

## ***The Outcaste: An Intersectionality of Self, Community and Nation***

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### **Abstract**

It is significant to note that autobiography is a popular genre in Dalit literature. Unlike the non-Dalit autobiography Dalit autobiography is more than the story of an individual. Sharankumar Limbale's *The Outcaste* is a representative Dalit autobiography. I have taken this as a case study to deal with a few important questions: in what way Dalit autobiography dismantles the very definition of autobiography? Is Dalit autobiography limited to the narration of an individual's lived experience? How is it the life story of more than just an individual? How does an individual's story intersect with the story of a community and the nation at large?

**Keywords:** autobiography, Dalit autobiography, caste, community, nation, self, intersectionality

### **Dalit Autobiography**

What is an autobiography? Simply speaking, an autobiography is writing about self by the individual himself/herself. Autobiography constitutes three important components: auto (self), bio (life) and graphy (writing). Philippe Lejeune, a French critic defines autobiography as "Retrospective prose narrative written by a real person concerning his own existence, where the focus is his individual life, in particular the story of his personality" (Lejeune, as quoted in Kumar, 2010, p. 3). Autobiography is traditionally known as the act of writing a conscious individual self. The subjecthood of 'self' is the main focus in every autobiography. But individual self cannot be removed from the community (society) or even nation. It is in relationship with the community that an individual self is