



Between Globalization and Localization: Aesthetic Manifestation of Globality, Reflexivity and Social Change in Daya Pawar's *Baluta* (2015)

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Abstract

Daya Pawar posthumously clearly establishes his human personality, laying bare to readers of his work, both his scars and warts, his pride and shame. Through his story *Baluta*, considered his autobiography and recently translated to English by Jerry Pinto, he gives us a chance to reclaim our own humanity. In a society where castes play a big role in determining both the present and the future of a person, social change is the only way to ensure equity and fairness to those regarded as the lower caste members, a group to which Daya Pawar himself belonged. The text *Baluta* thus comes in handy to both bring out the woes of the dalits, and their importance on the flipside in the society, which the members of the upper caste blatantly refuse to acknowledge, but left alone, cannot perform these roles that are considered filthy. These Dalits are born into savagery, hence they are compelled to live within this cocoon, with minimum chances of ever changing this situation. *Baluta*, however, as stated by Pawar is just but a tip of the iceberg, hence there is still more to be deciphered concerning the plight of the lower caste members in India. This paper entails an analysis of *Baluta*, in terms of how globality, reflexivity and social change have been reflected, with these three concepts oscillating between globalization and localization.

Keywords: *baluta, dalits, globality, mahars, reflexivity, social change*



1.0 Introduction

The contemporary world experiences dualities in its various manifestations including but not limited to rich/poor, men/women, black/white and humans/animals. Such dualities are a strength to those who consider themselves better than the others under the dictates of the society. Personal experiences best express the damage of such categories to the 'others', and one such experience is that of Daya Pawar as expressed in his novel, *Baluta*. Globality, Reflexivity and Social Change are the key concepts enhancing the analysis of *Baluta*, which forms the basis of this paper. LISA and O'Hagan, as cited by Ying-ting Chuang in 'The Concepts of Globalization and Localization' state that Globalization refers to a product "that has been enabled at a technical level for localization", and localization means "a process to facilitate globalization by addressing linguistic and cultural barriers" respectively. From these two definitions, localization can be regarded as a means to help achieve globalization. Both globalization and localization, broadly, are means in response to the expanding landscape, the ever-changing social context (2010, p.1). Sassen Saskia in *A Sociology of Globalization* explains that "Studying the global, then, entails a focus not only on that which is explicitly global in scale but also on locally scaled practices and conditions that are articulated with global dynamics. Moreover, it calls for a focus on the multiplication of cross-border connections among localities in which certain conditions recur: human rights abuses, environmental damage, mobilization around certain struggles, and so on" (2007, p.18). The caste system in India, as presented in *Baluta* express the abuse of human rights and the struggle for survival by the Dalits, a global menace that occurs across national borders in different forms for instance the rich vs the poor.

2.0 Aesthetic manifestation of globality, reflexivity and social change: a critical analysis of *baluta*

Considering the translation of Daya Pawar's *Baluta* to English quite recently, globalization has already been noted, exposing the plight of the Dalits to the English speaking nations, and its needs addressed. In this regard, Chuang agrees with an assertion by Newmark in a paper titled "No Global Communication Without Translation", that "translation of all kinds of texts plays an important role to help economic, technological, cultural and commercial globalization, and at the same time, globalization of these aspects pushes translation activities to become a part of the globalized process" (2010,p.1). Dollerup, cited by Chuang further argues that if translation is to "form cultural identities to create a representation of a foreign culture that simultaneously constructs a domestic subjectivity', as explained by Venuti, globalization is to select and represent translation materials to construct a global culture and global identities, which are inevitably tied with mainstream languages and cultures. English has been, undoubtedly, the most prominent

among all for being the lingua franca since the latter half of the 20th Century” (2010, p.2). Nandana Dutta in “View From Here – English in India: The Rise of Dalit and NE Literature” clearly explains the importance of English to the globalization of Dalit literature thus:

Texts emerging from contemporary conditions feature in courses, with one of the most significant of these transactions resulting in the incorporation of Dalit and minority literatures into English Studies. Perceived as an instrument of empowerment by Indians almost from the time it was introduced, English has never quite lost this aspect of its role – and even as the discipline has taken note of global expansions in the field through theory and the incorporation of new areas, it has gradually acquired a strong national/regional flavour that has helped turn the very real disadvantages of practising the discipline outside of its primary Anglo-American sites of production into a source of strength (2018, p. 202).

India, the country in which the novel *Baluta* is set is known for adhering to the caste system. Ankur Barua in ‘The Solidarities of Caste: The Metaphysical Basis of the ‘Organic’ Community’ gives an example that comes from Saksena, who, while drawing attention to the charge that the Indian social ethos is an ‘anti-individualistic’ one where individuals do not have ‘equal rights’, argues: ‘One fact about India stands out prominently. It is this highest regard for...over-individual ends [directed towards “social welfare” and away from “atomistic individualism”] through which alone an individual is supposed to live his [sic] life in society and be a significant individual. But this does not mean that the rights of an individual are thereby disregarded’. While admitting the presence of the underprivileged without the right to improve their social status, Saksena (1949:372) stresses nevertheless that the ‘social theorists’, right from Vedic to contemporary times, have sought to provide all individuals with opportunities to attain their social goals within a social structure that is based on ‘duties and obligations rather than on rights’(2009, p. 99). This subdivision of duties has resulted into the members of the upper caste perceiving those of the lower caste as filthy, thus their obligations include handling filth and carcasses, announcing the village misfortunes among others.

Anita Madhav Bhosale in “Theme of social Injustice in Daya Pawar’s ‘Baluta’” explains the caste system in details thus: “Since the time of the ancients, India has been a place of cultural diversities in many aspects of life. Caste system is one of the major factors that affects the life of each and every Indian individual which he or she gets hereditarily. Every member of society has silent feelings of either superiority or inferiority due to his belonging to a particular community. There are set but unspoken rules and regulations in

the society and one cannot violate these rules and regulations and if he or she does, he has to pay for it in many forms. A typical hierarchy is maintained in the society and the people belonging to various strata of society are obliged to follow their limitations". She further adds that "Violations of these codes of conduct are harshly condemned and the people who commit the crime of violation get punishment at mental, social, political and cultural levels. In the 21st century also this sense of superiority and inferiority complex is found here and there in Indian society (2016, p.133). Bhosale adds that: "In recent times, we come across with so many incidents of violence against the people belonging to lower castes. They are suppressed, they are humiliated and most of the time they are killed by the so called 'Sanskriti Rakshaks' in our society. The people belonging to lower castes face a mental trauma. They are humiliated, suppressed and tortured at the hands of the so called upper caste people. They are compelled to fall prey to psychological paralysis". In addition, "They are made to feel depressed, they are made to feel inferior and the system also helps to cater and flourish this mental set up. They are exploited physically, sexually, economically, culturally to maintain their status in our society. They are made dependent and they are compelled to lead a life of parasite. These people are called as the 'Dalit'. They are known by this name and the name itself stands for depressed and suppressed classes of society" (2016, p.133). These sentiments are quoted in the prologue of *Baluta* thus: "One of your academic friends abuses you, says you're a Dalit Brahmin", a confirmation that being a 'Dalit' was not by any standards anything to be proud of. It was also ironical that in the village, "some Mahar youths had spent years working with rich villagers. Invariably, they would form relationships with the Maratha women. These women would allow the Mahar men to screw them; but they would serve them food or offer them water from the regulation distance to avoid pollution. This was rather odd" (Pawar, 2015, p.108). In this case, the village ethics that rendered the Mahars untouchable seemed overruled when it came to sexuality, it would seem like the upper caste members would still use the dalits to satisfy their sexual desires, hence sexual exploitation of the dalits. Due to psychological torture, some dalits committed suicide, for instance, Shiva-tatya in *Baluta* who out of the frustration he underwent that made his life a tragedy, the previously "happy-go-lucky" fellow took an "overdose of opium to kill himself" (Pawar, 2015, p.50). Dagdu, the narrator, also considered committing suicide at some point in his life, as it was a life full of sorrows, all his memories were like a drop of acid, the placard of his fate lay on his forehead and he shivered with pain. Despite all these, he pretended on the outside to be fine, he says: "I cannot tell if you will meet this "Me" in the story. The reflection of a man in the mirror does not know the whole story of the man it is reflecting. Consider this: My real name is Dagdu;...Since my childhood I have hated this name...It smacks of a clod on which a clod was born" (Pawar, 2015, p.4).

Barua also notes that “These tensions and contradictions present in the traditional attempts to reconcile hierarchy and inequality with an all-encompassing social order came to the fore in a particularly acute mode during nationalist movements, and especially during the mobilisations of Dalit identities in opposition to brahminical orthopraxy” (2009, p.101). In this context, Andre Beteille has pointed out that while the British colonial administration was ostensibly based on the principle of individual merit, members of the Indian elite aspiring to posts within it experienced discrimination on the basis of race, and this raised the uneasy question of the domestic discriminations along lines of caste. As Beteille notes: ‘It would hardly appear reasonable on the part of these Indians to seek to repudiate the distinctions of race if at the same time they sought to uphold the distinctions of caste’ (1986, p.125). It is therefore not surprising that many influential Hindu figures of this time, notwithstanding their in-house disagreements, were forced to distinguish between two notions of caste, which we shall refer to as ‘mythic caste’ (varṇāśramadharmā) and ‘empirical caste’ and argue that the latter, a proliferating multiplicity, was a malignant excrescence of the former which had to be defended (Barua, 2009, p.114). ‘Mythic caste’ is based on the analogy of the well-functioning human body: just as the members of the body are neither superior nor inferior to one another, so too the varṇas, compared to four parts of a (social) body, cannot be ranked but are instead united in a harmonious whole (Barua, 2009, p. 102).

The Dalit Reformation Movement, Bhosale notes, “came in to existence parallel to Indian movement for Independence. The great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, and Mahatma Phule stood against the injustice done to this class. Mahatma Gandhi called these people ‘Harijan’ meaning people of God. He fought against the practice of untouchability and suppression of this class at the hands of the so called upper caste people. The injustice done to these people was highly condemned by him and he suggested many a good things to improve the condition of these downtrodden people. The works of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar have proven to be a milestone which can be compared with the Martin Luther King and Dr. Nelson Mandela” (2016, p.133). Considering both Martin Luther King and Dr. Nelson Mandela’s origins, which are the United States of America and South Africa respectively, it is notable then that the fight against discrimination is a global issue, only that it re-invents itself depending on the context, that is, while in India it is manifested through the caste system, in the United States of America it is seen through the segregation of the Blacks and Whites, basing on the skin colour, while in South Africa it was and still is evident through the strained relationship between the black and white South Africans who constantly tussle over land ownership. In *Baluta*, after efforts to fight for their rights ideologically, the Mahar community was given fifty two rights after their honesty was recognized through a trusted

Mahar who was to escort a beautiful young daughter of Padshah across a dense jungle. On being accused of having raped the princess, the Mahar asked the Padshah to open a box that contained something valuable to him, his penis, which he had cut off in advance, so when the king asked the Mahar to make a request, he said: “ ‘I want nothing for myself,’... ‘But give my community something that will last for generations’”, hence “The king granted the Mahars the fifty-two rights. These are the glorious traditions that gave rise to the Maharki, the entitlements of the Mahars” (Pawar, 2015, p.65). These rights were a step in the right direction of dismantling the caste system, but the war is yet to be won.

Gandhi, in 1920 was strongly against the afflictions faced by the Dalits, he said, ‘I decline to consider it a sin for a man not to drink or eat with anybody and everybody’. A year later, he went on to declare in stronger terms that the ‘[p]rohibition against intermarriage and interdining is essential for a rapid evolution of the soul’ (Barua, 2009, p.104). Both of these issues are addressed in *Baluta*. The Mahars could only marry fellow Mahars as inter-caste marriage was forbidden. The narrator tell a story of a terribly poor boy called Rokade, who was ironically very bright. He fell in love with a rich girl called Kulkarni who was “pretty: plump cheeks, short but of a neat and shapely build, sparkling eyes, skin the colour of ketaki”. After the SSC examination they joined different institutions hence separated, only to meet after four years, but her family “refused the match on the basis of his caste” (Pawar, 2015, p.182-183). In restaurants, cups were set aside depending on the caste one belonged to: “The restaurants had different cups for different castes; there were Mahar cups and Chambhar cups, Mang cups and so on. Our cups were very often without handles and ant-infested. We had to rinse them ourselves before ordering tea. We sat separately; either on the verandah or on a bench behind the restaurant” (Pawar, 2015, p.42). A similar scenario would be observed at the market place where custom dictated that villagers sat in groups according to castes, with the Mahars sitting near the Mari-Aai temple (Pawar, 2015, p.43). The Mahars’ area of residence were squalid and small, compared to the size of a henhouse, with “two or three subtenants. Wooden boxes acted as partitions. But they were more than that: we stuffed our lives into the boxes. At night, temporary walls would come up, made of rags hanging from ropes” (Pawar, 2015, p.7). This place called Kawakahana could not even be found on any map of Mumbai (Pawar, 2015, p.7). Such bitter experiences thus led Gandhi to declare the Dalits as children of God, in a bid to equalize them to the upper caste members religion-wise, with the hope that the mistreatment would be done away with considering God as their creator too.

Ambedkar also argued that ‘The Hindu social order is based on the view that the second is more significant than the first, which legitimises the vertical placing of the

different classes on a chain of graded inequality. Therefore, he pointed out, almost as if he were responding to a Radhakrishnan-style demythologising of caste, that the caste system was not simply a division of labour, but more crucially a division of labourers into hierarchical groups segmented from one another, based on the hereditary occupation of their parents. More strongly, this division was a negation of the freedom of choice since it did not allow them to choose professions on the basis of their capacities and preferences, and was in fact based on the 'dogma of predestination' (Barua, 2009,p.106). The Mahars as presented in *Baluta* were under slavery as they were subjected to bigar labour. The jobs they were subjected to did not require any studies or skill, and they were to avail themselves twenty four hours a day for the work. They were to take taxes into town; run in front of the horse of any important person who came into the village and tend to his animals; make proclamations announcing funerals from village to village; drag away carcasses of dead animals; play music day and night at festivals and welcome new bridegrooms at the village borders during weddings. Their payment was "Baluta, their share of the village harvest", for which the farmers grumbled as they queued to collect, insulting them thus: "Low-born scum, you do no work. Motherfuckers, always first in line to get your share. Do you think this is your father's grain?"....This came with a stream of abuse. The Mahars would ignore them completely as they tied up their bundles" (Pawar, 2015, p.66). They had learnt to accept their predicament and focus on their own welfare amidst the difficulties encountered.

The notion that it was the upper castes who must bring about structural transformation on behalf of or in place of the Dalits, since the Dalits themselves are allegedly incapable of making any contributions in this regard, is one that is strongly criticised by many contemporary Dalit writers. They have often viewed such upper-caste overtures as disguised attempts to co-opt their struggles against discrimination by inserting them into the caste hierarchy through the processes of Sanskritization (Barua,2009,p.109). This situation led to constant fights between the upper castes and the untouchables, for instance, Pawar states: "During the immersion of Ganpati, there was a fight to make sure that the Mahar Ganpati did not take precedence over the upper-caste Ganpati. Or the Mahars would take out a procession for the book *Pandavpratap* and the upper castes would object" (Pawar, 2015, p.147). Reflexivity is evident here, whereby both the political and social struggles around categorizations are observed. This is in line with Bourdieu, as cited by Carstensen-Egwuom in "Connecting Intersectionality and Reflexivity: Methodological Approaches to social Personalities", whose argument "is based on the understanding that the social sciences are part of everyday struggles around categorizations". These created groups, that end up being perceived as 'real groups' as stated by Lippuner, who builds on the arguments of Bourdieu, imply that "Understanding

intersectionality is a critical concept embedded in a struggle for recognition and social justice thus also implies a non-essentialized understanding of the lines and difference that it creates” (2014,p.270).

Social change is notable in *Baluta* as portrayed through notable figures like Dr. Ambedkar, through whom Mahars converted to Buddhism, a religion that allowed them to intermingle with the rest of the members without considering their castes (Pawar, 2015, p.106), abandoning their old ways after being entertained by the Raiwands (Pawar, 2015, p.85). Purnachandra Naik in ‘Baluta and Joothan amid Humiliation’ addresses the changes in the Indian constitution thus: ‘After independence, the Constitution abolished untouchability under Article 17 and provided the ex-untouchables with rights, which had been systematically denied to them for centuries. The Constitution was a Magna Carta that Dalits got as an independence gift from their liberator, B R Ambedkar, who knew that formal independence meant very little for the Dalits who were still living in the squalor of poverty, ignorance and deprivation’ (2016,p.20). A good number of the Mahars also converted to Christianity in the text, owing to its disregard for the caste system. The narrator also considers being converted, he says:

Christianity did not seem, to my eyes, much concerned with caste. But Kharat never asked me to convert. Perhaps that is why I began to have a green and moist spot somewhere in my heart for Christianity. And now I think, truly, why didn’t I become a Christian? In the district in which I was then living, a huge number of Mahars had converted. But no one in our district had (Pawar, 2015, p.120).

Naik further explains that two Dalit authors, Pawar and Valmiki knew that education remains a formidable tool to surpass the life of misery and squalor and to escape from the clutches of untouchability, thus for that they bear taunts and humiliation in school, attend class on an empty belly, sit away from the rest of the class, but never give up on this new-found opportunity. He states that “Education brews a storm inside Pawar and Valmiki. It germinates a quest to critique and question the established hierarchical order of caste and untouchability. It opens up windows into seeing untouchability anew and provides a new perspective to challenge it from within. It urges the consciousness to perceive that something is amiss in the system that systematically victimises and humiliates Dalits” (2016, p.20). For Pawar, with education “all sorts of question formed a raucous tirade inside [his] head” (Pawar, 2015, p.46) and a new consciousness is generated vis-à-vis *baluta*, the share of the food (Pawar, 2015, p.81), while a boy who used to swallow insults and offences started changing as a “result of education” (Pawar, 2015, p.162). The

village “seemed like a hell” with its preserved contempt and disrespect for him and he acknowledges that the only way out was education (Pawar, 2015, p. 86, 166, 21). Despite the discouragement Aai was exposed to by Uma-ajya, who viewed schooling as meant for Brahmins and Baniyas, and lowly jobs like loafing around, eating scraps and taking animals to graze for the Mahars, regarding the schooling of Dagdu, she assumed and proceeded to take him to school, an action that the narrator supposes arose from Babasaheb Ambedkar’s statement: ““What dreams do the women of Maharwada have for their children? That their sons should become peons or sepoy’s? A Brahmin mother’s ambitions are different: My son should become a District Collector, she says. Why do Mahar women not harbor such longings?””(Pawar, 2015, p.60-61). The discrimination at school was too much and very open, a faint hearted dalit would easily have given up the struggle, but Dagdu struggled through despite his poor performance in Mathematics. At the back of his mind was the urge to get out of the tough life of being a Mahar, the hope of getting a proper job at the end of his education. He narrates:

The school had classes up to the fourth standard but from the first to fourth, we all sat in one large hall. We would take a piece of sacking to sit on, along with our slates and schoolbags. I remember the early times well. We were not allowed to sit with the Maratha children from the village. They faced the teacher and we sat at right angles to them, facing in a different direction. If we were thirsty, there was no water for us at school; we had to go back to the Maharwada to drink. The Chambharwada was close by but they too would not give us water (Pawar, 2015, p.45).

Dagdu found solace in books despite being mocked about his speech. He became more sensitive with his education, it was his only way of seizing control of himself, and refers to a poem from *In Prison* which read: ‘Why did I ever discover the world of books?/ I could have been a stone in the stream,/Grazed cattle in a meadow./No need then to bear the scorpion’s sting’, a description of his newly found life amidst living like animals in the Maharwada. He was ‘filled with revulsion against the life [he] was leading and wanted to get away’ without necessarily having anything to do with those who lived the life he had wanted for himself (Pawar,2015, p.46-47). When he was considered of age to be married, a girl from his rich uncle’s family in Aurangapur was chosen for him, the girl’s brother would mock him on the basis of his education: ““What’s an educated man going to do in our house? Count the bags of grain?””(Pawar, 2015, p.136). The narrator eventually lands a job in Bombay Veterinary College, which he perceives both as an achievement and as a

modernized version of what the Mahars were subjected to in the village: handling dead animals.

Daya Pawar was born in a very narrow minded society, in which there was lack of education, culture and open-mindedness, hence, a sensitive person like Dagdu Pawar was totally collapsed because of the ill treatment given by the society. “The surrounding was captured by the references of sex, extramarital affairs, family rivalries, quarrels with relatives and what not. In Mumbai also he experiences extremely poor life and the situations which convert a man into an animal”. At the beginning of the text, Pawar uses a very beautiful simile of an iceberg to compare his life with, in which only some of the part of the iceberg can be seen and but a large portion of it is hidden under water. This major part of the iceberg is full of sufferings, pains and disgust (Bhosale,2016,p.134). *Baluta*, Pawar’s autobiography has been written through the medium of his past identity which as ‘Dagdu Maruti Pawar’, a name that he disliked from the start.

The Dalits in Pawar’s *Baluta* are treated worse than animals and their mere presence is usually banned by the upper class localities. Even then they are bound to hang clay pots from their necks so that may not pollute the streets of the villages by their spittle. They carry brooms tied to their bodies so that while passing through such ‘upper lanes’ they can wipe away their footprints, an extreme form of humiliation. “Pawar points out that their sufferings are not just the sufferings of an individual and there is nothing romantic about it. Their problem is neither ideological nor philosophical. It is the basic question of identity, of existence, of mental trauma, of harassment and a quest for social injustice. They do not seek poetic beauty, similes, and metaphors. The reality of their life is too hideously shock beyond the capacity of fantasy or imagination. Their tragedy is universal, trampling them down and disfiguring their humanity” (Bhosale, 2016, p.134). The names of the Dalits, as per the Indian Hindu Caste System very ordinary, common and simple as they were considered backward people. For instance, they included ‘Dagdu’ meaning stone, ‘Kacharu’ meaning garbage and ‘Jabya’. Pawar hates his name, ‘Dagdu’ despite having had given reference of Shakespeare when he asks ‘What lies in name?’ It is notable that the caste factor matters a lot when it comes to the first name of the child. While in Mumbai they lived in ‘Kawakhana’ where they had a very small room including bathroom and toilet. His grandmother and uncle’s family also lived in the same place where surrounding environment was very bad and extremely shameful conditions faced by the Dalit women. Their business was nothing but to collect wasted cloth pieces, papers, glasses, iron, and cracked jars from the garbage outside the roads (Pawar, 2015, p. 7). Domestic quarrels between two families, due to egoism were very common in the village including families like ‘Pawar’, ‘Rupavate’ with several others experiencing domestic

violence (Pawar, 2015, p. 16). However, the Mahars remained united at heart. Pawar writes:

We loved each other intensely; we hated each other passionately. We supported each other. During a fight, it would seem to the outsider that the combatants would never speak to each other again; that afterwards we would go our separate ways; but nothing like that ever happened. If you try to uproot a bean-pod creeper, all the bean pods will fall. The Mahars were no different (2015, p.10)

This situation resulted to Dagdu's father getting caught up in a conspiracy, thus being charged by police in a murder case, which fortunately he got acquitted for and returned safely at home (16). Consequently, his father decided to shift his family to Mumbai in 'Kawakhana', slum, a place you "won't find on any map of Mumbai"(Pawar, 2015, p.7). In the text, there are many references about Dagdu's father's adulterous nature and drunkenness. His debauchery increased even though he was married and has the children, resulting to their economic condition was decreasing daily. Dagdu's mother eventually became helpless after efforts to salvage her husband's unbecoming character became futile. The situation in the schools was not different either as the children from 'Maharwada' were ill-treated by the school authority because of 'untouchability'. The author became emotional and sensitive, and never liked his playmates.

Despite the slow, gradual societal change in terms of culture and time, elements of inferiority and hatred are still being directed at the Dalits, whose superiority over the upper castes is deemed unacceptable as yet. Bhosale notes that the Dalits are "burning with a desire of revenge and this anger is reflected in poems like 'You wrote from Los Angeles' by Daya Pawar. In the stores here, in hotels, about streets. Indians and curs are measured with the same yardstick. "Niggers" "Blacks" This is the abuse they fling on me. Reading all this, I felt so damn Now you've had a taste of what we've suffered in this country, from generation to generation. (Pawar, Daya. Poem- 'You wrote from Los Angeles')" (Pawar, 2015, p.135). In *Baluta*, social change is noted when the education Pawar had been pursuing bore him some fruit as he secured a 'respectable job', he was employed as a clerk-cum-laboratory assistant at the Parel Veterinary College. This job entailed, in brief, the opening of parcels of shit of sick animals that arrive every day, conveying the contents into jars with a glass rod, sifting the sediments, and transferring the remains into a glass phial. In addition, in the anatomy department, he has to inject alcohol into the skinned carcasses of animals hanging from hooks so that they do not decompose before being dissected by vets in swan-white gowns that he, Pawar, wishes to

see soaked in blood. He writes: "Damn it, after all this education, here I am doing the work that my forefathers did". This made him feel like a gravedigger (Pawar, 2015, p.234). It is notable, therefore, that the treatment of the Dalits in the rural still manifested itself in the metropolis that is Mumbai, it has re-invented itself, but at least, the narrator had gotten something to earn a living from, however bizzare, without having to move from place to place, collecting garbage to find food from it as it was in the village.

Despite having tried his best to forget his past, the past was stubborn, it would not be erased so easily from the narrator's mind. His fellow dalits may have perceived what he was doing as someone picking through a pile of garbage, similar to a scavenger's account of his life. His consolation, however is that "he who does not know his past cannot direct his future". His education did not elevate his status in the village. Having been born a Mahar, there was no way out of it, he says:

When I went to the village temple a Maratha would say, 'You motherfucker, whose son are you? How dare you lean on me?' Once in a rage, I replied, 'Motherfucker yourself. I'm Maruti's son.' This was a first for me. I'd taken his words, his style and thrown them back at him. It would have been truly odd if he had not got angry. I thought: damn it, I've studied, I've improved myself, but in the village, the same accusation: 'Hey you, Maruti the Mahar's son!' My Mahar identity was a leech that would not let go. I was ashamed to be called a Maruti's son, especially since there were two men called Maruti in the village (Pawar, 2015, p.103).

S. Anand, a publisher in *Navayana*, quotes a speech by Babasaheb addressing to a Dalit audience in 1942 where he said: "Ours is a battle not for wealth or for power. It is a battle for freedom. It is a battle for the reclamation of human personality."

3.0 Conclusion

More writers are publishing Dalit Literature as a way of participating in this battle, including Laxman Mane, Shantabai Krushnaji Kamble and Dinkar Gangal. This, it is concluded, is a global battle, involving the search of identity for the so-called minority and sidelined groups, including those affected by racism, albinism, female genital mutilation, disabilities and gender based violence, with a hope of a world that acknowledges everyone's potential based on their capabilities but not their appearance and the families they were born into.

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