5.1 PRELIMINARIES

Kishor Shantabai Kale is a doctor by profession. He belongs to Kolhati community. His uncommon name indicates that he is a son of ‘Shantabai Kale,’ a Kolhati woman, supposed lower and treated insultingly, resident of Karmala, Dist. Solapur.

Kolhati women are looked upon as dancers in Tamasha whose fate turns them prostitutes. Dancing and prostitution has become their means of livelihood. Their sons go pimp and daughters follow their mothers. Their youthhood remains cash crop and old age, withered with pleasures. Men survive laziest, addicted and like a go between’s life. The male community uses their daughters as earning hands and their sons go vagabonds, pimps and survive. When they become old, their suffering kills them. Education and the so-called benefits of democracy have yet not touched them. They live in their traditional pattern which in no way gives them respect and honour. Kishor Kale’s book is a pathetic tale of women suffering in Kolhati community. It exposes bitter reality hidden from the sight of the readers. Sincere world may feel shameful of its culture, where such a bitter suffering has torn out life of a boy like Kishor. This unheard tale is an attempt to tear the mask of those hungry uppers who have exploited and have thrown away the women whose children curse the designers of this social setup. Against All Odds is an autobiography of Kishor Kale translated from Marathi version titled Kolhatyacha Por in 2000 by Sandhya Pandey. It made an attempt to expose the upper lusty land-lords and raise the suppressed voice of the weak, pathetic and painful sufferers.

Against All Odds is a tearful tale. It includes Kishor’s journey from childhood to youth. His torture of childhood and humiliating youth is pen pictured. “The book does make an effect simply because it’s a true sincerely and honest story and that honesty is reflected in the story telling [Book Review: Vivek.net] Avoiding or hiding nothing, Kishor has straightforwardly narrated the incidences seen, heard and lived. It naturally has sharpness of the sorrow that humiliated him. The episodes of his childhood suffering and youth suffering break the heart of the readers. It is a great shock to see the men looting the youth of Kolhati women. The lusty land-lords, politicians and rich people have always exploited the helpless beautiful women of this poor community.
Kishor Kale has created history by raising his voice against his community that considered him traitor and excommunicated. It exposed pathos behind the beauty and youth of Kolhati dancers. It brought before the world, the humiliation of their children. It has very effectively thrown light upon the unbelievable exploitation of Kolhati women by their fathers, brothers and the rich, sex starving uppers. It is a blow upon those looters, who enjoy young girls of their daughter’s age and cage their beauty. This autobiography not simply opens the darkened life but leads it to the rays of light and demands for the education of this downtrodden mass. This social awakening attempt of Kishor deserves research in the direction of Kolhati community, their humiliation and need of humanity.

5.2 INTENTIONS BEHIND WRITING AGAINST ALL ODDS

Kolhatyacha Por is the autobiography of “an illegitimate son of a tamasha dancer from Kolhati community, set against the harsh and apparently hapless life of its women.” [Kale. Against All Odds, 2000.iii]

Kishor Kale, being educated, saw piteous condition of Kolhati women and their children. He lived piteous Kolhati life and suffered a lot. His torture is the record of the hardheartedness of the society. Being, rejected by father, mother, grandparents and even by his own society, records the bitter unbearable truth. Not simply for winning sympathy, he has raised these suppressed voices as a representative. But has exposed those bleeding wounds caused due to the lusty society. His mother, being representative of all tamasha dancers, shows unbelievable humiliation. It unmask so-called pious image of Indian woman whose hidden face in his community is exploited whore. Empire of lust is blasted by Kale of which the emperors are white collared capitalists, merchants, politicians and land-lords. Their illegitimate children are these tamasha girls and boys who turned to be prostitutes and pimps. Regarding intention of writing, Kale says – “I wrote the book to reveal the plight of the tamasha dancers of this community in Maharashtra.” [iii]

During education, Kale could realize the piteous condition of his clan. Awareness made him restless and education enlightened him. Social activist hidden in him could not remain silent. He shouted in such a high tone that his angst reached before the world very politely. He tried his best to shut his mouth but most of the
times, his wounds made him yell. His mute suffering is his heroism—“His story reminds us that the human spirit can, if it will overcome every obstacle and reach its goal.” [iii]

Kishor Kale, witnessing all odds and fighting against them, has come up. He saw his community laying in utter darkness of ignorance and ill treatment. The degraded life of the women and their children tore him. He wanted to bring them in the main stream of life. He fought to raise their torture to relieve them. He states, “I want them to know their own rights and their own strengths.” [xiii]

Kale’s intention is not to create aesthetic beauty in literature but to raise social issues. He notes—“I am not a literary writer, and take no time off for writing. I write what I honestly believe and feel strongly about.” [xiv]

This honest feeling behind the book raises it not only as a literary text but also a valuable social document opening new chapter from the world of pain and pathos. It is an illegitimate son’s confession who feels himself a broken bell, dropped and uncared by parents but awakened by education. It is the fruit of the Phule-Ambedkarite philosophy at the bottom of the downtrodden class of this nation, called India.

### 5.3 INSPIRATORS BEHIND WRITING AGAINST ALL ODDS

#### 5.3.1 Sincere Suffering the Basic Inspirator

Kishor Kale was a helpless sufferer who came into lime light due to his autobiography. His education gave him foresight. The awakened people who had realized fruits of education, helped him. The sympathetic hands always supported him financially. Emotional backing from most of the early sufferers made him to march in the direction of writing. The suffering of the women and children of his clan filled his eyes with tears. His pathetic life burnt him with rage and made him to refuse all those ways bringing insult. His real teacher remained his pain that torn him out, right from the childhood until the time of becoming a doctor. Social humiliation matured him. Starving for mother’s affection and food for stomach made him do hard work without rest. The unrest at his heart awakened him to see bitter truth at the root of his sorrow and suffering. His school and college life filled his head with awareness. The lifelong tortures filled his words to rise against exploitation. The
otherness made him speak. His people and the people of the world teach him the bitter lessons of pain. His mute suffering remained his qualification to pass all the ordeals of time. He collapsed and still then walked ahead which brought him close to the fruits of education. Social evils were the chapters he read and realized. He saw naked reality of the brutal lusty rich men. The piteous, helpless and exploited women were nobody than the women of his family. Their suffering was an epic that he had read heartily. The tragedy of life remained a million dollar lesson which he read and realized the inequality in the society. The very first teacher that matured him is the odd job; he faced at every stage of his life and inspired him to speak this truth boldly. His spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings helplessly made him to raise his wounds. His sincere suffering is the first inspirator of this work of art.

5.3.2 Phule-Shahu-Ambedkarite Philosophy

Realizing social realism of Indian social situation, Kale burst out through words. He used words as weapon and made post mortem of his society. He states, “the intention of writing is to awake the society!” [Kolhatyacha Por. 1999. II]

Phule-Shahu-Ambedkarite philosophy raised downtrodden class of Indian. It awakened, organized, agitated and rebelled against the social evils imposed upon the poor and the neglected. It spirited the skeletons and chanalized them to fight against injustice. Democracy lifted their voice to the high pitch and heard by the world to reject injustice of Manusmriti that rejected the weak, making them slaves. Rejection to slavery and every kind of insult remained at the root of Dalit literature. Kishor Kale, while taking education of his M.B.B.S., realized the reasons of his humiliation. It was scholarship, which kept his education going on; otherwise, he was bound to be failure. He states-

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar gave mantra to educate, agitate and organize. Education is the milk of tigress, if drunk, man fights for self-respect. Because of this mantra, I got educated myself right from my childhood without fear. I refused for just crying or my sorrow. I took education at first. The fruit is that I am at this stage. [2000. ii]

Facing social and economic difficulties, Kishor completed his education of M.B.B.S. from Bombay. Society tortured him a lot but Ambedkarite philosophy strengthened him, kept him unbroken and supported. It remained his inspiration to
fight for the right of prostitutes, tamasha women and all those suppressed and
oppressed Nomadic Tribes. Being disciple of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, he walked on the
path of Buddhism.

5.3.3 Prof. Ravindra Nanaware, Sharankumar Limbale, Kusumtai
Limbale and Laxman Mane: Predecessors

Suffering brings the sufferers close to each other. Awared people awaken
others. Sympathy is such a feeling that inspires the sufferer to walk against all odds.
Kale, being frustrated due to his social and economic condition, came close to Prof.
Ravindra Nanaware and narrated his pathos. It was Prof. Nanaware, who motivated
and suggested him to write the book, Kale state -

I told my sorrow to Prof. Ravindra Nanaware. He suggested me to write
this book. I read Sharankumar Limbale’s Akkarmashi and Laxman
Mane’s Upara. Then I met Sharankumar Limbale. I could complete this
book because of him and his wife Kusumtai. [iii]

Sharankumar Limbale lived outcaste life and Laxman Mane’s sorrow knew no
bounds. These people have walked on the same path of torture. The social setup of
Hindu society humiliated them. It is but natural for Kishor Kale to get inspiration
from the same sufferers to raise his pain. Kishor got chanalized by the socially
awakened predecessors of Ambedkarite Autobiographies.

Suffering of Kale’s mother made him pen-picture her suffering. Supporters
like Prof. Nanaware and Limbale family encouraged him. Akkarmashi and Upara
remained his ideal. Phule-Shahu-Ambedkarite philosophy fed him and strengthened
to break bonds of all caste-based-slavery. His book is a slap on the face of the
exploiting evils of this nation. It is a severe blow upon the cast-based-culture, looting
the poor and the helpless who are denied to do dignified jobs and rejected to live
awakened life. Education is that medicine which strengthened downtrodden to fight
for self-respect. After all, it is Kishor Kale’s battle against all odds.
5.4. BRIEF HISTORY OF KOLHATI COMMUNITY

5.4.1 Kolhati: One of the Shudras

India is a multi-cultural nation. It has Hindu, Muslim, Shikh and Christian people living separately. Every religion has its ethics. Hinduism has its setup built upon Manu’s Manusmrti. Rigidity in its caste system created four-storied Varna system. The lowest one is Shudras including various castes. Kolhati is one of the Shudras suffering in this nation. It is matriarchal caste where woman is subject of exploitation. Her dancing is the prime occupation upon which her family survives. Her brothers and father economically exploit her and throw her before the hungry vultures of lust to do sexual exploitation. On all levels, Kolhati woman uses her beauty and youth as her commodity to be sold in the market of art and lust.

5.4.2 Kolhati Community: Basically Rajasthani ‘Tribe’

Sandhya Pande, the translator of Marathi text Kolhatyacha Por in to English as Against All Odds writes regarding Kolhati community as-

The Kolhati community was originally a nomadic Rajasthani tribe that migrated to western Maharashtra. They first earned their livelihood by performing acrobatic acts, but soon turned to the more lucrative business of dance. The women of the Kolhati community were trained to dance and learn music. They were forced to entertain men and earn money, while the males of the community lived on the earnings of their womenfolk. However, though the men made their sisters and daughters dance to their selfish motives but their wives were never allowed to do so. Kolhati men rarely married their tribe’s women. They roamed from village to village and abducted any young woman they fancied. Through a simple ceremony called Melni, she became a Kolhati. Acceptance in to the community came through the Jat-panchayat group of powerful men who controlled the community. They accepted her once she had been anointed with turmeric paste, while the man gifted them a goat. Only after the woman had borne him a child, would the Kolhati marry her – until then, he was afraid that she would escape from him.[vii]

5.4.3 Lavani: Erotic Song

The Kolhatis developed a distinct style of dance and song called Lavani. The music has more rhythm than melody and the song is loaded with erotic sense. “The
dance itself is designed to attract male and it is easy to understand, why it is called Tamasha.” [viii, ix]

It clearly indicates that Kolhati community has come from Rajasthan as tribials and rested in Maharashtra by establishing its tamasha for which their women pay from top to bottom. Their sisters and daughters remain victims and have to feed their parents and brothers. Selfish parents, instead of educating their daughters, train them in singing and dancing and run their tamasha. The women attract the rich men, give themselves to them and in return, get estate in the form of golden jewelry, houses and land which later on goes to their brothers and parents. Kolhati community’s economy runs upon the beauty and youth of their daughters and sisters. They play the key role for the family.

5.4.4 Kolhati Woman as Cursed Gandharva Kanya: A Folk Tale

Kolhati community has its own myth. Ramnath Chavan’s Bhatkyanchi Jat-panchayat states that Indra had his darbar where a Gandharva Kanya during her dance made sexual appeal, which was supposed ill manner. Indra became angry. He cursed the dancer to be a stone and go to the earth. The dancer frightened and requested to relieve her from curse. Indra took pity upon her and told that Lord Shankara would relieve her. The Gandharva Kanya became stone, came to earth and started praying Lord Shankara. One day, Lord Shankara and Parvati were wandering. They heard Gandharva Kanya’s prayer. Parvati requested Lord Shankara to bless her. Due to Lord Shankara’s blessing, the stone converted Gandharva Kanya turned to her original image and requested Lord Shankara to bless her. Lord Shankara blessed her—“Hereafter, the child begotten to you would be an artist. That will entertain the public and survive.” [1989.74]

Due to Lord Shankara’s blessing, she delivered a girl who turned to be a beautiful lady in her youth. By doing aerobatic, dancing and singing, she entertained in public. Public initially opposed her dancing and singing but slowly started praising her beauty and demanded physical pleasure. She told her mother, who directed her to go to her father, Lord Shankara at Kailash Parvat. Lord Shankara told her, “Daughter, your life is made for the same. There is nothing objectionable in it. As people demand, you behave and survive.” [75]
Kolhati people believe this folktale and behave. Years passed, and the Gandharva Kanya’s family increased due to which, a community of Kolhati came in to existence of which singing, dancing and enjoying sex remained prim-function. Slowly, there came Jat-panchayat, its rules and regulation. This system established and has been going on from generation to generation.

5.4.5 Kolhati Jat-panchayat

Kolhati community has its own community court, which is built with members known as panchas. There is neither fixed number nor a leader. It solves the disputes of the community. They ex-communicate the culprits in the place of their seating called Akhada. The four Akhadas are Jejuri, Madhi, Sonari and Malegaon. Madhi’s Akhada is supported to be their supreme court. There after, there is no appeal. The personal quarrels, land-disputes, illicit relationships, stealing, deceiving and dishonors are some of the disputes solved in Jat-panchayat. Their women also play role as a member of panchayat. They have right to raise voice as they earn for the family. There pass humiliating punishment and they have their own system that governs their clan. Regarding the tradition, Rannath Chavan states- “To do government service is slavery. To do ancestor’s profession is supposed honor, otherwise, they ex-communicate the family.” [91]

5.4.6 Tamasha Became Loknatya

Kolhati community survived on the work of women. Their women dance entertain and earn. In the course of time, the community designed group performance in the name of tamasha. It is a kind of theatre dancing art. The Kolhati community made it as their means of livelihood. It attracted the rich people from all the sections of society. The erotic lavani inviting the amorous feelings of men tied relationship with men and earned money. So, Kolhati community is supposed devalued, degraded and lowered in the ranking of social honor and reputation. Their art is also humiliated by calling it as -tamasha.
Dr. Vasudev Mulate, the eminent scholar writer and critic states-

Maharashtra is a rich state with its folk arts. Tamasha was one of such public supported arts. Specially, during the period of Peshwa, it reached at the height of publicity in society. After Panipath War, tamasha got rooted in the soil of Maharashtra. After Independence, tamasha was called loknatya of which the credit goes to the eminent scholar writer, Shahir Annabhau Sathe. [1999. 272, 273]

In the world today, tamasha is supposed as an abuse. It was awakened writer and social activist Lokshahir Annabhau Sathe, who honorably called it Loknatya. From then, tamasha became loknatya in which singing, dancing, batawani, gangawalan and drama takes place. Annabhau used this loknatya folk literature for raising the social issues. It became a successful pattern of social awakening. The subjects like casteism, exploitation and suffering were handled due to which a lot of social awareness took place. Instead of devaluing and humiliating title, tamasha, the shift as loknatya gave a little honor and became weapon in the direction of social progress.

5.5 WOMEN EXPLOITATION

5.5.1. Indian Women: Self-scarifying and Compromising for Spouse and Children

In Indian scenario where male centered society rules, women have no significant place in power and politics. She is weak and made to devote according to the religious literature imposed upon her-

Manu made her slave and ordered to suffer. Women are expected to be self-sacrificing and compromising for their spouses and children. Her personal dreams become subordinate to the good of her family at any expense. In response to women’s roles as defined, husbands are expected to be loyal, faithful and supportive towards their families and wives, providing and protecting them.

[Shukla, 2008. 202]

Regarding pathetic condition of subalterm women, Dr. Sharankumar Limbale in his book, Dalitanchi Aatmakathane: Ek Avalokan writes,

“Dalit women reflected in Dalit autobiography have gone, suffered. They have suffered a lot compared to Dalit men. She has to suffer twice as a woman and a Dalit
woman. She has become like teared sky. As a woman, she is pathetic, more than being a Dalit. On one side, she remains hungry for food, humiliated as untouchable, and on the other hand, the upper caste male exploits her sexually. With strong determination, she has been facing the days. Rather than men, she is proving backbone of her family. Dalit autobiography has reflected her pathetic life. Even Dalit males have dishonoured and made injustice to Dalit women. May the male be touchable or untouchable, he has exploited woman, being helpless.” [2008. 130]

Dr. Avinash Patwardhan in his review on Kolhatyacha Por describes pathetic condition of Kolhati women thus -

Their women folk have been professional dancers for ages. These dancers as the author describes are pathetic. Their elder men force their mothers, daughter and sisters into dancing cum prostitution business, and then act as their pimps. They live a comfortable, purposeless irresponsible life with consumption, tobacco and gambling. Pathetic and ironically as it may seem, these women, acquire the skills of dancing to make money. May it substantially through performances but also partly by subjecting themselves to prostitution with the rich audience that attend their shows and then voluntarily give away almost all of their earning to the alpha male of the group while they themselves along with their children suffer starvation, disease and indignity. Children are born, often out of wedlock to supply new dancers. Some women rebel and try to escape from their fate by becoming mistresses of wealthy audience clients, only to be thrown back on the tribe, when they no more can serve as sex machines for their adopted masters. The end of their lives is also the climax of their misery because now they find themselves rejected by both, by their masters for having become useless and by their tribe for having betrayed it. [Patwardhan, Parichay Book, club. com]

It clearly shows that the Kolhati women are used as puppets by their parents. They dance, earn and feed the family. They become the keep of the rich and feed their parental family. They even become prostitutes. They work as a sex machine satisfying the rich. They work as earning hand for their father and brothers. As long as they earn and remain faithful to the family, they live respected life and when they become old, they become worn out tools. Their people cash their beauty and youth. They become old and bear torture of starvation and humiliation of neglecting. Against All Olds gives us all the types of women described here. There are weak puppets, helpless mothers, cash crop daughters feeding their parasite brothers and father. It is as if encarved on their brain, they live in favour of them. They suffer and die.
disrespectfully. As the men connected with them, loose money, land and prestige in society, their wives and children blame them. These women sexually satisfy greedy rich men’s sexual hunger. Indirectly, they burn already settled woman’s married life and resettle them. The society blames them and never gives respect as a married woman. They never receive that honour, which, the married woman receives. Kishor Kale’s mother and aunts are such piteous neglected, looted and sexually exploited women, whose suffering makes weep to the readers. Every woman’s life reflected in this autobiography is a tale of tears.

5.5.2 *Kolhati* Women: Dancers, Prostitutes Mistresses Money Machines and Sex Machines

Kishor Kale’s *Against All Odds* is a story of pain and pathos. It seems a story written with tears. It introduces a helpless boy and his miserable mother. At one level, it is the story of a son and mother. However, at the same time, it narrates the suffering of *Kolhati* community. Kishor is the protagonist whose humiliation is representative of the children of *Kolhati* community. Shantabai and her sisters come as the representatives of the *Kolhati* women whose exploitation brings tears in our eyes. They stand synonym for the suffering.

5.5.3. Jiji the “Sali” Became *Kolhati*

5.5.3.1 *Sali* Caste Laxmi’s Daughter: Jiji

Kale opens his autobiography with the introduction of Jiji. Regarding her, Kale concludes his prologue-

*My mother managed to free herself of the binding ghungroos but I, like a little broken bell was dropped, left in the care of Jiji. My story begins with Jiji. [2000.02]*

Jiji was the step-sister of Kondiba, who was son of Krishna *Kolhati*. Jiji was a daughter of a weaver from Solapur. Her mother Laxmibai was a *Sali*, the caste of weaver. Unfortunately, her poor husband could not protect her from the torture of his mother and brother. Therefore, Laxmibai took her daughter Tarabai (i.e. Jiji) and son Gangaram and ran away from Solapur and reached at Karmala. At the bus stand of Karmala, she met Krishna *Kolhati*, who sympathised her and-
Laxmi became Krishna’s second wife. Laxmi of the Sali community became a Kolhati. Naturally, Krishna Kolhati who was attracted towards her attractive figure used her and developed her children Tarabai – Jiji as a dancer and her son Gangaram as dholak player. Krishna Kolhati the only legitimate son of Kondiba stayed at house and enjoyed fruits of his siblings’ labours. [4, 5]

5.5.3.2 Jiji: the Hen that Would Lay Golden Eggs to Krishna Kolhati

Laxmi, being second wife of Krishna Kolhati, was not in the mind to develop her daughter into a dancer. However, “Krishna Kolhati had found himself a hen that would lay golden eggs and was not going to let her get away.” [5] Jiji was a beautiful, fair complexion girl. She had become a graceful dancer. She had maddened the public and had become popular.

5.5.3.3 Jiji Became Madhavrao Patil’s Keep at Nerla

Once, when tamasha at Nerla (the village in Karmala Tahsil) took place, Madhavrao Patil of Nerla got attracted at Jiji and determined, “This women must be mine.” [6] Madhavrao Patil, being rich land-lord gave a six room house and twenty five acres of land. She becomes beloved wife of Patil, and Kondiba relaxed his fears with the shelter of Patil. Jiji’s brother Gangaram, due to epileptic fit, slipped into the stream during watering the cattle and drowned. Krishna Kolhati with the commitment of Madhavrao Patil resided at Nerla and enjoyed happy days due to Jiji. Madhavrao Patil looked after Krishna Kolhati’s family.

5.5.3.4 Jiji Became Widow and Controlled by her Step-brother Kondiba

Madhavrao Patil died and Jiji became widow. Kondiba, who was step-brother of Jiji, took charge of the family. “Jiji came to live with Kondiba. With this reversal in roles, her future now seemed uncertain.” [8] She had no heir of her own from Madhavrao Patil and her house and property was left for her. Believing that there was no option to live as Kondiba’s widowed step-sister; Kondiba took full advantage of Jiji’s property and enslaved her. He sent her to guard the crops and made her to spend the days in the fields. She was never allotted to set out of the house alone. Kondiba
became habitual of easy living. He took regular diet of meat and alcohol. Widow Jiji had no way other than accepting her brother’s dictatorship.

5.5.3.5 Jiji the Caretaker of the Babies and Dancers

Kondiba got married to Kalawati, a girl from Baramati and they had eight children named Shanta, Shalan, Sushila, Rambha, Popat, Baby, Raju and Ankush. Jiji looked after all the eight children of her brother. Not only that, when the girls became matured, she had to accompany them for their dancing, trainings and shows. When they had delivered babies, she had to work as a caretaker. Kishor Kale is such a boy developed by her, during his childhood. His infant age passed on the laps of Jiji. Kale narrates her degraded pathetic journey of life thus-

From a Sali, fate made her a Kolhati. Kolhati Jiji became Mrs. Patil, and from Patil’s wife, she turned into a widow who had to accompany tamasha groups to look after a baby. [18]

Jiji used to feed milk by dipping a piece of cloth from the bowel into the month.

Jiji not only looked after Shanta’s Kishor but also looked after all the daughters of her brother during tamasha parties. Once, a drunken man caught Shanta’s hand and pulled her down. Shanta fell down. Jiji saw it. She picked tabla player’s chappal and thrashed the man- “You bastard, you pimp! She is a dancer, not a whore. Her dance is an art. Do you understand?” [19]

Now and then, Jiji protected girls from the rural gundas who demanded sex with the dancers.

Once at Sangali, a land-lord dada saw Shanta and demanded sex at a night with her or otherwise he would kidnap her. Jiji took Shanta into the fields at night and escaped from the gunda. Kondiba always used Jiji as his observer to watch his daughters and look after their children.

5.5.3.6 Kalawati Ill-treated Jiji

When Madhavrao Patil was alive, Jiji was the ruler of Kondiba’s household. Kale states her hold- “If she raised her voice, my grandmother Kalawati aji hid in fear and the rest of the household trembled.” [22]
Such Kalawati, when got an opportunity after getting her two daughters bringing money, had the upper hand and ill treated Jiji. She abused her and called her a barren widow. She did not give her enough food. If she cooked meat, she would send some watery gravy with a few bones in it to the field for Jiji—“Otherwise, it was just bhakri (unleavened bread) with chutney or thecha, a paste of garlic and red chilies.” [22]

Jiji had to suffer and survive though she was owner of the house and land both, Kondiba and his wife Kalawati humiliated Jiji in her old age.

### 5.5.3.7 Cunning Kondiba Neglected Jiji in her Old Age

Kishor, being shifted to Sonpeth to his mother, got educated up to M.B.B.S. During his education, he had no time to go to Nerla. Jiji had become old and witnessed humiliation. Nobody looked after her. She lived in farm. She had devoted her life for her brother. She had become painfully thin. When Kishor went to Nerla, he saw Jiji’s pathetic condition. Jiji had loved and looked after Kishor in his childhood. In the absence of Kishor, nobody cared her. She suffered from a paralysis stroke. Kishor narrates her tragedy in these words-

**This was the Jiji who owned twenty five acres of land and a large house. This beautiful Jiji had lived in splendor as the Patil’s wife. This Jiji had unquestioningly spent her entire life slogging for the welfare of her brother. Her cruel, brother had not even taken her to a doctor, instead, she had been abandoned at the farm where on one bothered about, whether she lived or died. [180].**

Kishor could not bear the humiliation of Jiji and asked his ajoba to treat or let him take Jiji to Bombay hospital. He was highly frustrated to see piteous Jiji and said—“You better let me take Jiji with me otherwise I will make a complaint to punch (the Kolhati Council).” [183]

Kondiba was afraid of the thing that Kishor would convert Jiji’s property on his name. Jiji, who always protected her brother, even at such situation asked Kale to take Kondiba’s consent. She had dry skin, base wrists and dirty forehead. Her brother neither pitied her nor paid the debt of her love and sacrifice.

Due to the utter suffering, she begged her brother. “Kondiba, let me go with Kishor to the hospital, I beg of you, I have never done you any ill, let me go.” [191] Finally, she fed the greedy dog and silenced him with a juicy bone. Kishor took
her to the hospital but she could not co-operate with him and demanded to go back to Nerla. With helplessness, Kishor records his defeat- “I had lost the battle because my General, Jiji had turned her back on the battle field.” [192] Jiji transferred her all the property on the name of Kondiba’s son and proved her loyalty towards her greedy brother.

Jiji’s life story reveals her sacrifice ignored by her brother. She worked and supported her brother’s family and finally met wretched conditions. She does not know what made her to suffer like a sincere Indian women. She passed adverse conditions and lived with unbearable tortures. Jiji stands for utter negligence of Kondiba and got humiliated and looted at last. Her life passed in the service of her brother. She never dared to rebel or revolt, which is her weakness. She is helpless Kolhati woman who walked according to the rules of Kolhati community. She never blamed anybody for her piteous conditions. Kondiba, the parasite lived on her property and exploited her.

5.5.4. Shantabai’s Humiliation

Shantabai is the first daughter of Kondiba and Kalawati. She is mother of Kishor and Deepak. She lived pathetic life, after being mother. Her life story opens the history of the torture of the Kolhati women. She had three men as her masters in the face of Namdevrao Jagtap, the MLA of Karmala who bare her Kishor; Dharurkar from Dharur who bore her Deepak and finally rested in the arms of Nana Sahukar from Sonpeth. During these three stages of her life, she witnessed a lot of humiliation. Her separation from her son, Kishor gave her the days of torture. As a mother, she was unable to look after her son and on the other hand, she had to go with Yejmans as they had paid for her. Out of insecurity in future, she rebelled against her father and left tamasha dance on the demands of Nana. Sun and shower humiliated her. Shantabai is the representative of Kolhati woman’s exploitation.

5.5.4.1 Shanta Was Engaged but Shalan Got Married

Madhavrao Patil kept Jiji as mistress and had become the acknowledged head of Krushna Kolhati’s family. He provided comfortable life and refused the girls of the family to dance. He enrolled Shanta in the local school and found her a bright
student who wanted to be a teacher. He had fixed her marriage with the officer in the
collection department at Bidargaon. Unfortunately, Madhavrao died and Kondiba
Kolhati’s family started suffering. Kondiba took the decision to break Shanta’s
education and send her to dance. He made Shanta, his earning hand.

Shanta started dancing and earning at early age. Kondiba laid a devious plan
of Shanta’s marriage. Kishor narrates-

…in stead of Shanta, he sent his second daughter Shalan into the
mandap. Dressed like a bride, her face covered with her sari,
Shalan took Shanta’s Place. [09]

It was realized by the groom, that he was cheated; he could not vent his anger
on Shalan.

Shalan was dark and plain. As a dancer, she would not have proved her ability
to attract men and money, the way Shanta would. Kondiba skillfully married Shalan
to the groom decided for Shanta. He destroyed Shanta’s dream to marry and even to
get education and be a teacher.

5.5.4.2 Shanta’s Dream to Be Teacher Destroyed

Kondiba trained his daughter as other dancers and to earn as the tradition of
his community. Shanta, due to her tender nature, became fond of Madhavrao. Due to
his attention, Shanta was admitted in the school. She had a dream to be a school-
teacher but her father shattered it by sending her to dance and earn money. It broke
the dream of innocent Shanta and she had to follow the same pattern of humiliation by
her clan. Kishor, after being doctor, records his mother’s incomplete dream -

I remember how, many years ago, a young girl had begged her
father to allow her to finish her studies, so that she could realize
her dream of becoming a school teacher. [197]

Unfortunately Shantabai, in her tender age, had no courage or awareness to rebel
or revolt, accepted father’s decision and witnessed wretched conditions in life. Kolhati
community considers daughters as money making machines whose feelings, desires
and dreams are never acknowledged. Shanta’s education and dream to be a teacher
was never fulfilled.
5.5.4.3 Shanta’s Ceremony of Chira-utarna with MLA Namdevrao Jagtap from Karmala

Shanta, who was taken out of school, was taught dancing and had become a leading dancer who could win the hearts of the audience. She had become money making machine for her father. Unfortunately, Shanta could not become school-teacher or wife of construction department officer at Bidargaon due to the sudden death of Madhavrao Patil, Jiji’s Yejman. Her father starved and sent Shanta to dance. Namdevrao Jagtap who was the MLA from Karmala, asked Kondiba to let his daughter live with him. Kondiba did Chira-utarna ceremony, “the Kolhali ritual of selling a virgin girl.” [15] to MLA Jagtap. “He became her kaja or yejman, her master.” [15] “Kondiba sold his daughter’s youthful body.” [16] Shanta got pregnant and Jagtap wanted to take her to Karmala but greedy Kondiba refused. When the MLA could not come for a long period, Kondiba advised her to abort the child. It was his desire to make free his daughter for his profession. “A girl whose virginity was lost commanded a far lower price in the tamasha bazaar.” [17]. Draupadi, the local midwife cum abortionist, told that the foetus was of is three months. She told, “I cannot make it fall. If I go on any more, this girl will die.” [17] Kondiba got annoyed as the dancer with a baby was of less value. Shanta continued her dance and one day, delivered Kishor at Nerla. MLA, the politician father of Kishor, neither came to see him nor accepted any responsibility of Shanta or her child. She continued her pathetic journey of life with the help of Jiji to look after her baby. Even though, her delivery had taken place before few days, she danced and provided money to her father.

5.5.4.4 Rich, Elderly Alcoholic Dharurkar Kept Shanta and Bore Deepak

As Namdevrao Jagtap, the M.L.A. of Karmala deserted Shanta, she had to join the dancing party to feed her family. She begged her father Kondiba to allow her to remain at home but he dragged her to dance. Kondiba ignored her pleas and beat her. He also made his eleven year old Sushila to dance. Therefore, Jiji, Shanta and Sushila joined Andharya’s Jalsa party and came to Dharur in Marathwada where Shanta met Dharurkar.
Dharurkar was a rich, elderly alcoholic man. He came to watch the tamasha every evening, and fell in love with Shanta. He said to Jiji-

You are just ruining this lovely girl’s life. Shanta looks like a princess. Keep her away from this environment. I will give you more money than you can earn. Provided, you take Shanta home and keep her there. [21]

This is how; an elder Dharurkar became Shanta’s Yejman. He visited Shanta once a week at Nerla and provided all the money needed to run Kondiba’s household, “To Dharurkar’s great joy, she bore him a son whom they named Deepak.” [21] Shanta seems unfortunate, who lost Dharurkar even though she tried to give up his alcohol. Due to heavy drinking, his liver damaged and he died. “Shanta was left alone, heart broken and with no means of survival.” [21]

5.5.4.5 Krushnarao Wadkar from Sonpeth Married Shanta

After loosing MLA Jagtap and Dharurkar, Shanta got deserted. She had two sons, Kishor and Deepak. She had to dance and feed her father’s family and her children. Therefore, Sushila and Shanta danced in various parties. Shanta-Sushila party was established, which become most famous tamasha group in the region. People had gone mad and gifted golden jewellery to Shanta and Sushila. Sushila was to dance and Shanta had to sing.

Krushnarao Wadkar was from Sonpeth. He was a Sali, community of weavers and was a reputed Sahukar. He was a moneylender, nicknamed Nana. He had become mad after Shanta- “He wore three gold rings on his fingers and a thick gold chain around his neck.” [30] Kishor states-“Nana was in love with Shantabai. He promised to treat her well, to buy her land, to build her a house.” [30]

Shanta told her bitter experiences, how lusty people looted the fragrance and threw away faded flowers. She told about the piteous condition of Kolhati women who go beggars and die on the streets in the old age. Still then, Sahukar persuaded Shanta and assured her prosperous future. One day, Shanta realized Sahukar’s earlier affairs and asked about it. He replied - “If my wife made me happy, would I have ever sought happiness outside?” [35]

Shanta yielded to his persuasion and the dreams he had showed. She became bold and decided to take her life out of Kondiba’s hands and place it in Sahukar’s
care. They planned carefully and one day, on the name of watching Shri 420 movie, ran away from Latur. They took the first bus to Parli and then tonga to Sonpeth and from Sonpeth to the Siddeshwar temple. “Shanta and Nana exchanged garlands before God.” [36] narrates Kishor.

Jiji out of her brother’s fear and Kolhati tradition went to Sonpeth and begged. However, she pleaded and cajoled, but Shanta remained unmoved. Shanta’s parents took some gundas and went to Sonpeth to take her back, but she remained unmoved. Poor Shantabai sat up on the terrace and listened abuses of her family. Deepak who was playing out side was taken by them and went back to Nerla. Though Shanta begged, they neglected her and left her alone at Sonpeth.

Shanta’s step to run away and remain as a wife was against Kolhati community. When Sahukar went to Nerla to take back Deepak, Shanta’s mother spoke the biter truth-

You have ruined my daughter, you have taken my Laxmi, my Goddess of fortune, away from my house, and now you want my grandson as well. [41]

It shows that the Kolhati girls were allowed to enjoy sex with their Yejmans at the house of their parents and not in the house of Yejman. It makes live the girl at her father’s house where the Yejman visits and feeds the girl’s family. Shanta broke the tradition for which she had to suffer through out her life.

5.5.4.6Shanta’s Humiliation at Sonpeth as Sahukar’s Keep (Mistress)

 Rejecting to obey father’s ideology, Shanta loved and married Sahukar of Sonpeth. She dared to go against Kolhati community traditions. She accepted to be the mistress of Sahukar rather than making show of her life. Self-respect made Shanta to run and remain at Sonpeth. Her son, Kishor remained with her parents at Nerla and another son Deepak at Sonpeth. With heavy heart, she agreed with Sahukar to keep Kishor away and Deepak with her. Her helplessness made her to accept Kishor as Shantabai’s son and Deepak as Kondiba’s. This bitter truth to digest is difficult but she digested to keep her father’s name as her son’s father. Neither MLA Jagtap gave his name as Kishor’s father nor Dharurkar as Deepak’s father though they were real father of the two. Shanta accepted it as her tradition. She understood even Sahukar’s rejection to give his name to Deepak, behind which his policy of economy
was there. He kept Shanta to satisfy his sexual hunger but rejected her sons to be his heir. He used Shantabai as a substitute to fulfill his erotic nature.

Shanta remained faithful to Sahukar and remained sincere with him. She lived with him, though her parents hated her. She did work at floor mill at home and worked as a wife of Sahukar. She made Sahukar to transfer few acres of land on the name of Kishor who had got a lot humiliated without his mother at Nerla. When Sahukar agreed to keep him at Sonpeth for his further schooling, he had proved his loyalty. Still, Shanta could not get that social respect and identity as a legal wife of Sahukar. She remained pathetic in the hands of Sahukar and received torture of him due to his frustration in gambling. Her helplessness regarding dependency on Sahukar for money made her to see her son Kishor suffering economically for education at Ambajogai and Bombay-

**Because of financial problems, her Kishor had tried to commit suicide. Still then, she begged her son to say that he had accidentally eaten rat poison that had been mixed with raw peanuts. [196]**

This is what Shantabai never made her husband to suffer. Her helpless mute suffering speaks loudly. She saved her husband from every humiliation caused due to her. She is the typical woman incarnation of India to suffer and survive.

### 5.5.5 Sushila’s Suffering

After Shanta, Kondiba introduced Shalan to the theatre and survived. One after another, he exploited his daughters and protected his family. Shalan, who was beautiful, earned for her father and mother, suffered for her children’s future. Utter negligence humiliated her and tired Sushila requested Kishor to help her children for education. She helped and loved Kishor when he was at Nerla as if orphan, away from his mother. Sushila proved a helping hand for her nephew, Kishor. She mutely under went exploiting mechanism of her father’s greed and community’s traditions.

#### 5.5.5.1 Sushila Introduced in Tamasha at the Age of Eleven

Kondiba ran his community’s tyrannical tradition to use his daughters for family’s economic survival. He closed his ears to the humble requests of Shanta for
education and with her, introduced his eleven-year-old daughter Sushila for dancing at tamasha. Kishor narrates regarding Kondiba’s heartless cunning planning-

He had decided that his younger daughter Sushila would also train to dance in tamasha. Sushila was about eleven years old, just the right age to begin training. [20]

In Andharya’s Jalsa party, Shanta and Sushila danced at Dharur, Parli and through out the Maharashtra.

5.5.5.2 Men, Young and Old, Rich and Poor, Wished Sushila to Be their Mistress

Kondiba with his selfish thoughts made Shanta-Sushila Party under the observation of Jiji and introduced at Selu theatre. The party won popularity. Shanta was singing and Sushila was dancing. It was a golden period that the two sisters attracted large crowds and money. Kishor narrates-

Men, young and old, rich and poor, flocked to Jiji asking for my aunt Sushila demanding that she be allowed to live with them as their mistress. [24]

Shanta and Jiji refused the demands for Sushila as they had experiences of such people and their mentality. Their sweet talk attracts the girls and they satisfy their hunger and then abandon the girls. Shanta had personally suffered from MLA Jagtap of Karmala.

5.5.5.3 Sopanrao Galegaonkar from Selu Did Chira-utarna Ceremony of Sushila

Sopanrao Galegaonkar, a rich man of Selu of about forty-five, owned three hundred acres of land. He had no heir. Sopanrao’s wife urged him to remarry but he always refused-

During the stay of Shanta-Sushila Party at Selu, he got attracted at Sushila’s beauty that was young, pretty, properly dressed and well behaved. She always covered her head with her palla. [24]

Sushila’s refined language, sober nature attracted Sopanrao, and he decided, Sushila, to be the right choice for second wife. He approved Sushila by managing their meeting and offered to pay what ever wanted. Sushila, being teenager and bright
future for Kondiba, refused to stop dancing and sending her to Sopanrao’s house. On the demand that Sushila will dance and will live in Kondiba’s house, Kondiba agreed. Kishor narrates, “Sopanrao Galegaonkar performed the Chira-utarna ceremony for my Sushila Maushi.” [25]

Galegaonkar family treated Sushila with a great care and within a year, she had a baby girl. The little girl was named Jaya.

5.5.5.4 Kondiba Destroyed the Relationship between Sushila and Sopanrao

Kondiba realized that after being mother, Sushila will ignore him and will live with Galegaonkar at Selu. He always demanded money from Galegaonkar. He felt insecure that his golden egg-bearing hen would run away from his custody.

Kondiba decided to marry his son Popat for which he went to Selu and asked Sopanrao for money for the wedding. Because of non-availability, Sopanrao asked Kondiba to wait up to peanut crop to be harvested. Kondiba for his prestige could not postpone the wedding-

His gargo ego made him decide that Sushila was not to live with Sopanrao any more. Kishor states that in one stroke, Kondiba destroyed the relationship between Sushila and Sopanrao. It was as if he had picked up a duster and wiped Sopanrao out of Sushila’s life. [26]

Sushila could not refuse her father’s demands and had to walk with him. Kondiba rejected even Jaya to be given to her father when he begged at least to leave his daughter with him. She was the only child and heir he had Kondiba destroyed his daughter’s happy married, dignified life.

5.5.5.5 Sushila Became Ramesh Patil’s Keep

The party came from Selu to Parli and earned fame. There, Nana Sahukar fell in love with Shanta and Ramesh Patil became made for Sushila. He was a young college student, completely enamored of Sushila. He showered money on Sushila during the show. He followed Sushila from Parli to Latur. At Latur, Shanta eloped with Sahukar of Sonpeth and Sushila became the owner of the party. She had a good voice. Kondiba always demanded money for Popat’s marriage. Ramesh Patil when agreed to bear all the expenses of Popat’s weddings, she accepted Ramesh Patil’s
proposal. Father’s demands and Patil’s demands made Sushila to take support of Patil. After being mistress of Ramesh Patil, Sushila gave up dancing and lived at Nerla. Kishor narrates-

Nobody, not even Sushila Maushi knows whether Ramesh Patil had a wife and family or where he lived. He never took anyone to his house nor did he answer any questions about himself. However, he loved Sushila Maushi deeply. They ate food from one plate and she would offer him with her own hands. [50]

Ramesh for his madness bore all the expenses of Kondiba’s family. Sushila bore a son named Balu from Ramesh Patil. Life turned bitter for Sushila when, after ten years of enjoyment, Ramesh Patil left her forever. Kishor narrates-

Ramesh Patil had been part of Sushila Maushi’s life for almost ten long years and suddenly, one day, he had walked out of her life without a word. Sushila Maushi was now thirty three years old. She had a son Balaji, from Ramesh Patil and two children Jaya and Anil from Somanrao Galegaonkar of Selu. [161].

Helpless Sushila became supportless once again.

5.5.5.6. Nana Patil of Indapur Loved and Demanded Sushila to Be his Mistress

After being away from Ramesh Patil, Sushila had become helpless to feed and educate her three children. She, once again joined Jalsa party, but could not earn more. She became helpless and decided to go to Indapur, where Nana Patil lived. Kishor narrates-

Nana Patil lived in Indapur and he had been in love with Sushila Maushi when she first denied at Modlimb, years ago. He had asked Maushi to be his mistress, but she had refused. Now, with desperation for money to educate her children, she had been forced to approach him. [166]

Kishor, during his MBBS Education at Bombay, had been at Nerla who helped Sushila to approach Nana Patil at Indapur. Kishor narrates the pitiable incident of which he feels shameful, where he worked as a pimp. Nana Patil gave Sushila, Rs. 2000 and in return states Kishor, “then he booked two rooms there. I spent the night in one room and Maushi and Nana Patil in the other.” [167] It was horrible for Kishor to bear that his Maushi had given herself to Patil. It made him agitated. Piteous, helpless Sushila was unable to meet her eyes with Kishor. Her eyes were wet. She had
lost hopes to be happy in life. She, who had laughed at the helplessness of Shanta, had become helpless. Nana Patil sent Sushila to Nerla assuring to come but could not. Sushila was of no use to him as she had been a withered flower.

5.5.5.7 Sushila Rested in the Arms of Teacher from Kolhapur

Life took tests of Sushila and she passed from one man to another, due to her father’s greedy nature. Her children made her wander. Finding no positive response from Nana Patil, Sushila acquired a paramour, states Kishor- “He was a teacher from Kolhapur, a married man, who declared that he was madly in love with Maushi.” [171]

Kishor requested the school-teacher to stop dancing of his Maushi and settle her into a decent house with her children. The teacher agreed and Sushila felt gratitude for Kishor. He settled his Maushi with his awakened educated witness.

Finally, Sushila got shelter of the teacher to teach her children and keep her happy. Still then, the journey of Sushila’s life records her humiliation imposed upon her by the traditions of her community against which she could not raise any word. Her helpless suffering is due to her clan’s culture, which obeys rules to receive for parents, brothers and die neglected. Her journey of torture started at the age of eleven and continued till she gets the teacher at Kolhapur. She wandered to Selu, Parli, Latur, Indapur, and Solapur. Except Galegaonkar, she met men of lust who exploited her sexually. Unfortunate Sushila’s story reveals how the dancers turn to be the prostitutes and even Kishor had to work as a pimp.

5.5.6 Rambha’s Exploitation

Rambha was the fourth daughter of Kondiba and Kalawati. Kondiba, as per the community pattern, trained Rambha as a dancer and then used her as a prostitute to feed his family. Her humiliation is the worst where her own father works as a pimp and she has to provide herself to the lusty men and pacify the starvation of her family. The journey of Rambha begins with dancer and ends with prostitute.
5.5.6.1 A Man Working in the Aeroplane Became Yejman of Rambha

During her party at Barshi, a rich man working in the aeroplane infactuated to her beauty to captured Rambha. He was a well to do man. Kishor introduces him -

Rambha Maushi had come home from Barshi for the fair. With her came a tall, fair young man whom everybody called Seth. Jiji told me that he was Rambha Maushi’s Yejman. He works in an Aeroplane. So, he has lots of money. [55]

He stayed for five days and returned to Barshi for his job. In his absence, Rambha joined her party and continued dancing.

5.5.6.2 Hot Tempered Rambha Humiliated Kishor

It was Diwali festival and Rambha had come with her Yejman. Regarding her nature Kishor states- “Among my Maushi’s, Rambha Maushi was slightly odd and had strange spells of ‘possession’ from time to time.” [90]

She had rough and sharp tongue. She always treated Kishor differently as Kishor’s mother had dropped him there and she had been with her gigolo. Her Yejman said to her, “You have brought clothes for everybody but nothing for Kishya?” [91] She replied angrily and insulted Kishor as abandoned at their doorstep. She treated Kishor like a slave. During those days, Kishor and Sadhana, Shalan Maushi’s daughter had a fight and Rambha slapped Kishor. In return, Kishor slapped her, but nobody believed even though Rambha was yelling, punching and kicking Kishor. She was a little mad, everybody believed.

Rambha’s Yejman had given Rs. 40 to Kishor for his clothes Rambha lost her temper and humiliated Kishor-

Beggar! Return that money. He gave you forty rupees. Who knows whose abandoned thing; you are looting us in a beggar’s guise, taking money from him! [92]

Rambha’s hot temper and merciless behavior tore out Kishor’s heart. She couldn’t understand Kishor’s piteous condition and humiliated him a lot.
5.5.6.3 Rambha Awakened Kishor of the Humiliation of Kolhati Women and Differentiated from Heroines and Kolhati Dances

Rambha seems a spokesperson of Kolhati women. She advocates the pathetic condition of Kolhati dancer dancing in tamasha.

Once, when Kishor was learning at Ambajogai, Rambha’s tamasha came to Ambajogai and Kishor was afraid to meet his aunt during the day. Education had awakened him of the good and bad and after all, he had been the son of a dancer. Still then, he faced a lot of humiliation from his college mates. Rambha was doing her shows and Kishor’s friends teased him. Vilas a young boy of 25 years asked Kishor to introduce him to Rambha for whom he was ready to give what she wanted. Kishor told him that she had got married but still then, he insisted. Kishor gave him tit for tat and they quarreled. When Kishor met his Maushi, he requested her to leave Ambajogai. He told his humiliation and feeling of insult upon which Rambha opened his eyes-

Arey, before a tamasha dancer knows, why her chest must be covered by the palla, somebody has filled her breasts with milk under the guise of chira. Isn’t that an insult? For two rupees, we are expected to sit on a man’s lap. Isn’t that an insult? Do not forget, the few rupees we get for allowing a man to hold and press our hand is what pays for the food in our house. Only, a rare one like you gets educated. And even you feel ashamed of us. Isn’t that an insult of us? [152]

Rambha was inwardly wounded and burst out thus. She criticized heroines in the movies who expose their bodies, do prostitution and enjoy publicity. She told that dancing was an art and business for Kolhati women but under the guise of dancing, women are running the business of prostitution. She stated-

If our palla slips even a few inches off our chest, it causes a commotion. However, heroines in movies dance with bodies exposed, with a different hero every time and it is called art. They go to Delhi and win awards for it. It is all a joke played on us by shameless people. [152]

This is how, Rambha acknowledged not only Kishor as an individual but also to the society regarding the reality in general. It clearly indicates the difference between film actresses and the Kolhati dancers. Still, their community and old age leads them towards the humiliation. Kishor apologized his Maushi of his feeling that made him feel ashamed of his community women. Rambha cried that Kolhati women
never chose to be dancers and never wished to be insulted by men. It is helplessness of the Kolhati women who are suppressed and exploited by their community men, their father and brothers. Their mothers also run and support the same pattern helplessly.

5.5.6.4 Kondiba, the Pimp of his Daughter Rambha at Home

Rambha who awakened Kishor of Kolhati women’s misery, finally, turned to be a prostitute to survive her family. Her Yejman had stopped visiting and she was mother of two children. Leaving her one and half year’s child with parents, she had to dance and earn. Her father was still feeding his three sons, their wives and his family on the income of his daughters. He pushed them to be the prostitutes.

Kishor was doing his M.B.B.S. and got news that Jiji was suffering. He visited Nerla and saw piteous condition of Jiji and Kondiba’s family. Kondiba was starving and suffering economically. He lowered the statues of his daughter Rambha to do prostitution on just Rs. 100. Kishor narrates the pathetic humiliation of Rambha Maushi that her child was in the arms of Kondiba, who was sitting outside and Rambha was inside with a strange man. He records the horrible truth thus-

A horrible truth hit me hard in the hut. Ajoba was prostituting his daughter to earn money. [185]

Rambha couldn’t show her face to Kishor. Kishor records – “Tears running down her face.” [185] Rambha begged Kishor to take her children away from her and put them in orphanage and take them away from the hell.

This pathetic condition of Rambha is due to her community and its traditions. The women of Kolhati, who turn from dancer to prostitute, humiliate Kishor. They feel living in hell; tell the story of their life, an unbearable load to live.

5.5.7. Baby’s Suffering

Baby was the youngest daughter of Kondiba and Kalawati. She was pretty and had a gentle and sweet nature. She was beautiful and had slender waist alluring youth. She was a little giddy girl who attracted youths as well as elders. Kondiba cashed her youth and enjoyed happy days. She continues the tradition of her clan to
feed her family by her dance. Like her other sisters, she started earning in her early age at Barshi Rasika theatre in Chitra Gulzar party of Dombari.

5.5.7.1 ‘He Was Forty and she was Sixteen’: Henge Patil of Akluj Did

Chira-utarna Ceremony of Baby

When Baby was dancing at Barshi, she had become popular due to her beauty. Henge Patil of Akluj was attracted towards her beauty. He had habit of drinking. Therefore, Baby disliked him. However, unfortunate Baby had to accept him as her Yejman on the demand of her father. He had given Baby a lot of golden jewellery and had a car. His property made Kondiba throw Baby in his arms. Kishor narrates Baby’s pathetic condition-

Baby Maushi disliked him. She was sixteen and he was forty. But, her father loved his money and easy lifestyle, and she was forced to refund it by giving herself to the man who bid the highest for her youthful body. [63]

Kishor disgusted on this father-daughter relationship and spoke about the ideal relationship of protective father and brothers to the girls in Indian movies based upon culture. He found tamasha dancers’ brothers and father as pimps, and parasites living on the earning of their daughters and sisters.

Henge Patil always visited Nerla with bottles of liquors and enjoyed sex with Baby, due to which, Baby became pregnant and delivered a daughter. Then, Mr. Patil stopped visiting as he had lost interest in Baby and threw her away to suffer and die. He stopped visiting completely. Kishor records- “Baby Maushi became a butt of everyone’s malice.” [65]

Baby fed up of the barbs and insults of parents, packed her ghungroos, picked up her four month old daughter and joined Kawadkar’s party at Beed.

5.5.7.2 Pawar Saheb Abandoned Baby: “Tears Are all that Tamasha Dancers Have in their Lives”

After suffering a lot due to Shivajirao Henge Patil of Akluj, Baby continued her dancing and feeding her child and parents. For the second time, Pawar Saheb who enjoyed sex with her for two years, bore her a son and then kept her. He had stopped
dancing of Baby and used to visit her at Nerla- “It was a second time, this had happened to Baby Maushi and she was in a state of shock, crying all the day.” [161]

Kishor spoke of the fate of Kolhati women- “Tears are all that tamasha dancers have in their lives any way.” [161]

How long will a helpless mother like Baby wait? Baby became mother of two children, a daughter from Henge Patil and a son from Pawar Saheb. She finally, took the decision to dance and earn.

5.5.7.3 Dinya the Eighteen Years Old Fan of Baby at Islampur

At Islampur, Baby had a young fan named Dinya. He was a young eighteen-year-old boy- “He was obviously not too well off, his clothes were rather dirty. But every evening, he used to give Baby five or ten rupees.” [165]

When Hambirrao Patil of Islampur came on the scene for Baby, he stopped giving money. Baby took him lightly but he started bringing flowers to her hair or some snacks. Baby made him realize of his reality and asked him to stop visiting. She told Dinya “You are still too young for all this.” [165] Dinya insulted Baby calling her only for Patils and not the poor like him. He told her bitter truth, which is the postmortem of the reality-

Those women will sleep with me for Rs. 300, but you consider yourselves too pure. For a hundred rupees, I can get a college girl. Why should I chase you? You think too much of yourself. [165]

Irritated and shocked with Dinya’s anger, Baby abused him idiot, pimp and sent away. She had considered him brother and he was expecting her to do prostitution.

5.5.7.4 Hambirrao Patil of Islampur Kept Baby

At Islampur, Baby received a romantic boy like Dinya and a rich man like Hambirrao Patil. Hambirrao Patil asked Sushila to keep Baby with him as he was enamored by her. He used to give two hundred everyday to Baby. He was a heavy drinker and had gone mad for Baby.
Helpless Baby, deeply distressed due to her son’s illness due to high fever and pneumonia, tied ghungroos but her mind and heart was with her ill son. Hambirrao Patil set up a steady stream of money for Baby, who during her collecting money for forty-five minutes, got bleeding at her feet. That day, she danced as if possessed. She needed money to take her son to the hospital. Kishor realized that it was not her dance but her beauty, her slender waist and her alluring youth that attracted them. People erotically spoke -

What a fresh, tender cucumber she is! What creamy skin! But she won't willingly give it. We will have to take her away one day. [170]

Baby danced like a mad, possessed woman and fainted from exhaustion. When understood, that her son’s conditions was worst, Hambirrao Patil called a cycle rickshaw and took them to the hospital. Baby, who was not in the state of mind to continue dancing and wanted to live with dignity, took advice of Kishor who told her to accept Hambirrao Patil. She accepted Hambirrao’s Proposal and became pregnant, which she thought to terminate, but Patil promised her to keep delighted. So, she decided to have the baby. Kishor requested Hambirrao to shelter Baby and educate her children. Kishor narrates- “Baby Maushi lives with Hambirrao Patil. She has a son from him. And he looks after them with care and affection.” [172]

Kishor settled his Maushi and kept her away from daily humiliation. Baby too had become victim of the traditions of her community, due to which transferred from person to person and received frustration. Her beauty and youth maddened the young boys as well as elderly men. Bitter relatives tested her. She remained puppet in the hands of lusty men and fortunately rested under the shelter of Hambirrao Patil.

5.5.8 Nili Sacrificed her Lover Calling,

“We Have No Right to fall in Love…”

Kishor Kale not simply raises humiliation of his mother and aunts; he exposes bitter truth by revealing other women walking on the painful path of exploitation. Kishor introduces few other women among whom was a girl named Nili. “Nili was a pretty, young and only seventeen.” [56] A rich middle-aged man spotted Nili and became her Chira-malik.
5.5.8.1. Nili: Madly in Love with a College Boy Mukesh

Nili, who was one of the Baby’s friends, was “madly in love with a young college boy called Mukesh.” [56] Nili’s aunt rejected it as Mukesh had no money. Mukesh wept and muttered, “I’ll kill that aunt of hers or I will kill myself.” [57]

5.5.8.2 A Middle Aged Man Became Chira-malik of Nili

During those days, a rich middle-aged man wearing gold chains and rings, used to come in a car and hunted Nili. He was forty-five years old and Nila was seventeen. “Nili cried in anguish. But, her aunt beat her into submission.” [56] Unfortunate Nili gave herself to that man and sacrificed her love. She could not escape from the clutches of her aunt.

5.5.8.3. We Have No Right to Fall in Love: Nili’s Letter to Mukesh

Helpless Nili gave sacrifice of her innocent love. She exposed bitter reality of the Kolhati women whom their relatives use as the sex dolls for the rich people and earn money. Nili exposed reality

We are dancing girls. We belong to everybody. We have no right to fall in love with any one man. If we do, then we must kill that love. Otherwise, society won’t let us live. [57]

It throws light that Kolhati women are born for rich men’s sexual satisfaction. They have no right to use their mind or brain which is chained by the customs of their community. Mukesh wrote that he loved her and not her body, it was of no use. Chained Nili suffered with the sexual exploitation of her Chira-malik. She sacrificed her love.

5.5.9 Mang Caste Suman Took the Baby off her Breast and Rushed to Dance

Poverty is the root cause of the other cast women to enter into the dancing profession. Kishor introduces a Mang cast woman named Suman. She had made her make up, tied ghungroos and was breast-feeding her baby. The bell rang and she dropped the baby and rushed to dance. She couldn’t even feed her baby. She asked Kishor to look after the baby. It remembered Kishor of his mother’s plight. He put
the baby on his lap and tried to clam him. He narrates- “My eyes filled with tears as I realized that perhaps this was what had happened with me too.” [57]

Dancing and earning was the compulsory duty for the women to do. Their Chira-malik would feed them, if they had capacity to satisfy their sexual hunger; otherwise, such women had to suffer a lot. Suman’s suffering is due to her poverty, which took her towards the steps of tamasha. Her poverty is due to the imposed caste and culture which humiliates her.

5.5.10. A Muslim Woman: I Need the Money to Educate my Children

The dancing parties had majority of the Kolhati women and few other caste and religion women who, due to their poverty, work there. When Kishor was looking after Suman’s baby, he saw Muslim women, returned from dance. Kishor asked her to take off ghungroos and she told him that she has to dance in the place of another girl who had gone away for a few days. She told Kishor, “I need the money to educate my children. Their father is unwell.” [58] Many women opened their heart and opened the brutal and ugly picture of society, where poor, oppressed, suppressed and helpless women have no other way than dancing and earning. The Muslim woman did over time for her children’s education, as her husband was unable to perform his duties.

5.5.11 Sixty Years Old Chira-malik of a Seventeen-Year-Old Girl Rukmin

Rukmin was a seventeen-year-old dancer. Unfortunately, she was a keep of an old man of about sixty years. He was a rich man visiting her in a car. Kishor narrates his appearance, “He wore a red turban and a white dhoti and seemed to have no teeth at all.” [58] Such an old man like father or grandfather has kept a girl of seventeen. How humiliated would be Rukmin and how bastards would be her parents who earned money by selling her to an old man. He sat down next to Rukmin and began to caress her. Kishor thought that he would be Rukmin’s father but suspected the way he was behaving with Rukmin and asked his Baby Maushi who angrily commented, “He’s not her father. He’s her Chira-malik.” [58]
5.5.12 Kusum Eloped with Kamble and Got Excommunicated

5.5.12.1 Kusum: Exceptionally Beautiful Dancer

Kusum was a beautiful and the best dancer among the Kolhatis. Her dances made a lot of money. She established Nerla Kolhati’s image as the best tamasha dancers.

She used to tie a hundred ghungroos round her ankles and then slow down her steps to such a gentle rhythm, that just one ghungroo would be heard. [59]

5.5.12.2 Kusum Eloped with Kamble and Committed Crime

One day, Kusum, eloped with Kamble. It proved a crime for Kolhati community as Kamble was a Mahar. Kusum brought her family’s anger and insults and her son Sanjay, was also taken away from her. “The Kolhati community declared Kusum an outcaste.” [59] Kale describes Kolhati community’s tradition which exposes the casteism and cast conflict. They feel themselves superior to Mahar or Muslim. They observe untouchability and run the tradition of Manu made setup of Varna-

For a Kolhati, to marry a Mahar or a Muslim is the ultimate crime, but they have no scruples when it comes to accepting money from Muslim or Mahar men at dance shows. [59]

Behind this system is their economy. As the Mahar or Muslim are basically poor and cannot keep the dancer’s family. Therefore, they do not encourage such relationship.

5.5.12.3. Harinana Excommunicated as he United Kusum and her Son

Kusum, who had her son at Nerla, wanted him and with the help of Harinana, she lifted her son, Sanjay and the community excommunicated Harinana. He was declared a thief-

Separating a child from his mother had been a good deed as per as Kolhatis were concerned. In their greed for money, they had truly obliterated the difference between right and wrong. [61]

Harinana’s newly married wife suffered in his absence mutely.
5.5.12.4. Kusum’s Daughter Neither Accepted by Mahars Nor by the Kolhati’s

Kusum who had two daughters from Kamble, suffered for her daughters’ marriage. Neither the Mahars not the Kolhatis accepted them. In their marriageable age, they found themselves ostracized by both communities. Her daughters begged the elders but the heavyhearted Kolhati refused them. It is piteous condition of Kusum and her two daughters who suffered from excommunication due to Kusum’s revolutionary elopement with Kamble.

5.5.13 Shobha’s Suffering
5.5.13.1 Shobha: Headstrong and Independent Minded

Shobha, to whom Kishor calls Maushi, was a member of tamasha party at Parli when Kishor’s mother was dancing there. “She was a beautiful dancer, slim, fair and tall with light eyes.” [172] She had her own way of living life. She was headstrong and had independent mind. She enjoyed relationship with only a man she liked whether he paid her or not.

5.5.13.2 Shobha Loved a Man from Majalgaon

Shobha did the crime of falling in love with a man from Majalgaon. She had never sent regular money to her parents due to which, they had scolded and beaten her. Kishor States-

To fall in love is the worst crime, a Kolhati woman can commit because falling in love means breaking bonds with parents, taking an independent course of action. Kolhati parents cannot allow their earning daughters to leave them for any other man because she is their source of income. [172, 173]

Shobha was earning daughter and her parents disliked her love affair, which could not remain beneficial to them. It was Shobha’s rebel against her parents, in love.
5.5.13.3 When Tired of Shobha, her Lover Abandoned her

Shobha, due to her nature got punished. Her lover lived with her as long as he was interested in her. He gave her neither money nor shelter. When she was thirty-three, he abandoned her. Poor Shobha visited Majalgaon but he never met her. She then, decided to go back to dancing when nobody liked her looks any more. “Her parents battered her, verbally and physically.” [173] she had become heart broken and miserable, almost mad.

5.5.13 Tragic End of Shobha: Happiness Plays a Very Very Small Part in Dancers Life

Being refused by lover, parents and the audience, Shobha could not live long. At the age of thirty-three, she had almost gone depressed and mad. Kishor states, “one day, sitting by her in a corner, her tired body gave a few sudden sharp jerks and she died.” [173] Her pathetic end of life made Kishor realize, “Happiness plays a very small part in dancer’s life.” [173] Shobha’s tragic end taught him lesson of mutability in the dancer’s life. Shobha’s independence ended her so.

5.5.14 Chandrakalabai: Tamasha Party Owner Preferred Domestic Life

While speaking about Chandrakalabai’s Tamasha Party, Kishor introduces the ordeals, the tamasha dancers have to pass. He throws light upon the humiliation of these women, their insecure life and torture of the audience.

5.5.14.1 Shanta Learnt Dancing and Singing in Chandrakalabai’s Party

Kondiba disconnected Shanta’s schooling and educated her in singing and dancing, after passing her seventh class. Though she objected, begged and wept-

She had to join Chandrakalabai’s tamasha party to receive training at the age of fourteen. Shanta stepped out of her secure childhood, straight into the hostile world, waiting to exploit her beauty and youth. [9, 10]
5.5.14.2 Requirements of Jalsa Party

_Jalsa_ party requires enough money to be invested for musical instruments and payments of the artists. Kishor makes the readers aware that the party unusually had four or five women dancers, one of whom was a main dancer-

There was a _dholak_ player who was also a dance teacher, a harmonium player who taught music, a _tabla_ player, a man who played the tingle and a female cook. Besides, there were a few women who looked after the dancer’s children as the dancers themselves really had no time for them. [10].

Chandarakala’s party was one of the better-known tamasha groups of that time.

5.5.14.3 Bathing: An Ordeal for the Dancers

Chandarakalabai’s tamasha party used to travel by bullock cart to villages and towns, where they had to face gundas. It was a matter of excitement for the villagers. The local schools were the places of stay and the villagers used to wander around them. The women face difficulties to their routine life. Specially, during such halts, they faced problems of latrine and bathrooms. They could not get privacy and their naked forms were clearly visible through the flimsy cloth. People taunted and played vulgar jokes at them. Kishor states piteous conditions of women as-

Bathing was an ordeal and the women rush through their baths or simply ran away to the shelter of the school building again. [11]

5.5.14.4 Dancers’ Day Begins at the Late Evening

The tamasha runs at night. Therefore, the works had to sleep during the day and be awakened at night. They used to wake up at five in the evening. The women used to wash and put on their make up. They used snow, powder, _kajal_ and lipstick. Their hair was always pinned up and decorated with flowers. They wear saries to cover them completely and their _pallu_ never slide off the shoulder on stage. They tie _ghungroos_ on the thick pads round their ankles. The show starts at 8 o’clock with the comments, whistles, gestures and approving noises of the audience. The whole night, the artists and dancers remain awake, performing. The audience throws money on the stage or asks the singled out dancer to collect money.
5.5.14.5 The Ghoda-Step to Collect Money

The audience uses to give money to their beloved dancer. She has to collect money, which proves complicated for the dancers. While dancing, they have to do back and forth which tires them. One of the steps to collect money is “Ghoda-step”. Kishor describes this step as “the dancer to be a horse which squatted and in that posture, pranced around like a horse.” [12]. This kind of dance and Ghoda-step gives pain to the legs and calf muscles. The other step is to bend backward and collect the coin by sticking it to her forehead. Sometimes the admirers ask them to sit on their laps by giving notes. The money collected during the show, is later on divided among the members of the group.

To do such tricks and dance, the Kolhati girls are sent to dance at the age of nine years because their young bodies are flexible and can be easily trained. It is as if aerobic training that makes the girls good dancers to earn. Chandrakalabai’s party used to trend the girls to be utilized in future. Shantabai got training of dancing and singing in Chandrakala’s party.

5.5.14.6 Land, Gold and House Settled Chandrakalabai

Chandrakala, who was owner of the party, one day, decided to settle down with one of her admirers. She had plenty of men begging her to live with them but she had rejected all the offers. However, her latest forceful personality admirer took her in his grip. “He offered her land; gold and a house and Chandrakalabai succumbed.” [14] Kishor states -

Kolhati women who dance for a livelihood are always on the lookout for a man who will provide them with food and shelter. As soon as such a man comes along, they give up dancing. [14]

Chandrakalabai went off and the party broke up.

Chandrakalabai seems fortunate to enjoy ownership of the party and then the admirer who could provide her luxurious life. Still then, what about the stigma of being a dancer and Kolhati caste that would pain her? Even though master of tamasha, she preferred domestic life for which Kolhati women starve. They seem deprived of social acceptability and shelter of husband.
5.5.15 Nagin: Fortunate Woman in Comparison to other Kolhati Women

Nagin was one of the dancers at Jalsa party of Selu. She was a sixteen-year-old dancer who caught attention of M.L.A. Lonikar, who brought her away from tamasha. He had set up her in a house of her own. She was treated with respect and affection and had three sons and a daughter. She was a good friend of Shanta who helped Kishor during his M.B.B.S. She provided shelter and food to Kishor at Parbhani. Being aware of the importance of education, looking at Kishor, she asked him to teach her children. Kishor records his respect and gratitude for her helping hand in these words-

If she had not come to my aid just when I needed it, I would have been like a dog abandoned in the street. To me, she was a goddess. [157]

Kishor taught her children and even tried to teach her, read and write. She treated Kishor like her son.

Nagin is the only fortunate woman recorded in Kishor’s autobiography. Lonikar-kept his promise and respectfully treated Nagin. She seems fortunate in receiving honour and being away from hellish humiliation. Dr. Sharankumar Limbale records his observation-

M.L.A. of Karmala Namdevrao Patil kept Kolhati woman and when realized that it would defame him, he threw her away. On the contrary is the experience of M.P. Lonikar. He treated Kolhati woman like his wife. [2008. 75]

Even though separated from parents and living with Yejmans, the condition of Nagin seems more fortunate than Shanta who remained the ‘other’.

In over all consideration, she is a woman, a Kolhati woman and has to bear all those insults of inequality in society, with those reputed honours, which other women enjoy. Still, being a woman and that too in Hindu set up is to give herself for exploitation. Her beauty and youth was her capital, based on which, she captivated MLA Lonikar.
5.5.16 Jealous and Superstitious Hausabai

5.5.16.1 Hausa’s Hatred for Shanta’s Group

Shanta –Sushila Party became popular at Parli and started earning Rs. 2000 to Rs. 3000 every evening. They had attracted audience with their charm of dancing, singing and beauty. Nana Sahukar was chessing Shanta and Ramesh Patil was spending money on Sushila. They were continuously showering money on Shanta and Sushila’s party, because of which other parties were jealous of them. The other women were filled with envy, among whom, was Hausa, who hated them with a vengeance.

Hausa was the best dancer among all the tamasha groups of Maharashtra. Her glamour finished and the other party of Shanta -Sushila had surpassed her, which made her play superstitious ideas.

5.5.16.2. Hausa Played Homespun Witchcraft against Shanta’s party

Being jealous and superstitious, “Hausa tried to sour success of her rival party of Shanta- Sushil with a bit of homespun witchcraft. She threw stuffed lemons and ragged dolls,” [2000.31] in Shanta’s room. Shanta ignored it, but “Hausa made things worse by making rude gestures” [31] at Shanta. One day Shanta saw Hausa doing black magic. She got furious and quarreled with Hausa.

Kishor states, “Sushila and Shanta also joined the fight and they got on Hausa’s stomach and chest and beat her.” [32] It made Hausa leave Parli and go to Latur.

Hausa’s character clearly indicates common professional jealousy in Kolhati community. Her playing witchcraft shows her faith in superstition due to illiteracy. She seems jealous woman who could not bear others’ success. It opens the typical culture found in Tamasha party where women are searching Yejmans and money which ultimately throws light upon the profession they do and the violation of it. It was not Hausa, who played tricks but her poverty and starvation imposed upon her by the community’s way of living.
5.6. UNTOUCHABILITY

*Against All Odds* – is the autobiography of the author, who in the Hindu setup, feels dissatisfied and shameful and registers his name as Kishor Shantabai Kale. It is a tale of the refused by parents and society. It speaks about the pain of his life due to his relatives and the system that rules their mind. It has shades of casteism, untouchability, humiliation and rejection, which are the brutal means of Manu made system called *Varna*. Kishor Shantabai Kale refuses stigma due to caste and raises the weapon of pen to rebel and revolt against it. It is the voice against all odds due to which, Dr. Yeshwant Manohar, the poet and critic of Ambedkarite literature states, ‘The dreamland of Ambedkarite literature has got bloomed.” [1999. 272]

5.6.1 Kishor Kale Certified Illegitimate by Birth

Fire of casteism has burnt Kale. Humiliation and hatred have brought him maturity. He blames his parents and the social system responsible for his sorrow and suffering. He frustrates and feels angry upon himself. In his note he states – “illegitimate certificate I received from society by birth.” [1999. Writer’s Note]

5.6.2 Experience of Untouchability at School

Restlessness became the spirit of Kale. During school and college education, Kale received bitter experiences of untouchability. Feeling of inferiority burnt him. When the boys tease him, he feels guilty. Casteism has burnt his innocent childhood and youth. The school boys kept distance from him and observed untouchability. During school days, he states – “Nobody at school made friends with me.” [2000. 126]

5.6.3 Torture of Untouchability at College

During college education at Ambajogai, he had to hide his caste and had to live. Caste humiliated him a lot and gave shame. When he was to be admitted in college, his mother had told him – “say, you are a *Sali*, because I am a *Sali*.” [125] It was difficult for Kale to bear it. His admission papers clearly stated that he was *Kolhati*. Teachers and students of his college wondered about him. They whispered, “Krushnarao Wadkar is of the *Sali* caste but Kishor’s papers say that he is a *Kolhati*.}
Then whose son is he?” [145] The question of his identity is raised before him and all those who came close to him. It resulted in teasing to Kale. He states, his hard days at Ambajogai-

I had to keep changing my room every few weeks, I felt convinced that everybody around had discovered what my caste was and the kind of family I came from. [146]

This feeling of inferiority regarding caste has tortured Kale a lot. He could not even meet his Baby Maushi at Ambajogai, whose tamasha party had come there. Therefore, he had to visit his Maushi at one night when no classmates were around him. His Maushi understood his humiliation and burst out weeping. “Why, oh why were you born into our community Kishor?” [147] Now and then, Kale had remained under burden. His friend Dhule, who was his room-mate when inquired Kale regarding his caste, he accepted and cleared, “it is not my fault that I was born in that caste and community.” [148] It is a torture and the feeling of speaking truth. Education made him strong to accept the reality. It was his helplessness which made him frustrated and speak Dhule, “...any way, if caste matters to you so much, you should have asked me mine before making friends with me.” [148] Such kind of humiliation at Ambajogai made Kale think that he was inferior at first and then realized that it was not his mistake to be Kolhati.

Kale accepts that he had hidden his caste as Baburao Bagul for getting the rooms. Regarding humiliation in finding rooms, he states – “Are you a Maratha or Brahmin? Maratha. He gave me the room.” [149]

It was Komti community that felt higher in Varna system and raised such questions and when satisfied with Kale’s reply that Kale was Maratha, gave the room. Such many incidences came in Kishor’s life in Ambajogai and every time, the ghost of fear never spared his neck, that he was Kolhati and belongs to backward class, which is supposed untouchable.

5.6.4 Brahmins Ignored Kale’s Merit in 12th Science

Kale was the first student from Sonpeth, who had been admitted in Medical College. Nobody praised or honored him. Kale keeps his awareness of humiliation thus -
I was the son of a mistress; besides, at Sonpeth, the Brahmins were in control. Ambajogai also had its staunch supporters of caste system. [160]

But still, Prin. Dr. A.C. Chaudhari stressed “that caste had nothing to do with effort and hard work.” [160] Prin. Chaudhari knew everything of Kale and appreciated his sincerity and hard efforts.

5.6.5 Torture of Untouchability during M.B.B.S.

5.6.5.1 Step-sister Hesitated to Call Kale ‘Brother’

Kale passed 12th Science and got admitted at Grant Medical College, Bombay. He had “stood second among the backward class students” [158] His self-confidence had grown up. When he was to be admitted in college, Nana had come with him to Bombay. They had stayed at his elder step-sister whose children called Mama to Kale. When inquired by the neighbors about him, his step-sister hesitated to call him brother. It was heart breaking for him. He records his pain – “that hesitation really hurt me.” [159]

These feelings of otherness and alienation humiliated Kale. There was no other way, other than bearing the reality. The inner differences hurt him now and then.

5.6.5.2 M.B.B.S. Students Teased and Played Practical Jokes on the Name of Caste

After being admitted in Medical College, Kale lived in hostel. He took hard efforts to adjust with studies and students. He records-

Life in the hostel was made difficult by the other students who teased me constantly and played practical jokes on me. [175]

Kale was always afraid of his fractured identity. It was as a kind of raging, which humiliated him. The hostlers broke his windowpanes. He thought to complain to the Dean, but he felt the complaining useless. He states, “I was inured to troubles and found it easier to bear them than to talk to people.”[175]

This is height of suffering. The naughty boys troubled him a lot. They stole his Pathology Notes before two days of his examination. His friends advised him to
tackle the bullies rather than bearing their insult. The boys used to kick his door at the midnight and ill-treat him. The boys had made his life hell. Therefore, one day, with courage, he confronted the boys and they backed down. One of his friends knew about his family background and awakened him-

Kishor, so many people have no clue as to who their father is. In addition, it is not your fault, is it? You did not choose to be born in the Kolhati community. So, forget the past and live your life without fear, otherwise they would treat you very badly. [176]

It awakened Kale regarding his parents and the caste for which he should not be called responsible and ill treated. It helped him to fight against casteism and related insult of it.

5.6.6 For a Kolhati to Marry a Mahar or a Muslim Is the Ultimate Crime:

(Kusum’s Humiliation Due to Elopement with Kamble)

Kusum was Sanjay’s mother. She was a beautiful dancer of Kolhati. She used to tie a hundred ghungroos. Sanjay was her only son. At the height of her success, she broke away her family and eloped with Kamble. Her family got furious because “not only had she eloped, she had done so with a Mahar, the lowest of the castes.” [59]

It clearly indicates untouchability within the untouchables. With pride, the male Kolhatis say “we by the caste Kolhati, our relatives – Maratha.” [Chavan.1989. 76.] This consideration made Kolhati feel so and they feel superior. Kale states – “for a Kolhati to marry a Mahar or a Muslim is the ultimate crime.”

Actually, it is the economy, that matters most and still higher castes are preferred as social status. Kusum had two daughters from her husband Kamble. For Kolhati community, they were Mahars and for Mahar, they were Akkarmashi. When the daughters reached to marriageable age, “they found themselves ostracized by both communities.” [2000. 61] Kusum took her daughters to Nerla. They “wept and begged to elders to accept them among the Kolhatis, but the elders did not relent.” [61]Kusum remained neither Kolhati nor Mahar by eloping with Kamble. This is pathetic suffering of Kusum due to casteism in to the blood of the downtroddens of this nation. Every caste has its caste spirit.
5.6.7. Kale’s Restlessness Due to Casteism: ‘Kis Garva Se Kahoon Main Hindu Hoon?’

Kale received a lot of humiliation due to his caste; Dr. Anil Surya regarding Kale’s suffering due to caste and its untouchability states -

Everybody will feel pity and weep for Kishor Kale’s suffering.
Kale seems angry due to caste humiliation. He even tries to commit suicide but is saved. [1996. 113]

Kishor Kale’s awareness later on made him to fight against the cruelty imposed upon his caste. He realized Ambedkarite philosophy

Untouchability is not only worse than slavery, but is positively equal as compassed to slavery also. [Ambedkar 1989. 15]

Kale realized that Indian society is suffering due to untouchability and casteism. His caste humiliated him, which is unfortunately designed according to the Manusmruti pattern. Therefore, he felt to uproot the casteism, as he was walking on the footprints of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. He revolts against casteism and untouchability by working on his new book ‘Kis Garva Se Kahoon Main Hindu Hoon?’ [2000. XVI]

5.7. ILLITERACY AND HUNGER FOR EDUCATION

Kishor Kale, being educated raised voice against the root cause of the suffering of his clan. He suffered and witnessed the ugly face of the evil traditions developed by his people. Sex made their women dance and sell themselves, humiliated him. He studied overall downfall of his people due to not having sense of education. From thousands of years, Kolhati people have been providing their daughters, sisters and mothers to the hunger of the sex, for the rich people who pay and play sex with their women. The Kolhati people neither feel shameful of selling their daughters on the name of Chira-utarna nor feel guilty to survive on their earnings. Kishor realized all these things happening because of illiteracy and the pimp mentality of the men receiving easy money, by selling body of their women. Kishor requests his society to send their children to school and change their dirty pattern of life. These are men and women, who tried to take education but their greedy parents kept them away and used as money-machines and sex-machines. Kishor records the illiteracy responsible for the suffering of his community. He
accepts Dr. B. R. Ambedkar’s revolutionary slogan ‘educate, organize and agitate.’ Education, he realized would change the face of his community.

5.7.1 Kondiba’s illiteracy and Shanta’s Plea for Education

Kondiba had five daughters and three sons from his wife Kalawati. He had already his hold upon Jiji’s house of six rooms and more than twenty acres of land. He had tasted fruits of his step-sister’s gain of property and being Kolhati, he thought to utilize his daughters in the dancing profession. His every daughter was a money-machine for him. As per his tradition, he trained his daughters to dance and earn. Being illiterate, he could not realize what honour means or what self-respect would be. If daughters get educated, he would lose his way of living vagabond life and would be damaged. Therefore, when his daughter, Shanta passed seventh standard, he forcefully disconnected her schooling and sent her to dance and earn. Kishor records his mother’s humiliation due to his grandfather Kondiba as–

Kondiba pulled her out of school when she passed the seventh class and sent her off to learn dancing. Shanta objected; she begged, she wept, ‘I want to be a school teacher,’ she cried. ‘And what will you earn as a teacher?’ demanded Kondiba. [9]

When Shanta was not ready to agree, he beat her until she had given in. Shanta stepped out of her secure childhood and entered into the hostile world, wanting for her exploitation of beauty and youth, when she was just fourteen.

Kondiba, who interrogated what the education will give her, is a serious thing. Kondiba only counted material gain and not the honor, self-respect, dignity, morality and awareness. His mental setup is designed by his community culture where education is futile. If the girls go educated, they will not dance. They will be awakened of reality and may feel shameful of their profession. More over, how will they be ready to do their Chira-utarna, ceremony of selling a virgin girl to any rich man, may be young or old. This is the inner ideology of not sending the girls to school and make them unable to revolt to rebel and reject their hellish life, dipped in tears. ‘Keep them illiterate and loot them would be the policy of Kolhati community. Therefore, the Kolhati parents do not educate their daughters.
5.7.2 Kishor’s Plea for Education to Gawali Guruji

Kishor, being dependant on his grandparents, got humiliated a lot. His grandfather and almost all the members had made him odd-job-doer. Nobody bothered him respect or love rather than Jiji, as his mother was away from him at Sonpeth.

*Kolhati* community, that prefers girls to dance and boys to play tabla or dholak, make them the members of tamasha party. Unfortunate Kishor was also asked by his grandfather to do the same, by sending his sons Ankush and Raju to school that never bothered to attend any class. Kishor states Kondiba’s hard heartedness- You must learn to play tabla. I’ll send you to a *Jalsa* party to learn. What do you want to go to school for? [46]

It again raises crucked mind of Kondiba to ruin Kishor as his mother. He wishes his sons to learn but grandson to earn at tamasha. Kishor himself went to Gawali Guruji and requested him to enroll him to school. It was Kishor’s inner motivation like his mother, who had dreamt to be a school-teacher. Gawali Guruji enrolled his name – ‘Kishor Shantabai Kale’ as it was common among the *Kolhati* community to place mother’s name as the father was unknown, which causes embarrassment to the children at school. Kishor passed through such ordeals throughout his education but never gave it off. After being doctor, he gave his life for awakening his society in this regard to live honorable life.

5.7.3 Sushila’s Awareness for Education

Sushila who always helped Kishor in his education when she was at Nerla, got realized of her children to be educated. She had seen ups and down in dancing profession. When Ramesh Patil deserted her, she had no means to survive and her children’s education. She lowered herself to go towards Indapur where lived Nana Patil, who was mad after her in her youth and had demanded her to be his keep. Her children’s education took her to Indapur where she gave herself to Nana Patil on the amount of Rs. 2000. On one side, it was her sacrifice for her children’s education and on the other, awareness of education. Kishor records Sushila’s awareness and helplessness regarding education and her condition. He states that Nana Patil -
...had asked Maushi to be his mistress, but she had refused. Now faced with desperation for money to educate her children, she had been forced to approach him again. [166]

When Kishor approached Nana Patil, he gave Rs. 2000 in return to one night halt. Another day, she felt guilty of it before Kishor, but for her children’s education, accepted this humiliation. She was ready to do anything. She told Kishor-

I would rather clean dirty vessels at people’s houses or do anything. I want my children to be doctors like you. Will my children also be doctors like you Kishor? [167]

It clearly indicates Sushila’s desire for educating her children in any condition by doing anything. She prostituted herself and even became ready to be washerwoman. Significance of education made her lower like prostitute for her children. It shows her frustration in dancing or prostitution. She preferred education, which would free her children from the hellish world of Kolhati community.

5.8 HYBRIDITY IN KOLHATI COMMUNITY

Kolhati community is like ameba, which has no typical fatherhood. The women are connected with various caste men as their Chira-malik and bear children. These children bear their mother’s name in the place of father. Kishor Kale, though born from MLA Jagtap of Maratha caste, has no name of his father written as ‘Kishor Namdevrao Jagtap’ but ‘Kishor Shantabai Kale’. His brother ‘Deepak’ was born from Dharurkar and still named after his grandfather as ‘Deepak Kondiba Kale’. Though, they have same mother ‘Shantabai’, the fathers are different. Such many examples are recorded in Against All Odds. His all the aunts, except Shalan, have more than one Yejmans and their children have been born from many men. There is no similarity of the father. The only mother is one and the fathers differ, father’s castes differ. In fact, they do not have typical DNA of their community. There is no typical religion, God or Goddess or celebration, which would bring them under one umbrella. The only significant feature is – ‘mother’, who bears the children from her Kajja (Yejman), is the same. She may have her children born from various men, their names and their castes are not given to them. Kolhati community seems hybrid, ameba like and DNA differentiated.

Hybridity, which is one of the typical features of post-colonial literature, is observed in Kolhati community. Some of the illustrations may be stated here –
1) “Laxmi of the Sali community became a Kolhati.” [04] Laxmi who had run away from Solapur with her two children at Karmala met Krushna Kolhati made her as his second wife.

2) Laxmi’s daughter ‘Jiji’ become keep of Madhavrao Patil who was Maratha. He did Chira-utan ceremony of Jiji demanding, “This woman must be mine” [06] her big house of six rooms and twenty-five acres of land.

3) Shanta was Kondiba Kolhati’s daughter. Her chira-utan ceremony took place with MLA Namdevrao Jagtap of Maratha caste. MLA Jagtap became her “Kajja or Yejman, her master.” [15] She delivered Kishor from Jagtap, who is Maratha according to patriarchy.

4) Shanta when deserted from MLA Jagtap got trapped by Dharurkar. He told Jiji “I will give you more money than you can earn, provided you take Shanta home and keep her there.” [21] Not known what caste was of Dharurkar, he bore Deepak, but still Deepak had the name of grandfather at the place of father.

5) Shanta lived with Krushnarao Wadkar from Sali community.

Such many examples prove Kolhati community women bearing children from various men of various castes and religion and creating hybridity. It seems, as if they have adopted hybridization as part of their community.

Kishor Kale revolts against this hybridity in his community. However, Kale does not raise weapon against it, but keeps the facts before, which ultimately is a courageous deed to show reality. It is his anger against the culture imposed upon Kolhati community.

Kolhati community itself stands for hybridity.

5.9 EXPLOITING KOLHATI MEN TO THEIR DAUGHTERS AND SISTERS

5.9.1 Patriarchal Mentality in Against All Odds

Kale’s autobiography records pathetic condition of men and women of Kolhati community. It wins sympathy on the part of sexually humiliated, exploited women and deserves hatred on the name of men who force their women to dance and to be a prostitute. The custom and tradition deeply rooted in their blood makes them neither feel guilty nor raise their voice against the exploitation. It has destroyed their emotions. In other sections of society, we find husbands, fathers, brothers and sons
protecting their womanhood where as Kolhati people send their women to earn money by selling their womanhood.

Most of the times, they search the buyers and make contract of the life of their women for their livelihood, Against All Odds is such a social document which exposes the masks of Kolhati men who humiliate their women and feed their stomach. Their economy is based upon the profession of which they feel proud. An image of pimp neither humiliates nor bothers them. They have been running this system of shame on the name of their tradition, against which, this book raises voice and pleads the clan to be educated to uproot the shamelessness from the blood of Kolhati community.

5.9.2 Male Characters in Against All Odds

Kishor Kale brings before the world, an image of careless, lazy, addicted, shameles and parasite men of Kolhati community. The women undergo suffering mutely to the demands of their brothers and fathers. Even for their children, they bear utter humiliation. Sharankumar Limbale records his observation -

As the sensuous eye of the sexual men is there on the women of Kolhati, there is the eye of hunger of her family members on her. [2008. 74]

Against All Odds gives two types of men doing exploitation of women. Her brothers and fathers appear as if villains looting their women and they exploit their daughters and sisters mercilessly by throwing them into such vulgar profession and become pimps for the beautiful body of their sisters and daughters. Krushna Kolhati, his son Kondiba and, Kondiba’s three sons do not live respectable life. They exploit their women as their profession. They are no more different from outsiders. After all, they are also victims of the age old tradition. There are men from other castes and religions who enjoy young and beautiful Kolhati dancers. They are fops and gallants with their richness. They buy the Kolhati girls, sexually use them until they are young, and sex fulfilling objects. They even bear them children and heartlessly throw them into the world for starvation. Such cruel men, running behind lust like MLA Jagtap, Dharurkar, Sopanrao Galegaonkar, Ramesh Patil, Nana Patil, a rich man working in Aeroplane, Pawar Sahib, Henge Patil, Dinya, Hambirrao Patil, men of young and old age have looted the Kolhati women and then deserted them to suffer.
Kale pours his anger upon such people who exploited the women and threw them in the hell to suffer.

5.9.3 *Kolhati* Men Exploiting and Destroying their Lives as Pimps and their Women’s Lives as Prostitutes

They become dictators and rule them. They keep women as cash crop and push them to dancing and earning. They do not feel shame to send their women to do prostitution. They develop the culture, which may rule their women. Their Jat-panchayat also favors them and they become lazy, addicted and parasites upon their women. Krishna *Kolhati* and Kondiba *Kolhati* are the two such examples Kale stated in his autobiography. Kondiba’s sons have also become parasites. They are not trained in any job, which would also make them the exploiters of their daughters by sending them to dance and earn or even to be prostitutes to earn. No matter, how the money comes, it must come to the house where dancers’ father and brothers live.

5.9.3.1 Krishna *Kolhati* Kept Laxmi and Exploited her Daughter Jiji:

Krushna *Kolhati* saw Laxmi the Sali caste woman and her two children at the bus stand of Karmala and sympathized them. Laxmi, who had run away from Solapur because of her family disputes, was trapped in to the clutches of Krushna *Kolhati* and came with him as his second wife. She had a beautiful daughter named Jiji who, later on became keep of Madhavrao Patil as per the custom of *Kolhati* and Krushna Kolhati got started his earning. Krushna *Kolhati* thought of his only legitimate son Kondiba, exploited his illegitimate son Gangaram as dholak player in Tamasha and Jiji as a dancer, and then keep of Patil. Kishor records Kondiba’s crucked, exploiting nature who found Jiji “a hen that would lay golden eggs.” [2000. 5] He used Jiji’s pretty and fair complexion as a capital and filled his pockets with twenty five acres of land and a six room house at Nerla by Madhavrao Patil, “Kondiba continued to relax at home.” [7] He married his son Kondiba to Kalawati from Baramati and passed his tradition of *Kolhati* community towards him.
5.9.3.2 Kondiba Ran his Father’s Tradition of Sending Daughters to Dance, Earn and He Became Pimp

Kondiba Kolhati married Kalawati, a Kolhati girl and became father of children. Among them were five daughters – Shanta, Shalan, Sushila, Rambha and Baby and three sons named Popat, Raju and Ankush. Kondiba sent his sons to school where they could not learn, even though he gave one rupee each, every day. Kishor states how his grandfather spoiled his sons Raju and Ankush – “They have to be given one rupee every day before they could be persuaded to go to school.” [68]

As Kondiba was illiterate, he fulfilled demands of his sons but he could not peruse them to school. On the contrary, he refused Kishor to give twenty paisa to buy chalk by saying, “I have no change.” [68] It indicates Kondiba’s partiality at his grandson. He seems hardhearted, crucked, selfish and evil minded.

Kondiba had not simply humiliated Kishor but his mother too. When she was a school-going girl, he refused her learning and sent her to tamasha for dancing and earning by breaking her dream to be a teacher. He kept illiterate his daughters and used them as dancers and then sex-machines to earn and feed his family. He used Jiji, his widow sister to control his daughters, during their training and performances as dancers. He proved pimp father, living on the earnings of his daughters. His house had become a brothel place where the Kajja, Yejman or the Chira-maliks visit their mistresses and had sex with them. As they were rich people, they were demanded golden jewelry, lands and cash as a price of the girls to be their women. Therefore, Kondiba enjoyed happy days as long as his daughters were young, ignorant and obedient. He never allowed his daughters to fall in love which may disconnect them and source of income would be stopped. He humiliated Shanta who loved and eloped with Nana Sahukar from Sonpeth. Otherwise, all the other men were his clients, who would count money and exploit his daughters. It is shocking that no brother of these five girls shocked or objected upon such way of living but rather accepted as a routine pattern and supported it mutely.

Kondiba, in his old age, became pimp. His daughters had become aged and were not able to attract men. Except Shanta and Shalan, remaining three named Sushila, Rambha and Baby were earning. Almost all of them had their children born from various men. They had gone fed up of such life and were thinking to leave it.
Their poverty and helplessness pushed them to prostitution. Kishor records Kondiba as a pimp for his daughter Rambha that was unbelievable to him. He records... “a horrible truth hit me hard in the guts. Ajoba was prostituting his daughter to earn money.” [185] and Rambha had become helpless to reduce her to be a prostitute for 100 rupees. This is pathetic downfall of Rambha’s life. Kondiba shamelessly and helplessly became pimp of his daughter.

5.9.3.3 Unknowingly Kishor Became Pimp of his Sushila Maushi

Once, Sushila’s daughter Jaya who was learning, needed money for her schooling and Sushila had no money. She sent Kishor to Indapur two times towards Nana Patil who had once loved and demanded Sushila to be his keep but she had refused. This time, with the mediator, Kishor approached Nana Patil and took Rs. 2000 and Sushila slept with him. She felt shameful to do this before her nephew, who was then doing M.B.B.S. She told Kishor that she had decided to live with Nana Patil, who had assured her to come to Nerla in few days. Kishor records his guilt “I had practically been a pimp for Sushila Maushi.” [168] when Nana Patil didn’t come to Nerla, Sushila sent Kishor to Indapur. Nana Patil awakened Kishor of his work and ashamed of him. Nana Patil talked him, “this kind of work doesn’t suit you, Kishor … “you are going to be a doctor, aren’t you ashamed to do this?” [169] It made Kishor guilty who realized his Maushi indirectly using him as her pimp. Piteous Kishor for his Maushi became pimp and got humiliated.

5.9.3.4 Babya Became Pimp

Babya was a boy of the age of Kishor, when Kishor had been with his Rambha Maushi at Barshi theatre as “odd-job-lad-cum-errand boy.” [141] Babya lived near Rasika theatre and acquainted Kishor of the ugly face of sex. He used to say that he would run away to Bombay but “instead he had become a pimp.” [141] When Kishor met and poured out his sorrow, he showed the way that Kishor could do his job and be free from his worries. He took Kishor to brothalplace where he worked. His job was to bring the hesitated and undecided men wandering on the road to the whorehouse. He used to speak sweetly and politely to bring the customers. He used to say-
Sir, this girl is very nice. Taste her once, and you will come back for her very day! She’s only sixteen, Sir. [141]

It was Babya’s job to clean the bed, before the couple went in. This is how; he does not feel guilty of his job but earn and live happy life. Babya seems a pimp living without seriousness, who never feels that such job would humiliates or dishonour him. His all the senses have gone numb and had gone habitual of living shameless life. Against All Odds has recorded the greedy, habitual and helpless men pimping for the prostitutes who are either their daughters, aunts or the whores in brothel, Kishor exposes this dark face of Kolhati men who were knowingly or unknowingly fallen in this profession. He condemns the cruelty of men that is making the women to do such shameful jobs and display their shameless life.

5.10 THE RICH AND LUSTY MEN EXPLOITING

KOLHATI WOMEN

Kolhati community provides girls as dancers and then makes them keeps of the rich and lusty people. These rich men are sex starved who buy the Kolhati women by paying money, ornaments and land. They bear them children. Some of them grow and accept them as their children but most of them reject the woman and her children. They even do not allow the children to bear their names on the name of shame and the fear of the property to be shared by them. Out of such difficulties, these men use the Kolhati women and throw them away when faded. The merciless behavior of those upper-castes, rich, heartless people made Kolhati women and their children to suffer.

5.10.1 Madhavrao Patil of Nerla, Krushnarao Wadkar, Man of Sonpeth and MLA Lonkar of Parbhani: Exceptions

Against All Odds gives us two types of men exploiting the Kolhati women. The first type of men supported the Kolhati women throughout the life and the others, who just sexually exploited the women and threw them away. Madhavrao Patil from Nerla who kept Jiji, Krushnarao Wadkar the Sahu from Sonpeth who kept Shanta, Sopanrao Galegaonkar from Selu who kept Sushila and MLA Lonkar from Parbhani who kept Nagin seem a little honorable through the tradition of Kolhati women. They never deserted their keeps and their children. However, in the broad sense, their deed
does not suit to be called honorable in the light of their religion and humanity. They were married and still they deceived their wives, kept tamasha dancers of Kolhati community and bore them children. Their hunger of sex made them so. Their uncontrolled sexy mentality and richness lowered them. Culture could not stop them, though they were educated. Madhavrao Patil gave “25 acres of land a six room house to live in [7] to Jiji with his possessive determination “this woman must be mine.” [6] Krushnarao Wadkar who is called Nana, fell in love with Shanta and promised “to buy her land, to build her a house” [30] at Sonpeth. MLA Lonikar treated Nagin and her children respectfully by building house and providing education to children. MLA of Karmala, Namdevrao Jagtap’s behavior seems contrary to MLA Lonikar who never deserted Nanda-

**MLA of Karmala Namdevrao Patil kept Kolhati woman and when realized that it would defame him, he threw her away. On the contrary, it is experience of M. P. Lonikar. He treated Kolhati woman like his wife. [2008. 75]**

Sopanrao Galegaonkar from Selu was unhappy because of not having heir and his wife had permitted him to remarry. Therefore, he kept Sushila by paying to her father. However, unfortunately, Sushila’s father Kondiba separated him from Sushila and children because of Galegaonkar’s inability to pay for his son Popat’s marriage. “It was as if he had picked up a duster and wiped Sopanrao out of Sushila’s life.” [2000. 26]

Though lusty and rich, mad for the Kolhati women, Madhavrao Patil, Krushnarao Wadkar, Sopanrao Galegaonkar and MLA Lonikar seem supporting, protecting, loving and caring their women and children. Their youth madness of lust for other women is condemnable, except Sopanrao Galegaonkar at Selu. As per Hindu traditions, if they feel so, they must obey their religion, which never allows them to behave so. They have deceived their wives at home and submitted their loyalty towards the Kolhati women, which itself is immoral.

The only thing that keeps them in protected zone is that they have not run away from the wrong done by them by keeping Kolhati women. Though Kishor feels a little warm on the past of these people, he voices against the tradition itself, which makes the Kolhati women as keep and not the respectable wives, who may really enjoy fruits of their matrimony and identity.
5.10.2 Lusty Looters of Kolhati Women

Against All Odds shows pain of the Kolhati women who are deserted by their Chira-malik, when fulfilled their lust. They, with their uncontrolled lust for sex and money, enjoyed the poor Kolhati dancers by making private sittings (Baithaks) and showering money upon them. Their excessive sex hunger maddened them and they behaved as a vagabonds, fops and gallants. They tasted sex of the Kolhati virgins one after another and lived careless life. They deceived their wives by keeping sexual relationship outside, hidden from the family and society. When acknowledged to the society and the family members, they have broken the relationship heartlessly by deserting the keeps and children. Such, many male characters are exposed in this autobiography, from college students to the elder lusty men of about sixty and above. These men have not obeyed norms of their culture or religion. The have not obeyed the rules of humanity and faithfulness. They have not observed morality and became hungry and thirsty lusty men of immorality. Ethics have nothing to do with them. Sex is the only dominant thing ruling their head and hearts. They never feel guilty of the deeds they have done. These are the looters and lusty villains on the ground of humanity, who deceived their wives by enjoying keeps. They deserted their keeps and children, which is again, a crime against humanity. They seem hateratable in all the situations.

5.10.2.1 MLA Namdevrao Jagtap Patil of Karmala

MLA Namdevrao Jagtap Patil of Karmala enjoyed Shanta by doing ‘Chira-utarna’ ceremony. When she bore him son, he deserted and disowned her with her son. He frightened to the damaging of his political image. Kishor states as, “Kondiba sold his daughter’s youthful body” [16] to the MLA, who played and ran away.

5.10.2.2 Dharurkar Dragged Shanta

Dharurkar, being aged found sexual shelter in the arms of Shanta. He was a rich, aged and alcoholic man who told Jiji that she was ruining Shanta and emotionally got connected with Shanta. He made Shanta stay at home and bore her a son. For Dharurkar’s great joy, Shanta “bore him a son, whom they named Deepak.” [21] Such an old man, due to the damage of his liver, died and left Shanta behind to
suffer. Dharurkar’s character though appears sensitive and positive, his age and the things he had done, never leave him to be called, a gentleman. What about his family, he would be having at Dharur? These questions remain unanswered and Dharurkar deserves blame, shame and dishonor.

5.10.2.3 Ramesh Patil Deserted Sushila

Sushila, after being dragged away from Sopanrao Galegaonkar, offered herself to the love and lust of Ramesh Patil who played with her. He had his family and still then wooed Sushila. “They ate food from one plate” [50] and he bore all the expenses of Kondiba’s family. His lust maddened him and her profession exploited her. “Suddenly, one day, he had walked out of her life without a word” [161] when Sushila was thirty-three. This is heartless deserting to a keep and her son Balaji, born to starve, suffer and survive.

5.10.2.4 Nana Patil of Islampur Slept with Sushila Giving her 2000 Rupees

Helpless Sushila dragged away by Ramesh Patil, helplessly went to Islampur and begged for his shelter. He was her mad lover once and had demanded Sushila as a keep. Sushila, then rejected him, forgetting tragic past, he assured her to keep at the age of her thirty-three. Though, he would be old enough, slept with her at lodge and paid her Rs. 2000. He did not come to Nerla. Agitatedly, he refused Sushila’s stale body and said, “I cannot come to Nerla, I’m too busy.” [169] and Kishor advised his aunt, “Better forget him.” [169]

5.10.2.5 A Man Working in Aeroplane Did Chira-ceremony of Rambha and Deserted her

He was “a tall, fair young man whom everybody called Seth.” [55] He was a man working in aeroplane. He enjoyed Rambha and deserted her. He became Rambha’s Yejman and could not obey his responsibility. He, just played sex with young Rambha by paying money and one day, left her to dance. He never came back and Rambha had to join the dancing party once again.
5.10.2.6 Henge Patil of Aklij Kept Baby and When Lost Interest, Deserted her

He was a heavy drinker. He got attracted at Baby’s beauty and youth. However, Baby disliked him; she had to accept him on the order of her father. “She was a sixteen and he was forty.” [63] He paid the highest price for baby’s youthful body, as if baby was a commodity to be sold in the market of sex. He visited Nerla and did sexual exploitation of beautiful Baby. When filled his lust, left her to dance and survive again.

5.10.2.7 Pawar Saheb Gifted Tears to Baby

“Tears are all that tamasha dancers have in their lives any way.” [16] – is the fate of Kolhati women. Kishor’s comment on the tragedy of Baby, when she was deserted from Pawar Saheb, shows how the sexual looters left Kolhati women to suffer and die. Pawar Saheb too, enjoyed sex with Baby for two years, bore her a son and ran away from responsibility.

5.10.2.8 Hambirrao Patil’s (Islampur) Steady Stream of Money for Baby

Hambirrao Patil of Islampur was a rich man. He showered money as if a stream on Baby’s “beauty, her slender waist and her alluring youth.” [170] Baby “a fresh tender cucumber” [170] fell prey to the lust of Hambirrao, when he called rickshaw for the sick child of Baby to be hospitalized. Baby accepted Hambirrao’s proposal and became his keep. On the request of Kishor, during his M.B.B.S., he permanently sheltered her.

5.10.2.9 Sixty Year Old Chira-malik of Rukmin

Rukmin, being a poor girl of seventeen, was a keep of sixty-year-old dhoti-wearing toothless man. Kishor suspected him as Rukmin’s father. His Maushi cleared him, “he was not her father” but “her Chira-malik.” [58] Such a shameful lusty man of the age of her grandfather played sex with helpless Rukmin and exposed his inhuman face.
5.10.2.10 Shobha’s Man of Majalgaon deserted her

Shobha, who lived life as per her likes and dislikes, one day, got trapped by a rich man of Majalgaon. Shobha disobeyed her parents and gave herself to her lover. He lived with her and one day, abandoned her. She had gone almost mad and miserable as “her parents battered her, verbally and physically.” [173] Though Shobha visited Majalgaon number of times to search him, because of not having his address, she remained helpless. It is because of his dragging, she died miserably.

5.10.2.11 Dinya from Islampur – A Young Boy Baby’s Lover

He was eighteen-year-old fop and gallant, who tried to hunt Baby. At Islampur theatre, “every evening, he used to give Baby… five or ten rupees” [165] in the competition with Hambirrao Patil. His romantic attitude of bringing flowers to Baby, one day made Baby say him, “you are still too young for all this.” [165] In reply, he bitterly spoke “I can get a college girl” [165] in about three hundred rupees. Baby, who considered him like her brother, could not understand him.

Dinya’s attitude and practical knowledge shows his carefree sexual life, wandering behind school, college and tamasha girls. It is horrible to witness such a young boy maddened by lust.

5.10.2.12 A College Boy Mukesh Fell in Love with Nili

Against All Odds does not simply throw light upon the elder addicted lust but the young one too. All the age group men have gone mad to enjoy sex with the tamasha women. At first, they fell in love, keep the women and then leave them tense.

Mukesh, who was a young college boy, had fallen in love with Nili. She was “pretty and young and only seventeen.” [56] Mukesh was madly in love with her and was ready to do anything. His romantic nature was ready to face any ordeal. When Nili’s aunt understood of her romantic lover Mukesh, she rejected him on the basis of money. In frustration, he conveyed his feeling to Nili as “I’ll kill that aunt… or I’ll kill myself.” [57] This is truly a madness of this young boy, who instead of educating himself at college is searching the roots of sex at the door of theatre or tamasha.
5.11 **CHIRA-UTARNA CEREMONY OF SELLING VIRGINITY OF KOLHATI WOMEN**

Kishor Kale strongly condemns and complaints against the evil traditions running in the Kolhati community regarding women.

‘Chira-utarna’ – ceremony is “the Kolhati ritual of selling a virgin girl.” [15] Kolhati girls are trained for dancing and singing and are sent to the theatres or tamasha theatres to earn. There, they dance in various groups on the lavani and filmy songs. The audience gives them money as a price, honour for their dance, and flirt with them. The erotic gestures and ambiguous praising creates sexual appeal. The men with their lusty intentions organize private shows and shower money on the women of their interest. Especially, the virgins fall prey to their lust for whom, such men pay any price. Her beauty and youth-hood maddens them and they wish to claim the girl for their sexual satisfaction by Chira-utarna ceremony. They keep the Kolhati virgins and satisfy their sexual hunger either by loving them and bearing their children happily throughout the life or by leaving them to starve and suffer. Regarding Chira-utarna ceremony, Kishor Kale provides information-

**The first man in Kolhati girl’s life had to pay her family a certain amount of money or agree to pay it over a fixed period of time. The money may be paid in cash, gold or land. [15]**

The man who buys the virgin of Kolhati in such a tradition is called “Kajja or Yejman” [15] of that Kolhati woman. He is also-called “Chira-malik.” [56] The Chira-malik usually keeps such Kolhati girl at her father’s house and used to visit her as per his schedules. Such a daughter becomes a source of income to her family and hence lovable. She is not allowed to be the keep and live in the house of her Kajja or Chira-malik. As such, the girl remains golden the egg delivering hen, for her. Her father never allows her to fall in love or marry and desert his family. This economy works behind Chira-utarna ceremony. This ceremony is as if marriage, as the girl has to wear mangalsutra as a token of her relationship. Kale’s autobiography records such ritual of his mother, did with MLA Namdevrao Jagtap from Karmala.

During the days of election, Namdevrao saw Shanta and “asked Kondiba not only for his vote but also for his daughter.” [14] He said “Name your price, Kondiba, and let your daughter live with me.” [14] Shanta’s Chira-utarna ceremony took place and she lived in her father’s house as Namdevrao Jagtap’s keep. “Jagtap took the
place of a husband, even though she was an unwilling bride.” [14] When tamasha at Nerla took place, Madhavrao Patil saw Jiji and went mad for her. He determined, “this woman must be mine” [6] and did Chira-utarna ceremony with Jiji by paying twenty-five acres of land and a six-room house at Nerla. Sushila danced at Selu and Sopanrao Galegaonkar “performed the Chira-utarna ceremony for Sushila…”[25] A young and rich man, serving in the aeroplane, who was called Seth became “Rambha’s Yejman.” [55] Baby who was just sixteen unwillingly accepted the wish of her father and became victim of the lust of Henge Patil from Akluj who paid the “highest for the youthful body” [63] and became her Chira-malik. A middle-aged man became Nili’s Chira-malik when she was “only seventeen.” [56] The shameful thing to record is, that sixty year old grandfather-like, toothless, dhoti wearing man performed Chira-utarna ceremony of Rukmin. Such many examples are recorded which show the sexual hunger of the rich men who are already married, would be having their own children, wife and prestige but did this to satisfy their hunger of sex. Except Galegaonkar who really wanted Sushila as his wife with his first wife’s consent, as he had no children from his first wife, the other men exploited her. MLA Lonikar’s example is exceptional who bore children and did not desert Nagin. All the other men have run away from their keeps of whose Chira-utarna ceremony was made by them. They are responsible to damage the life of these women and their children to suffer and die. The other shocking thing disowns the responsibility of fatherhood, where fatherhood plays million-dollar role for self-respect and identity. These are all inhuman crimes, welcomed by the shocking tradition of Kolhati community, lingering around sex only.

5.12 IDENTITY CRISIS, SEARCH FOR SELF-RESPECT AND FIGHT FOR EXISTENCE

Being hybridized, Kolhati community has woman’s caste attached to her sons and daughters. Fathers, out of either social guilt or fear of family, hide their relationship with Kolhati women, as it is illegitimate. Their social norms and religious strategy, never allow them to keep sexual relationships rather than wives. Still, their money and lust maddens them and they wander in the lanes of the outsider women in tamasha theaters. Most of such men are rich and lusty, no matter of which caste, beautiful young Kolhati woman seems their prey and they become the hunters.
Mercilessly, and irresponsibly, they do illicit deeds. As everything is illegal and base, everything is kept secret. It is handled as a private matter of such lusty men, who have doomed religion of humanity. It seems as if Kolhati community is designed for the lust of such vulgar men, who are satisfying their hunger of lust in the houses of Kolhati. Such men run away by wiping their names from the forehead of such women by disowning them and their children. They seem economically conscious, caste conscious and socially conscious, hiding their names, their identities and never allow such women to use their names or surnames which caused identity problems for the children. In the nation like India, where father’s name and caste is written as a record of identity and Kolhati community places mother’s caste and name. Most of the times, the fake names are written or grandparents’ names as father are found on the record. It causes humiliation, which is lived by Kishor Kale who writes his name as ‘Kishor Shantabai Kale.’

5.12.1 Why Mother’s Name at the Place of Father?

“Kishor Shantabai Kale”

Almost everybody neglected Kishor as his mother had deserted him and had gone to Sonpeth with her master Nana Sahukar, which was a crime in the sight of her parents. Therefore, Kishor, who was disowned by Nana and helplessly deserted by Shanta, lived at Nerla, at his ajoba’s house, where he got ill-treatment. Except Jiji, Sushila Maushi and Ramesh Kaka, nobody loved him calling parasite. Ill-treatment highly humiliated Kishor. Nobody thought to enroll his name in school when Raju Mama and Ankush Mama were already enrolled. In fact his ajoba used to say him learn to play tabla, so that, he may be sent to tamasha party for earning. Kishor disliked his ajoba’s idea and met Gawali Guruji, who was a classmate of Shanta, sympathised Kishor and registered his name in the school as “Kishor Shantabai Kale.” [46] Kishor gives justification behind this cruelty thus-

I was given my mother’s name because my father was unknown. This is common among the Kolhatis and causes the children much embarrassment in school. [46]

During the attendance, when Guruji used to call his name, the children used to tease and humiliate him. As Kishor loved school as his mother, he tolerated this pathetic humiliation.
Kishor himself records his father’s name as ‘MLA Namdevrao Jagtap’ from Karmala, due to whom, his mother had become pregnant. He was her Chira-malik. He enjoyed her youthful body and beauty and when she became pregnant, her deserted her, out of the social fear, which he felt would damage his image. Shanta’s father advised her to aboard the child. They even tried to abort with the help of Drupadi but could not, as “a girl whose virginity was lost condemned to a far lower price in the tamasha bazaar.” [17] Delivering the baby, Shanta joined the dancing party and kept Kishor under the care of Jiji and her parents. Kondiba knew the name of Kishor’s father but nobody cared for the name of father to be registered as per their custom. Kishor clarifies the reasons of such traditions humiliating the Kolhati community.

5.12.2 Deepak’s Father Was Dharurkar But Was Not Registered

After being deserted by MLA Jagtap, Shanta joined the party and went to Dharur. She was admired as princess and madly loved by an elderly alcoholic rich man. He told Jiji, “You are just ruining this lovely girl’s life.” [21]. He provided money and kept Shanta by becoming her Yejman’. For his great joy, “She bore him a son whom they named Deepak.” [21] Shanta gave up his alcoholic habit, but due to the damage of liver, he died and Shanta once again was brought to the street with her children, without the means of survival. Deepak, who was a child, was yet not admitted anywhere, but when Shanta was once again kept by Nana from Sonpeth, he registered his name in school as “Deepak Kondiba Kale.” [174] He was already expected to be registered as ‘Deepak Dharurkar’ but it couldn’t take place. It again leads to that Kolhati tradition, which is broken, where Kishor himself had written to have, Kolhati tradition to write mother’s name. Kondiba is the name of Kale’s maternal grandfather. Still then, he is made Deepak’s father, which is horrible and shocking. Shanta’s father is made her husband. If taken according to Hindu tradition, in which Shanta lived with Nana, such ugly picture to record grandfather’s name, as father’s name is objectionable.
5.12.3 Fractured Identities of Kishor and Deepak

Krushnarao Bhagojiappa Wadkar
Surendra Krushnarao Wadkar
Radhabai Krushnarao Wadkar
Shantabai Krushnarao Wadkar
Kishor Shantabai Kale
Deepak Kondiba Kale. [174]

This is the list of voters from Krushnarao Wadkar’s family from Sonpeth. It was the same list on the ration card, which does not prove -

i) That Kishor is the son of Shantabai Krushnarao Wadkar.

ii) That Deepak is neither son of Shantabai, nor Krushnarao.

iii) That Kishor and Deepak are brothers born from Shantabai or Krushnarao Wadkar.

iv) That it does not prove that Kishor and Deepak belong to Wadkar family.

v) That Shantabai and Radhika would be sisters born to Krushnarao Wadkar or must be said that they must be wives of Krushnarao Wadkar.

It puzzles and does not clarify the internal relationship of the members. Specially, the last two names seem wrongly added to the member card of Krushnarao Wadkar. Ultimately, Krushnarao is neither neither Deepak nor Kishor’s father. He had kept Shanta assuring land, jewellery, house and honourable stability. He had kept Shanta in his tin house and had given her honourable stability. He had kept Shanta in tin house without much dignity as he had already a wife and three children. When he was asked repeatedly to transfer some land to the names of Shanta’s children, he used to be angry and say that he was not going to die in a hurry. However, it was Deepak, who raised identity problem irritated, says-

It is not a question of when you die. The fact is that there is nothing to prove that Kishor and I are brothers or that Bai is our mother. So, the deed of the land should be clearly in our names. [174]
5.12.4 Krushnarao Wadkar’s Crucked, Selfish Mentality to Crack

Deepak’s Identity

When Wadkar kept Shanta, Deepak was of six months and had spent most of his childhood at Sonpeth. Wadkar, instead of giving his name as father, gave grandfather’s name as father of Deepak. He had not thought, what would happen to the identity of Deepak.

It was the intention to keep Kishor and Deepak aloof from the society at Sonpeth, so that, they should not be called as children of Wadkar. Nana had already three children from his married wife. Kishor clearly understood his Nana’s purpose of naming Deepak on the name of Kondiba, his grand father. Kishor realized Nana’s purpose, as “he did not want us to have any claims on his land or money.” [174]

5.12.5 Fractured Identity Made Kale Suffer During M.B.B.S.

When Kishor was learning, Wadkar always showed his step-fatherhood. He never provided enough money and Kishor had to suffer. He suffered from teasing of medical college students who used insulting language on the name of his father. They broke his windowpanes. He thought to complain Dean as he was wounded. He records- “my troubles seemed endless.” [175] His friends advised him to deal with them courageously.

Harish Rathod, who had insulted Kishor once, was taken seriously. He had kicked Kishor’s door and had run away. Kishor saw Rathod running drunkenly down the corridor. Kishor confirmed him and raised his anger-

What do you need at two a.m. in the morning? And if you do need something, why do you run away? If you do it again, I'll break every bone in your body. [176]

Rathod felt sorry and accepted that he had done it to tease him. Such kind of nuisances humiliated Kale as his name was ‘Kishor Shantabai Kale’ and he was son of a Kolhati woman. His caste and name, both of them, made him suffer. Kishor felt his life oppressed with fears of offending, inviting more troubles and causing troubles to others. His constant tensions insulted him.

It was his fractured identity, which took tests of him now and then and humiliated him.
5.12.6 Wadkar’s Selfish Piteous Efforts to Be Father of Kishor When Became Doctor

It was Krushnarao Wadkar, who noted Kishor in his ration and election card as ‘Kishor Shantabai Kale’ and separated Kishor from himself. During Kishor’s education, he did not pay proper financial attention. Kishor sold clothes at Ambajogai and ran to Nerla, to get help from his aunts. Receiving a lot of humiliation, he became M.B.B.S. with the help of scholarship. When he became doctor, Wadkar tried to do change in the name of Kishor as his son. When honour came, he tried to deposit it on his name. Kishor refused it and destroyed his selfish desire to win easy reputation to be the father of a doctor. Kishor records his agony, “Now that I am a doctor, he is trying hard to get my name changed to his, but I have refused.” [175]

Kishor, by refusing his Nana’s intentions to record him on his name, shows his awareness. He says -

It is because I have learnt that success does not depend on a name or caste, or the womb from which one is born, it is only sincere effort that counts. [176]

Though it is so, Kishor lived in India where caste matters most, fatherhood matters most, legality matters most and what matters most is profession you do. Kishor’s mother was a Kolhati dancer, who became a keep and fractured the identity of her children unknowingly. Calling it custom of Kolhati community is unpardonable. She obeyed her tradition and became a scapegoat. It made her children, suffer for father’s name, where it is matter of legality and hence the honour.

Kishor rebels against his humiliation that caused a lot of trouble to him. He revolted against his odd name showing his fractured identity.

5.12.7 Kishor’s Acceptance of Reality and Rejection to Suffer on the Name of Identity

Bravely, Kale accepted his reality and revolted by raising his dissonant voice. His autobiography Against All Odds is a record of exposing the men and women with their suffering. His forceful rejection to Kolhati traditions and customs exploiting womanhood makes him protagonist of the postcolonial literature.
5.13 REJECTION OF WOMAN ENCOUNTERING AND EXPLOITING JAT-PANCHAYAT OF KOLHATI COMMUNITY

Jat-panchayat was a system to monitor the life and affairs of tribal community. Earlier it functioned as a community court. With the Britisher’s arrival many communities began to obey the orders of modern court. In fact, the intention of this court was not to exploit but to monitor the smooth functioning of the society. Unfortunately, this function of the Jat-panchayat couldn’t remain in the age long traditions of the Kolhati community. The women specially got highly humiliated by it.

Against All Odds is a complaint against all the odds, which humiliated Kale as a representative of Kolhati community. Kishor “took the society to operate in his dispensary that is deep rooted into the clay of inequality.” [Goyanka, 2007]. He has made the diagnosis of his community and has come to the result that it has been suffering due to age old traditions imposed on them by the society. It has got designed in such a manner, to produce beautiful sex satisfying girls to the rich and lusty people. He, who has money and wishes to satisfy his sexual hunger, may keep the Kolhati virgin. Undoubtedly, the brain design of Kolhati community is also designed in such a manner to submit to the wills and wishes of the rich and the rulers. It is given the caste base and Jat-panchayat base to strengthen it into the blood of the men and women of Kolhati community. Jat-panchayat has made women’s code of conduct and overall principles to be obeyed. Jat-panchayat is the part of Kolhati culture. It further strengthened the hold of the system. It acts as if a community court where elder men and women act as panchas and sit their court, at four places once in a year.

At Paunshi Purnima (full moon day) at Jejuri, during Rang-panchami at Madhi, at Sonari during Akshay Trutiya and at Malegaon fair. [Chavan 1989. 77]

All Maharashtrian Kolhati community gathers at Madhi, as it is believed their supreme court. Once, the decision declared at Madhi is final and the punishment can’t be changed or disobeyed. Kishor Kale’s autobiography gives few references and provides severe punishments passed by Jat-panchayat that made life of the Kolhati people unbearable. The punishment of excommunication seems inhuman. The rules that enslave the women are also objectionable. These people have puppetrised their
women for the males who have gone addicted vagabonds on the earnings of daughters and sisters.

5.13.2 Jat-panchayat’s Cruel Code of Conduct for the Kolhati Women

*Kolhati* community has made dancing and protecting family compulsory for their women. The Jat-panchayat has made its rules and regulations strict to bind and blind their woman, strongly under its clutches. The whole Jat-panchayat revolves around woman and controles her. The five pledge-wise code of conduct of the community are these -

1. I will not devalue dancing-singing by doing anything bad.
2. I’ll be away from dirty habits and ungentleman behaviour.
3. I’ll look after depending brothers, sisters and mother.
4. I’ll help them live dignified life by helping them to do trading or jobs.
5. I’ll look after depending men to not to be parasites and addicted.” [84]

5.13.3 Implementation of Jat-panchayat as Found in Against All Odds

*Against All Odds* exposed the bitterly humiliated lives of women due to the strict implementations of Jat-panchayat rules, community traditions and customs.

Kishor’s all the aunts went through ordeals of Jat-panchayat. All of them, except Shalan danced and provided finance to parents. They mutely suffered without any complaint. Shanta, Sushila, Rambha and Baby, all the four sisters have gone through suffering. They have not broken, traditions imposed upon them. They went through dancing traditions, *Chira-utarna* ceremony, provided money to their father and obeyed traditions. Except Shanta, others stayed at Nerla and supplied money to their father and brothers. They suffered with their innocent children, born from various men, who kept and enjoyed their youthful body and dragged them to suffer. Kishor raises voice against the suffering of his aunts and mother through this autobiography. He has fought battle against all the odds imposed upon the women, which caused a lot of frustration to the women and tragedy of their children. His mother, Shanta eloped with Nana from Sonpeth and broke the tradition of Jat-panchayat, which made her suffer and her children see humiliation. Kalawati, the
mother of Shanta, and Mijas Maushi, with few hired men, went to threat and take
back Shanta, they threatenend of their traditions of Jat-panchayat to Shanta. They said-

The moment, your youth is over, he’ll kick your arise. Then we
will see how you come home. Nobody will even take your dead
body to the cremation grounds. You’ll be thrown to the dugs.
[2000. 40]

Sushila, who had gone suffered a lot, raised her inner voice against Jat-
panchayat norms, destroying the lives of Kolhati women. She raised her humiliation-

Has a woman no right to her own life? Is the only aim of our lives
to provide a livelihood for our fathers and brothers? Is it a sin to
be born beautiful woman in a Kolhati family. [43, 44]

This is how; every woman has gone scapegoat of the traditions of Kolhati
community imposed by Jat-panchayat, became victim.

5.13.4 Kusum Eloped with Kamble and Ex-communication by Jat-
panchayat Norms

Kusum, who was the best dancer, established fame of Nerla Kolhati
community in Maharashtra, was entered in cinema. Because of her art of dancing, she
became popular and loved Kamble, a Mahar community man, whom the Kolhati feel
lower caste. Because of which, her son was snatched away from her and-

…the Kolhati community declared Kusum, an outcaste and her
family was warned that they too, would be thrown out of
the community, if they allowed Kusum to enter their door. [59]

Kishor raises voice against Kusum’s as a tragedy. In the days of twentieth
century, actually Kusum is to be welcomed as she loved and married Kamble. The
couple is inter-caste married. However, they are blamed. Kusum then got outcasted,
not simply by her Kolhati community but also Mahars, when her daughters had
reached to the marriageable age. Kishor states Kusum’s tragedy-

Her daughters wept and begged the elders to accept them among
the Kolhati, but the elders did not relent. Finally, they left Nerla
mere heavy-hearted. [61]

Kusum’s tragedy is a wake up call to other Kolhati women, so as they fear and keep
on running their traditions imposed by Jat-panchayat, mutely.
5.13.5 Harinana Excommunicated by Jat-panchayat

Kusum was separated from her son, when she had eloped with Kamble and was excommunicated. She begged for her son Sanju, who had been forced to live at Nerla, without his mother. She tried her best to take Sanjay with her but never succeeded.

Harinana was a Kolhati. He was the eldest son of Ram dada and Mane aji. He took Sanju to Mumbai and united mother and the child. The Kolhati community objected it and with sticks and axes marched towards Harinana’s house. They threatened to kill him. Kishor records, “Harinana became an outcaste in Nerla.” [60] Harinana’s father was summoned to attend Sonari panchayat-

He was made to stand before the Kolhati council like a criminal. The elders, one by one accused his son as a thief and kidnapper. They objected Harinana’s attempt and resolved thus, your son has taken a Kolhati boy and left him in a Mahar household. So, we have thrown him out of our community. Do you agree to shut the doors of your house forever to your son? [61]

Harinana’s father as if a culprit, nodded his head and agreed. Kishor records-

He was declared a thief, his crime, being that he had brought a mother and her son together. Separating a child from his mother had been a good deed as far as the Kolhatis were concerned. In their greed for money, they had truly obliterated the difference between right and wrong. [61]

This judgement made Harinana’s newly married wife suffer in his absence and his parents had to live excommunicated and humiliated life.

5.13.6 Dr. Kishor Shantabai Kale Excommunicated by Jat-panchayat and Attempted to Murder

Kishor exposed the bitter truth behind the suffering of Kolhati woman and their children in Against All Odds. The leaders of the community took it seriously. They said-

Kishor has maligned our community and told lies about us, he should be punished, they said. There was an unsuccessful attempt to murder him, and the powerful Jat-panchayat excommunicated him. [x]

Not simply this, the matter went worst as his close relatives turned away from him, “…His mother broke off all relations with him.” [x] Tal publication of the
autobiography caused him a lot of trouble. Rakshit Sonwane in the column of The Indian Express takes cognisance of Kishor’s tragedy thus-

His family ostracized him for portraying them in a bad light. Community ladders said that he was a blot on the community as he had defamed them and their traditional way of life. [Sonwane, 2007.]

Throwing away community’s burden, committed Kale turned towards his social awakening campaign, though he was “Disowned by his mother and excommunicated by his Kolhati community.” [Ketan, 2011.]

5.14 KISHOR’S PAINFUL SUFFERING AND STRUGGLE AGAINST INJUSTICE UNTIL BECOMING 'DR. KISHOR SHANTABAI KALE’

Against All Odds is a heartbreaking experience of mother and son’s life. It has reached to the peak of pain and pathos of a Kolhati dancer and her unfortunate son. They have become victims of the system imposed upon them, where woman is a sex-satisfying instrument and her sons suffer without her love and care. Dr. Vasudev Mulate, a scholar critic states, this “autobiography is of a child grown up without mother even though he had.” [1999, 39] Kale, being educated raised, his voice and “presented sorrow and suffering of Kolhati community, poverty in Kolhati community, keeping and exploiting women, traditions and values of life.” [Pagare, 2005, 145] Regarding social injustice, “he has raised questions on the culture, society and its morality” [Manohar, 1999, 271]. His autobiography pen pictures his journey of life “from the brothel place of Barshi, to be a doctor.” [271] His struggle of life records the system that makes the women and their children suffer.

5.14.1 Kishor’s Unwanted Birth

Kishor’s suffering starts before his birth in the womb of his mother. Shanta’s Chira-ceremony had taken place with MLA Jagtap of Karmala. After enjoying her, he deserted her, during her pregnancy. Shanta had to dance. Her father advised her to abort and called for rural treatment but useless, as the fetus had grown up. With a lot of suffering, Shanta, while dancing, preserved this unwanted pregnancy and delivered
at Nerla. He received title unwanted; illegitimate which made Dr. Yeshwant Manohar say, “Kishor as a son of a woman whose dreams are dead.” [271]

5.14.2 Kishor’s Childhood, Humiliated at Nerla as if Orphan

Kishor’s mother’s pathetic journey of life made her dance, earn and feed her family as per the tradition-

The enjoying- addicted rich and romantic minded people enjoyed her pleasure. Her relatives survived upon her singing and dancing income. [2000. 274]

Shanta searched for stability but couldn’t find, till she meets Wadkar Sahukar of Sonpeth who made her elope and then a keep. Her son, Kishor could not accompany her. She lived with Wadkar at Sonpeth with her youngest son, Deepak. In the absence of mother, Kishor lived on the mercy of his ajoba, Kondiba and grandmother, Kalawati. They treated him like a servant and used him as an add-job-doer. He worked as if a servant throughout the day, where as other members of the family rested and enjoyed their life. It is penesrating to record his pain and pathos during his childhood at Nerla. He was already starving for his mother’s love and could not receive a word of sympathy except Jiji, who cared for him. His ajoba was as if a Satan doing child-exploitation. Kishor records the job done by him at Nerla, which humiliated him a lot-

i) I was given the task of tending to the cattle and the hens in the little farm. [49]
ii) I cleaned the house and made the bed. [63]
iii) I still rose early and went to the farm to fetch milk in a large aluminum vessel. [66]
iv) To collect cow dung and make flat cakes to dry in the son. [67]
v) I now bought the groceries regularly, took the grain to the flourmill for grinding, served the meals when guests visited us and cleared up after every meal. [68]

If he is found free, he is always given a work that never gives him time to breathe happily and play. Most of the times, the family members humiliated him a lot by insulting language and physical assault. Most of the times, he felt “I wished I had wings and could fly to Sonpeth and see Bai.” [72] He suffered as if he was orphan. His ajoba and uncles used to beat him. Once, Ankush had stolen twenty rupees from the pocket of Kondiba and Kondiba assaulted Kishor without allowing him to say a
single word in his defense. His grand- father Kondiba “found new books, a new slate, note-books and a one-rupee coin,” [75] which Kishor had purchased from the money given by Ramesh Kaka. Such many incidences record Kishor’s inhuman suffering at Nerla, where he was living like an orphan, though he had his mother.

Without anybody’s help, he had been admitted himself to the school. His ajoba always motivated him to join tamasha to play dholak. However, Kishor refusing to do it, went to school, though the children humiliated him on the name of his caste and the name, ‘Kishor Shantabai Kale’. As his father’s name was not written, as per Kolhati tradition, but he records his father’s name as, not known, though it was known to his ajoba. This tradition, which rejects fatherhood though the rich people bear them from the Kolhati keeps, is badly exposed by Kale. Kondiba, Kalawati, Maushi and Mamas, most of the times, humiliated Kishor up to his seventh standard education at Nerla. Kishor passed tests of hard time and progressed in life.

Kishor’s life at Nerla sums journey of sorrow and suffering. He lived like a servant, an odd job doer and a slave. He suffered due to his understanding, that he had nobody to love or care, except Jiji.

5.14.3 Kishor’s Odd Jobs at Tamasha Theatres -during Childhood

Kishrya, hook up my blouse for me.
Kishrya, get the flowers for my hair.
Kishrya, have you got my sari pressed?
Kishor, have you collected the money from that man?
Ay you monkey, the tea hasn’t come yet, just go and see, and get it with you.
Kishrya, have you washed the clothes?
other wise I’ll be in trouble. [113, 114]

These are the orders passed by the men and women at theaters where Kishor had to stay with his Maushi. People behaved rude with him. He did all the odd jobs without hesitation, as it was imposed upon him by his helplessness, poverty and orphanhood. It was merciless treatment, he received at Nerla. He saw pathetic, helpless women dancing and feeding their lazy, arrogant fathers and brothers. It made Kishor realize his mother’s helplessness in leaving him behind and eloping with Nana at Sonpeth. His childhood is totally filled with pathetic, painful experiences, which remained eye opener of the world.
5.14.4 Kishor’s suffering at Sonpeth during School Days

Kishor passed seventh standard and his mother took him to Sonpeth. He became very happy to live with his mother. Kishor expressed his happiness thus, “My happiness seemed to fill the sky.” [124] He was admitted in 8th standard and his mother asked him to tell, Sali caste as Krushnarao Wadkar was Sali and he had kept Shanta. The teachers and students wondered about his name and fractured identity. They used to whisper- “why is his name Kishor Shantabai Kale?” [125] they wanted to find out his father’s name. Such kind of bitter humiliation welcomed him at school in Sonpeth. Still, accepting insulting taunts and dishonour, Kishor passed S.S.C. while doing odd jobs at home and helping mother, witnessing her pathetic suffering. He saw his mother’s life, always uncertain and insecure out of the fear of dragging away. He saw his mother always making prayers in sorrow and despair. When Kishor saw his step-father maddened by another dancer, he was frightened with his mother saying “I spent all my youth with you and now you tell me to go?” [131]

In utter depression, Kishor saw his mother running to jump into the river to commit suicide but he, “caught her sari and pulled her back.” [132] Bearing Nana’s beating him and his mother black and blue each time, he protected his mother and got educated. Sushila Maushi properly read Kishor’s humiliation and pathetically said Kishor, “Even here, living with your mother, your life is no better than a dog.” [133]

At Nerla, he was an odd-job-doer, a slave like and at Sonpeth; he lived tense like a dog. Nobody cared for him. Even though, mother was there, she was helpless, tongue-tied to see her son’s humiliation.

5.14.5 Casteism at Ambajogai during Education

Kishor passed S.S.C. at Sonpeth and got admitted in Yogeshwari College Ambajogai. Due to his name, he was highly humiliated by his college classmates. They teased him, which made him shut himself into the room. He always changed rooms out of fear, which the owner would know his caste and he would be thrown away. This insecurity horrified him.

Once, Rambha Maushi’s tamasha had come to Ambajogai and she had seen Kishor walking. However, Kishor purposefully ignored her at the time of day and helplessly with much guilt, met her at night. Rambha Maushi was inwardly wounded,
finding educated Kishor, her nephew, avoiding her. She wished her nephew to realise
the tragedy of dancers and said, - “people who are educated and yet do not understand
the complaints of our life?” [152]

Kishor’s eyes were opened to see bitter truth that his mother would also be
humiliated thus in this profession. His sense of guilt ran away and a clear visual
picture of pain and pathos of Kolhati women’s suffering awakened him to march
ahead. Refusing bad friends, who would play vulgar taunts, Kishor passed XIIth
Science in merit, for which, the college in the felicitation programme honoured him.
Prof. Chaudhari awakened the students and teacher community, “Caste had nothing to
do with effort and hard work.” [160] He appreciated Kishor’s sincerity and hard
efforts.

5.14.6 Bearing Teasing and Taunting, Awakening during M.B.B.S.
at Bombay

5.14.6.1 Voice against M.B.B.S. Truants

“Kishor stood second among the backward-class students” [158] and
got admitted at Govt. Medical College Bombay, where immature, caste spirited,
stupid and ugly minded boys humiliated him. Financial difficulties, Nana’s neglecting
responsibilities and mother’s suffering ripped the youth of Kishor. In all the
directions, pain and pathos ware attacking him and making him strong enough to bear.
Kishor passed tests of hard time and fought battle against all the odds. Kishor records
his tragedy… “My pathology notes were stolen just two days before my second year
exams… My troubles seemed endless.” [175]

Kishor found insulting and teasing by the boys “Easier to bear…. than
to talk to people.” [176 This is lesson of torture. It made him dumb and deaf to the
tortures of the fops and gallants in the medical college. When the things went worst,
he gathered courage. His friends awakened him that it is not his crime to be born in
Kolhati community and one day, gathering courage, he threatened the teasers like
Rathod who by drinking had kicked his door at 2 a.m.
5.14.6.2 Raised Voice against Scholarship Corruption

During M.B.B.S. Kishor witnessed corruption in scholarship. He found the system corrupt, which humiliated scholarship holder boys and girls. The poor students like him had to beg for it to the office. Kishor raises his voice against this malpractice, humiliation and records-

Scholarships were given out yearly at the college, and they often came late. The students had to go to the college office repeatedly and beg the staff to hand over the money to them. When it was finally given, the clerk would take huge commissions out of it. The students usually got only half the money. The rest was swallowed up in dues and commissions. But I had not yet received even this half a scholarship. [181]

5.14.6.3 Raised Voice against Oral Examiner Who Asked Bribe of Rs. 40,000

It was scholarship to which Kishor thanks to keep up his studies, otherwise he had thought to commit suicide and even had wandered to his Maushi for help. With severe suffering, inhuman insult and caste-based torture, he studied M.B.B.S. During his internal examinations, he was asked to pay Rs. 40,000 as a bribe for oral. He records -

I studied hard but failed my exams because I did not pay the examiner at the oral examinations a bribe of Rs. 40,000. Failing a year meant that I no longer receive a scholarship. [196]

It made Kishor complain against the system and the oral examiner who had asked bribe. As a result of which, “the Anti-corruption Bureau arrested the examiner, who had demanded bribe and with a new examiner, I had a fair chance at the exams.” [196, 197] Finally, Kishor got passed M.B.B.S. on “18 June 1944” [197] with his hardship and humiliation.

5.14.7 Fighting against all Odds, Kishya Became

‘Dr. Kishor Shantabai Kale’

Kishor shut his ajoba’s mouth that broke the life of his mother, who had dreamt to be a school-teacher and he who was asked to play dholak. Kishor remembered -
Ajoba says learn to play the dholak  
Why do you want to go to school?  
But I will go to school. [197]  

Kishor proved his illiterate, parasite, daughter-exploiting Kondiba ajoba’s words untrue and enlightened his life and the life of his community. Against All Odds, he faced, fought and ultimately won. With pride, sense of dignity, self-respect and honour, he records, “Kishrya had become Dr. Kishor Shantabai Kale.” [197]  

5.15 DR. KALE’S SOCIAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGN  

Kishor, after becoming Dr. Kishor Shantabai Kale, whole-heartedly devoted his life for the social cause. He had already experience of humiliation, insult and injustice with him due to which, his sensibility, sensitivity and social awakening was ripened. Having seen bitter suffering of the Kolhati women, Kale gave his life to lift them up to the moral and dignified level of life. Out of determined goal to serve for Kolhati society in particular and subaltern society in general, he established social organization and ran awakening campaign by resigning government service. He strengthened Dr. B. R. Ambedkar’s dream ‘to educate, organize and agitate. Healthcare, education and rejection to humiliated life imposed by Manu made setup, remained his agenda of life after being M.B.B.S. “He was”, also “impressed with life of Albert Schweitzer, a German doctor who worked with missionary zeal in Africa.” [Sonwane. 2007] Sonwane throws light upon Kale’s passion “to uplift his community and reach out to those who were deprived – tribals, prostitutes, Dalits, AIDS patients and so on.” [Sonwane.2007]  

5.15.1 Kale Rejected Inconvenient Government Service for Social Community  

After being M.B.B.S., Kale got government service-  

For one year he worked at Matheran and then at Nerla, near Mumbai, in the primary health care centers. Later, he got a job as a lecturer at Terna Medical College in the same region.’ [2000. xii]  

Seeing corruptions and humiliation of adivasis in Nerla, “he resigned from the job and went to work for the adivasis.” [xiii] His sensibility made him aware of the exploitation of the poor and neglected people on all grounds.
5.15.2 Kale Set up Various Organizations for Social Service

Dr. Kale set up “Tara Memorial Sanstha in the memory of his great aunt Tarabai, who brought him up” with the money, he received from the sale of his autobiography. “The organization has helped many Kolhati children to get an education.” [xiii] Sanstha awakened sex workers about AIDS in Ghatkopar area of Bombay. They advised them, that they would only practice safe sex, which brought down sexually transmitted diseases. Sanstha got affiliation to “Mumbai district AIDS control society” [xii] which funds the project. Dr. Kale obeyed ethics of his noble profession and used his Sanstha for the health care and educational awareness in the slums and redlight areas where poverty rules.

5.15.3 “Kuderan Is Going to Be my Ideal Village,” Says Dr. Kale

Rejecting inconvenient govt. medical job, Kale worked as a social activist. For the need of adivasis, he got educated himself in “acupressure and acupuncture.” [xiii] He lived with the adivasis who lived in little hamlets. His conviction was “A dispensary is where a doctor is”.[vi]. Kuderan, at the border of Thane and Raigad districts near Mumbai, became his field of work, where he taught adivasis to respect and protect environment. “He wants the tribes to learn how to make their own lives better.” [xiii] He awakened them regarding their rights and strengths. So, he established Kreeda Kendra (sport centre), Mahila Mandal (women’s club), Bhajan Mandal (prayer group) to teach good health habits, educate the children and treat women with respect. With the sense of hard work and sacrifice, he feels satisfied to say - “Kuderan is going to be my ideal village.” [xiv]

Mr. Gangal described Kishor as an over sensitive person who tried to devote one hundred percent to everything, whether his medical profession, literature or social work. [All India News. 2007]

Dr. Kale as per his committed goal of life, gave up his life for the wellbeing of the poor and the depressed.
5.15.4 Social Awakening through Writing Literature

After the publication of Against All Odds, Kale continued his literary creation to enlighten the society. While working at Terna Medical College as a lecturer, he wrote second part of his autobiography-

*Me Doctor Zhalo,* a book of poems - *Aai Tujhe Lekaru;* a novel - *Hijda Ek Marda*... and *Buddha Batla.* He wrote, acted, directed and produced the plays *Akrosh Ghungroocha, Andhar Yatra* and *Sundra Gawat Aali* (a street play on AIDS prevention). He also wrote and acted in a tele-serial *Maran Yatra.*


Kale, who was well aware of the power of pen, raised against all the odds and pen pictured them, so as to diagnose and uproot the root cause of the humiliation of the poor and the needy. To awaken the society effectively, he uses literature and multimedia.

5.16 REJECTION OF HINDU CASTE-BASED CULTURE, CAUSING HUMILIATION AND MARCH TOWARDS BUDDHISM

Having witnessed pathetic humiliation of Kolhati community, Kale raised his pen and highlighted pain before the world. He gave jerks after jerks to the deep-rooted Manu-made setup by writing, various awakening books and describing reality. He attracted the attention of the world towards unbelievable tragedy of Kolhati and adivasi communities, founding various organizations. He rejected to his inconvenient service and decided to serve for the poor, needy, depressed, prostitutes, and sex-workers. Realizing reasons of tragedy in the system of Hindu religion, he decided to break it and marched on the way to Buddhism, directed by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar.

5.16.1 Inter-caste Marriage with Sangita; Daughter of Laxman Gaikwad's

During the writing of his autobiography *Against All Odds,* Kale met well-known Dalit autobiographer Laxman Gaikwad. Being fully determined to break traditional rules and regulations which inhuman the human being and daring to face the ordeals what may fall, he married Gaikwad's daughter Sangita and joined hands in the social awakening campaign. He refused five-lack dowry and the bride chosen for him by his mother. He rejected Jat-panchayat and walked on the way of the
annihilation of caste. “Kishor married Sangita, the daughter of a Dalit writer,” [2000.10] which shows his sense of responsibility and a lot of respect to the men who dared to break the traditions and accept wide and open understanding of humanity. Kale rejected cast-based culture by inter-caste marriage.

5.16.2 Dr. Kale Embraced Buddhism

Dr. Kale saw hellish life of the women and children form Kolhati community. He realized the caste, its rules and regulations exploiting women, by forcing them to dance and to be prostitutes to feed their parasite father and brothers. This was totally injustice made to the women, which caused tragedy in the life of the children. The women, who go old, are thrown away, as refused. They suffer and die. Excommunication of Jat-panchayat remains a lot of trouble for them. They are bound to the chains of their caste. Kale, being awakened after doing many experiments in social and medical field, courageously embraced Dr. B. R. Ambedkar’s philosophy, To give up blind faith and superstitions, Kale “embraced Buddhism” [Sonwane, 2007]. Moreshwar Kale delightedly comments on the decision and embracement of Buddhism. Kale’s “strong will power and Ambedkariet democracy made him doctor. He converted into Buddhism… salute to great Ambedkarite.”

[Kale, Moreshwar. 2007]

Kale respectfully agrees impressions of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and Lord Buddha who showed way to be free from human bondages and chains of slavery tied by Hinduism. In his speech at Shrirampur organized by Republican Front, he remembers Gawali Guruji’s, revolutionary advice-

The culture that made your mother a dancer, have to make that culture bow before her and you could do it. For that, you will have to learn and accept Buddha’s Dhamma. [Kamble.2007.8]

With dedicated life he said that he could do revolt “because of Buddha’s Dhamma and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar’s inspiration.” [8]
5.17 KISHOR KALE’S MILE STONE UNIVERSAL ACHIEVEMENT

 Against All Odds seems universal lament upon the lack of humanity, justice, equality and independence. It is rejection to Hindu social set up, cruelly treating the lower castes and honouring the upper ones. It records pathetic life of Kolhati community in Maharashtra living on dancing and prostituting. Kale raised this darkened society into light and shocked the so-called elite class of India. It has thrown light upon sexual exploitation of Kolhati women by the rich and the lusty men who enjoy their youth beauty and drag them, when distasted Stating the greatness and universal placement of Kale’s Against All Odds – Dr. Patwardhan states -

This work may not be a piece of classical art, but its every line stirs heart and its every page wrenches soul. It portrays the grand pathos of a social order, just as Charles Dickens Oliver Twist does, even if it does not have the fineness of Dickens language and it unfolds in front of the reader, the same genuine realistic pessimism that drama of O Neill’s plays do, although it may lack his flourish. On the other hand, in a very subtle and effective way, the author uses the stream-of-consciousness technique, though he might not be walking directly in the footsteps of Anthon Chekhov’s eloquence. And while the story does not pomp the philosophical grandeur of Sartre, it does time and again ascend to the high note of existential angst. Of course, the author can be best identified with Dostoevsky. The entire sketch, though a chaotic rambling and a chronicle of random events of a sort, is a pronouncement of existentialism.

[Patwardhan. parichaybookclub.com]

5.18 TRAGIC DEATH OF DR. KISHOR SHANTABAI KALE

Dr. Kishor Shantabai Kale passed away at a private hospital on 20th Feb. 2007, late night, when he was just thirty seyen. He had met with an accident on Feb. 4, near Kalam, Dist. Osmanabad. He was admitted to a private hospital in Solapur succumbed to his injuries. Keeping behind his wife, son, mother and a brother, he passed away. His funeral took place at his native Nerla in Karmala tahsil of Solapur district.
Dr. Kale’s death remained a severe blow to his family and society. He was very sincere and sensitive social activist who in his a little life had shown bright colours in his social work. He had turned his society into the light of the philosophy of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and Buddhism. Mercilessly, death dragged him away. In paying condolence to such a great author, newspaper Loksatta says -

Graduated from Bombay’s Grant Memorial College, this doctor had taken unequal society to operate in his operation theatre. In reality, Kishor had raised hopes. However, he has gone back leaving halfway. But the way he has walked, has gone lush green. [Goyanka, 2007]

Kale’s death has orphanised the Kolhati community’s sorrow and suffering. His dedicated life and activities are to enlighten his clan. His writing loudly spoke to the rulers of the Indian government system and the Varna system of Hindu society. His cry for social justice and revolt against imposed humiliating life made him worldwide acknowledged advocate of his society, though he was M.B.B.S. doctor, his social engineering through activities and literature made him reputed author of the postcolonial literature in the world abroad and Dalit literature in India.

5.19 CONCLUSION

Against All Odds is a tough fight of a pathetic Kolhati community boy against the adverse conditions in his life from his childhood to the days he becomes a doctor. To conclude the chapter it may be stated that –

1. Against All Odds – is not only the autobiography of Kishor Kale but all those children suffering in Kolhati community.

2. It is a realistic document of horrible women suffering who never enjoy matrimonial life with dignity.

3. It has exposed male mentality of Kolhati community who act as pimps of their daughters and sisters. They use them as money making machines.

4. Kolhati Jat-panchayat acts impartially and favours women in comparison to men.

5. The rich and lusty men use Kolhati women as sex commodity and neglect responsibility to them and their children. Even they do not allow their inname to be used the place of father.
6. *Chira-utarna Ceremony* seems marriage ceremony but actually it is not so. The rich uppercaste lusty men enjoy sex with virgin *Kolhati* girls under the garh of this ceremony.

7. Kishor Kale, awakened due to education has tried his best to awaken his society to reject, rebel and revolt against the ill-traditions treating them inhumanly.

8. Kishor Kale tried his best to direct his community to follow the way shown by Dr.B.R. Ambedkar where equality, liberty, fraternity and social justice act as backbone of the casteless social setup.

9. Kishor Kale dared to use his name as Kishor Shantabai Kale and revolted against the Manu-made Hindu social setup which insulted him and his community. He rejected slavery and mental colonization of Hinduism.

10. Kishor Kale is a post-colonial autobiographer and his autobiography *Agaist All Odds* becomes a social document of the suffering of *Kolhati* community.