



IMPACT OF LPG ON THE CARTOONS OF R. K. LAXMAN

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ABSTRACT

The present research paper focuses on the impact of LPG (Liberalization, Privatization, and Globalization) on different issues like socio-political, economic culture and education. The art cartooning has been influenced by the LPG. Cartoons of R. K. Laxman have been influenced by the LPG. In the present paper, the researcher considers a cartoon to show the impact of LPG.

Keywords: - LPG, Cartooning, socio-political, economic.

METHODOLOGY:

For the present research paper, the researcher has used explorative method. Laxman's cartoons will be read and selected cartoons will be studied in view of the impact of LPG.

INTRODUCTION

The decade of post 90s is considered as an era of LPG (Liberalization, Privatization, and Globalization). This decade has been influenced in all the strata of life. It is reflected on the arts and fine arts. This era finds impact on poetry, drama, short story, novel, painting, drawing, caricature and art of cartooning, etc. This era is well-known for demolition of Babri Mosque, GAT Agreement, changing dimensions of industrialization, flood of channels, internet, multimedia and android system which digitalizing human being, etc. After 90s the spread of globalization has made impact on economic tensions and class-conflict also became intense issues. In the post 90s sentimentality regarding various identities based on religion,

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class, caste and religion flared up in our society. All that stirred up our socio-political, economic and educational and literary world. In the era of LPG the world of painting, drawing, caricaturing and cartooning has got affected. The cartoonists like Keshav Shankar Pillai, Bal Thackery, R. K. Laxman, Mangesh Tendulkar, Monick Sarcar, Sudhir Tailang, Vikas Sabnis, E. P. Unny, Prashant Kulkarni, Charlie Hebdo, etc have shown influence of LPG. Out of all these cartoonists the researcher is going to discuss a cartoon of Laxman.

Laxman throws light on different aspects of LPG like socio-political, cultural and economic changes, which happen all over the world. The art of cartooning is an ongoing commentary on the day-to-day life issues. In the present paper the researcher takes into account a cartoon of Laxman to show the impact of LPG on the subjects of art of cartooning. The following cartoon is the best example to show how the scenario of liberalization, privatization and globalization has affected Laxman's cartoons.



You are still living in the past. Of course, we have made tremendous progress—Kellogg's corn flakes, Arrow shirts, Pepsi, Coca-cola, scotch . . .

The above cartoon is the best example to talk about the impact of LPG over the daily lifestyle of rural and urban life. This cartoon is a critical comment on uncontrolled and unbridled consumerism. On the one hand some people say that the advent of Kellogg's corn flakes, Arrow shirts, Pepsi, Coca cola and Scotch is an indication of attack of LPG and encroaching development. Some of them believe that the mall-culture is not development; it is a sort of swelling over the society. On the other hand some of them believe that living in the village is close to nature. The old man, hut and goat shown in the cartoon are the real life picture of village life. The old man seems to be surviving according the Gandhian principles. Laxman has shown the impact of LPG through the mouth of the man standing akimbo who says to the old man that, 'You are still living in the past. Of course, we have made tremendous progress—Kellogg's corn flakes, Arrow shirt, Pepsi, Coca-cola and Scotch'. The caption in

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the cartoon shows the encroachment of LPG through various objects which are the representative examples considered by the cartoonist. However the readers' ability to read between and beyond lines enables them to discover the hidden agenda of LPG.

The cartoon says one thing but means exactly the opposite. It says that the persuasive presence of foreign products is an indication of tremendous progress of globalization. In fact the cartoon means exactly the reverse. It implies that consumerism has made man materialistic and self-centered in the world of LPG. It suggests that the bond between nature and man no longer exists. As W. B. Yeats says in the poem *The Second Coming*, the falcon cannot hear the falconer man cannot hear divine voice. The cartoon violates the maxim of manner, as there is a contradiction between what is said and what is meant. As far as the first three maxims are concerned, the cartoon observes all of them. It is only the maxim of manner that the cartoon flouts. In a country where a large continent of population lives below the poverty line, how can one say that the country has made tremendous progress. The reader makes use of the contemporary context dominated by contradictions and paradoxes and arrives at a reverse interpretation of the claim made by the speaker in the picture. It is nothing but the impact of globalization. This cartoon indirectly tells that not only metropolitan cities have influenced but also villages are also in the clutches of globalization. The cartoonist focuses on the issue that the things, which are generally finds in the malls, have reached in the lifestyle of the common man/people. That's why the speaker/villager is very simply and casually talks about the Kellogg's corn flakes, Pepsi, coke, Coca-cola, and Scotch. It shows the direct impact of globalization over the lives of village life.

Laxman as a mystic and creative thinker does not remain untouched by the impact of LPG. He pinpoints the influence of globalization in the day-to-day lives of the common people. He has also shown tremendous impact over all the strata of village life in his cartoons. Laxman also depicts the other side of globalization. Globalization has connected village to village. The communication gap is decreasing very fastly. The modes of exchanging information and knowledge have been increasing in a large amount. Because of the impact of LPG villagers can connect and be in contact with a person living outside of country. But it is richness of the cartoonist like Laxman who shows the dark reality of society.

This cartoon can be examined from one more different perspective. First of all, let it be noted that the cartoon conveys exactly opposite meanings. The sentence 'used in leaving in the past' seems to be an accusation or blame. The speaker says that the hearer is backward because he is not aware of products like Kellogg's corn flakes, Arrow shirts, Pepsi, Coca cola and Scotch. The speakers view is not the cartoonists view, contrast is a strategy used by the cartoonist here. In other words, white means black and good means evil. The speaker in the cartoon says that these products are indicators of tremendous progress. As readers we know

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that Laxman's opinions are exactly opposite. It's like reversing the spelling of the word 'God'. When we reverse the meaning of the speaker's sentence we get a negative perspective meaning that these products are NOT the real indication of progress. The eloquent silence of the quite man in the cartoon can be translated in the following words, 'Excuse me. You think Kellogg's corn flakes, Arrow shirt, Pepsi, Coca cola and Scotch are signs of development and progress'. In my opinion they are symptoms of cultural slavery or hegemony.

The speaker's opinion is an indirect directive which can be verbalized in the following words. 'Everyone knows off and consumes Kellogg's corn flakes Arrow shirt Pepsi, Coca cola and Scotch. Why don't you start consuming them?' It has another implication. The poor listener lives in a hut, is barely clothed and looks victim of malnutrition. Against his pathetic condition, the speaker's advice sounds very elitist and callous.

CONCLUSION:-

At the end, the researcher would like to say that the cartoon does not give the complete picture of poor (globalised) India. It is just an ideal example of real India. The actual picture is so horrible that the man of common mentality cannot even imagine truth behind the curtain. In reality, thousands of women and men die only because of the depreciation of one time food and clean drinking water, that's why this is not the entire picture of society. The factuality in our country is different from the superficial reality in the cartoon. The cartoonist doesn't criticise directly. However, this cartoon pinches to the concerned people who are responsible for poverty in the era of globalization. The cartoonist within this limited area cannot open the perfect reality. Cartoonist just strikes to people of India to think over basic and serious problems of society. Without hurting hearts of the concerned people the cartoonist throws light on the impact of globalization. It is a deviant style of Laxman to comment over the burning issues of the country like India. It is also accepted that directly or indirectly the art of cartooning is not far away from the impact of globalization.

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