

Tribhuvan University
Faculty of the Humanities and Social Sciences
Central Department of English

Literacy, Freedom and Justice

A Dissertation Submitted to the Central Department of English in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Philosophy in English

By

Nokha Bahadur Shrestha

November 2014

Tribhuvan University
Faculty of the Humanities and Social Sciences
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Letter of Recommendation

Nokha Bahadur Shrestha has completed his dissertation entitled “Literacy, Freedom and Justice” under my supervision. He carried out his research from October 2012 to November 2014. I hereby recommend that his dissertation be submitted for viva voce.

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Approval Letter

This dissertation entitled “Literacy, Freedom and Justice”, submitted by
Nokha Bahadur Shrestha to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in
English has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my respected supervisor Dr. Anirudra Thapa for his scholarly guidance. Also would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Amma Raj Joshi, Head of the Department of English for English for his approval of this dissertation. I am equally obliged to my respected teacher Dr. Beerendra Pandey and Dr. Rewoti sir for their scholarly suggestions.

I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to my parents Lal Bahadur Shrestha and Nil Kumari Shrestha. I am thankful to my friends Kamal Sharma and Sarbagya Raj Kafle for their support and academic suggestion.

Abstract

This dissertation explores the issue of literacy in prominent nineteenth-century slave narratives in particular, the three slave narratives- *The History of Mary Prince* by Marry Prince, *Incidents in the Life of Salve Girl* by Harriet Jacobs and *My Bondage and My Freedom* by Frederic Douglass to show the extreme form of domination upon the slaves by different masters and mistresses. These narratives also stage the moments of resistance implying that slavery could be challenged if the slaves acquire literacy. Douglass's acquisition of literacy is a series of acts of resistance. His attempts to gain freedom through education establish acquisition of literacy as a form of resistance. Therefore, unjust discrimination and punishment were a kind of good lesson for some slaves like, Douglass, Jacobs and Mary Prince who instead of tolerating such unjust behavior, revolted resist, struggle for personal freedom. Thus, they deconstructed their history by rewriting it and disclosing the realizes of the slavery system. Jacob realizing the importance of education tries to teach other black people as she alone could not get complete equality. Prince also gets her narrative published with the help of literacy she has obtained education. Thus the three narratives highlight the importance of literacy for slaves to attain liberty from bondage.

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I. Introduction: Literacy and Slave Narrative

This dissertation focuses on literacy, freedom and justice in three slave narratives *The History of Mary Prince* by Marry Prince, *Incidents in the Life of Slave Girl* by Harriet Jacobs and *My Bondage and My Freedom* by Frederic Douglass. Mary Prince's narrative is her personal experience of cruelty of physical pain and torture she underwent in the British West Indies. Similarly, Jacob's text too is a chronological account of her slave life. Her struggle against her owner's sexual abuse and exploitation makes her stand against slavery, and she is determined to preserve her culture, womanhood and wants to subvert her role as submissive woman as a slave girl in North Carolina. Frederick Douglass, who is a courageous black slave, acquires literacy as a way of fighting against slavery and slave holders. He uses his mental trick to gain the knowledge and literacy. He knows that until and unless he becomes literate, he can't get freedom from slavery. So he is committed to gain freedom through his individual physical and mental struggle. All of the slaves mentioned above get their freedom due to literacy they gained as they struggle hard on the way to liberty.

Set in the context of slavery in the American south, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* was published as a complete work in 1861. The main character Linda spends her early years in a comparatively pleasant home with her mother and father who are slaves living in servitude. When her mother died, six-year-old Linda was sent to live with her mother's mistress who treated her well and taught her to read. The inception of reading along with understanding the evil aspects of slavery can be found in her attempts to attain freedom. The literacy proved to be a tool to fight against slavery and cruelty. Her new masters were cruel and neglectful, Dr. Flint took an

interest in Linda and tried to force her into a sexual relationship with him. Linda was aware of his attempts and maintained her distance. Dr. Flint continued to hunt for her, and escape was too risky.

At the start of the story, Linda was unaware of her status as a slave due to her previous kind master who taught her how to read and write. Then the act of reading made her aware of her state of servitude. She faced betrayal and harassment by her other masters, the Flints. Linda learnt along the way how to defend herself against her masters. She used psychological warfare and cunning to avoid the advances of Dr. Flint, which proved to be effective in the story. However, Jacobs revealed in the beginning of the book that there were aspects of her story that she could not bear to write down on paper. She was torn between her desire for personal freedom and her feeling of personal responsibility to her family, especially her responsibility towards her children Benny and Ellen. Jacobs never feels that she quite understands freedom as a black slave, and consistently considers African Americans to be on a different level of morality than others. Her consciousness of human freedom is shaped by her reading and writing.

The History of Mary Prince: A West Indian Slave Narrative by Mary Prince is the story of a slave who was born in Bermuda and was forced into slavery. She had to endure many hardships in her life, like being separated from her family and being dehumanized; she was treated as if she were an animal. However, even though she had different masters and the majority of them treated her badly, she didn't give up on the fact that she wanted her freedom.

She struggled to the end and even though she didn't completely get her freedom, Mary was not also completely negative to whites. This means that she

believes that the white masters were not always bad but that slavery affected them in such way that made them cruel. This is an opportunity of Mary Prince that many slaves did not get chance to write their history by themselves. Many slaves thought that their masters were simply cruel by nature. This narrative was a very interesting to read because it provided her with more facts about slavery which was a big part of America.

This was a story narrated by a former slave, Mary Prince. She was being sold to and by the slaves owners more than once. When Mary was narrating the story, she explained how she was suffering when she was being passed as an object from masters to masters. It was horrifying to see how slave owners beat their slaves, she shows that slave owners hate slaves when the slaves did nothing to them but were forced to do everything for the masters. I think it was a good thing how Mary always had hope in freedom. Prince's narrative is marked by acts of resistance, moments in which she shocks her owners by talking back or rebuking them.

In one instance, she offends Mrs. Wood with a reprimand for her verbal abuse and her physical neglect: "I told her that she ought not to use me so" (15). She actively seeks offers from potential new owners to escape current ones; she marries against the wishes of Mr. and Mrs. Wood; she refuses to work when too ill to do so, and she eventually leaves the Wood family in England: "I took courage and resolved that I would not be longer thus treated, but would go and trust to Providence"(20). This spirit of resistance not only enables Prince to survive a lifetime of abuse, but it pushes her to take up the abolitionist cause on behalf of those who remain enslaved.

My Bondage and My Freedom is an autobiographical slave narrative written by Frederick Douglass and published in 1855 is set in the racist society. It is a

historical document discussing in greater detail of his transition from bondage to liberty. Douglass, a former slave, following his liberation went on to become a prominent abolitionist, speaker, author, and publisher and motivating factor for other blacks.

Douglass's *Narrative* shows how white slaveholders perpetuated slavery by keeping their slaves ignorant and uncivilized and incapable of any kind of resistance. At the time, Douglass was also made to believe that slavery was a natural state of being. Slaves believed that blacks were inherently incapable of participating in civil society and thus should be kept as workers for whites. However Douglass did no longer believed on such fake stories. The *Narrative* explains the strategies by which whites gain and keep power over blacks from their birth onward. Douglass resisted against the slavery through education which help to know the fundamental rights and freedom. For him, attaining literacy is an important stage, moving from silence to speech. He believes that literacy can help grow the verbal skills and acquire consciousness and confident to use those skills in practice, skills such as logical reasoning against brutality of the white master. By breaking conventional expectations, Douglass was able to escape from slavery.

In the slave narratives under discussion, the violence leads to literate and consciousness of voiceless slaves, and victim women. In this regard Jacobs exposes her resistance to white domination through literacy. She uses language as a tool to attain liberation. The language she speaks, as she understands, is phalocentric, masculine and patriarchal she uses her literary in a way which liberates her from the dominant discursive practices of her communities. She understands that one way to get freedom is to rupture the way of language that denies her of agency. She becomes

silent, submissive unspeakable because the act of speaking through phallogentric language is to deny her own subjectivity. According to her, throughout her twenty-one years in slavery, Jacobs is abused, sexually harassed, and attacked by racist and sexist behaviour by the white culture. But she was determined to preserve her purity of woman hood by using her tool such as hiding inside the garret of her grandmother. She pretends in letter that she is in New York. On the other hand Jacobs faces problems in her narrative. As Cutter points out how to use language as a way of achieving liberation, when language itself is a large part of oppression used by white masters. According to Andre Lorde's opinion that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house", Cutter focuses that the way Jacobs moves far away from master's tools because since to speak in the "master's" language is to remain in the problematic situation within a system of white supremacy Martha J. Cutter, in "Dismantling 'The master's House': Critical Literacy in Harriet Jacob's incidents in the life of a Slave Girl", shows how Jacob uses her literacy tool:

Jacob's desire for silence reflects an understanding of the problematic nature of speaking in a language which denies her subjectivity, as well as her understanding of the uses and abuses of white, phallogentric discourse. Throughout her twenty-one years in slavery, Jacobs is typified, abused, sexually harassed and attacked by racist and sexist discourse. Language is also wielded by her owner, Dr., Flint (James Norcom), in a way which is directly phallogentric: he seeks to induce her to become his mistress through a form of sexual abuse which uses language as its mechanism for power. (209)

The quote clarifies that to speak in the master's language is to remain trapped within a system of their discourse which denies her identity. The meaning is that one can not overcome oppression by using the master tool. Therefore the tool or technique is need to defined by herself for her freedom and literacy. By understanding the oppressive nature of the master's tools, she does hard labor to go beyond such ethical discourse of white. She becomes empowered through critical literacy—reading not only word but also world— which involves the transformation of the world from oppressive one to the free one. After she becomes literate, she is able to use language for social and political construction. Here critical literacy enables her to struggle for freedom of her voice, creation of future and reclaiming of her own history. However, once Jacob does try to use the "Master's tools" to dismantle his house; she tries to use language against the master without rejecting its abusive and coercive underpinnings. Ultimately, she realizes the oppressive nature of "the master's tools" and strives to move beyond them (Cutter 209). As Jacob tries to get out from the grip of white master, she tests, experiences, and practices how to dismantle the master's house. Thus she gains the knowledge by practicing. That is why, she is compelled to utilize another tool and she has to invent it on her own selves for the whole black community. This tool may become a strong and sharp weapon for their freedom. So her critical literacy is invented as a new tool against white patriarchal discourse. In this regard Cutter argues:

Critical literacy involves and understanding of how language practices have functioned to keep slaves disempowered, imprisoned in a "culture of silence." But critical literacy also involves an attempt to transform the structures of oppression: not simply to replicate the master's house,

but to dismantle it. Jacobs does gain critical literacy: She understands how language has functioned to disempower her, but she also begins to challenge these signifying practices. Jacobs fashions a new relationship to language and finds a voice which challenges her culture's language practices even as it creates its own. (210)

Jacob has understood that when she uses the language within the master's house, she can only mimic them but can not transform the system. Being of slave and the lower class girl, her practice and effort become vain. She is a marginalized and commodified black slave girl whose voice is oppressed and who does not have any culture, identity and the status of a human. Therefore she is punished by white as if she is an animal. Thus she is demanding a new standard of morality and new definition of womanhood in search of new identity and the culture of human. Thus, literacy has been proved to be an essential aspect of slave narrative which has been associated with liberation, subjectivity and transformation.

The relation between literacy and freedom is an inextricable link because a slave who has learned to read and write, can escape and argue away from slavery. By grasping words, sentences and discourses, one can talk about world, discursive formation and selfhood. It means to say that with the help of literacy, mental and technical ability to accurately represent and speak for their slave community, they can safeguard their future generation against the white masters and their institution of slavery. While Jacobs knows everything after being literate. She is compelled to raise her own body and knows that the slavery is a war to protect the body and to own self-ownership for the slaves who were object-property for the white master. Therefore, Jacobs is determined to protect her body from Dr. Flint who is a evidenced throughout

her narrative. A young black slave girl who is submissive and innocent is determined to be protected from sexual and physical brutality of her white master Dr. Flint. As M.J. Cutter elaborates:

Thus the attainment of literacy is a crucial part of the slave narrative genre. Yet literacy . . . while absolutely necessary to freedom and the tool for challenging the ideological view of slaves as sub-human . . . is also the tool wielded by hegemonic society to maintain slavery. (210-211)

The lack of vocabulary, grammar, language makes slaves unable to express the feelings. While Jacobs becomes younger day by day she demands her freedom and equity in every sector of the society and nation. Therefore, Jacobs escaped from slavery approximately eighteen years after her servitude of slavery. When she becomes young and energetic, her feeling remains unexpressed due to the lack of communicative power of language. So her desire of freedom and equality remains in the trap of slavery where the rule and regulation confined all the slaves within boundary of slavery institution. Therefore, Frederick Douglass takes reading as a pathway of freedom, liberation and selfhood. It is a pathway from slavery to freedom. Thus Jacobs wrote around in 1858, "by the restropect" of slavery's wrongs, a confession indicating the passage of time and her growth and maturity in her own voice. Similarly, Douglass understands the hypocrisy of white when they talk about biblical things to justify the slavery. He understands that the language has been misused by slave masters. Rowell writes,

Douglass' narrative therefore manifests a sophisticated awarness of the link between language and freedom and also a awareness of the

abusive qualities of language. Does this man, then that Douglass attains critical literacy certainly, Douglass is aware that language can either liberate him from the dominant social order or mire him within it. But does Douglass conceive of a way of using his language to transform the dominant social order? Douglass mimics the mastery of language which he sees demonstrated by the white world around him, but he cannot conceive of a language which would move him beyond master of the dominant discourses and into a voice of his own. Macedo and Freire remind us that although "it is through the full appropriation of the dominant standard language that students find themselves linguistically empowered to engage in dialogue with the various sectors of the wider society", a learner's "voice should never be sacrificed, since it is the only means through which they make sense of their own experience in the world." (152)

Thus Douglass uses his literacy as a means of resistance to the dominant discourse and the dominant social order around him thereby attaining freedom and self-inflicted justice. So, Douglass's efforts seem to provide clear evidence of the tradition of linking literacy with freedom for those African American slaves. Such efforts are the most important awareness and thoughts of a pre-literate slave. Douglass also understands that literacy can provide the power to re-define relationships of authority. He clearly states his desire to oppose his master. Auld, from which he emerges to describe for literacy, Douglass says:

What he most dreaded, that I most desired.

What he most loved that I most hated. That which to him was a great evil to be carefully shunned, was to me a great good, to be diligently sought; and the argument which we so warmly urged, against my learning to read, only served to inspire with a desire to learn. (275)

Douglass is a man who is always innocent and gentleman to follow the order of his white masters. His main intention is to be a literate man and free human with the equal right like white masters but his masters are totally against the desire of Douglass. Therefore, such contradiction leads towards the national discourse and issue for the debate. While he was in the plantation of master Auld, his mistress Mrs. Auld taught him like their child. But such education was prohibited to the slaves even though his mistress was teaching Douglass. Suddenly Mr. Auld saw his mistress teaching Douglass in the house. It made Mr. Auld angry and aggressive but his angry and negative attitude towards Douglass learning made the latter learn a great lesson. Douglass further writes:

Impressed his wife with the evil consequences of giving me instruction that served to convince that he was deeply sensible of the truths he was uttering. It gave me the best assurance that I might rely with the utmost confidence on the result which, he said, would flow from teaching to me to read. (275)

In this way, even the bad behaviour and evil that torture to him are taken in positive way for good lesson by Douglass. Mr. Auld's bad and evil attitude against Douglass become a good issue. For Douglass, such a lesson becomes a tool or weapon to dismantle the slavery institution in America.

Like Douglass, Jacobs also shows how religion and Bible have been misinterpreted. The slave masters missed religion showing a natural relation of domination between slave holders and slaves. Jacobs sees her masters and mistress cruel practices and hypocrisy along with oppression they perpetrate. As M. Cutter explores:

Religious discourse is also used by southerners as an instrument of suppression; as with the law, a powerful system of authority is in place to confer upon slaves an inferior status. Jacobs describes an old man who must be taught to read the Bible in secrecy because according to law, slaves will be whipped and imprisoned for teaching each other to read. In an extended reflection, Jacobs depicts the way both religious and legal systems of discourse conspire to keep slaves "in the dark".

(214)

Jacobs understand her experiences of language promoting her realization of both uses and abuses of languages. By knowing the value and importance of language, she writes from hiding place expressing the painful experience of the black body in crisis, as seen in their real physical and psychological torture. Her main purpose and value of language is to revolt against white supremacy over slave and to gain equal rights like white people. In this endeavour, essential tool is language and literacy to convey and communicate to the whole nation and to make them believe and have sympathy over the voice of slave narrative in south America. Thus she says, "Legal, Biblical, and spoken discourse are marshaled against slaves, and it is difficult to combat the ideological force of these powerful sources of authority" (114).

Jacobs uses her literacy to change the uneven relation between blacks and whites due to the false reality created by religious meanings and salvation. She tries to change the religious discourses so that it does not perpetuate injustice. The masters also use a spoken language which creates a false reality thereby perpetuating unusual, domination, marginalization and subordination. She escapes to freedom, she even does not care about her children, Jacob wants their death rather than their slavery. She is ready to be a cruel mother against the slavery though her grandmother says that "you are killing us" (374). Therefore, her escape is for the justice and equality. Her effort for freedom is very precious. Linda, spends seven years in a small, crypt like garret "nine feet long and even wide" (437). In her grandmother's house such painful struggle for Linda was like meditation to be free and literate. By such meditation she was literate and was able to get justice too. Linda's every struggles were not violating and disastrous like Douglass and Covey. Because of being female she struggled very much peacefully. Rather, she is in search of religious support like Bible and its philosophical doctrine. In the doctrine of Bible it is not written that Blacks are inferior and Whites are superior, rather all the humans are equal. But white masters are taking and interpret the Bible doctrine to suit their oppressive purpose. Thus, Jacob argues in this way:

Slaves should be allowed to seek religious salvation. But when Jacobs casts white Southerners as the real "heathen" in need of salvation, she begins to undermine and even reverse the process whereby religious discourse has been used to promote the enslavement of her race.

Through this reversal and through its repeated emphasis on "talking" and "telling", this passage transforms religious discourse; Jacob uses

her critical literacy to change religious discourse so that it does not perpetuate injustice. (214)

Jacobs finally reaches the conclusion that the only way of getting freedom is believing the god. Whites are cruel and non human towards the slaves. Whereas all people are equal in the eyes of God. Jacobs's strength lies in her act of showing the falsity in legal, cultural, religious documents. The imprisonment of slaves are partly because of misinterpretation of such texts. Jacobs suffers linguistic incompetency, and disempowerment. She struggles to find a way of liberating herself from the master's oppressive system of discourse. Slaves were very much weak in language. Language is main instrument to communicate but black people used their own black vernacular form of language. It means just a broken language they used to speak in their daily practice. Therefore, for Jacobs language is the main problems. Of course, Jacob is speaking of sexual harassment and rape, and much of this oppression uses language as its medium. Not only as a grown up but also at an early age Jacobs has suffered verbal harassment of her master, whose restless, carving, vicious nature roved about day and night, seeking whom to devour had just left me, with stinging, scorching words, words that scathed ear and brain like fire" (18).

From the very little age Jacobs has been suffering and torturing, blaming due to lack of language. She is a female and black but there is problem even in community. Her quotation is exactly relevant here that "slavery is terrible for man' but it is far more terrible for women" (1). From her words it is evident that Jacob is not fighting with a single master but fighting with nature, culture, religion and with the whole universe for her literacy, freedom and justice. Thus, she is not just bearing the pain while giving birth to a child, but bearing the pain for her equality, freedom and

justice. That is why she further struggles optimistically, and she never loses her and is determined to fight against the slavery and its institution as she further states:

Jacobs's narrative carefully presents the way religions, legal, and spoken discourses are used to create a false reality which imprisons slaves in a culture of silence. Her culture's language games revolve around using language for duplications means, as an instrument of oppression and individual power. And although Jacobs and other slaves resist this linguistic oppression, their efforts are often futile because they find themselves caught within a system of discourse which defines them as inferior and subhuman. (215)

Because of the power slave holders took in their grip, everything like religious, legal and spoken language are interpreted in their favor and they created false discourse for the slaves. Due to the lack of awareness, consciousness and literacy, slaves were confined within the territory of white discourse and what the white people ordered them to follow. Blacks were obliged to follow the order of slave holders their order was all, such as, law religion and the spoken discourse. But after Jacobs becomes literate all the white discourses become vain, and equity and justice become common property for the white and black after long time struggle of Jacob.

Similarly Douglass's passage into literacy enables him to resist his masters openly. More than violence, he uses literacy and slave's language to destroy and to make disaster in the family of master. He openly resists slavery by fighting himself with Covey. He sings a blue song to resist the slavery. He also depends on his aural abilities for the most effective resistance to slavery. His acquisition of literacy and his ability to do something for the sake of black community make him more responsible.

It is literacy that makes him able to resist. His most effective discursive resistance to slavery is an act of singing songs. Such types of activities create awareness in other slaves to be united against the white tradition. This kind of awareness is totally depicted in literacy. As Wendy Ryden states,

And yet literacy is, without doubt, essential to ending Douglass's mentality of enslavement, for he clearly states, upon hearing master Auld's prohibition on reading that "From that moment, I understood the pathway from slavery to freedom" (36). But it is important here, I would argue, to understand this statement as applying to Douglass in his particular circumstances and not to the power of literacy in general. Not everyone who is literate in the text experiences the enlightenment that Douglass does. For example, literacy, paralleling religion, brings no enlightenment to the slave owners. And neither does it to the poor white children whom Douglass bribes and tricks into teaching him his letters. (14)

Douglass got different experiences, while he was a slave in different places, some where he did not get food to eat and to wear clothes. Thus sometimes he had slept in the open place by covering his body with shacks. Similarly, somewhere he exchanged the knowledge with a piece of bread. In this way he had got knowledge even though Mr. Auld did not allow his wife to teach Douglass. That bitter experience of Douglass became a sweet memory for his fertile and progressive life of the future. Despite such a bitter experience, he was clever enough to consider the threat of Mr. Auld, as a moral lesson not for only himself but also for the whole black community and the slavery

institution. Therefore, he is committed to read and write with strong determination.

He states as, W. Ryden writes;

Since I have started reading more, I have found that reading makes me a more intelligent person and has helped improve my writing skills. I feel that reading, depending on what type of reading it is, makes me think and be more creative with my mind.... I have now learned that reading is not something to be afraid of because of I can be taken into a whole different world with reading (6)

Douglass knows the value of education or literacy. He understands that knowledge empowers blacks to fight against white cultural supremacy. He is also mindful that energy is gained through reading and writing. While he is able to write then, he acknowledges the strength of the literacy. He is impressed such tool and towards to sharpen it and to get freedom as whole slaves and dismantle the institute of slavery.

As Lisa Sisco follows the ideology of Henry Lois Gates:

Thoroughly documented and origins of his relationship between literacy and freedom by showing that in the writings of "great" thinkers of the European Enlightenment - among them Kant, Hume, and Hegel- literacy was the basis for arguing that slaves were subhuman, since man's capacity for reason (as reflected in literacy) was the ultimate means of differentiating him from the beasts. For slaves like Douglass, becoming literate was the most powerful way to prove they were human. In Gate's words, literacy was not a skill; it was commodities [slaves] were forced to trade for their humanity. (196)

The above quotation clarifies that all the slaves were compared not as a man or woman but compared with commodity so they can have as a property and can sell them and buy them as a thing. So there is only way to solve the problem and to make all the slaves as a status of human that is only one way or solution is literacy and to develop their consciousness all over the plantation so that everybody knows the essence of literacy. In such a way, Douglass is committed to be literate by using his own tool. In this regard W. Ryden explores:

Douglass describes the "bread I used to bestow upon the hungry little urchins, who, in return, would give me the more valuable bread of knowledge" (41). While Douglass deems knowledge more valuable than bread here. I again suggest that we can read this as applying to his particular case rather than a humanistic statement about literacy in general. For clearly according to Douglass's own description the actual bread is more valuable to the urchins than the knowledge they possess: they have knowledge but no food to eat. Knowledge, which is lawfully theirs, does not improve their condition; does not benefit them in the same way knowledge, gained illegally, will ultimately benefit Douglass. (15)

The extract clarifies that reading made him more intelligent, perfect and matured man. Such inspiration also developed his writing and reading skills. Douglass as very much sensitive, clever and cunning man. Therefore he never thought about his physical hunger but always thought about mental hunger and was curious to develop his mental knowledge. Thus he became the superman of all the slaves. His effort from the childhood to manhood leads him to a world completely different from the world of

servitude. He learned and experienced physically, mentally and verbally to struggle and survive despite the torture and dehumanizing treatment from white masters in different plantations.

After all, he has come to realize that reading as well as studying the text is the only thing that can help him succeed in his life. While Douglas is very much conscious about society, slavery and its institution, he feels that he can subvert the whole slavery system not being only one place like a caged bird but escaping to north. His literacy enables him, to escape from the south, to join the abolitionist movement. His most effective discursive resistance to slavery as slave depends upon his aural abilities rather than his skills as a literate subject. Douglas joins the abolitionist movement and involves in a national debate on slavery. His talent in singing or aurality through slave songs and his talency or performance of morality as an orator was source of liberation. Douglass's keen desire to involve in the debate surrounding slavery requires that ability to write and speak. His careful representations of an alterative discourse in the form of song become national discourse. "Douglass aim is to break out the tautology of language" perpetuates that very tautology (12). He aligns the slave songs exclusively with the feelings while joining literacy with analytical thought. This dualism perpetuates the notion that the slave, in the absence of literacy, is bereft of any mode of expression that would make him/her a critical, intellectual subject capable of anything more than expressing emotion. (12)

In the described quotation Douglass understands the mental expression and realizes the proper way to arouse the voice against the slavery. Using songs or melodious painful voice which helps to grab the sentiment and painful feelings of the slave, he comes with the new kind of technical knowledge i. e, using as a songs to

avoid the tautology developed by the white masters. In those songs there is melodious and unified voice to be aware and the literate for the pre-literate slaves. Similarly Douglass does not come outside the broken language of the surroundings. Slave, in order to appropriate the tools of the master', instead, uses the slave "language" to mature those tools in his own nation (105).

Douglass means to convey only for the slaves. Therefore, he totally rejects the master's tool and master's language. By avoiding master's tool, he wants to create his own tool and the language of their own so that they feel embedded togetherness for their united voice of songs to be literated, become free and to gain justice by overthrowing the institute of slavery. While Henry Louis Gates has argued that literacy was not a skill rather it was a commodity, slaves forced to trade for their humanity” (196). As Henry Louis Gates, says, literacy is just commodity but that is to be gained by the human through awareness. So the mental knowledge can't be seen but, to realize realization of such feelings can be exposed in the human behavior. Therefore, such literacy is an important tool that can be experienced or perceived in the practice psychologically and mentally forming united whole groups of the slaves. It can also be seen consequence in their ability and their ultimate purpose to resist. Henry Lous Gates asserts:

Douglass's account of the slave songs reveals the extent to which those songs are able to subvert the ethnocentric concept of the logos that drives the thinking of the southern plantation owners. Douglass writes that, "[I]n all the songs of the slaves, there was ever some expression in praise of the great house farm; something which would flatter the pride of the owner, and possibly draw a favorable glance from him"

(74). Similarly he claims that the slaves" would sometimes sing the most pathetic sentiment in the most rapturous tone, and the most rapturous sentiment in the most pathetic tone". (7)

Knowing such pathetic conditions of the slaves about their pain, torture and sentiments are expressed through the songs in their own language is important. What they speak, sing or communicate in their own language would not be understood by their owners. Therefore the slaves were using their own vernacular language in their songs for their national discourse of literacy. Such songs were very much enjoyable and melodious very much artistic musics were even attracted to the slave owners. Such artistic songs flattered the pride of the owner's through a linguistic discourse critiqued that same owners through a discourse that the owners could not understand. Therefore, those songs became very much relevant to all the slaves to make them aware.

As Douglass developed such new techniques to communicate about the slavery, his mental capacity becomes very much creative and he determines to make it a national discourse. He is able to invent his own tool to be literate to make all the slaves literate. He challenges the slave holders that "If not in the word, In the sound": He means to say that if the owners do not listen the voices of slaves by the word, we will make them listen by the sound. Through this deconstruction of languages, Douglass is able to demonstrate his own subjective capacity. He challenges the ability of the written word to capture aural phenomena. Thus such attempt of Douglass became the national discourse and finally nation and its people were compelled to listen the voice of voiceless people. At last all the slaves got victory after becoming free, literate and got justice just like other white people.

Talking about liberty and literacy, Jacqueline Bacon highlights about the words resonating: the emotioning attachments beyond simple meanings. He talks about language as an appropriator of his freedom. "Indeed, for an ex-slave to speak is itself an act of taking liberty", a theft, "asserting freedom through the paradoxical appropriation of the language of the oppressor to voice the concerns of the oppressed" (271). Bacon talks about literacy as a tool to fight against slavery. For slave to be free from the slavery needed language of white Americans and it was often necessary to fight against oppression. But literacy, like liberty, could not be simply acquired; both had to be "taken".

Deception was required, relegating literate and free African American to an ambiguous position in American society. In this way to gain literacy is not an easy game in the plantation within the territory of slavery. Thus, for Master Hugh Auld, to be literate is against the white law and slavery institutions. Therefore it is not an easy matter to be a literate and to gain and liberty. There is inevitability of mental and physical confrontation. But as Douglass says, "If not in the word but, it is through sound", he has determination to gain that. But all the slaves should be literate, for liberty and freedom. His motto is to be free and gain equality with the other white Americas. Moreover Douglass discloses his internal efforts to be literate, what he did while he was a child in the house of Mr. Hugh Auld. He was a boy to take care of his master's son. At the same moment, he captured an opportunity to learn to write and read on the left side paper of the white boy which was left on the side of margin. As Sisco says:

Douglass refers to two important moments of liminality in the narrative, that of being "Out-side the circle" of the slave songs and of

writing "in the space left" of his young master's copying book. These liminal points, one of reading or interpretation and one of writing, serve as spatial metaphors for the fluidity of Douglass's process of defining and / or transcending the meaning of literacy in slave culture.

(199)

This extract highlights the clever attitude of Douglass that he catches the opportunity from the house of Mr. and Mrs. Auld. While he is let in the house to take care of their house, he does not do the authorized duty but grabs the opportunity by writing on the left page of white boy. But his writing is just like the white boys that so there is no difference in both writings. Thus he does double duty for himself to be literate reading and writing on the "space left" in the copy of white boy. On the other hand he take care of the master's house. So he got good opportunity to be literate in Auld's house, similarly "Douglass uses this knowledge to his advantage by constantly practicing a kind of sleight of hand (or trickery) reminiscent of African trickster tales. For example, he takes letters used by whites for solely utilitarian purpose (to identify pieces of wood in a boatyard) and transforms that use of literacy into a sophisticated political act" (199). In this way he is trickster too because he takes knowledge playing with mental capacity. His owners think that he is just performing his duty innocently.

Douglass also does his daily duty very much honestly but he is having something else as well. Such techniques are not known by the whites. Thus Douglass says that "literacy is a technology" by which one group asserts control or status over another so he exploits that capacity of literacy when antagonizing white boys, who only see in his taunts way to use literacy to show their superiority over Douglass (199). Douglass wants to prove that literacy is a technical way. When he writes on

"the spaces left", the white boys are incapable to find out that their own writings or another person's writings. He confidently explores his views that sometimes one group dominates other and sometimes suppressed group dominates oppressor. It means to say that now the turn to dominate is of slaves. Thus Douglass is successful in learning from them. He turns moments of literacy's potential oppression into moments of control and self education "In the spaces left" by the white boy's efforts to prove their superiority is the unseen opportunity for Douglass to learn to write (199). The white boys try to prove that they are educated and superior, but such efforts are being vain before the cunning Douglass. Their education becomes strong base structure for Douglass's self education and they open the window of Douglass to be literate for himself as well as other slaves.

As Sisco gives the concept of Mikhail Bakhtin's discussion of the individual struggle with language can help us to understand this process of becoming literate, of struggle with language. "Language" or, in the case of Douglass's, literacy is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily the private property of the speaker's intention; it is populated - over polluted with the intention of others (198).

According to Bakhtin, to be a literate man, there struggle is necessary, or there needs to be individual struggle through the language. Then such struggle indicates a process of becoming literate through the medium of language. He also focuses that literacy is not a signal entity and that passes through easily. But literacy needs to be shaped through the struggle of individual. Then there is possibility of gaining it. That is why, Douglass has struggled from the childhood to manhood to gain it. He struggled physically, mentally, and technically to overthrow the slavery system and to give freedom and justice to all the slaves. Thus, his individual struggle, according to

Bakhtin's views, is very much relevant to be a literate man. Further he gives his opinion:

It is this process of increasing "literate-ness", of foreign literacy to submit to the intentions and experiences of the slave, which Douglass dramatizes throughout the narrative. Bakhtin describes this an "ideological process of becoming", which is characterized by a sharp gap between Auld's "authoritative discourse" and Douglass's internally persuasive discourse. "Bakhtin describes internally persuasive discourse as language" that is denied all privilege, backed up by no authority at all and is frequently not even acknowledged in society . . . not even in the legal code (198)

Bakhtin's quotation valorizes Douglass's struggle to be literate and a perfect man having black identity. To be a literate man is most challenging game in the plantation. If a slave is literate or tries to be a literate man, that was the crime and against the law. That is why, to be a literate man, he follows the orders of his masters passively and pretends that as if he does not know anything about the knowledge. But internally he was gaining more valuable knowledge of literacy than his white master's in the plantation. So all the role he performed despite injury and brutal punishment, which means to impose knowledge to the whole slavery system in the plantation. According to Bakhtin, such struggle is the "ideological process of becoming". Then he also says that Douglass realizes and internalizes techniques of struggle through the medium of language.

Without the concept of language to internalize any new process of literacy is not possible. But, Douglass proves it thoroughly self-emplation without sharing his master. He put his thought inside without evoking or publicizing it to anybody.

According to Bakhtin, such internalization also a language of persuasive discourse. Even society and people are unknown. Although it is against the law for black slave to be conscious and literate does not care about it. Rather Douglass backed himself up with literacy even in the absence of aid from any authority. He wins literacy against the master's law for the freedom of black slaves.

While talking about how literacy helped many slaves to be free, Bacon focuses on the relation between literacy and freedom. Bacon points how literacy becomes the pathway from slavery to freedom :

For many slaves, the relationship between literacy and freedom was literal as well as figurative. Slave narratives often relate that learning to read and write intensified the desire for freedom. Literacy helped many slaves to fight their oppression—and in some instances, to escape. Jacobs comments on her iron appropriation of a proslavery newspaper to trick Flint, furthering her plans to escape from his control: "for once, the paper that systematically abuse the colored people, was made to render them a service." (128)

The quote explores that slave narrative often deals with desire to read and write which intensifies the desire for freedom. Literacy taught many slaves to fight against the oppression. It also helped them to escape.

In this way, the three slave narratives mentioned above are the outcome of racial oppression of blacks by whites. After being literate, the slaves like Douglass, Jacobs, and Mary Prince can no longer bear the barbaric and extreme form of slavery imposed upon them by the whites. They apply different strategies and techniques to fight against racial segregation and domination there by getting freedom with the help of knowledge they have got.

II. Literacy and Freedom in Douglass's Narrative in *My Bondage and My Freedom*

Douglass in his narrative, *My Bondage and My Freedom* exposes the sufferings and challenges he faced during his attempts to escape the servitude. In his narrative, literacy plays a key role to change his life from slavery to freedom, from ignorance to light and from the state of animalism, inability to articulate painful feelings to masters to resistant freedom fighter. After attaining literacy, Douglass narrates his life story in details as a confident man. He remembers his past life of servitude. He writes, “Like other Slaves, I can’t tell how old I am. This institution was among my earliest troubles. I learned when I grew up, that my master—and this is the case with masters generally—allowed no questions to be put to him, by which a slave might learn his age” (35). He says that he could not tell how old he was because like other slaves he had no parental figure to tell his age. In this way he says that being a slave was a trouble, it is marked with no questions to put forward to masters. He further makes a memoir of his history:

I was a slave born a slave and though the fact was incomprehensible to me, it conveyed to my mind a sense of my entire dependence on the will of somebody I had never seen; and, from some cause or other, I had been made to fear this somebody above all else on earth. Born for another's benefit, as the firstling of the cabin flock I was soon to be selected as a meat offering to the fearful and inexorable demigod, whose huge image on so many occasions haunted my childhood's imagination. (45)

The above extract demonstrates the idea that the slaves were following the rules designed by the persons they never saw and met. The slaves were hegemonized to be ruled by other. He narrates that he was a commodification or a meat to be offered to demigod or the whites. In the same way as a literate man, he can retell the experience of being a stranger with family members due to slavery, “We were brothers and sisters, but what of that? Why should they be attached to me, or I to them? Brothers and sisters we were by blood; but slavery had made us strangers. I heard the words brother and sisters, and knew they must mean something; but slavery had robbed these terms of their true meaning” (48). The lines clarify that the brothers and sisters were unknown to each other as a result of slavery.

The true meaning of brotherhood and sisterhood has been lost or made to be lost because of hard practice of slavery. However after attaining literacy he becomes resistant and rebellious. In this regard, Sisco explores, “Douglass's acquisition of literacy is a series of acts of resistance . . . he shouldn't be taught to read or write. But . . . he is also copying his young master's hand imitating his style, . . . handwriting, the unique mark of literacy, always bears the trace of his unwitting teachers and enslavers” (8). Sisco clarifies that acquisition of literacy acts as a resistance to slavery and the masters' attempt not to literate him.

Sisco's view about importance of literacy indicates the resistance through the copy of the hand writing of white. He has not been allowed to read and write by the legal code and master. But, as opposition of order, he copies the handwriting to make it a means for escape from the slavery. If slaves cannot write, their side of the slavery story cannot be told. Therefore, they should write to make their experience known. Thus his attempt to copy handwriting is a sign of freedom. He further narrates the

history of black mothers to know the sufferings. He did not get a chance to play with his brothers and sisters. His mother had many children but not a family. In this regard he writes:

The conditions of brotherly and sisterly feeling were wanting—we had never nestled and played together. My poor mother, like many other slave women, had many children, but no Family! The domestic hearth, with its holy lessons and precious endearments, is abolished in the case of slave-mother and her children "Little children, love one another," are words seldom heard in a slave cabin. (48)

As the lines evoke the theme of family separation and lack of filial recognition, the loving tendency was often denied to blacks. The brotherly and sisterly feelings were discouraged. The slave masters were very jealous of black intellectuality that they did not want to teach any positive thing to blacks. Douglass writes that "slaveholders never encourage that kind of communication, with the slaves, by which they might learn to measure the depths of his knowledge" (81). He further writes how the slaves were taught to be ignorant "Ignorance is a high virtue in a human chattel; and as the master studies to keep the slave ignorant, the slave is cunning enough to make the master think he succeeds.

The slave fully appreciates the saying, where ignorance is bliss, it is folly to be wise" (81). The slave holders taught the slaves to be happy by being ignorant. In the same way he shows the evil side of slavery which is very difficult to break. He shows how women or slave mothers were exploited. "Neither age nor sex finds any favour. The overseer stands at the quarter door, armed with stick and Cowskin, ready to whip any who may be a few minutes behind time. When the horn is blown, there is a rush

for the door, and the hindermost one is sure to get a blow from the overseer” (102).

As the lines show, the slave masters used to stand with the whip and stick to beat the slaves along with the mothers. “Young mothers who worked in the field, were allowed an hour, about ten o'clock in the morning, to go home to nurse their children. Sometimes they were compelled to take their children with them, and to leave them in the corner of the fences, to prevent loss of time in nursing them” (102). The black mothers were compelled to work carrying their children which shows the dark side of society.

However Douglass understood that education is the best asset that one has to possess. Then he says that slavery is manmade thing not a natural entity. The point is that nature has made blacks as slave and whites as masters. Thus he wants to say that slavery can not be justified on any ground. The white masters created false religious things to enslave the blacks. In this context, Douglass says: "It was not color, but crime, not God, but man (90). Thus in whatever way we look at the matter, the right to enslave has no existence not only because it is without legal validity but because the very term right to enslave has no real existence. As white masters claimed that they have right to control over the blacks, such mental attitude is no more than the human cruelties over black communities. The point is that the right to enslave has no legal ground. Douglass also questions the very notion of slavery, he says:

By some means I learned from these inquiries, that "God, up in the sky", made everybody; and that he made white people to be masters and mistresses, and black people to be slaves. This did not satisfy me, nor lessen my interest in the subject. I was told, too, that God was good, and that, he knew what was best for me, and best for everybody.

This was less satisfactory than the first statement; because it came, point blank, against all my notions of goodness. It was not good to let old master cut the flesh off Esther, and make her cry so. Besides, how did people know that God made black people to be slave? Did they go up in the sky and learn it? Or, did he come down and tell them so? All was dark here. It was some relief to my hard notions of the goodness of God, that, although he made white men to be slaveholders, he did not make them to be bad slaveholders, and that, in due time, he would punish the bad slaveholders; that he would, when they died, send them to the bad place, where they would be "burnt up." Nevertheless, I could not reconcile the relation of slavery with my crude notions of goodness. (90)

The extract clarifies that white masters made a false story by saying that God made whites masters and blacks slaves. He challenges the so called religious assumptions of the whites. As a literate man, he can unmark the hypocrisy of religion of whites. The blacks were hegemonized to believe on this false story constructed by whites to rule over blacks. He understood slavery is a series of crime committed by whites. He says, "Once, however, engaged in the inquiry, I was not very long in finding out the true solution of the master. It was not color, but crime, not god, but man, that afforded the true explanation of the existence of slavery; nor was I long in finding out another important truth, viz. : What man can make, man can unmake"(91). Douglass says that it is not colour but a crime, not a God but a man that institutionalized the slavery.

The appealing darkness faded away and I was master of the subject and there were many who could say that their fathers and mothers were

stolen from Africa—forced from their homes, and compelled to serve as slaves. This, to me, was, knowledge; but it was a kind of knowledge which filled me with a burning hatred of slavery, increased my suffering, and left me without the means of breaking away from my bondage (91).

The dark side of slavery made Douglass aware of his identity and conscious of his origin. He remembers the true painful stories of slavery where mothers and fathers were sold without any resistance. However, this gave him an important knowledge that slavery and bondage should be broken to be free. Douglass narrates the inhuman treatment of slavery.

Douglass understands that literacy is one of the most important strategies that can be used to get freedom. Douglass achieves his freedom by using several techniques and tricks. However, literacy is one of the important things that helps him forming his own identity thereby challenging the whites. His escape from brutality to freedom, south to north, his flight to New York are helpful for him in developing his sense of self and freedom. His freedom is the possible freedom for all blacks. At last he understands he has no masters and mistresses. He realizes he himself is the master of his own life. He gets literacy by copying from the masters' sons. Along with this he enjoys his freedom in America.

As an intellectual resistant man, Douglass celebrates freedom when he reaches in New York where he is involved in abolitionist movement. He says, “I was my own master, it was a happy moment. . . The reward of which was to be entirely my own. There was no master” (114). His confidence and assertion of self-identity shows that he is free for the first time, he is rewarded with liberation and all things are his owns.

There is no master to restrict him as Hugh Auld used to restrict him before. Indeed, he experiences the pleasure and joy of freedom, which he never had experienced before. Now, he is enjoying new conjugal life. He narrates, "It was to me the starting point of a new experience" (114). By presenting himself as self-determined and assured with education, Douglass is showing the detailed inspiration and rewards of his success. Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass is a detail, the process of self-discovery, through which Douglass exposes the evils of slavery as an institution. His narrative involves the association of literacy with freedom. Thus the literacy and freedom exist in horizontal way. The changes that appear in the life of character of Douglass after education is clearly visible in the following lines.

When I was about thirteen years old, and had succeeded in learning to read, every increase of knowledge, especially respecting the FREE STATES, added something to the almost intolerable burden of the thought - "I AM A SLAVE FOR LIFE". To my bondage I saw no end. It was terrible reality, and I shall never be able to tell how sadly that thought chafed my young spirit. Fortunately, or unfortunately, about this time in my life, I had made enough money to buy what was then a very popular school book viz.: the "Columbian Orator". I bought this addition to my library, of Mr. Knight, on Thames street, Fell's Point, Baltimore, and paid him fifty cents for it. I was first led to buy this book, by hearing some little boys say that they were going to learn some little pieces out of it for the Exhibition. This volume was, indeed, a rich treasure, and every opportunity afforded me, for a time, was spent in diligently perusing it. (157)

His position in some plantation is more than a slave man. To some extent, Douglass's freedom is partly seen in St. Michael's plantation where he is teaching to the fellow slaves in the Sabbath school. His life changes from a silent slave to a bold confident leader and teacher who teaches other to read and write. In this regard, he opines in his narrative

I teach them because it was reputable to be thus engaged. Every moment they spent in that school, they were liable to be taken up, and given thirty nine –lashes. They came because they wished to learn. Their minds had been started by their cruel masters ... cruel masters, they had been shut up in mental darkness. I taught them. (99)

The extract shows how slaves were enslaved in slavery. The fellow slaves are brutally beaten by their masters, and if the masters know about their education, they would torture the slaves. In this miserable condition, they have a great desire of learning to write and read. Douglass develops intimacy with the fellow slave while teaching in school. Douglass, in the course of time, understands that why the slave masters are unwilling to teach the slaves. In this context he writes:

If the slaves learnt to read, they would learn something else, and something worse. The peace of slavery would be disturbed; slave rule would be endangered. I leave the reader to characterize a system which is endangered by such causes. I do not dispute the soundness of the reasoning. It is perfectly sound; and, if slavery be right, Sabbath schools for teaching slaves to read the bible are wrong, and ought to be put down. These Christian class leaders were, to this extent, consistent.

They had settled the question, that slavery is right, and, by that standard, they determined that Sabbath school are wrong. (266)

He wants to say that if the slaves are taught, the institution of slavery would be disturbed thereby making the white masters weak. If the slaves learnt to read, they would learn something else, and something worse. The peace of slavery would be disturbed; slave rule would Douglass endangered. The masters claim that slavery is right. Despite the challenges Douglass is determined to be educated to get the freedom.

Along with the literacy he also wished for unity of blacks. He feels that, this is the time of meeting together, unifying together so, he says, “we were linked and internalized with each other... I never loved any or – slaves” (99). It denotes that Douglass' individual desire of getting education becomes constitutional; most of the slaves are supporting him as a master/ teacher. By learning to read, the fellow slaves also become conscious about racism and slowly begin to think literacy is power of resistance. He realizes the importance of education in this way:

Seized with a determination to learn to read, at any cost, I hit upon many expedients to accomplish the desired end. The plea which I mainly adopted, and the one by which I was most successful, was that of using my young white playmates, with whom I met in the street, as teachers. I used to carry, almost constantly, a copy of Webster's spelling book in my pocket; and, when sent of errands, or when play time was allowed me, I would step, with my young friends, aside, and take a lesson in spelling. (155)

Reading gives a type of knowledge and confidence to the reader. So, fellow slaves also want to get knowledge and power that can resist the injustice of their own body.

Elizabeth McHenry explains, "Reading was a collective exercise, a means of developing the critical skills which to interrogate systems of knowledge and move people to consciousness of their own power" (5). According to her, reading makes people powerful, reasonable and logical. They become conscious after reading a book; they gain different knowledge and pleasure in reading. Douglass and fellow slaves also follow the same strategy to overcome the barbaric slavery.

Douglass, being self-educated person, is conscious about the justice. Therefore he wants to escape from the injustice and hellish world of slavery. In search of identity and freedom, he reaches in Gardner's Cackling factory. There, Douglass becomes the protector of the poor white employer. He does not want to be sufferer of other. If he escapes from the slavery, he himself is responsible. He says, "I will now proceed to the statement of those facts, connected with my escape, for which I am alone responsible, and for which no one can be made to suffer but myself" (108). Douglass continues to think about his escape from the slavery though the master Thomas has told him not to deceive as earlier. If the slave wants to be happy, he/she should be obedient and faithful to master. In contrast to this belief, Douglass says; "I continued to think, and to think about the injustice of my enslavement, and the means of escape" (108). Thus he was searching the different ways to escape.

He struggled hard and obtained the freedom, he writes," had now penetrated the secret of all slavery and oppression, and had ascertained their true foundation to be in the pride, the power and the avarice of man" (159). He is not going to stop to think about injustice and enslavement, rather he wants to escape from there. So, he is

searching the ways of justice to slaves. In this point, he thinks literacy along with money is the means of freedom. Douglass has known only literacy is not sufficient to get freedom, rather economy also plays vital role. But, he becomes economically independent by literacy. He says, “It was a step towards freedom to be allowed to bear the responsibilities of a Freeman and I was determined to hold on upon it. I bent myself to the work of making money” (109). He knows how to run away from the plantation for his freedom. So, he is determined to collect money in order to get rid of slavery. By using trick, he become intimate with white man then learns Cackling very soon. After that he earns more than before and it helps him escape from the plantation.

Similarly, Douglass's determination of getting education in plantation finally leads him away from enslavement to freedom. He reaches New York escaping from the plantation by using knowledge and consciousness which he has got from self education. In New York he can breathe freely without any restriction. Hence, he remembers his past life of naming. In every plantation, his subjectivity is weakened by white man. Douglass's subjectivity has been redefined by naming. His innocent subjectivity makes him weak who could not do any things outside.

The name, such as ‘Stanley,’ ‘Frederick Bailey,’ is the most problematic to assert the black identity. Finally, Douglass is able to give names himself ‘Frederick Douglass.’ He becomes free when he escapes from plantation to New York. He owns his own house, establishes business with Mr. Johnson in Talbot country Maryland. Lisa Sisco further explains, “Douglass's conflict here emerges out of his identity as a literate being, which had always been connected to his ability to write . . . the masters, and out of a sense of personal responsibility as survivors of

slavery” (24). Sisco's view shows that Douglass's journey ends with being a great slave narrator of his own life. In his narrative, he talks about racism, dehumanization and essence of the black people in slavery time. His writing reveals the discourse of master and survivors of slavery. He further writes how slavery was made a job of god:

I have met many religious colored people, at the south, who are under the delusion that God requires them to submit to slavery, and to wear their chains with weakness and humility. I could entertain no such nonsense as this; and I almost lost my patience when I found any colored man weak enough to believe such stuff. Nevertheless the increase of knowledge was attended with better, as well as sweet results. The more I read, the more I was led to abhor and detest slavery, and my enslavers. "Slaveholders", thought I "are only a band of successful robbers, who left their homes and went into Africa for the purpose of stealing and reducing my people to slavery." I loathed them as the meanest and the most wicked of men. (159)

This knowledge opened his eyes to the horrible pit, and revealed the teeth of the frightful dragon that was ready to pounce upon slavery but it opened no way for his escape. He has often wished himself a beast, or a bird - anything, rather than a slave. He was wretched and gloomy, beyond ability to describe. He was too thoughtful to be happy. It was this, everlasting thinking which distressed and tormented him; and yet there was no getting rid of the subject of his thoughts. Sometimes he curses himself of being slave because Douglass was compelled to tolerate different dehumanized behaviours of his white masters. Therefore, he was cunning clever and courageous as well innocent boy, who never violent destructively

until he had attracted several times by covey. So, being a courageous boy, he put forward his keen interest of being literate man towards his mistress Sophia Auld and writes:

I frankly asked her to teach me to read; and, without hesitation, the dear woman began the task, and very soon, by her assistance, I was master of the alphabet, and could spell words of three or four letters. My mistress seemed almost as proud of my progress, as if he had been her own child" (145). Sophia Auld was a very kind hearted mistress for Douglass. In his history of literacy, her behavior towards Douglass just like her own son is a bliss for Douglass. His base structure of education established in the house of Mr. Auld in reality. But such a golden period of Douglass's literacy, could not last longer while his master Mr. Auld saw him learning to write and read in his home with the help of his own wife sofia. While Mr. Auld saw such kind behavior of his wife, he threatened in this way:

If you give a nigger an inch, he will take an ell", "he should know nothing but the will of his master, and learn to obey it." "Learning would spoil the best nigger in the world;" "if you teach that nigger - speaking of myself - how to read the bible, there will be no keeping him;" "it would forever unfit him for the duties of a slave;" and "as to himself, learning would do him no good, but probably, a great deal of harm making him disconsolate an unhappy." If you learn him how to read, he'll want to know how to write; and this accomplished, he'll be running away with himself. (146)

But Douglass individual struggle and aim of being literate was not postponed rather his master's negative attitude towards his literacy, became a positive inspiration for

Douglass. Therefore he writes: "This was just what I needed; and I got it at a time, and from a source, when I least expected it (144). Douglass never lost his faith despite the negative behavior of his masters, Douglass took it as a positive way. He identified the value of literacy, knowledge and the hard labour in his daily duty in the plantation to over throw the whole slave institution. Though his master was shocked with Douglass's literacy latter grabbed such shock as an important lesson to redraw the history of whole slaves in the African American society. So the act of reading and writing led him to be a successful teacher from a slave. As he further writes, in Baltimore, I could, occasionally, get into a Sabbath school. among the free children, and receive lessons, with the rest; but, having already learned both to read and to write, I was more of a teacher than a pupil, even there" (99).

The lines show that he was planning with a determination to learn to read, at any cost. He hits upon many expedients to accomplish the desired end. The plea which he mainly adopted, and the one by which he was most successful, was that of using his literacy. He used to carry, almost constantly, a copy of Webster's spelling book in his pocket.

Douglass's *Narrative* shows how white slaveholders perpetuate slavery by keeping their slaves ignorant and uncivilized beyond the access of doing any kind of resistance. At the time Douglass was also made to believe that slavery was a natural state of being. Slaves believed that blacks were inherently incapable of participating in civil society and thus should be kept as workers for whites. However Douglass did no longer believe on such fake stories. The *Narrative* explains the strategies and procedures by which whites gain and keep power over blacks from their birth onward.

Douglass resisted against the slavery via education which helped him to know the fundamental rights thereby getting freedom.

He got such rights by means of his individual struggle. Their struggles caused not only self freedom but also made all the blacks free as Douglass asserts his opinion: "Little other slaves, I cannot tell how old I am. This destination was among my earliest troubles. I learned when I grew up, that my master—and this is the case with masters generally—allowed no questions to be put to him, by which a slave might learn his age" (35).

In Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey was born Douglass. He started his struggle even not knowing his age and where he was born by whom. But on the way of his struggle to be a man, he knew his detailed history from his relatives. He was tortured, beaten, and threatened by his master in the different plantations where he worked. But he was never defeated by such terrible torture and punishment. He was determined to struggle and get victory over such inhuman behaviour of his white masters. While he was a small boy he got more experience and knowledge of education by being active receiver of the literacy. But, he pretended as a passive boy in front of his masters. In this narrative, Douglass says, "You have seen how a man was made a slave; you shall see how a slave was made a man" (47). His painful struggle gave him the reward of a man of equality and justice. His achievements were not limited within the boundary of African-Americans only, but his struggle became a theory of the world history.

According to Lisa Sisco, Douglass uses the master's tool to ignorance as a weapon against him. "I would keep the merciless slaveholder profoundly ignorant of the means of fight adopted by the slave... Let him be left to feel his way in the dark;

let darkness commensurate with his crime hover him" (204). His ascertainment gives clear messages that he silently ignores the order of his master. For instance, while he was left to take care the house of Mr. Auld, he disobeys the rule by learning and copying the writing of his master's son to be a literate person. Therefore, he says, let them be where are they in their position, but "I will forward my work of gaining knowledge." We can analyze his creative and progressive struggle against his masters. In this same context Bakhtin asserts that, "Douglass' words here do account for literacy's many Paradoxes, including its capacity to simultaneously empower and imprison, to "bless" and to "curse". Ironically, at the very same moment that Douglass's position in the "horrible pit" enables him to understand his enslaved condition, it gives no "remedy" to his pain (198).

While he was in the painful condition he was able to get knowledge or literate himself. Such literacy gave him power to avoid any torture and punishment. Such "curse" and "bless" were powerless in the comparison to literacy. The struggle for literacy and knowledge paved the way to freedom and justice for the whole black community in the history of African-Americans. They also became able to express their social problem, economic problems and the problems of equality and justice. After he became literate, he became man of the whole African-American, social reformer, orator, writer and statesman. After escaping from slavery he became a leader of the abolitionist movement gaining the knowledge of literacy.

Being a small boy, he lived with grandmother, because his mother was unknown to him. Later he came to know that his mother could read something and his master could probably be his father. He was parted from his mother in Maryland never to be united again. Because of being slave he was snatched by his master at the

age of seven from his grand mother Betty. From the very beginning he started his working carrier from warehouse plantation where Aaron Anthony worked as overseer. When was ten, he came to know that his mother died. At the same time, his master Anthony also died then he was transferred to Lucretia Auld, wife of Thomas Auld, who sent him to serve Thomas's brother Hug Auld in Baltimore.

While Douglass was about twelve years old, Mr. Hugh Auld's wife Sophia started teaching him the alphabet although Maryland state law prohibited teaching slaves to read. Douglass appreciated Sophia very much because she treated him as a human being and taught him like her own son. But when Hugh Auld saw his wife was teaching their slave, he became angry saying that "a slave learned to read, he would become dissatisfied with his condition and desire for freedom" (146). Such threat and dissatisfaction of Hugh Auld towards the education of Douglass given by Sophia made Douglass curious and more energetic. Such dissatisfaction became a great literacy to develop his educational carrier setting an example for future generation of the whole black community.

Therefore Douglass continued, to learn himself how to read and write secretly. Later he knew that knowledge is the pathway from slavery to freedom. Then such evidence became a pathway to freedom and he knew the value of education more than before. He also knew the internal intention of white masters towards the black and their desire to put blacks always in dark, without the impression of knowledge of light. Thus Douglass's real struggle began due to the behaviour of Hugh Auld. Therefore, DeLombard considers: "South as a place of both violence and silence (8/21). Douglass also proved that by struggling individually, physically, mentally. For example, he fought with Covey, who was a poor overseer who punished him brutality.

Douglass is not only man of religious but also professed to believe in a system of magic. One of his friends told him about the magic power of a root, and elaborates: "He told me further, that if I would take that root and wear it on my right side, it would be impossible for covey to strike me a blow; that with this root about my person, no white man could whip me" (238). As Douglass wearied it till one year, he had never received a blow by any whites and he got magic power to resist covey. From this point of time, he fully started resisting his several white owners physically, and mentally.

Douglass also kicked Covey. At that time Douglass was around sixteen years old. While Douglass kicked him, covey asked Douglass "Are you resisting me ?" (243) and Douglass replied yes sir ! After such physical confrontation, both came in conclusion that both should to be unite. Douglass also realized that, he also could not do anything in the first resistance because he was just a growing young boy with the essential literacy to be free and to get justice. So DeLombard gives his opinions:

Here the trauma of witnessing threatens to overwhelm the ability to testify; the visual threatens to exceed, and thereby to suppress, the verbal. The remaining "bloody scenes", then, chart not only Frederick's quest to gain a hearing for his eyewitness testimony against slavery but also Douglass's growing determination to "commit to paper" his increasingly detailed testimonial account of southern violence and thus, in both cases, to accomplish the shift from the visual to the verbal. (10/121)

Above quotation shows that while Douglass was a small say he had not any alternative except to see and the bear the torture and punishment. At that moment he

was just a watch dog of being traumatized by their threat and violence. He was just a young boy of sixteen who had seen so many cruelties. He was encouraged to determined to revolt not just physically but also verbally. He did not just beat Covey, but also much confidently he replied that he had started resisting, while covey asked if he was resisting. It is the evidence Douglass was not just eye witness, but an active participator to fight against Southern slavery to be free and obtain equality. From this time Covey was mentally traumatized and Douglass was never beaten. Thus, he got a new confidence to fight against southern slavery. He realized that he was aware and gained more experience, to be a more confident man of freedom fighter.

In the later years, Douglass credited *The Columbian Orator* an anthology which he discovered at about age of twelve, clarifying and defining his views on freedom and human rights. It was published in 1797, is a classroom reader, containing essays, speeches and dialogues. It helps students in learning reading and grammar. He never went any school, but because of his hard labour and determination, he became a reputed man of USA. This book for him was a better life indicator. By the help of this book he taught other slaves on the plantation of William Freeland, on Sunday school. Most of the slaves were interested to learn about the education, and more than 40 slaves would attend his lessons.

After about six months, their study went on unnoticed by other slave holders. In this way his literacy was continuously going on. Douglass first tried to escape from the plantation of freeland, who had hired him out from his owner colonel Lioyd. But he was unsuccessful. In 1836, he tried to escape unsuccessfully from his new master Covey. On September 3, 1838, Douglass successfully escaped by boarding a

Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad train to the great Northern cities.

As Delombard opines:

In the South, enslaved eyes see black bodies beaten, whipped, raped, and murdered, but enslaved tongues remain silent. In the North, not only are African eyes freed from witnessing such horrors but African American voices are free to testify against what Garrison refers to as "that crime of crimes,—making man the property of his fellow-man" (FD, 8)—and against the violence that ensues from the southern crime of man stealing. (9/21)

Delombard means that Douglass ran away to North because he knew that there he could get some kinds of relief from his pain and torture. North was not as strict as South. In the South, no one could resist and speak against such terrible punishments. If anyone resisted that person could be shot like Gore had shot Demby. But in North such rules were some how free and open. Douglass could tell his history and gather the witness and testimony to be presented in the court of public opinion. Individual opinions could put in front of such people who suffered by from the terrible punishment. In the North Douglass had great opportunities to discuss about the anti-slavery movement. He met many friends to support and help him succeed in his mission of freedom. But in the South, such opportunities were prohibited. In this regard, Paquet says, "southern slave holders who involve in crime by selling human and making them as a property" (145).

Then also brutalizing slaves to death therefore such things are the crimes of white masters of south. Then when he comes back to USA from New York, he published North Star publishing his first abolitionist newspaper. The motto of this

newspaper was "Right is of no sex Truth is of no color - God is the father of us all, and we are all brethren" (68). This news spread all over the Europe and Africa then such issues became the national issues. Thus Douglass was a deeply spiritual man, as his behaviours and attitudes continued to show. Finally, consequence of his terrible struggle and freedom of slavery, such motto obliged the nation listen him. Finally president Lincoln's emancipation proclamation, took an effect on January 1, 1863 declaring the freedom of all slaves in confederate-held territory. Ultimately, in 1872 Douglass became the first African American nominated for vice president of the United States.

Thus, he is not a normal slave who just works for self, but he is a person with extra power and capacity dedicated to end the slavery system. Because of his literacy and struggle, he becomes a slave with extra qualities. After learning power of literacy, he also teaches fellow slaves to escape servitude. Later he becomes a powerful writer, orator and campaigner.

III. Jacob's Struggle: Paving way to Freedom and Literacy

In this chapter, I deal with Jacobs's experiences of slavery and how that experience allows her to gain strength to fight against slavery. The most important part of her narrative is the transformation of her struggle into strength and victory. The history of slavery was complex. Slavery was an inhuman practice that was imposed upon the slaves. The promises were made by Masters and Mistress to free slaves. But there was always a gap between what the masters told to do and what they actually did. In the past, the slaves were treated as the cattle. They were uneducated and they— mostly male slaves were in search of manhood so they could not resist. But at present the educated slave can no longer bear such domination. Rather they fight for freedom and justice. Therefore, the unfulfilled promises became source of energy for slaves. Jacob remembers the promises of her grandmother's mistress to grandmother:

My grandmother's mistress had always promised her that, at her death. She should be free; and it was said that in her will she made good the promise. But when the estate was settled, Dr. Flint told the faithful old servant that, under existing circumstances, it was necessary she should be sold. (20)

As the quote clarifies, Jacob's grandmother was convinced by her mistress that she would be free after her mistress' death. But when her mistress died, she was told that she would be sold away. Jacobs became aware of the false promises made to her mother by the white masters. This consciousness leads Jacob to an awareness of her basic rights which were received in the past as well as present. She talks about her mother who honestly served her masters. She was cruelly beaten, tortured and victim.

She did not deny to be sold as she had no racial sensibility then rather accepted to be sold. She was just a property. Thus Jacob writes:

She had lived forty years under the same roof with my grandmother; she knew how faithfully she had served her owners, and how cruelly she had been defrauded of her rights; and she resolved to protect her. The auctioneer waited for a higher bid; but her wishes were respected; no one bid above her. She could neither read nor write; and when the bill of sale was made out, she signed it with a cross (21).

The frequent reference of the rights by Jacob in her narrative shows her awareness and consciousness about herself and identity. Her mother was sold at auction. She accepted. Since she was uneducated. She could neither write nor read. Unlike her grandmother, Jacob is conscious of her rights which were denied to her mothers. Her mother was very much obedient and innocent servant who never resist and disobeyed to her owner. The experiences of slavery faced by Jacob herself are enough to understand the cruelty of slavery. She gains knowledge about right, freedom and justice. Therefore, she does not like to be treated like a slave girl. So she uses her mental strength to voice against her painful situation of being a slave girl. She also physically resisted and became economically or financially strong. In the novel, she talks about identity, knowledge and freedom. She realized the power of literacy as she is no more silent when she becomes literate. "Two years had passed since I entered Dr. Flint's family, and those years had brought much of the knowledge that comes from experience, through they had afforded little opportunity for any other kinds of knowledge" (28).

As quote gives clear information that when Jacob suffers and faces different animalistic behavior from her cruel master, then she gets the knowledge about cruelty of slavery as she enters in the house of Dr. Flint as a slave girl. Along with the experiences, Jacob becomes conscious of her goal, a determination to get her freedom. She is motivated, encouraged by her own experiences. She does not like to be dominated. Though it has been fourteen years, since she became a slave, she has developed a revolutionary sensibility. Thus, Jacobs writes,

I had not lived fourteen years in slavery for nothing. I had felt, seen, and heard enough to read the characters, and question the motives, of those around me. The war of my life had begun; and though one of God's most powerless creatures, I resolved never to be conquered.

Alash for me ! (31)

As Jacobs becomes very much energetic, and aggressive against her master. Therefore she grows her rebellious sensibility and becomes strong. She could no longer be ignorant of the cruelty of slavery. While exploring her growing consciousness, she writes, “I could not remain ignorant of their important. I tried to treat them with indifference or contempt. The master's age, my extreme youth, and the fear that his conduct would be reported to my grandmother made him bear this treatment for many months” (44). She denies her status as property. She has developed a racial and gender sensibility towards getting her freedom. She became aware that she was no longer a somebody's property. Due to the consciousness, she realizes that being ignorant of the slavery is an indirect way of accepting slavery.

When her master tells her that she is his property, she resists. She does not obey what her master says. She ignores her master's rules and order imposed upon

her. She does not like to be treated as property, neither she likes to be humiliated. Jacob is in the struggle with her master to establish her human right and equality as other free man. Therefore, she shows her anger when her master calls her that she is his property. She narrates very much mysteriously, "He told me I was his property; that I must be subjected to his will in all things. My soul revolted against the mean tyranny. But where could I turn for protection ? No matter whether the slave girl be as black as ebony or as fair as her mistress" (45).

She realizes that slavery is evil, misdeed and undesirable job but, she is compelled to remain in slavery and face cruel behavior of her master. She hates not only the master but also the slavery institution, where has seen animalistic attitude towards black people. She wants to escape from slavery but can not do so immediately. Regarding inhuman treatment of slavery, she writes, "The degradation, the wrongs, the vices, that grow out of slavery, are more than I can describe" (45). The slavery is more harmful than she can describe.

When Jacobs understands that education is a pathway for success and freedom, she begins to read and write. She feels that through the education any one can expand the knowledge for their individual freedom and justice. The value of education is related with the value of slavery and it would be a tool to escape from the grave of slavery. Then she starts learning to write and read by challenging the master. She remembers, "One day he caught me teaching myself to write. He forwarded, as if he was not well pleased" (49). The vices of slavery were clear to Jacobs; she understands that her mothers were very much passive receiver of pain and suffering. They did not try to face the challenges of their ignorance and their master. Not to be ready to resist or obey means to accept the cruelty of their master. They were just

silent and humble. Not to resist means to accept even the cruel behavior done to the slave as all right. Regarding the bad treatment done to them by masters. Jacob writes:

The secrets of slavery are concealed like those of the inquisition. My master was, to my knowledge, the father of eleven slaves. But did the mothers dare to tell who was the father of their children ? Did the other slaves dare to allude to it, except in whispers among themselves ? No, indeed ! They knew too well the terrible consequences. (55)

She criticizes and strongly resists slaveholders who boast themselves upon being honorable men. They think themselves superior, civilized and rational. However, Jacob is also conscious of her freedom, rights and liberties. She also knows she will not early get her freedom and justice because master will not allow her to be a free human. Therefore, she thinks and manages various techniques to be away from her cruel master. So she understands her humanness from inhumanness. That s why Jacob realizes importance of her freedom and writes:

It is difficult to persuade such that freedom could make them useful men, and enable them to protect their wives and children. If those heathen in our Christian land had as much teaching as some Hindoos, they would think otherwise. They would know that liberty is more valuable than life. They would begin to understand their own capabilities, and exert themselves to become men and women. (68)

At the age of twenty one, she observes the slavery and understands that it is a curse not only to blacks but also to whites. White children would be immoral and barbaric seeing the inhuman treatment of black by white. It encourages whites to be inhumane, and cruel, demolish and evil. As a consequence of their behavior, blacks are being

their competitor though whites people used to treat black as an animal. But, now both are being counter partner: for black people, their own freedom fighter and for white people, suppressor of the black. Therefore, it makes them cruel, violent and licentious. It contaminates their generation as well. She writes:

I was twenty-one years in that cage of obscene birds. I can testify, from my own experience and observation, that slavery is a curse to the whites as well as to blacks. It makes the white fathers cruel and sensul; the sons violent and licentious; it contaminates the daughters, and makes the wives wretched. (81)

While struggling against slavery system, sometimes she felt too weak to raise voice against the powerful master. She was very much hopeless and her feelings of freedom was being just hypothetical because of helplessness and hunger of her fellow black people. Thus she was alone in the struggle as no other black slave was ready to accompany her to fight against her master's cruel domination. She writes, "I was struggling alone in the powerful graps of the demon slavery; and the monster proved too strong for me. I felt as if I was forsaken by God and man; as if all my efforts must be frustrated; and became reckless in my despair" (84). She calls slavery a demon. She was facing the servitude alone.

How cruel slavery used to be. Jacobs's condition during her pregnancy further worsened. She was beaten and cursed by her master. Her new born baby was an addition to the slaves, "Dr. Flint continued his visits, to look after my health; and he did not fail to remind me that my child was an addition to his stock of slaves. I felt too feeble to disputes with him, and listened to his remarks in silence" (94).

Being a literate woman, Jacob attends religious meetings where she sees slavery in its cruelest form. The slaves sing their own sad, pitiable songs echoing the painful life they are living with. Therefore she writes, "I was invited to attend, because I could read. Sunday evening come, and trusting to the cover of night, I ventured out" (105). Because of her literacy she was invited to the religious meeting and she knew that everybody was equal to religion. Thus she used religion as a tool to go against slavery which makes a huge discrimination.

To abolish slavery, she thought she has to impress other as many blacks as possible by using various techniques such as persuading them with flash back stories triggering their memory of pain and torture given by their white owners. So when a black man comes to learn, she teaches him A, B, C. Therefore, she further writes:

As soon as he could spell in two syllables he wanted to spell out words in the Bible. The happy smile that illuminmated his face put joy into my heart. After spelling out a few words, he paused, and said, 'Honey, it pears when I can read dis good book I shall be nearer to God. White man is got all de sense. He can learn easy. It ain't easy for ole black man like me. I only wants to read dis book, dat I may know how to live; den I hab no fear about dying. (112)

Jacobs starts to resist white domination. Therefore, she wants to share the ideas with whites that it is sinful to sell the kids, young and old ones. She writes,

Tell them it is sinful to sell their own children, and atrocious to violate their own daughters. Tell them that all men are brethren, and that man has no right to shut out light of knowledge from his brother Tell them

they are answerable to God for sealing up the fountain of life from souls that are thirsting for it. (113)

Jacob, despite of being frustrated due to the constant attack by whites, hopes that one day she would be free and her children enjoy freedom. For her, the children are more important than herself because she knows that her life is about to expire but her children are the beginner of new life. Thus she writes:

The winter passed undisturbed by the doctor. The beautiful spring come; and when nature resumes her loveliness, the human soul is apt to revive also. My drooping hopes came to life again with the flowers. I was dreaming of freedom again; more for my children's sake than my own. I planned and I planned. Obstacles hit against plans. There seemed no way of overcoming them; and yet I hoped. (126)

Jacob is not always pessimist; she has strong determination of freedom. She is dreaming of beautiful spring. The racial sensibility and conscience that come in her makes her strong, determined, goal oriented and motivated. She has hopes, aspirations, love and respect for her kids. As she writes:

My grandmother was much cast down. I had my secret hopes; but I must fight my battle alone. I had a woman's pride, and a mother's love for my children; and I resolved that out of the darkness of this hour a brighter dawn should rise them. My master had power and law on his side; I had a determined will. There is might in each. (130)

Having determined will she challenges her master, despite the fact that her master has law on his side and she has only strong desire to fight with her master. She always focused on her daughters and sons. She could escape alone but she was worried about

the kids. Without freeing the kids, slavery would not be finished. Therefore, she writes:

Dr, Flint was suspicious, and determined not to loosen his grasp upon us. I could have made my escape alone; but it was more for my helpless children than for myself that I longed for freedom. Though the boon would have been precious to me, above all price, I would not have taken it at the expense of leaving them in slavery. Every trial I endured, every sacrifice I made for their sakes, drew them closer to my heart, and gave me fresh courage to beat back the dark waves that rolled and rolled over me in a seemingly endless night of storms. (136)

Jacobs was aware of Dr. Flint who wanted to exploit her sexually. He wanted to impress her so he treated her positively. But Jacobs was very much conscious about Dr. Flint's technique and what he would do to her. She was fully aware what he would do to impress her. He offered good things like a golden chain and small house for her.

She writes:

Mr. Flint wished that I should sleep in the great house instead of the servants' quarters. His wife agreed to the proposition, but said I mustn't bring my bed into the house, because it would scatter feathers on her carpet. I knew when I went there that they would never think of such a thing as furnishing a bed of any kind for me and my little one. (145)

Jacob finally escapes from the house of Flint. She kissed the kids and left. She writes, "I went forth into the darkness and rain. I ran on till I came to the house of the friend who was to conceal me" (147). After this event, this Dr. Flint wrote an advertisement

of reward if anybody found Linda. The advertisement that was placed at every corner goes like this:

\$ 300 REWARD ! Run away from the subscriber, an intelligent, bright, mulatto girl, named Linda, 21 years of age. Five feet four inches high. Dark eyes, and black hair inclined to curl; but it can be made straight. Has a decayed spot on a front tooth. She can read and write, and in all probability will try to get to the free states. All persons are forbidden, under penalty of the law, to harbor or employ said slave. \$ 300 if taken out of the state and delivered to me, or lodged in jail. (149)

The advertisement shows that Dr. Flint was afraid of Jacobs because she could read and write being a black slave girl. She could disclose all the inhuman realities done by white masters. Finally Jacob narrates the experiences of joy when she sees sunrise for the first time in her twenty one years of long life. She writes, "We had escaped from slavery, and we supposed ourselves to be safe from the hunters. But we were alone in the world, and we had left dear ties behind us; ties cruelly sundered by the demon slavery" (241). Escaping from slavery was really a challenge. The announced and published price over slaves's head made the life complex. Escaping was a matter of both life and death. If caught while escaping, the death was inevitable .

In some of the cases, Jacob remains silent. Remaining silent does not mean that she is going to be submissive, rather silence is a tool that functions as a revolution. As Martha J. Cutter observes, "Jacob's desire for silence reflects an understanding of the problematic nature of speaking in a language which denies her subjectivity" (209). She does not want to use the language which is phallogentric, the language that denies her subjectivity.

As Jacobs could read and write, she could also understand the nature of white people's language which dominates her. Instead of using the same language that glorifies the masters, she wants to use the language as a way of achieving liberation.

The emerging literacy in language functions as a way to liberation. Cutter writes,

The problem Jacobs faces in her narrative, then is how to use language as a way of achieving liberation, when language itself is a large part of her oppression. How can Jacobs use her literacy in a way which liberates her from the dominant discursive practices of her society? To speak in the master's language is to remain trapped within a system of discourse which denies her subjectivity. (209)

Jacobs uses her literacy in a way which liberates her from the domination of her masters. She does not want to speak in masters' tongue, language and way. She wants to speak in her own language to dismantle masters' discursive practice. She is critically literate. She uses her words to describe the racial world. Despite being a property, she owns property, i.e., the critical literacy. Talking about critical literacy, Cutter writes:

Critical literacy involves an understanding of how language practices have functioned to keep slaves disempowered, imprisoned in a culture of silence. But critical literacy also involves an attempt to transform the structures of oppression: not simply to replicate the master's house, but to dismantle it. Jacob does gain critical literacy: she understands how language has functioned to disempower her, but she also begins to challenge these signifying practices. Jacobs fashions a new relationship

to language and finds a voice which challenges her cultures' language practices even as it creates its own. (210)

Her critical literacy emerges as she understands the biased language of the white's culture. She dismantles it and creates her own. After she becomes literate, she is able to use language for social reconstruction. Jacobs also challenges the religious discourses that keep slave in inferior status. This discourse, as she understands perpetuates injustice, discrimination and evils. She understands that the whites perpetuate injustice through law, religious discourse and spoken language. Taking about one sided religious discourse that dehumanizes blacks, cutter furthered writes:

Religious discourse is also used by southners as an instrument of suppression as with the law, a powerful system of authority is in place to confer upon slaves and inferior status. Jacobs describes an old man who must be taught to read and write the Bible in secrecy because according to law, slaves will be whipped and imprisoned for teaching each other to read. In an extended reflection, Jacobs depicts the way both religious and legal systems of discourse conspire to keep slaves in the dark. (214)

Jacob's narrative clarifies how religious, legal and spoken discourses were made to create a false reality that imprisons slaves in a culture of silence, passive and submissive. Slaves are regarded as sub-human, inferior and of low quality as if they are animal. Therefore, Jacobs realizes that slavery is worse, inhuman and barbaric.

Her life started in a very happy mood with her parents and grandmother who was a woman having property and commanding power of her family. She had nine

grand daughters but only Jacobs was alive with her grandmother. So she loved Jacobs very much. Martha is the woman who guided Linda to be a submissive and innocent woman. She also oriented Jacobs to protect femalehood and tendency to love childhood. Because of her love Jacobs did not know whether she was a slave girl or a child of a reputed family till the age of six years. She was growing up girl able to read and write because her lovely mistress taught her in the child age. Therefore, she was able to understand her position of a slave girl so she writes, "When I was six years old, my mother died; and then for the first time, I learned, by the talk around me, that I was a slave" (14).

Her conscious power and literacy was developing with her physical growth. All the mistresses are not bad and similarly all the mistress are not good as the mistress of Linda. Till the age of twelve she was treated like the daughter of her own. She could understand well, about the life style, world, society as well as humanity. She could internalize love, hate, childhood and motherhood. Therefore, when her kind mistress dies, she worries for her future ways. She does not know her future destination. Therefore Jacobs cries and her tears fell upon her grave. Further Jacobs writes:

When I was nearly twelve years old, my kind mistress sickened and died. As I saw the cheek grow paler, and the eye more glassy, how earnestly I prayed in my heart that she might live! I loved her; for she had been almost like mother to me. My prayers were not answered. She died and they burried her in the little churchyard, where day after day my tears fell upon her grave. (15)

For Jacobs, her kind mistress, was like mother. She taught her and showed the way of life but, her better way could not be completed. It broke on the way. Thus it became just as an inspiration. Because of such good and lovely background she got more experiences and knowledge to know the future destination what to do ! where to go ! although she knows that she is a slave her future lies on the hand of her cruel master. She knows the essence of motherhood and she also knows that she is going somewhere else in the plantation. Silently, she acknowledges that her life is uncertain and her life is in between condition of life and death. When she gives birth to two children she does not want to kill her children, but thinks to protect them by using her new techniques.

Jacobs was born in North Carolina in 1813. She was very attractive girl having physical attraction and mental talent. She could read and write. Therefore Flint is too much attracted towards her and says, "with a chuckling laugh, "Dis nolgger's too cute for 'em dis time" (158). Being a woman she is terrified with Flint because he claims that she is his property and he can do as he likes. First he tries to persuade her and when she does not obey his order, he threatens and kill her. "You obstinate girl! I could grind your bones to powder ! You have thrown yourself away on some worthless rascal" (91).

He is determined to claim his right on her body. Therefore she is tortured mentally and physically. If he did not get the chance to sexually exploit her, he threatened to kill her child or sell them to the plantation. Thus Jacobs is tortured and terrified doubly by Flint, Jacobs and says, "Give me liberty, or give me death was my motto" (151). She feels that if she died would not tolerate the pain whatever they would do to her body. Thus to be dead is better than the punishment of slavery and

sexual abuse of the masters. So she does not want to continue her generation further. She opines: "Death is better than slavery. It was a sad thought that I had no name to give my child" (96).

Her opinion is very much painful because she has child but she does not want to become it. If she gives the name, that name will be recorded on the account of white masters. Her children's turn will also come one by one as other slaves'. Therefore she does not want to name of her own children because their bright future is covered by the black cloud. Thus Jacobs made good relationship with Sands. She has only one hope that Mr. Sands will help her in her every difficulties and crisis in her future destination in Dr. Flint's plantation. So she becomes also pregnant from Sands. Her pregnancy with Sands takes as a secured way by Dr. Flint, because Sands is a white free man. Jacobs believes that being a wife of a white freeman, would be safe from Flint. But, Flint never thought so, rather continuing tries to exploit Jacobs.

On the other hand she is very much afraid of her grand mother about her sexual relationship with Sands because pre-marriage pregnancy culturally illegal and Aunt Martha is rigid in culture and femalehood. In this regard Jacobs is in trap to disclose her reality with her grandmother and with Dr. Flint, who desperately wanted to have sexual relationship with Jacobs. Jacobs expresses the uneasiness of the situation thus:

He stood and looked at me in dumb amazement, and left the house without a word. I thought I should be happy in my triumph over him. But how that the truth was out, and my relatives would hear of it, I felt wretched. Humble as were their circumstances, they had pride in my good character. Now, how could I look them in the face ? My self-

respect was gone! I had resolved that I would be virtuous, thought I was as slave. I had said, "Let the storm beat ! I will brave of it till I die." And now how humiliated I felt ! (87)

At this critical situations Jacobs determines to face the obstacles and challenges posed from the side of cultural perspectives and from Dr. Flint. In this regard, according to Moor, Homi K. Bhabha relates of the power of the subaltern consciousness. That is Jacobs appropriated her hybrid status to ask "authoritatively" "and then who are Africans ? Who can measure the amount of Anglo-Saxon blood coursing in the veins of American slaves ?" H. Bhabha asserts that the powerful Anglo-saxon blood coursing in the veins of African-American slaves (9). Therefore she determines to have ownership of her body. Her body occupies neither Flint nor her grandmother. Thus she says, "Let the strom beat me ! I will brave it till die". She wants to have her relationship by herself. There may the obstacles but she will bear it until her death.

Moore explores on the same issue and says slavery is a war for the body; self-ownership for the slave and object-property for the master. Jacobs' determination to protect her body from Dr. Flint is evidenced throughout the narratives (5). She has attractive body and physical appearance. So Dr. Flint is determined to make her property. But she wants to be the owner of her body. It is a struggle between extreme domination of male slave holder and the female slave. Dr. Flint reminds and threatens her, "Do you know that I have right to do as I like with you, that I can kill you, if I please ?" (4). Here he reminds that her body is totally owned by him, everything of her body is under his control. So she also tries to regain the body of Jacobs according to moor, Freud describes:

A compensatory relationship between women's beauty and their developing self-peservative narcissism. He remarks, "women, especially if they grow up with good looks, develop a certain self-contentment which compensates them for the social restrictions that are imposed upon them in their choice of object." (9)

Jacobs is in her sheer physical appearance and youthfulness as inscribed on the slave girls developing an attractive body, which becomes a marked in her slave narrative. Her narrative includes her real story struggle and unseen cruelties of the plantation. With the help of literacy she is able to revolt and resist her owner for freedom and justice. As a grown up, slave woman her body becomes an object to looked at and used by the white masters. But, Jacobs struggle against it. As a "representative" woman of the nineteenth century she "shape [ed] her past from a private tale shame of a 'slave girl' into public testimony against a tyrannical system" (4). Jacobs experienced race and identity crisis in southern, plantation. Her sexuality played a fundamental role in her life as a vulnerable female slave. Inside the slave community, she is such a slave mother who hides herself in a garret, incredibly, for seven years, waiting for the time when she could escape to freedom, with her children.

She braved the threat of murder and torture, instead of surrendering to Dr Flint. She wants to protect women hood, motherhood and submissiveness. So Moore writes: In Victorian era that defined true womanhood by it's purity, submissiveness, and gentleness, Jacobs the real narrator, assumes, retrospectively again, a more cultivated and composed material voice (6). Her character can be analyzed as very much innocent and restricted to the culture and conscious to preserve it. When Jacobs is pregnant, she is scared with the society, and grandmother and much more about

prestige of Dr. Flint. She says, "Now how could I look them in the face ? They had pride in my good character" (87). She is very conscious about cultured womanhood and respects the social prestige and also wants to continue it to preserve it. So she is worried more about her femalehood too. She also knows that it is possible only after resisting Dr. Flint and not allowing him to have sexual relationship with her.

Therefore, she struggles to self-protect from him. It seems that she is also embedded in the Victorian culture and its essence. So, she does not want to avoid cultural norms of womanhood by letting Flint to have sex with her. She respects her grandmother, culture and society.

After the death of her mother, her guardian is only grandmother. So, Jacobs is scared with her about her pregnancy. When Martha knows everything about her relationship with Sands from Dr. Flint, Aunt Martha threatens Jacobs in this way: "I Linda ! has it come to this / I had rather see you dead than to see you as you now are. You are a digress to your dead mother. "Go away ! she exclaimed, and never come to my house, again" (88). Linda's grandmother had good status she and Martha expects Linda would continue it. Although she is a slave woman, she is rigid in terms of cultural values. Therefore, she does not want Linda be pregnant before marriage. Thus Jacobs behaviour is not favoured by Martha. She allows Jacobs to go away because her society would criticize Aunt Martha about Jacobs' illegal pregnancy with Sands. So she called Sands to know about his relationship with Jacobs. While she knows everything positive and in favour of Jacobs, Marth, convinced and accepts her pregnancy with Sands. He promises to take care of Jacobs child and her in front of grandmother.

Jacobs's pregnancy creates much more problem to her because Flint is always following her to persuade and sexually exploit her. She knows that the coloured people and slaves who lived in the remote parts of the town suffered in an especial manner (98). Therefore, she struggles herself between master and other slaves to overcome the situation of terrible pain. Jacobs does not know when Dr. Flint will kill her because every where men women, and children were whipped, till the blood stood in puddles at their feet (98). However she does not obey Dr. Flint and is determined to fight and resist him without any terrible violence for her freedom, literacy and justice. Dr. Flint tries to persuade Jacobs in this way, "You must not ask anything from him, or receive anything from him. I will take care of you and your child. You had better promise this at once, and not wait till you are destroyed by him (92). Jacob's decision to sleep with Mr. Sands too can be taken as a form of defiance. It works as a strategy of resistance to Dr. Flint's never-ending desire. Instead of surrendering herself to Dr. Flint's techerous advances, Jacobs chooses to "make the best to an inescapable necessity" to make it clear that, if she must surrender to a man, it will be one of her life partner.

But Dr. Flint forced Jacobs to reject Sands and follow his instruction and suggestion to take care of her child and herself for their better future. Jacobs did not follow the instruction of Dr. Flint. But she says, "I will never do this. In a few months I shall be a mother" (87). In this way Jacobs is rigid to resist him for her freedom. She chose secured way of being with Sands as her husband. On the other way, she had to fulfill the desire of her parents being secured with Sands.

Although she grew up happily with her kind mistress, at the age twelve her struggle began with Dr. Flint to own here body. Flint wanted to snatch her body

forcefully. So she cursed herself of being female. Being a female, she had to bear more pain and tortures given by Dr. Flint. She speaks on her own words, "When they told me, my new-born babe was a girl, my heart was heavier than it had ever been before slavery is terrible for men; but it is for more terrible for women" (199). Though she was in great shock, she knew the essence of motherhood. When she gives birth to her child she does not want to kill her. But she knows more history of slave women. The same history and evidence would not be borne by her daughter. That is why, she wished to do kill her own child but, would not do so because she is mother. Being a mother she is more anxious about herself and child too.

Her grand mother Aunt Martha, is courageous and determined to protect her grand daughter, her children and her culture too, from the den of slavery and to release them. Martha was a woman who challenged a white person with a gun. Jacobs further asserts, "I had been told that she once chased a white gentleman with a loaded pistol, because he insulted one of her daughter, I dreaded the consequence of a violent outbreak, and both pride and fear kept me silent" (47). Thus Martha has a history of challenging white masters. If she has not supported Jacobs, her courageous skill of hiding in the garret to resist Dr. Flint would not succeed.

Because of her grandmother's courage and determination to protect her she is somehow protected from the den of white supremacy. When Dr. Flint comes in the house of Aunt Martha, to know detail about Jacobs's escape, Aunt Martha threatened him in this way: "Get out of my house !" she exclaimed ! "Go home and take care of your wife and children, and you will have enough to do, without watching my family" (125). Aunt Martha does not care about Dr. Flint so she orders him not to come to her house and have no concern about her family, and advises him to take care of his own

family and wife. Such order could not be given by any other slave woman, but she does it in favour of her family.

Because Dr. Flint was brought up by Aunt Martha and he is afraid of her, she has that revolting attitude. Thus, she protected Jacobs for the prestigious womanhood. Martha has great role to free slaves and to make them educated. Otherwise, it would not be possible to revolt against the owner of plantation.

Jacobs decides to escape from slavery and the den of slave holders for freedom, literacy and justice. She often doubts whether it would be success or not. Thus she worries, "I was about to risk every thing on the throw of a die; and if I failed, what would become of me and my children? They would be made to suffer for my fault" (146). Jacobs revolts against slavery and its institution by escaping. To escape means to resist the law of slave holders. She is scared with Dr. Flint because he has power and law on his side; but she has nothing more than determination and will for freedom and justice. Jacobs transcended slave consciousness. Jacobs, in society's eyes, was no more than a slave, despite her beauty and intelligence (18). In the slave society, she is warier to fight against slavery and injustice for the blacks. Therefore, she did not obey as a child. When she is conscious and literate, she is determined to go against Dr. Flint's will and decides to escape from the den of slavery. Jacobs totally depends on her grandmother and kind mistress. At the age of twelve she has no right to own her body. So she had to be dependent on cruel master by force and without her will. As Moore writes,

As a slave mother, Jacobs could not neither acquire this status legitimately, nor enjoy the role of motherhood: She could neither claim ownership of her children without subterfuge nor marry the man of her

choice. Jacobs could not, in fact possess home protected by the until much later in her life away from the south and slavery. (19)

Jacobs fights for her individual rights. In the plantation, her status was as a animal commodity, identityless, humanless. But she is conscious slave girl because of good family and kind mistress, in the childhood she is able to write and she has gained the determined power through the education. While Jacobs is struggling with Dr. Flint, she does not possess any ownership. Dr. Flint who is cruel and selfish person who is waiting for chance to exploit her, but she is rigid in it. Therefore, she has great will to defend her motherhood, ownership of her body and reputation being an educated woman. In this context, she opines about whites: "But even those large, venomous snakes were less dreadful to my imagination than the white men in that community called civilized" (172). Jacobs questions the white civilization pointing that they are making other people fool by saying that white people are civilized. White civilization is just slogan but, their attitude is more poisonous than venomous snakes. Thus, Jacobs is determined to own legally possessed home and ownership of her body by fighting white masters, and their cultural supremacy.

She decides to resist by escaping from the slavery. She wants to be free and her black women's voice wants to make the voice of all female either white or black. She is conscious of a particular black society and knows that white society always dominated and ruled over the body of black slave. Therefore, she writes, "We escaped from slavery, and we supposed ourselves to be safe from the hunters. But we were alone in the world, and we had left dear ties behind us; ties cruelly sundered by the demon slavery" (214).

Jacobs escapes from the slavery of master Dr. Flint. She is worried and feels that she is alone in the world and everything is against except her own body. She came to the garret of her grandmother at twelve o'clock at mid night and asked her grandmother about her secret plan. While she arrived in her house she was very afraid and told her grandmother "come, Aunt, Martha", said the kind lady, "tell me all about it" (152). In this way she tells detail of her escape and her grandmother supports her to hide in her garret. From the garret she writes several letter to Dr. Flint. Jacobs says, "Dr. Flint made a third visit to New York, in search of me" (189).

She thinks that it is her turn to make him fool and punish him distracting him about her escape. She writes several letters from the garret of her grandmother by saying him "I am in New York, if you want to meet me you come here to search me". Dr. Flint was thirsty to test Jacobs so, he goes New York several times. But in reality she was hiding in the garret of her grandmother. In this regard Gloria T. Randle says, "Like the signifying monkey, a classic trickster figure in African American lore who, lacking power, uses cunning to outwit the master, Brent's "deliberate calculation" reveals how she has been forced to move beyond adolescent illusions" (49). Jacobs is clever and cunning girls who had determined power. Except power and will she has nothing else, although she is fighting using her own skills by hiding in the garret of her grandmother to be secure from the cruelty of Dr. Flint. She uses her trick it seems that she is trickster who makes Dr. Flint wander here and there in search of Jacobs.

In this regard, Jacobs says, "I would do anything, everything, for the shake of defeating him . . . I knew nothing would enrage Dr. Flint so much as to know that I favored another; and it was something to triumph over my tyrant even in that small way" (50). She is eager to defeat him at any cost. When Dr. Flint wanders restlessly

due to her letters, she feels relief some how. She was born of alienation, injury, hopelessness, and anger, surrendering all prospects of a virtuous life as her grandmother defines it (49). As Jacobs resists, she is in search of her equality in the law, justice and freedom despite of her alienation and hopelessness. After all she is also women, mother of her child and the wife of her husband. But white supremacy denies that status of human uses her as their materials things. For the same subject Gloria T. Randle asserts: "Robert step to refers to as the "pregeneric myth" or leitmotif of the African American literary tradition – i.e., the quest for literacy and freedom (ix)–trickstrism and signification were also crucial ploys in slave life, particularly in an effective salve plan" (50).

Jacobs is challenging death, trying to get victory over it and willing to get new life. She is hopeful to be a literate and free woman in the African–American history. At any cost, by using her skill, she wants to be free from the grip of Dr. Flint. Thus trickstrism is a tool to use against master and dismantle his will and great desire to abuse Jacobs. After all, her desire to be free is the process of struggle which is never ending process until she gets freedom. On the other hand, on the way of her struggle, she may face the punishment of death, poverty. She is ready to bear it. While Jacobs spends seven years in a small, crypt like garret "nine feet long and seven feet wide" her bodily pain was intolerable. As Jacobs writes, "The pain in my leg was so intense that it seemed as if should drop; but fear gave me strength" (153). Her terrible pain, torture, and punishment is a kind of inspiration and strength to tolerate for her bright future and the black woman. She has an extreme will to get freedom and justice. She is an optimistic girl and has great desire to live in the bright future. Therefore, Randle

writes, "Brent as a space between freedom and slavery, childhood and adulthood, motherhood and childlessness, presence and absence, even life and death" (53).

In this context her fighting is not simple matter. She is fighting with death. She is fighting voiceless with voiced owner. Dr. Flint has everything behind him but she has nothing more than her physical body, mental idea and great will. She is in condition while fighting with Dr. Flint. As she started writing letter to Dr. Flint mentioning that she was in New York, Flint went following the direction of the address of Jacobs though it was wrong. Then her victory of morality emerged from her living place. Her trick was tested and it succeeded in making him fool. Therefore when he goes to New York third time, he could not meet Jacobs there. But Jacobs really escaped to the North and meets her children Benny and Ellen. As she reached the North, she writes, "I know I did wrong. No, one can feel it more sensibly than I do. The painful and humiliating memory will hunt me to my dying day. Still, in looking back, calmly, on the events of my life, I feel that the slave woman ought not to be judged by the same standard as others" (86).

Jacobs rethinks about her past and the future. As she faced different challenges and difficulties it impressed her to do more things about others. Such torturous punishments and dehumanizing behaviours faced by her self. She can not share such behaviours except verbally writing. Even after escaping to the North, she is still in danger. She appeals all the readers not to consider all the slave woman with a single eye, they should be judged with multiple opinions. Jacobs requests the reader to analyse the slave from different perspectives.

As she escaped from the garret of her grandmother, she saw first time sunrise in seven years: "I called Fanny to see the sun rise for the first time in our lives, on free soil; for such I *then* believed it to be" (214).

She is optimistic about her future generation and feels some relief from the terrible slavery. Sunrise signifies that her future is going to be lighted from the dark side. Thus her will and determination has become positive to direct her future in peaceful way. Jacobs says about her freedom as follows:

My story ends with freedom; not in a usual way, with marriage. I and my children are now free ! we are as free from the power of slave holders as are the white people of the north; and through that, according to my ideas, is not saying a great deal, it is a vast important in my condition. The dream of my life is not yet realized. I do not sit with my children in home of my own. I still long for a health-stone of my own, however humble. I wish it for my children's sake for more than for my own. (302)

Her struggle ends with freedom but still she has not got chance to live with her family, children and husband in her own house. Her family is free from the power of white master but still not free from the race, colour and gender. So, Jacobs is worried about her children more than her own future. Her main dream is not fulfilled. She wants to redraw the history of black slavery and wants equality, between white and no discrimination between male female by using silence tool. In this regard Jennifer Larson writes:

That is to say, silence can be a powerful weapon both in the hands of the oppressor and of the oppressed, and because of the instability of

power previously described, Brent can use the silence to her advantage. Therefore, with non-response, which would appear on the surface to be passive, Brent actively resists Dr. Flint and the culture of true womanhood as she protects her sexual dignity and autonomy. (750)

The first instance reflects Jacobs' desire to preserve her purity and the second shows her desire to maintain her sexual dignity and privacy. So being silent she rejects Dr. Flint from sexual relation. In this regard Henry Louis Gates, theory is suitable to *The Signifying Money*, in that she, "Lacking power, uses cunning to outwit the master" (49). It means to say that Jacobs applies her technique to make her owner fool for her relief and solace for some times. Because if her owner is around her hiding place, she is scared if he may find her. She knows everything just listening sound of her master from the garret. So silence is an active tool to destroy and reject the master's will. Her 'silence tool' is appeared in her disappearance. In her different types of active works but, just disappeared in front of Dr. Flint. From the garret of her grandmother, she performs her role to dismantle the desire of Dr. Flint. she thinks of blurring the gap between white and black by uniting womanhood to fight against male patriarchal supremacy. Fight against such force, is possible when black woman and white woman unite. It leads to the coinage of an ideology—"sisterhood".

Jacobs has good relationship with her grandmother and her loving mistress, who was also a victim of her Master's cruelty. Because of Master's several cruelties, she created a new doctrine. Her purpose is to develop 'sisterhood' to embrace two different groups to fight against patriarchal society because male are dominating female for their progress and prosperity. In this subject, Moore describes:

Jacob's expectation of sisterhood across race and class faculties is betrayed by her distinction between privileged slave mistresses and vulnerable slave women, inhibiting their alliance. Jacobs links white slave mistresses with their spouses' identity: Mrs. Flint (Mrs. Norcom), Mrs. Sands (Mrs. Sawyer), and Mrs. Dodge (Mrs. Mary Matilda Norcom Messmore), Fixing these women's singular identity in the patriarchal grip of their husbands, men who both abused and elevated them (17).

Jacob's evocation of sisterhood between race and class is deceived by her own difference attitude of slave mistresses and vulnerable slave women. She further tries to link this distinct identities of slave women with white slave mistres with their conjugal identity to fight against the patriarchy. Moreover, she tries to say that male abused and elevated the salve women. More further explores, "Jacobs reaches out to her white female readers and show them that they can help black women, and achieve, sisterhood, by putting jealous and racism behind them and seeing that they can work collectively against the patriarchy for the good of all women" (753).

In this way her theory or solution of the confrontation between white and black women and discrimination is caused by the women inferiority. So, sisterhood would be only one solution to blur the gap between two groups of woman. Jacobs' appeal is accepted by the white females too. In her strategy, there will not be any violence and destruction to maintain the law and order of equality and justice if both groups of women behave in a friendly way. Therefore, her theory of sisterhood is implacable for the existence of blackness and to accept fact that the black slave is also a female character and a creative woman in this world.

Thus because of conscious and literacy she is able to write her own slave history and gives the solution of confrontation between white and black. It is the first strongest slave narrative by a woman to be published in U.S.A. Further, as an antebellum Afro-American female, Jacobs acquires the strategy to fight against ill-behaviors of whites using her literacy.

IV. Horror of Slavery and Terrible Experiences by Mary Prince in *History of Mary Prince*

Set in racist society of Bermuda, Mary Prince, a West Indian slave girl, suffers dehumanization, debasement, and sexual exploitation. However, Prince is not only a passive recorder of servitude but she is an active shaper of her life. After she is sold to several masters and mistress, she regains her strength to fight against the torture. She has difficulties in purchasing her freedom from her owner. Then she dictates her life story to Susanna Strickland, a recent convert to Methodist who is a guest in the house of Thomas Pringle, a white editor of Prince's text. In this regard Sandra Pouchet Paquet writes;

Unable to purchase her freedom from her owner, prince dictated her life story to Susanna Strickland, a recent convert to Methodism, a guest in the Pringle household, and a poet in her own right her narrative was edited for publication as an anti-slavery tract by Thomas Pringle, her benefactor, employer, and publisher, and secretary of the Anti-slavery society. Social and religious prohibitions surrounding sexually explicit material in nineteenth century Britain, and legal liabilities attached to the publication of such tracts, placed further constraints on Mary Prince's individual voice. Yet her narrative retains a qualitative uniqueness that is distinctly west Indian, distinctly a black woman's and distinctly a slave's. (131)

Prince's original language is missed while altering the text from oral to written form with the help of Thomas Pringle. The authorial voice of Prince is the reflection of slavery's hard treatment of black slaves. Her narrative is not a private life story but a

reflection of public awareness. Her purpose of writing is to ensure that "good people in England might hear from a slave what a slave had felt and suffered" (1). By writing this line conveys the message about the black slaves who have been tortured, dehumanised terribly, punished and commodified by selling and buying. Therefore, only kind hearted English people know the sufferings and suffocation of blacks in this way her narratives are not a private life story but a reflections of public awareness. As Paquest further writes: "Through her distinct voice, the slave narratives as evidence of victimization and document of legal history, is transformed into a triumphant, narratives of emergent west Indian subjectivity in the gendered space of a black woman and a slave" (131).

Her individual life has become public, historical, national. Her self is shaped in the real historical time, a changing world. In her narrative historical time is localized in the specific details of birth, and her vision of their future. Such vision may encourage other west Indian women too, to explore their pathetic condition of womanhood in the society or their progressive movement towards the upgrading society. Not only that people who want to read and write, will get good lesson from her slave narratives. Prince's private story of victimization, survival, heroic dream of safe community. Paquet further writes,

In linking her individual life and story to the unmaking of slavery and to the emergency of a new world, Mary Prince becomes an active agent of her society transformation. In the context of the region's historical quest for freedom and independence, her contextualized and transformed literature voice emerges as a gender-specific, all-inclusive ancestral voice. (132)

Mary Prince links her whole life to slavery. She becomes an active agent of social transformation. She is a West Indian slave born of slaves. Her tortured body speaks despite her silence as well. The tortured body of a female slave speaks via and on behalf of the tortured bodies. Her narrative is transcribed, pruned, edited for publication. Mary's speaking voice is transformed into a literate text.

Prince begins her narrative conventionally as "I was born in Bermuda (3)". She gives a detail of happy past and makes a contrast with harsh present. The historicity is established. Paquet, in this regard, writes:

The specific historicity of her narrative is established immediately. She gives a brief account of her happy childhood and contrasts it with a heart-wrenching account of the slave auction that separates her from her mother and her siblings of her mother's grief and the children's distress as they are forcibly separated at a public market in the middle of street in Hamble town. Her narrative describes the brutality and cruelty of her masters and mistress, Captain Williams, Captain and Mrs. I - Mr, D - and his overseer son Master Dickey, and finally, Mr. and Mrs. Wood. She gives specific information about the working conditions of household slaves and slaves employed in the salt works of Turks Island. She describes the paucity of food, clothing, and health care, as well as the kind of work required of slaves in her circumstances. (134)

While Prince was unable to understand as a child she was unaware about her life. While she was grown up and about to work somehow and she was left in the middle of street. She started wondering where to go. Finally as she reached the house of Captain and Mrs. I. There begins her terrible, pathetic and animalistic behaviours

imposed upon her by the cruel white masters in several plantation. All those brutality, cruelty and tortures are described in her narratives simultaneously.

While Mary prince is narrating her slavery, her aim is to make public self-consciousness of the female slave. It is not only about the empowering of women; it is also about the liberation of the whole society. Marry Prince has desire to do something because she is separated from family and husband. Therefore she is very much aggressive and there is not any way to compromise for her about her aggressive attitude, rather she decides to revolt. She wants to communicate, to pursue the slaves who are not aware their commodification. As Sandra Pouchet says: "Mary Prince's public accounting of self is the degree and quality of its interiority, its attention to the cultural systems that nurture a human community under Seige, and her unshakable confidence in the future of the west Indies as place to live and love of her work" (132).

The above extract explores that Prince has determined to create the west Indies as the lovely city, peopled city, free and fair city where everybody is to be behaved equally and fairly without discrimination between white, black and cruelty. Her main purpose of writing the autobiography is also for the equality justices and freedom. Similarly being a female slave girl, her sufferings wants to share in the human community should be aware and self-conscious learning from the unshakable confidence of Mary prince. As paquet further states:

Prince's narrative modulates between and aggressive ascertain of self as an uncompromising arbiter of value on behalf of an oppressed community and a longing for reconnection with an ideal Caribbean community. It is an ideal, as Thomas Pringle's supplement informs us,

that would restore a freedom - loving heart and a broken body to the safety and security of a loving husband in a west Indian landscape. It is charged with the necessity for radical social change. (133)

Mary Prince is very much optimistic therefore she struggles to reconnect the people who are separate because of slavery. The way she is left on the middle road of crowded city in Hamble Town, many other slaves are sold in many different plantations. These people may reunite one day because of awareness and supportive efforts. A Prince has written about the realities and cruelties of the plantation, her narrative occupies private and public spheres simultaneously. Thus her individual life story becomes public, historical and national issues in England. She pointed that these issues have been common to all, and all the people must concentrate on it.

The problem of ruler and ruled is also very much like that of black slave & white master. If the problems of both sides have not been solved, there may start confrontation in many plantations like Covey and Douglass in the plantation of Covey. Thus Prince's aim is not to create confrontation between two sides rather to solve the problem in consensus way. Then there will be the situation of sisterhood as Jacobs said. Such compromise is possible only after being reunited. All the blacks who are separated and sold by the white and their broken body, lovely heart, separated children and family, husband and wife should be reunited. Then Prince's painful voices also reunited people to form fair and free society.

Mary's collective act of telling, writing, edition and publishing her strong desire which in oral tradition of story telling is infinitely repeatable. She likes to hear her narratives to be read by whites. Her subjectivity and voice is fully established within the context of her own expressive culture. To have her story written down,

Many comes to Wood's household, in England, an Anti slavery society, Thomas Pringle.

Mary Prince discloses the history of west Indian slave girl. She was sold with her mother as an infant to a captain Darrel Williams, who gave her as a gift to his granddaughter, Betsey Williams. Prince served as a childhood companion to Betsey until the age of twelve. It was her first experience of slave. While Prince was with Betsey, she describes her early childhood in the household of captain Williams as "the happiest period of life she got chances to read and write with Betsey, but she was too young to understand the importance of literacy. After the death of William's wife he sold Prince to Captain I who took her to Spanish point, Bermuda.

Five years later, Captain I sold her to a Mr. D who sent her to work in the salt ponds of Turks Islands for "several years" where she had to work in the salt water. As Helena Woodard says about Turk's Island: "On that Turk's Island was a horrible place! The people in England, I am sure, have never found out what is carried on there. Cruel, horrible place" (137). Helena explains that Turk's Island is the horrible place where human being is sold for economic profit. There is focus only the materiality rather than the humanity. The owner of this Island is concerned with money more than humanity. Prince also describe her painful memory of physical sufferings. Those long hours she worked in the salted water caused huge boils, especially on the feet and legs, that are "to the very bone, affecting the sufferers with great torment" (137).

She explains the very pathetic works on the salt water which caused terrible sickness, if they asked the medicine then the slave holders used to give the bowl of salty water which would worsen the sickness. Thus, this place is the place of human

killing and to work here is to be killed. But such cruel people's intention is concentrated on the money, property and sexual exploitation. Despite of being a black female Mary Prince is not pessimist, rather she optimistic and determined to disclose such inhuman attitude through her peaceful narratives. She believes she will get justice and innocent people will listen and support her. She asserts further: "I have felt what a slave feels, and know what a slave knows; and I would have all the good people in England to know it too, that they may break our chains, and set us free" (137).

Mary prince is optimistic with the good education and consciousness of girl of the England. Therefore, she has written her own history for the people who are literate and again the process of being literate. It is because these people can judge the cruelties of reality and raise the voice against such cruelties of slavery and its institution. Thus, she has afforded her hard time, labour and economic fund to make slavery public by her narratives. She also challenges male literacy environment by her personal and artistic identity.

After several years she returned to Bermuda to work again for Captain 1 in 1815. Prince was sold to Mr. John Wood and taken to Antigua to work in his household in 1817. She joined in Antigua's Moravian Church. In that church she got chance to meet and read with free slaves and to assimilate the ideas of slavery. There she met her husband who was free black man named Daniel James, whom she married in December of 1826. Prince accompanied the Woods to England in 1828. Technically freed from slavery upon her arrival on English soil, she worked for the Wood family until she joined the Anti-slavery society. However, in 1829 Prince joined the household of Mr. Thomas Pringle as a domestic servant. Mainly from the

house of Pringle, prince begins her life story. While prince was with Thomas Pringle, her life story was written by Susana Modie a writer as well as the member of the London, antislavery movement. Pringle edited the life story of Prince and published it in 1831. It became so popular that three editions were printed that year.

Because Pringle edited Prince's life story, Wood took legal action against Thomas Pringle. But Prince decided to take the stand providing the only known records of her words outside her own narratives. But Pringle couldn't provide witness from the west Indies to prove Prince's allegation. Therefore, such court case caused to Prince to appear in the public record. The events of her life afterward are unknown though the most scholars accept she remained in England until her death. Prince opines that her history was written and it was somehow true. But most of the realities are changed, her ethnic language is converted into the favour of Pringles views. He has imposed the views of colonial mentality of the nineteenth century point of views. Therefore Lynn A. says;

Earlier slave narrative's author portrait is the initial threshold through which the reader realizes the genre's ironic relation to New world slavery. That is, the ironic contradiction of an African and British Subject, Slave and or writer confronts the reader, who must realize that the narrative which follows concerns a character who is both African and British, a slave and a writer. The struggle between these contradictions is the instruction by which readers are able to interpret the events of slave's life. (3/14)

In given quotation by Lynn A., the power is always powerful and able to impose, authority upon lower class people. Those who have money, authority and power are

allowed to do whatever they desire. Therefore they suppress the slave and give limited right for their individual essence. So, there is threshold or limitation of the rights of slave. But slaves always want to evoke their terrible torture and painful condition so as to disclose that in front of the society of British people, who have sympathy towards the human. They will realize the reality and will forward their opinion publicly against the cruelties of slavery. For this purpose Prince is also hopeful. Thus, there is contradiction between both groups. But the readers need to analyze fact and true history of slavery and its institution. According to Lynn A. Bacon's observation, such pathetic issues of blacks are researchable so he states:

Bacon's initiation of the scientific methods of observation facilitated the placement of the African in nature. The African is, therefore, a being whose lack of "the Arts" of education, or writing, means that black is observable, knowable, and controllable according to the same scientific methods and Eurocentric ideology used to understand the national world. (5/14)

Bacon observes that black people have lack of art, and education or writing. Despite being some scarcity of knowledge they have required capacity of energy, power, and dignity to know the things. They have ability to control and perform the arts, culture and history in Eurocentric ideology. Therefore, Bacon is confident in developing black's mental capacity technical capacity to deal with white masters. Because of such efforts writers like Douglass, Mary Prince and Jacobs come up with the writing of their own history. Similarly, they have developed the music like Jazz, blues etc. Their creative performances build their own history and culture in the African-British society.

In the same issues, Ronald Judge traces the effects of "the writing Negro" as a philosophical and scientific "Proof" (5/14). The slave narrative becomes an extreme demonstration of the Negro's humanity, in the light of western European Philosophies. In this way the clear pictures of the slave narratives help the readers understand the African's struggle for nationality, identity, class status and manhood in the world history.

So Prince has energy and power to write own history and make it known to the British people. She is a woman and black slave. Whites always tried to suppress her voice, and they didn't allow her to write her history easily. In her writing, half realities were cut by the editor. Instead of writing her history, she had to appeared in the court. Writing by a slave is illegal according to the British law. Slave is tortured from birth to death. But Mary Prince never became silent and passive recipient, rather active female struggler against the slavery institution. Further, Starr Alonzo writes,

Mary Prince told of repeated beatings and floggings: "Both my mistress and my master caused me know the exact difference between the smart of the rope the cart-whip, and cow-skin . . . to strip me naked - to hang me up by the wrist and lay my flesh open with the cow skin, was an ordinary punishment for even a slight offence." (121)

Mary Prince proves that African women are most powerful and they are different from the White because blacks have power to bear the terrible punishment, as well as ability to argue with whites. Prince has much more persuasive power direct and repeated voice to persuasive powers to influence the black communities and whites as well. While she goes to England, she got courage to resist. When she is sick because of terrible punishment, she refuses to work with Mr. and Mrs. Wood. She also marries

against the wishes of her owner. When she goes to the Church in England, she speaks, in front of all, about the slavery. Then, her speech was appreciated by the people who had attended the church and she was encouraged to write her narratives. But her speech was against the slavery.

This spirit of resistance not only enabled Prince to survive in a lifetime of abuse, but it also pushed her to take up the abolitionist cause on behalf of those who remained enslaved. Thus her history was obliged to edit by Thomas Pringle not without any pressure but with extra black woman's impression. Torture and horrible punishment faced by Mary Prince became a moral education to the black community, black woman and the good people of England and for further study of slavery to the world as well. So she is not just bearer of the horrors but doer and exposure of the unseen realities of cruel slavery by fighting technically and resisting against her master. Such reputed work cannot be done by a normal female black slave. She has extra courage to do it and to make other slaves aware. Her literacy and freedom became a tool for whole slaves to release themselves from slavery.

Finally, Mary Prince begins her autobiography in conventional manner by relating the place of her birth followed by an account of her childhood. Prince describes a domestic world. She gives a brief account of her happy childhood and connects it with heart-wrenching account of the slave auction that separates her from her mother and her siblings. Freedom, humanity, independence and familyhood are not experienced by the blacks. Low payment, overworking, danger of liberty are the outcomes that the institution of slavery produced.

Enslaved black women were deprived of proper payment for their labour. One cause to revolt against legalized slavery in colonial Caribbean is to dismantle the gap between overwork and low payment which whites provide for blacks.

The History of Mary Prince shows the barrier between blacks and whites under slavery. Its value lies in the detail that it gives of the British Caribbean slave trade and rarely documented recollections of an enslaved Caribbean woman.

Prince places an emphasis on the colonialist's psychological domination and physical abuse of enslaved Africans. Prince understood clearly that she was owned and viewed as property by white plantation owners. She also had the alternatives to go back to slave owners after working hours to reclaim her identity with fellow enslaved Africans, to voice her displeasure over being exploited economically by her owners, and to choose to obtain her freedom in England.

Thus Prince's narrative is replete with struggles and tactful solutions guided by literacy she obtains. As an adult, prince clearly chose a set of values resulting from a loving relationship with a mother who encouraged her to stand up for her civil right, identity right and literacy right despite the psychological repercussions and physical beatings by her owners. Mary Prince is fortunate enough to have a pre-colonial slave mother who protected and encouraged her to fight those seeds of doubt implanted in her by the slave masters and mistress that she is an inferior human being.

V. Conclusion: Literacy leading to Freedom and Justice

This research ends with an exploration of the key role literacy has played in bringing out slave narratives into light. Douglass resists the slave trade and struggles hard with the help of literacy. He reads Bible and suggests his master Auld that any claims the slaveholder has to authority of enslavement are unreasonable and invalid. He sees the force of language is upon those who is in power. In slavery, the masters who are in power control slaves verbally as well. He finds relationship between manipulation of language and oppression: "As a free man, Douglass controls the terms of debate between him and Auld. As he deploys language to ostensibly justify his escape, he simultaneously calls attention to his self-determination, demonstrating that he need neither defend nor apologize for his actions" (275).

Douglass blames his former masters for exploitation. He also hides his plans from the master whose power was based on spurious authority. He deploys his language to justify his escape. Because of his ability to convey emotions, he is a self-determined and courageous man. He does not surrender against his determination rather he is committed to fulfill the desire of literacy. In this regard, Elizabeth McHenry writes,

The stories of free, northern blacks who turned to collective reading and literary exchange as one way to see themselves and test the ability of language to give voice to their experience provide a crucial counterweight not only to the history of southern slaves, but also to the 'master narratives' we have created around the ideology of literacy and the black community. (478)

Elizabeth McHenry clarifies that many blacks who fought and committed themselves to fight against the slavery are the heroes of their struggle. Likewise those who supported the fighters are the important persons as well, because they believed that abolition of slavery, they cannot be silent. They deconstructed the history and existing norms and values that dehumanized other human. Black people were dehumanized and used as a property by the white. Such tradition was overthrown by the same suppressed black. Therefore they established their own history, ideology and name. Such opportunity was developed by themselves. They established new history and by the help of literacy they created their own language and culture.

In the same way, Jacobs also finds evil nature of slavery. She is in confrontation with anybody who supports slavery. She is in debate with Mrs. Tyler who asks her to be silent as she is a woman. As a woman, she is supposed to be passive in the political question of slavery.

Some critics claim that slaves were not sold forcefully. They were sold because of their own suffering. But Jacobs denies it. Explaining the cold effects of slavery on women who are seduced, tortured, sold and forced to be their masters' children, Jacobs condemns on this issue.

Thus Jacobs finds problems in some women who support slavery. Jacobs also disagrees with Tyler's views that woman is just passive and can not do anything about such a big slavery institute. Masters' order is supposed to be received passively without protesting and arguing because women are slave and uneducated who cannot read and write. But Jacobs explores her determination to be literate and to redraw the boundary of black woman as well as the whole slavery by defeating white master in the confrontation between white masters and slavery. Such determination is also the

duty of a slave woman in this movement Jacobs is not just passive receptor and docile woman rather an active slave abolitionist. Jacobs does not make aware only the black community but also conveys even white mistress to be united. Thus, to develop the tool of 'sisterhood' to fight who suppressed woman, against patriarchal society, who suppressed women. Therefore such united force between black woman and white women would be the combine force to work in favor of the whole womanhood.

Mary Prince also feels stronger due to the Bible class she joins. She is no more a passive slave like her mothers who were not literate. She gives the permission to Thomas Pringle to edit her narrative so that her narrative could be published. It is the conscience that appears in Prince with her literacy that enables her to fight for equality. The self-determination, fighting against slavery, response to torture shown by Jacobs, Prince and Douglass are the outcome of literacy they have.

Thus all the three narratives mentioned above are shaped by the racial sensibility that emerges in the mind of slaves and flows in their blood. The racial consciousness is an outcome of literacy they get on the way to liberty through struggle. Literacy has been proved as manifested these three slave narratives: *The History of Mary Prince* by Marry Prince, *Incidents in the Life of Salve Girl* by Harriet Jacobs and *My Bondage and My Freedom* by Frederic Douglass.

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