicted in the autobiographies of both the communities. In doing so, the study seeks to compare the two literatures using the depiction of denial of discursive citizenship, and post the discursive granting of full citizenship, the denial of performative citizenship in the subaltern literary counterpublic of Baby Kamble's *The Prisons We Broke*, Aravind Malagatti's *Government Brahmana*, Alice Nannup's *When the Pelican Laughed* and Gordon Briscoe's *Racial Folly*. The study would depict how the discursive denial of citizenship manifests in the writings of Baby Kamble and her Aboriginal counterpart Alice Nannup and the performative denial of citizenship in the writings of Aravind Malagatti and Gordon Briscoe using narrative tropes specific to the writings of both the communities. For bringing to the fore the denial of functionaries of citizenship that the dalits and aboriginals face, the study would read the autobiographies in terms of the parameters of the realization of political subjectivity by dalits and aboriginals, namely, "freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own property and to conclude valid contracts, and the right to justice" (Marshall 11) to analyse the individual autobiographies in order to maintain a homogeneity of analysis and a fair basis for observation and conclusion. As the autobiographies listed above denote particular moments of socio-political change and strongly depict the struggles over citizenship, it also successfully serves the purpose of the study. While comparing the two literatures the study also aims to create a new arena of knowledge which would challenge and subvert the reigning discourses of the dominant group. The study then depicts citizenship as a centre of political activities, whose very existence becomes distraught when it has to be extended to the dalits in India and aboriginals in Australia. The narratives of equal citizenship, followed by the frequent assertions of homogeneous treatment to all irrespective of internal differences by the state machinery goes on to reveal how the caste-based differences in India and racial differences in Australia have destabilised the category of citizenship. To read the changing forms of denial of citizenship also means to read the conflict-ridden version of citizenship followed in India and Australia. The narrative frame of citizenship is then used to underlay the idea of who is a citizen or the political subjectivity of citizenship and using it to understand about the membership of a citizenry or the extent to which this political subjectivity is realized by the dalits and the aboriginals through the literary counterpublic sphere. In other words the study would focus upon the manner in which the process of citizenry is narrated

by the dalit and Australian aboriginal autobiographies and the manner in which the rights of the dalits and aboriginals are foregrounded by the autobiographies. However, the study while talking about the changing forms of denial of citizenship would refrain from forming a genealogy of the denial of citizenship meted to the dalits and the aboriginals, but looks at the way how dalit and aboriginal literary studies have reformulated the debates of dalit and aboriginal citizenship at critical historical moments. The study then questions the liberal legacy of political, civil and social citizenship while raising some important issues: How is the performativity of citizenship foregrounded by the dalits and aboriginals in the literary counterpublic? How does this foregrounding evoke violent retribution from the dominant sections? And does the continued violation of performative citizenship point to the dysfunctionality of the performative citizenship status accorded to the dalits and the aboriginals?

Before detailing the dalit and aboriginal autobiographies, that would be considered for the analysis of the denial and subsequent attempt to reclamation of citizenship in the literary counterpublic sphere, the study would outline in detail the development of the literature of the oppressed which would chalk out the growth of the literary counterpublic that can be defined as an attempt by the dalits and aboriginals to assert their identity and vent their anger against the denial that they had to face. The outlining would provide us with a more vivid picture of the distinction between the mainstream and marginalized literary sphere that was present historically. Simultaneously, the literary sphere of the marginalized brings forth the dalit and aboriginal consciousness that had for long been subsumed/appropriated by the mainstream literature and in the process gives vent to the aboriginal feeling of helplessness, and at the same time attempts the construction of aboriginal and dalit consciousness.

1.7 Aboriginal literature

1.7.1 The Oral Tradition

The oral history of the indigenous Australians was not assigned much importance; the first British fleet that arrived termed them barbaric and illiterate, their land a terra nullius. The oral songs had been a primary mode of communication for the aboriginals and had its own significance. The arrival of the British initiated a series of disruption; great upheaval and furore among the aboriginals, the disruption of families under the guise of welfare, being branded as barbaric, forced to follow an alien culture, tradition and language, and deprived of their own land and resources

with no claim to their property. The wealth of the oral traditions was overlooked and only the culture with a written script was considered civilized. "The oral tradition" states Toorn "incorporates not only a set of songs and stories but also a set of rules and protocols for their transmission" (20). The oral narratives as popularly believed were not just a set of function but were also intricately connected with their culture and non-verbal communication. These narratives when they are captured in alphabetic writing reproduce but a hazy picture of the aboriginals. Since the publication of Catherine Langloh Parker's *Australian Legendary Tales* (1896) there have been several publications related to aboriginal myths and legends. Most of these stories lack an authentic source and have been fabricated to contend the mental image of the settlers. However, there have been some amends made by the recent publications which meticulously attempt to delineate the voice of the aboriginal orator. From the late eighteenth century aboriginals were involved in a variety of collaborative activities, where their verbatim was paraphrased in English by missionaries, sailors, explorers, historians. The amicable settlers wrote to the government authorities on behalf of the aboriginals. The aboriginal voice was thus ventriloquised. In 1820s an aboriginal Biraban started working with a missionary and helped in translating the gospels of St. Luke. In the 1870s another aboriginal James Unaipon helped in the translation of Ngarrindjeri oral narratives into English. In most of the cases the aboriginal voices were not distinguished from the white author's voice and at times the contribution of the aboriginals were not even acknowledged. With the advent of the nineteenth century the aboriginal people started learning that one's language is always the product of one's environment, power structure, and institutional dominance. So for the aboriginals the arrival of British and their methods of literacy '…did not trigger a shift from Aboriginal orality to European literacy, but rather an entanglement between radically different reading and writing cultures" (Toorn 52). The 1788 just did not bring the books. It also brought with itself the practices of the 18th century European society into the life of the indigenous Australians. As Toorn mentions

> Aboriginal people were using several modes of graphic signification, in rock paintings and engravings, on message-sticks, and in the ground drawings that accompanied oral storytelling… Important also were the fleeting, intangible 'logograms written into the air', the ceremonial dance movements central to Indigenous religious practice, and the hundreds of readable hand signals and other

> body movements necessary for silent communication while hunting, or to convey information to people out of earshot. (52)

Any language and writing derives its value and significance from the perception of the people using it. The English literacy of the aboriginal people coincided with the necessity of the settlers to garner land for pasture and agriculture, which led to the establishment of government missions and reserves. These reserves housed the aboriginal people in groups or families who suffered a new identity in terms of Christian names, age, colour and gender. The reserves under the garb of a European literacy undertook the task of a Christian proselytizing. European etiquettes and manners were taught to the aboriginals but at the same time the social protocols of the indigenous culture was continued resulting in "…a dual perception of literacy and its associated material culture" (Toorn 53).

1.7.2 The Beginning of Written Literature

The history of aboriginal literacy is intricately associated with the practice of stealing the aboriginal children that dated back to 1789. The practice was institutionalized in the middle of the nineteenth century in the protectionist era. The first school for aboriginal children was started in 1815 and some children were taught individually at the homes of the white settlers. The schools were both oppressive as it was the place where the stolen children were taken for education (who the settlers formulated were neglected by the aboriginal parents), and at the same time were empowering as it taught them the language of negotiation. However inspite of the cultural genocide the parents were interested in the education of the natives. Indigenous Australians were ventriloquised in the early writings of the settlers rendering the authenticity of testimonies even questionable. The assumption of their being at the highest level of cultural advancement was the rationale behind such a decision. The poems like 'The Native's Lament' and 'The Gin' are instances of the Aboriginal speech rendered in conventional English. Not just poetry, aboriginal speech was represented in prose as well. The language of the aboriginals rather than receiving any attention added to the legal fiction of the *tera nullius*. The low variety of English that the aboriginals acquired did not aid their reception of any social intelligibility or respect. The earliest recorded example of aboriginal authorship is Benelong's letter of 1796 which was dictated to Mr. Phillips, a steward. The letter is neither an exclusive aboriginal document, nor can be interpreted as a british colonial product. And as Toorn would tell, "…Bennelong's authorial practices can be

seen as a product of his individual agency working within the dynamic intercultural contact zone that emerged after 1788" (Toorn 63). Other indigenous authors include Biraban and a Nyoogar man named Benjamin. The Coranderrk reserve was one of the earliest and most significant sites of aboriginal writing. Not just the aboriginal men, but also the women took to writing. Aboriginal writing was mostly functional. The aboriginal writing took the form of a fight for their rights, like the Coranderrk petition produced in late 1881. With the spread of literacy amongst the aboriginals, they started indulging in writing their own as well as other aboriginals.

The literate aboriginals defended the practices of their community; their political interests as well as the traditional methods of communication. Certain trivial writings show the difficulties faced by the people in procuring simple human rights. However, the most moving pieces are the ones written by the women separated from their children. There were several such letters written in 1884 and 1885. These kinds of writings soon gave way to more serious forms of writing where the women wrote for themselves as well for their community. There were other sites like the Wybalenna settlement in Tasmania where the tradition of aboriginal writing developed. The aboriginal people took advantage of the press, undertook public display of their protest in order to make their presence felt. One of the most well-known indigenous woman writers was Bessie Flower Cameron. The aboriginal people developed their own culture of writing where they added meanings based on their language, social practices, environment, and traditions. One such letter was written in February 1900 by Maggie Mobourne where she complains about the manager of the reserve. The government encouraged writing in English as a political step to ensure compliance from them while the aboriginals used it as a means of resistance and fighting oppression. "Present-day Aboriginal political, historical and autobiographical writing is rooted in nineteenth -century journalism of the Flinders Island chronicle, in the early letters and petitions to government officials, and in written statements submitted to official inquiries (Toorn 27). They acted as ethnographers and also translated religious texts. William Barrack, Ngurangaeta of the Wurundjeri people, worked with the anthropologist A.W. Howitt and published the book *Kamilaroi and Kurnai* (1890).

The nineteenth century foundations were used to establish *Abo Call*, a newsletter of the Aborigines' Progressive Association. The paper subverted the notion of peaceful settlement and instead raised a pan-aboriginal awareness leading to a shared sense of history. However the aboriginal writing remained largely on the fringes and it was only when William Fergusson wrote

the story of "Nanya" as told to him by Harry Mitchell in 1920 that the aboriginals writing came into the limelight. However, it is David Unaipon who is considered to be the first aboriginal writer of Australia. He is best known for his booklet *Native Legends* (1929), his public address published as "An Aboriginal Pleads for His Race" (1928), and his autobiographical text, *My Life Story* (1951).

1.7.3 The Contemporary Phase of Aboriginal Writing

The contemporary phase of aboriginal writing began in 1964 with the publication of Oodgeroo Noonuccal's (Kath Walker) first poetry collection, *We Are Going*. This collection of poem was not a new step in the virgin field of aboriginal writing, rather it brought "…a powerful aboriginal voice into earshot of large, mainstream audiences both in Australia and overseas" (Toorn 29). Her other major publications include *The Dawn is at Hand* (1966) and *My People* (1970). Her works are an extension of her political activities. Oodgeroo along with Kevin Gilbert, Jack Davis, Colin Johnson (Mudrooroo) is considered to be the founders of aboriginal literature. Kevin Gilbert was a prominent poet, playwright, printmaker and photographer. His play, *The Cherry Pickers* reflects the conundrum of aboriginality; it is not just the first drama written in English by an aboriginal, it is also the first play to be performed wholly by an aboriginal caste. Gilbert's *Living Black* is one of the most celebrated works by an aboriginal as it reflects the authentic aboriginal expression and his poetry has been collected in a volume, *End of Dream-Time,* and he started writing prolifically in magazines and journals. Mudrooroo has written some of the most hard-hitting and most debated works of the aboriginal literature. His first novel, *Wild Cat Falling*, was adopted as a school text for many years. He along with Jack Davis had founded the National Aboriginal and Islander Writers, Oral Literature and Dramatists Association (NAIWOLDA) in 1983 as an attempt to adopt a pan-aboriginal approach in verbal art. At the height of his writing career he produced a herculean study of modern aboriginal literature namely, *Writing From the Fringe* (1990), three novels, and an impressive collection of poetry, *The Garden of Gethsemane: Poems From the Lost Decade* (1991).

Jack Davis' writing spans several genres like drama, short story, autobiography, and critical materials. His first book of poetry *The First Born and the Other Poems* was published in 1970. The poems yearn for a connection with the past. He even took to writing plays like the *The Steel and the Stone* (1973), *Kullark* (1979), and *The Dreamers* (1982). These writings dramatise

race relations in Australia. The publication of Noonuccal's book of poetry coincided with prolific activities by aboriginal activists, like the freedom ride of 1965, the referendum for federal government by the FCAATSI (Federal council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders) in 1967, the tent embassy protest against the lack of land rights in 1972. Toorn states "(t)he emergence of Aboriginal literature in the 1960s and 1970s was part of this entrance of Aboriginal people onto the national stage" (29). All of them portray similar concerns in their writing like the lack of justice and land rights for the aboriginals, and they also overhauled the accepted racial stereotypes, challenged the exclusionary models of identity, and corrected the biased narratives of history which exclusively eulogized the settler British. They busted the myth that all injustices were perpetrated against the aboriginals in the past, the past was still fresh and new injustices were meted out against them every day. Lionel Forgarty is considered to be the most radical poet writing in contemporary time. In recent years a number of educated poets have emerged namely, Kim Scott, Lisa Bellear, Anita Heiss and Kerry Reed Gilbert. These writers base their writing on the traditional aboriginal protest tradition while writing from their personal experiences of racism, and the complexities of gender, caste, sexual and class politics.

1.7.4 Aboriginal Biography and Autobiography

Contemporary aboriginal writing is largely constituted by the biography and the autobiography. The beginnings of aboriginal autobiography can be located in the formal dialogues between the aborigines, the settler officials, and researchers or in the act of aboriginal confession of their sins to the missionaries. However, it was only in the mid of twentieth century due to the sudden interest in anthropology that these life stories were recovered and collected. These life stories were then accurately recorded and transcribed, and the bigger problem that arose was to convert these oral stories into writing. This process posed a lot of problems as there was a pressure to maintain the integrity of the aboriginal voice, as well the coherence and conciseness of the narrative. The biggest cause of debate was the question of editorial principle and the question of ownership of the published life story. Toorn rightly states "Aboriginal life-writing is thus a highly contested textual territory" (35).

Aboriginal life writing occupies an ambivalent position as it is bound to a postcolonial structure of mourning as well as the struggle to maintain one's tradition. "Aboriginal life writers, biographers, and autobiographers often position question of poetics, practice, and the cross-

cultural concept of life itself bears contextualization" (Griffiths 19). There are several characteristics of Aboriginal life writing viz. narrating the dispossession, the disruption that they have faced due to the colonizing process, reflecting not an accepted cultural pattern, but rather showing the complex process of regeneration. Griffiths draws upon the idea of Aristotle that states the distinction between poesis and praxis where acting in the world is largely different from that of making art, which incubates the idea that the text is a separate entity from that of lived experience. However, she denounces this binary, as she voices that it obscures the process of aboriginal life writing (17-18).

Aboriginal life writing dissolves the distinction between the two, risking its literary value. But it is this refusal to fall into the binary that makes this life narrative unique. Aboriginal life writing derives from the individual bios and forms a meaningful community connection that has been disrupted by colonization. The life writers do not just construct aboriginal life stories but also help in kinship formation, construction of knowledge about region and community which makes it non-literary. "Aboriginal life writing is personal and political, community focused, and the poetic triumph of voice" (Griffiths 18). Indigenous autobiography of the Australians and the Indian dalits has been largely ignored by students who study autobiography. The aboriginal and dalit autobiographers have had to fight a gruesome literary battle to gain acceptance as a literary narrative, even though the tales are crafted with meticulous literary acumen. These autobiographies subvert the western claim which confines an individual within the speech and the script, and focus instead on the self in continuum with one's kinship and country. "By drawing together and restoring kinship and community with self and individual Aboriginal lived experience, Aboriginal life writing challenges the colonial biopolitical notion of life and insists on the maintenance of a concept of kinship and belonging vested in country" (Griffiths 20).

A prolonged tradition of aboriginal writing has affected the authenticity in the life writing as is particularly evident in Douglas Lockwood's *I, the Aboriginal*. The early aboriginal autobiographies *I, The Aboriginal* (1962), and *Lamilami Speaks* (1974) underpins the manner in which the native has been relegated to the margin, and the authorial position has been usurped by the recorder. The former went on to win the Adelaide Advertiser Festival of Arts award which inspired a volley of autobiographies from eminent aboriginal activists and critics like Dick Roughsey, Charles Perkins, Jack Davis, Jack Bohemia, Noel Tovey and others. Aboriginal authors have always been largely aware of the oral accounts that had led to the misrepresentation of the

aboriginals by the White authorities, mainstream editors and others. Aboriginal writing in the earlier time had been largely related to ethnobiography. David Unaipon's *Legendary Tales of Australian Aborigines* in the 1920s to Dick Roughsey's *Moon and Rainbow: The Autobiography of an Aboriginal* (1971) and Jack Mirritji's *My People's Life: An Aboriginal's Life* (1976). While these books strongly proclaimed their authenticity, the texts that came in the later decade were more politically engaged and revealed the truth of the stolen generation. It was, however, the aboriginal woman writers who sensitized the black as well as the white readership with their autobiographies. Webby quotes Anne Brewster, "Aboriginal women have until recently been less prolific as dramatists, novelists and poets, but since the late 1970s they have dominated in the area of autobiography" (35). Though the aboriginal women have never been prolific writers, dramatists, novelists or poets, but since the 1970s they have dominated the area of autobiographies. The first wave of women's autobiographies includes Margaret Tucker's *If Everyone Cared* (1977) and Labumore's (Elsie Roughsey's) *An Aboriginal Woman Tells of the Old and the New* (1984). With the bicentenary there was a second wave of the women's autobiographies like Sally Morgan's *My Place* (1987) which became the first aboriginal bestseller, Glenyse Ward's *Wandering Girl* (1988) which was from the first indigenous publishing house, Alice Nannup's *When the Pelican Laughed* (1992), and Evelyn Crawford's *Over My Tracks* (1993).

1.7.5 Aboriginal Autobiography: Post Bicentenary Phase

With the bicentenary the focus shifted on the cultural-nationalist mode of interpreting the autobiography which has brought the crisis of identity onto the centre stage. These were followed in the 1990s by works like *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* (1996) and *Under the Wintamara Tree* (2003) by Doris Pilkington Garimara. The aboriginal women carved out a niche for themselves amidst a plethora of male writers and it is this special recognition that they sought, which Tracey Bunda termed as "…the enunciatory site of the black sovereign women" (Griffiths 21). "Indigenous life writing has become an important vehicle for retrieving previously repressed histories of colonial violence, forced assimilation, and state intervention, and, therefore, it has been identified as a site of resistance" (Horakova 54). There also have been subgenres in the aboriginal writing like the collaborations amongst intergenerational members of the family where the younger member of the family usually transcribes or writes the life story as in Sally Morgan's *My Place* (1987). Morgan develops this mode of storytelling further in *Wanamurraganya: The*

Story of Jack McPhee (1989), and *My Bundjalung People* (1997). Jackie Huggins also records the autobiography of her mother in *Auntie Rita* (1994). The popularity of this mode of writing extends even into the twenty first century as in *Shadow Lines* (2003) by Stephen Kinnane. These are usually termed as the communal or collective life narratives. There are life narratives again where the white editors collaborated with the aboriginal writers, instances of which can be seen in autobiographies like *Ingelba* and the *Five Black Matriarchs* (1990) by aboriginal author Patsy Cohen and white scholar Margaret Somerville, respectively. There were oral life narratives which were recorded by the white settlers who transcribed and wrote for the aboriginals. These autobiographies are termed by Arnold Krupat as told-to autobiographies (Horakova 54). The rise of the indigenous autobiographies overturned the accepted readings of the Australian history. This movement along with the rise of identity politics has caused autobiography to be diverse and politically charged.

Indigenous autobiography is resistant and dialogic, concerned with home and with a focus on family. It avoids the common patterns that eulogises the individual development and instead focuses on the community. Though they do not adhere to the sense of coherence as prevalent in the western autobiographies, they employ non-indigenous traditions to discover their aboriginal identity. The publication of aboriginal autobiographies by non-indigenous publishers, its use of non-indigenous collaborators and editors has resulted in underestimating the aboriginal contribution to the text. Aboriginal writings also blur the distinction between indigenous biographies and autobiographies as in *Auntie Rita* (1994) where the voices of Rita Huggins and her daughter Jackie Huggins interweave in the narrative. Wayne King in his autobiography *Black Hours* (1996) talks of his mother's experience. Jeannie Bell in *Talking About Celia* (1997) tells the story of Celia Smith, while *In Haunted by the Past* (1999), Ruby Langford Ginbi narrates her son's story in a manner that depicts the reality of aboriginal incarceration. The aboriginal autobiographies garnered public attention which led to the publication of a commission report in 1997 that was constituted of testimonies by 535 witnesses which took the form of a book in 1998 titled *Stolen Children: Their Stories*, edited by Carmel Bird. The report then led on to the publication of several related texts, like Rosalie Fraser's *Shadow Child: A Memoir of the stolen Generation* (1998), Coral Edward and Peter Reed's reprint of *The Lost Children* (1997) and the like. David McCooey voices regarding Bird's book that it "powerfully illustrates the political and ethical potential for autobiographical discourse, especially with regard to large-scale, on-going

cultural crises" (342). The autobiographical discourse has evolved over the years and has diffused into popular and public culture which has given it a new urgency and significance. Autobiographical discourse is on the whole reliant on the language used for the narration of the autobiography. McCooey would like to state that autobiography is affected "by the things that exceed full autobiographical tension---history, experience, embodiment…autobiography itself is a spectre of those things that it can never represent" (343).

The conditions that led to the growth and development of dalit literature would be traced in the following section.

1.8 Dalit Literature

Dalit literature celebrates the marginalization, the stripping of the grandiose, the representation of the mundane and ordinary, and a justification of self-affirmation. "Dalit literature is characterized as a literature of protest and historical revisionism, typically with an emphasis on the documentation of the violence, oppression, and structural inequality engendered by casteiem" (Gajarawala 2). Dalit literature is the product of the dalit movement, and as Anupama Rao in her book *The Caste Question* connects the literature with the history as she states that the "narrative of how a new political collectivity was constituted by resignifying the dalit's negative identity within the caste structure into positive political value" causing dalit literature to be its "necessary corollary" (2). Dalit literature is really a product of the radical revolution propounded by Ambedkar. As literature is considered to be the most important asset in creating, demolishing, and retaining erstwhile set up, be it mental, social, ideological or physical, the dalit leader realized that political and economic equality and emancipation from centuries of oppression would require religious and creative equality as well. Dalit literature thus "…owes its origin to a revolutionary struggle for social and economic change" (Dangle 237). Dalit literature has largely been the product of the recovery of the identity crisis that the dalits were facing. The political spirit of these works dominates the aesthetic appeal that these works carry.

Dalit literature in its wide appeal denies the canon of mainstream literature, refuting the practices of caste and drawing upon a regionalism, while creating at the same time, a globalism that arises out of its conformity with the other regional movements across the world. Dalit writers largely claim that the literature is unaffected by the mainstream work. However, the dalit literature gains from the canonical critique. The mainstream literature acts as a dialectical opposition,

enabling it to form its identity in opposition to that of the literature by the upper caste. And as Gajarawala states, "(d)alit literature should therefore be read as constructing an antigenealogy" (4). The literature holds an intricate relationship with the caste practice rendering the works that fall under it not to be classified as fiction, but realism.

Literature and knowledge had earlier been a property of the upper caste Hindus only, and the history of literature "shows how the alterity of the subaltern has been replicated in culture to ensure that Dalits will not have voice or, for a long time, presence" (Limbale 3). The upper caste Hindus or the Brahmanical literature had laid down certain precepts to be conformed by the forthcoming classes which gave no place to dalits in the content of their literature. They were relegated to the margin not just in the society, but also in the world of literature because the superiority of the upper caste Hindu depends not just on the physical, but the psychological subjugation of the Other. "It would appear that the upper caste Hindus achieved in literature… a complete silencing, if not erasure, of the untouchable" (Limbale 4). The dawn of dalit literature has rejected the mainstream literary tradition, which focuses on the ancient myths that perpetuates untouchability, and brought to light the harsh and stark brutality of their experiences, which had never been the subject of art. However, the inversion of the social structure, the marginalizing of the centre and the centralizing of the margin has brought a new awakening among the masses. A review of the Indian literary history would show that the untouchable was completely missing from Sanskrit and regional literatures. The eminent dalit critic Sharankumar Limbale, however, shows that there were people of the lowest ranks like Kabir, even in the early days, who were making literature, and how those voices were normalised into Brahmanical literature as "oppositional voices or as reformers" when they could not be suppressed (Limbale 5). Limbale describes this inclusion of the dalits into mainstream literature as "reformist-liberalism", moving from erasure to containment (Limbale 5).

Thus while the early literature sought to erase the presence of dalits, the later literature followed a strategy of containment. The untouchable Other was visible, but only in the context of a discourse of compassion and sympathy. The Brahmanical literature do not show the dalits as they are, but as helpless people who need their mercy and pity, who are child-like and need the assistance of the upper castes in making their own decision. So a view is prevalent, though not strongly emphasized, and largely debated that a good dalit work can be written by a dalit and not by a non-dalit. So on this basis, works of Mulk Raj Anand, Rabindranath Tagore, Premchand have

never been recognized as Dalit literature. Though their work has harnessed social opinion against casteism, but their writings procure commercialisation, pathos and satire. This containment also had its negativism, as the representations of dalits by the upper caste Hindus were the basis of discussion of caste issues in literary theory and history.

The Indian literary history fails to recognize the writings of dalits, and the lives of the dalits are largely known through the works of the progressive writers and the non-dalit writers. Arjun Dangle, a prominent dalit writer and critic, however, would credit the contemporary non-dalit writers who opened the door of upper caste literature and made favourable conditions for the dalit literature to appear. And this literature "…is both a part of and yet apart from the mainstream" (Limbale 9). There have been many theories regarding the origin of dalit literature. Some would trace it to the Buddhist period, and some to the Bhakti saint Chokamela. Others would credit Mahatma Phule, and others still to the professor S. M. Mate, but Arjun Dangle, the famous Marathi dalit writer, editor and activist marks Ambedkar as the father of Dalit literature and trace its origin to him. The political movements organized by him play a significant role in the development of this literature and creating new a space for the dalits. The dalit intellectuals translate the pain of the discrepancy faced by them in society into words and it is the expression of this pain that is termed as dalit literature.

Dalit prose literature embarks on the discourse of realism. The realism that is depicted in the dalit autobiographies is different from the Western realism brought forth by Enlightenment. Dalit literature is frequently criticized to be univocal, expressing similar anguish, agitation and resentment against the upper caste. The eminent dalit writer Sharankumar Limbale voiced that the nature of the tyranny faced by the dalits have been the same throughout, "Social boycott, separate *bastis*, wells and cremation grounds; inability to find rental accommodation…these experiences are same for all the dalits" (35). The literature gained ground with the momentum gained by the dalit movement with the burning of the Manusmriti by Ambedkar in 1927, which provided the dalits with the strength to defy the set patterns of mainstream literature and voice their experiences in a manner that brought forth their anguish with an unquestionable authenticity. The term dalit literature could be traced to the first Dalit Literary Conference held in 1958 and it is no coincidence that the dalit literary movement took birth in Maharastra. However, the first conference of the dalit writers organized by the Dalit Sahitya Sangha passed unnoticed showing the case of negligence and desertion. It was the regional developments in dalit literature that

bolstered the development of the dalit literary movement in general. The Guajarati dalit literature began in 1978 with the launch of the first ever magazine in Guajarati dalit poetry and the historic movement is considered to be the formal inauguration of dalit literary movement in Gujarati. The dalit literary movement in Andhra Pradesh emerged with the Karamchedu massacre in 1985. The Tamil literary scene saw the emergence of the dalit literary movement at the turn of the nineteen nineties, and inspite of its deferred emergence it had boomed all through the 1990s. The Kannad dalit literature produced the first dalit writer, Madara Chennaiah (12th century). Later at the end of the twentieth century it saw many eminent writers like B. Krishnappah, Dohara Kakkaiah, Aravind Malagatti and the like.

The first dalit writings can be traced to Dr. Javelkar's *Desaca Dushman* (1926). However, Sisir Das in his History of Indian Literature mentions that for some S.M. Mate's *Upekstance Antaranga* (1942) is the first specimen of dalit literature. In 1930s and 40s there was an attempt by novelists like Mulk Raj Anand who attempted to portray the life of the people living in the margins. The democratic ethos of the time gave rise to this genealogy of novels with the focus on the labour and caste problems prevalent in India. There were other writers like Raja Rao, Bhabani Bhattacharya who also focused on these problems. However, the works of all these writers were coloured with Gandhian nationalism and the genre novel was upper caste in language, form and ideology. The form that the novel largely followed was "…a social realism overlaid by Gandhian romance" (Gajarawala 72). The novels were looked upon as portraying the casteized labour and the caste problem was not blatantly considered even by the critics. These novels portrayed the protagonist as separate from the menial job that he is indulging into. In doing so, the novels beautify the work while alienating the work from the worker. This causes the caste untouchable to be stripped off its caste identity. The concept of casteized labour loses its value and so does the generations of filth and squalor that was associated with it. Inspite of the lack of true reflections, these works serve as models of the literary representation of the untouchables. The neglect instead of trampling the spirit of the dalits gave them an increased strength to fight the inequity in society. The sixties for dalit literature were important as it saw an important poet Narayan Surve (1926-2010) penning the quandary of the workers. There was also The Little Magazine Movement, an inherent pressure group activity for dalit movement. Anna Bhau Sathe (1920-1969) and Shankarrao Kharat (1921-2001), prominent Marathi dalit poets, were already established by then, but the dalit literary movement gained colossal momentum from the short stories of Baburao

Bagul (1930-2008). "Bagul's stories taught Dalit writers to give creative shape to their experience and feelings" (Dangle x). In the seventies dalit theorists began to theorise on Dalit literature and its role. A number of young writers started writing for periodicals like *Asmitadarsha*. The implosion of the Republican Party of Ambedkar and the Black Movement and Literature in Unites States of America made the young dalit writers realise that merely sounding the bugle against injustice will not give them their deserved equality and respect in society. This led to the establishment of the Dalit Panther Movement (1972-75) where describing one's personal experience in provocative language became the dominant ideology. The movement though initially sprung its head in Marathi; very soon it spread its tentacles to other regions as well. The Backward Caste Reservation Movement in 1986 and the pro-Mandal agitation in 1990 provided a platform for a fuller debate on the contemporaneous issues of caste in literature and fulfilling what Dangle states, dalit literature is not simply literature, but "associated with a movement to bring about a change" (Dangle x).

The mainstream writers use metaphysical, imaginative language to depict the beauty and the heroic qualities of their characters. Their depiction is mostly the God-man relationship. The dalit writers on the other hand express their experiences in the most realistic manner using their native speech. "The central concern of the Dalit literature is how best to represent the authentic experience of the Dalits" (Limbale 10). This authentic experience is not just of an individual but of an entire community. The age old hierarchical and hereditary system, sanctioned by religion, with the notion of people being polluted and untouchable makes the dalit identity unique and distinct. The educational, economic, social, and political attainments of dalits cannot alter their unique dalitness. It is this unique dalitness that dalit literature is challenged to portray. Baburao Bagul, a well known dalit short story writer says, "(d)alit literature is not a literature of vengeance. Dalit Sahitya is not a literature which spreads hatred. Dalit Sahitya-first promotes man's greatness and man's freedom and for that reason it is an historic necessity" (Prasad and Gajian 3). And this literature finds the manifestation of its true intent through the genre of autobiography.

Autobiography was written by the belligerent; treated like a treasure for the people to cherish. However these narratives became a prominent weapon in the hands of the dalits. A large portion of Dalit literature is in the mode of autobiography. The social oppression, injustice, the centuries of persecution has resulted in their need to express themselves. This confessional mode pervades all the genres of writing in dalit literature. Kumar states in this regard,"whether it is Dalit

poetry or novels, theatrical dialogues or critical prose pieces-all these forms often bear a 'confessional characteristic' made by the authors themselves" (150). Fiction writing derives a lot from the personal life of the author, as Manoranjan Byapari in his *Ittibrite Chandal Jiban* , would like to tell, "aami likhte boslei kolomer dogai eshe poreche shudhu aamari bohudha bibhajito jibon golpo." (My endeavors of writing have always been submerged in the retrospection of the fragmented pieces of my own life). To emphasise his point he tells "amar protita kotha kahinite choriye royeche aamari gota jibon." (*Life of a Chandal*) (Each and every story of mine contains a piece of my life). The jagged language, the muted anger are all the characteristic of these narratives. These narratives are more communal than individualistic. It is not a celebration of the self, but a necessity of asseveration of the hardships and a pain that is personal, that causes the dalits to indulge in autobiography writing. Dalit autobiographies are then the literary forms of a social protest process. The necessity to capture the important aspects of their lives and bring out the truth of the pernicious caste system and the social malfeasance is an important aim of these autobiographies. Hazari's *Untouchable: TheAutobiography of an Indian Outcaste* (1951) is the first dalit Autobiography. All the regional dalit literatures use autobiography as a dominant medium to express the travails of their life. In Marathi works like Vasant Moon's *Growing up Untouchable in India*(2001), Sharan kumar Limbale's *Akkarmashi*(1984) translated into english as *The Outcaste* (2003), Laxman Mane's *Upara*(1980), *Antyaj*(1992) by Madhav Kondvalikar are the most well-known; Tamil dalit literature saw the publication of an autobiography by Salma or A. Rokkaiah entitled *Irandaam Jaamangalin Kathai* (2004) translated into English as *The Hour Past Midnight* (2009) and Bama Faustina Soosairaj's *Karukku* (1992). C. K. Janu's autobiography *Mother Forest: The Unfinished Story of C. K. Janu* (2004), Nalini Jameela, a sex worker's autobiography, *The Autobiography of a Sex Worker* (2005) translated into English in 2010, and *Kallen Pokkudan*, an environmental activists' *My Life Among the Mangroves* (2004) are important contributions to Malayalam dalit literature. Gujarati dalit autobiography consists of writings like B. Keshrishivam's *Poorna Satya* (The Complete Truth), Dharambhai Shrimali's memoir *Bhandariyun*, and Harish Mangalam's *Aganzaal* (Eternal Flame) published in 2008. Life writings then become the fountainhead of the expression of denial that both the communities, dalits and aboriginals face. These would also become the rock on which the study is based.

Life writings as demonstrated above constitute a significant place in the literature of both the oppressed communities. The present study would depict the denial of discursive citizenship,

followed by a discursive granting of equal citizenship and a simultaneous denial of performative citizenship, and an attempt to the reclamation of same in the literary counterpublic by both the groups in select dalit and Australian aboriginal autobiographies. The dalit autobiographies that would be taken up for the study are Baby Kamble's *The Prisons We Broke* and Aravind Malagatti's *Government Brahmana*. The aboriginal autobiographies chosen for the present study are Gordon Briscoe's *Racial Folly* and Alice Nannup's *When the Pelican Laughed*. The reason for selecting these two particular autobiographies from the oeuvre of dalit writings is clear. All the chosen autobiographies chart a journey of the characters from subject to citizen status which fits the scope of the study. The comparison between the autobiographies of the two groups would serve to provide a graph of the manner in which citizenship has been denied, demanded, discursively provided, performatively denied and reclaimed in the literary counterpublic by both the groups. The study would deter from drawing parallels and instead focus upon the particularities of the demand, of whether the autobiographies portray a similar pattern of struggle for citizenship and the differences that underlay these similarities.

The study is divided into four chapters. Chapter II foregrounds the denial of a discursively equal citizenship in the sense that a discourse of equal citizenship eludes them through a close reading of Baby Kamble's *The Prisons We Broke*. However, it is Chapter III that culminates this debate when it depicts through the analysis of Aravind Malagatti's *Government Brahmana*, that even when the dalits are discursively granted equal citizenship and even granted positive discriminatory practices, the dalits are performatively denied equal citizenship. Chapter IV through an analysis of in Alice Nannup's *When the Pelican Laughed* depicts again the discursive denial of citizenship rights faced by the aboriginals at the hands of the settler British an illusionary culmination of which takes place with the discursive grant of equal citizenship piecemeal as depicted in Chapter V through the analysis of Gordon Briscoe's *Racial Folly*, but which unfolds the reality of the performative denial of citizenship hiding behind this illusion.

Chapter II

Towards Discursive Equal Citizenship: A Study of *The Prisons We Broke*

The Prisons We Broke foregrounds the narrative of Baby Kamble's life interspersed with the narrative of the Mahar community. It transcends the boundaries of a personal treatise and becomes a communal document, a feminist clarion call against the male oppression, and is the memoir of a community denied of all rights and forced into living in the fringes of society. The seed of dalit revolution is portrayed in the autobiography through revolutionary speeches, forced entry into temples, denouncement of Hindu festivals and celebration of the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Ambedkar, which in other words can be described as the record of the struggle for equal rights by dalits. The autobiography delineates in a unique manner, the growth of the Mahar community from the pre-Ambedkar days to the possibilities of gradual development in education and the changes it brought about in the Mahar community. In doing so, the autobiography talks about the problematics of equal citizenship, associated with dalit lives. The autobiography traces the trajectory of the denial of equal citizenship to dalits, to the struggle for the reclamation of it. Though the dalits were doubly denied citizenship rights at the hands of the British and the upper castes, the active and primary role of the upper castes in denying discursive equal citizenship to the dalits cannot be denied, a point that has been amply demonstrated and discussed in the introductory chapter. The study would cite specific instances from the text to depict the denial of discursively equal citizenship by dalits at the hands of the upper castes. Kamble's purpose, in writing this autobiography, is never to instigate pity or sympathy; it is instead to write a history of the dalit struggle for equal citizenship that concerns the dalits. The chapter considers the imaginative possibilities opened up by the autobiography to recuperate with the hegemonic structures of citizenship. The chapter in outlining the dalit struggle for citizenship would detail the initial denial of equal citizenship and the subsequent struggle put up by the dalits for the grant (even if discursively) of equal citizenship. The chapter would look into the manner in which the autobiography, *The Prisons We Broke*, portrays the denial of equal rights and the resultant refusal of discursive equal citizenship subsequently leading to a struggle for reclamation of the refuted equal citizenship through the narrative tropes of liberation, alienation, space and place. The denial of discursive citizenship would be demonstrated through the depiction of equal discursive

citizenship based on the parameters of equal citizenship outlined by Marshall in his "Citizenship and Social Class". *The Prisons We Broke* was initially published in a serialized form in 1984 in Stree, a Marathi woman's magazine, and was later published in a book form titled, *Jina Amucha* , in Marathi in 1986. It had since then been translated into many languages like Hindi, Punjabi, French and Spanish. The English translation of the book, *The Prisons We Broke*, was published in 2008. The last chapter published in the English version is an addition that was not published in the earlier versions.

2.1 The Struggle for Citizenship

Baby Kamble was born in 1929, a time when the dalit movement was surging ahead leaps and bound in their struggle for equal citizenship. The movement was spearheaded by none other than the highly qualified Mahar, Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar. Ambedkar was a recently returned graduate from Elphinstone College who had earlier spent three years in Columbia University and one at the London School of Economics. Bombay, the hub of many important political movements (the first session of the Indian National Congress, the site of the beginning of Phule's *Satyashodhak Samaj* easily saw the emergence of the strongest uprising of the dalits against the vicious nexus of caste practices prevalent in the society. Even before Ambedkar started his movement against untouchability, there were several unorganized uprisings against the Upper Caste dominance over the dalits. Gopal Baba Walangkar was among the first to send a petition agitation for the recruitment of the Mahars into the army and other government services. Shivram Janba Kamble, a retired army man in 1904 and then in 1910 sent petitions on behalf of the Mahars. The first claimed that the dalits are *kshatriyas*, and the latter asked for equal rights (citizenship) based on their recent service. A sub caste of Mahars, *Somvasiya*, worked for internal reforms by introducing education and other means of self-improvement. Caste Hindu reforms also carried alongside the Mahar fight for right to equal status and living. This included the *Satyashodhak Samaj* of Phule which worked for the autonomous living of the dalits and worked free of the patronage of the Caste Hindus. Another caste Hindu reform, in the period before Ambedkar's revolt against the brutality of caste practices, the Depressed Classes Mission started under the patronage of Vitthal Ramji Shinde. The president of this committee was a noted Brahman reformer, Nayanrao Chandavarkar. The committee undertook several efforts at reform, but that was presided, organized and controlled by the caste Hindus.

However, all such reforms came to an end by 1917 just when Ambedkar was about to enter the struggle for the rights of the untouchables. Inspite of winning the attention and benefits from many royalties and the British government, the question of representation of the untouchables brought up by the Montague-Chelmsford reforms brought an end to all such patronizing efforts by the caste Hindus. The dalit movement was given a totally new direction by the newly returned graduate, Bhimrao Ambedkar. He very soon made claim to the dalit leadership by organizing two conferences for the dalits and starting a journal, *Mooknayak* (The voice of the mute). Though the dalit agitation for separate representation to the dalits (which was in opposition to Shinde's demand for reserved seats for dalits within general constituencies) failed, it marked the beginning of the struggle for equal citizenship for the dalits. An independent conference of the dalits, the *Akhil Bharatiya Bahiskrut Parishad* (the All India Depressed Classes Conference) was organized in Nagpur on 30th and 31st of May, 1920. The demand for equal citizenship for the dalits reached its crux in 1927 with the *Mahad Satyagraha*. Prior to this, when Ambedkar returned in 1923 after his law degree, he founded the *Bahishkrut Hitakarini Sabha* (BHS) in 1924 for organizing mass awakening, and he was one of the untouchables appointed to the legislative council in 1926. The *Mahad Satyagraha* was the result of the first mass rally of BHS and was carefully planned in Mahad, a town in the Konkan, where the *Mahars* had strong connections and there was considerable caste Hindu support. The *Mahad Satyagraha*, according to Omvedt, represented "both the role of mass readiness for action and the genius of Ambedkar in giving leadership to it" (150). The 1920s witnessed several agitations for the opening up of public utilities like water tanks, temples and schools for the untouchables. In December 1927 took place another revolutionary act, the burning of the Manusmriti which garnered around ten to fifteen thousand supporters.

Kamble took birth in the time of such an agitation. After the Mahad Satyagraha, Ambedkar became immensely popular among the untouchables in general and the mahars in particular. It is this that Kamble echoes when she mentions the address by Ambedkar during the jatra in Jejuri. Kamble describes how Ambedkar had already become a talked of entity because of his overseas education. She puts her words in the conversation amongst people. "You know, they say this boy Ambedkar belongs to our Mahar community; but he has been educated at a place far beyond the seven seas…Imagine, he returned to Mumbai in a ship! And he can actually speak in the white sahib's own tongue and hold his own…This man is nothing less than a miracle of God" (63).

Working at a time when mass radicalism strongly informed the dalit movement, Kamble was highly influenced by it and this consciousness pervades her autobiography where she charts very deftly the discursive denial of equal citizenship meted out to the dalits that was the causal agent of these mass movements through the narrative trope of liberation, alienation, and place and space. The theme of the discursive denial of citizenship captures the condition of marginality by depicting the denial of equal citizenship using the parameters of equal citizenship as defined by Marshall in his essay, "Citizenship and Social Class", while the tropes of liberation, alienation, and sense of space and place help to understand the denial of, and struggle for equal citizenship.

Liberation has been a recurring theme in all dalit writings, and Kamble's work is no exception. Liberation is used in a sense that marks a shift from "ideas of removal of disabilities or the granting of privileges to more active ideas of winning freedom and self-determination" (Williams 183). Liberation in the autobiography, however, takes place not just in an individual capacity but at the level of the community. The mixing of the first person and third person narrative throughout the work amply demonstrates this. The translator Maya Pandit describes it as "sociobiography" and Kamble herself describes it as the "autobiography of the entire community" where "(t)he suffering of my people became my own suffering. Their experiences became mine…I really find it difficult to think of myself outside my community" (157, 136). However, in Kamble's book the trope of liberation does not arrive unaccompanied. It is accentuated and at the same time attenuated by the trope of alienation that pervades the work. Alienation here is used in the sense of estrangement. The book every now and again goes back to how the rejection/non-pursuance of liberation leads to alienation while the acceptance of the necessity of liberation also results in the feeling of alienation. In the former situation, alienation can be defined by what Seeman classifies as powerlessness and meaninglessness, where powerlessness implies the inability to influence or contribute to the society one lives in, and meaninglessness is defined by the lack of guide to conduct oneself in society (784-786). In the latter situation alienation is defined by the estrangement of a dalit from the extended bodies of one's family and community when the larger community remains unchanged. It focuses then on the losses of the self and community that comes with indulging in the quest for modernity. The sense of alienation is also aggrandized by the demarcated spaces and places that the dalits are limited to.

Public spaces have historically been denied to the dalits. The issue of the occupancy of the public space has been a major factor in the dalit struggle for equal citizenship. A majority of

discussion of public spaces has taken place in the context of European society, and the third world connotations of the meaning of public spaces have also been theorized by many scholars. The eminent historian Partha Chatterjee in his book *Nation and its Fragments* has cast public spaces in the mould of imperialism and dominant national resistance. However, scholars like Gail Omvedt, M.S.S Pandian have complicated this relationship by bringing in the traditional hierarchical structure of caste or the subaltern structures of resistance into the picture. They have brought to the fore the manner in which the public sphere in India practices exclusivity on the basis of caste and is enmeshed in a social hierarchy of casteist origin. This problematic scenario where the dalits are stripped bare of their performativity of equal citizenship in the public sphere with respect to the formation of public opinion which is an 'exercise in ideological construction with respect to who belongs to the national community' is a critical one to engage with (Marston 450). The notion of public sphere is thus integral to the dalit struggle of equal citizenship. Confined and marginalized, these people have been practically termed non-citizens, excluded for long from the performative citizenship of the public sphere that has been essentially Brahminical. The demand for an equal participation in the public sphere had taken the form of an enraged struggle in the nineteenth century, and continues even in the present, as Omvedt describes as the dalit desire to "establish, enlarge, and make increasingly effective a public sphere" (132). Kamble work uses this trope of space to depict how the struggle for equal citizenship constitutes the fight for equal access to public spaces and to redefine the public spaces as a true representation of the public sphere. The trope of space and place is frequently employed by Kamble as she describes the denial of discursive citizenship to the dalits and the struggle for equal citizenship undertaken by her community under the umbrage of Babasaheb Ambedkar.

2.2 Denial of Liberty

Marshall exclusively situates liberty in the domain of the individual which he terms as the "liberty of the person" (Marshall 10). Individual liberty becomes the basis for foregrounding the demand for other functionaries of equal citizenship to the community as a whole. Dalit literature represents not the liberty, but the confinement that the dalits face. This confinement manifests itself in all dimensions, especially the physical dimension or bodily dimension, whereby the dalits are denied individual liberty due to their physical polluting presence. The autobiography abounds in many instances of the denial of liberty to dalits in the physical dimension. So if the dalits happened to go to a shop in the village to buy something, they were supposed to stand far away from the shop and

beg for whatever they needed inspite of having the money to buy those products; "Standing in the courtyard, keeping a distance from the shopkeeper, she would pull her pallav over her face and then, using the most reverential and polite terms of address, she would beg her with utmost humility to sell her the things she wanted" (Kamble 13). Even the terms of address used by the mahar women to denote herself was supposed and expected to be full of insults to herself. And so Kamble states how the dalit woman would address the shopkeeper, "Appasab, could you please give *this despicable* Mahar woman some shikakai for one paisa and half a shell of dry coconut with black skin?" (Kamble 14) (My emphasis). The most dismal manifestation of the denial of liberty in the physical dimension can be witnessed when kamble mentions about how the dalits were not allowed to use the public spaces that was used by the caste Hindus;

> They (the dalits) were not allowed to use the regular road that was used by the higher castes. When somebody from these castes walked from the opposite direction, the Mahars had to leave the road, climb down into the shrubbery and walk through the thorny bushes on the roadside. (Kamble 52)

Even the surrender of the public spaces was not enough, the dalits had to ensure complete supplication to the caste Hindus even to the extent that they had to "cover themselves fully if they saw any man from the higher castes coming down the road, and when he came close they had to say, 'The humble Mahar woman fall at your feet master.' This was like a chant, which they had to repeat innumerable times, even to a small child if it belonged to a higher caste" (Kamble 52). The physical polluting presence took away from them even the right to presence. Kamble portrays such a state when she avers, "The tired and dusty Mahar women walked on one side of the road with utmost humility so as not to offend anyone. They tried to make themselves as inconspicuous as possible, hiding themselves from all others" (Kamble 54).

The dalits did not even have the liberty to dress according to their wish as they were bound by caste rules. As Kamble mentions,

> There were caste rules even for how one tucked the pleats. Mahar women had to tuck them in such a way that the borders remain hidden. Only high caste women had the privilege of wearing their saris in such a way that the borders could be seen. A Mahar woman was supposed to hide the borders under the pleats; otherwise it was considered an offence to the high castes. (Kamble 54)

The dalit did not have the freedom to choose a job of one's choice. Ambedkar delivers this point home very strongly when he says, "caste system is not merely division of labour. It is also a division of labourers" (15). They had to carry out the traditional caste assigned jobs as "the caste system will not allow Hindus to take to occupations where they are wanted if they donot belong to them by heredity" (Ambedkar 16). So the chances of liberation were difficult and the attempt to liberation was met with a strong resistance. Kamble explains how the Mahars were bound by their caste to perform duties for the village which were considered abominable. So "The yeskar Mahar had to wait upon the Patil's chawdi for the whole day. The yeskar's family would have to do any kind of work that the Patil assigned. This could be spread across various localities" (Kamble 74). What was most diminutive in the entire allocation was what Kamble describes about the labour paid in lieu of the service rendered. "The labour of the entire family was paid in terms of bhakris, which the yeskar had to go and collect from house to house every evening" (Kamble 75).

The caste-based allocation of duties caused the dalits to live in perpetual state of servility to the upper caste. In the village chawdi this servility found a profound expression when the mahar was allotted a place "but not inside the chawdi. His place was at a distance from the chawdi, out in the courtyard. There he was made to stand for the whole day. He wasn't even allowed to stand straight" (Kamble 78). And if any dignitary would happen to visit the village, it was again the burden of the mahar to carry out the menial tasks. So the yeskar mahar's wife was entrusted with the job of getting grass for the horse of the official and "The Mahar had to toil ceaselessly…he had to tie the horse to a peg, give it fresh green grass and water, and brush the horse's coat till his wrists ached…The Mahar also had to collect the horse droppings and clean the yard again. He had to chop firewood for the preparation of the sahib's food and announce the news of the sahib's arrival in other localities. He had to give the sahib's messages to various people as well" (Kamble 78-79). All these work done by him did not guarantee any pay, not in cash or kind, so "he would get food some times and at other times, he would go hungry" (Kamble 79). The Mahar was also responsible to carry the messages of death in the village to the relatives in nearby places. "Scorching sun, heavy rains and biting cold --- none of these mattered. He had to run without food to distant places" (Kamble 79). The caste system which has been often been ironically and incorrectly hailed as a neat structuring of society, does not provide those especially in the lower ranks with the freedom of choosing their jobs, instead it relies on the order of predestination to

accomplish the division of labour with strict regulation forbidding any deviance from this predestination.

The individual liberty of dalits was regulated according to the needs of the caste Hindus. The liberty of dalits was challenged most strongly in the physical or bodily dimension as it is associated with the signifier of pollution. The denial of liberty manifested itself in terms of refusal to enter the village areas and also in the refusal to choose a job of their own choice. The denial of individual liberty asserted its effect most significantly in the thoughts and beliefs of dalits resulting in their internalization of these ideals.

2.3 Denial of Freedom of Thought

The denial of liberty draws other problematics along with it. Chief among them is the problematic associated with the freedom of thought. The denial of liberty caused the subjugation of the free thought process of dalits. Dalits had no subjective thinking. Their thought process stemmed from their object position, where their thoughts and beliefs were shaped by the upper caste and in turn internalized by dalits. The internalization of the upper caste objective discourse of the bodily marker of pollution resulted in perpetuation of discrete hierarchical positions as per the dictates of the *jajmani* system. The stripping of the subject position also prevented them from countering the caste bound restrictions imposed on them. The point is accurately depicted by Dumont's statement that "the caste is *a state of mind*, a state of mind which is expressed by the emergence, in various situations, of groups of various orders generally called 'castes' (34) (Emphasis Original). This state of mind bore down heavily upon the dalits and concretised the discourse and consequent practice of caste even in the minds of the dalits. So when the shopkeeper warns his children not to touch a mahar woman, the woman too echoes the same sentiment;

> 'Chabu, hey you, can't you see the dirty Mahar woman standing there? Now don't you touch her. Keep your distance.' Immediately our Mahar woman, gathering her rags around her tightly so as not to pollute the child would say, 'Take care little master! Please keep a distance. Don't come too close. You might touch me and get polluted.' (Kamble 14)

The knowledge dissipated by the upper caste about the superiority attached with those who were twice-born was accepted unquestioningly by dalits, who also humbly accepted the associative

notion of their inferiority. Dalits would themselves fear intruding into the spaces designated for the upper castes as dalits considered themselves as the reified form of the concept of pollution. Kamble focuses on one particular episode when dalit women selling firewoods in the Brahmin locality shrink their polluted bodies into themselves; "Have we gone mad that we will pollute your house? You are god's own people. Don't we know even that?" (Kamble 55). Kamble also refers to another incident when a naïve newly-wed dalit bride fails to acknowledge an upper caste man walking on the road, the family members of the bride in their repudiation echo the words and teachings of the upper caste, "we eat their food, don't we? Should we pass by them without bowing" (52).

The upper caste perpetuated this condition by denying any access to knowledge to dalits. Knowledge as the fountainhead of thinking had the power to dismantle the superior position of the upper caste. The existence of the whole structure is dependent upon the "*necessary and hierarchical coexistence of the two opposites*" (Dumont 43) (Emphasis Original). Dalits were, hence, debarred from gaining knowledge by limiting them to their predestined, hereditary jobs. Kamble very vividly explicates this situation, "Just as the farmer pierces his bullock's nose and inserts a string through the nostrils to control it, you have pierced the Mahar nose with the string of ignorance. And you have been flogging us with the whip of pollution" (56). As the sole bearer of knowledge the upper caste was all powerful as they shaped the discourses of superiority and inferiority in society, condensed and crystallised this discourse by denying dalits any right to knowledge. This was further aggravated by the fact that the upper caste created a belief among dalits that the demeaning tasks assigned to them was a proud duty which they should accomplish with sincerity.

The upper caste also created an illusion of greatness in the minds of the dalits regarding the demeaning task of the yeskar Mahar who was a representative of the Mahar community and was entrusted with the most defiling, diminutive jobs; "The higher castes had created an illusion among the Mahars that the yeskar's stick was like a royal staff. Each yeskar considered this stick as a mark of honour for his family. Each family had their turn…People would feel so excited when their turn came, that they wouldn't be able to sleep. The next man received the stick with great pride. His wife would worship it with haldi and kumkum and pray to it with folded hands" (77). The denial of knowledge which had created internalization amongst dalits of their inferior position, and a passive acceptance of their inferiority are voiced by Kamble, "the entire (dalit)

community had sunk deep in the mire of such dreadful superstitions. The upper castes had never allowed this lowly caste of ours to acquire knowledge. Generations after generations, our people rotted and perished by following such a superstitious way of life" (37). The blind internalization of a falsely created belief about the nobleness of the task entrusted upon them even deterred them from raising their voice against the denigrated tasks that they were supposed to perform. They accepted the job and accomplished it proudly. The resistance of a group of Mahars to any attempt by any person to change the lives of the Mahars drives the point home that Kamble tries to explicate about the internalization of inferior values by dalits and considering it as homily.. Kamble describes a particular situation where her aaja tries to dissuade the *karbhari* from performing the caste-based duties and the *karbhari* meets this attempt to reformation with a strong resistance;

> 'The duty of being the yeskar has been earned by our forefathers. They worked so hard for it. They suffered a lot but they never thought about giving it up. And you suddenly want us to give it all up…why do you want us to put our children in schools? Are they going to become teachers? Or are they going to become Brahmins…you can't make the river flow backwards. The village land is our mother…the yeskar's stick is the mark of the happiness of the land. We have in us real Mahar flesh and blood…we, are born for this work. That's our sacred duty. Why should we give up our religion, our duty? We are the real original and pure Mahars!' (67)

2.4 Denial of Freedom of Faith

Denial of freedom of thought also encapsulates the denial of freedom of faith. So the dalits were denied the right to be a part of the Hindu society. The status of dalits with respect to the Hindu society was dubious. They were a part as well as apart from it. The dalits desired to be a part of it, but the Hindu religious dictates prevented them from being so. Kamble rues the fate of the dalits when she states, "Hindu philosophy had discarded us as dirt and thrown us into their garbage pits, on the outskirts of the village. We lived in the filthiest condition possible. Yet Hindu rites and rituals were dearest to our hearts" (Kamble 18). However, the upper caste Hindus who were the self-appointed custodians of the Hindu religion restricted and debarred the dalits from actively practicing and being a part of the Hindu community. The denial of freedom to the dalits of being a

part of the Hindu society is reflected when Kamble avers, "We desperately tried to preserve whatever bits of Hindu culture we managed to lay our hands on" and yet the denial did not mean that dalits turned away from the Hindu gods or society. "It was to the Hindu gods that they prayed for deliverance from their suffering" (Kamble 18). The upper castes were not ready to grant the dalits the right to follow a faith similar to them and hence they were debarred from entering the temples, or practicing any ritual that was similar to the upper castes. The dalits had to face the wrath of the upper castes in case they attempted to cross their prescribed limit as dictated by the upper castes. The dalits had followed all such limitations throughout the centuries, and it was only with the arrival of Ambedkar in the scene that the dalits tried to break free of the centuries-old dictates of the Hindu scriptures which imposed restrictions on them. Kamble describes one such prohibition as prohibition from entering the Hindu temples, and the manner in which they tries to overthrow this with encouragement from Ambedkar:

> Once Baba sent a telegram asking us to exert our rights as the sons of the soil, by forcibly seeking entry into temples and hostels. The hostel students discussed this all through the night. They made a plan for the campaign. They planned as to who would enter which temple. They chose the Viththal temple in the Shimpi lane, which was next to the Brahmin lane. The Brahmins came to know of this plan. With fire in their blood, the young activists from the Harijan Boarding set off to forcibly enter the Viththal temple. They were shouting slogans of Ambedkar's victory…The tallest among them was a boy called Anand Ahiwale who was the son of a wrestler. He dashed through the ring of the Brahmins (created to protect the idol from the polluting touch of the mahars) and managed to touch the idol (Kamble 126)

Yet this attempt of dalits of foregrounding their faith was not to be bereft of any resistance; "the Brahmins had surrounded the idol of Viththal to protect it from the polluting touch of the Mahars. Many wielded lathis. They wanted to stop the Mahar boys from entering the temple at any cost" (Kamble 126). The resistance of the upper castes to the foregrounding of the desire of the mahars to assert the right to follow a faith of their choice was so strong that when inspite of the attempt of the brahmins to prevent the dalits from touching the idol failed, they came up with remedial measures of denying the dalits to follow the faith of their choice. The remedial measure was a ploy by the upper castes to deny even a flimsy presence of the dalits by undoing the act of the dalit

entry into the temple, which was problematic, as with the denial of the even-so flimsy presence at one particular moment even though forced, they deny the possibilities of a dalit presence in the future. The hopes on the part of the dalits to be a part of the Hindu society sometime in the future are dashed with this denial. Kamble describes the remedial measure;

> The Brahmin priests in the temple announced that the Mahars had polluted the temple. They also declared that god Viththal's face has become contorted and that tears were flowing from goddess Rukmayi's eyes…Priests organized the chanting of scriptures and purificatory rituals to wash away the pollution with milk and gomutra. Finally, after one and an half months of incessant chanting, ceaseless worship, and of course, substantial grants from the king, the Brahmin priests managed to cleanse the gods of the pollution… (126-127).

The violation of the codes of the *jajmani* system suggests in such a case a fall in the social status of the dominant group and a challenge to the established *jajmani* system. And the social situation between the superior and inferior is reversed, making the superior vulnerable (to impurity) and use the outward expression of this vulnerability to dominate over the lower castes. This vulnerability is then made a strong reason for the denial of freedom of faith to the dalits. The denial of freedom of faith is significantly foregrounded in the book by the prohibition imposed on the dalits from being a part of the Hindu faith, and more so when the demand of the dalits is to be accommodated into it on an equal footing as the upper castes.

2.5 Denial of freedom to own property

The dalits were forced to live in as Kamble describes "dirt pits on the periphery of the village, like discarded rags, ignored by society" (35). The epistemic violence meted out to them prevented them from developing an idea of a decent living, resulting in the dalits being propertyless, which was aggrandized by the dictates of the upper caste Hindus which debarred them from holding any property. Speaking about the idea of property, Kamble remarks sarcastically, "our place was in the garbage pits outside the village, where everyone threw away their waste. That was where we lived, in our poor huts, amidst all the filth!" (Kamble 49). The possession of dalits could be defined in terms of being "masters only of the dead animals thrown into those pits by the high castes" where right to possession meant a "fight with cats and dogs and kites and vultures to establish our right over the carcasses, to tear off the flesh from the dead bodies" (Kamble 49). The dalits had no right

to possess any land except for in the periphery of the village, and the lack of education kept them for long in the depths of ignorance ensuing into life-long misery. It was a life full of make-believe illusions. Kamble describes the things dalits counted as wealth, "one big clay pot, one mud bowl to eat from and a cracked coconut shell with a piece of wood nailed to it which functioned as spoon" (39). The clay pots in a dalit home constituted of all precious treasures which was taken great care of and passed on from one generation to the next.

But Kamble draws the attention of the readers about how the denial of property was inconsequentially dismissed by dalits who sunk in the depth of ignorance and tried to make the maximum of whatever they were offered. To put in Kamble's words, "so far we have been calling our huts, royal palaces; our poor husbands, kings; and the leftovers we got, rich dishes" (41). Ambedkar states about how dalits were forbidden from holding land, precious metals as belongings as it was seen as an insult to the upper caste. He cites the instance of the Balais of Indore district who were not materially allowed to own or use things that the upper caste hindus did like wearing "gold-lace pugrees…dhotis with coloured or fancy borders…gold or silver ornaments" (6). He also mentions an incident in Jaipur where the use of ghee by a lower caste infuriated the upper caste to the extent that it led to violence against the lower caste (8). Their right to own property was routinely infringed even sometimes to the extent of forced evictions. These instances prove that inspite of having the natural right to live like an upper caste, dalits were systematically denied the right to own property or in other words to follow a similar life style to the upper castes.

2.6 Denial of Education

Power and knowledge lie in a circular relationship with each other, where one produces and sustains the other (Foucault 1977). Power is also intricately connected to truth and the production of knowledge is further dependent on discursive truth. With truth as a moderating factor, power and knowledge are strongly dependent on each other where, "there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (Foucault 27). The interrelation of power and discourse enable the governing of the world. Power can be exercised over things that knowledge would be invested in. This significant relation of power and knowledge has been used by the Brahmins to consolidate power in the society by creating a monopoly over education.

Education was witnessed as a property of the upper caste and the lower caste was denied any opportunity of being educated. The lower caste had internalized the dictum of the upper caste thus accepting their hereditary caste-based jobs unquestioningly and in the process ruling out the necessity of education for themselves. The denial of freedom of thought to dalits was the outcome of the dalit ignorance of the importance of education even to the extent that dalits themselves denied education to be a significant aspect in their lives. When Kamble's aaja inspires the people of his community to give up the demeaning tasks and save their future generations from the dreary life, he faces criticism from the people of his own community as they repeat the internalized thoughts propagated by the upper caste, "Stop preaching us this Christian knowledge. Why do you want us to put our children in schools? Are they going to become teachers? Or are they going to become Brahmins? Send them to school indeed" (Kamble 67)! Education was visualized as the domain of the brahmins and dalits restrained themselves from venturing outside of their domain of caste-ordained jobs.

Education became the backbone and preserver of a hegemonic social construction favouring the upper caste Hindus. Parulekar points out how "the depressed (or untouchable) classes had no access to schooling. They were, as a rule not allowed to attend the indigenous schools whatever might be the caste or creed of the teacher. Tradition held them back with an iron hand allowing no exception under any circumstances whatever" (1945: LVI). Gough reiterates the same point when he notes that "it was seen as improper, even ungodly for Adi Dravidas to read or write, and it was traditionally forbidden for both Adi-Dravida and non-Brahman castes even to hear the recitation of the vedas" (Gough 1981 in Saberwal 1991: 733). Though attempts at reformation were began by the missionaries and the colonial government, they were constrained by their appeasement of the dominant castes. The dominant castes, recepients of the modern colonial education, were themselves stuck in a dualism which Bhattacharya pins as "an intellectual adherence to egalitarianism co-existing with its denial in the realm of education in practice" (11) leaving no option for dalits, but to fight for their own right to education. The awareness of the importance of education for fighting against the degraded status was then brought to them by a dalit, Babasaheb Ambedkar. Kamble informs her readers about how affected they were by Ambedkar's plea to educate themselves, "Education is your right, you must go to school----were stamped on our hearts. So there was no question of our not going to school" (140).

The binary of purity/pollution pervaded the social formation, which favoured upper castes, and hindered the acquisition of education by dalits. The discursive binary of purity/pollution helped create the hegemony of upper castes which was further enforced by the performativity of it. Kamble mentions the instance of when a brahmin girl in her school demonstrates through her mother's instructions the manner in which this performativity takes place and repeatedly consolidates itself; "My mother has come to know that Mahar girls sit in our class and she doesn't allow me to enter the house unless I have a bath" (108). The brahmin mother in doing this not only bindly follows the binary, but also ensures that the binary thrives and the educational process does not obscure the distinction between castes.

The process of education was meant to benefit only upper castes and dalits were dissuaded from attending the spaces of education using discrimination. Kamble depicts this discrimination as she mentions how her school "was a Brahmin school since all the teachers and a majority of the students were Brahmins. The teachers used to be awfully worried about our polluting them and harassed us a lot as if we were their enemies. They treated us like lepers, really. They wouldn't even look at us" (140). The discrimination at times even attained the structure of violence, "cherumar (ancient slave caste) boys used to have their books snatched out of their hands as they went to schools established for them in Calicut" (Hunter in Nambissan 1012). Kamble depicts a similar violence perpetrated by the teachers of the school; "the teacher would hurl insult at us, to hit us with a long ruler, and make us bend down and hold our toes till school was over" (109) Or at times dalits were made to feel like intruders in the educational spaces to ascertain that they soon leave the educational spaces that were designed for upper castes. Kamble says that "the teacher had allotted us a place in the corner near the door from where we could not move till school was over for the day. The blackboard would be in another corner" (108). The denial was materialized not just by spatial demarcation in educational spaces but creating hurdles in the path of learning of dalits. So Kamble mentions as if validating it, "we could neither see what the teacher was writing on the board, nor could we raise our doubts in the classroom" (108). Richley mentions the same thing when he states with respect to Multan, "boys of low castes such as chamars, musalis and sansis occasionally attend ordinary schools but are seated apart from the children of the higher caste" (206). The creation of social hierarchy in terms of denial of education to dalits consolidated and perpetuated the position of upper castes.

2.7 Denial of Justice

When justice is situated in the dalit context, it includes everything, from equality, fraternity, liberty and human rights. Yet in the context of equal citizenship, justice signifies equality with others by law. In the Indian context, law has been historically defined in terms of "strict observance of enforcement of Hindu law, based on the four varnas and an elaborated caste system" (Guru 41). It is in echo of the same thought that Ambedkar states,

> caste has destroyed the sense of public charity…A Hindu's public is his caste. His loyalty is restricted only to his caste…There is no sympathy to the deserving. There is no appreciation of the meritorious. There is no charity to the needy…There is charity but it begins with the caste and ends with the caste. There is sympathy but not for men of other caste (27).

When Ambedkar criticizes the lack of charity and sympathy, he is critiquing the lack of rationality, and bankruptcy of a sense of justice in caste Hindus for whom the only social community is the caste to which a person belongs to that can be extended to the members of other high castes. This resulted in the establishment of a hegemonic social order which dictates the cultural superiority of caste hindus over dalits and favours the propagation of inequality over justice. Justice for them was not equal treatment for all, but following the traditional hierarchical mode of living which preserves the inequal treatment meted out to the lower castes. Justice was replaced by compassion by some liberal caste Hindus. The compassion that was showed to dalits arose out of the need to appropriate the dissenting voices of the lower caste in the brahminical fold so as not to allow them the space to overrule and break the hegemonic structure propagated by caste Hindus. The compassion did not stem from the desire to pronounce dalits as a part of the hindu caste society, resulting in an attitude of caste Hindus "marked by moralistic unconcernedness" (Guru 42). This did not allow dalits to be deemed as subjects deserving of justice. Though the colonial government did try to make certain changes, yet in order to avoid a confrontation with the upper castes whom they wanted to appease even while ruling over them, had the following position, "it is not desirable for masters or Inspectors, to endeavour to force on a social change and…undesirable to urge [the low-castes] to claim a right about which they are themselves *indifferent"* (Indian Education Commission Report Qtd. in Paik 40).

Kamble depicts the denial of justice most tellingly in her autobiography. Inequality had been the watchword for upper castes in their dealings with dalits. So equality to dalits was relegated to a state of oblivion. Equality to dalits was trodden down upon by upper castes by propagating the discourse of necessity of maintaining the traditional hierarchical structure, and instilling in the minds of dalits a pride associated with the demeaning jobs. The traditional structure and the internalization of the idea of the significance of the jobs done by them prevented dalits from raising their voice against the inequality perpetrated against them. The dictum of the karma theory, whereby, the birth-determined caste was the outcome of the actions of a previous birth added spice to the cake. The dalit bore all insults and humiliations unprotestingly. So when they visited the village shops and were treated with contempt, they would bear it silently, sometimes assisting the upper caste in their own denigration. She would address the shopkeeper in a language where she would demean herself and tell, "'Appasab, could you please give this despicable Mahar woman some shikakai for one paisa and half a shell of dry coconut with black skin'" (Kamble 14). Or when the children of upper castes came near her, and the shopkeeper shouted them instructions, "'Chabu, hey you, can't you see the dirty Mahar woman standing there? Now don't you touch her. Keep your distance'" (Kamble 14). To this statement the mahar woman in a compliant action and affirmative tone told the children, "'Take care little master! Please keep a distance. Don't come too close. You might touch me and get polluted'" (Kamble 14). In order to preserve the caste division, upper castes kept their rituals totally distinct from dalits. Yet, dalits did not give up on Hindu culture and rituals and tried to cling very hard to it, harbouring the hope to be accepted in the Hindu society, and living a life like upper castes;

> we desperately tried to preserve whatever bits of Hindu culture we managed to lay our hands on…Our minds somehow kept on hoping against hope---that we too would be able to live like the upper castes, that we too would be able to enjoy wealth like the patil's wife and practice the same rituals as them (Kamble 18)

Instead the dalits were confined to the liminal space of the village where they desired to live like an upper caste while fighting against the odds of their life. The grave inequality meted out to dalits did not move the upper caste, nor did the faithful adherence of the dalits to the laws of untouchability cull them into action. Instead they attempted to perpetuate the inequal social system as homily. Kamble states "the upper castes had never allowed this lowly caste of ours to acquire knowledge. Generations after generations, our people rotted and perished by following such a

superstitious way of life" (37). Yet the idea of fighting for equality never struck them. The life at the periphery of the village was a far cry from the struggle for, and granting of equality. The practice of inequality included the denial of humanly living to them. Kamble echoes this as she states, "we were just like animals, but without tails. We could be called human only because we had two legs instead of four" (49). They were left to establish their equality with the animals who lived with them

> in the garbage pits outside the village, where everyone threw away their waste…We were masters only of the dead animals thrown into those pits by the high castes. We had to fight with cats and dogs and kites and vultures to establish our right over the carcasses, to tear off flesh from the dead bodies. (Kamble 49)

Far from the grant of equality, the dalits were "kept on a tight leash. The upper castes were scared that if the hold was loosened even a little, the suppressed community would spring up in revolt and break their domination" (Kamble 18). The dalits had to follow the custom of bowing to the upper castes if they encountered the upper castes anywhere. Kamble describes the ritual ordained for such an occasion; "When somebody from these castes (the upper castes) walked from the opposite direction, the Mahars had to leave the road, climb down into the shrubbery and walk through the thorny bushes on the roadside. They had to cover themselves fully if they saw any man from the higher castes coming down the road, and when he came close, they had to say, 'The humble Mahar women fall at your feet master'. This was like a chant, which they had to repeat innumerable times, even to a small child if it belonged to a higher caste" (52). The extent of injustice perpetrated by upper castes on dalits can be explicated by these words of Kamble, "a life without food, living space and clothes--- it was a story of permanent deprivation and suffering" (79).

Dalits were denied the right to an equal knowledge that sunk them in the mire of superstition. And any attempt to gain knowledge was met with a strong resistance from upper castes. Though every aspect of the lives of the upper castes was defined by the contribution made towards it by the dalits, yet the upper castes claimed their superiority, forgetting the existence of the dalits. The law of chaturvarna, in a nutshell, dictated that dalits should be denied all material comforts, acquisition of knowledge, or performance of any action that resembled the upper castes. In other words, dalits were denied the right to justice by the refusal to a right to equality.

The denial of justice is also inclusive of the perpetration of violence. A critique of violence to borrow Benjamin's words, "can be summarized as that of expounding its relation to law and justice" (277). Violence, then can be stated to have a "lawmaking character" (Benjamin 284). In the dalit context, violence has been wielded as a weapon by upper castes to control and delimit the actions of dalits. Violence in the dalit case focuses on the means than the ends, as the ends are predefined by the Hindu scriptures. The denial of justice in the form of perpetration of violence against dalits dubs the use of violence as a moral means as it justifies the moral ends of maintaining the caste hierarchy and social order. The violence that was meted out to dalits can be defined as sanctioned violence, a violence that was built upon the Hindu philosophical sanctioning of a social order punctuated by the theory of karma. The violence was monopolized by the upper castes vis-a-vis the lower castes, and any existence of it outside the domain of operation of the upper castes was not allowed. This paved the way for the upper castes to be violent towards the lower castes, but the lower castes did not hold the same kind of sanction. The violence then was a one way approach where the moral ends dictated by the religious scriptures become the sole basis of the perpetration of violence and the victim against whom this violence takes place. The violence perpetrated by caste Hindus took place in an individual basis, but was collective in nature. Though the violence might have taken place against one individual, yet the property of the violence made it collective. So an act of violence against an individual was displayed in such a way that the effect was collective. The violence served the moral end of disciplining the deviants in accordance to the norms laid down by the scriptures to maintain the hegemony of the upper castes. The violence in the dalit context can then be termed to be collective in nature and disciplining in function.

Kamble's work foregrounds many such cases of violence where violence was meted out as a sanctioned form, pushing the dalits down to a subhuman level and holding them there. Kamble cites an instance when a naïve young dalit bride walked past a person of an upper caste without acknowledging him, raising a storm for the Mahar community. (It was a custom for the Mahars to bow down and greet a person of a upper caste whenever they meet one). The man who belonged to the upper caste did not hand down a reprimand to the girl who committed the mistake in the eyes of the *chaturvarna* law. Instead the reprimand was issued to the community at large. The violence and disciplining was directed at the girl and through the girl at the community. The outcome of it all would not just be punishing the present deviance, but also to prevent any challenge to or deviance from taking root. Kamble describes the situation,

> the master would simply explode with rage. He would march straight to the Mahar chawdi, summon all the Mahars there and kick up a big fuss. 'Who, just tell me, who the hell is the new girl? Doesn't she know that she has to bow down to the master? Shameless bitch! How dare she pass me without showing due respect?...You Mahars are transgressing your limits. It is all this food that you get free of cost that has made you forget your place, isn't it? But listen carefully. Next time, if anybody passes by me without bowing, you've had it! No mercy would be shown to you any longer. What do you take us for? Are we Mahars like you or do you take us for naïve children? Daring to pass by me without bowing! Think twice before doing any such thing again!' (53).

The upper castes achieve their motive of venting their anger on the entire dalit community using the instance of a naïve young girl. Collective disciplining is achieved as the Mahars try to placate and pacify him swearing eternal servility and obedience to the laws of the *chaturvarnas* and the preachers of it. The dalits would then beg for mercy:

> "No, no kind master! That girl is a new animal in the herd! Quite foolish and ignorant. If she has erred, I, her sasra, fall at your feet, but please forgive us for this crime…master, we will not let such a thing happen again! Please forgive us this time.' (53)

Disciplining and violence in the dalit context was never individualistic. Any error was viewed as the error of the entire community and any term of caution was handed down to the community as a whole, forcing the dalits to define and shape their identity with respect to the community. For the sake of disciplining, the dalits were never addressed individually, but as a community. Kamble mentions another instance of disciplining that the upper castes indulged in when the Mahar women went to the villages to sell wood, the brahmin kaki would instruct the Mahar women as "'Listen carefully, you dumb Mahar women, check the sticks well. If you overlook any of the threads sticking to the woods, there will be a lot of trouble'" (55). The same communitarian tone was used repeatedly to caution them, "these idiotic mahar women! Hey you, why do you bring these brats along? They'll touch things and pollute everything" (55). The means of violence adopted by the upper castes can be regarded as collective in nature for the achievement of the ends that are scripturally moral and maintains the hegemony of the upper castes.

The discursive denial of equal citizenship to dalits has been portrayed using the depiction of the denial of the constituents of equal citizenship. The denial that the dalits face in this stage is at the discursive level itself, which also encapsulates a denial of performative citizenship. There was no discursive equality to dalits, and the dalits under the leadership of Babasaheb Ambedkar participated in mass movements for the discursive grant of equal citizenship. The initiative taken by Ambedkar, for the struggle of equal citizenship showed results, when the former untouchables gained equal citizenship, granted by the constitution of India, discursively. How and whether the discursive grant of equal citizenship affect the citizenship status of the dalits in terms of performativity of the equal citizenship will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter III

Denial of Performative Citizenship in Aravind Malagatti's *Government Brahmana*

Originally published in Kannada in 1994 and translated into English in 2007, Aravind Malagatti's book, *Government Brahmana*, is the first dalit autobiography published in Kannada which also received the Karnataka Sahitya Academy award. What links Kamble's book to Malagatti's is that the latter is a manifestation of the hope of a grant of equality that culminates every chapter of Kamble's book. In doing that the autobiography completes the saga of denial started by Kamble, by depicting the discursive granting of equal citizenship by the constitution of the country after India became a republic in 1950, and simultaneous performative stripping of equal citizenship.

The book is formulated into episodes, expressing the vignettes of the author. The episodic series may look like a fragmented, disjointed narrative to the reader, and the reader might question the self-actualization achieved by the author through the act of writing the autobiography. However, it would be an aberration to interpret the episodic nature of the narrative to be deconstructive (commonly found in western writing), rather it can be viewed as a variation of storytelling often created often with the purpose of inducing a sense of alienation in the readers. The effect it intends to create can be summarized in the words of the literary critic, William Monroe, "(a)lienistic performers 'front' what is predictable and comfortable about culture by confronting and affronting readers who may feel touched in ways that make them uncomfortable" (121). This discomfort then decentres the traditional meaning of literature while bringing forth the unnerving social reality of the upper caste dominated Indian society and their display of equality. In questioning the Indian society, the autobiography outlines the discursive granting of equal citizenship, and the subsequent web of performative denial of it, a problematic that has been deepened with the granting of differential citizenship, by the aid of affirmative action policies, to the dalits. In depicting the denial of performative citizenship, the chapter critically looks into the "aspiration to personhood through the realisation of full citizenship" of the dalits (Ganguly 433). In doing so it seeks to redefine this quest whereby the dalits have been granted nothing more than the status of a second class citizen. The book in depicting the performative denial of equal citizenship, depicts the denial of "the endeavour to recover subject positions, lives, possibilities,

and political actions that have been marginalized, distorted, suppressed and even forgotten" (Pandey, *Subaltern Citizens* 7). As equal citizenship entails a very important concept of belonging, the chapter not only looks into the denial of equal citizenship in terms of gain of equal resources (with the aid of differential treatment) that is handed down by a democratic machinery but also what the historian Gyanendra Pandey describes as "the threat s/he poses of becoming a full member of the community…about belonging- in a society and its self construction" ("Subaltern as Subaltern Citizen" 4735). In other words the chapter concentrates on the restrictions and limitations that the upper caste imposes on the dalits in terms of denial of equal citizenship in order to maintain the condition of subalternity and prevent them from being at par with the upper caste.

The normative cruelty practiced by the caste Hindus is illustrated in the autobiography using several instances of denial of performative citizenship inspite of the constitutional granting of discursive equal citizenship. However, the autobiography is significant not only because of the narration in lurid details of the indignities heaped upon the dalits inspite of being equal citizens, but also because it mentions in clear and sometimes indirect tone, the failure of the corrective measures of the government in eradicating caste based discrimination by enforcing a performativity of the discursive equal citizenship granted to the dalits. The discursive denial of equal citizenship rights had been strongly protested by the dalits under the leadership of Babasaheb Ambedkar resulting in their being granted equal citizenship with the formation of the independent republic of India. However, Ambedkar had realized that the demand for equal citizenship rights would not usher in equality, as the dalits would be burdened by the ritual notions of hierarchy embedded in the Indian society which would prevent their growth and development, and would be overshadowed by the highly evolved and already flourishing upper castes. In the light of these realizations, Ambedkar had demanded for equality in discursive citizenship not on equal terms but on the basis of differential terms. The demand for differential citizenship was fuelled by the fear that a citizenship on equal terms would rob the dalits of the performative aspect of it. The grant of differential citizenship notwithstanding, the fear of dalits being stripped of their performative rights has materialized, with the differential citizenship functionaries instead of closing the gap between the discursive and performative citizenship, widening it (Mukherjee and Jha 43). Malagatti's book depicts this denial of performative citizenship inspite of, and often due to the play of functionaries of differential citizenship. Malagatti through the autobiography focuses

upon the shortcomings of differential treatment in terms of the failure of the narrative of equality and affirmative action policies in granting dalits the status of performative equal citizenship. Malagatti's work then depicts the way in which the demand for a differential treatment has resulted in creating an unequal status rather than achieving the goal of equality even though the legal provisions in India and socio-political narratives do provide for special privileges in order to bring the discriminated or the 'lesser citizens' at par with the 'greater citizens' or the privileged in the country.

The depiction of this denial of performative citizenship is analyzed in Malagatti's book using the same parameters on whose basis Kamble describes the discursive denial of equal citizenship. In the process the disparity in the process between the discursive granting and performative granting of citizenship or what Pakulski describes as the gap between the "claimed rights" (fulfilled through discursive granting of rights) and "sanctioned rights" (unfulfilled with respect to the participative aspect of those rights) is revealed (73). The parameters used to drive home the point of performative denial of equal citizenship are assisted by the narrative tropes of alienation, journey from the rural to the urban space and modernity.

Alienation occurs as a distinctive trope in the book. Malagatti depicts alienation as a disconnection of a dalit from his roots, origin, as well as his family inspite of and due to modernity. The feeling of alienation is heightened while attempting to live a casteless, modern life. Inspite of Frederic Jameson's description of the alienation associated with modernity as "the expression of a pathos inherent in the traditional romantic diatribe against 'modernity' and its 'ills'" (130), in the dalit context modernity has always been projected as a boon. The dalit leaders Jyotirao Phule and Ambedkar have tirelessly preached about the boon of modernity for a casteless society as "the language of rights to equality, freedom and dignity, self-respect and recognition" (Guru 123). Modernity was meant to give the dalits equal opportunities in jobs, education and other amenities (at times assisted by positive discriminatory policies) to let the dalits shed off the centuries of caste prejudices and live like an equal. It was supposed to let the dalits be a part of the Indian middle class, and live without the stigma of casteism, and a development of self-awareness. However, the promise of emancipation by modernity remains unfulfilled as it "has offered only a crippled and fragmentary sense of time and corresponding notion of freedom to dalits" (Guru 125). Shalini Ramchandran in her study on Marathi dalit literature touches upon the incomplete

and fragmented deliverance of modernity and also focuses upon the sense of alienation that it induces. She states, "the emphasis is on a certain unfeasibility of subjecthood, as the inhabitants of the stories feel the pull of modernity, but are punished, fragmented in the process of seeking entry into it" (31). Malagatti's book brings forth this alliance between alienation and modernity, where adherence to modern ways of life is necessary and at the same time induces a sense of alienation and does not deliver on its promise of emancipation.

Malagatti's work also employs the narrative trope of the journey to the city to elaborate the persistence of caste-based prejudice even after living in the midst of modern subjects. Journey to the city has always functioned as a metaphor of self-transformation in western and non-western literature. And one can always mark the binary that has existed between the meanings that the city and village have been invested with. Raymond Williams, significantly puts this binary into words, "On the country has gathered the simple idea of a natural way of life; of peace, innocence and simple virtue. On the city has gathered the idea of an achieved center, of learning, communication, light" (Williams 46). The city has been identified as a modern space functioning with anonymity and caste obliviousness. The meaning of the city in the imagination of the dalits is brought to the forefront by the thinker Ashish Nandy,

> Obviously the anonymity and atomization in the city are doubly seductive in a society scarred by socio-economic schisms and cultural hierarchies. A Dalit, landless, agricultural worker or rural artisan seeking escape from the daily grind and violence of a caste society has reasons to value the impersonal melting pot of a metropolitan society. He is ever willing to defy the pastoralists' or the environmentalists' negative vision of the city. Because to lose oneself in the city is to widen one's freedom in a way not possible by migrating to another village, however distant from home. (12)

Malagatti foregrounds in his book how such a simplistic derivation of the freedom-bondage binary between the space in the city and village is fraught with inconsistencies by portraying that caste-based distinctions remain alive in cities and villages alike. The role of the city then takes on alternative forms in the minds of the dalits other than the ascribed meanings. Using these tropes as bedrock the study would now build upon it the depiction of the denial of performative citizenship to the dalits.

3.1 Denial of Liberty

When Kamble depicts the denial of liberty in her book, it is the discursive denial that she largely portrays. Towards the end of her book, Kamble also depicts the struggle put up by dalits for their individual liberty inspired by the ideas of Ambedkar. Malagatti's book depicts the culmination of this struggle with the discursive grant of equality on positive discriminatory terms bestowed upon the dalits, and picks up from this point onwards. Malagatti depicts how, liberty, an important constituent of the grant of discursive equality, is performatively denied to the dalits.

Malagatti cites several instances to denote the performative denial of liberty to dalits. The most significant in all the instances takes place when Malagatti states the episode of his father's tryst with the assertion of performative liberty. Keeping with the discursive grant of equal citizenship by the legal and constitutional forces of the country, Malagatti's father "went to the temple well and drew water...These people, after drawing water, did not even take it home. Drawing the water from the well, splashing it on the ground...not from one well or two, but all the wells in the village. The whole of fifteenth August was spent doing this work" (Malagatti 113). Drawing water freely from the village wells, without any protest from the upper castes becomes symbolic of the liberty that the dalits sought in all other acts of life. Referring to the meaning of independence to the dalits, Malagatti remarks, "The different ideas each person holds about freedom! Vivekananda had his own idea of a nation; Sardar Patel's idea of the nation revolved around gallantry and vigour. Nehru had a vision of a modern India and Gandhiji a vision of Ram rajya or the ideal notion while Ambedkar had the idea of a land where human rights could be claimed. For an ordinary person like my father, an independent country meant a country where nobody could obstruct us from drawing drinking water" (113-114). The century old denial to dalits of access of the public spaces and the amenities associated with it is brought to the fore here. Though the varied ideas of independence of the great leaders of this country have materialized with the independence of India, yet the common dalit's dream of a performative right to liberty remains unfulfilled. Malagatti's father's assertion of the performative right to liberty with the grant of discursive right to liberty did not go unheeded and unpunished by the upper castes. Malagatti states,

> On fifteenth August, people just watched them, perhaps because there was an air of uncertainty. But the next day there was news in abundance of the tables being

> turned. There was contempt and gnashing of teeth! Some had removed the pulleys from the well and some were waiting for the arrival of these people with the threat, 'Let them come today.' (114)

The ordinary dalit's life receives no liberty and freedom from the colonization at the hands of the upper castes. Malagatti further describes a situation proving the denial of performative citizenship when his father inspite of qualifying for a teaching job was not allowed to perform his job duty. Malagatti describes the situation thus,

> When he received the appointment order, he went around the lane, fell at the feet of the elders to seek their blessings and then reported to work. But everyone was surprised when he came back with a forlorn face. He revealed the reason to my aayi and avva. 'When I reported, the headmaster said "Take a transfer to some other place. Or else...you won't be alright here." "No sir, I will do my best to adjust here." Then all the teachers got together, "No, you just cannot join the school." "If you have brought the letter from the government, take it away, and tell the government that you are not going to work here. Get the place of work changed or else you will pay for it. (111)

A clear violation of the discursive rights of liberty to the dalits is depicted here. The differential rights meant to assist the discursive rights have not been able to change the performative denial of citizenship that the dalits have to face, but rather spices up by the violence that the upper castes have resorted to in order to maintain their cultural hegemony, and to prevent the dalits from foregrounding the performativity of the discursive social citizenship rights granted to them. As the threats faced by Malagatti's father depicts, a life with the denial of liberty is forced upon the dalits, and the anger in the upper castes because of the grant of differential citizenship creates circumstances so as to prevent the dalits from foregrounding their performative citizenship claims and liberty. The freedom of choosing one's job, and not following the caste-ordained, pre-determined jobs is still not available to the dalits, and the treatment that Malagatti's father receives from the upper castes who occupy the public spaces of education goes on to show that the performative grant of liberty to dalits is still a far cry.

The upper castes are not ready to accept and allow the dalits to leave their hereditary jobs and venture into the public spaces dominated by them. However, this position has changed, for better or for worse, and the direct instances of violence meted out by the upper caste towards the dalit foregrounding of performative citizenship has been replaced by scathing, bitter comments and indirect acts of violence towards the dalits to deny them the liberty they seek for. Malagatti describes how when ousted from that particular village, Malagatti's father tried his luck at another school in a nearby village. The school was located in a temple, making things more difficult for him as he was not allowed to enter the temple to teach because of the century-old dictates of upper castes who did not allow the dalits and former untouchables to enter the temple. Even after the grant of discursive equality, the liberty to enter the temple could not be achieved. So Malagatti's father had to encounter such scathing indirect comments as the village head made when approached by Malagatti's father to start the temple school, "'Why do *you people* need a teacher's job? There is no school in our village and there are no children either'" (My Emphasis) (Malagatti 111)! The attack on the caste of Magatti's father cannot be missed. Being from a lower caste, they are supposed not to venture out in the public spaces designed and formulated for the upper castes, but instead silently carry out their caste-ordained jobs. The dalit assertion of liberty is not easily acceptable to the upper castes, and they make all efforts to deny the liberty the dalits seek for.

In the village, the discursive grant of equality has not ushered in any changes in the behaviour of the upper castes, who still expect the dalits to toe the caste line of hierarchy. The differential citizenship functionaries go unheeded by them, and every attempt of the dalits to foreground their right to liberty is ruthlessly crushed. Malagatti describes how the dalits still do not have the liberty to use the village lake to wash clothes like the upper castes. Malagatti describes this lake as having "washing stones at five places, as though to represent the four varnas and the fifth for the outcastes. Each stone was used by a person of a particular caste, as if on contract" (27). When the dalit women would decide upon visiting the village lake, they "also took a few women from the neighbouring houses along with them. This, in a way, was to gather a troop---in case any upper caste person began a fight" (27). The instance depicts that the lower castes cannot assert performative liberty on an individual basis. Only as a collectivity do they have an option to foreground their right to performative liberty.

The denial of liberty is again foregrounded when the caste-based division in the use of the water bodies is brought to the fore by the upper caste women in the lake: '"There is a pond outside the village. Can't these people go there? Why should they come here? They come to the lake like people from the upper caste!'" (28). The continued struggle put by the dalit women do bring some results but that is generally dubbed by the upper castes as generosity and not as the natural rights of the outcastes, or the performative grant of the discursive equality that had been bestowed upon them. Malagatti states how the great soul at the last stone would shift to the middle stone and leave the dalits the last one. “The upper caste women assumed it was a gesture of generosity to leave at least the last stone to these outcaste women who were anyway not supposed to wash their clothes there at all" (28). At times the foregrounding by the dalits of the performative need for liberty induces bitterness in the upper castes, who then create situations to pick up fights with dalits and humiliate them. So the upper caste women, as Malagatti describes sarcastically,

> would show their magnanimity by loosening the washing stone!...The shaking stone would cause inconvenience while washing. If at all a little water splashed over the other women who were washing clothes by our side, their abuses would scale the highest peaks. (28-29)

Malagatti mentions another such incident of the denial of liberty to dalits to use a waterbody. He mentions two wells, one square well and another round well which were accessible to all the villagers except the dalits. Malagatti describes, "(T)here was a person to watch the well. He let all the villagers swim, but on seeing us, he would fume and turn as prickly as a tiger" (30)!

The denial of performative liberty also extends to the context of the dalit presence in other public spaces an act that had always been shunned by the upper castes. Kamble mentions in her book (as described in Chapter II) about the discursive denial of liberty to the dalits in the village shops where they were treated as untouchables, not allowed to get up on the steps of the shops, and buy things that they intended to. They had to only beg for it from a distance. Though Malagatti's book takes into account the time period after the discursive grant of liberty, yet performatively, liberty eludes them and they are treated in the same manner in the public spaces of the village shops. Malagatti describes this denial in simple and blunt terms;

> There was a sweet shop on the way to school. We used to call it the shop of Undi Muthya. If we took him some cotton, he would give us a small undi of low quality black jaggery...That shop was on a higher ground and one had to climb three steps to reach it. We untouchables were not supposed to climb the steps. (40)

In order to take the money or cotton the shopkeeper would use a ladle and then throw those undis into Malagatti's hands. If the undis fell down on the ground while throwing, the onus was on the dalits; "If I failed to catch the undis, they would roll on the ground like balls. It was my habit to pick up the fallen undi and blow off the dirt, and if the dirt still did not go, I used to rub the undi on my shirt, and then eat it" (40). And if by any chance Malagatti happened to climb the steps of the shop, the shopkeeper would shout at him to '"get off the steps first"' (40). Touching or even going near the untouchables is still beyond imagination. The discursive grant of liberty is not of much purchase as the situation remains the same performatively, before and after the discursive grant. The status of a lower caste strips them of their right to liberty, so at many places where their caste identity is unknown, the dalits refrain from expressing their caste background, even going to the extent of posing as upper castes in order to freely exercise their individual liberty. Malagatti describes his school days in Solapur when he stayed with his chikappa (uncle) who was a railway sub-inspector. Malagatti tells how he hesitated "to admit his caste. The caste identity and meat-eating were kept secret. They used to tell the others that they were Veerashaivas or Vokkaligas" (50). The fear of being stripped of their right to performative liberty made them surrender an important aspect of their liberty, of living with their caste identity. The upper castes if not directly, but by creating in the minds of the dalits, a taboo and inferiority associated with their caste identity, performatively denied them liberty.

Malagatti, in contrast to his father has never been denied liberty directly in the form of scathing comments, but always indirectly in mild undertones. He cites several instances when he had been denied performative liberty. Before he came of age, Malagatti had to face the brunt of caste directly on his assertion of liberty, and later when he goes to the city, the performative denial of citizenship became stealthier, with it becoming more difficult to identify the opponent of his liberty, and the supporter of it. In the urban public spaces, the denial of liberty took on a different form. It was clandestine and indirect, sometimes even assuming the disguise of progressiveness.

The dalits have been typified and categorized with certain qualities like meat-eating and consuming alcohol, and no change in the dalit image has been permitted even after the discursive abolition of caste. The discursive grant of equality has also not brought about any change in the image of the dalits as conceived by the upper castes even in the modern urban spaces. The dalits are supposed to be indulgent in notorious activities which are looked down upon by the upper castes, and no change in the image has been easily acceptable. The dalits are then denied the liberty to formulate a new image of their own, breaking the traditional, casteist typological images that have been associated with them in general. Malagatti describes a gathering of his college friends in the city, where he denies to have alcohol, but is forced to consume alcohol by being provoked. Malagatti cites the incident as he states, "When I said, 'I don't drink', people looked at me as though I had committed an offence...Finally when everyone was convinced of failure in forcing me to have a drink, a sharp arrow of words was shot at me directly...'Dalits drink liquor like it's having coffee in the morning...' 'What sort of a dalit are you?' 'Fake dalit or what' (95)? The denial of performative liberty to let the dalits rise above the lower caste dictated image hits him the hardest when someone in the group comments "'Perhaps he is trying to be a brahmin.' 'Really! What sort of a dalit are you? You say you won't drink! You don't even know how to eat meat properly" (95). Malagatti portrays this denial of liberty to dalits and tries to effect a change in their image, "There are many dalits like me who do not drink. And likewise, there are some who do not eat meat...But the questions which haunted me then were: Isn't it better to give up meat eating and alcohol consumption? Isn't it better to wipe away the filthiness bestowed on dalits and try to bring about cleanliness" (96)? The dalit denial of performative citizenship also extends to the other domains where discursive freedom was earlier denied as depicted by Kamble in her book.

3.2 Denial of Freedom of Thought

Freedom of thought is the direct outcome of the grant of liberty. The denial of liberty causes problems in the foregrounding of thought, and creates hurdle in the thought process of dalits. The dalits through the denial of right to liberty are also stripped of their power to think. When Kamble describes the discursive denial of liberty, it is more blatant and direct. After the discursive grant of citizenship, as depicted in Malagatti's autobiography, the freedom of thought has found a place in the dalit lives, yet not to the fullest extent possible. So while the dalits have foregrounded the necessity of the performative freedom of thought, yet the process is more than over.

Performativity, in terms of freedom of thought is still lacking in the dalit lives, and the same can be demonstrated through an episode that Malagatti describes of his family's conversion to another religion, Veerashaivism. The conversion to a new religion had taken place as "(T)hey too longed to be called upper caste. So they took the deeksha, a procedure by which religion is conferred on the converted" (47). The new religion demanded other commitments, like "not to drink alcohol or eat meat" (48). The desire to be called an upper caste and the attempt to appear respectful in society caused the dalits to lose out on, and defeat their own identity. The lack of liberty has created a situation whereby dalits are willingly bartering their identity with the dominant and ideal identarian ethos propagated by the upper caste, causing the dalits to keep their caste identity under a garb. The dalits in order to gain liberty do not employ in the process internalize the thought process of the upper caste, resulting in the denial of freedom of thought to themselves. Malagatti describes this internalizing of the upper caste ways, when he describes his mother's blind devotion to the lingas that they received during the conversion to Veerashaivism, "the linga around my avva's neck still troubles me. It hangs like someone hanging from a rope. I have told my mother many a time to throw it away. I cannot force her any more" (50). The performative denial of freedom of thought is intricately related to the performative denial of liberty. The denial of liberty ushers in the denial of freedom of thought. Malagatti cites another instance, this time in the urban public space, when he is with his friends in a gathering and is forced to drink. When Malagatti denies consuming any alcohol, he is immediately taunted using his caste association, the differential citizenship functionaries is used to jeer upon him and force him to consume alcohol, '"Dalits drink liquor like it's having coffee in the morning...' 'Hey, what sort of a dalit are you?' 'Fake dalit or what?' (94)

The freedom of thought exercised by dalits to refuse consuming alcohol and meat which denigrates their caste, and the simultaneous force exerted by the upper caste to pull them back to their age old life is highlighted here. In the process one can easily discern the denial of freedom of thought meted out to the dalits by the upper castes. As if voicing this denial of freedom of thought, Malagatti wonders aloud, "Isn't it good to give up meat eating and alcohol consumption? Isn't it better to wipe away the filthiness bestowed on dalits and try to bring about cleanliness" (96).

3.3 Denial of Freedom of Faith

Freedom of faith generates from freedom of thought. When dalits are denied the freedom of thought, it is easy to envisage that freedom to follow the faith of their choice would also be denied to them. Though, the discursive grant of equality has guaranteed the equality of all before all faith, yet the dalits continue to be excluded from the folds of the upper caste-dominated Hindu religion. If Kamble's book had portrayed a discursive denial of freedom of faith with ousting from all places ruled over by the upper caste Hindus, Malagatti's book post grant of discursive equality upholds no major changes performatively. In Malagatti's book the dalits face a situation similar to the one before the discursive grant of equality. So the dalits are debarred from equal participation in religious activities, and even when they are allowed to participate in religious activities, the participation is divided along caste lines. Malagatti describes an incident when he had become an ardent devotee of the lord Raghavendra and

> at the peak of my devotion, I drew a beautiful picture of lord Raghavendra standing before Brindavan...and had it framed. We zealously gifted the framed picture to the temple. I had got my head smoothly shaven. My face bore all the signs of a committed devotee. I felt blessed after gifting the paintings to the temple. (61-62)

The happiness that Malagatti felt in getting his painting admitted in a temple ruled by brahmins is well explicated by Malagatti, "I was overjoyed to see the picture and the name therein. My mind felt like a peacock dancing with its tail feathers spread. The feather on my cap stood upright in tune with my joy. I was filled with pride that a dalit's name had found its glory in a brahmin temple" (62). Though the discursive equality powered by differential citizenship made it difficult for the upper castes to deny them a space in the temples or let them practice their faith, yet the caste rules were too strong to wean in the face of an artistic talent and pure joy arising from the heart of a dalit in witnessing the importance that his painting receives in the Brahmin temple. And very soon thereafter he found his painting missing from the pride of place it had occupied earlier in the temple; "All of a sudden the picture vanished from the temple. When enquired about it, the priest, wearing the look of someone in deep sorrow, said, 'It's been kept inside because the nail came loose and the picture fell down.' The brahmin conspiracy comes undone as Malagatti informs his readers,

> I looked at the wall and observed that the nail was intact, but the picture was no longer there. I nurtured the hope that the picture might be restored to its place the next day, so I watched the wall with hope every day. The nail stood out on the plain wall. The priest used to pretend as though he did not see me and presented the appearance of being engrossed in his work. (62)

The discursive denial of the freedom to practice any faith that an individual willed to irrespective of the caste to which the individual belonged has undergone transformation into a performative denial of the freedom of faith. The practice of casteist discrimination in matters of faith that pervades the narrative of Kamble can also be visualized in Malagatti's work, with the only difference that the discrimination is no longer outright and blatant, but more stealthy and covert. The dalits are now allowed to enter the religious spaces, but not on equal terms as the brahmin. The manner in which a painting by a dalit finds no place reflects a larger picture of the dalit denial of equality in religious spaces still dominated by the brahmins, but which can be pronounced more dangerous to the demand for performative equality as it functions in a covert manner. Malagatti describes another incident related to a place of worship where the denial to be at par with the upper caste was not blatantly handed out to the dalits, rather functioned in a rather inconspicuous manner where the place of worship was divided along caste lines. Though it shows an improvement from the situation described by Kamble in her book, yet the discursive equality promised in matters of faith is far from being fulfilled. Malagatti along with some other friends decides to visit the temple of lord Raghavendra in Mantralaya. The dalit denial of freedom of faith resulted in their ignorance about the "ways and means of worship" causing them to "rely on our brahmin friends for all the procedures and the like" (65). The situation before entering the temple is vividly described by Malagatti; "My heart started beating fast even before entering the premises of Mantralaya. A few others from our group were also scared. The first reason was we were low caste people; the second was they could identify us easily because we were not wearing the sacred thread; and the third was we did not even have white clothes to wear" (65). The dalits were not allowed inside the sanctum sanctorum and so Malagatti and his friends on the insistence of their brahmin friends wore the janivaara and posed as brahmins to gain entry. Even while having food, the dalits and upper castes sat in different places; "They explained how, when it comes to having food, the brahmins are alloted a separate place. The other castes ate in a different place" (66). This goes on to reveal the performative inequality that still informs the religious spaces in matters of

freedom of faith, where the dalits are not treated as equals to the upper castes inspite of the discursive grant of equality.

3.4 Denial of Education

Kamble's work depicts the discursive denial of education. Malagatti's book in that context does not depict any improvement on the scenario of education described. In other words, performative educational rights are still denied to them, still viewed as a domain of, and dominated by the upper caste. To describe the domination of the upper castes, Malagatti says, "We were four from our lane there---Devappa, Mallappa, Basavantappa and me" (14). The limited number of people belonging to Malagatti's caste who attended the school goes on to show how the discursive grant of equality in education fails to manifest in the performative aspect, not just because of the discrimination faced in school, but also the dire situation of poverty that arises out of the denial of dalits to hold any property. The denial of rights to dalits to own any property restricts and limits the number of dalit children going to attend schools. The situation is appropriately described by Guru and Chakravarty;

> This desperate poverty also means that despite high enrollments in government schools (87 percent according to government figures), families cannot afford to lose a pair of working hands in the long gestation period that goes with the completion of school education. This factor along with faint employment prospects in the future, leads to a high dropout rate among dalit students (66.7 percent) as families begin to use schools largely as creches, keeping young children there only until the point that they became more useful in helping to provide subsistence for the family. (138)

The proportion of dalit children attending schools is much less as compared to the proportion of upper caste children attending school, a trend effected by the discourse of the binary of purity-pollution widely rampant in the educational space as portrayed by Kamble, and still persisting in the spaces of education in Malagatti's book. The spaces of education, in that sense, continues to be exclusivist in that it aims to function on the principles of the traditional Hindu society which considers the *dwija* or the twice-born as the sole preserver of all knowledge.

In the urban areas the sphere of education is explicitly exclusivist where the opening up of private schools has preserved the divide between the upper caste and lower caste education, while in the rural sphere where education is mostly furnished by the government schools, the scenario of dalit education acquires a picture similar to the one painted by Valmiki, “The country had become independent eight years ago. Gandhiji’s uplifting of the untouchables was resounding everywhere. Although the doors of the government schools had begun to open for untouchables, the mentality of the ordinary people had not changed much” (Valmiki 2). Valmiki's observation finds echo in Malagatti's description on the discrimination that befell them; "There were wooden benches in the classroom, which could accommodate four or five students...These benches were not meant for us to sit on! The four of us had to sit on the floor in the corner" (14).

There are other measures taken to ensure that the dalits keep away from the educational spaces. The dalits are assigned lowly jobs in school in order to remind them of their caste association, and denigrate them further to break their morals and prevent them from attending school. Malagatti describes how only the job of cleaning the classroom was entrusted upon the dalits; "It was mandatory that we, friends from the lane, should come early to the school and sweep it fully!" (14), and if by any chance they failed to perform their allocated caste-based task, they were subjected to humiliation and physical abuse infront of the whole class. Malagatti lists the punishment that he faced at the hands of the teacher at school,

> hang yourself on a peg on the wall, such that there is sufficient distance between the floor and your legs...The pegs should be located between your braided fingers...When hung in such a manner, we could not even loosen the grip of our fingers and fall on the ground. We had to cry, plead, beg and pester---all in vain. The more we pleaded, the wilder our great teacher grew. His highness had a long, rough cane in his hands...He would then cane us repeatedly (12).

The physical abuse of the dalits at the hands of the teacher brought amusement to the upper caste children seated in the class, "For the students in the class it was like watching a movie. The whippings increased as their mocking laughter and my whining touched a crescendo" (13). Malagatti however, cautions the reader from analyzing the severity of the punishment and states

> There was yet another severe punishment. One had to stand (half sit) in the posture of a chair, bending one's knees. It is not possible to maintain this position for long.

> After a while, one would inevitably sit down by folding the knees fully. To prevent us from doing so, two thick and slightly sharp pieces of wood were placed in the hollows behind the kneecaps. If we bent our knees further than the permitted level, the wooden pieces would hurt and cause bleeding. (13)

However, the discrimination finds the most profound expression when Malagatti states, "But we untouchable lot never had the good fortune of receiving slaps from his hands" (14). This discrimination often discourages the dalit children from attending school and Malagatti states such an instance when he resists going to school, "One day I stubbornly refused to go to school. When Aayi sought to know why, I replied, 'They sit on the benches and make us sit on the floor. No, I will not go'. Though most of the studies on dalit education give us the physical accessibility of schools, the account of social accessibility is left out in the process. The binary of purity-pollution even after the postcolonial madate of equality affects the social accessibility of education. Mencher in his study of Chinglepet district of Tamil Nadu notes an important factor prohibiting the schooling of dalits children, "students had to walk through the upper caste section of the village in order to reach the school (Mencher 54). In an even more expository study, Jalaludin found that "in the 28 panchayats of Tikamgarh block (Uttar Pradesh) where untouchability seems to persist even more firmly, about fifty percent of the harijan children have not been able to join schools" (233). Any resistance from the dalits to stand up against the insult and humiliation invited further violence and abuse at the hands of the teacher. Malagatti cites an instance when he attempted to correct his name written on the blackboard by the upper caste children, from "Katti" meaning donkey to gatti, and inviting the wrath of the teacher in the process. The depreciative attitude shown by the upper castes towards the education of dalits comes unveiled as Malagatti describes the fury of the teacher in his act of correcting his name;

> My heart was thumping. Still, boldly, I moved towards our guru's chair, stood on it and attempted to rewrite 'ka' as 'ga'. I do not know where our great teacher was hiding till then. He entered the classroom and pulled out the cane, which was kept on a wooden peg on the wall...Before I could get down and justify my act, saying, "They have written "Katti"...', he started beating me. 'So what if it is written as "Katti"? Were you trying to make it "gatti"? The bastard had just learnt to write and he already wants to correct what is written. A katti is a katti anyway' (16).

Nambissan mentions in this context that "Ex-untouchables adults who reflect on their experience of education refer...to the 'hidden curriculum' that underlies school processes-i.e. distinct message of social inferiority that is often quite clearly conveyed to them by teachers and peers" (1018). The anger of the teacher in Malagatti's attempt to correct his name is fueled by the differential citizenship functionaries that have encouraged dalits to be educated.

Even in college days, Malagatti had to bear the brunt of the jealousy that the grant of the differential citizenship status to the dalits induced in the upper caste. The mockery that dalits have to face because of the affirmative action policies are clearly demonstrated when Malagatti says, 'Since I was getting the benefits of the government's reservation policy they called me "Government Brahmana"' (Malagatti 61). The performativity of citizenship is denied to forbid the construction of a separate image that would challenge the traditional image associated with dalits even in terms of clothing, 'When I went to college wearing a new dress Appa had got stitched for me, they would question me, "Is your dress a gift from Indramma?" [Referring to the then prime minister, Indira Gandhi]' (Malagatti 61). The spaces of higher education and employment are filled with deceits to prevent the lower caste from inhabiting the same positions as the upper caste. Here, the measures of direct violence upon or discouragement from pursuing a career meant for the upper caste is not resorted to, as the awakened dalit consciousness about the provisions of differential citizenship prevent them from doing it, prompting them to use other measures. The dalits are looked down upon in educational spaces and their meritocracy questioned due to the provisions of differential citizenship values. They are sneered upon by the upper caste as Malagatti explicitly tells the readers how differential citizenship erected a greater barrier to the realization of performative citizenship in public spaces.

> When many of my friends in the universities re-appeared for exams after failing to get a minimum fifty percent, it was quite common for the professors to comment, "Why do you need second class at all? Apply somewhere for a job, you will get it. Anyhow, there is reservation for you people! (Malagatti 91)

There is a huge force which prevents the dalits from making a mark in public spaces, politically, socially or in terms of dissipating knowledge. Malagatti describes the fate of one of his friends who had the potential of a good researcher but whose future was destroyed at the behest of the upper caste people as 'When an intelligent dalit emerges as a researcher, this is the way they pluck

out the sapling. Such professors are found in plenty in our universities' (Malagatti 90). The differential citizenship values instead of inculcating equality, promotes inequality. The performative citizenship of the dalits is at stake because of differential citizenship functions, forcing Malagatti to say, 'Dalit friends who come with glittering dreams find their future getting lost more often than blooming' (Malagatti 91). The diminutive attitude of the upper caste towards education is foregrounded, and the manner in which dalit education is viewed as a snatching away of the privilege of the upper castes questions the discursive grant of equal education which does not necessarily incorporate the performative aspect of it.

3.5 Denial of Right to Hold Property

Dalits have been traditionally denied the right to hold property. Property has always been held by the upper castes and the acquiring and holding of property is difficult for dalits as the stigma of dalit touch and pollution raids the mind of upper castes, causing the upper castes to prevent the dalits from buying property, especially anywhere near an upper caste cluster. The dalits are prohibited from entering the spaces demarcated especially for the upper castes, not allowed to be at par with the upper castes, and still confined to the liminal space. While preventing the dalits from acquiring and holding any property of their own in the public spaces, the upper castes push the dalits permanently to the margins and confine them there. Kamble had earlier described the situation when a lack of discursive intervention meant that the dalits lived in the dirt pits of the society and the practice of debarring the dalits from entering the public spaces meant that they could not do much to effect any changes in their condition. There were several places where the dalits were debarred from buying or selling property as in province of Punjab, the Land Alienation Act specified only certain communities who could buy or sell property and the dalits were naturally left out of it (WSBRA 23). Even when the situation of the untouchables changed, and the British government freed them from the hereditary servile status (Tremenheere 1), the dalits were allowed to cultivate the lands but not acquire and possess it. Malagatti's book shows that the discursive regulation hardly brought in a change. The dalits are still living in demarcated spaces as Malagatti repeatedly describes his community as "people from our lane" and most of the people of his community held no property or land. Only Malagatti's family was comparatively well off as his family had a little bit of cultivable land and a house (Malagatti 3). Yet, the condition of their living could not be pronounced as significantly good as Malagatti says, "Ours is a joint family...If our

joint-family property is divided and shared amongst us, each of us will get a plot of land hardly the size of one's palm" (3). Though there have been several government programmes to alleviate the living condition of these people, these "have often culminated in the reproduction of marginality" like the "rows of small single room, concrete government constructions are as sure a sign of dalit settlement as any that existed previously" (Gorringe 175). Thangaraj comments, reflecting upon the introduction of differential measures in granting equal property rights to the dalits,

> after Independence, the Indian government started various welfare schemes to ameliorate the condition of SCs. Distribution of surplus land through land reforms and assignment of cultivable waste land were considered to be crucial measures for their economic development and empowerment...Despite the introduction of several welfare programmes, there has been no marked change in their socio-economic condition due to poor implementation of law and lack of political will. (55)

That denial of holding property meted out to the dalits is closely connected to dalits working as wage labour on fields generally owned by the landed class, which in turn leaves very little room for dalits to oppose the discrimination practised against them or claim for property rights that have been discursively granted and performatively denied to them.

3.6 Denial of Justice

Denial of justice serves as the core of the larger picture of the performative denial of equal citizenship to dalits. The denial of justice can be cast in the mould of legal and socio-economic justice. Legal justice to dalits was based on socio-economic justice, making it necessary to precede the grant of legal justice. The thought that the discursive grant of equal citizenship to dalits, in socio-economic or legal terms would not erase the caste consciousness in the upper castes had permeated the belief of the drafter of the constitution, Babasaheb Ambedkar who believed "that legal justice at the formal or theoretical level would be ineffective at the practical level" (Guru 43). Ambedkar further enunciated the situation as

> From the capital of India down to the village the whole administration is rigged by Hindus. The Hindus are like the omnipotent almighty pervading all over the administration in all its branches having authority in all its nook and corner. There

> is no loophole for anyone opposed to the old order to escape. If the established order has continued to exist, it is because of the unfailing support it received from the Hindu officials of the state. The Hindu officials are not merely administrators administering the affairs on the merit, they are administrators with an eye to their parties. Their principle is not equal justice to all. Their motto is justice consistent with established order. This is inevitable. For they carry over into administration, the attitude towards different classes in society under the established order. This is well illustrated by the attitude of the state officials towards the untouchables in the field of administration. As every untouchable will be able to testify, if an untouchable goes to a police officer with a complaint against a caste Hindu, instead of receiving any protection he will receive plenty of abuses. Either he will be driven away without his complaint being recorded or if it is recorded it would be recorded quite falsely to provide a way of escape to the touchable aggressors. If he prosecutes his offenders before a Magistrate the fate of his proceeding can be foretold. The untouchables will never be able to get Hindus as witness because of the conspiracy of the villagers not to support the case however just it may be. If he brings witness from the untouchables, the magistrate will not accept their testimony because he can easily say that they are interested and not independent witness, or, if they are independent witness the magistrate has a easy way of acquitting the accused by simply saying that the untouchable's complaint did not strike him as a truthful witness. (Khairmode 265)

Malagatti's book depicts the denial of socio-economic justice, proving that the grant of a performative legal justice is a far cry. The title of the book 'Government Brahmana' itself serves as evidence of the denial of socio-economic justice. That the denial of social-economic justice becomes stronger due to the grant of differential citizenship is appropriately driven home by Tharakeshwar in the afterword of the book,

> They (the upper castes) began calling Dalits 'Government Brahmin', when the government took certain steps to 'uplift' Dalits. If a Dalit is still in a village and bound to his traditional occupation nobody would call the Dalit a 'Government Brahmin'. But if the Dalit utilises the legal opportunities that come his way, then he

> would be called by that name. Thus the title of this book takes the name given to Dalits who enter modern spaces with the help of reservation. (Malagatti 121)

The denial of justice becomes even more blatant when Tharakeshwar mentions how when the upper castes "enjoyed the privileges of the state (monarchy), and they (dalits) were treated positively by caste based society. Now the members of 'upper' castes cannot reconcile themselves to the positive steps that the modern democratic state has taken up for ushering social equality" (Malagatti 121). The affirmative action policies have not been received well by the upper castes, and the anger of the upper castes towards these policies have "perpetuated this difference and through differentiated treatment in the mode of affirmative action has paved the way for continued inequality and prejudices" (Mukherjee and Jha 3). The denial of justice then takes on a more complicated form when it has been discursively granted to the dalits. The denial of socio-economic justice can be discerned in the denial of social equality to dalits. Malagatti cites social gatherings when even in homes of Marxist friends he had been reminded of his lower caste status. The shunning of class inequalities has not deterred his Marxist friends from commenting upon Malagatti's low caste birth;

> It was not a palace! But the residence of that Marxist friend was not as threadbare as the khadi he wore. Many friends were sitting on the sofa. An exciting game of cricket was flashing on the television screen. That friend of mine was sitting on a rotating chair. I was sitting on a rotating three-legged stool...The excitement I had displayed while entering his house was still on my face. My friend was older than me, so I addressed him with due respect. He started chatting with me.'I don't believe in caste discrimination. Many Harijans come home, have tea and food...' Listening to these words, I lost my poise and my face dropped like a burnt brinjal. This was not the first time I was listening to such words. Earlier, during such instances I have felt my insides rusting. (98)

Malagatti cites another instance when another of his progressive upper caste friend invited him to eat food, but "made me sit on a mat spread on the floor of the outer room and started serving food" and later encouraged him to wash his own plate. However the thing that struck him strongly was that his friend's son "who had not participated in the happenings so far --started moving about in the house...After a while the boy took the utensils his father had used inside. Mine stayed where I

had left them" (101)! This action of the boy draws out the age-old casteist practice he had been informed about from his unconscious as he avers,

> Throughout the bus journey, I was reminded of what my aayi had said...the procedure related to cow dung and cow's urine...If a dalit happened to touch an upper caste person's vessel, it had to be smeared with cow dung and burnt in fire. It would then be immersed in a solution of tamarind and salt. Afterwards, it would be immersed in cow's urine, and only then would it be placed along with the other vessels of the house...Such resentment is reserved for brass vessels. Earthenware would be given away to dalits with contempt. Or else, such earthen pots would be kept outside the door for such people, as if they were being kept for dogs...All these images started performing a deadly dance in my mind. I reached home wondering about the fate of the vessels I had used and watched. (102)

Socio-economic justice to dalits is not received even at the hands of the progressive thinkers as Malagatti thinks aloud,

> Why was I invited here? To be offered tea? Or to be reminded that I am a Harijan? Haven't I come to his house thinking that he is a rational and progressive person? When that is the case, why should he pick on my caste again? Is it to boast that I have offered you tea, in spite of you being a harijan? (102)

When performative socio-economic justice is being denied to the dalits, the performative grant of legal justice is beyond achievement as socio-economic justice forms the basis of legal justice.

The discursive grant of equal citizenship has been unable to change the status of the dalits in the Indian society. Instead the old forms of discrimination still persist, with the performative citizenship functionaries still eluding the dalits. The discursive grant of citizenship has then not manifested in the performative form. The citizenship status of the dalits has then changed from what can be deduced from Kamble's book as the discursive denial of equal citizenship to what is depicted in Malagatti's book as the discursive granting, and the performative denial of citizenship. And the dalits continue being a victim of the unequal citizenship status still relegated, and confined to the status of second class citizens. Though the differential citizenship functionaries provide for equal participation of the dalits in the public spaces, yet the

deep roots of caste in society prevents the performativity of this discursive equality. This inequality faced by the dalits can be appropriately described in Malagatti's words, “Even though we dalits receive good education and financial facilities, the ghost of caste does not stop haunting our inner psyche” (Malagatti 98).

Chapter IV

Denial of Discursive Citizenship in *When the Pelican Laughed*

Alice Nannup's *When the Pelican Laughed,* is an autobiography of a dear daughter, a doting wife and a loving mother whose story takes the modular form of protest against the denial of discursive citizenship to the aboriginals. However, while registering a protest against the refusal of complete participation of the aboriginals in the nation-state as citizens, or while challenging the secondary status of the aboriginals in the Australian society, the autobiography also serves as a narrative of resistance. The chapter focuses upon the structures of denial of discursive citizenship, where the aborigines are reduced to mere objects whose control lies in the hands of the white power. The communal self in the autobiography takes the position of a first-person narrator, and depicts the denial of the basic citizenship rights and freedom, and the resistance against absorption in the dominant society which challenges their identity. The chapter intends to study the manner in which Nannup imagines the denial of discursively equal citizenship to the aboriginals.

The conception of Alice Nannup's *When the Pelican Laughed* took shape when the documenters, Lauren Marsh and Stephen Kinnane, started documenting the story of Stephen Kinnane's grandmother, Jessie Argyle. The conception of the idea of an autobiography of Alice Nannup took place in the January of 1991 and the book was first published in 1992. The autobiography narrates the story of Alice Nannup which is informed by Alice's indomitable spirit and courage. Born in 1911 in Pilbara station to an aboriginal mother and an English father, she was taken south as per the policies of aboriginal protection and assimilation which ultimately resulted in her being torn apart from her family. The events of her life narrated by Nannup coincides with the various turmoils of the discursive denial and struggles for the grant of equal citizenship to aboriginals, and this denial and struggle finds a candid representation in Nannup's book, making it an appropriate book for analyzing the discursive denial of citizenship to the aboriginals. The autobiography serves to foreground the normative denial of citizenship rights to the aboriginals, and the tendency of the settlers to rescript the aboriginal identity by impinging upon them the narrative of the cultural superiority of the settlers. The chapter would use the parameters of equal citizenship as enunciated by Thomas Marshall in his essay, "Citizenship and

Social Class" (1950) to unfurl the denial of discursive citizenship that the aboriginals faced at the hands of the settler British using the narrative trope of space and place, stolen children, and the trope of alienation.

The narrative of the stolen generation is a coalescence of the stories of separation of half-caste aboriginal children from their parents over two decades in Australia. The aboriginal protection board systematically separated the aboriginal children from their parents from 1915 to 1969. The board even disrupted the connection that the children had with their parents by intercepting and withholding gifts that the children received from their families. Until the separation of the aboriginal children from their parents, what John Frow describes as "social death", became an important topic of debate in the 1990s, the forcible removal of these children from their homes and families were hardly considered (358). The trope of stolen children has been a significant trope in all aboriginal autobiographies and Nannup's book is no exception. Peter Read puts the entire incident into perspective as he states, "welfare officers, removing children solely because they were Aboriginal, intended and arranged that they should lose their Aboriginality and that they never return home" (57). The effect of such an act was disastrous for the aboriginals and resulted in a trauma of separation that according to Read "reaches sometimes into the third and fourth generation" (57).

Denise Cuthbert argues about the image of the child being associated with innocence is a significant association with the image of the stolen children. Cath Ellis, on the other hand, renders, that the image of the child as universal and innocent influences and shapes the narrative of the stolen children. Peter Pierce in his *The Country of Lost Children: An Australian Anxiety* talks about the image of the stolen child in light of cultural and moral implications for the Australian society. He argues that the stolen child becomes the representative of socio-cultural guilt in relation to aboriginal feeling of unbelonging. Smallacombe in his work "Oral History and the Stolen Generation", Ward in his book, *Wandering Girl,* Rita Huggins and Jackie Huggins in their work *Auntie Rita* argue about the cultural loss, the ethnocide, the grief and the harm that the aboriginal children were subjected to. This image of universal innocence amalgamated with a feeling of rootlessness and unbelonging seems to be portrayed by Nannup while using the trope of the stolen children. The trauma of separation leads to a feeling of alienation among the aboriginals, sometimes extending even to the subsequent generations. This feeling of alienation as Nannup describes is somewhat similar to the alienation that Kamble describes in her

autobiography. Alienation here again takes the form of powerlessness and meaninglessness. Powerlessness implies the lack of influence over socio-political events or over the society at large. Meaninglessness according to Seeman is the lack of "sensed ability to predict behavioral outcomes" (786). This aspect of alienation then focuses on the lack of guide to conduct oneself in society or the inability to predict the outcomes of certain behaviour. Alienation then disrupts the past as well as the present lives of the aboriginals by cutting off the roots of the past and also by making the present and future uncertain. The aboriginals can no longer identify and connect with their aboriginal roots, and they also cannot imagine a prosperous life where they can live lives like the whites. They are left suspended between two worlds, belonging definitively to none. The book focuses upon how Nannup keeps vacillating between these two positions. The sense of alienation extends to include the problematic of place and space. Land has always been important to the aboriginals, and the removal of these children from their home and land causes physical as well as spiritual alienation. Nannup in this book unites the self and the land, and combines the two into a metaphysical unity, the remembered self and specific natural landscapes. Rather than being a Wordsworthian trope of connection with nature, the trope of place here is more a question of belonging and identification. And the displacement faced by Nannup gives birth in her to a sense of alienation, and a feeling of unbelonging and rootlessness. These three tropes become the bedrock on which the study bases its analysis of the depiction of the denial of discursive citizenship in this particular book.

4.1 Denial of Liberty: Policy of Protection: The Australian federation formed in the 1900s showed a scant regard for the colonial rights. The earlier and practically violent extermination of the aboriginals with the sole aim of ethnic cleansing was replaced by a milder form of co-option into the structures of domination built by the settlers. This co-option intended to control every aspect of the life of the half-caste aboriginals. The issue is well explicated when the imposition is described as the limitations imposed on

> their freedom of movement and association; choice of employment; right to dispose of assets as desired, including wages, and to marry and raise families. While lack of bureaucratic and financial resources meant that legislative controls were not fully utilised, nearly all Aborigines were deprived of basic political rights; their personal freedoms were limited, and they were commonly discriminated against by employers. Many lived in fear of government officials who had the power, most

> notably exercised in Queensland, to compel residence on reserves, and in most States to remove children by force. (A. Markus qtd. in Davidson 191)

The passage clearly portrays the control that the state sought under the guise of assimilation. Assimilation was not just an instrument of collective disciplining and control over the aboriginal half-castes, but also the denial of basic individual rights to them. As the commonwealth left the matter of aboriginal legislation to the states, all the states proposed and imposed their acts of protection on the aboriginals.

Alice's story begins with a description of her family. She describes the intimacies that she shared with her family which demarcates the pain inflicted by the policy of protection even more strongly. Alice mostly lived a sheltered life in Kangan station under the care of her father, Tom Bassett, and her aboriginal mother, Ngulyi. Alice describes her upbringing as peaceful and full of content. Alice clearly states her feelings to the readers when she says, "I had such a great life on Kangan, it was really beautiful country up there" (31). Her intimacy and longing for her mother is revealed when she says, "I have such great admiration for my mother because she was always having to do the best she could to patch me up" (29). She would even spend her vacations with her father's family at Roebourne though being aboriginals they were not allowed to mix freely with the family. The numerous episodes and instances that she states describing the time spent with her family is suggestive of the value that she ascribes to her family. The family assumes the central tenet of her entire narrative. But the assimilative policies intended to effect a conspicuous change in the lives of the aboriginals by destructuring their original identity. The destructured identity then served as the site of the structuring of a totally new identity. It was only when her mother decided to fatefully leave the Kangan station and work in some other station that she fell in the way of the scouts who "were sent up from the Aboriginal Affairs in Perth to come and look for the half-caste kids" (38). It can be safely deduced from the book that Alice at that moment never realized the upheaval it would cause in her life, and how it would estrange her from her family. For young Alice it was an adventure, an alibi to get rid of getting married to the old man she was promised to. She bid farewell to her family "not realizing that this would be the last time I would ever see any of them again" (44). The anguish and trauma that being forced apart from their family caused to the aboriginal children can be easily mapped when Alice mentions how the three children including Alice suffered from home sickness and incessant bouts of mourning for their families. The pitiable condition of the children can be discerned from Alice's words, "During the

day us three kids would get up onto this big box, the life jacket box, and sit there crying and talking in our language. We kept on wishing we'd never come" (46). And realization of what they had gotten into sunk soon and deep, "If we'd only known what it was going to be like we would have run away" (46).

The lives of these aboriginal children were highly regulated without any freedom of movement and independence. It was monitored and supervised to the extent that they could never think of starting any business or activity on their own. Their existence was eclipsed by the restrictions and impositions made on them. It was caused by a belief that the aboriginals were savage and barbaric people who had to be trained and constantly supervised. This was quite evident when Alice cites an instance when the Prince of Wales intended to visit the Moore River settlement reserve and was dissuaded from doing so. He says, "You don't want to go there. They're cannibals" (71).

As savage people they were supposed and assumed to be lacking in maturity to even fend for themselves, which provided the settler British with the pretext of regulating their entire living, under the guise of taking care of the aboriginals. Alice informs the reader of the tactical subjugation of the Britsh when she says "Some of the girls were fully grown women, like in their late twenties and early thirties, but the department still called them all girls. We were always girls no matter how old we were, and the men were called boys" (117). One can evoke the strictly monitored life of the Moore River mission in this context. Alice describes it as "split into two main parts; the compound where all the kids and older girls were, and the camps, where all the married people and old people had to live" (62). Regarding its structure, Alice comments that "The compound was set up just like a little town" (62). This statement goes on to reveal how the life of the aboriginal was limited to and built around an artificial livelihood. They were not considered refined and mature enough to handle and conduct themselves on their own. The aboriginals were not trusted with their own lives and their living even within the aboriginal homes was strictly disciplined to which the aboriginals had to act with complicity or face severe consequences.

Alice talks of the strict segregation that was maintained in the aboriginal homes making it feasible for the Whites to control them; "Us kids were all put in the compound and it was a rule that we weren't allowed to go down to the camps. They always tried to keep everything separate there. There were separate dormitories for boys and girls, and even to go into the dining rooms we

were kept separate" (63). Citing an instance of a Paddy Darby who was released from prison after his attempt of swimming across a sea suspected to be full of sharks, she gets sarcastic and mentions that the freedom he achieved was equivalent to no freedom at all (67). Alice further argues her statement by mentioning "Life in Moore River had a real routine to it" (67). Regarding the work that they were pushed into after being removed from school, Alice mentions, "All the girls were taken out of school and sent down to the sewing room…We had no choice about working there and we were never paid for it…they'd come along with a block of chocolate for us and that was our pay" (70).

Home remained strongly etched in the memory of these aboriginal children as the Aboriginal Protection rules were very strict and the only option left to the aboriginal children was to lament and keep wishing to return back home. In this process of yearning for home, the aboriginal children would grow up and start their own family, keeping the memory of home and family kindled in their heart all along. Alice in her autobiography also keeps lamenting about her family and the memories of her family drive her through difficult times, and provides her with solace. Whenever a difficult time came, Alice kept returning to the memory of her family; "Everytime something went wrong, or we did something wrong, it all flashed back to our home. We'd get upset and want to be home with our mothers" (56). Even when she is estranged from her family for a long time, the memories remain strong and the yearning remains. While working with the Larsens who were her first employer, she longs for her home. Alice says, "I started to sort of settle in there. I don't think I could ever have felt homesick for the settlement, but I used to have my little tears for my family back home" (91). Though they were not allowed to go back to their homes and were deliberately brought far away from their families, they did meet a few relations now and then who were also brought far away from their families. These situations made the aboriginals ecstatic as they could even for a short time meet some distant members of their families. Alice describes her meeting with some of her relations like Aunty Daisy Corunna, Aunty Nellie Bark and Aunty Helen Bunda. She goes on to say, "We had accidentally met once through being introduced by someone else. They'd all been taken from the North too, and we found out that I was their people and they were mine. So we used to make it a day" (123). Even while living in the settlement, Alice was overjoyed to find a relation of hers, an Uncle Jack Doherty, who used to work in the bake-house in the settlement. In any occasion when Alice would feel bottled up, the memories of her family would rejuvenate her and deliver her from her frustrations. And when she

would meet any of her contacts from the North, the only thing that would provide her with happiness would be the memories of her family.

The aboriginals were considered to be innately notorious by the settler whites, a characteristic which was assigned to their racial inferiority, who if left unfettered would pose a menace to the state. Alice reflects on this phenomenon and tells, "When I think back to the time I spent in Mogumber, I think about how they always had me working, never left me free" (71). The aboriginals could not even escape from those homes as they would be caught and punished severely. Alice informs the reader that "If girls ran away they'd send the trackers after them and they'd be brought back and their hair would be cut off, then they'd do time in the boob (Prison)" (74). The amount of control that was exercised upon them was evident from the fact that when Alice was sent to work for the first time she was put on a train without any money which in all probability had been a preventive measure of ensuring that she reached her original destination without any financial aid. The inhumanity and control is also despised by some whites like a station manager who on realizing the plight of the aboriginal children tells, "I'm going to look into this. Sending kids without any money" (89)! The lack of freedom even informed such activities as the job the aboriginals had to take up. So when Alice reached Williams to live with Mr. and Mrs. Larsen, and reported that she had no inkling that she was supposed to work for an invalid lady, even her employer Mr. Larsen is shocked to find out about it, "Well, what sort of people are they"!, he says and leaves in exasperation. It was not even considered important by the white authorities to intimate her about the wage that she was supposed to receive. The only thing that was considered important for the aboriginals to know was the status of their employment, and nothing else was deemed significant enough for the aboriginals to know. When Alice receives her first salary she is pleasantly surprised and asks Mrs. Larsen, "'What's this?'" to which Mrs. Larsen replies "'oh, this is your pocket money'" (93). Alice later reflects upon it and thinks aloud, "Well, I didn't know. They never even told me when I left the settlement when I was going, let alone anything about my wages" (93). The aboriginals were not given any breaks between their jobs, and when to join a new job was not upto them to decide. The aboriginal board decided everything for them. So when Alice finished working with Mrs. Larsen, she was immediately taken to a new job after a very brief interval, and was not allowed the much needed break that she sought after. Alice quips, "Anyway, as it turned out I stayed for about two weeks. Although I really needed a break after being with Mrs. Larsen for so long, I was only there long enough for

them to make arrangements to send me out to another place to work" (108). The control wielded by the authorities over the aboriginal selves is open for us to see when Alice says, "They never gave you time, they just choofed you off when *they decided you were ready to go*" (108) (My Emphasis). The decision of not just the place of employment, but the time of employment was even decided by the white authorities. In the process the aboriginals were robbed of their subjecthood and agency. In the interim period, between the switching of jobs, the aboriginals were housed in a particular place in Perth, they could not go to any place their choice or even to their homes. Their freedom of movement was regulated by the authorities, so Alice blatantly states, "In those days there wasn't a choice about where you stayed, we all had to stay there. That was the department's orders, because they could be sure to keep an eye on us" (115).

The aboriginal department focused on using the aboriginals as tools to serve the needs of the white population, and in the process the aboriginal being was degraded and reduced from that of a human. The feelings and needs of the aboriginals were ruthlessly crushed as it was the sole way for the white population to keep control over the aborigines. When Alice asks Mr. Neville to let her go and work with a friend, Jessie Argyle, he rejects her request outrightly. Alice comments on his turning down her request, "It was just to be you know, opposite. You never got with anything with him. If you were sent to a place you had to go there, and once you were there you were tied down until it suited them" (122). Not just the choice of a job at a particular place but the freedom to quit a job was even snatched away from the aboriginals. In some places the aboriginal freedom to movement was restricted by time limitations on the visit of the aboriginals. Alice explains about this prejudice when she talks of Wyalkatchem, "Wyalkatchem was a really prejudiced town. It was a real colour bar place, no Aborigines were allowed there. All the people who were working on farms out there…all of them would just go into town to do their bit of shopping , then they had to go straight out again. That's what it was like, not a soul allowed after dark" (127). This situation was repeated when the war broke out and the restrictions imposed on the aboriginals became even stringent. "Then they brought in a law that Aborigines weren't allowed in town after dark. We were only allowed to come in freely during the daylight hours, and if we wanted to go to the evening pictures we had to get permission from the police" (174).

The aboriginals were considered incapable of responsibility towards their children as they were considered to be lacking in the qualities of care and support by the white population. The result was that the aboriginal parents were in the constant fear of their children being taken away

from them, and kept in an aboriginal home under the false pretense of being looked after and cared for. The aboriginal parents were kept under surveillance and their spending of the endowments meant for the children was closely monitored, else those endowments could be easily taken away from them. The aboriginal parents did not have the freedom to care for their children in a way that would be suitable for them; they had to follow the prescriptive method laid down by the white population to look after them. The lack of freedom is depicted by Alice when she states, "They could just stop you anytime, anywhere, and ask whatever personal questions they liked" (188). A bad report filed against aboriginal parents could be worrisome "in case they got it into their heads to take your children away from you" (189).

The aboriginal lives were controlled and supervised by the settler whites to an extent that even the decision of aboriginal marriage was even taken by the Aboriginal Protection Department, with the person they were to get married to and the venue of marriage even decided by the Department. The aboriginals had no individual say in the matter. So Alice narrates how the information of her marriage was made known to her, "Anyway it turned out I was only at Mrs. Cashmore's for a couple of months when I got a letter from Mr. Neville to say Will was at Moore River and we were to get married" (147). The marriage plans of the aboriginal girls would materialize after looking at the availability of housemaids to work in the white homes. So Alice tells, "Getting married wasn't that easy in those days, I think housemaids were very scarce and they didn't want us to get married out, because they never had enough working girls" (147).

The picture of the denial of liberty meted out to the aboriginals was not pretty, and Nannup deftly depicts the denial of liberty that the aboriginals faced at every stage of their lives.

4.2 Denial of Education

The primary reason cited by the settler British for the removal of the aboriginal half-caste children was education. Education served as an allurement for the aboriginal parents to send their children far away from their homes. Alice, her mother and later her English father was made to believe this. Alice tells her father when asked about what was going on that "Mr. and Mrs. Campbell are taking me down there and when we're finished we'll be coming home" (41). That the purpose of their being taken South was solely education was explained to her mother as well; "they told them (the parents of the aboriginal half-caste kids) they were going to take us down south to educate us, then bring us back home to our family" (39). Here Alice generalizes the situation as that was the lie that

most parents were told about, who also believed it eagerly. But the real purpose of their removal from their families was far from education. Alice goes on to reveal how they were made to carry out the chores of the stations where they put up ---- "washing dishes, sweeping the verandahs, scrubbing out the bathroom and toilet, things like that" (39). The hypocrisy and deceit that the settler British practiced veiled under the honourable modules of welfare is exposed by Alice when she mentions very bluntly, "They used to say to us, 'You're our children now', but they didn't treat us like that. Doris and I shared a room in the house, but we ate in the verandah where we washed up and not with them" (39).

There was not much scope for education in the places these children were taken to. Instead of really focusing on their education all they did was engage the aboriginal children in domestic work. They functioned as substitutes for domestic help and their education was only secondary to the household chores for the Campbells. Alice describes the stipulated chores they had to get done before they could even leave for school, "In the mornings we'd get up and milk the cows, then I'd do the separating and wash the separator, while Herbert shut the cows out in the paddock. Then we'd go off and feed the poddies. After all that was finished, we'd rush off to get ready for school…" (53). The dismal condition of the school when they were in Beeginup testifies to the gross neglect of education of the aboriginal children. Alice describes the impoverished state of the schools when she states, "While we were in Beeginup we went to Toolbrunup school. Mr. Burridge had a farm out a Toolbrunup and they were short of kids for the school. See, if they didn't have enough children they'd have to close the school down. I think they had to have about nine kids and with us three it made up the right number" (53).

The purpose for which they were tore apart from their family was of no concern to the Campbells, and so when they moved to Pallinup, the three of them were without education for almost a year (54). Before she joined the aboriginal reserve her time with the Campbells was spent in physical labour which entailed "clearing the bush, digging up the beds and getting it up and running" as "The Campbells decided to start up a garden". Once the garden was started she tells, "Every morning we'd have to go down and wash the leaves on the lettuces and tomatoes to get the frost off so that when the sun came up it wouldn't burn the leaves" (54). She also mentions other petty jobs like collecting the mail from another farm which was at a considerable distance from the farm she lived in, thus engaging her young mind in menial jobs rather than than some constructive tasks of education. The children very soon realized the humbug of the Campbells (a

disillusionment which had till then not harboured inside her for the Aboriginal Department as a whole), and in their disdain for the connivance of the Campbells for keeping them away from their families wished them bad; Alice states in her autobiography, "We used to say to each other in language that they were terrible for taking us away from our home, and we wished something would happen to them" (56).

The reality of a similar treatment of the aboriginals at the hands of the settler British was till then not known to them. Once they move to the reserve this reality hits them hard that the Campbells' attitude towards them was the microcosmic representation of the attitude of the settler British towards the aboriginals. The deceit that was taking place in the name of education became clearer to her when she was sent to the Moore River mission. She registers in a protesting tone, "I was going to school in the settlement up until that Christmas, and for a couple of months after. But I can truly say that they never taught me anything in all that time" (69). The education at Moore River was only upto the grade three which Alice had completed in Toolbrunup, so she says, "So when the teacher was busy she'd get me to go out and keep the infants occupied while she taught the bigger class" (69). The truth dawned upon her very soon and in retrospect she reflects "Moore River did nothing for me by way of schooling; I had to learn through experience and picking up little bits here and there on my own…I had chores to do before school and chores to do after" (69).

She encountered a similar atmosphere as in the Campbells' place where education received a backseat. The importance that the settler British attributed to the education of the aborigines is well explicated when Alice states the reaction of the head of the Aboriginal Affairs Department, Mr. Neville, about the extent of education that the aboriginals should receive, "ohh, it's all right, as long as they can write their name and count money…that's all the education they need" (71). A misconstrued assumption about the intellectual inferiority of the aboriginals which seeded from the strongly held belief of racial inferiority did not let the authorities take any interest in the educational advancement of the aboriginals, though that was the stated purpose of the removal of the aboriginal children from their families. The irony of it all was that bereaved of any educational facilities (all she had was a grade three education), Alice learns writing off jam tins and milk tins. Alice says, "Some people say to me today, 'Where did you get your education?' And I always say, 'I learnt it off jam tins.' They laugh at me but that's the truth" (122).

Education becomes a political tool in the hands of the settlers by which they could keep a control on the lives of the aboriginal people. It simultaneously becomes a weapon of destruction which destroyed the lives of several aboriginal children by debarring them from receiving any education at all, tore them apart from their families, gifting them with a sense of uprootedness and unbelonging, and subjected them to a life of control and humiliation.

4.3 Denial of Faith: Loss of selfhood

The struggle for identity and the freedom of practicing one's faith is an important site on which the minority autobiographies are situated, and this autobiography is no different in that respect. It is appropriate at this juncture to state what Anne Brewster tells, "The process of self-creation and self-consciousness that the writing of autobiography represents has a specific political role for such people" (127, *Aratjara*). The specific political role can be interpreted as the demand for the freedom of faith in terms of equal treatment in the country of their origin. The treatment that the aboriginals faced in aboriginal homes was not just inequal in terms of the functionaries of citizenship, it was far from humane. As Peter Read mentions that there was an increasingly popular discourse amongst the Whites that the aboriginals were "dirty, untrustworthy, bad" (12) with which they justified the kind of behaviour with which they met the aboriginals. A similar feeling is echoed by Alice when she hits at the general white attitude towards the aboriginals when she mentions, "I think they did things like this to deliberately lower us; well, degrade us really" (64).

Another way in which the white settlers tried to destroy the identity of the aboriginals was to "disconnect people from their past" (70). As Peter Read mentions they were of the opinion "that the best way to make black people behave like white people was to get hold of the children who had not yet learned aboriginal lifeways" (3). And the learning of the white mannerisms would not be complete without breaking their links and connections with their aboriginal families. This problematic is brought to the forefront by Alice, when she describes how the superintendent of the aboriginal affair denied her employment with the people who brought her from the north to the Moore River mission. These children would not even be sent home during the holidays. Alice mentions an instance when her English father wanted to get in touch with her but was denied to do so as the settler whites wanted to break the links of these children to their past. But the irony lies in the fact that when the whites wanted the aboriginals to take up their values and mannerisms,

they simultaneously debarred the half-caste aboriginal children from being recognized as a part of the white filial structure. So when Alice first moves into Moore River mission the superintendent Mr. Brodie addressed Alice as Cassit, and not by her real last name Bassett as they "didn't like me having my father's name because he came from a big family up there" (Nannup 62).

The lives of many aboriginals were blighted in the aggrandized belief of the White race in the discourse of their racial superiority, which were imposed upon the aborigines who in turn were believed to be savage and barbaric. Even the European conditioning in the aboriginal homes, however, could not purge them of their aboriginality and they were the victims of racial contempt. Their identity was reduced to the blackness of their skin, and their sole existence was defined by the necessity to serve the superior race which "pave(d) the way for the absorption of these people into the general population" (Read 3). The absorption would also be full of sympathy and pity which would be reductive in nature as the aboriginals would be reduced to objects of pity. While discussing about her, Mrs. Larsen addresses her as 'little black girl' (101). Her identity is reduced to that of a servant who was supposed to be getting more refined with her service in a white household. Later this reductive identity of Alice in the eyes of her employers in particular and the white population in general is confirmed when Alice is directly addressed as a servant by Miss Ryan, a nephew of Mrs. Larsen (103).

The identity of the aboriginals was also largely a derivative of stereotyping where their slight misdemeanor was attributed to the notion of racial inferiority. So when she had a minor dispute with Mrs. Larsen's niece, the lady police comments, "You know, you people, you let your temper run away with you" (103). The aboriginals were not considered human enough as the whites, and their labour was even treated as cheap labour, as distinct from the white labour which was comparatively more expensive. Describing the easy availability of aboriginal labour, Alice comments, "See, we were cheap labour, you know --- well, that's my impression. It's just like with the squatters of yesteryear, that's how they made their money --- a stick of tobacco and a bag of flour to pay the Aborigines that did all the work for them" (137).

The aboriginals were always made to feel different from the self-declared mainstream population, something that made the aboriginals conscious of inhabiting the public space. This induced a self-imposed restriction of the aboriginals into the private space which was desirable of, and compliant with the motives of the mainstream population. So when the actions of the

aboriginals were not in keeping with the desires of the mainstream, they were blatantly made to feel different; “Sometimes…we’d go out in this big group and we all stuck together. People in the street would stare at us but we’d just ignore them” (117). Or at other times when they would be visiting or going around in a bunch, they would have to face such comments as Alice states, “Pfoo, look at these dark clouds. It sure is going to rain” (117). The behavioural attitude of the aboriginals to move around in groups can be attributed to the fact that the aboriginals did not feel confident enough to perform duties or assert their rights in public spaces which were otherwise normative rights of the white population. The assertion of their right to freely occupy the public spaces was challenged, and to a large extent mutilated by the white European population. And any intent on the part of the aboriginals to assert themselves against the inequities, and raise their voice for the demand of rights was met with resistance.

The aboriginals, however, had no agency to fight these resistances as the powerful European officials would curb the resistant and non-compliant voices. So when some girls decide to settle score with the people who singled out their identity as differential, some other girls voice with fear the action that would be undertaken against the non-compliant voices, and restrain them from doing so. Alice quotes Jessie one of the big girls who prevent the other girls from settling score, “‘Look you girls pull yourselves together’…‘you know if the police come we’ll be in big trouble. They’ll get away with it, and we’ll be the ones in hot water” (118). And the helplessness at the face of being denied even the basic freedom to move around without being made conscious of their aboriginal identity is tellingly expressed by Alice “But that was right--- it was just what we had to put up with” (118). Even when the aboriginal women had to be hospitalized for some health issues their identitarian difference was made evident to them by keeping them in a separate space, divorced, from the main ward where the other women were housed. Alice describes the discrimianating situation clearly as she tells, “This was Meekatharra Hospital and it was very different for Aboriginal women in those days. We weren’t allowed in the main ward where all the other women would be, we had to be kept separate in a little place that was just like a meat-house” (155). Later when things evened out for the aboriginals and they were allowed in the main ward, they still had to face screening off from the white patients. Alice talks about the situation and tells,

> I went into the government hospital, and another Aboriginal lady who’d had a baby and I were in a little room together. We were kept separate from the other ladies --- that’s the white ladies --- and in some ways we didn’t mind, because it was privacy

> for us not being stared at or talked about. But in another way, we did mind, and although we used to have a good laugh about it, it still hurt that they thought they were better than we were. (187)

This fight for right to follow one's faith, and denial of selfhood also extended to the domain of religion and being treated equally like the white population while visiting the church. Alice describes the prejudice shared by the white minister who

> didn't like the coloured people sitting in with the white congregation…he'd come and usher them away to another pew. Also, when the service was over the minister would stand at the door and shake hands with everyone as they left. But when we (the aboriginals) came along he'd put his hands behind his back and say, 'It's very nice to see you coming along. (184)

Soon after, the aboriginal children were debarred from going to the Sunday school picnic as the minister did not want to look after the aboriginal children. Alice raised her voice against this ignominy and tells, "I said to him, 'Well, if this is Christianity, it's not for me,' (184). The right to follow a religion occupied the centre stage of the demand for rights.

The way of life of the aboriginals was disliked by the whites and they wanted to inculcate the white way of life in the aboriginals. The whites thought that a better way to refine the aboriginals was to cut them from everything that was related to their past. The identity of the aboriginals was stomped on by the identity of the white population. The aboriginals were even prohibited to speak in their lingo. Alice tells, "in those days they didn't like us speaking in our language, we all had to keep to English, and that way they stamped a lot of it (their lingo) out" (85). After her employment Nannup forgot her language, a defining feature of her identity, completely.

4.4 Denial of Protection: Perpetration of Violence

The aboriginal race itself became the object of contempt in the eyes of the self-declared superior white population. And violence upon the aboriginals was not a major object of concern for the white population. Violence perpetrated on the basis of racial inferiority towards the aboriginals was not paid any attention to by the aboriginal protection authorities, rather any dissent or deviation from the impositions enforced on them was punished by the authorities by resorting to

violence. This violence need not have always been state sponsored, as the white individual itself became the representative of the state, and wielded the agency of doling out penalty for disciplining the aboriginals. Interestingly, the white individual was never vested with this power and at the same time this power was never revoked by the authorities as it was viewed as a means of the collective disciplining and subsequent silencing of the aboriginals. Though, it was not always that the violence perpetrated against them was bore silently by the aboriginals. Frequently the aboriginals rose to retaliate against such violence but they could not fight and retaliate against the institutional violence meted out against them. Alice cites both violence at the institutional level and violence in the individual level, where she settles score against the latter, but is powerless infront of the former. When Mrs. Larsen's niece, Miss Ryan was there to visit the Larsens, Alice was commanded to clean a mess Miss Ryan had made. Alice's denial to clean up the mess led to an act of violence by Miss Ryan on Alice to which Alice retaliated immediately

> Miss Ryan wanted to wash her hair. She carted this water through the house and split it on the floor. Just after I finished polishing it mind you. I heard her sing out to me, 'Alice, bring a cloth and wipe up this water'…I was that annoyed, I went into Mrs. Larsen and told her what had just happened. Mrs. Larsen called out and told her what had just happened. Mrs. Larsen called out, 'Kathleen', and Miss Ryan came in. Mrs. Larsen said to her that if she'd split the water on the floor then it was for her to wipe it up. 'No', she said, 'she's the servant, she's got to do it'. 'Well, I'm not doing it,' I told her. We were all in Mrs. Larsen's bedroom and Miss Ryan grabbed the hair brush from the dressing table and started hitting me with it. Well, I lifted her I dragged the brush off her and I flogged her. (103)

Alice cites another instance where the aboriginals went to visit a government garden and in Alice's words were "minding their own business" when "some white blokes came along and kicked one of the blokes with us in the shins" (118). This act of violence too was fought back and the "Aboriginal boys chased them until they got them" (118). These acts of retaliation against the numerous instances of violence at the individual level become a prelude to the resistance that the aboriginals would later set up against the state sponsored violence. Alice in a way voices this prelude when she reflects on her counterattack on Miss Ryan,

> I think Miss Ryan thought that me being the servant made me just a bit of dirt she could push around. But I wasn't one of those kinds, I rebelled---I had to because I was so keyed up all the time. I thought to myself that if I was humble all the time then it would be worse for me in the long run. (104)

Violence at the individual level also had another dimension to it. This violence was inflicted by the members of the families where these aboriginals were housed. The aboriginals were not directly subjected to physical violence but were harassed and abused mentally by being forced to perform too much of chores even when (aboriginal) children were in consideration. When in Beeginup, they had a school to attend and hence were assigned less tasks but once in Pallinup, they had to do a lot more. They had to start a garden as the Campbells decided to start a garden, so the children had to start,

> clearing the bush to make the fences, digging up the beds and getting it up and running. Every morning we'd have to go down and wash the leaves on the lettuces and tomatoes to get the frost off so that when the sun came up it wouldn't burn the leaves. We had to go out sucker-bashing too, because the Campbells decided they wanted to put a crop in…Another one of our jobs as to go and pick up the mail. It was about a mile away, and if they thought we were worthy of riding, we could ride. But if they thought we'd been naughty, then we'd have to walk it. (54)

The engagement of the aboriginal children in numerous chores was not just limited to the restrictive purpose of abstaining them from indulging in notorious activities as was normatively attributed to the aboriginal race, but transcended such measures to be an act of violence against the children whose capacity of physical labour was overestimated in such activities. These activities then become the instances of violence which snatched away the childhood of these aboriginal children, and reducing them to being slaves. This kind of violence could not be countered by the aborigines as the aboriginal slavery was state sanctioned.

However, the violence meted out at the level of the institution could not be countered by the aboriginals. There are several instances of institutional violence mentioned by Alice in the autobiography, a violence at the face of which they were powerless. Alice cites the violence practiced against the aboriginals at the aboriginal home (Moore River mission). Violence when perpetrated at the level of the institution was to silence and discipline the dissenting and rebellious

voice of the aboriginals. Alice mentions one particular incident when an aboriginal girl and boy ran away from the Moore River mission. On being caught they were punished severely;

> They brought Linda to the middle of the main street in front of the office. They made her kneel, then they cut all her hair off. It was falling in big long tresses and *we were made to stand and watch* …then they took Norman down to the shed, stripped him and tarred and feathered him. The trackers brought him up to the compound and paraded him around to show everybody…it was a dreadful thing they did, and when they'd finished they took Norman away and locked him up in the boob. It took hours and hours for that poor boy to get the tar off, and it took a lot of his skin with it. For extra punishment Linda had to do more chores around the place. (75) (My Emphasis)

The act of collective witnessing suffered by the other aboriginals while those pronounced guilty of dissent were subjected to harsh tortures became instrumental to force the aboriginals into compliance with the state rulings and modular behavior set up for the so called inferior race. While this was the instance of the more dreadful punishments meted out to the aboriginals to prevent from leaving the oppressive care of the white population, there were smaller instances of violence that was practiced very frequently to keep the aboriginals in line. So there were "black trackers for policemen…their main job was to catch anyone who ran away" (63). The girls dormitory was watched by an old matron-mother who "wouldn't yell at us if we made a noise, she'd use her stick. She had a big stick and she'd hit the wall three times. I tell you what, you'd hear a pin drop" (65). Alice quotes the old matron-mother, "If I hear another word I won't hit the wall, I'll come in and crack every head in this room. So just keep quiet" (65). Any defiance was strictly dealt with, and Alice states that "Lots of girls got a thrashing…they used to take them down to the storeroom and the superintendent would belt them until they weed all over the floor" (74). An atmosphere of fear was created amongst the aboriginal children to discipline them along the lines of laws of living laid down by the white population.

Later in the autobiography, Nannup mentions how during the war the aboriginals were not provided any safety by the government or aboriginal protection agencies to protect them from the air raids. At one such time when the sirens went off, Alice fearing an air raid "got Ron and the rest of the kids together, rolled up a couple of blankets, shoved clothes into a bag…and got the kids ready to head up into the bush" (176). The callousness shown by the government towards the

protection of the aboriginals becomes symptomatic of the larger worthlessness that was attached to the aboriginal lives. What outshines this selfishness of the white government is the resistance shown by Alice for the protection of the lives of her children.

4.5 Denial of property

Denial of property to the aboriginals was a reality right from the moment when Australia was colonized by the settler British. The doctrine of terra nullius (an unowned land) pervaded the British image and occupancy of Australia. Under the British colonial law, the aboriginals had no right to property. The policy of terra nullius had evoked a shocking response from all critics who were surprised at this British policy who had been earlier used to purchasing lands from the North American Indians as well as the Maoris of New Zealand. This image of Australia was fed by Cook's description of it as "enormous and populated by a few hunter-gatherers, people so primitive that they did not farm or show any interest in trade, people who could offer no meaningful military resistance" (Banner 104) making it easy for the Britons to classify the area as terra nullius. Anthropologists were sent to Australia who found the aboriginals to be miserable creatures and that further dictated the colonial policies towards Australia. The lack of proper cultivation, clothing and shelter were seen as a proof of their primitiveness which directly implied that these people had made no progress in terms of property. Terra nullius had long been in practice before the legal doctrine of it was approved by the British government. The position very soon changed from the British intruding in their land to the aborigines intruding in the lands possessed by the British, and led to a position where the settler British criticized the aboriginals for "their ignorance of our laws relative to the right of property" (Kercher 85). However, the early assumptions about the uninhabited status of the aboriginal lands were soon broken when the settlers realized that "terra nullius rested, in part, on a shaky empirical foundation. It was true that the Aborigines were not farmers, but they were more numerous and more property-conscious than had been expected" (Banner 115). But even this kind of criticism against the doctrine of terra nullius did not take into account the idea that the land originally belonged to the aboriginals. It was more of the opinion of allocating separate lands to the aboriginals for their own use. The idea of terra nullius in this sense remained uncontested and the property rights of the aboriginal went unheeded. A change in the conception of the settler British about the property ownership of the aboriginals did not effect any change in the doctrine of terra nullius and the discursive right to property still eluded them.

The aboriginal identity was cast into the mould of notoriety which formed the basis of the denial of property to the aboriginals and activities like renting out any place was denied to them without the recommendation of any white (167). Their identity was debased to such an extent that the aboriginals were cheated in the name of houses, and sent to shacks in the name of living in houses. Explicating this phenomenon, Alice tells,

> When Mr. Neville said the government were going to build houses we thought they'd be proper houses. But these were just tin shacks. They built them out of a few sheets of corrugated iron knocked together into two rooms…it was obvious from my days working as a housemaid, that was what meant houses for white people meant quite another thing for us. (171)

Not just renting a property, but the aboriginal right to buy a property was also strongly challenged by the move of the Aborigines department, whereby the aboriginals were denied the right to inheritance. Alice mentions about how she got the information that her father had left her a hundred pounds in his will which was sent to the aboriginal department and never reached her. Talking about the sad state of affairs, Alice mentions that "Over the years different people tried to find the money for me, but they never had any luck...if aboriginal people received an inheritance, any money left to them became the property of the Aborigines Department" (179). The robbing of their inheritance by the aboriginals led to a pathetic situation for the aboriginals as described by Nannup when she states, "I don't understand that, we are all human beings, we should have been entitled to it. I could have really used that money my father left me, and it would have made the world of difference to my family" (179).

The geographical space also acquires a distinctive meaning in the discourse of the right to property. As the land becomes the basis on which the denial of citizenship began with the aboriginals, the land then becomes the territory through which the problem of this denial is addressed. The returning to one's homeland then becomes a larger sign which is open to diverse semantic explanations. The signification can be traced in the claim of citizenship as Nannup connects with her land, and asserts her rights over the dominant desires of the whites, even though the desire to return to her homeland had been till then passive in her. Alice tells, "I had always wanted to go back home, but I'd never been in the position to be able to do so" (204). She

associates not only with the place of her belonging but also her people which is another way in which the denial of citizenship is reversed.

The denial of equal property rights can be interpreted as the denial of the comfort of being with her family as Alice keeps reiterating in the autobiography that the whites wanted to keep the aboriginals away from their family and homeland. But the importance of family had been quite strong in her from the moment she had been separated from them, and the reunion with her family by denouncing the control imposed on them by the whites as to employ them far away from the place of their origin becomes symptomatic of the reclamation of citizenship rights that they were stripped of till then. In fact the seed of this denouncement of the forceful control of the life of the aboriginals can be discerned when Alice proudly claims, "They might have taken me away from my home, but they didn't take my home away from me" (204). The stoical attitude Alice shines through once she tells her reader, "(t)o me, going back…is my true going home story, but there is another part too, and that's going back to make peace with my country" (221). Even "(t)he naming of the recipes, of bush tucker and health remedies, like the naming Aboriginal language group or nations, is an important act of decolonization of reinsribing domestic and geographical space from an Aboriginal women's point of view. (Brewster 38).

The denial of property thus becomes one of the focal points around which the dilemma of the denial of discursive citizenship is organized by Nannup.

4.6 Struggle for the Reclamation of Citizenship

The reclamation of citizenship begins with the assertion of resistance. Resistance is defined by Barry Morris as "the indirect ways in which oppressed groups gain some degree of relative autonomy by limiting or frustrating the controls those in authority exercise over their lives" (4). The denial of discursive citizenship is resisted by the aboriginals, and the greatest instance of resistance that forms the crux of the narrative is the incident of the Radio theatre where Alice holds back the white people there, and tells them frankly about the feeling that jeering creates in them. The resistance forms the climax of the search for equal citizenship, "'you know,' I said, 'it's not fair. We're all the same. We're all human beings; we walk, we talk, we eat the same kind of food, we are all just made the same. Colour is skin deep and I think we should all be treated as human beings'" (15).

"The life stories written by the Aboriginal women tell of situations which aim to influence White Australians in creating a more equitable and just society" (Russell 63). The writing of autobiographies then becomes the site through which the problematics of citizenship can be looked into and citizenship restored. The writing of autobiography does not only subvert the denial of equal citizenship, but through the voicing of its travails of not being considered a citizen claims all the rights that had been denied to the aboriginals "For women like Nannup, it is a basic concern to narrate their lives and revive the past, not only to let others know about injustices but *to reclaim stolen terrain*" (Zierrot 101) (My Emphasis). The autobiographies express the desire as Nannup states, "is the hope that all people, young, old, black, white, will read this book and see how life was for people in my time" (218). The act of writing the autobiography itself becomes the means by which Alice foregrounds her battle for the right to equal treatment like the whites, and in turn for the right to citizenship values. The writing of the autobiography becomes the outcome of the subversion and reversal of the limit put on the aboriginal need for equal participation with respect to the functionaries of citizenship by the white population. Alice very tellingly mentions the denial that she had faced; "Somedays, when I think about things, there is a lot of grief and sadness in my heart. It's then I realise how much *I was denied when I was taken away*" (211) (My emphasis). The denial then causes Alice to imagine "I don't think I'll see a time when there will be true equality in this country" (215) which she soon submerges in her optimism for a more equal life in the future for the aboriginals as she exclaims, "I think too, there's lot more opportunities today than when I was a kid" (218). There is still a lingering hope of the equal citizenship that the future is yet to bring. The autobiography gains importance not due to its ability to reclaim completely the citizenship values that were denied to her in particular and the aboriginals in general, but in its refusal to surrender to the phenomenon of the denial of discursive citizenship or in other words the resistance to the forced submission to a living without any citizenship rights. It is in this refusal of surrender that is strongly represented by Alice that we can study the subsequent grant of discursive citizenship and the denial of performative citizenship that is taken up in the next chapter.

Chapter V

Denial of Performative Citizenship to Aboriginals: A Study of *Racial Folly*

The question of citizenship in post-1967 Australia is of immense significance as it depicts the transition of the citizenship status of the aboriginals to full members of a society where from which they had been legally and formally excluded till then. While Alice Nannup's autobiography in a detailed manner outlines and strongly foregrounds the discursive exclusion prior to the formal and legal grant of equality as depicted in the previous chapter, the present chapter undertakes a survey of this exclusion faced by the aboriginals, post the stages of formal granting of full citizenship in a participative sense. Though 1967 is hailed by several scholars and critics as the year when full citizenship was granted to the aboriginals, it was in 1948 that the "aboriginals, along with other Australians technically became 'Australian citizens', with the commonwealth still restricting the access of aborigines to two principal rights of citizenship: the federal franchise and social security" (Chesterman and Galligan 157). In addition to the above mentioned restrictions, the continued existence of sections 127 and 51 which referred to the aboriginals in a negative light undid any willingness on the part of the settler British to confer upon the aboriginals the status of full citizenship. The sections which read as follows make this clear:

Section 51. The Parliament shall, subject to this Constitution, have power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the Commonwealth

with respect to: [...]
(xxvi) The people of any race, other than the aboriginal race in any State, for whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws.

Section 127: In reckoning the numbers of people of the Commonwealth, or of a State or other part of the Commonwealth, aboriginal natives should not be counted.

The 1967 referendum altered or dropped the phrase, 'other than the aboriginal race in any State' and symbolically ushered in equality for the aboriginals which has since then been hailed as the point of grant of equal citizenship for aboriginals by historians and scholars, but from the legal point of view it did not bring about a Herculean change in their status until the Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander (Queensland Discriminatory Laws) Act 1975. The discursive grant of the demand of equal citizenship piecemeal in 1948, 1967 and then in 1975 shifts the focus away from the performative denial of the aboriginal demand for equality that followed soon after discursive grant of equal citizenship. In other words, the chapter seeks to look into the "attitude of ambivalence and inconsistency towards formally incorporating Aboriginal people into a common Australian society and the failure by the settler society to come to grips with the persistence of indigenous identities and social orders" (Peterson and Sanders 3). This attitude of ambivalence and inconsistency towards the aboriginal demand for equality inspite of formal granting of equal citizenship or full membership of the Australian society is what is termed as the performative denial of citizenship. The chapter seeks to locate this disparity in the performative and discursive equality through the textual analysis of Gordon Briscoe's *Racial Folly*. The chapter would accomplish this by not just taking account the post-1967 performative denial of equal citizenship, but also by including the post-1948, phase of grant of equality with respect to the functionaries of citizenship, as these periods are important discursive signifiers of the grant of equal citizenship to the aboriginals. The need to document the performative denial of citizenship is foregrounded by Briscoe right at the outset when he tells, "The driving idea behind this memoir was the need to document the history of a group of Aborigines who were institutionalised from birth but saw liberty, equality and fraternity as more important than notoriety" (xix).

Gordon Briscoe was born at the "Old Telegraph Station Native Institution", to Eileen Briscoe and an unknown white father in 1938, two years after the Aborigines League was formed and the demand for citizen rights witnessed a dramatic augmentation, when the policy of assimilation had caught up pace, and the legal grant of aboriginal citizenship was round the corner. The text details the author's journey through the grant of citizenship in 1948 and 1967, and the performative denial of equal citizenship brought by each of these grants of equality making it an appropriate book to consider for analysing the denial of performative citizenship to aboriginals. Briscoe documents the performative denial of equal citizenship with a vivacity found nowhere else and amalgamates harmoniously his personal life suffering from the want of a performatively equal citizenship with the life of an aboriginal activist fighting for the rights and liberties of the aboriginals. The autobiography under consideration is the product of this activism, which can be described in his words as fighting against the ideological monopoly of the "Commonwealth and states' 'assimilation policy', and as such they took away Aboriginal peoples' heritage, their lands,

along with their long term family relationships and inheritances" (xix). The chapter will use the same parameters of analysis that had been used in the earlier chapter in order to draw a smooth comparison between the discursive and performative grant of equality and depict the changes (not) taking place in the performative aspect of citizenship after the discursive grant of equality aided by the narrative tropes of home and alienation.

In the Australian context, in order to control the racialized population, the white population has been investing in the nation-state as a white territory, to where they belong and where they have ownership. White possession operates, discursively as well as performatively, as the home of the brave, where the white male signifiers become the founding father and the hero. The indigenous sense of belonging stands against this through its incommensurable difference. The white settlers ensured their belonging legally through the *Immigration Restriction Act*, 1901, and socially through the White Australian Policy of the 1950s that gave preference to the white British, Canadian and Australian migrants. The white body became the rule and norm of belonging. And though the need to reproduce social whiteness has been discursively disbanded, performatively it continues well into the twentieth century. "Who calls Australia home", according to Moreton-Robinson "is inextricably connected to who has possession and possession is jealously guarded by white Australians" (27).

The notion of home for the indigenous Australians are then based upon a series of inclusions and exclusion, and in this particular context the exclusion takes place along racial lines with the exclusion of the aboriginals. This exclusion over generations gives rise to what Caryl Phillips terms "anxiety of belonging" (np). This anxiety manifests itself not just in a spatial but also in a historical uneasiness. The traumas of the individual and collective unbelonging interfere with the historical sense of the modern world of the indigenous Australians, and they can never feel at home. This home includes both the private space where one retires as well as the wider geographic connotation of one's country. Madan Swarup remarks strongly that the "notion of home seems to be tied in some way with the notion of identity", and identity is the consequence of a process of interaction between people, institutions and practices (95). And groups based on identarian behaviour maintain boundaries to prevent other people from being a part of a particular group or feel a sense of belonging, and are treated as deviants. Though most studies would delineate how outsiders or settlers in a particular society are made to feel as deviants, interestingly in the aboriginal case, the indigenous population is treated as deviant and the norms of the settler

become the dominant norm of the society. Furthermore, as Jonathan Rutherford argues, "identity marks the conjuncture of our past with the social, cultural and economic relations we live within" (19), this feeling of deviance gives rise to a feeling of alienation. The sense of place results in a crisis of identity in the aboriginals which then induces a feeling of alienation in the aboriginals. The nature of this feeling of alienation can be appropriately summarized in the words of Rahel Jaeggi, "An alienated relation is a deficient relation one has to oneself, to the world, and to others" (5). Jaeggi further elaborates this concept as he states "it refers not only to powerlessness and a lack of freedom but also to a characteristic impoverishment of the relation to self and the world (6). The aboriginals after living a life according to the terms and conditions of the settler whites cannot identify with their aboriginal heritage and also remain a deviant with respect to the white society. What Briscoe's work foregrounds are the feelings of isolation, meaninglessness, and impotence that constitute a sense of alienation. The following sections would chart how the tropes of home and alienation in Briscoe's work bring forth the denial of performative citizenship to the aboriginals.

5.1 Policy of Assimilation and Estrangement from Family

The policy of assimilation was the outcome of the failure of the Aborigines Protection Act to protect the aboriginal people which had given the British settlers power to control everything from "where they could live, where their children could live, where they had to work, what funds they could have as an allowance, and who was and who was not an Aboriginal person" (Armitage 18). The Protection Act functioned under the assumption that the aboriginals would be wiped out in twenty or thirty years. However, the failure of disappearance of the aboriginal people supplemented by the rise of the aboriginal half-castes, and a reduction in the number of full-blood aboriginals led to the propagation of the policy of assimilation which in turn aimed to include the half-castes into the white population, and thus wipe out the aboriginal heritage. The policy is aptly described by Peter Read as

> Aboriginal people were to be brought to live amongst white people. They would proceed to act and think like them as they became progressively europeanised. In successive generations the 'Aboriginal strain' would become less prominent until no one would be distinguished - or would want to be distinguished - as being of Aboriginal descent. Within a few generations the former Aborigines would actually

> be white people. There remained two practical problems ...: how to get the Aborigines from their homes on the reserves into the towns and how, once they were there, could they be made to want to be Europeans? (*Hundred Years War* 98)

The policy of assimilation however, was not meant for the welfare of the aboriginals as it was conceived in the light of benefiting the settler British as it would at the end serve the settler whites by providing them with educated and trained labour, and came with the precondition that "Aborigines either full- or mixed blood, had neither claims of heritage nor legal, civil or political rights" (Briscoe 34) with the state drafting laws to "control marriage, morals, property and succession of any possessions" (Briscoe 36) without planning to bring about any significant positive change in the lives of the aboriginals.

The dominant mentality of reaping benefits using the aboriginals as cheap labour became a huge obstacle in the path of any positive changes to be made to the lives of the aboriginals by the settler British. This becomes abundantly clear when Briscoe comments that "stock and station agents and their clients acted as agents of profit. In addition, these privateers themselves became barriers against any humanitarian changes to Aboriginal male and female workers' emancipation" (33). The policy of assimilation assumed that "if the half-caste is to be admitted to full citizenship as a white, then those influences which press him towards the blacks' camp should be as far as possible removed" (Briscoe 34) and the half-caste institutions appeared to be the best solution for that. Most of the half-caste institutions that sprang up in that time meant to "satisfy European women who thought Aboriginal women caused their husband's sexual apetities to boil over and to educate labour for domestic and pastoral employment"(Briscoe 33). These institutions caused the brunt of this assimilation policy to be felt most strongly by the aboriginal half caste children who were separated from their families and made to live in aboriginal half-caste institutions or in institutions governed by the church bodies who "placed them in institutions, took away their liberties, and, those males in charge of female employees either made them pregnant or sent them to remote pastoralists to do likewise" (Briscoe 33).

The removal from the families due the policy of assimilation and the manner in which their growing up years were affected by it is amply demonstrated by Briscoe when he states that,

> For my mother, racial theories meant little because in Adelaide in the post war era it just meant more difficulties looking after two children with few resources.

> However, a solution was provided for her that she could not refuse! As a six year old, I would have had a little understanding of the implications of my mother's relief, but this alienation most certainly influenced my attitudes to others. This feeling of loneliness that affected me in growing up in an institution, away from a mother's affection, would have, no doubt, echoed among the other children with whom I identified. (31)

This feeling that Briscoe describes is elaborated by Read aptly when he vents his anger against the "stupidity of the officials, horror at the callousness of dividing families arbitrarily, pity at the extraordinarily destructive effect of such bloody-minded ineptitude, despair at a bureaucracy whose right hand never seemed to know what the left was doing" (170).

Briscoe's removal is the story of removal of aboriginal children elsewhere and Briscoe successfully universalizes the pain. Briscoe was sent to an Anglican institution headed by a Father Percy Smith who harboured the idea that "if you took half-caste children out of their dependent, poverty-stricken decrepit circumstances, put them in urban society backed by religion and public education, then you could transform them into citizens of equal worth" (Briscoe 31). Though based on a romantic idea, Father Smith was one of the very few people who wanted to tackle the problem of the half-castes, but even then his ideas cannot escape criticism as it was more of an "experiment in social engineering" (Briscoe 32). Though the native institutions were meant to be secular, yet the inability of the government to bring about meaningful changes in the lives of the aboriginals, and the distressful situation created by the war led to the half-caste institutions being shut down, and resulted in the aboriginal children left uncared for by the working aboriginal parents ultimately carving a niche where the church could make a place for themselves by proselytizing and bringing people under its umbrella. Though Briscoe believes that Father Smith did things in good faith and felt that "a change would occur when his brand of christianity was applied" (Briscoe 41), yet he failed to see the what Briscoe suitably defines as "replacing one form of constriant with another" (41). Briscoe laments over the fact that the confidence in his own motive of doing good resulted in him being oblivious of the fact that "these children's escape was in fact an escape from an identity of which government wanted conformity" (41). Briscoe further enunciates the hopelessness embedded in the lives of the half-caste children when he says how nobody wanted to stand up to the authority and fight for the liberty of the half-caste aboriginals. He states,

> He (Father Smith) recognised the oppressiveness but had no nature to bring it down. Father Smith, according to his son John, read and understood theories of religion and existentialism, and what had become an anthropological theory of the twentieth century --- freedom was something that only God could bestow, and 'bad faith' was something that had to be endured. (41)

With honest intentions of turning the aboriginal people into useful and respectable citizens, Father Smith began his house for the aboriginal boys in 1941 without visualizing much about the future and without putting much thought into the way things would turn out to be or how it would affect the lives of the aboriginal children. Interestingly, the grant of formal citizenship in 1948 did not bring any alteration to the policy of assimilation as the legal status of the aboriginals remain unchanged after 1948, and Briscoe becomes a victim of this assimilation in the same period as the declaration of the equal citizenship status of the aboriginals. The crux of the problem is stated by Briscoe when he mentions that "I also knew from my family's internment at bakalava that 'assimilation meant that white people expected us to be like them: but we knew we were not, and they made sure we were different" (59)! This denial of liberty spills over and takes various other forms of denials; denials that are the constituents of the larger denial of the performative citizenship functionaries.

5.2 Denial of Education

Briscoe was taken by his mother to Adelaide to reside in Father Smith's hostel for boys of mixed aboriginal descent in 1945, just three years before equal citizenship was formally granted to them and yet if we base our analysis on Briscoe's description, life had not changed much for him or any other aborigine. The abominable state of education described by Nannup in the previous chapter in the era of the discursive denial of citizenship also continues in the period after the discursive granting of equal citizenship. The aboriginal parents had still no say in the quality of education that their children were supposed to get. Briscoe describes this when he says,

> Our mothers were never involved in the process of choosing what quality of education Father Smith would provide for us. In the end a public school was chosen because of the level of charity that Father Smith was able to muster...In the short term accommodation was found, but the dreams of long term upkeep and an excellent education were already beginning to fade. (47)

Though technically the aboriginals were then full citizens, yet they were kept from a good education, as the settler whites planned to let the aboriginals be a part of the white society only for serving the purpose of cheap labour, which did not call for a very good education, but only the "learning of English and democratic education through local self-government" (Davidson 193). Welch significantly mentions about how education could be used to perpetuate this internal differentiation in terms of education, "education often serves as an instrument of internal colonialism by socialising the colonised into an acceptance of inferior status, power and wealth" (206). And this education of acceptance of inferiority was dished out through "Differential schooling" that "rationalized the unequal distribution of product..." (Roberts 270). The education was further hampered by the fact that when Father Smith nurtured the dream of educating the aboriginal boys, little had he imagined that stripping the boys of the love of a family would hamper their education.

Briscoe never directly talks about the estrangement, but does indirectly connect his failure to learn anything to being kept away from his family. Though the strict routine ensured that he attended school every day, yet it could not guarantee him education. Briscoe says validating it,

> I only saw my mother a couple of times in those first few years from 1945 to 1948. In my new home in Kensington Gardens and with my new name I walked to the Marryatville kindergarten and public school. I did this with the other boys and soon got used to the routine of going to school, but *learnt little.* (48) (My Emphasis)

The condition of his education was pathetic and though Father Smith aimed to provide everyone in the house with the best quality of education, yet Briscoe's failure to learn did not command his attention to these failures. Briscoe very tellingly describes his inability to learn,

> I had great difficulty in moving up from grade one to two. It must have taken me from 1944 to 1948 to complete grade one. I don't think I ever graduated from kindergarten at Kirribilli or grade one at Marryatville because Christmas always came upon me before I had mastered grade one lessons...I could not read well. I preferred to be distracted by the girls of my own age at school rather than learning to read, write and count. (48-49).

This inability of his was not much pondered upon, and Briscoe was left on his own to deal with his failure. Bricoe very pertinently describes his educational failure as a period of "stagnant learning" (50). Interestingly, the year in which the aboriginals technically became Australian citizens, Briscoe and the other boys of the house were not allowed to enter a school by the white people, reflecting that the grant of equal citizenship to the aborigines did not change the dominant white disparaging view of the aboriginal attempt to education. This attitude, though, was present before the discursive grant of equality, should ideally have had no place once equal citizenship had been bestowed upon them. That education was still a distant dream for the aboriginals inspite of being granted citizenship becomes amply clear when Briscoe describes the near war-like situation when they tried to enter the school, "we marched as a group from St Francis House to the new school to be confronted by a howling throng of white mothers, fathers, and adolescent boys and girls barring our way in through the school's front gate" (57).

The church provided shelter to many people displaced by the Japanese raid, but instead of returning the displaced people it continued carrying on the task of assimilation, and under the garb of assimilation, the task of proselytizing. The church argued that "their educational ideas were more important than sending half-caste aborigines back to their homes" (Briscoe 58). Regarding the role of the church in educating the aborigines, Welch comments, "there was little difference between the twin processes of 'civilisation' and 'christianisation'" (207). The focus on civilizing through Christianizing norms made real education take a back seat, and the education they received made sure they inhabited the bottom of the economic pyramid. Briscoe tellingly depicts this when he mentions how the dream of the aboriginal parents to see their children get excellent education came crashing down;

> But as the years passed the dream sold to our mothers came crashing down around our ears with a bang not a whimper. The image in everyone's mind was of an education of excellence...As the population of the house increased with new faces from Alice Springs and Mulgoa the image and the original idea was soon lost. (62)

The education scenario has not changed for them even after 1967, which has been hailed as the most significant step for attaining full citizenship or even after 1975, which made any discrimination on racial grounds illegal. How insignificant has education been in the lives of the aboriginals can be discerned from the following statistics, “that in 1981, some 12.5% of the

aboriginal population had never attended school, and by 1984, only seven aboriginals had ever graduated in law from an Australian university, and two in medicine" (*Aboriginal and Tertiary Education* 51). Briscoe too had a very poor education record and he had not even made it to the high school. And his bad start in education affected even his later years of learning. His semi-literate skills also proved to be a hurdle in his clerical job. The poor primary level of schooling affected all the aboriginal children, resulting in only a handful of students reaching the university for Higher Studies. After striving hard on a personal level, he was offered scholarship by the New South Wales Aboriginal Education Council to complete matriculation from the Sydney Technical College for matriculation, and with support from his wife and consistent perseverance he reached to the stage of tertiary education, something that most aboriginals could not reach. However, as he received little support from the commonwealth government, reaching tertiary education had been a daunting task for him and he could do it only by the age of thirty one.

5.3 Denial of Liberty

The deplorable condition of aboriginal liberty is expressed by Malcolm X when he says in 1965, "The aboriginal Australian isn't even permitted to get into a position where he can make his voice heard in any way, shape or form" (Maynard 3). Aboriginals have been deprived of their liberty right from when Australia became a commonwealth, first under the protectionist policy and then under the assimilationist programme. While the previous chapter depicts the manner of aboriginal denial of liberty to the aboriginals by the settler whites largely using the alibi of the protectionist policy, the current chapter would focus upon how the discursive grant of equal citizenship failed to provide the aboriginals with performative liberty, one of the most essential components of civil citizenship. The Aborigines Protection Act through a Board for the Protection of Aborigines controlled every dimension of the lives of the aboriginals including "where they could live, where their children could live, where they had to work, what funds they could have as an allowance, and who was and who was not an Aboriginal person" (Armitage 19). The protectionist policing extended even in the assimilationist era and in the years up to the run of equal citizenship, so that even after the legal granting of Australian citizenship to aboriginals in 1948, things did not change much for them in terms of the grant of liberty.

Though different states pursued different policies for assimilation, yet there was something common in that the states largely aimed to take the children of the European-aboriginal descent

into its folds. The first step towards the denial of liberty takes place through this assimilation programme in which the children were separated from their parents. In the earlier chapter Nannup depicts how she was not allowed to meet her parents or go home, and in that context Briscoe delineates but only a minor improvement to that situation. While he still had to face estrangement from his mother and family, he was allowed to go home in the holidays. However, the separation from his mother induced in him a sense of alienation which affected him throughout his life as he describes, "this alienation most certainly influenced my attitudes to others. This feeling of loneliness that affected me in growing up in an institution, away from a mother's affection, would have, no doubt, echoed among the other children I identified" (31).

The strict discipline in the house, living with boys who were much older to him, and emotional distance from most people living in the house meant that he could not vent his feelings, and lived cooped up, bottling all his emotions. The absence of any emotional support and inability to contact his mother led to an emotional instability which meant he could not really fulfill the primary purpose of education for which he had been in the house. Education served as one of the major alibi to deny the aboriginals the liberty to return to their homes. Though the main purpose of assimilation was to turn the half-castes into whites in their mannerisms through the problematic and doubtful process of education seemingly for their welfare, the real motive behind it was dubious. Briscoe cites an instance to depict how education became an alibi of denying the aboriginals their right to liberty when after the war, the church would not let the aboriginals return to their homes as it argued that "their educational ideas were more important than sending half-caste Aborigines back to their homes. Protestors accused the Church of denying this group their civil rights" (58).

Briscoe particularly mentions about how he became conscious of the denial of liberty by the age of ten, around 1948 when the aboriginals had technically become Australian citizens; "By the time I was ten, in November 1948, I was acutely aware of the 'rigid controls' others in society had over me. News items about Aborigines made me and the boys I grew up with, sensitive to new ways the government would or could impose conditions on us" (61). The denial of liberty to the aboriginals and the manner in which the grant of liberty is totally controlled by the White settlers is made explicit by Brisoce when he states, "The new bulletin often contained information about how far governments would allow Aborigines to be educated, to receive full legal rights, how to behave, to enter licensed premises or even shops--where often we would be asked to leave for no

other reason than the colour of our skin. These events had an impact on us and we would often hear about other Aboriginal boys who were the victims of discrimination" (61). The news-items were the medium through which the knowledge of liberty was disseminated to the aboriginals. At times the information would reach them through other people who would "reveal to us either our lack of civil liberties or our human rights, sometimes in advance of us knowing them" (Briscoe 61).However, the strict laws prohibiting them from asserting their liberties also meant that there a fear and threat of "breaking these customary barriers or laws" (Briscoe 61). The lack of liberty was a constant companion and they were not allowed to freely move about in the city,

> When we played football we would be required to leave the training sheds immediately, similarly at swimming pools and picture theatres. On one of my mother's rare visit to Adelaide, I recall being asked to leave the Balfour's Cake and Coffee shop in King William Street in Adelaide. When we sat down there were still seats spare but we were nevertheless asked to leave. (62)

The discursive grant of equal citizenship in 1948 did not grant them performative liberty. Life in the supervision of Father Smith's successor, Squizzy Taylor, was a narrative of extreme oppression, something which Briscoe refers to as "period of brutal repression. Taylor, I suspect, was a sadist who revelled in the power he exerted over a bunch of hapless half-caste kids" (Briscoe 81). He describes the time under Taylor's supervision to be like a "concentration camp" (82). The helplessness at the face of such inhuman treatment goes on to show the lack of liberty of the aboriginals. Briscoe states, "We felt we were mistreated and could do nothing about our circumstances" (82). The policy of assimilation under the guise of education also took away the aboriginal culture and language of those people. The aboriginals were not given the liberty to follow their customs and traditions. Briscoe talks about this attitude when she mentions "the dominant society provided taxpayers' money for us to disappear into the morass of the white society" (91). They were to "become like other white people on the continent" (91).

The aboriginal habits were despised and kept in check by the settler whites. Bricoe mentions one such incident when he first joined the house "Because these boys knew me as a baby at the bungalow they immediately called me 'Nicky' the name my mother had always called me" (48). But this attitude was seen as ungentlemanly by Father Smith who "scolded them and ordered that I was to be called Gordon, the name on my birth certificate but one that I was totally

unfamiliar with" (48). The denial of liberty in terms of practicing their culture and language becomes associated with the grant of citizenship, such that "when this meltdown was complete our citizenship would be reinstated" (91). To gain liberty, the aboriginals had to get an exemption from the Aborigines Act 1934 (SA) and in Briscoe's words this meant to "deny our race and Aboriginal heritage" (96). This led to an epiphany in the aboriginals who fought for equal citizenship and hence liberty that would enable them to retain their identity as an aboriginal. Briscoe describes this in his words when he says, "we wanted to live freely as Aborigines with rights the same as those people we worked and lived with" (96) or as he later states that "We wanted the return of our civil liberties, a capacity to declare ourselves to be an aboriginal person. In turn we wanted the return of our land, freedom of movement and protection of our cultural heritage" (98).

After almost a decade, the 1967 Federal Referendum changed the Federal constitution regarding aboriginal rights, and the sections 127 and 51 were repealed that allowed the commonwealth to make laws for the aborigines. However, this event hailed as the point of the grant of equal citizenship was criticised by many as an eyewash. And as Attwood and Markus reveal that "the nature of the constitutional changes it entailed has been increasingly submerged. Myths about the referendum are promulgated in many forums and have acquired enormous authority over time" (118). Markus and Attwood further designate the changes brought by the referendum as a misrepresentation which they list as follows,

> the referendum recognised Aboriginal rights for Aboriginal people in their own country; it granted them citizenship and so equality under the law, or, more specifically, gave them the vote; it ended discriminatory State laws that had denied Aboriginal people basic human rights; it transferred control over Aboriginal affairs from the States to the Commonwealth. (118)

The over-hyped and almost mythical status attributed to the 1967 referendum is challenged when Markus and Attwood state "they did nothing to alter the legal status of the Aboriginal people: repeal of section 127, quite clearly, did not confer citizenship upon Aborigines, and amendment of section 51 (xxvi) did not transfer responsibility for Aboriginal affairs to the federal government" (Briscoe 121). The referendum has not granted liberty to the aboriginals as they would desire, and the question of "Aboriginal autonomy, leadership as well as Aboriginal control of their

organizations and future" (Briscoe 125) were still high in the priority list of the aboriginals. The issue of freedom of association was also absent from the struggle. The post referendum era has been carring on the "welfare role rather than pursuing liberty for all Aborigines" (Briscoe 132). What happened after the formal grant of equal citizenship was only "an assumption of freedom and liberty" (Briscoe 152). The freedom of aboriginal labour, and the democratic interests of the aboriginals were sidelined inspite of their being granted equal citizenship (Brisoce 127). Due to being relegated to an inferior position all throughout, the aboriginals are not able to experience a similar kind of liberty as the white Britishers. To feel liberty in the true sense would require some positive discriminatory laws on the part of the Australian government to make up for the secondary position they had been relegated to for centuries and which had been denied to them since them.

5.4 Denial of Property

While the previous chapter had shrouded the property rights of aboriginals in a mist of denial, the present chapter represents no change in the performative property rights of the aboriginals inspite of the discursive grant of equal citizenship. So even around the time when the aboriginals legally became the full citizens of the country in 1948, their land rights were not paid much heed. Briscoe mentions about the issue of "the British testing on the range, cutting through the Pitcha Pitcha lands" (53). The institutional impunity with which the aboriginals were functioning in grabbing the aboriginal lands when they were legally the citizens of the country and entitled to property rights like the whites is explained by Briscoe, "The newpapers were full of how Elkin (Professor of Anthropology at the University of Sydney) had betrayed Aborigines by helping government to steal Aboriginal lands...Bill Ferguson could be heard on the wireless protesting about the infringement by the British and Australian governments in taking Aboriginal lands for rocket testing" (53).

The insensitivity of the whites in comprehending the value of land for aborigines can be derived from Briscoe' description of Father Smith's reaction after learning about the rocket resting. "Father talked not about poor Aborigines but the poor church and nothing more happened..." (53). Though the church had played a major role in the lives of the aboriginal children, albeit making them more white in their mannerisms, yet Briscoe mentions "I am unaware of any action the church took to protect...their (the aboriginal's) land rights or offer them compensation from the

Anglican's stock of property wealth" (58). The ruling white society wanted the aboriginals to be trained in their mannerisms and only then would they be allowed to have property rights. So in 1950, the policy of 'new assimilation' was introduced (Briscoe 91). However, the 1949 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and other United Nations' covenants caused a stir among the aboriginals and as Briscoe states, "we wanted our heritage, wealth, land and a fair share of the human rights..." (91).

Bricoe not only intimates the reader about the lack of property rights, but also the denial to temporarily live on the property of the settler whites, which he demonstrates when he states, "I had no place to stay when I left St. Francis House" (91). The situation described by Briscoe echoes the denial of rental property that Nannup describes depicting that there has been no improvement in terms of property rights He could find an accommodation with Mrs McGee "who washed our clothes and bedding at St.Francis House. She offered me a board in a room on the back veranda of her home at Semaphore South" (91). There were also situations when the culture of the aboriginal people were destroyed because of the take-over of their lands as happened in Arrernte, and the government instead of compensating for those lands (even after the aboriginals technically became Australian citizens) ran a reserve there to house the people whose lands had been taken.

The Housing protests that took place in the 1950s and in the early decades of the 1960s and mentioned by Briscoe are important markers of the denial of and fight for property rights by the aboriginals; "Housing protests intensified during the 1930s, throughout the 1950s and on into the early part of the 1960s. The rent strike became a fully-fleged protest movement in the 1960s as wide-scale pressure on the Aborigines Protection Board mounted" (105). Race prejudice was at the heart of this property denial immersing the aboriginals in dire poverty. The denial of the rights to possess houses and division of residential areas along the lines of races, led to a strong protest for housing rights that continued well into the 1960s, twenty years after the aboriginals had legally become Australian citizens. The denial of the settler British to live alongside the aboriginals led many students to argue that "townsfolk in the many communities they visited were breaking international law by basically refusing to live side-by-side with Aborigines and this conflict had become a universal culture of intolerance" (111). This culture of intolerance denied the right to aboriginals to live on equal terms with the British and this denial manifested itself in the right to hold property as well. Though the 1967 referendum discursively has granted equal citizenship rights to the aboriginals, yet property rights has not come easily to the aboriginals. The problems

of acquiring property by aboriginals is elaborated by Briscoe in the context of the acquisition of houses; "Housing for Aborigines was a huge problem right across Australia...The states possessed a parsimonious policy in regard to Aboriginal housing" (120). The problem of aboriginal housing is further elaborated upon by Briscoe; "They (the British) built houses that white people wanted but that Aboriginal families found inappropriate. Lack of funds for maintenance was a common state administrative response- build houses for Aborigines and then just leave them alone, was their refrain" (120). He goes on to describe the deplorable housing conditions that the aboriginals live in by referring to the condition in which his mother lived, "My mother grew up under similar conditions and on many occasions I returned to find her living in a tin shack with a dirt floor, unlined walls with nail holes everywhere and doors that let flies and vermin in as they pleased" (121). The property rights for aboriginals post the grant of equal citizenship in 1948 and then in 1967, did not see much change in the performative level. It took another two decades till the Mabo case of 1992 for aboriginal property rights to be legally accepted.

5.5 Denial of Justice

Denial of Justice in the performative sense showed no improvement upon the discursive denial that was faced by Nannup. For the sake of a clear comprehension of the performative denial of justice to the aboriginals, we categorize the denial faced by them into denial of social justice and denial of legal justice. The concept of social justice defined as "the most basic right of all members of our community to live from want and hunger, the right to adeequate shelter and the right to adequate and accessible medical services" (O'Shane 19). And it overlaps with the categories that have been dealt with earlier, so in the denial of justice the study would largely deal with the denial of legal justice meted out to the aboriginals. Legal justice as depicted in the earlier chapter, before the discursive grant of equality, shows how justice was largely controlled by the whites for the benefit of the whites. Following the discursive grant of equality, the scenario of legal justice provided by the formal institutions witnessed no change, and some aboriginal leaders had to create organizations to ensure fair justice was available to the aboriginals.

Briscoe devotes a major part of his book to the narrative of the legal inequality that the aboriginals face at the hands of the white institutional justice. Briscoe mentions how in the period after the grant of equal citizenship in 1967, the condition of legal justice to the aboriginals has not seen much improvement and has led to the establishment of independent legal services to provide

legal assistance to the aboriginals. Brisoce mentions the instance of one such legal service called Redfern, that operated in New south Wales. The necessity of this legal service is pointed at by the fact that "Research in New South Wales provided evidence of the legal system's endemic discrimination against Aborigines, in particular, within the criminal justice system" (Noone and Tomsen 66). The Aboriginal Legal Service called Redfern was born in the backdrop of

> growing radicalism of the rural Aboriginal population migrating into the city. The thinking behind this radicalism was the need for legal protection for rural Aborigines who bought with them a lack of understanding of urban European culture...basically it amounted to Aborigines fear of a culture of police brutality and white lawyer self-interest. (Briscoe 152)

Briscoe describes how the 'public defender' system where the courts were supposed to provide the victims with a legal representative failed the aboriginals as he mentions, "Many people coming in contact with the courts, such as jailed prisoners or their family members applied for legal representation but often found it difficult to access" (152). Briscoe criticises this invisible unrecorded and uncared for hindrance to the realization of justice for the aboriginals and bursts out,

> The system propped up both an illusion of justice and an assumption of freedom and liberty. The reality was that over-worked and ignorant police officers out of convenience often handed out 'plead guilty' advice to those charged, telling them they would be treated leniently. The other method was for the accused to front the Magistrate, who would ask the accused if he or she had legal representation and if not a lawyer at the bench would be asked to take the case on a minute's notice. If nobody volunteered the prisoner or plaintiff would be asked to complete an application that was often too complicated for those with poor educational backgrounds to fill out. It was a very archaic system that lacked a guarantee of either human rights or justice. (152)

Briscoe would personally visit the jails to find out if any aboriginal person was without legal representation and later would arrange so.

The pitfall of the public defender system comes to the forefront when Briscoe brings the attention of the readers to the fact that he would at times, "talk to five or six aboriginal people who had no legal representation" (152). He describes the efficiency of the system when he mentions about how, "it was far more efficient than the public defender system" and he also describes the promptness of the system as he tells that he with the Redfern group would "arrange for lawyers there and then" (152). Not only are the aboriginals robbed of proper legal representation by the white government inspite of being equal citizens of the country, but they are also kept in the dark regarding the details of their legal proceedings, and institutions like the Redfern group aim to kill the ignorance of the people and bring transparency to the process, "gave them notes on what was happening, what the charges meant and the name of the lawyer who would be representing them. In addition, I contacted their families, took family members to see them, took families to court and gave them money for smoke and reading material" (152-153). Getting the families involved not only provided moral boost to the victims but also made the family intimate with their legal rights. Regarding the value of the Legal Service to the Aborigines', Briscoe further elaborates, "since the 1967 referendum Aborigines were migrating in huge numbers to urban areas and in many instances were unable to adapt lawfully to their new situations. In the case of Sydney there were few lawyers in a position to take clients who either could not or would not pay.

Migrating Aborigines often did not have employment and after coming into contact with the law had little knowledge of how systems worked and gained little comfort from police and prison guards. Rather, they were regularly picked on by police, often with no reason" (153). This aboriginal legal service body handled all the cases with sensitivity and patience, and not rushing the matters or handing it sloppily as the white officials generally did. Briscoe is forced to explicitly mention how the

> law promises minority groups the same treatment as everyone else. However, history and practice reveal that this had not always been the case and the Redfern Aboriginal Legal Service created a new liberal approach to legal aid for Aboriginal people...People's rights can be overrun by war but they can and do get overrun in societies that believe it cannot happen in their patch. (165)

Though Redfern was the first aboriginal legal service, it was soon followed by others like the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service which started in 1972.

Elizabeth Eggleston, an Australian born white inspired by her visit to a Navajo Indian country of America wrote her thesis on aborigines, and the administration of justice while conducting extensive field work in Victoria, South Australia and West Australia, and had a major role in forming the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service. By, 1973, the utterly miserable white legal service saw the establishment of an Aboriginal Legal Service in almost every state of Australia except the Northern Territory. But this service and some government officials were also at loggerheads because of "mistaken belief that they acted against the government policies" (Briscoe 155). Some members of the body of the Aboriginal Affairs also saw this legal service as the "failure of the policy of assimilation" (Noone and Tomsen 68).

The aboriginal legal service is largely affected by the aspect of its clients' health as sick people could make the entire system come under attack, and make it unworkable and hence Briscoe became involved in the social justice issues like the health concerns of the aboriginals, most of whom were leaving the reserves to look for better job opportunities in the city. However, the problems of "'culture-shock', poverty, missed opportunity and alienation coupled with ignorance of white culture exacerbated Aboriginal people's health problems" (Briscoe 156). The primary health care system is dysfunctional as the aboriginal people are too poor to afford to pay that money. And they deliberately keep away from the large hospitals. The problems faced by the aboriginals is explicated by Briscoe,

> the Aboriginal people migrating from destitute rural government reserves, that they came for work, which they were little prepared for and how they slept in empty houses. When they got sick general practitioners were nowhere to be found in the local suburbs because they relied on paying clients and there were few able to pay, black or white. Many of the sick would wait near death conditions, and then would be taken to hospital by ambulance or to casualty for emergency treatment...Aborigines and their children suffered from diseases other Australian had heard about in third world countries; diseases such as worms, impetigo and anaemia which led to serious social problems like missing school and work. (Briscoe 157)

The result is that the medical negligence of the aboriginal is beyond any repair. The solution to this problem is seen in the establishment of an Aboriginal Medical Service. Though

few ophthalmologists find this unnecessary, yet the problems faced by the migrating aboriginal population have forced them to reconsider their stand. The aboriginal legal service and medical service are then the result of the denial of justice to the aboriginals. And the necessity of forming these bodies goes on to depict the denial of performative justice inspite of the grant of equal citizenship, in legal terms or in terms of social justice encompassing the aboriginal health service. The formation of these bodies depict the correctional forms employed by the aboriginals to fight against and reclaim the right to performative justice that has until now been denied to them.

Brisoce's autobiography depicts the denial that the aboriginals face even after being granted equal citizenship rights piecemeal in 1948 and 1967, albeit performatively. The study uses both the points in the history of the grant of equal citizenship to talk about how the aborginals were denied equal citizenship rights like the white Australians. Briscoe's work in depicting the denial that the aboriginals have to face underpins the changelessness that accompanied the grant of equal citizenship in the performative level. The analysis of the book goes on to show that the grant of equal citizenship did not bring about any change to the social status of the aborigines. The analysis based on the parameters for the grant of equal citizenship show that equal citizenship rights have been continuously denied to them inspite of the discursive grant of equal citizenship. The autobiography becomes the site through which the performatively denied citizenship can be reclaimed. The angst that Briscoe feels at the denial of performative equal citizenship is oozes out of every pore of the autobiography, and forces the reader to divert their attention to hollow promises of discursive equal citizenship, and the simultaneous denial of performative citizenship faced by the aboriginals.

Chapter VI

Conclusion

The present study has attempted to understand how the dalit autobiographers, Baby Kamble and Aravind Malagatti, and aboriginal autobiographers, Alice Nannup and Gordon Briscoe imagine the manner in which equal citizenship had been, and continues to be denied to the dalits and aboriginals. Using the time frame of the discursive grant of citizenship as a point of reference, the study has looked into the discursive denial of citizenship which implies a lack of grant of discourses of equality to the dalits to participate in the functionaries of citizenship, and the performative denial which talks of the denial of participative citizenship even when the discursive rights have been granted to them. While Baby Kamble's *The Prisons We Broke* and Alice Nannup's *When the Pelican Laughed* describe the time period before the grant of discursive citizenship, the other two autobiographies, namely *Racial Folly* and *Government Brahmana* denote the time period after the grant of discursive citizenship. The study in the process has also attempted a comparison of the literature of the two diverse communities (dalits and aboriginals) using the parameter of how discursive citizenship and performative citizenship (inspite of the discursive granting of equal citizenship) has been denied to them. While doing so, the study also has attempted to bring to light the state of continuous denial of citizenship that both the dalits and aboriginals have to face. The study claims not to have deviated from the individualistic struggle of either the dalits or aboriginals or conflating the boundaries of their struggle while comparing the literatures of the two communities.

The increasing demand for equal citizenship rights by dalits has been dubbed less as a demand for rights, and more as a struggle for survival. In the process, the participative aspect of citizenship has been overlooked. And the necessity of survival has also snatched away from them the right to "Enlightened citizenship" (Guru 269). The gap between discursive and performative citizenship is perpetuated by the nation-state, and the following statement by Guru holds sway in this context; "It is really shocking to see that the state itself is responsible for stigmatizing dalit citizenship" (270). Guru further adds to his argument, "At the theoretical level, the state treats them as equal citizens, but at the practical level, they have come to be known as BPL (Below Poverty Line) card holders, nadar (poor and helpless), yellow card holders, or certificate holders"

(270). Instead of civil rights, the question in the dalit context becomes that of human rights. And as Guru states, "For dalits, citizenship is a matter of social standing and being able to stand without having to shrink their bodies. It is not a question of asserting citizenship rights or feeling empowered" (274).

Several instances of denial of citizenship can be discerned in the way the dalits are denied equal treatment and privileges that are extended to the upper castes. While identarian politics help the dalits get recognition on the basis of their caste identity, yet this move itself subverts the narrative of equality as the dalit identity becomes the basis on which performative citizenship rights are denied to them. Identity politics and dalit citizenship rights then form a vicious circle. *A Times of India* Report of January 24th 2016, states how a dalit family has offered to give up their Indian citizenship after a case of land grabbing by local strongmen of their *Sabarkantha* village. The family of Chandu Nadia knocked the doors of justice to revoke the performativity of their discursive citizenship but to no avail. The report further quotes Nadia who cries out against the disparity between the discursive and performative rights when he states, "There is no meaning to keeping such futile documents like voters' ID card or ration card, when we are not given constitutional rights. Even the CMs orders are not followed, so there is no option left for me. So, as a final protest my family and I can give up our citizenship" (n.p).

The upper caste civil society with the help of violence and force has successfully kept the dalits out of the realm of performative citizenship. Equal citizenship then cannot be achieved through the policies of the state, or through the reformations brought by the elite; it has to be gained by the continued struggle of the second-class dalit citizens. The denial of the discursive citizenship in the performative form shows the continued denial of citizenship. Through the forging of collective identities dalit politics has tried to address the denial of performative citizenship, and has also constructed alternative ways to foreground their right to the citizenship functionaries. Although political participation has brought about a change in the exercise of rights in relation to the citizenship functionaries, yet it is only a handful of dalits who have been able to exercise the performative rights of citizenship. And even when the dalits have been granted the right to participate freely in the citizenship functionaries it is the communitarian identity that looms large in the dalit assertion of citizenship and against that background the individual foregrounding of citizenship rights by dalits is not much heeded.

Aboriginal citizenship also faces a similar problematic with respect to the functionaries of citizenship. Elaine Crombie Pitjanjtajtarra, Warrigmal, South Sea Islander woman with German ancestry from her father's father in one news article published in *The Guardian* mentions about how the reparations by the Australian government along with the discursive grant of citizenship does not change the trauma for the aboriginals. She mentions

> I've never had to experience on a traumatic level what my mother and uncle did, but there are definite parallels and I have to make mention of this because lately people have spoken out about the subject of the stolen generation and its validity. Trust me, it is real. It did happen. I am living proof of it. I live today with no living culture that I can practise or pass down to my sons. I have no living tongue in my mouth that I can teach my kids. My tongue only knows a colonised speak…I am a perfect example of genocide.

What Crombie states about the present condition of the aboriginals inspite of the discursive granting of equal citizenship goes on to show the general improvement lacking in the lives of the aboriginals. That the discursive grant of citizenship failed to transform itself into the performative grant of citizenship is amply demonstrated by Crombie. The aboriginals believe that their "citizenship lacks legitimacy" (Mulgan 185). The main problem of most aboriginal people is the relative deprivation in the citizenship status defined by their limited participation in the citizenship functionaries.

The test for the contemporary Australian state is if they will uphold the rights of their citizens irrespective of their ethnicity. And following this line of thought it can be questioned if the Australian state would allow distinctive rights to the aboriginals, and if these distinctive rights would be "linked more to the historical priority and present minority status of indigenous people rather than to the injustice of their original dispossession" (Mulgan 187). The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation Act, 1991 aimed to improve upon the minority status of these people. The council's report in 1994-95 states " indigenous peoples are central and integral to the cultural fabric of this nation and that the government should acknowledge the true place of indigenous people within the nation" (CAR 5). The discourse of right included the privileging of the idea of one nation, and did not focus much on securing the status of the aboriginals. Even the idea of social justice included in the council failed to provide any importance or solution to aboriginal problem of land or self-determination.

The citizenship rights even when granted rules out the possibility of the correcting the gross denial of rights that the aboriginals face as the participative aspect of that citizenship is not stressed upon. For instance, the Mabo Judgement of 1992 tried to compensate the aboriginals for the dispossession of lands, but in practice this stance just confirmed the dispossessed status of the aboriginal people. Though the aboriginals were allowed to buy land in the Western fashion, a commitment of the settlers to their social justice package, yet this piece of legislation "was heavily biased towards commercial interests" (295). Though the grounding of aboriginal rights has been a major issue in the politics of Australia, and the state is working for the internal autonomy for the aborigines, yet, it denies the aboriginals, the right to the universal principles of freedom and equality and also becomes an instance of internal colonization (Tully 47). The aboriginals also face a denial of performative citizenship just like the dalits, and the commonality shared by the two communities of being stripped of the equal rights to performative citizenship becomes a fair basis for the comparison of literatures of the two communities.

The issue of the comparison between caste and race and the question of the correctness of the comparison is inevitably brought on by the comparison between the literatures of the dalits and the aboriginals. This likening of race to caste has been even questioned by several anthropologists and sociologists, and yet the analogy between race and caste has been very popular when it comes to the comparison of oppressed groups in India with that of the rest of the world. Caste has always been likened to ethnicity. Stephen Barnett in his essay "Approaches to Changes in Caste Ideology in South Asia" drew parallel between the modern transformations of caste to ethnicizations. Though the sociologist H.H.Risley over simplified the race-caste dilemma and used anthropometry as a solution to the riddle of caste, but eminent sociologists like G. S. Ghurye also had similar views of caste as equivalent of race. Ghurye calls the chamar and the pasi (the outcastes), "…as the hinduized representatives of the aborigines" (121). The modern arguments of caste and race though talk of the historical construction of caste and race, and its uneven modern changes, it omits all talks of the problem of caste and race as rigid, or its popularity as absolute categories.

The present study focuses on the way caste and race can be read as fractured entities which derive from the greater truth of racial and casteist discrimination clearing the ground for their comparison. The study also focuses on how the debates of citizenship needs to be viewed in the larger context of exclusion, and the sanitized notions of citizenship disconnected from the issue of

minoritarian exclusion needs to be questioned. The study aims to illuminate the distinction between dalit and Australian aboriginal citizenship and the exclusiveness practiced in the affiliations to the nation-state. Since the eminent sociologist, T.H.Marshall's definition of the ideal of citizenship as participation in the community, the concept of citizenship has undergone a sea change from the political-based definition of citizenship, where the focus was on an individual's relationship with the state to a more sociological definition where the focus is on the relationship of an individual with the society. The political definition has been fulfilled in the dalit and aboriginal case (the discursive aspect), and it is the sociological definition (the performative aspect) that is at stake. This change becomes the basis of viewing of the problematic of dalit and aboriginal citizenship.

Citizenship attains meaning only when it is divested of the ethno-cultural investment and dominance in it. Only then citizenship can signify the liberal principles associated with it. Habermas addresses this problematic by distinguishing between nationality or *ethnos* and citizenship or *demos* (158) where nationality signifies the common ethnic and cultural properties that bind the ethnic groups together, and citizenship denotes the exercise of civil rights that bind the people of different ethnicity together. The problematic is well elucidated when Edgar states that "Ordinary people must be socialized into an *ethnos* in order to acquire the competence to function in social life...But the *ethnos* cannot be allowed to be the basis of political life" (39). Nationalism “swings between its overwhelming desire to unify people of all castes and ethnicities and the xenophobia and cultural clashes that this desire of unification generates” (Silva 13). The constitution should then become the focus of citizens' concern rather than ethno-cultural unity or ethnos. This differentiation gains special signficance "in a pluralistic society, (where) the constitution lends expression to a formal consensus" (Habermas 24). In such a nation-state, everyone is respected as free and equal. However, the dominant groups in India and Australia situate the dalits and aboriginals outside the cultural and ethnic affiliations of the dominant groups of the respective countries. Because of their ethnic variation, they are discursively granted civil rights by the constitution, yet the performative aspect of the civil rights still eludes them. Gabriel reflects this exact sentiment as she states, “It is exactly this material and ideological distinction between citizens and the hierarchically conceived nation that is signified by the place of the hyphen…where the ‘ethnic’ is kept apart and at a distance from the ‘national’ within the cultural space of the nation” (1222). Though citizenship ought to be ideally based upon what Habermas

terms "constitutional patriotism" (162) and not shared identity, yet the exercise of the functionaries of citizenship becomes largely dependent on the identity of the groups in question, leaving out the citizenship rights of the dalits and the aboriginals in the process. So ethnos becomes the medium of denial of citizenship, and ironically again the medium through which citizenship is reclaimed. The meaning of the universal that occurs when confronted by this contradiction between demos and ethnos illuminates the faultlines in the existing practice of universal citizenship. The comparison of the literatures of the two communities then contests "the hegemonic idea of citizenship forwarded by the nation-state" (Batra 6) and opens up unexpected avenues of political thought and praxis, which the chapters of the thesis elucidate upon and illuminate.

Chapter I introduces the concept of universal citizenship and how this concept has eluded the dalits and the aboriginals. It justifies the studying of the two different literatures by the distinctiveness they hold from the mainstream literatures of their respective countries while posing them to be a part of the transnational counterpublic, a group which defies the boundaries of the westphalian imaginary to be united by the oppression that they face at the hands of the dominant group of people in their respective countries. The chapter also justifies using the particular autobiographies as they occupy important historical junctures with respect to the grant of discursive citizenship which straddles the point of pre-grant and post-grant of discursive citizenship and also become "a mode of self-assertion and protest for the figures in the narrative" (Singh 115). Each of the autobiographies is then individually taken up to study the discursive and performative denial of citizenship. The analysis uses Marshall's parameters of equal citizenship namely, right to liberty, right to the faith of one's "freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own property and to conclude valid contracts, and the right to justice" (Marshall 11) to analyse the individual autobiographies in order to maintain a homogeneity of analysis and a fair basis of observation and conclusion.

Chapter II analyses the discursive denial of citizenship in Baby Kamble's *The Prisons We Broke*. The above mentioned parameters are used to depict the manner in which equal citizenship is being continually denied to them. The chapter throws up instances of the discursive denial of citizenship from the autobiography on the basis of the narrative tropes specific to the work to portray the stage of dalit citizenship when the discourse of equal citizenship was not present even in the constitutional narratives.

Chapter III depicts how Aravind Malagatti's *Government Brahmana* depicts an improvement upon the state of the discursive denial imagined by Kamble in her work. The chapter shows how the discursive denial has been improved upon by the discursive granting of citizenship. The chapter goes on to show how Malagatti through his work successfully drives home the point that the discursive granting of citizenship has not changed things for the dalits, as the dalits face the same inequities that they faced before the discursive granting of citizenship. The chapter deals with Malagatti's unravelling of the truth in the discursive granting of citizenship, which includes the performative denial of citizenship using the narrative tropes in the autobiography as bedrock to base the analyis. In order to depict the discursive granting and performative denial of citizenship the chapter uses the same parameters as were used in the earlier chapter to depict the discursive denial of citizenship.

Chapter IV moves from the dalit scene of denial of citizenship to the denial of citizenship faced by the aboriginals. The chapter charts the discursive denial of citizenship as depicted in Alice Nannup's *When the Pelican Laughed*. The chapter analyses Nannup's foregrounding of the denial of discursive citizenship based on the narrative tropes of the autobiography. For doing so, the chapter again employs the parameters used in the earlier two chapters to show the lack of narrative of equality bestowed upon the aboriginals.

Chapter V deals with Gordon Briscoe's depiction of the performative denial of citizenship faced by the aboriginals in his book *Racial Folly* again using the same parameters used for analysing the denial of discursive citizenship to the aboriginals. The chapter again bases itself on the specific narrative tropes that pervade this work. Briscoe's depiction of the denial of performative citizenship takes shape in the form of the time period of 1948 when Aboriginals legally became the citizens of Australia, and in 1967 when the legal narratives of the country pronounced the aboriginals as full citizens. Briscoe's book is analysed with respect to the denial that he describes both after 1948 and 1967, to show how the performative aspect, of the discursive citizenship, is denied to them. The current chapter would then compare the trajectory of denial of discursive and performative citizenship faced by the dalits and the aboriginals.

6.1 Denial of Discursive Citizenship

As Baby Kamble in her autobiography, *The Prisons We Broke* and Alice Nannup in her work, *When the Pelican Laughed* depict, both the dalits and aboriginals have been denied citizenship

discursively by the dominant fractions in their respective countries. By the denial of discursive citizenship, the authors point to the denial of any discourse of equality that had been granted to the dalits and the aboriginals. The narrative tropes employed by Kamble and Nannup to depict the discursive denial of citizenship are almost similar. While Kamble employs the trope of liberation, alienation, place and space in her work, Nannup employs the trope of stolen children, alienation, and place and space in her autobiography. The discursive denial of citizenship imagined by both the authors employs similar tropes which hint at a similar trend in the depiction of the discursive denial of equal citizenship. Alienation and the sense of space and place is a common trope to the writings of both the communities in depicting the discursive denial of citizenship. The sense in which the trope of alienation is used in by both the authors is also comparable as both use it in the sense of powerlessness and meaninglessness. Powerlessness implies the lack of influence over the socio-political events or the society at large. Meaninglessness, according to Seeman, is the lack of "sensed ability to predict behavioral outcomes" (786). The trope of place and space in Kamble's case is more of a demarcation of the public spaces between the upper castes and dalits, and the aboriginals and white settlers. While in the case of the aboriginals this also includes a sense of uprootedness from their original homes, in the dalit situation it implies a restriction from venturing out in the spaces that is occupied by the upper castes. In both the cases the larger question that dominates is the issue of belonging, with the autobiographies acting as sites where the issue of unbelongingness is addressed. The discursive denial of citizenship then is depicted using similar tropes across the boundaries of a westphalian imaginary. The following section will compare the depiction of the discursive denial of citizenship by the individual authors on the basis of the parameters of equal citizenship as outlined by Marshall.

The denial of the right of physical presence in public spaces is faced by both the dalits and the aboriginals, and both the communities are denied their right to be seen in public spaces, confined to community-specific spaces. The denial of liberty faced by both the dalits and aboriginals runs along almost similar lines. The dalits and the aboriginals alike are denied the right to choose their jobs, with the former dictated by manufactured caste laws by the upper castes, and the latter by the strict control and imposition by the settler British. The case of right to property meets a similar fate. Both the communities were denied the right to acquire and sell property. The caste rules set down by the upper castes for the dalits prevented them from holding any property. The settler British also made it near to impossible for the aboriginals to hold any property. Both

the groups were subjected to utter humiliation and were denied their right to presence in public spaces. To spice it all up, both the communities were even denied the right to have their own faith. So, while the dalits were explicitly denied the right to be a part of the Hindu faith which they revered and yet were numerically attached to it leading to an ambiguous situation, the aboriginals were forced to abandon their traditional customs and rituals and were religiously trained in Christianity.

Acquiring education was also a distant cry for both the groups. As painted by Kamble, the dalits were denied education owing to their low-caste birth, and compulsory caste-ordained jobs, the aboriginals were under the policy of protection promised proper education. But the results for the aboriginals were far from what was promised. Nannup also shows how the aboriginal children were denied education, and the focus of the settler whites was on imparting an education only to the extent that would enable the aboriginals to serve as cheap domestic labour. Denial of justice was the most significant amongst all the parameters used to describe the denial of discursive citizenship. Kamble and Nannup depict how the dalits and the aboriginals faced similar travails when it came to justice. The dominant sections in both the societies defined and prescribed the laws that were to govern the dalits and aboriginals which were consequently drafted in favour of the settler whites and the upper caste Hindus and put the dalits and the aboriginals at a disadvantaged position owing to their less privileged birth. Justice to dalits was based upon the Hindu caste laws, and the concept of Hindu upper caste justice belied the very notion of justice itself. So the dalits were bereaved of any discourse of equal justice. The Hindu scriptures formed the laws that governed the dalits and left the dalits at the mercy of the upper caste. Similarly, the aboriginals were at the mercy of the laws drafted by the settler whites for their own convenience. The lack of liberty in choosing their jobs faced by the dalits and aboriginals made them financially crippled and they were left at the mercy of the dominant classes/castes in their societies for their survival.

6.2 Denial of Performative Citizenship

The denial of performative citizenship entails the granting of the constitutional narratives of equality, which the study terms, discursive equality with the simultaneous stripping of the participatory or performative aspect of citizenship. The study has analysed to see how Aravind Malagatti in his *Government Brahmana* and Gordon Briscoe in his *Racial Folly* have tried to

depict the denial of performatively equal citizenship after the discursive granting of the same using the dominant tropes in the respective works. Malagatti's work uses the tropes of journey from rural to urban space and the trope of alienation. Brisoce's work uses the trope of home and alienation. Both the authors use the common trope of alienation tempered with slightly different flavours to drive home the feeling of performative denial of citizenship. Briscoe and Malagatti in employing the trope of alienation want to depict the way in which the self is estranged from the world, often abetted and accompanied by modernity, where they cannot identify with their roots and also cannot successfully formulate a new identity to mingle with the dominant population. The trope of journey from rural to urban space used in Malagatti's book and the trope of home used in Briscoe's work point to the feeling of homelessness and rootlessness that occupy both the writings. In journeying from the village to the city, Malagatti subtly portrays, the unchanged attitude of people towards caste causing him to search frantically and hopelessly for the feeling of home. This feeling of homelessness also echoes in the work of Briscoe who views this homelessness as an outcome of the exclusion faced with respect to the normative white society. As a deviant from this white normativity, Briscoe depicts throughout his work the feeling of homelessness that continually haunts him. This feeling of homelessness can be summarized in the words of Rita Banerji,

> The subaltern search for identity in a society which incorporates the indigenous tribes into its fold while relegating them to a position of perpetual dependence and inferiority is characterized by two conflicting inclinations-one, to conform to the accepted mores and to win approval by the larger society, and two, to assert their deviant yet distinctive identity, the sense of which they have retained. (85)

Both the authors portray in their work that the granting of discursive citizenship has been eyewash, and performative citizenship still eludes the dalits and aboriginals. Same parameters as that of the discursive denial of citizenship were used to analyse the depiction of the performative denial in order to arrive at a clear viewpoint if the grant of discursively equal citizenship has impacted the performative aspect of it. Both the autobiographers portray that the discursive grant of citizenship did not yield an equal participation in the functionaries of citizenship. The situation in case of the dalits did not see any major makeover in the rural areas, though Malagatti does point to a discreetness that entered caste discrimination in the urban areas. The aboriginal case also saw a shift from the blatant practice of discrimination, to what Briscoe depicts as a humanitarian

encapsulation of discrimination. The autobiographies show that the performative denial of liberty still loomed large both on the dalits and the aboriginals. The dalits and aboriginals were still denied the right to participate in the citizenship functionaries in the public spaces. The freedom of choice was still not exercised by them performatively as the constitutional narrative of equality was defeated by the dominant attitude of the dominant sections who still considered them to be inferior.

The autobiographers show how the field of education also characterized similar results. While in case of the dalits, the binary of purity-pollution still pervaded the educational spaces, making it difficult for the dalits to attain education, the aboriginals too were still haunted by the prejudice of the settler British about their racial intellectual inferiority. Both, Malagatti and Briscoe describe how they were not benefitted by the discursive grant of equal citizenship. The right to property scene also did not result in a pretty picture. Both Malagatti and Briscoe describe how buying lands and property was still not allowed to the dalits and aboriginals, and also bring forth the truth of ghettoisation that did not cease with the discursive grant of equality. The freedom of practicing one's faith is also not brought about by the discursive granting of equal citizenship. Malagatti describes about how his family had to hide their caste identity to live amongst the upper castes with respect, and Briscoe even mentions about how the government controlled every aspect of their lives, including their faith and customs. The discursive grant of equality still prevented them from gaining equal rights in practicing their own faith.

The distinction between high and low in terms of faith and practices persisted. The right to justice also witnessed no change post the granting of discursively equal citizenship. Malagatti illustrates how the dalits were still hounded by the upper caste presence in the all tertiary positions in the country who also posed as the agents of social change, and used all their might to deny the dalits the justice that they demanded and deserved. An intervention by the architect of the constitution and the dalit leader, Babasaheb Ambedkar, did bring in the clause of an affirmative action in terms of reservation in jobs and education for the dalits. Yet Malagatti produces several instances in his work that show how the use of this policy by the dalits led to denunciation and denigration of their achievements by the upper castes. The affirmative action then did not achieve its desired results and opened up avenues for further discrimination (Mukherjee and Jha 41). The aboriginal grant of discursive citizenship, as delineated by Briscoe, varies in this respect as their grant of citizenship was not accompanied by any distinctive status bestowed on them that might

make up for the repeated assaults undertaken by the settler whites with respect to the citizenship status of the aboriginals. Though efforts have been made by a Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation Act, 1991, yet the effort did not bring the desired results, and was seen as a preventive measure to the breaking up of the nation for an exclusive aboriginal territory. So, the performative citizenship status as depicted by Malagatti and Briscoe does not provide an impression of an improvement of their status over the discursive denial of citizenship. The performative citizenship then becomes a shell citizenship or what can be termed in that sense as only a discursive citizenship.

The comparison between the literatures of the two groups then successfully draws a pattern in the depiction of the denial of equal citizenship rights to the dalits and aboriginals in the literary counterpublic sphere. As Briscoe delineates, aboriginal citizenship claims initially were based upon the suppressed notions of aboriginal difference from the white settlers. Briscoe's work goes on to illustrate that it was only later that citizenship rights were claimed inspite of the differences. The dalit case follows a similar path with a slight difference. Kamble and Malagatti's work portray how the claim of dalits to equality shifted to equality in terms of difference with the grant of the differential citizenship rights. But as depicted by the autobiographers of the two communities, in both the cases, the recognition of difference has widened the differences instead of bringing about a 'differential equality' as dalits and aboriginals are still being denied equal citizenship rights or in other words "the guarantee of social inclusion for all" (Marshall qtd. in *Dangerous Classes* 2002, 2). While the instance of internal colonization is common in the depiction of both the dalit and aboriginal autobiographers, the distinctive rights granted to the dalits is missing in the aboriginal case, and instead the aboriginals have been awarded with the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation Act. "The "use of citizenship status as a category to instantaneously exclude hundreds of thousands of participants has allowed racial bias to be expressed and legitimized through a seemingly neutral category" in case of both the communities (Fujiwara181). And in both the cases the question of civil rights for both the communities has been replaced by the issue of the denial of human rights. This commonality that they share helps the study to look at the denial of equal citizenship as depicted in the literary counterpublic to aboriginals and dalits by the respective dominant communities and in the process draw a pattern in the denial meted out to them.

A close reading of both the autobiographies suggest that the narrative tropes employed in depicting the discursive denial of citizenship is reiterated with a slightly different flavour in the portrayal of the performative denial of citizenship. And what outshines the use of different tropes is the problematic of belonging. The problematic of belonging then remains the central issue in the works of the dalit and aboriginal writers when trying to depict the denial of performative citizenship and the denial of discursive citizenship. Discursive citizenship then does not bring any change regarding the issue of truly belonging to the dominant society in case of both the dalits and the aboriginals. As depicted by the autobiographers of both the communities, performative citizenship is reduced to discursive citizenship, and discursive entails aspects of performative citizenship in it. The aboriginal and dalit literary counterpublic then portray that discursive and performative citizenship for the dalits and aboriginals are bound to each other in an aporiacal relation where one entails and prognosticates the other. Performative and discursive are not stable and unified entities, but fractured, and in an incessant interplay with each other, where the grant of one does not necessarily mean granting the other. This results in the dalits and aboriginals receiving only a shell or empty citizenship. Equal citizenship, as depicted by the dalit and aboriginal literary counterpublic, is at war with itself. It is not able to resolve its inner contradictions that assume the forms of discursive and performative. Equal citizenship, one can safely conclude after a close reading of both the autobiographies, eludes the dalits, and due to the continuous tension of the discursive and performative aspects of it, is always deferred. The dalit and aboriginal autobiographers then depict how the problematic of citizenship is shared by the two communities and in their depiction of this problematic essentially divorce themselves from the mainstream writings of the respective countries and become a part of the transnational counterpublic, where they can foreground their problems and only where they can feel as an equal. The study in the process of the comparison of the two literatures creates a new discourse of denial of equal citizenship with respect to the two communities while preserving their individualistic discourses, creating what Nigam describes as "the preservation of the old in the new and its transcendence" (4262). In the comparative analysis of the depiction of the denial of equal citizenship in the literary counterpublic, the study proposes a reconstruction of the policy of liberal universalism, that forms a basis of the theoretical equal citizenship, into "cultural citizenship" which involves the "right to be different, to re-value stigmatized identities, to embrace openly and legitimately hitherto marginalized lifestyles and to propagate them without hindrance" (Pakulski 83). This would also allow an alternative form of ethnic identity, which can be described as

“associational ethnic identity that allows the individual to take pride in his or her ethnic origins while allowing for the complex and intricate ways in which multiple cultural identities can be woven together to produce something both familiar and new” (Gabriel et al. 274).

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Chapter I

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