



Social Gloom In Laxman Gaikwad's Autobiography.

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Abstract

In this research paper, the researcher has tried to find out the image of Indian Dalit as depicted in the Autobiography of Laxman Gaikwad. This research has been conducted by analytical method because it has no numerical data. This study of autobiography has focused the frightening, and sensitive personal experiences in the life of an economically backward class family. Their stories are heart touching and are a good way to illustrate how one feels about societal problems like racism, crime, unhappy marriages, poverty and starvation. The present research concludes that the efforts undertaken by the Dalits to reveal the truth about their lives has tremendous positive impact in the society. Thus through their courageous writings the underclass of this society have become aware of their exploitation and are now living their life respectfully. Laxman Gaikwad's 'Uchalya' is an authentic description of the Dalits of 'Uchalya Community'.

Keywords:- Dalits, Laxman Gaikwad, autobiography, study

Introduction:

The Marathi term 'Dalit' implies to be crushed or shattered to pieces or to be silenced. All around the world, the dominant higher class people have not treated the oppressed groups as equals. On the contrary, they developed a number of methods for abusing and humiliating their victims. The history of human society demonstrates that oppressed groups have used both violent and non-violent forms of protest to make their oppressor aware of their disapproval of the unfairly difficult life they have been forced to live.

Through their writing, dalits have worked hard to draw attention to their plight, but publishing houses controlled by the upper castes have not given them enough opportunities to get their works published.

Dalit literature is a creative depiction of the sorrows experienced by Dalits due to enslavement, family dissolution and poverty. In order to enjoy the joys and sorrows of human life, Dalit literature places human at its core, it elevates the human person and inspires revolution in them. Dalit or blacks were only depicted in literature from the perspective of white writers, who saw them as ugly and evil, and assigned the secondary roles of servants and helpers to the white

heroes and heroines. Hence the researcher chooses autobiography which makes it different from other research work.

In rural areas Dalits still face discrimination in the public sphere, limiting their services like schools and religious places because they have lower quality of life and low salary. This is the reason Laxman Gaikwad's autobiography is taken to bring equality in the society.

Significance of Study:

This research gives rise to enhance the argument in literature particularly in the democratic country like India. Thus it can enable scholars to organize research on various autobiographies of dalits not only in India but all over the world.

Readers are very interested in autobiographer because they want to learn about author's personal life, including the ups and downs, their ideas and beliefs, his heart and mind, and his patience and prejudices.

As a literary genre, autobiography has its own unique, qualities. An autobiography is usually a first person account of a person's life that is written by the author. The autobiography stays true to the facts of autobiographer's life and points a picture of his former existence.

About the Author:

A social activist and mill worker leader Laxman Gaikwad was born in a tiny village in Dhanegaon, near in Latur District. He belongs to the Bhamata caste, which the British empire designated as a criminal group. In his autobiography, Laxman details his struggles as both an individual and an unfortunate member of the Uchalya community, as well as his tenacious attempts to forge his own identity in the face of adversity. Here he describes in minute detail the different ruses his community members use to loot the inhabitants. According to his book crime was not a natural sin. His novel 'Uchalya' is a factual and subtle description of the sufferings of Laxman Gaikwad not only as an individual but also as a member of 'Uchalya Community'.

Statement of the Problem:

Gaikwad meticulously details the various theft methods employed by the members of his team in this section. His writings usually depict crime as not being vice of his people but rather that the social conditions of their time forced them to rely on the art of thievery to meet the most basic need of survival. Since Dalit writers were never accepted into the mainstream Hindu social structure, they made an effort to develop a set of their own literacy norms to analyze and research their own works. Discrimination based on gender and race features prominently and consistently throughout literature. Autobiographies written by Dalits are understudied. Discrimination against Dalits is a major problem especially in rural areas of India. It signifies something that has the greatest impact on the world. Laxman Gaikwad's autobiography shows the worst of his community's people, ending him to the Dalits.

Research Objectives:

The purpose of this research is to look into how Laxman portrayed the Dalits in a way that fits the topic at hand.

Delimitation of the Research:

This study is limited to Laxman Gaikwad's autobiography because of the specificity with which he describes the plight of Dalits in the society.

Literature Review:

Autobiography is one of the most influential and widely read genres of the twentieth century, it is often a vehicle for introspective reflection.

Even authorship claims can be made for a biography because, "it offers an ideal scope for satisfying that human urge and quest and curiosity about human nature." (Naik: P.)

Autobiography:

It is difficult to find a comprehensive definition of the term autobiography as there are numerous definitions in dictionaries and book of literary terms.

Analysis:

The inability of people from lower castes to advance socially was a direct result of the closed nature of the caste-system in India, which forbade them from working outside the profession assigned to their caste. Thus they were engaged in the same customary occupation, which necessitated their continued dependence on the caste Hindus for support. Forcing them to work beyond their means, the caste Hindus often took advantage of the less developed communities. For all their hard work, they were only compensated with a piffling wage, barely enough to cover their basic needs. Consequently, Dalits across the country experienced chronic food insecurity. They had to work had their whole lives to find a solution to the food problems that plagued Dalits. They were so close to starvation that all their efforts were towards finding food.

Laxman describes one such time during his childhood, "On one occasion we lived only on water for eight or nine days. Father used the money from the Anna to purchase a chibatak of jaggary, which he then dissolved in water and served to us in individual cups. As a child, I remember wrapping my arms around my father's neck on days like these and sobbing uncontrollably about how hungry I was. Used to go through trash cans looking for dried mangoes and tamarind seeds to collect, roast, and eat.

When I was really desperate, I'd sprinkle salt on the stone, and then lick it to get any remaining bits of flour off. (On page 33 of Gaikwad.)

His insatiable hunger as a kid led him to experiment with many different strategies for satisfying his cravings. He would sneak snacks from the kitchen, organize group burglaries, and even crash weddings. They used to eat at these wedding celebrations and if they were caught, the host would often severely beat them. However they would continue their exploits because hunger was their master.

Laxman mentions another time when he went hungry by explaining how, during recess, he would sneak out of school and go on a hunt for food. He explains, "on occasions I had to go to school without eating bhakar and felt hunger gnawing in my belly. On such occasions Dagadu and I skipped school during the short recess and escaped through the window. In the forest, we looked for beehives and on trees for pigeon nests. We would rub eggs with cow dung, boil them, and eat them if we happened to find any. At all times, our school bags contained a catapult and a box of matches. Without bhakar, we used the catapult to slaughter pigeons and khaduls, then roasted and devoured them.

Laxman Gaikwad recalled how his family members used to make him drink wine – he started drinking at a very tender age of eight to nine and put a stop to it when he was in fourth class, such type of polluted atmosphere had adverse effect on the mind of Laxman—as a child Laxman was fortunate enough to quit drinking at a young age as opposed to other kids in his neighbourhood whose lives were ruined as a result of huge drinking. Even his own brothers, Manik was alcoholics, Throughout the course of his story, he informs the audience that his brother, Manik passed away from excessive in his prime age, leaving behind a young wife and children who were left to their destinies.

The older son's lives were doomed even before this. As a result, he made up his mind to teach his youngest child Laxman. He was so adamant that Laxman go to a decent school in the area that he was ultimately successful in doing so. Because of this, Laxman was able to let the light of knowledge into his life, where it taught him the principles he needs to be a good human being.

When Laxman took advantage of the chance to enroll in the institute, once again fortune shined upon him. His elder brother had joined the family business of theft. His father loved him more because he was the youngest child in the family and wished for him to stay away from that line of work. As a result he was accepted in a local language school. Yet, his route of success was not easy because he lost his mother at a young age and was therefore in his sister-in-law care. They viewed him as a useless and unnecessary burden for the family because

he attended school. They used to treat him poorly and rudely.

The depressing effects of his in-laws' attitude on Laxman's developing mind were clear. With no way to seek relief, he was forced to bear the pain in silence. His sisters-in-law apparently did not want him to keep going to school. They could have much rather turn to stealing in order to help the family. Laxman, Harchanda, and his elderly, nonworking father made up the family at the time. This meant that his sisters-in-law were heated to take care of any of them. Since their husbands were the primary providers, they may have decided it was best to split up and start new families elsewhere. When Laxman's other brother got married and brought home his wife, the tension in the house only increased. The women were constantly fighting with one another. The only way to settle was to break up.

Laxman's life was already difficult before his brothers abandoned him and the village leaving him dependent on his elderly father. Landlord provided food for his father back in the day. When Laxman returned from boarding school, his father would feed both of them from the same plate, even though the father's portion was always smaller. Laxman was inspired to pursue his education and realize his father's goal because of his father's love and concern.

When Laxman talks about his father in his autobiography, he becomes viably emotion. He attended school for only a short time before entering the workforce, first in Latur and later in Aurangabad.

He feels terribly guilty because he was not able to provide adequate care for his ageing father while he was away from home. Due to his deep love for and sense of obligation to his father, decided to leave his job in Aurangabad and move to Latur. He reflects on this experience by writing, "Baba... said, Come here now, my child; you've gone so far away for service, and I'm quite old: I could die suddenly at any time and I won't be able to see you. How long can I expect to be in labour? I was so disappointed in myself for forgetting about the man who had given me life. My mother passed away when I was young, and I was helpless to console my father, "I'll take you to Latur, I'll take up a job there," I told Baba" p. 94 of Gaikwad) He felt guilty for not providing better care for his ageing father after witnessing the grim realities of his life.

Laxman's father was the only family member who paid attention to him as a child and a young adult. Because of his disability, his father used to serve as a farm watchman in the neighbourhood. He had learned from his time spent with the upper-caste people how important an education could be in shaping one's future. He had been firsthand how the lack of education devastated the people in his community. He could empathise with Uchalya because he'd been there. His parents and grandparents' lives were in danger.

To quote what he has written, "I broke down into sobs. Everyone in the lace came over to hang out at our house. A few folks tried to comfort me.

"Don't cry, Laxman are you going to wake your father with these cries". My mother died because of our family's financial difficulties. She lived her last days in servile poverty.

Funny thing was, despite having five young sons, no one was able to keep him from dying of starvation. Laxman was unable to pay for his own burial even after his death. However he was able to give his father a proper burial thanks to the timely assistance of a friend.

Laxman's autobiography reveals that he does not have particularly fond memories of his other family members. Everyone he encountered sought to take advantage of him by putting up some kind of road block in his way. He has related numerous stories that demonstrate the self-centered nature of his relatives. He describes how his brother used the promise of marriage arrangement to take advantage of him. Laxman's brother had already sold the tin sheets that were part of their influence. As a Laxman Gaikwad puts it, "From the sake of the tin sheets, he had reaped a sizeable profit. That being the case, he went out and promptly purchased a dhoti and shirt for himself... All of the money was used for his own personal expenses. "Dada, why did you sell all the sheets?" I questioned, Can a marriage be performed on nothing?" he shot back. To impress my future in-laws. I need to dress nicely. No?

Dada made this argument to justify his spending. My first thought was that Dada was trying to trick me into believing something untrue. just like he did when he was out on the town robbing people blind." in this case, the source is Laxman's mental anguish was caused by his brother's

treatment. His priorities had to shift, and he had to seriously reconsider his bond with his brothers. It was pected that, as the eldest sibling, he would help his younger sibling with wedding costs. Rather, it appears that he was exploiting Laxman for his own gain.

As a result Laxman's identity became tangled up in his dysfunctional family and was stunted.

Conclusion:

It is clear that the Dalits of India suffered from hunger and starvation as direct results of the harmful religious practices prevalent in Indian society. Social reformers started the movement to liberate Dalits from long held false religious beliefs. Dalit literature especially autobiography is one of the most effective means of their revolution against evil circumstance of their lives. Finally the aim is achieved by spreading the values of freedom, equality and justice in the mind of the readers.

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