

**THE POETICS OF REGION: POLITICS AND PERFORMANCE OF ANDHRA AND
TELANGANA**

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For the award of the degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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THEATRE AND PERFORMANCE STUDIES

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND AESTHETICS

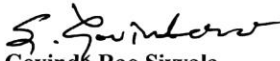
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Declaration

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I declare that this dissertation titled “**The Poetics of Region: Politics and Performance of Andhra and Telangana**” submitted by me at the School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy in Theatre and Performance Studies**, is an original work and has not been submitted by me so far, in part or full for any other degree or diploma of this or any other university or institution.


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Abstract

This dissertation aims to study the formation and transformation of regional identity of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana through the poets-singers' imagination and performing arts traditions. From the formation of Andhra Pradesh based on Telugu language identity in 1956 to the separation of Telangana state based on unequal distribution of resources, the idea of region has gone through a radical transformation. This dissertation would examine how performing arts played an important role in shaping and reshaping of the regional formation. In parallel to globalization and nationalism, the local and region has emerged as an important site of study. Scholars have tried to understand the question of region largely from the social sciences perspectives (Aloysius 2013) Kannabiran (2010). The dissertation recognizes the importance of those studies; however, it attempts to see the region from other perspectives. For instance, how the idea of region figures in the performing arts. Songs and performances have played an important role in mobilizing the idea of region. The dissertation will try to map out the journey of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana from the movement for Andhra Pradesh to the movement for the separate Telangana. Region, as Aloysius (2013) says, is not a passive category, region acts, asserts, and reproduces itself. From region reproduced in language to the region as an actor in performing arts, the dissertation tries to examine more dynamic formation of region through performing arts. With a special focus on two major poets-singers, Gaddar (b. 1949) from Telangana and Vangapandu Prasada Rao (b. 1943) from Uttarandhra, the dissertation will analyze how artists imagined their regions.

Keywords: region, imagination, identity, landscape and performance.

Introduction

This dissertation aims to study the formation and transformation of regional identity of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana through the poets-singers' imagination and performing arts traditions. From the formation of Andhra Pradesh based on Telugu language identity in 1956 to the separation of Telangana state based on unequal distribution of resources, the idea of region has gone through a radical transformation. This dissertation would examine how performing arts played an important role in shaping and reshaping of the regional formation. In parallel to globalization and nationalism, the local and region has emerged as an important site of study. Scholars such as (Aloysius 2013) Kannabiran (2010) have tried to understand the question of region largely from the social sciences perspectives. The dissertation recognizes the importance of those studies; however, it attempts to see the region from other perspectives. Duncan B. Forrester argues, 'I use the term 'region' to refer to a cultural and social area, the regional boundaries in peninsular India now in most cases being those of the major languages (1970: 5).

For instance, how the idea of region figures in the performing arts. Songs and performances have played an important role in mobilizing the idea of region. The dissertation will try to map out the journey of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana from the movement for Andhra Pradesh to the movement for the separate Telangana. Region, as Aloysius (2013) says, is not a passive category, region acts, asserts, and reproduces itself. From region reproduced in language to the region as an actor in performing arts, the dissertation tries to examine more dynamic formation of region through performing arts. With a special focus on two major poets-singers, Gaddar (b. 1949) from Telangana and Vangapandu Prasada Rao (b. 1943) from Uttarandhra, the dissertation will analyze how artists imagined their regions.

After the formation of Telangana as 29th state in Indian nation, the people of Telangana celebrated it with much hope. For them, it was a realization of dream coming true after the decades of violent struggle. While Telangana celebrated its birth, Seemandhra almost mourned the moment. People of Seemandhra have felt as they have witnessed partition of India and Pakistan. They felt as loss of bond created through Telugu language. There were tensions from both sides. Political propagators and cultural performers from the both sides responded the situation very

emotionally. In the context of Andhra and Telangana, it took almost fifty years to form a linguistic state and fifty years to form Telangana.

Andhra Pradesh and Telangana are two Telugu speaking states in India. Andhra Pradesh (Seemandhra) state formed with two major regions, Rayala Seema, south western part of the state which is comprised in four Districts. Rayala Seema is a dry, infertile area, subject to frequent droughts and famine (Forrester 1970:6). Another region Coastal Andhra located on Coast line of the Bay of Bengal. The Circars region includes the rich rice-growing deltas of the Krishna and Godavari rivers, the port and shipyards of Vizagapatnam, the important towns of Vijayawada, Guntur and Rajahmundry, and the bulks of Andhra's population (Windmiller 1954:301). Andhra Pradesh has the largest larger sea shoreline in India. There are many ports situated on this shoreline, like Kakinada, Machilipatnam, and Visakhapatnam. . Modernization and English education causes cultural renaissance in Andhra region. In the British regime, social changes mostly happened in the coastal belt. Social reforms and English education system brought enormous social changes. The irrigations projects were constructed across the region. This had a positive effect in economic changes in this coastal line.

Telangana region is located in the Deccan Plateau. It has comprised of ten districts. Andhra and Telangana regions for a long time remained under one rule. Popular dynasties like Satavanas, Kakatiyas, Vijayanagara kings, Qutb Shahis and Asaf Jahis ruled the regions. Till Nizam Ali Khan seceded the Coastal Districts to the British in 1776 and Rayala Seema Districts in 1800, they were under one rule. From 1800 to 1956, before the formation of Andhra Pradesh, both these Telugu regions came under different regimes. This period made some important distinctions in these Telugu regions culturally and economically.

Historically speaking, the entire region of Andhra Pradesh is known as 'Telangana'. 'Anamu' means country and 'Telangana' literally means the land of Telugu speaking people. It derives its name from the original 'Trilingadesamu'. It is called so because of its location between three Shiva temples in Srisailem (Rayala Seema), Draksharamamu (Coastal) and Kaleswaramu (Telangana). This 'trilingadesam' has gradually metamorphosed into 'Telangana'. (Reddy, 2003:103)

In the case of Telangana region, Telugu people rose against the religious hostility of the Muslim rulers. It resulted in the decisive confrontation against aggression on the Telugu language and culture yearning for Telugu existence. People suffered under the high handedness of Zamindars and Deshmukhs and their cruel ‘*gadi*’ tradition. Time and again, people were oppressed, humiliated and also participated in armed struggle against the oppressive systems. In Andhra region, Kamma, Reddy were dominant castes. Reddy caste was also prominent in Rayala Seema and Telangana region but Velama was the most dominant caste in Telangana region. Dalit castes, Mala and Madiga have their presence throughout the regions, but their representation in politics is marginal. Tribals also have their presence in Uttarandhra, Bhadrachalam and Adilabad regions. The location of caste is important to understand the culture and politics of a particular region. Suppression of rebellion and exploitation continued in Telangana under the veil of Independence. Modernization and increasing urbanization also led to the destruction of the local economy and culture. Migrations increased in the village and people started pouring in the city in search of jobs and new opportunities. Along with the caste politics, corruption, bribery, and favoritism became normal in the regional politics. It also has some positive impacts. The government welfare schemes led to the increase in literacy. Migration, unemployment, corruption and increasing loot of resources by the capitalists became part of the postcolonial development. Active unemployed youths were feeling dejected and despair. They were participating in all sorts of movements. On the other side, Dalit movement and feminism were making inroads in the public sphere. They were influencing social and culture spheres with new songs and slogans. The earlier discourses of class and language were shaken by the new political consciousness. Telangana as economically backward regions were feeling discriminated. Song emerged as the most powerful genres in some regions to bring the discourses to the public and society. The genre was getting localized, regionalized with active participation of the local communities.

Politics also shaped the performance traditions in Andhra and Telangana regions. The political consciousness started in Andhra at the end of the nineteenth century with social reforms and *padya natakam*. At the same time, Gidugu Ramamuthi and Gurajada started ‘*vyavaharika bhasa*’, spoken dialect movement for educational writings against ‘*traditional gradikavadis*’ textual language, for bringing education to common people. The political aspirations resulted in the formation of cultural organizations. Praja Natya Mandali and Jana Natya Mandali emerged as

two major interventions from the left political organizations that radicalized the public and social sphere debates of Andhra and Telangana.

Praja Natya Mandali [a unit of the Indian Peoples Theatre Association] entered into the cultural scene of Indian theatre and started engaging with people art forms and local musical traditions in their performances. Burra Katha, Oggu Katha, Veedhi Bhagavatham and many arts forms became part of their engagements to reach the masses. It played an active role in fighting against the British rule and as well as protesting against the emerging fascist ideologies and governments. Burra Katha emerged as one of the most successful art forms in Andhra Pradesh. It is a semi-literary art form performed by three artists. The form narrates a story in singing and dialogue mode. Main narrator of the performance tells the story, besides him two *vanthalu* [accompaniments] listen the story and reacts to incidents. It has one story teller and two listeners. The form has very active performers and audience relationship. Accompanies do not listen story passively, they interrupt the performer and seek more clarification. They also comment and respond to the emotions. When the story is in pleasant mood they says, '*bali bali*', *vah vah*, if it was in sad mood they give the expression '*rama rama*', and if it in pathetic, they say, '*ayyo*'. In Andhra Pradesh, the form incorporated various performing elements as described by the phrases in the beginning: they sung the phrase at the beginning, '*raga, thaaladi, nritya, geethadi thambura katha vinaro*'. The form was widely used by various political organizations but most prominently by the artists of Praja Natya Mandali. The PNM borrowed elements from various regional art forms and successfully used them in effective ways to spread egalitarian ideology. Most Interesting part of this form is it erases the boundaries between literary and orality. It can be argued that literature is produced in oral forms. The form was able to attract middle class as well as villagers. People across the sections could have easily connected with the form. It was local as well as inter-regional. The form was equally popular in Telangana region. Burra Katha was traditional as well as a new innovation after the colonial period. During the colonial period, Andhra people largely enjoyed *Janjam Katha, Yakshagana, Veedi Bhagavatham* and other forms.

Telugu literature traditions have two prominent genres existing in parallel. First, Sanskrit influenced, *marga*, pan Indian style or inter-regional style of performing art tradition. Second, *desi*, the regional more embedded in local traditions. *Desi* genre has connections with local performing styles. Modern Burra Katha adoption was an 'ideological reproduction' of the leftist organizations. They wanted to show social conditions of the independence struggle era. The form could evoke

identity of 'nation' (Bharatha Desam) as well the identity of the region, Andhra as a homogenous group in a heterogeneous nation. The phrase, '*vinara Andhra veera Kumara vijayam manadhera*', stands for, 'O heroic son of Andhra, listen to the heroic ballad, victory is ours'. This popular phrase of Burra Katha, resonate in the minds of Andhra people raise the nationalist feelings. Stories like, Palnati Yuddam, kastajeevi, Alluri Sitharamaraju, Bobbili Yuddam, Bengal Karuvu were representatives of the nationalist sentiments but the stories also brought local hegemony and peoples struggle.. Burra Katha brought the 'historical consciousness through writing. It also mobilized 'mythical consciousness of the linguistic region through the performance. The Cultural repertoire of Burra Katha successfully brought 'archival material of histories. Why did Brahma Naidu arrange '*chaapakudu*, cosmopolitan dinner irrespective of caste, religion or creed became a useful metaphor for the Tribals of the Srikakulam? They were refused to arrange the dinner to the educated activists in Srikakulam armed revolution (1964-71) because they feel activists belongs higher caste. How did Alluri sacrifice his life for the rejection of foreign rulers, or how did Bobbili men and women sacrifice their life for 'self-respect. These provocative examples become part of the people's memory in the fight against all kinds of repression and exploitation.

In beginning, it was difficult to think art and politics together. They were separate domains. Progressive writers played a vital role in erasing this separation, which was actually never there. But these progressive writers were not able to reach masses because of the genres they selected. They were initially involved in literary practice which is more a kind of individual practice. Unlike other genres, its relation is always one to one relation i.e. writer to reader. The collective community was missing in its exposition. The questions were raised about the role of literature which created challenge for progressive writers as well as performing artists. The exploitation was very visible but there was no connect with people and society. The political activists were also failing in this movement because speeches were not able to evoke that feeling. From political leaders to writers all were feeling this big gap that was becoming a serious hindrance in practicing any kind of radical politics. Literatures were not sufficient to engage and mobilize people. Progressive writers seriously recognized these inabilities after the suppression of the Naxalbarry movement in Srikakulam. They searched for new genres to express the proletariat ideology and to educate the masses.

A section of progressive poets and writers established VIRASAM [Revolutionary Writers Association] and tried to mobilize people for revolution after the Srikakulam movement. Popular writers like Kalipatnam Rama Rao, Ravi Sastri, Sri Sri, Cherabanda Raju joined the movement and tried to teach masses by reading their stories [like, *Yagnam*] in the colonies. But they did not see any impact of their literature on people. Even they tried to write stories in their dialect and tell them. They failed to communicate and evoke the response they wanted to achieve. They also realize that not only uneducated section but also educated people are not interested in these stories. In the process of experiments and working with people, they realize that performing arts can bridge this gap and they started giving emphasis on performing arts. And the result was enormous. Later, performing art traditions become the mode of articulation of political in both Andhra and Telangana region.

Rationale and Intervention

Andhra Pradesh before the separation of Telangana had three distinct regions; Coastal Andhra, Rayala Seema and Telangana. All these three regions can be said to be a demarcated spaces, constructed through spatial- social dialectic over a period of time, much human emotion and imagination is invested in it. The regions have developed around socio-historical practices. Therefore it can be argued that the demand of Telangana or for that matter Rayala Seema is not similar to the demand of Andhra Pradesh based on linguistic identity. Three distinct features of state formation emerges in the context of Andhra and Telangana; state formation based on linguistic identity, demands for egalitarian state imagined by the artists like Gaddar and Vangapandu and the real outcome of the state formation as we can see in the context of Telangana.

In the pre-modern period, great Telugu poets have engaged with the question of region. Their construction of region seems different than the idea of region in the modern period. Their idea of regions was more cultural and dynastic than modern idea of administrative regions. P.S.R. Apparao's *Telugu Nataka Vikasam* (1967) deals with pre-modern performance history of the Telugu region with a focus on evolution of the modern theatre in the early twentieth century. His work offers us to look at the Andhra regional formation from theatre and performing arts perspectives. How dramatic literature and *padya natakam* (verse drama) disseminated Andhra

identity among masses. It can be argued that the bilingual elites tried to construct the ‘imagined communities’ with Telugu as the mother tongue. They successfully provided the necessary linguistic equipment to enable Telugu to become an adequate language of modern literature and performances. Benedict Anderson’s idea of Imagined communities (1983) will be helpful to understand this formation. I will examine how Telugu language was structured and canonized through print capitalism. The print capitalism contributed in developing *padya natakam* in the nationalist perspectives. The local bilingual elites imagined the *Vishalandhra* [complete Andhra] with the unification of all Telugu speaking regions and people. But over a period of time, the ‘imagined community’s’ idea of the state and region started failing apart, a vast majority of people and regions within the Andhra region felt discriminated and oppressed.

What happened in the formation of Andhra Pradesh is that more than one historical cultures were forced into a single Andhra state: the traditional home lands of the Telangana indigenous social groups were ruthlessly destroyed and occupied by the Seemandhra capitalists. At this point of time a movement for separate Telangana made a strong comeback with an active support of CPI (ML) and People’s War. These political organizations understand the important of the culture and formed cultural front, *Jana Natya Mandali*.¹

My major focus is going to be on the development after the 1970s, when Telangana question reemerged as the question of socio-cultural-backwardness. The hegemony of Coastal Andhra people in politics and administration was substantial evidence. At this outset Gaddar² (1949) and Vangapandu Prasada Rao³ (1943) emerged as two important poets and artists who in their works not only question the idea of national imagined communities but also the local elite’s imagination of the region. For example, one of the Gaddar song, ‘Bharatha desam bhagya seemara...’ says, ‘India is a wealthy and prosperous country, golden lands and perennial rivers are there, then why are people hungry’. He questioned the idea of nation and posits regions which are oppressed. He also criticized N.T. Rama Rao’s Telugu self-respect concept in this song. They also

¹ *Jana Natya Mandali* was earlier named as the Art’s Lover Association (ALA). Founded by B. Narsingarao, Gaddar and Vangapandu, its main aim was to disseminate the necessity of armed struggle among the masses. The historical Naxalbarry movement inspired the Tribals of Srikakulam region to fight against the oppression. Artists like Subbarao Panigrahi and Vempatapu Satyam started propagating their ideology and people’s sufferings through their art forms and songs. *Jana Natya Mandali* influenced by these artists.

² Gummadi Vithal Rao, popularly known as Gaddar, is a revolutionary Telugu balladeer and activist.

³ Vangapandu Prasada Rao popularly known as Vangapandu, is a singer who came after, with the influence after Srikakulam Naxalbarry movement (1964- 71).

imagine more egalitarian idea of region. Most importantly, these artists brought their laboring caste background and respective experiences in articulation of new identity of Telangana and Andhra regions. Coming from radical Marxist-Leninist background, both artists radically transformed the idea of regional and cultural identity.

Poets imagined Telangana with abundant range of songs in Dhoom-dham performances. There are different kinds of songs mixed in Telangana movement, suppose songs from revolutionary movement, pastoral songs, devotional songs and modern film songs. These songs emotionally charged with feelings towards Telangana local culture and dialect. Songs deal with different castes people, folk forms, tribal culture, local festivals have made connections between people of this particular region and also make them feel a distinct homogeneous culture. They successfully provide the equipment of the regional emotions in the people. These songs comes from the mostly working class and marginalize communities, so that it has impact of legitimacy. My intervention would be to analyse performance of the songs in connection to regional formation with special focus on Gaddar and Vangapandu. From 1970's to the present their works have shifted from early Marxist phrase to their emergences as two individual artists of the regions.

Gaddar and Vangapandu have been performing since last forty years and they created hundreds of songs in relation to those local and regional experiences. I would like to study the politics and aesthetics of their songs in reference to the particular locations and regions. I would like to do a comparative analysis of their works in respect to their region, language, popularity and issues of struggle. How these two actors and singers have imagined their regions and how they have been constantly reimagining them. Neither Gaddar's Telangana nor Vangapandu's Uttarandhra are based on linguistic identity and from the perspective of the imagined community. They have brought the everyday question of caste, land, gender, displacement and various other issues in their imaginative regions. They have not only envisioned the idea of the region but they have also democratized the performing arts and literary traditions. How do regional struggle and cultural struggle gone together, For example, SriSri, who was a great progressive literary figure under the influence Vangapandu and Gaddar, started writing in people's language.

I will explore their performances styles, music, gestures and regional dialects in their performances. How they have used theatrical elements like space, costumes, properties, set in their performance? They generally narrate the background of the songs. Gaddar says, '*Prati pataku*

Oka Katha Unda? Aaa Undi' - 'is there a story for every song? Oh! Yes, there is'. If story is there then there is a scope for scene and play. Gaddar performance generally has starting, middle and end. Gaddar entertain his political audience, educate them, move them, salute them and also he will get angry on them. It may look like a theatrical experience. But it is not like a main stream theatre. Vangapandu dance dramas also different than main stream theatre. Thinking through their modes of theatre, I will examine how their theatre becomes a critique of mainstream theatre.

However, the recent development in Telangana and Andhra has posed new challenges, specifically the ways both states have been trying to subvert the radical impulses of the culture and appropriate those songs and performing arts traditions in hegemonic ways. Dominant regional political parties also tried to appropriate the regional identity. For example, Telugu Desam Party (TDP) tried different way, film hero Rama Rao tried to bring Telugu pride and self-respect in order to get political mileage. Similarly, the Telangana Rastra Samithi (TRS) and the Barathiya Janatha Party (BJP) imagined and constructed the idea of Telangana from their own vantage points of view.

A region is constructed through embodiment. How did the embodiment take place in Andhra and Telangana struggle? How did the embodiment lead to differences in their cultural expression? G. Aloysius (2013) offers a radical conceptualization of region. In his view, 'the region no more represents the locale chauvinism and residual primordialism but offers itself as the site of the cultural practices of the mass people' (41). I would like to examine what extent Telangana and Andhra as two regions embody this emancipatory idea of the region.

Research Questions

1. How region can be understood through the performing arts traditions. They are not only regional expressions but they also construct the region.
2. How the works of Gaddar and other artists creates a poetic conflict around the political conflict of the region?
3. What happens to the artist's region once the demand of region is fulfilled?

Research Methodology

This research work will draw on inter disciplinary approaches of literature, social sciences and performance studies with a special focus on regional studies. Theatre and performance studies offer some interesting frame-works in analyzing the question of region and their transformations and conceptualizations through different actors. While actors imagine and construct their idea of region, region also produces actors. In G. Aloysius' words, the region is not an inert backdrop or even a passive theatre action, it is something alive, active, not merely letting man act on it vigorously reacting on man (2013: 32). We can see how region and performance have reciprocal relations they effect the actors and get affected by them'.

I use Aloysius's *Conceptualizing the Region* (2013) to foreground the questions of regional sensitivity and regional expressions. Aloysius has approached the qualities of the region in different ways: region as an actor, region as internal homogeneity, region as ideology, region as historical formation, region as differentiating principle, region as identity and so on. These categories get evoked in poetry and performing arts in various ways. One idea would be to see how these categories figure in songs and performing arts. He has outlined a special importance of language in formation of a region. If we see the formation of Andhra Pradesh as linguistic region then the language connection was very important. The state tries to unify all Telugu speaking people based on language. But the failure of the Andhra Pradesh as a state also suggests the nature and performance of the language. We see the shift from the language to dialect and performance. How Telangana reproduced in Telangana dialect and performance? Oral language of Telangana proliferated in Gadder, Goreti Venkanna and others cultural performances in the Telangana agitation.

The works of Velcheru Narayana Rao and David Shulman (2002) offer some interesting insights in terms of methodologies. They have tried to understand how literary poets imagined region in pre-modern poetic and cultural landscape. They argue that,

Andhra history and culture reflect the constant interplay of these (the coastal zone, Telangana, and Rayala Seema) eco-logically distinct zones, especially of the delta and Deccan with cultural innovation often emerging in the latter to be reshaped and domesticated in the former (2002:4).

Rao and Shulman's methodological approach remains relevant for my work. They discuss the great poet Tikkana of the thirteenth century who was apparently the first to refer the cultural zone named- Andhra [*andhravali*]. The work will help me to explore the ways two poets Gaddar and Vangapandu from two regions have imagined their particular regions. Rao and Shulman also argued that, Telugu poets have consistently been drawn to an examination of language in its life-creating, world generating aspect. (2002:7, 8).

Region becomes an important marker of music memory, place, time and characterization. But, Shulman and Rao did not discuss the performance part. I will try to extend their work with the analysis of Gaddar and Vangapandu's acting, gestures and performance. I would like to see how poets, singers and performers bring their bodies in construction of region.

Ted Gioia (2006) provides an innovative method to analyze different genres of songs and music. His works on labor songs and healing songs are quite relevant for this research. He shows strong interrelationship between labor and music and also sheds light on music and social institutions interaction. Gioia argues that, music is not only deeply embedded in day-to-day lives, but it also serves as a valuable tool in meeting demands and necessities, and navigating through challenges and crises (2006:10). In Gioia's method, 'songs are musical performatives'. He has used the term 'incantation', because songs revealing their magical powers in the process of performance (2006:8). The method will help to analyze Gaddar and Vangapandu's songs and music embodied in the experiences of work and labor. Their songs can be described as musical performatives. Gioia works on healing songs see music as transformative force. He argued that, 'the most powerful and forgotten aspect of the music is its role as a change agent; it's potential as a transformative force for individuals and groups (36). Similarly Gaddar songs generate effective healing capacities and make audience sympathizers to the performance. In the case of Vangapandu songs, emotional content is minimized, song was structured in analytical and didactic way.

I have grown up watching and listening Gaddar and Vangapandu's songs and performances. Performance materials are available in the forms of songs books, CD's, DVD's and also in You Tube. I will interview the artists and the people associated with groups.

Chapterization

Introduction

The introduction will foreground the question of region and scholars debates around it. The importance of region has been felt almost in every discipline and it has become crucial in today socio-political world. This has also happened because of the ever- widening gap between the promise and performance of the nation- state. It will also offer a cultural geography of Andhra-Telangana region. This chapter will also discuss rationale of the research and conceptual frames and methodological framework. The introduction will also provide a background pre-modern idea of this region through the works of Telugu poets.

Chapter 1: Andhra in Literary Imagination

This chapter will focus on formation of Andhra (1953) and examine how the literary poets and playwrights imagined Vishalandhra (1956), on the language base to unite all Telugu speaking people that time. How the bilingual elite of the Andhra try to raise self-respect among Andhra people, against Tamil hegemony. They were influenced by western literature, Bengal movement; nationalist discourse and print culture were caused to literature spread in Andhra region. They also used pre-modern poet's imagination of Andhra region to awake educated people about great cultural history. If we look at the phrases, like '*desa bhashalandu Telugu lessa*'-among regional languages, Telugu is great⁴, Telugu is the Italian of the east⁵, '*Sundara Telingi*'⁶ has given regional feelings. I will examine the poetry and songs of Andhra movement. Songs like, *maa Telugu thalli*, *cheyyetti jai kottu Teluguda*, *Desamunu preminchu manna*, '*Amaravathi pattanamuna*', were as mobilizing force and supported the formation of Andhra. This chapter mainly intended to look at how historic Andhra movement emerged on the idea of united all Telugu people. I will examine the way the print culture and theatre contributed, in this formation of regional identity.

⁴ Sri Krishnadevarayulu (who is a 16th century Vijaya Nagara king)praises Telugu language in his *kavya*, '*Amukta Malyada*',

⁵ Nicola Di Conti, traveler from Italy, first he used this phrase, after him, Europeans refers Telugu as Italian language in the East, because, generally Telugu words end with vowels like Italian words. This vowel ending gives musicality and sweetness to the language.

⁶ Subrahmanya Bharathi, great Tamil poet, he praises Telugu in his poem.

And also this chapter will examine, how this literary imagination gradually shifts to performance after formation of Praja Natya Mandali. The aesthetics of Praja Natya Mandali and their efforts to draw a new audience is important. How they contextualize the effort and their use of diverse mediums and what that movement tried to do? How this cultural movement bring consciousness to Telangana region?

Chapter 2: Region in Conflict

This chapter will look after formation of Andhra Pradesh, how gradually various regions and people of Andhra felt discrimination. How the state is asked several questions from the Telangana region. Issues like, discrimination, inequality, uneven distribution of resources and cultural hegemony of the elite culture, emerged as important questions. On the other side communist and Naxalite movements emerged as strong force. Within these circumstances poets of the left movements and regional propagators imagined the regions according to their political goals. The organizations like Praja Natya Mandali, Jana Natya Mandali and other groups played an important role in raising these questions. This chapter will deal the land, class and language issues through the songs of Gaddar, Vangapandu and other leftist singers and artists. How Gaddar and Vangapandu deal the regions in Marxist lenses, will be examined. Guda Anjayya song, ' *ee vuru manadi ra ee vaada manadi raa*' (village is ours, this street ours, sickle is ours, hammer is our, , who is the landlord' .Similarly, Vangapandu's song, ' *kudu gudda leni kulinallollu' Empilado eldamostava...'* *randiro raithanna Sangam pedadamu....,*' criticized the hegemonic role of the state and region.

It will be important to look at their relation to poetry performance as well as differences. I will argue in this chapter is region is no more depend on past glory, but it is constructing on future egalitarian imagination. I will explore how these songs are different than earlier Andhra movement songs as well as Marxist movement songs. How the region is imagined, constructed and transmitted through the songs, this can be viewed. Songs of Gaddar, like, ' *amma Telanganama akali kekala ganama....'*, ' *podustunna poddu meda nadustunna ganama ...'* these songs gave greater strength to the Telangana movement. In Gaddar songs, he imagined the region from the perspective of the oppressed.

Chapter 3: Region as an Unfulfilled Desire

It has not been too long that Telangana emerged as a new state in India, however the dream started fading out. From activists to the singers and poets have been arguing that how the new state which comes after so much struggle is failing to meet people's expectation. Recently, Gaddar wrote several songs that says how the people's aspirations have been sold out and the situations of dalit, adivasi and poor section have not changed. While Vangapandu is singing for Uttarandhra region, Gaddar and new emerging artists like Goreti Venkanna, Andesri, Yepuri Somanna, Vangapandu, and Vimalakka started questioning Telangana.

Conclusion

Conclusion will be provide an allover analysis of the region formation through performing arts and their limitation.

Chapter 1

Andhra in Literary Imagination

O humble men! The gleaming history of Andhra-s has not perished, open your hearts and read it. _Rayaprolu Subba Rao (1925)

This poetic stanza is from *probodham* (Keeping awake) written by poet Rayaprolu Subba Rao⁷. The emphasis was on reading, the literature as a part of regional consciousness. As it is clear from the meaning, he wrote the poem to mobilize people for Andhra. The poem was part of the demand of the special statehood for Andhra province on the linguistic basis. The poets and literary persons like Subba Rao tried to mobilize people by showing inequality and exploitation. The emphasis was on how Tamil ruling class had captured all resources, employment, irrigation projects and educational institutions in the Madras province in the British India. In the first decade of the twentieth century, Andhra people realized their backwardness in the multilingual state of Madras. They saw their future in the Telugu speaking region. Keeping the aspiration of a special province based on Telugu speaking people, the first Andhra Maha Sabha (AMS) conference was held in 1913 at Bapatla in Guntur District to achieve the status of special province. Though the movement for the separate Andhra saw many ups and downs along with the Indian freedom struggle. It achieved its height after the death of Potti Sriramulu⁸ in 1952 who died while doing fast-unto-death for the demand. This led to the violent upheaval and subsequent formation of Andhra. Then the Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru declared the formation of Andhra state on 1 October 1953. After Andhra formation, the leaders of Telugu focused on forming Vishalandhra (united Andhra Pradesh) by merging Telangana region.

^{7 7} Rayaprolu Subba Rao (1892-1984) one of the pioneer of modern Telugu literature. He wrote poetry with western influence romanticism and nationalism. His *desa bhakti* (patriotism), *Tenugu thalli* (mother Telugu), 'Andhra' poems praises the Andhra glory. He introduced platonic love concept to Telugu literature. He received Kendra Sahitya Academy Award and Kalaprapurna.

⁸ Potti Sriramulu (1901-1952): was popularly known as *amarajeevi* (immortal being) who was disciple of Gandhi. He was participated Indian national movement and imprisoned. British government denied the long standing demand of special statehood. The people of Andhra believed that Indian Government fulfil their demand. After independence, Dar commission (1948), JVP report also deny for the formation. Seeing this inaction, Sriramulu decide fast-onto-death. He start it on 19th October 1952 in Madras. It continued till his death on 15th December. After his death, Andhra movement becomes a mass movement.

In the movement for separate Andhra based on Telugu language, poets and literary persons played an important role. They evoked the glory of Andhra history and culture. They asked Andhra people to read the glory of Telugu. They used Telugu language and literary archives to make their points. The movement disseminated in the public spheres through printed books and booklets. Andhra was evoked as motherland. Andhra was conceived as physical as well as a metaphysical entity. In this regard, G. Aloysius argued that 'region is socially constructed'. He aptly says that 'the study of the region starts with the consideration of the physical, but very soon the investigation moves to other planes such as culture, economy and politics' (2003:12). All these factors generally influence the regional formation. Culture is one of the important factors which has remained ignored in the region studies discourse. Culture works as catalyst in the regional formation; it becomes a conscious shaping force through which one imagines a region. It shapes individuals and collective formation of groups and identities in a region. It can be argued that region is reproduced in culture. This chapter aims to understand formation of Andhra region through cultural consciousness coming through literary culture. This chapter will map out the various ways the region 'Andhra' was 'imagined', constructed, reproduced. The chapter will closely examine dramatic poetry and theatre performances, which played a crucial role in the formation of the regional consciousness. Andhra Pradesh was formed based on language in which literature played a vital role. I would like to know how Telugu drama constructed the idea of region. The chapter will also attempt to locate the poetics and politics of the dramatic literature in formation of Andhra. It will also examine the various ways, these literatures were disseminated in the region with the help of theatre. For this purpose, I will analyze popular *padya natakam* (verse drama) and the plays of the *Praja Natya Mandali (PNM)*, the branch of the *Indian People's Theatre Association* in Andhra Pradesh. I will focus on my analysis on those plays and literatures where the demands for separate Andhra figured prominently. These were part of the great mobilization of the demand for Andhra. My analysis shall be PSR. Apparao's *Telugu Nataka Vikasam* (1967) offers a useful historiography of Telugu theatre. The work discusses emergence and expansion of literary drama from the end of nineteenth century till the formation of Andhra Pradesh. The study of David Shulman, Velcheru Narayana Rao and B. Kameswara Rao provide methodological tools as well as historical background of the literary imaginations of that period. B.Kameshwara Rao's *Andhra Padya Patanam* (Reading Telugu Padyam) (1957) is useful for the analysis of padyam aesthetics.

Broadly, the chapter will examine politics of language with a focus on theatre in relation to the formation of Andhra Pradesh as a cultural region and state.

Region and its reiteration

The appellations ‘Andhra’, ‘Tenugu’, ‘Telugu’ simultaneously refers to ‘nation’, ‘geographical area’, and ‘language’. It refers to the people who live in a certain geographical space, their language and their nation. The region Andhra is located in the middle of north India and south India. The location makes it place which has mixed language and culture. Telugu comes from the proto Dravidian language that has its roots and contiguity with Tamil and Kannada. But in terms of cultural exchanges Sanskrit hugely influences it. Almost sixty percent of Telugu words are drawn from Sanskrit. While Sanskrit has influenced Telugu, Telugu has humanizes Sanskrit. According to some critics, Telugu pronunciation reduced Sanskrit language harshness and the roughness of Tamil language. It becomes sweeter and appealing. Telugu poet from the 16th century praised it as *desha bhashalandu Telugu lessa* (Among country languages Telugu is the great).

India as a nation is constituted of nationalities. Different Regions have different languages and cultures. Every region can be seen as a nation, or ‘sub-nation’, because of their cultural, political economic distinctions. In the nation-state system, they are the political regions. In compare the nationalities based on language and culture, the modern nation is a new phenomenon. Recent scholarship ask us to question the origin of the idea of the mother tongue lying in pre-colonial times by dismantling discourse of linguistic nationalism. Rama Sundari has traced the recent constitution of the modern linguistic community (2014: 338). The path breaking work of Benedict Anderson has also reiterated the argument that how ‘the nation is an imagined political community’. And how that constitution is _ inherently limited and sovereign (Anderson 1991:6). He has pointed out that the imagined communities were intellectual constructs, which relied on the imagination. Drawing from these readings, I propose that Telugu bilingual elite constructed an imaginative Telugu nation called ‘Vishalandhra’. The nation was supposed to speak for all the Telugu speaking people and regions, which were historically different. Time to time, they were bifurcated and united through different zones. The conceived political and linguistic unity was already based on fragmentations.

The movement for Andhra was part of the Home Rule movement led by the Indian National Congress. It was further fueled by the hegemony of Tamil speaking areas under Madras

presidency. Andhra intelligentsia was feeling sense of inferiority in relation to Tamil region. To counter this hegemonic presence, they reinvented the 'past glory' of Telugu culture. The Telugu intelligentsia tried to bring two different regions together. On the one side, it was Telangana region which was part of Hyderabad state under the Muslim rulers. Muslim rulers imposed Urdu as a language in administrative and educational system for a long period. On the other side, there was Rayala Seema region. It was dry zone. Under British rule, it has named as Ceded. Rayala Seema was earlier not to agree to join in special Andhra province movement. After Sribagh pact⁹ (1937) it agreed to join in movement. Basically, the movement for Andhra was trying to bring four different ecological and cultural zones: Coastal Andhra, Rayalaseema, Telangana and Uttarandhra. These cultural zones also indicate that the concept of region and regional conscious existed much before the nation and nationalism became euphoric (Reddy 2003: 108).

Region in Poetry

Existing literatures of the movement for separate Andhra conceived a romantic idea of nation: beautiful land, golden past, happy people and beautiful language. It was an aestheticized idea of region much more in common with the idealized notion of the Indian nation. This was foregrounded in three different ways. First was the idea of region as motherland. As it was expressed in Rayaprolu Subbarao's poem, *Desa bhakti* poem, *ee desamegina*,

Whichever country you go to, wherever part you step in

Whatever alter you ascend, whatever people say

Keep praising your motherland Bharathi

Keep your nation's honor in high¹⁰.

The idea of sub-national consciousness was more like the colonized nation. In this imagination, motherland was greater than the heaven, '*janani janma bhoomischa swargadapigariiyasi*'. The region was mobilized invoking the primordial roots of culture. In his well-received poem, Viswanatha Satyannarayana imagines the past glory of the local kingdoms

⁹ Sribagh pact: the people of Rayala Seema suspicion about, they will not get fair treatment in the Andhra province. To protect their interests, Andhra and Rayala Seema political leaders made this agreement.

¹⁰ Rayaprolu Subbarao, 'Desha Bhakti' geyam published in *Jadakuuchulu*, 1925.

through *Kondaveedu pogamabbulu*, the Clouds of Kondaveedu. He also eulogizes intellectual attainments of the poets. The poet smells, the *paurusham*, manly fashions of the Andhra child's in the clouds of Kondaveedu from his former birth memories. Poet feels, Andhra civilization remains to tell something to present Andhra people's inertness. The clouds here symbolically represent the fame, desire and imagination of the poet which he would like to evoke the nostalgia of the past.

The second was evoked by juxtaposing Telugu speaking region against the Tamil region. Poet Puttaparti Narayanacharyulu in his *Megha dutham* (the Cloud Messenger) sends cloud as a mediator between a prisoner and his beloved. The beloved lives in Srikakulam, Andhra boarder. The prisoner asks the cloud to send a message to her while he describes the root map. He describes several Andhra towns, hills and rivers. This poem evoked the memories of the Andhra history and culture through different ecological-geographical places of Andhra. The poet successfully created an aesthetic experience of *Telugu desam* (Rayala Seema, Telangana and Andhra). In a fascinating way, the poet's idea of the region flows like lyrics and music flouting with clouds, imagination and reality. The poet compared the region and its history with beauty, love and romance. The prisoner separated from beloved created *vipralamba sringar*. In this connection, he sees love everywhere, in every object and material.

Telugu fraternity was against the political and cultural hegemony of the Tamils at the time. The other important reason was the increasing influences of Dravidian, non-Brahmin movement in Madras Presidency. Andhra intelligentsia dominated by Brahmin castes was not comfortable with the development. They were unable to assert their identity and culture.

Third important reason was the regional disparities and marginalization of Telugu speaking people.

However, this sense of aesthetics was challenged by the new sensibility of Modern Dalit poet Gurram Jashuva who wrote a poem called '*Gabbilam*, the Bat. Using the metaphor of Meghdootam in his poem bat becomes a messenger between God and Dalits, the untouchables. While Gurajada's love for the nation undermines the question of caste, class, religion and gender hierarchies, Jashuva's poem was a sharp critique of that imagination of a region. It can be argued that the movement for Andhra, dominated by upper castes elites while tried to mobilize people on the basis of language, it fails to understand '*Desamante matti kadoi, desamante manusuloi*', that the nation is not about the soil, it is about people.

Nation, Language and Padya Natakam

Modern public sphere in India emerged in the colonial cities built on the model of the European empire. Three things that constructed the public sphere in Andhra region were: nationalist movement, education system and modern theatre. They were drawing from each other. In 1860, the first Telugu drama was written in a conventional style under the influences of English. However, there was no theatre until the Dharvada theatre company toured Andhra Pradesh in 1880. Taking an inspiration from the Dharvada Company, the reformist Kandukuri Veeresalingam Pantulu staged a farce in Rajahmundry with his students. Many plays of these period remained as dramatic literature and were not staged for several reasons, for example, Gurajada, in the preface to his *Kanyasulkam*, says, 'it is a popular prejudice that Telugu language was unsuited to the stage'. They were debating about the mode of language one should use for literature and theatre writings. While some of the conventional playwrights used mythological themes, and wrote in verse, the English educated men writers rejected the style and theme. They argued that if the literature has to reach ordinary people then writers need to use the language of everyday life. Gurajada, who argued for the inclusion of the spoken language in educational system, says, 'my own vernacular for me is the living Telugu, Italian of the East, in which none of us ashamed to express our joys and sorrows, but some of us ashamed to write well' (Gurajada 1986:15).

The Andhra padya natakam has more than one hundred year's history. The performer's adopting the characters of Krishna, Duryodhana or Harischandra used to stand in front of the European painted curtain sings the padyam for hours. They used to have ornamentation with flaring costumes. The audience in ecstasy would have ask them 'once more', the performer would sing once more for them. The phenomenon of padya natakam continues till now, but it does not remain very popular. But the theatre convention set by padya natakam still remains relevant in popular imageries. For example, if one says we are theatre artist, common people may ask, 'do you sing padyam?' The poetry has to be sung remains a criteria to follow. In Telugu language classroom, when it comes to teach poetry Telugu teachers still try to sing the poems. A popular perception was created that A Telugu *bhashabhimaani*, a man of passion for his mother tongue Telugu, feels that even an uneducated Telugu person also easily can say at least four Telugu padyam that was the greatness of Telugu. The popular padya natakam-s like Satya Harischanda, Goyapakhyanam, Pandavodyogam and so on are still have demand in Telugu theatre, like Jatra in

Bengal and Odisha. Surabhi theatre family group also continues their conventional theatre practice with padyam. How this tradition of singing padyam started in Telugu Theatre and what was its role in regional and national politics?

During the movement for Andhra, padyam singing was new phenomenon in modern Telugu theatre. But padyam as a form of poetry was very old. It was core form in classical Telugu poetry. The classical Telugu poetry started in the 11th century with a translation of Sanskrit Mahabharata by Nannayya. While translating *slokas* he invented new metre called padyam. The form was musical and performative. Nannayya's adaptation of the *champu* style also implies a particularly active, participatory role for the listeners (Shulman and Rao 2002: 11). This poetic tradition continued by centuries by taking different shapes and rhythms.

Andhra has been geographically located somewhere middle between the North and the South India. Therefore, both Dravidian and Sanskrit literary tradition influenced it. Telugu emerged from Dravidian is evident in Andhra civilization as it is in the Telugu language (2002:3). Sanskrit vocabulary also negotiated with the structure of Telugu language¹¹. Many Telugu poets Tikkana and Srinatha reworked the Sanskrit texts into Telugu. The sixteenth century poet Ramarajabhushana wrote about the Telugu world, *bahulandhrokti maya prapancham* created by these poets. By the end of the 19th century these Telugu world re-created by Telugu dramatists.

The modern Telugu drama started with the prose form of writing. The drama is in conversation form among characters. This form was new to Telugu literature. Literary giants like Kandukuri Veereshalingam, who was called '*gadya Tikkana*' (Tikkana of prose), enormously contributed to Telugu language and social reform. The enlightenment started in Telugu language from 1853. The sensibility of that enlightenment first came in literature. With the printing press, manual scripts written on palm leaves got printed into books. They made available for wider circulations. The people of Andhra were very much aware to their past through the book called 'History of the Andhra-s' published by Vignana Chandika Mandali in 1910. At the same time English education gave them rational thinking. The encounter with English culture and debates offered them a new critical view to evaluate own traditions and cultures. The educated men like Kandukuri started reform movement by eradicating the social evils of the brahmanical society. He

¹¹ Kashinadhuni Nageswara Rao. *Andhra Vanmaya Charitra*, N.d.

used theatre as a medium to carry out his reform. Telugu playwrights gradually began to develop a play structure, following western and Sanskrit models of theatre. Some of them translated plays from these languages into Telugu. Theatre scholar, PSR. Appa Rao termed the period between 1886 _ 1900 a developing period of theatre. Gradually theatre performances started in Bellary and Circar districts as an entertainment. When theatre emerged as entertainment, commercial adventures and capital investment started. The investors started searching for various methods to draw audience to theatre. They invested capital in music, scenery and box type theatre. As part of experiment, they also re-introduced padyam to theatre because of their appealing quality of musical rhythm. The period also saw a major shift in education by the British government. The British government decided to give education to Indians in their mother tongues. They were surprised by noticing two types of dialects, the dialect spoken in daily speech and the dialect taught in classroom. Dr. Grierson argues that,

the vernacular has been split into two sections- the tongue which is understand of people, and the literary dialect known only through the press and not intelligible to those who do not know Sanskrit. Literature has thus been divorced from the great masses of the popular and to the literary classes. (Grierson qtd in Murthy, 1992:40).

The distinction between literary dialect and spoken dialect led to a regime of distinction in aesthetics. The poets and reformers were split into two groups. They stated two movements called movement for literary dialect and the movement for spoken dialect. While the traditional pundits wanted to keep literary dialect in education system. They argued that, these social reforms are harmful to the Telugu language and society. They accused the people who are writing in spoken dialogue, called them as '*gramya*', uncultured people. Linguist Dakshinamurthy mocks these pundits' arguments like, if people start reading and writing the spoken dialect, there will be possibilities for regional prejudices and special state movements (Murthy, 1992). Another section of pundits who were reformists argued that spoken dialogue is the best for education. They argued that spoken language will give easy access to acquire knowledge. They also added that the usage of spoken language in education will make learners happy because the language would be the language of their heart. Theatre was one of the battlegrounds for these arguments. These Pundits and reformists choose drama as a medium to prove their arguments. For this purpose, they have

translated and adapted mythological, historical texts into dramatic forms. They wrote in standard literary dialect. Another section of pundits tried to focus on contemporary social problems which they were facing in their daily life. In his preface of *Kanyasulkam* Gurajada argues that ‘modern life which presents complex social conditions is neglected by playwrights except for purposes of the broadest farce and poverty of invention is manifested by the consultant handling of thread bare romantic topics (Gurajada 1986:13). Gurajada rightly argues that the complexities of the modern social life does not reflect in modern Telugu theatre, instead romantic themes like truth, justice, to protect the refuge whatever may come, these perennial problems were focused. While describing bourgeois modernity and critical realism, George Lucas says that these modern bourgeois writers create only outer reality. The question arises is that why only *Kanyasulkam* was considered a landmark in Telugu theatre? There are many reasons for it. In *Kanyasulkam*, he created a complex inner world of the society and psychological reality of the characters which was in parallel with the modern sensibility. This could not be done by mythical dramas despite of the fact that they were well-received plays. Plays like *Pandavodhyogam*, *Satya Harischandra*, *Gayopakyanam* and others created another world. They could not bring the complexities and crisis of the society and the region.

Historian, Y. Balarama Murthy says that,

Gidugu Ramamurty and Gurjada Apparao took forward the language reform which was initiated by the Kandukuri. And they said that the Telugu which we writing must be understandable to the common people. In the democratic era, there only appropriate language is spoken dialect (Balarama Murthy 1995).

Urdu and Sanskritized Telugu dominated in Telangana and Andhra, respectively. Telugu reformists in Andhra and Telangana regions fought against the linguistic hegemony of the dominant ruling class with their mother tongues. The struggle against Urdu and Sanskrit hegemony also gave a way for Telugu. . Drama as a modern genre and a conscious art form did not much explored in pre-modern Andhra region for whatever reasons. The pundit playwrights began writing plays in literary styles not having the idea of performance. Against this background, *padyam* became an aesthetical element in the entire Telugu language. But even in the classical literature *padyam* was not silent. It used to perform in reader’s mind. Shulman and Rao argues that

These are not verses written on palm leaves, printed on pages, read silently in libraries. They exist in the living space between the poet and his listener, who hears and feels every syllable in the body (2002:16).

But the classical Telugu padyam was limited to court production and did not have access to common people.

In terms of structure, one cannot enjoy padyam alone. Padyam needs commentary and interpretation. Like in the genres of Harikatha, the narrator tells the stories of the Lord Hari or god's story. The narrator sings the part and narrates and makes comments on it. Another genre in Telugu called 'Avadhanam'. The genre is 'skill of performing feats of memory', a form of spontaneous poetry. The genre has highly intellectual performing activity. The avadhaani, a person versatile in performing feats of memory, a time does many activities. He answers to the questions asked by many people at a time. The popular playwrights like Tirupathi Venkatakavulu, Balijepalli and others were well-known for this art. With this technique, poets are able to write many kavya within a short period. There are many examples when padyam was used in nationalist and the movement for Andhra meeting. Playwright Chilakamarthi Lakshminarasimham sang a padyam spontaneously at the end of the meeting in Rajahmundry in 1907. The meeting was attended by Patriot Bipin Chandrapal:

Bharatha khandambu chakkani paadiyaavu/ Hinduvulu legadalai yedchuchunda

Tellavarunu gadasari gollavaru/ Pithukuchunnaru muthulu bigiyagatti

(While India is a milking cow, Indians crying like lambs

Shrewd British shepherds, draw milk by tightly holding lamb mouths).

With one *thetageeti* padyam, he explains the suppression by the colonial regime. It has followed the meter that gives rhythm and words used in daily speech. He compared the Indian nation as a cow and Indians as lambs. Before regionalism sprang into Andhra social sphere, many of the theatre societies/companies used to have names included 'Hindu' and 'Nation'. For instance, Hindu *nataka Samajam* (Rajahmundry), Bandaru National theatrical society and so on. Most of these societies were located in Coastal Andhra, and some of in Bellary region. Bellary being

proximity to Kannada, the first play was performed in Kannada. Before Darmavarapu Krishnamacharyulu, known as the father of Andhra theatre, started writing drama, there was a myth that Telugu language was not suitable for drama writing. After his creative work 'Chitranaliniyam', he created an impression that Bellary is not a part of Kannada region [but part of Telugu region] (PSR 1967). Bellary region theatre circles produced well-known playwrights, actors like Kolachalam Srinivasa Rao, Bellary Raghava and many other famous actors came from that region. After the formation of Andhra, Bellary region went into the Karnataka state.

Scholars have noted that theatre taste varies region to region. Theatre critic PSR says, Sastri divided the Andhra area into four regions: Visakha mandalam, Godavari-Krishna mandalam, Datta mandalam and Nellore mandalam. He writes,

Bellary region people like devotional-amorous themes with Parsi music. There are some historical plays, but they didn't rose any heroic temper in them. Visakha mandala is proximity to Bengal, the region has interest in social and historical themes. Godavari-Krishna mandala people like all types of plays. Datta mandalam produced only street plays and Yakshaganam. (PSR 1967)

By observing this narrative, historically Telugu has many cultural variations identified with their proximity to the other regions. The Rayala Seema is popular for street plays which continues to persist in the name of 'Bharatha kathalu'. Bellary theatre introduced music to theatre, they started singing padyam. It also experimented with western theatre through Parsi theatre, like painted sceneries, music. Tragedy was also introduced. Another major contribution from this region was style of acting. Bellary Raghava brought changes in the way classical characters interpreted and commented. This was spread later whole Andhra, especially Godavari- Krishna region. This region had settlements of high Brahmin with the infrastructure support provided the British government. The region had western education, irrigation projects constructed by the British. Towns like Rajahmundry, Bandaru, and Guntur were well known for theatre culture. Rajahmundry was an important center of reforms, print media, and theatre. The pundits of this region were very rich in Telugu literary scholarship. They continued the classical tradition of Telugu. In their writings, 'literary dialect' portrayed quite visibly.

Theatre is the place of congregation nurturing the ideas and ideologies and to unite and bring depersonalized feeling among the audience. They may enjoy together, feel together and can construct the unity for some cause. It also becomes a carrier of knowledge coming from generations. Theatre works in a physical setting; it needs real audience and real players. Rest of the elements can be imagined and symbolized. The Harischandra may be aroused in mythic, illusionistic creation but it also has its real connection with the society. One can find one theme across languages but language may have different social thought process. And therefore the variants are very much expected. The Telugu Harischandra will be different from the Bharathendu's Harischandra. Because Telugu classical poets developed a meter called padyam, it created a strict rule for poetry. Balijepalli Lakshmikantam's Satya Harischandra (1912) play became very popular during nationalist movement (1905), and Andhra movement (1913). The play tried to establish the realm of truth and justice. Truth was presented as the ultimate criteria to be human. The play shows how truth gives *punyam* (spiritual merit) and *keerti* (fame). These themes were widespread in theatre of the nationalist period. Andhra playwrights drew themes from myths and histories to shape their political ideologies. In *kaati scene* (graveyard scene) of, Harischandra, when he lost all wealth indebted to Viswamitra, the sage. And he appointed as a keeper of cremation ground in Kasi. A scene comes when his wife comes to cremate her son Lohitasya who dies of a snake bite. Harishchandra demands her to pay the cremation taxes, without that he would not allow her do the cremation of body. She replied him that she did not had a single penny. He didn't believe this. Because he saw in her neck, a golden auspicious thread was hanged. He replies her with a poem;

Galamun -payyedalo-nadangiyu-samudyatkantuliredalan

Malayimpan-disalan-thvadiya-gala-seemalan-bala surya Prabha

Kalithambai-velugondu chunnayadi-mangalyambu-kabolu-ye

Vela-kainan-theganammi-ni suthunikai-vecchinchinan-chellade (Balijepalli, 1912)

In your neck, in your upper saree

There is a splendid light spread in all directions, which shines like an early rising sun

That may be your auspicious wedding thread.

Please sell it for any rate and you better use it for cremation of your son¹².

At the peak of the play, the poet reveals the relationship of Harischandra and Chandramathi who were husband and wife, but were disguised in other characters. They both were not able to identify each other because both were standing in dark graveyard. Or maybe Harischandra identified her, but he fulfilled his duty because he must keep his oath. The playwright reveals the secret slowly, in your neck, in the upper saree which covers her breast, there hang a golden thread, which shines like early morning raising dawn *tvadiya galaseeman balasurya prabhakalithambai*. This long Sanskrit compound gives the value of the thread. Using Sanskrit words was a popular practice in Telugu poetics. Whole piece of Sanskrit phraseology can be lifted from a Sanskrit source and reworked into a borrowed Sanskrit meter, and yet be entirely and amazingly Telugu (2002:10). Suddenly he got furious, the words which were used in daily speech, ‘*ye velakainan theganammu*’, sell it for whatever you get. The thread is considered auspicious for the married Indian woman. She is never supposed to take out her marriage thread. On this question of Harishchandra, Chandramathi got angry and at the same time she was surprised because she had a boon that no one could see her wedding thread except her husband. She he realizes that he is her husband. Modern padyam is very near to spoken language, but they also use heavy Sanskrit compounds. Balijepalli’s Harischandra padyam were very popular among masses. These padyams were very lyrical, expressive and continual to be accepted in the classical tradition. When Harischandra was ready to execute the death penalty to Chandramathi by a local king, he firmly towards truth and duty. There, he gives a soliloquy in a seesa padyam; *hridayamaa...* (Balijepalli, 1912),

‘O heart! This debt is settled with my wife, don’t linger your passion on her,

O enchantment! Your time has gone, O grief! Please leave from my thought,

O knife! Be ready to taste the blood of the woman’.

While saying this he prepared to cut her head. The poet uses the words as an affective force to do this: *satyamunakai-ee Harischandru-vamsam-antarinedugaaka-Sriharunimida-manasu-*

¹² All translations from Telugu to English are mine, otherwise mentioned.

guri-chesi, haa! Chandramathi-tvadiiya-kantam-arpimpu-ni pathi-khadgamunaku (Balijepalli, 1912). Within one padyam, Harishchandra firmly states, ‘may extinct my dynasty for seeking of truth’. He asks his wife to pay concentration on Lord Shiva and he lifts the sword to cut her head. Here poet executes the action through throat full of words without gape. The sound ‘haa!’ used as exclamation and also the character preparing his sword force to cut the head. Listener of the poetry easily visualizes the entire scene in his mind. This kind of active poetry caused Telugu *padya natakam* more *sravya* (audible) than *drisya* (visible). How this padyam was performed in a theatre production? Padyam could have been recited Padyam frames with ganam-s, group of words. It has a fixed rhythmic movement. ‘The word and its meaning is different in drama and poetry’, Adya Rangacharya, in his Natya Sastra translation argues that ‘in a play, words gain their significance from *abhinaya* where in a poem, written down on paper, we see the words with the eyes (Rangacharya 1984: 357). Telugu padyam even though it was written in a poetic form maintains its orality as well. When it comes in a play mode, the playwright consciously used performative qualities like, using daily spoken dialect, compound Sanskrit words and more dialogic conversation. In their celebrated texts, ‘Pandavodyoga-vijayaalu’, Tirupati-Venkatakavulu¹³ pushed *padya natakam* to another level. The pair gave new outlook and direction to the Telugu poetry and created an aesthetic awareness and literary taste (S.Krishnamurthy 1985:8). They also dramatized the Mahabharata into Telugu with more ease. The translation of Mahabharata into Telugu was done by at least three poets, Kavitraya (3-poets). The medieval poets Nannayya and Tikkana created and imagined Telugu world through the translation of the Mahabharata. Shulman and Rao pointed out about Nannayya, ‘he knew that he was innovative in creating a musical and flowing poetic form, dense with expressive possibilities and unique to his mother tongue (2002:9). While Tikkana adheres closely to the verbal text of Sanskrit Mahabharata, he has in effect re-created the text in Telugu, alive with Telugu speaking heroes’ (23). This kind of ‘Teluguized’ poetics were renovated, when Telugu renaissance took place with print media and English education., Tirupati-Venkatakavulu brought classical poetics into modern era. At the same time, they incorporated nationalist ideology into their mythological themes. Lord Sri Krishna goes to Kaurava court as a mediator of Pandava and seeks treaty with them. When Duryodhana rejected

¹³ Divakarla Tirupathi Sasrti (1872-1919) and chellapilla Venkata Sastry (1870-1950) are popularly known as Tirupathi Venkata Kavulu. These celebrated twin poets brought modern sensibility in classical forms. They have dramatized the classics epics, which were highly applauded in the Telugu region.

to give even five villages to Pandava-s, Sri Krishna tried to convince him with four kinds of peace approaches, reasoning (saama), and wisdom of gifting away (daana), prudence (bheda) and the threat of reprimand (danda). Krishna started his padyam in simple daily language:

Chelliyo chellako thamaku-chesina yeggulu saichiri-andarun-

Tholli gathinche nedu nanu dhuthaga-pampiri-sandhi seya ni-

Pillalu papalu-prajalu pempu vahimpaga-pondu sesedo

Yelli ranambu-kurchedo-yerpada-cheppumu kauraveswaraa (Tirupathi-Venkatakavulu 1955:55)

Right or wrong, the wrongs done to them are borne by

Them all, the past is past, now they have sent me as a mediator

To arrive at treaty pray tell me, leader of Kauravas, clearly

Whether you are going, to make a treaty to the prosperity of your

Progeny and people or whether you will make a battle ready (1985:54).

Tirupathi- Venkatakavulu follow the Tikkana's poetic vision of '*natakiyatha*', dramatic nature and his poetic narratives speaks rather than sings. Here they break the text into daily speech pattern. The words, *chelliyo chellako*, were more colloquial rather than textual. I apply Shulman and Rao criticism on Tikkana, to Tirupathi- Venkatakavulu, 'the syntactical breaks tend to be unpredictable-as in living speech-retarding the movement of the meter, stopping and starting afresh, laden with indexicality' (16). Here Krishna, says like this way 'right or wrong, they bare them all', he stops then he starts, 'past is past, today they send me as a mediator to make treaty, O Kaurava! Tell me, what you want, war or bring prosperous to your kin and kith by making treaty'. Here poets used tender, softer, voiced 'Dravidian clusters' gives the feeling of musicality to the padyam. Contrary to the playwright's musicality of language and daily speech pattern, Modern Telugu verse actors started singing these padyam-s with borrowing raga-s from the classical music.

Raga-s have an attractive quality which makes audience in a mood without concern about words and its context. Music undoubtedly has the ability to indicate, stimulate, nourish, fulfil or intensify emotions and moods engendered in words. (R. Satyannarayana 2004:85)

Whereas drama relies on words and its contexts as conscious and it is a continuous thought process of conflicts amongst the characters. In this regard, Drama critic B.Kameswara Rao argues that raga kills the padyam, hence we must prohibit the raga in drama and padyam needs to be recited. But Telugu padyam cannot be imagined without singing. It is very difficult to identify how this padyam performed in classical time. Padya natakam will not give up its singing repertoire of legacy but tragedy is that padya natakam itself decline after independence. In another padyam, '*alugutaye yerungani...*(55)', Tirupathi Venkatakavulu, attributes Gandhi characteristics into Dharmaraja, 'as when the great Ajatha Satru, who does not know how to get angry, gets angry, the oceans might not remain separate, O Raja! Karna-s will, if there were ten thousands fall and die, have faith in my words and save all the people' (1985: 54). The humanistic approach to the poetry, Tirupathi-Venkatakavulu proposed peaceful militancy of Gandhian thought incorporate in their drama-s. Telugu padya natakam was more flexible with padyam singing mode because even one actor can stage the whole play. The fact is that even a single padyam refers to whole drama. Telugu actors used to take main conflict of the play, and then they used to perform it. They also used this method as it also reduces the cost of the production. It could have been performed several times. Chilakamarti Narasimha Rao's play, *Gayopakhanam* (1909) was performed with only two actors Krishna and Arjun. The theme of the play is the conflict between two near and dear friends. The Gandharva king Gaya spit into the hands of Lord Krishna, who pray to the Sun god. Angrier Krishna, take an oath to kill him. After that Gaya take refugee under Arjun's shield. Arjun refuge to send back Gaya to Krishna and the battle was ensued. The play drew the modern sensibilities of the Telugu audience. When a question arises, where we have to stand with have's or have not's? Dharma Raju gives an explanation keeping nationalism in mind. He say we as an elite must stand with have not's. Chilakamarti first wrote this play in prose style, later he added padyam-s in it by following the trends of the time. Unlike Tirupathi-Venkatakavulu, Chilakamarti padyam is not a part of the main story. They served to enhance the mood of a character or an incident. Later they were occupied by the main stage and prose became a mediator between the padyam-s. These padyam-s were more playful, sarcastic, and melodious. While Krishna and Arjun accusing each

other like common people, Krishna makes some remarks about the Dharmaraju, the brother of Arjuna, follow this way:

Peru dharmaraju penu vepa vittandru

Maata thene theta manasu vishamu

Nethi bhirakaya nee yudhisthara shadbam-

Eruka lenivaani-eduta-pogudu (chilakamarthi 1955; 109)

Named as Dharma Raju (king of justice) but he is big bitter seed

His words are sweet, but his heart filled with venom

He just sounds well

Please tell this to some unknown persons.

Here playwright brought another dimension to the mythical character. In the play, Dharma Raju was treated in a farcical manner. The playwrights of padya natakam also tried to bring the mythical characters into daily life situation.

India nationalism and Andhra movement staged in 1920's to 30's brought historical themes in theatre specifically rooted in the region. They had an opportunity to deal with the history, and to prove the backwardness of the region. Kolachalam Srinivasa Rao, the playwright argued that 'it is easy to imagine and write mythological plays, and if we talk about historical themes, people don't know about history, that can creatively interpret and educate audience (PSR, 265). His popular play 'Fall of Vijayanagara' was banned in 1918. The play indirectly criticized the British Rule even though theme dealt the conflict between Hindu and Muslim kings. Historical themes are different from history, as Aristotle says in his Poetics, the historical events stages in order, it has possibility of probability. Also playwrights interpret the story with their own ideology. The historical plays like Prathaparudriyam of Vedam Venkataraya Sastry, Bobbiliyuddam of Sripada appealed the masses of the Andhra. These playwrights introduced the interesting element of '*paatrochitha bhasa*', the language in which the characters speak. It was not a new concept in Sanskrit drama, the characters speaks Sanskrit and Prakrit according to their hierarchies.

On the other hand poets like Gurajada propose the spoken language as a useful tool for the modern writing. Playwrights like Venkataraya Sastri creatively employed *gramya bhasa* for his 'downgraded characters. PSR argues that 'Sastri restricted this language only to characters in the play. For other purposes he never agreed and used this language in his kavya or in teaching (254). He maintained that the life in literature and the life in reality are two different things. The point was raised by critics that if king is Muslim then how will he use Sanskrit or for example how come the French governor will speak Sanskrit. If we take this *paatrochitha bhasa* in reality then obviously, kings and gods did not speak in that language. Even if they spoke then one needs to ask when they spoke? In what period? The questions arises that if kings or gods spoke in plays, then how audience would have accepted them? Even in folk drama, local artists use the standard pattern language with their local dialects. Gadya, prose or any dialogue in conventional drama was rather in complex sentences, rhythmic words are kept in a kind of pattern it has a flow, playwright imaginatively imitates his lexical knowledge. In Chilakamarthi's *Gayopaakhyanam*, Krishna made an oath to kill Gaya with long prose dialogue:

*'...daithya raadgarbha nirbhedaka sudharshna mahaabhidhardhamai
brundaara kendra tri divasaamrajyaida samrakshana dhurandharamai
pralaya samaya krushanu shikha prathimaanasaajyvaka mahaa kiilika
shobhithambai –alaru nirvakrama paraakrama sprhuritha
chakraayudhambuche-adduraathmu-kruthaantha nishanthambunaku-
athidhi-kaavincheda'. (22)*

For common audience it is very difficult to understand the meaning of this dialogue, but they can easily get the feeling of the character expressing his anger on opposite character with throat full of syllables which the playwright already given in the text. And therefore, an actor who plays this character no need to worry about his emotions. They simply have to focus on *dharana*, retention.

Many reformers used theatre as a tool for reform. These playwrights dealt with real people and their language. They identified inequalities and discrimination in society. Their focus was on issues like widow marriages, nautch systems, education and untouchability. In Gurajada's *Madhuravani* or Kallakuri's *Chintamani*, the prostitutes could become mother of the Telugu people instead of so-called Telugu Thalli. But Nationalist movement and special Andhra province

movement wiped out the realism that Gurajada and Kandukuri had created. The nationalism staged in with big themes like mother land emancipation with imaginative mythic, historical themes or the real heroes of the nationalism. Actors like Bellary Raghava tried to bring realism in acting methods. He reinvented created a mythological characters like Hiranyakashyapa, the demon, Bhahuka or dhuryodhana from new perspectives. In the mythological characters, stage actors of Andhra used to portray one dimension of the character, which is a melodramatic formula. Raghava showed the good angle of a bad character like Hiranyakashyapa, the demon king who punish his son being not follow his school. He innovatively interpreted the characters, which audience to think not just passively agreed the total goodness or badness of the character.

On the other side, the padya natakam actor sings padyam with one raga and leaves no room for thinking except surrender to the emotion. But ironically, padya natakam was commercially very successful in 1920's. Raghava brought realism in padya natakam. He recited padyam according to mood and feeling of the playwright's intention. Krishnamacharya argues that 'music is a useful tool to read padyam (PSR 235). Here one thing needs to be clarified that music, poetry and theatre, have distinct stylistic elements. Music and poetry are independent arts whereas theatre is *samaahaara kala*, mixture of many arts. Theatre uses all arts forms minimally for own purpose. Theatricality is something unique in this form-thought. Theatre interprets and comments on life, which is created by playwright. Whereas padyam is poetic, musical which is highly crafted by poets. Drama was conceived as a conflict between characters and structured in a dialogic mode. Playwrights wrote dialogues in padyam format. How does a performer perform this padyam? The genres asks performers to sing, not necessarily to act. It creates fascinating but complex interplays. While actors or actresses must understand the character but they should also have potential to hide behind the character. Whereas singer express his subjective feeling with his melodious tune and with skilled voice, as an actor the person also has to disguise his day to day character.

Actor of the padya natakam embodies the language which was richly written in meter and has a historical continuity. The poetic tradition of Telugu spread more dynamically through the theatre. The performers resonated the region with their voice by singing padyam and doing performance in a specific cultural context.

Utopic region

Theatre and literary practices went through a turmoil phase during the movement for the separate Andhra based on Telugu language. Padya natakam lost its glory because of its own intrinsic fault. Bereft of innovations, it was producing basis of its own faults, i.e. monotonously repeated plays. In the name of competition, actors dominated the stage with their individual glory and final cause of the capital manipulation of the contractors. When cinema becomes attractive art form for masses all the theater auditoriums turn into cinema halls. Social changes in the thirties produced new poets like Srisri. He brought new school of poetry along with the formation of the Progressive Writers Association (PWA) and Communist movement (1935) in India. His *Mahaa prastanam* had created a tremendous impact on the minds of youth (Raghunadharao, 1994: 256). In this Mahaa prastanam, he calls upon people for another world,

A different world, a different world

A different world is calling!

March ahead, push ahead...

Onward we march! A different world

A great one

Pervades the whole earth!

Roar like a great wind, Flow like a swift thought!

Burst forth like a dark cloud full of rain

Move on, march ahead!¹⁴

What was this another world or the different world? What kind of region, Srisri was proposing? Of course, it was different from the *swarajya* or special Andhra province or the Dravidian state. Srisri idea of region was an egalitarian region, a society of an inclusive space. In the hegemonic political situation Srisri was dreaming for the ideal state which did not exist in

¹⁴ Dr.Syamala Kallury. *Selections from Srisri and others essays. (Compiled, translated and edited)*. pp. 21-22
<http://newaavakaaya.com/component/attachments/download/26>

physical form. His region was a utopia. Srisri goes entirely opposite with the traditionalist who wanted to evoke the glories from the medieval Andhra and great Telugu culture. whereas Srisri wanted to traverse the future. This attracted the youth of Andhra. Unlike the earlier great poets, he saw poetry everywhere, in a puppy, in a matchstick, in a piece of soup. He appeals people that ‘only you should have a poetic inspiration... see if you have the sight, write if you have the word. He wanted to get free from lexicons, classical grammatical compositions and meters. He opposed the way history was written. As a Marxist, he said, history has nothing to do with kings, and their war dates and queens love stories:

Look at the history of any nation

What is there to be proud?

The entire history of the human race

Is one of exploiting the other!

The mighty have turned the meek

Into slaves!

Murderers have made name

In history as rulers of the earth!¹⁵

This is entirely different from what the Telugu propagators of the movement for the separate Andhra was imagining. Instead of writing people’s history and culture, they were seeking pride in classical poets and rulers. Poets and playwrights used to praise the glory of Andhra, ‘*Andhra prasasthi*’. In one of Gullapalli Narayana Murthy’s plays *Andhra Jyothi* (1940), a character admits the pathetic situation of the present Andhra province comparing with past. The playwright basically eulogizes past to bring the problem of the present:

The valor of Kakatiya dynasty who rule allover Katakam, the talent of Krishnadevaraya who rule Vidyanagara make victory in all quarters, heroism of Vengi Chalukyas, the campaigning of the Palnati heroes, the leadership of Nayaka kings, war talent of Kamma heroes, ferocity of

¹⁵ Ibid, pp. 46-50.

Reddys, oh! Mother of Andhra! These all perished in the oblivion, what state you are facing now? What happens to your independence, arts, literature, and statesmanship? You who make a king to carry your palanquin, you are the goddess of money who did port business with Romans... today Andhra people become living corpses. Andhra become a graveyard. Andhra's manly manner had died, and there is no nationality remain in them (Gullapalli1940:13).

Here playwright's intention was to excavate the past'. This could be read in the light of Joseph Roach's *Cities of the Dead*, Their 'aim was to excavate the past that is necessary to account for how we got here and the past that is useful for conceiving alternatives to our present condition (Roach 1996:25). While the character publicizes the Andhra movement, the playwright tried to evoke the memories of the heroic history of Andhra through the character, particularly on audience. But, Srisri in his *Mahaapranam*, imagines '*maro prapancham*', another world. He did not want to count kings, who get into the palanquin, he counts, the people who carries it. He evokes the history of the oppressed. The elite's ideas of linguistic state icons were kings and classical poets. During the feudal period, ideas of the piety, honor, valor and military chivalry were the ruling ideas of the hegemonic aristocratic classes (Douglas Kellner 2013:4). During the Andhra movement, instead of talking about social reality of the period, poets took up these imaginative themes by legitimizing dominant societal interests. Srisri adopted the social reality to his poetry. He has also influenced and shown new path to literature and performing arts. Srisri raised the issue of nationalism and Andhra movement and addressed what the movement failed to address. That was the immediate problems of the common people. He was deeply rooted in the Marxists politics. He tried to question the hegemony of capitalist forces above the nationalism and regionalism. He made remarkable changes in the political and cultural spheres of Andhra Telangana in the decades of 40s and 50s. His poetry performed an active role in Andhra movement and Telangana Armed struggle (1946-51) led by the Communist Party of India.

In 1943, the Communist Party of India established its cultural wing Praja Natya Mandali to spread its socialist ideology among masses. They tried to unify people against the capitalist and

fascist forces of local and international by using people's arts forms like Burra Katha¹⁶, Veedi Bhagavatham and Pagati vesham-s, of old cultural revivals of the region. Progressive movement led to two major changes, first not more relying on classical Telugu language and classical themes and the second was the marginalized art forms stages forefront. The Communist activists and artists fought for the region what Srisri imagines *maro prancham* (another world), against the real Oppressors. Praja Natya Mandali re-imagined the region different from the elite-brahminical imagination of Andhra. It tried to bring medieval *desi* region culture which was used by Shiva-s against Brahmin ideology. The artists used a wide range of themes from the local histories like Palnati veera charitra, Alluri Sitharamaraju Burra Katha to the international issues like Tatyana Burra Katha, Hitler Veedi Bhagavatam to portray radical reactionaries. The future region for the Communists and progressive were what they used to call, *kooli rajyam* or *karmika rajyam*.

They also influences the nationalist movement. They brought radicalism to fight capitalist state. In Telangana they fought against the Nizam adopting armed struggle. And in Andhra, they fought for the demand of democratic special state. However, there were a lot of ambivalences in their political strategies and cultural struggles.

The politics of land and language: *Maa Bhoomi*

Maa Bhoomi (1946) is a play on historic Telangana Armed Struggle written by Sunkara Satyannarayana and Vasireddy Bhaskara Rao. It was widely performed by more than 125 groups of Praja Natya Mandali in the years 1947-1948. PNM was vibrantly active in the political scenario of Andhra and Telangana. The playwrights historicize the events of struggle in dramatic structure. The play tried to bring the history of violence, suppression and sacrifice of people in performance to gain support for the movement. A Historical event emerged as a performance in Maa Bhoomi. It would be interesting to find out what efficacy it had on the movement for the separate Telangana. How did it help, Andhra and Telangana as a regions transformed into a single linguistic entity called Vishalandra?

The Telugu word *Bhoomi* refers to land, a piece of cultivated area by a family or a community. *Bhoomi* also gives an identity to the human being. It is part of their existing physical

¹⁶ Burra Katha: Burra Katha is a semi-literary art form which used by marginalized caste groups to praise and propagate Shiva-religion in the medieval Andhra.

entity as well as a product of their physical labour and imagination. At a collective level, it is a political territory and an environment. It encompasses human emotions build around it. A person in general a farmer in particular cannot be imagined without land. In a feudal society, land is the symbol of power hierarchy. It becomes an instrument of social and economic control. The ground politics in Andhra and Telangana was built around the land. Land distribution was one of the core demands of many progressive movements. The question of land also prominently appears in the cultural enactments of the regions. Telangana peasants faced unbridled feudal exploitation during the Nizam rule. Sixty percent land was under the raiyatvari system, thirty percent land was under the Jagirdari system and ten percent land was directly under in Nizam, called sarf khas. The tax collected from *serf khas* area would directly reach the Nizam and the Nizam was not expected to spend any welfare facilities to these areas. Jagirdari system was in sub feudatory area and common people in those areas did not have any right on the land. They used to collect more than ten times extra tax from the land tillers. The Deshmukhs as tax collectors used to be helped patwari and agents. They would grab and own thousands of cultivated lands from the peasants. Because of bad harvest, peasants used to face a lot of difficulty in paying the unfair taxes. On peasants' crops, landlords would lend money with high interests. Apart from this, there was a strong presence of vetti (bonded labour). Andhra Mahasabha (1928) and the Communist party came to support peasants. They formed Sangam (union) in every village and later they became the epicenter of the armed struggle movement

The play deals with the story of a village in which protagonist with his Sangam members fight against the exploiters. The playwrights brought many historical narratives and dimensions to the story that can epically map out the entire peasant struggle.

The play opens up with a village people offering devotions on Bandagi *urusu* (death anniversary) at the cemetery. The offer is made to a martyr who fights against the Deshmukh for his land. Protagonist Veera Reddy, his wife and sister along with poor village peasants both Muslims and Hindus praise the braveness of the Bandagi and hate the atrocities of the Deshmukh. When, Mastan a Muslim hireling of Deshmukh try to hit Yalamanda, shepherd they protect him. At the end of the act, every one decide to form the sangam. Bandagi's death becomes a background which draws audience towards the greater exploitation of the Deshmukh. It was used as a symbol of protest a mark of humiliation. In revolutionary struggle, cemeteries of the martyrs are the

landmark visiting sites for the activists. In the second act, at divanam, Deshmukh along with patwari Venkata Rao, the village accountant, getting angry on village people attending at Bandagi *urusu* by disobeying his orders. Patwari hatches a plan to teach a lesson to the peasants by raising levy issue. Meanwhile, police inspector Ameen comes and he collects money from Deshmukh for inspecting at *urusu*. They confine and thrashing up the Yalamanda, a shepherd, showing the cause that he took Sangam membership. They forcibly asked him to sign a statement that Sangam leaders threatened him to join in the Sangam. In the next scene, patwari asks the peasants to pay the levy on paddy. Sangam members reject the order and ask him to pay it first. In third act, Veera Reddy and his wife Sita talk about the marriage problem of his sister Kamala. Sita also takes the Sangam membership. This character portaged as equally to Maxim Gorki 'Mother' Nilovna. Then the peasants talks about the Rami Reddy another peasant's ox seized by the Dora's hirelings. They also discuss how the Nizam military have been brutally raping women in various places. They also discusses about how the Congress also support the princely states. The play also takes strong position against Congress.

In one scene Deshmukh and patwari argue that we should also support congress_ we wear khaddar and donate funds to Kasturba trust and also patwari quotes Gandhi words that, 'Deshmukhs and jagirdars must be guardian to the farmers'. For this, peasant Veera Reddy replies that 'goats are under the guardianship of wolves'. This metaphor reveals the disbelief in Congress leaders and also the political consciousness of the peasants. Yalamanda also argues that the Muslims don't let go Nizam rule. Subhan, a Muslim young boy says, sarcastically replies, 'Yalamanda don't let go Deshmukh rule'. Finally they come to the conclusion that Nawaz or Deshmukh, Muslim or Hindu, every ruler is the same, they keep us in starve. A barber Ramudu, who work under Deshmukh expressed his willing to join the Sangam. They allowed him.

In the fourth act, Deshmukh and Patwari deploy police to suppress the Sangam activities. In the meantime they come to know that entire village boycotts the work of Deshmukh. They also come to know that Sangam conduct a meeting where it expressed that wish to finish the authority of Deshmukh. Sahukaru, the local retile merchant denies free food item service to military camp which was an earlier practice. Deshmukh and Patwari instigate Ameen outrage with that Sangam tries to expel the Nizam government. Police Inspector failed in making Muslim peasants withdraw from Sangam, in his words *kaafir Sangam* and asked them join in *Majilise Ittehadul Musalmine*.

Deshmukh also fail to attract Vera Reddy by offering bribes. Finally, they arrest the Sangam leader Veera Reddy. In fifth act, police raid the village in the name of collecting levy. They try to molest women. Deshmukh and Patwari entered Veera Reddy home and try to molest Kamala. By the way of saving Kamala, Sita and Dadasaheb lost their lives with the gun firing of Ameen. When whole village come with uproar, Deshmukh and Ameen escaped from there. Peasants hit the patwari and banned him from the village. Deshmukh left village. Entire village cultivate their lands which were earlier occupied by the Deshmukh. At the end of the play, peasants offer tributes to the martyrs Sita and Dadasaheb and they promised that they hold their lands who ever come, even Indian military also. Veera Reddy asked people ready to fight against Deshmukh who will come definitely with military and we must get united to united defeat them.

Performance studies approach offers us a method and lens to study cultural behaviors and practices. Richard Schechner says ‘performances are twice behaved behaviors’. When it comes to the ideological performance, performers behave ideally or ideologically and the audience who believes in the actions of the performers, they try to reproduce the behaviors in their real life in order to make social change. *Maa Bhoomi* as a play offers us to see the characters behaviors in a historical context of a feudal structure. . Playwrights represent political stand of class. In this context, it would be difficult to make out the entirety of character. Play brings contradiction and antagonism through different characters. How a character behaves in a certain historical, social, cultural context becomes vital in this analysis. Landlord is the center of the feudal settings. With name, action and appearance play shows the authority and deaconess of Deshmukh, the feudal landlord of the village.

‘Deshmukh enter with the appearance of pointed moustache, wears shervani, shurva (chudidhar, paizama), fur cap on head and silver can stick on hand. And he sit in the chair. Barber Ramudu bent under the drawer and removes Deshmukh boots’¹⁷.

This small action reveals the account of character’s behavior, social hierarchy and social practice of *vetti*, the bonded labour. There is plenty of violence and character’s self-respect dragged down in this case. What characterizes the *vetti*? Vetti in various ways show that how village should

¹⁷ Satyannarayana, Sunkara and Bhaskara Rao, Vasireddy. *Maa Bhoomi*. Nava Chethana Publishing House, 2015. P.24.

perform certain kinds of labour inside and outside the house. A theatrical gesture which meaningfully conveys through embodiment has more value than the verbal communication. Karnati Lakshminarasayya who felt inferior to act Ramudu role in this play, but in one show his character was well received by the audience. One audience says that through Ramudu character, we come to know how Telangana working class people were exploited and faced indignities (Karnati, 2011). The protagonists in the play are poor peasants, agriculture labors, shepherds and rest of the castes of the village. Unlike many other plays, the leaders of the Communists Party did not appear in the play and they do not preach the ideology separately. This approach of the playwrights might have come from their peasant experiences. The political consciousness of the characters makes difference in their struggles. To create a sense of identification of exploitation and solidarity among the oppressed was one of the main aims of the play which play has successfully done. It does not mean that the Communist activists did not realize the question of language. When characters sings, the playwright imposes the idea of Vishalandhra. In the fifth act Kamala sings a song when Sangam informed her that Deshmukh is going to attack:

If three crore of Andhra's fight unitedly

We shall form Vishalandhra by breaking chains

The playwrights delineate many circles of aspirations. On the ground level, characters fights against the exploitation and bonded labour of Deshmukh. They wish to till their own land. At end they gained it after struggle and sacrifice. The play theme is a victorious story of the Telangana struggle; therefore its resemblances can also applicable to the play. While P.Sundarayya express the achievements Telangana movement,

during the course of the struggle, the peasantry in about three thousand villages, covering roughly a population of three millions in an area of about 16,000 square miles had succeed in setting up gram raj on the basis of fighting village panchayats (1973: 4).

The Party emancipates the villages and established people's state in a village level. They distributed lands to peoples. In a community level they established an egalitarian state. At the same time they emancipate the state from the autocratic rule of the Nizam. For this they were in still

struggling (1946). But in this time they have imagined the linguistic state Vishalandhra. There is a big gap and difference between the *gram raj* and *Vishalandhra*. The characters seeking support from the Telugu brethren form other regions. The playwrights are from Andhra and Andhra Communist party also actively worked in Telangana Movement. Telangana movement saw its major upheavals in two districts: Warangal and Nallagonda. They are adjoining districts of Krishna and Guntur of Andhra. These Andhra Districts, become very popular among the urban middle class by vociferously championing the cause of the establishment of a separate Andhra province' (Rao 1995: 311).

The realism in Telugu theatre comes through Raghava acting and from the writings of P.V. Rajamannaru with the influence of Ibsen. The intervention of Andhra Nataka kala Parishat (1929) was also important. It was established to protect theatre from the contact of *padya natakam* and cinema. The Praja Natya Mandali took the lead with a realistic portrayal of characters in *Maa Bhoomi*.

The success of the play was praised by many scholars and activists. Telugu theatre critique Srinivasa Chakravarthy reviews the *Maa Bhoomi* play, 'Praja Natya Mandali took forward the revolutionary light enlightened by Raghava in 1925, and was shaped under the conscious political, cultural conditions of the country.'¹⁸ *Maa Bhoomi* saw its performance of more than thousand shows by various groups, but the fact is that these shows were not performed in Telangana region where awareness was needed. This along with other political and cultural activities of the Communist Party was suppressed by the Nizam military.

In Telangana peasant struggle activists themselves creates songs and performance, as P. Sundarayya says that,

Many songs were written about every problem, about big incidents during the struggle, about martyrs, about the atrocities of the enemy, their defeat and so on. These were not written by learned poets; they from the ordinary people in the form of folk songs. These songs, very melodious and rousing to the masses, were sung everywhere and at any time, whenever it was possible and necessary (Sundarayya 1973: 21)

¹⁸ Mikkilineni, *Andhra Nataka Ranga Charithra*, 1965, p.516.

The use of art forms mainly folk forms for politics primarily started after the formation of IPTA. Telangana region's indigenous art forms did not come under so much influences of the colonial regime. On the other side, Andhra province had rich history of modern theatre culture from 1880's onwards. Apart from that Praja Natya Mandali uses people's art forms to inspire peoples for the nationalist movement. The involvement of Andhra Communists in Telangana movement also means that there was a diffusion of many cultural ideas from one side to the other.¹⁹ Mixture of progressive poetry and people's art forms generate a new kind of progressive culture during the struggle. This can be observed in the play *Maa Bhoomi*, a shepherd Yalamanda sings a song in *golla suddulu* form.

Sheep (gotralu²⁰) history Shepherds know

Shepherds history sheep know

But Wolves know the history of both these metaphors he applies on political situation;

Deshmukhs history Jagirdars know

Jagirdars history Deshmukhs know

But both of them histories Andhra Mahasabha know (Sunkara and Vasireddy 2005: 72).

Oral culture and folklore emerged as vital tools for the proletarian movements. This will make easier to reach masses, than realistic theatre or literary art where activists are illiterate. Actually, not only to the illiterates, every one easily attracts to the folk art. This was proved in the later movements. However, as a proscenium play *Maa Bhoomi* drawn the attentions of Telugu audience. It attracts audience on dreaming aspirations of Vishalandra rather than its basic goal of seeking support of Telugu peoples to Telangana armed struggle.

Telangana freed from the autocracy of the Nizam rule with police action of Indian state in 1948. Soon, it was under the rule of Indian military. After the suppression, Communists withdrew

¹⁹. Vulli Dhanunjaya, *Voice of the subaltern poet*, Research Journal of language, literature and Humanities, Val.2 (7), 1-7, July (2015).

²⁰ Gotram: lineage derived from an ancient rishi. Here it is used sarcastically, like I know your history, mentality etc.

the armed struggle movement in 1951. The Praja Natya Mandali banned in 1948 by Madras congress government. Artists of the group were arrested and harassed.

Conclusion

Cultural legacy of Praja Natya Mandali was obscured and severely criticized by Telugu theatre scholars. P. Rama Rao argues that,

...reason for the obscurity of Praja Natya Mandali in the history of world theatre, where there is a trend of people's cultural movement with a strong leftist ideology, there was an opposition to proscenium and hence , performance mostly based on the tradition were developed. (Peddi 2003:216)

This criticism is partially right, political performances have to stir the emotions of the audience and make them think. It will be possible from both traditional and proscenium settings. At least a proscenium play has a deep influence on the people, mainly, even not an immediate effect, after the movement readers can draw something from play. Praja Natya Mandali proscenium plays have written for immediate reactions. The realism was used but the characters of the play did not have the depth. It only shows the success story of the movement. It does not factor the sublime moments of the movement. According to some critics, it gives support to the pseudo progressive, cinema melodramatic, parishat stereo message oriented theatre to Telugu drama. Maa Bhoomi playwrights imagines the Vishalandra with the back ground of Telangana armed struggle. Communist leaders and elite Andhra capitalists formed the Vishalandra, an imaginative region in the illusion of people's democratic state. Within the short period of this illusion of dream land, the crisis appeared in the vision with the hegemony of the capitalist, feudalism of Andhra-s. In result, the political theatre culture had to take a new position in the changing political cultural scenario.

Chapter 2

Region in Conflict

Exploitations don't see the language. Belli Lalitha²¹.

Introduction

G. Aloysius (2009) argues that a region becomes region through certain identifications and differentiations. What were those identifications and differentials that carved Telangana and Uttar Andhra? The values are more appropriate for Telangana as it saw the heightened mode of conflict. To understand the conflict that shaped Telangana as a region, one needs to go back to the initial phase of the Telangana movement in 1960s. The first phase of the Telangana movement erupted against the discrimination and exploitation perpetuated by Andhra ruling class. In the second phase which started in 1990s, the question of self-determination and self-respect became the core of the movement.

In the first phase, the Telangana movement stood against Andhra rulers for sheer negligence and discrimination of resources. The demands included implementation of safeguards and employment for the locals. The demands also become the roots of emerging conflict between Andhra and Telangana regions. It can be viewed as a conflict between so called the 'imagined communities' and the experienced communities. The community which experienced discrimination and disparities indirectly opposed the homogenous idea of Telugu as a linguistic region. Communists and other radical movements played an important role in shaping of the movement, particularly poets and singers became the leaders who were supporting the move. The main catalyst for conflict was the emergence of Maoist movement. The Telugu Marxists intellectuals were split into two groups, one group was supporting *Vishalandhra* (United Andhra) and others were in the support of separation. Both were drawing their ideology from Lenin's view

²¹ Belli Lalitha (b.1974) was the founder member of Telangana Kala Samithi. She was a singer and activist in civil liberty movements and Telangana statehood movement in 1990s. She was killed in 1999 allegedly by TDP Government.

on nationalism. The Communist Party of India (Marxist)'s supported the cause of linguistic nation. Another group led by Kondapalli Seetharamayyiah, adapted Lenin's understanding of nationalist movement in the Indian context. He argued that in the circumstances of capital development, the struggles between nations are always between the struggles of the bourgeois class. It may seem like a struggle for the whole nation. He argued that demand for the separate state is essentially a movement of the bourgeois. This was political stand because it embedded working class benefits also. That is why they (CPI (M-L)) supported separate statehood Telangana movement even though it was a bourgeois class movement (Kasim, 2011). In 1990's strong repression on the Maoist movement was done by the state in northern Telangana and successive governments (mainly N. Chandrababu Naidu tenure (1995-2004) led the neoliberal policies which severely affected the down strata people of Telangana. In this circumstances second phase Telangana movement come back strongly. By 1990's, seeing growing people's support to the Telangana, Telangana Rastra Samithi (TRS) party emerged with the only agenda to achieve separate state under K. Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR) leadership. The demand for Telangana emerges at two levels; the upper strata of pro-political leaders' demands for *Bougolika Telangana*, geographical Telangana and progressive and democratic groups' demands for democratic Telangana. The power-oriented political groups achieved Telangana through elections lobbying with the Indian government. The progressive groups believed Telangana will be achieved only through movements.

If the Telangana region want a special statehood by projecting backwardness and discrimination, showing this same reasons, another part of the linguistic state, *Uttarandhra* (Northern Coastal Andhra) also raised special statehood movement under active mobilization of former JNM poet-singer Vangapandu Prasada Rao. Uttarandhra constitutes of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, and Visakhapatnam.

Gaddar and other JNM group singers reconstructed Telangana with their songs and performances. His songs build a conflict between ruling class of Andhra and regional propagators. Gaddar construction of Telangana region is it a class -perception or identity perception? How Gaddar and Goreti Venkanna and others songs are different? What is the negotiation between Gaddar and Vangapandu whom both come from the same JNM group, for their stands on their own regions?

This chapter will analyze Telangana of Gaddar which foregrounds the idea of the region by taking his popular songs on Telangana_ Amma Telangana (my mother Telangana), *nannu kannu naa kannu thalliro* (mother who gave me life), and *podustnna poddu mida* (on early rising dawn). Along with some other poets (Goreti Venkanna²², Andesri²³, Vimalakka²⁴ and others) to understand the poetic conflict between them. Another section I will try to elaborate Uttarandhra of Vangapandu which he raises counter movement against Telangana.

The poets and performers conceptualization of region is not a real region, it is an alternative reality. The region becomes an emotive category in performance studies. The geographical terms of space, place, and region metaphorically convey some than their actual meanings. Performance is a kind of experience, it is sensual, it embodies and it gives pleasure. Performing art can listen, sing, practice, mobilize, communicate, it moves and also it makes an effect. A region is also a kind of mobilizing territory for the practical need of the particular time society. The poets and singers as social actors they apply their art to construct the region. Here region is a strong idea of identification to an individual level, later ideal united, vast humanity as second prefer by. In that situation, the region is not an inactive thing, as Aloysius argues that, ‘the region is not an inert backdrop or even a passive theatre action, it is something alive, active, not merely letting man act on it vigorously reacting on man’ (2013: 32).

Telangana in Performance

The movement for separate statehood for Telangana is complex to understand its dimensions. Mainly the second phase movement which comes in the time of global identity movements and severe effect of liberalization. Scholars understand its ‘cultural turn’ (Srinivas, 2013, Kannabiran etc.al, 2010), ‘Telangana identity is built partly on facts, and partly on half-truths, prejudices and false hopes’ (Srikanth 2011: 39). Identity movements in the contemporary time is a crisis of, as Pierre Nora (1984) argues, the decline of the traditional vernacular forms of culture. This culture sees as a living memory that transmission from generation to generation personally in particular

²² Goreti Venkanna is popular poet-singer. He was one of the leading performer in Telangana movement. I elaborate his poetics in the third chapter.

²³ Ande Ellanna is also known as Ande Sri is popular poet-singer in the Telangana movement. His song, ‘*Jaya jaya he Telangana*’ selected as Telangana state anthem.

²⁴ Vimalakka (b. 1964), a popular Telugu ballad. She is founder of the left cultural organization Arunodaya Samskrutika Samakhya.

spaces (Nora qtd in Paul Claval, 2012). This reflects in the Telangana movement, which produces thousands of poets, singers and performers. They all produced thousands of songs and performances to achieve the state. Of course, most of the song contents and forms were borrowed from the left propaganda culture of JNM, mainly Gaddar and his troupe. Telangana region was merged in erstwhile Andhra Pradesh in 1956. It was under the princely state of Hyderabad. Telangana was located in the Deccan plateau in South India. It is also a drought-prone region with poorly developed irrigation system and water shortage (Kamat 2011:191). The region is drained by the two major rivers, with about 79% of Godavari river catchment and about 69% of the Krishna river catchment area, but most of the land is arid. Perennial droughts in southern Telangana have made the ecosystem fragile (S. Simhadri 1997:2315). Tanks have played a major role in irrigation. During the medieval period, the kings of Kakatiya constructed tanks across the region. This region irrigation mainly depends on the tanks and bore wells, which is a modern phenomenon. Another thing is pastoral landscape which plays a prominent role in the poetic regional formation of Telangana. It is part of the Deccan plateau which is high land. River bodies drain towards the downside of the earth surface. Many lands are remained dry due to a high level of water sources. This was the reason Telangana comes from the mixed wet zone area. Mixed zone is characterized by red soils considerable elevation moderate rainfall.

Telangana is an internal colony. It is economically exploited, socially and culturally suppressed and politically not represented...So you don't have space within the existing social-political system. And you are on the margins of the economy. This is the core understanding. It translates itself into a simple statement for people across Telangana_ "If we must live in our house, and enjoy what is ours, we need Telangana''. (Kannabiran etc. al, 2010:70)

Poets use both the real and the imaginative landscape to define their regions. They use local metaphors and actual references in various ways to convey their meanings. As Marxist, they describe materially constructed regions, as well as they, also delineate the region employing symbolic, linguistic and metaphorical devices. The region and location while works as a choice but they also become a necessity in the imaginative works. Metaphors, figures, and symbols have to be located somewhere. Therefore, some sense of spaces and locations has to be observed in their

poetry. What does happen to the idea of a region when a poet takes a revolutionary path; it appears that their sense of region also is re-articulated. As political consciousness enters in their imaginative world, they begin to understand the social and political nexus that runs deep into their thinking of planes, spaces, and landscapes. With their revolutionary ideas, they could see the production of cultural significances.

Telangana as a Mother Archetype

Psychologist Carl Jung mention many types of mother archetypes; personal mother, relatives, ancestress, figurative mothers like goddesses, mother in a figurative sense appears in things representing the goal of longing for redemption, arousing devotion or feeling of awe_ country, heaven, earth, and things and places standing for fertility and fruitfulness_ trees, springs and vessel shapes, etc. (Jung 1982). Gaddar applies the mother archetype to places and things which gives fertility and arousing devotion_ *amma telanganama*, *Godaramma*, *Krishnamma*, *palle* (village), and even gives this archetype to the dustbin which feeds strays dogs and street children and protects girl infant.

During the Telangana movement, there were two types of Telangana thalli (mother Telangana) that emerged. One is, the pro-Telangana party TRS invented the Telangana thalli icon in order to intensify the feeling of regional unity among Telangana people against Telugu thalli to prove they have a different culture. Another Telangana thalli were created in the songs of Gaddar and other poets. One is a physical form, as an icon, another is an imaginative and mental construction. One image is the corresponding glorification of the Telangana culture and other shows the actual, suppressed image of the mother. Gaddar depicts the arid landscape of Telangana as a woman; one was a chaste woman like the painters of Telangana. They ‘camouflage the poverty of the region in their works and instead focus on presenting the flora, fauna, and humans in kaleidoscopic hues and stylized idyllic imagery²⁵.

She robed Khammam forest as green sari

She embellished Adilabad leaf powder as a sectarian mark on her forehead

²⁵See in *Telangana struggle and Identity* compiled by Kondala Rao vechala, 2010, p. 84.

She beautified her eyes with Nagaram babul tree gum as an eye salve

She smeared Grinded Kusuma flowers as turmeric on her body

Chaste Telangana, now she looks as a widow²⁶.

This last stanza strikes the entire beauty of Telangana which Gaddar created. He projects another shade to the region by bringing the word 'widow'. The audience imagines the pathetic condition of the region with this widow metaphor. But this representation can show problematic agency of men on women. A question of beauty and social prejudices on widow how much similar to an exploitative region? In another stanza of the same song, in the context of Telangana was discriminated in the share of water, Gaddar says, 'godavamma (mother Godavari) turn Telangana into barren²⁷. Gaddar's representation of region is contrary to 'popular perceptions of the region as a romantic space blessed with divine grace and beauty' (Reddy 2003). Feminist groups severely criticized this type of women representation of Gaddar.

The use of extremely demeaning images and language about women that either spoke of 'barrenness' or glorified motherhood by people as distinguished as the peoples' poet Gaddar did the tremendous disservice to women's struggle for identity and recognition. (Vasanta Kannabiran etc. al, 2004: 4876)

The words 'widow', 'barren' are used to degrade the women from social status, one thing their life has value only till her husband alive and another one if they produce surplus offspring to her husband. Why Gaddar uses these words in representing 'region'? Gaddar uses people's language and imaginary to reach toiling masses. This type of deprived and deformed images was used in earlier 1960's by Digambara (naked) poets.²⁸

Gaddar will not go anywhere to borrow metaphors, he just picks them from rustic life. Not only that, Gaddar borrowed women voice from folk tunes as well. In rural milieu and agriculture life, women play a prominent role. They are the most oppressed class. Gaddar says, where people face suppression, there songs evolve as a resistance²⁹. Gaddar symbolizes mother with revolution.

²⁶ See Gaddar's amma Telanganama song in Okkokka patesi (in Telugu), anthology of Telangana songs, 2014, p. 19

²⁷ Ibid, p.21.

²⁸ See Balagopal, K. "Raju, Cherabanda." Economic and Political Weekly 17.31 (1982): 1220-1220.

²⁹ See Gaddar interview with Prema on <https://youtu.be/-FaqLHQ9YN4>

She consoles her children with her voice when they cry. Gaddar applies women song tunes as resistance against the state repressions.

Gaddar's popular mourning song *vandanalu maa biddalu* (salutes to my children) was written at the time when the state killed Maoists in the name of encounters. The mothers of the dead ask the state to submit the bodies. Gaddar as 'impersonation' of mourning mothers is very significant in his performances³⁰. In his earlier songs, Gaddar sees women as mothers and wives of revolutionaries. Women comprised as sub serve to men in the Maoist movement. They acted mainly as messengers, found shelter for male activists and provided food, but some even joined the dalams (guerrilla squads) and learn to wield guns (Niranjana 2002: 356). The same type of situation women faced in Telangana movement in a different way, as Ratnamaala says, who analyzed the women role in Telangana movement. In her accounts, women participated in large numbers in the movement, but no women were at decision making or leadership and their role was only comprised of carrying Batukamma, playing bonalu, or prepare food, and some women sit meetings just for appearance(they draw attention, but no power)³¹. Significant women singers are there in the movement, but women as songwriters are very rare.

There is a turn in women mourning songs in Telangana movement, mothers delineate in the songs as they lament for their beloved sons sacrifice in a religious –bhakti genre. The popular song *raathi bommallona kuvaina shivuda*³² (Lord Shiva! You displayed in the stone idol), in the song, a mother who lost her son in the police encounter (later this song appropriates the martyrs who self-immolated for Telangana) express her pain and anger in front of Lord Shiva, by saying 'Shiva! You don't know the blood relationship, because you displayed in a stone idol if you know this, can you bring back my lost son with your miracles'. In this mourning song, the poet questions the god for a political death, instead question the state directly. In away poet, universalize the pain of a mother, of her beloved son's departure any general reasons. Here two mothers express her grief, one is the grief of the original mother, and the other is the 'region'. One is real and second

³⁰ See Rao, Venkat, (1999). Mnemosigning: Ecstasies in pain. In Rajeswari Sunder Rajan (Ed.), Signpost: Gender issues in post-independence India (pp. 358-379). New Delhi: Kali for Women.

³¹ See Ratnamala essay Telangana Udyamamlo strilu (Women participation in Telangana movement) in Praja Telangana Virasam Vyasalu, 2011. Pp.86-91.

³² This popular song written by poet-singer Mittapalli Surendar. See for song and lyrics on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y5Y39W5ASu0>

is constructed. When a singer sings this song in the meeting (observed in the meeting) the original mother cries a lot, and remain audience in an ecstasy of grief they clapped.

Do this types of bhakti genre songs really help women to increase their political consciousness? But these songs are really helpful for gathering support of women for Telangana movement.

Gaddar's another song *Nannu Kanna naa kanna thalliro Telangana*, starts with the poet's self or the poetic self. Here *nannu kanna* means one who gave birth to the poets, their own mother, and Telangana. Self is the fundamental entity that explains human identity. In this context, Aloysius has rightly argued that, geographical term region used as metaphorically, 'self as a region' (Aloysius 2013:14). Gaddar identifies his self with the region. His body and voice become the expression of the region and also the ways he experienced the region. Gaddar's self creates a dialogue with the region in which he is located. The second stanza of the song, *naku janmanicchina janmabhoomi* explains the same situation with a different expression. It uses a very sophisticated language, '*naku janmanicchina janmabhoomi*', motherland, country where a person has taken birth to create an effect. While the first stanza evokes emotional feeling with the reference to the mother of a self and individual. The second stanza brings the idea of a region as '*janmabhoomi*', which is not a birthplace of one individual but of the community. This is the birthplace of selves. The song also brings the category of Bhoomi which can be considered as land, territory, or a region with certain boundaries. The phrase '*janmabhoomira Telangana*', the land which gave birth to people of Telangana. The poet first constructs the region with uniting his self with mother image. When a region becomes a figure of the mother then it gets acquired a deep emotive meaning. As the mother is the unforgettable figure in individual lives. In Telugu language, Thalli (mother) is used to symbolic landscape evolves in the regional discourse. In this construction, a mother becomes the primary source of human's existence. Mother is a maker of a micro-union who connects individually to the larger society. The mother becomes the core of the self and identity in traditional society. She is the figure who embodies love, affection and gives shelter like nature. The evoking of the region as a mother figure helps in creating a bond and giving a sense of blood relations among the fellow regional people. Despite differences, the region creates a sense of shared value and meaning for the people of a region.

Nandini Sidhareddy is another poet who evokes the idea of Telangana as *naa Telangana*—My Telangana. He uses metaphors of land and field to bring the vivid memories of the region. He sees (*nageti chaalullo naa Telangana*) Telangana in the furrows of a plow. He sees his Telangana in the agriculture field and labor activity. He has used an utmost aesthetic sensibility to bring experiences of the local people. *Janma Bhoomi* or *naageti chalullo* both of the words refer to the Telangana of individuals. These two lands produce crops and people. In the next stanza, Gaddar sings: *thalli rommunu netthurochedaka gudduku thaginro* (They knock means, they knock against the mother breasts and suck, until blood comes). This gives a very solid image of the exploited mother by her children. Songs say how some greedy people and hunger children forcedly knock their breasts and drink milk. Gaddar has used this image of Telangana to show regional exploitation. A poem is a place where the body and human environment meet and poem represents poet's feeling and world's responding reflection of them. (Selby 2008: 29).

Region as a sensual experience

Telangana not as a history devoured of sensuality but a sensual experience that can also contribute to the history. Poets use daily food items to alive the image of Telangana. Many times the region is defined on the basis of what people eat. Food habit helps in creating a sensual construction of similarities and differences from one region to others and one locale to the others. In this sensual exposition, Gaddar brings local flavors and cuisines into consideration, for example, preparation of fish curry, with *chinta chiguru* (tender tamarind leaves) is very specific to the taste of Telangana. It does not only brings the delicious of the taste but also delicious of the region, that taste of the Telangana is so delicious. When a regional debate arose, his route revolution to a region, he gives the explanation that through tastes, he says, there can be many tastes, but the taste of mother milk is ultimate.

O, mother! Taste the cashew nut of Uttarandhra, it is so sweet

Now taste the pickle of Guntur Gongura with green chilly, we won't forget it

Then taste the Ragi morsel of Rayala Seema with ground nut pickle, our mouth get waterish

Next taste the Telangana unboiled tamarind soup, it is poor people Biryani

There can be many tastes, but the taste of mother's milk is ultimate³³.

Gaddar identifies regions with tastes, a sensual experience of local flavors. These all sub-regions have to differentiate ecologically, internally homogeneous and externally heterogeneous cultures within the one linguistic umbrella.

The poet, without diminishing on regions to other regions, tries to bring a specific flavor of each region. Uddanam area in Uttarandhra region is special for cashew nut trees, Gunter is a Coastal wet zone, and is known for chilly crops. *Gongura*, a local pickle made of leaves is a unique taste of Central Andhra³⁴. Ragi, a crop grown on a dry land is special in Rayala Seema. The region is known for ragi *sangati* (ragi morsel). He mentions *pacchi pulusu* of Telangana a very special unboiled tamarind soup. He says it is poor people's biryani.

While discussing the taste and comparing food items, he says the mother milk is the ultimate. The mother's milk becomes the ultimate point of regional and cultural identification.

Cooked food is a powerful metaphor for reaching out to the common masses (Gopal Guru 2009:3). When poets and singers want to bring differentiation between two regions and also how one region dominates other, they used cooked food as a metaphor for communicating with common people. Guda Anjayya uses in his song the popular proverb of Telugu, *andaru shakaharulai the rajiga or rajigaa royyala mulledabaye rajiga ori rajiga*³⁵ if every person is a vegetarian then why the prawn's vassal which kept in fully has become empty. He put it in the context if every party support for special Telangana then why it is not formed. It is a simple way to make understand masses about the nature of political parties. In another song he says, *pappulo uppesi potthantiri*³⁶, you Andhra people just add salt to dal (lentil) asks us we unite together.

A region is not only notorious for the local mother tongue but also for taste. The twin words in Telugu, *ruchi- abhiruchi*, taste, and aptitude, are related to the food and peoples taste. The people's food staples depend on what type of crops grown in their geographical conditions. Since

³³ This song lyrics taken from Gaddar interview with 'open Heart with RK, see ABN Andhra Jyothi, see <https://youtu.be/UAXJ-arnylQ>

³⁴ Later this food item is symbolized for Andhra cuisine as an identity of Andhra culture in India

³⁵ See *okkokka patesi* (in Telugu), 2014, p. 235.

³⁶ Ibid p.31.

we know vast Telugu region geographically distinguished into four parts, i.e. Telangana, Rayala Seema, Coastal Andhra and Uttarandhra, each area have their four different cuisines. Wet zone coastal Andhra special for rice and chili, chili is especially known for Guntur, in semi-arid Telangana region millet based bread (*jonna rotte*) predominant staple food, dry zone Rayala Seema special for its *ragi sangati* and ground nut pickle and Uttarandhra well for its *ulava kattu*, is a soup made from horse-gram.

Cooked food is a passive backdrop, like nature, before the regional politics upsurge. When one culture or region tries to dominate and maintain hierarchy, cooked food is used as a metaphor for protest. In 1952, Telangana activist's slogan was, 'idli-saambaar go back'. Sridhar Subramanian says that,

The Telangana people referred to them as non-mulkies, meaning non-locals, they were also curiously called idli-saambaar, after the staple breakfast item of the Seemandhra region, and of course, Tamil Nadu that was the major unit of the Madras precedence³⁷.

Here people are categorized by their food habits and in this way it is also easy to make difference. This slogan is continued in the recent separate Telangana movement. Saambaar is a versatile dish is made with dal [lentil] soup and vegetable. It is a good companion with vada, idli, dosa, and rice. Popular food writer Ashwin Rajagopalan says that 'Idli and saambaar never used to be part of a traditional breakfast in Telangana³⁸'. Goreti Venkanna mocks the taste of saambaar, '*saambaar pappupodula chacchu ruchulu nerpistiri*³⁹', taught us tasteless *saambaar* and *pappu podi* (powdered dal based condiment). Goreti says, we may have similarities, but where is relevance? What is the relationship between *bathukamma and atlathadde? Attuku, jonnarotteku suttarikamekkadidi*'⁴⁰ Where is the kinship between *attu*⁴¹ and *jonnarotte*? He makes, the basic understanding for regional differences. Another poet C. Kasim says, how delicious is tender millet

³⁷ See Sridhar Subramaniam article '*Idli Sambar go back*', published July 30, 2013. <http://sridharsubramaniam.org/?p=1531>

³⁸ See Ashwin Rajagopalan article Telangana food versus Andhra food: What's the difference. September, 2016. <https://food.ndtv.com/food-drinks/telangana-food-versus-andhra-food-whats-the-difference-1467919>.

³⁹ See Goreti Venkanna song *pommante povenduku* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8fef1oKTsjs>

⁴⁰ See Goreti Venkanna song *pommante povenduku* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=waqNh9n1pIM>

⁴¹ Attu: a typical Andhra breakfast pancake made with rice and lentil fired in flat pan laced with cooking oil, served with chutney and saambaar

bread? Can *attu* compete with it? (92). Nutrition wise *jonnarotte* is better than *attu*. When Hyderabad was decided Andhra's capital, people of Andhra started migrating to the city and it is increased after liberalization.

In Hyderabad and other parts of Telangana and Andhra cities and small towns, everywhere Andhra messes are opened. The owners of these messes have generally come from coastal Andhra middle-class people. In these Andhra messes, a typical Andhra Brahmin food is served. This food is served in banana leaf, dal (lentils), curries, spiced pickles, *pacchadi* (chutney), *pappu podi*, *neyyi* (ghee), and a large amount of rice and occasionally they serve *pulihora*, *vada*. Generally, people say, *Avakaya* (mango pickle), *gongura* (Roselle leaf pickle) and curd, without these things Andhra meal is not complete. This Brahmin food culture as portrayed as iconic Andhra culture. Popular poet, C. Narayana Reddy says in a poem; '*panchabhakshyalu thana kanchaana vaddinchina, gongurakai gutakaleyuvadu*⁴²' even though five sorts of food is served in his plate, but he craves for gongura, who is he? He is Telugite. Elite also take interests in Brahmin food only. How poor people get all these items in their daily food?

When the Telangana movement upsurged, activists started cooking food protests called *vanta-vaarpu* (cooking and dining) and evoked overwhelmed response. Protesters have setup kitchens on main thoroughfares and busy traffic intersections since early Sundays, affecting the movement of vehicles. The stratagem of this protest is to involve housewives and children in the movement. They succeed in its large number of women children involved in the agitation. And also it has a second effect, after staging the cooking demonstrations, Andhra messes in Hyderabad changed their names into Telangana mess. Telangana is famous for non-vegetarian. 'It is an affirmation of recent reports that identified Telangana as India's non-vegetarian state'⁴³. Cooked food was used as cultural variation between regions, as Kondala Rao argues, 'aptitude and tastes of the people of Telangana are different, they come from the mixed social system, Muslims, Maharashtra, Kannada and other places (Velchala, 2010:434). Telangana cooked food influenced from royal Nawabs and pastoral lifestyle. The using amount of chili makes recipe differentiation in among the geographical regions. They have different names, red chili (Coastal), *koravi karam* (Telangana), *Seema karam* (Rayalaseema) and Uttarandhra use modest use of chili. The singers

⁴² Andhra prasasthi 1989 p. 244

⁴³ See Aswin Rajagopal article Telangana food versus Andhra food: What's the difference. September, 2016. <https://food.ndtv.com/food-drinks/telangana-food-versus-andhra-food-whats-the-difference-1467919>.

who sing for their region try to evoke the primordial food recipe of their region. In this modern times how the people lost connection with their regional food, was a lament issue. Vangapandu asks to the region, where is your foods;

Vandame Uttarahndhra (salute Uttarahndhra) song

Your *sodi sakkulu* (ragi cakes), *minapa attulu* (black gram cakes)

Kandulu [Red grams], *burelu* (deep fried sweet dumplings) and green gram cakes

Udala java [porridge], *samala* porridge

They dismantled your *ulavakattu buvva* (horse gram- rice) and served energy less hotel food

Mother! Revolt and restore our grandmother's cooking foods⁴⁴

Isn't these dishes has to restored? In the commercial crop time, farmers of Uttarahndhra stopped cultivating these crops. The people have been drawn or tend to use global recipes or at least fashionable according to their affordable. No one is cooking ragi gruel in Uttarahndhra. In our childhood, maximum families cook ragi to fill their stomachs. It is a cheap food. Eating rice mean they are rich people. When N.T. Rama Rao government started the welfare scheme of 'two rupees 1 kilogram' BPL (Below Poverty Line) families see the rice face. The political parties use this scheme for their vote bank, it is now continuing. Later Rajasekhar Reddy reduced its price to one rupee. *Ambali* (ragi) is now rich people food, who are facing health issues. The poor give up their healthy food habits, now they fashioned to use hotel food. Many of the Uttarahndhra poor are working in hotels as servants and cleaners in Hyderabad and various cities in Andhra. Eating breakfast is a new phenomenon in Uttarahndhra or in Telangana imported from so-called 'Andhra Coastal' belt. Sweet flavor of Uttarahndhra, *Seema karam* of Rayala Seema or the *pacchi pulusu* (unboiled soup) or *natukodi pulusu* (country chicken curry) of Telangana were erased with Andhra foods and tiffin's at least commercial dining halls or they were mixed in Andhra food. Vangapandu

⁴⁴ Lyrics taken from Vangapandu 'vandaname Uttarahndhra' song. see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=afj0vz7mG9I&t=1472s>

and Telangana poets negotiate with this culture. But it is inevitable in the global phenomenon. When Telangana agitators slogans ‘*idli- saambaar* go back someone says sarcastically put the slogan; *idli-saambaar* go back, but *pizza- burger* stay back’. Cooked food culture cannot be restored. People ideally claim their regional recipe, but practically it is superficial.

Now eating beef is a cultural negotiation to the marginalized castes against the Hindutva. It is not a regional issue. After Dalit consciousness increased, like Dappu, beef is also a politically put forth.

The man who eats beef looks beautiful

The thick lentil vegetarian become stupid

Gopal Guru argues that ‘politics build around the notion of food necessarily operates within the double configuration of power, local and nations’ (2009: 13). The political singers when they fight for egalitarian ideology, they fight for the food to everybody, whatever it is. When they turn into the region they claim for their regional recipe. As Gaddar argues, ‘mother milk is an ultimate taste for the human’. It is a unique recipe for every individual. This way individual reaches to their connection to the region or roots.

Region as a flow

Maa nillu maku kavali, we need our water_ is one of the popular slogans of the Telangana movement. Unequal distribution of water between the regions causes the bifurcation of the Telugu linguistic state. Telangana demands its rightful share in the river water which flows in the region. In this context, the river becomes one of the key metaphors to mobilize the region in poet’s song and performance. How poets mobilize the region with river by posing question around water. In this sense river is not only a political problem also a cultural problem.

Godavari and Krishna are perennial rivers in the Andhra and Telangana regions. The Godavari originated at Triyambakeswar in the Nasik District of Maharashtra. It entered at Basara in Telangana region and drains throughout northern Telangana. It flows in two Godavari districts in Andhra, before emptying in the Bay of Bengal, it takes wider basin at Rajahmundry by splitting into seven small distributaries. The Krishna river originates at Mahabaleshwar in Maharashtra. It enters at Tangedi in Mahaboobnagar district and flows in Andhra, Rayala Seema, and Telangana

regions. The Krishna and 'Godavari played a major role in the cultural psyche of the people of this region' (Syamala 2008: 181). From the medieval poets Nannayya to present radical poet Gaddar, this cultural psyche embodied with language, art, political and economic development. Whereas in the colonial period, when the people of Andhra struggling for a linguistic nation, the poets romantically imagine the prosperous nation with these rivers. In popular Telugu national anthem, *Maa Telugu Thalliki mallepudanda* (A garland of jasmine flowers for our mother Telugu) imagines;

When the rippling Godavari River flows

When the rapid Krishna River runs

Golden crops ripen

And milky white pearls appear (Lisa Mitchell, 2009: 68).

The scholar Syamala Kallury (2008) delineates the changing image of the Godavari in the account of various poets of different cultural contexts from romantic poets to Dalit poets. These poets see the river as a divine goddess, mother, courtesan, a revolutionary, and a livelihood of a common man. Later, in 1970's, particularly in the 1990s, Telangana region, when it questions the linguistic nation, When the bifurcation issue emerges on the discrimination of water distribution, poets, and singers of Telangana imagines these rivers total contrast to the earlier Telugu poets imagines of its beauty and glory. They described the rivers in a radical way. Unequal distribution of the Krishna and Godavari river water has also been central to the movement for a separate state (Kannabiran etc. al 2010: 72). Poets and singers have expressed this discrimination in forms of poetry and songs. Telangana poets love the landscape of the river, the river gives them imaginations to play with them and bring crucial aspects of poetry. In his song, '*Amma Telangana* (mother Telangana) Gaddar described both rivers Godavari and Krishna vividly, the way they move, places they touch and the ways they treat Telangana? In this act of imagination, the rivers get a personality. He adds geographical reality and historical facts to these imageries.

Ninda- stuthi: It's a kind of genre in poetry. It means *ninda* refers insult, blame, abuse, adverse, criticism etc. where *stuthi*, refers, praise; hymn of a deity. Poets use this as a strategy to

insult their beloved objects along praising them. The river gives primary sustenance to the human life. It also causes for prosperity and development of human civilization. Its flow, its beautiful greenery, rich landscape experience, Seasonal climate and river directions give more strength and creativity to the people. Another way trajectory of the river causes floods, highland remains in dry and politics over the river and unequal development paradigm leads to a painful situation. In the Telangana, movement poets describe this binary situation of the river through their poetry. The conflict between ecological given situation and manmade conditions leads vibrant discourses about river landscape in the literary and performing cultures of Andhra and Telangana regions.

A river is a moving landscape; it moves from one plane to the others. As rivers enter into different planes, the association also changes accordingly. When poets observe the river landscape, their imagination flows more fluid than the river. Poets make the river more rhythmical and lyrical. The landscape gives potentials to the poets to use the landscape in various ways. The poet often imbibes the sound of the river in their songs. Many times, Gaddar imitates the flow of a river and musical instruments also try to imitate the sound. But the river is not just about the scenery and beauty, it is also about the devastation. The Godavari remains the center of political and territorial debate of Telangana. Gaddar describes the Godavari with a sense of betrayal than beauty. This is important to understand as the water source is one of the major sites of discrimination in Indian caste society. He gives the Godavari a mother status calling the river as Godavamma. He asks how this mother flows in this region. Instead of saying, this is the way the Godavari flows in this region, he says look Godavari flowing. The Godavari flows very playfully in the forest region. But elsewhere he also says how the mother gave barren land to Telangana. She turned the region infertile. Poets and singers from Telangana often refer to this negative image of Godavari. The mother image does not the unquestioned and sacrosanct position in the poetic imagination. The poet constantly evokes a positive and negative image of the river, making mother an object of adoration as well as criticisms. The negative image of the mother, producing a positive sense of feeling like unity between children of the infertile mother.

Many times, songs embody the object of singing. For example, the structure of the song also embodies the structure of the river. It appears as a river is flowing into the lyrics and the curvets come as beats. Gaddar gives a personality to the rivers in his songs. The song creates a personal history of the river while discussing how the river was born in one place, how does it

confluences with other rivulets. She played and dances in the lap of one's place. In the heart of the other place, she learned to move and walk and move. When she saw a male god and expressed her deep feeling with vigorous dance. In the heart of other's place, she slept peacefully. Krishna betrayed this region. Gaddar while gives supernatural power to the ecological landscape, he also tries to humanize them. He treats Krishna as a girl child who has grown up in the regional places. He constructs the image of regions as garland and Krishna as a thread and places as pearls in the garland. In the beauty of thread and pearl, he asks what mother Krishna offers to Telangana, 'except tears, does not give water.' The evocation brings the ways river Krishna gets affected by the river.

In this song, *kannillu* (tears) and *nillu* (water) have a similar pronunciation. Gaddar playfully uses tears instead of water to show that how the river creates havoc in the region. Amma Telanganama as refrain continuously comes in this song. This *ninda* to the river is not specific to Gaddar, even poet like Goreti Venkanna treated Krishna into a negative light. In his poetry, *entha sakkani danive* Krishnamma (how beautiful you are Krishna!), the river is depicted as a young beautiful maid who leaves her people who love her passionately and go and stay with deceivers. He describes the Krishna different than Gaddar. His beautiful rhythmic lyrics flourishes as Krishna River flows in the rainy season. And he goes more deeply, how the local fields and landscapes are affected by the Krishna River. At the beginning of the song, he teases Krishna, as a graceful eloquent girl who is not stabilized one.

O krishnamma! How pretty you are, but where are you going?

Lead rapidly, with a deafening sensation beats, glittering flashes,

Your whole body is blooming

Born in Maharashtra, pleasantly played in our sand mounds

The poet, one-way praise the grace of Krishna, second thing questions and enquires the Krishna. We can see a strong tone of dissent in Goreti songs. When Gaddar says 'our mother Godavari did not give water, expect tears', there is a sense of taunt in the song. There is a feeling

of sadness. But here, the poet questions directly, this is the radical transformation in poetic expression. Throughout the song posed this type of questions. When the poet sees the Krishna with ecstasy he almost chants her beauty. There is a musical rhythm is there in the words. Uses of images stimulate the emotions in the listeners. He describes, how Krishna plays in the regions;

Plays kolatam movements in the branches, with thunders and lightings, immersing our villages

You crawl myriad ways

You play in the plantain trees

Provide strength to the cotton crops

Fondle the backbone of the slender paddy crops

Fed the milk to red pepper, increases the arrogance in the tobacco twigs

For our white maize crop, you provide nothing and left away.

Poet narrates, how lands are different in river catchment area of Telangana and Andhra regions, what kind of crops grow there, how river shows partiality to this regions. How river provides plenty of water to the Andhra region crops like plantain trees, tobacco, paddy and chilly, at the same time, provide nothing to the Telangana crops. Then he asks, like Gaddar, Goreti also first brings the positive side of the river, but at finally he brings the negative aspect of the river, what Krishna has done to the region; Reality of prevailing discrimination in the region.

Aesthetic pleasure of the imagining the region is a way to find the problems in the actual politics. Venkanna poses the questions in the song asking the river, from where you flow and where you produce crops. Which sides of villages are getting drown and which sides of the village rip fruit and feel happy? The song acts like chanting in front of a deity. Words, tones, sentiments, and environments used in the song creates a new picture of the river. What could be considered more radical than considering the river itself as discriminatory? Goreti asks pertinent questions that Why the land near the river becomes dry and a land far from the river become fertile In this song, he exploits on the popular proverb which goes like *yetiki moga, nitiki kosa* (near to the river, far

from water). Many times, he questions such popular proverb which has been accepted in the popular imagination. The popularity of proverb easily connects to the common people and also make them think. Using the structure of insult song, he incites Krishna, hey!

You poster hunger where you landed
 You increased exploitation in who inhibited you
 As a native, we delighted by seeing your beauty
 We worshipped you by devouring our anger
 You went with Andhras who exploit everything.

He describes how beautifully the Godavari flows in Telangana which creates a sensual experience of the river for the listeners. This is important because words are not auditory alone, it also gives visual images, tactile properties and so on. Goreti picturizes the Godavari with local folk flavor and its singing creates a sensation feeling of experiencing the river. As we could see the song indirectly makes a close observation on the regional politics. Goreti 'evoke the picture of the harsh realities at the ground level on one hand and at the same time to create moving images of unalloyed beauty on the other' (Symala 2008: 186).

The Godavari has more elegant beauty than you (Krishna),
 It effervesces like a cheese and kisses the sky
 Beautiful silver seethes and stunning weaves
 Mid-river tunes are a feast to our ears
 On waving winds there are cool breezes
 In blooming flowers, beauties mixed everywhere
 It gives a feast to eyes and moves forward
 There are no footprints were stepped in

But they got name_ the Godavari region people.

Goreti wonders how the popular Andhra psyche settled and referred 'the Godavari region people' mean so-called East and West Godavari districts people only. What about the rest of the people who situated in the Godavari flowing area.

Some 79 percent catchment of Godavari in Andhra Pradesh is located in northern Telangana and the remaining 21 percent of is in Coastal Andhra. Similarly, 69 percent of the catchment of Krishna in AP is in southern Telangana against the 18 percent in Rayala Seema and 13 percent in coastal Andhra. (S. Simhadri 1997:2315)

In this sense, Goreti not only raises the water politics of the river, also sees the river as an identity issue.

The song stanza, *Yeda mida purukuntu maaku edupe migilistive Godari* (the Godavari! You drain on our heart, but you remain us in lament. This also remembers Gaddar words Krishna gives us tears, but no water. The Emotional state of these songs brings the pathetic situation of the region.

Poets and singers create a landscape of river through the sound and voice. Gaddar says, See the Godavari flow in my tune *galagala* (rippling). Here seeing means listening. Seeing the landscape with active listening, will producing regional conflict. This radical subversive tone functions more than just a landscape. Poets visualize the regional landscape with the Godavari, these all images refer something like dry, parched, thirsty, barren etc. same images reproduce in different poets in different ways.

The poets imagine Godavari waves like a red flag and it echoes says struggle for Telangana. Poets of Telangana Sees River as a battle tool for express their dissent against the discrimination and exploitation of Andhra. The state-led neo-liberal policies, unequal development, negligence of agriculture and commercial crops causes' further ecological destruction, failure of bore wells, farmer suicides, animals livestock, migration all move around the river politics.

The political groups and governments in the name of development, they more try to exploit the natural sources in unlawful ways. In this ways, the river catchment area people face displacement

of their cultures and livelihood. The basic attribute of the river is; flow, it cannot be lost. Poets imagine this flow turn towards lands which remains barren. As Andesri expressed in the Telangana state anthem, *Jaya Jayahe Telangana*⁴⁵;

The Godavari, Krishna Rivers must turn towards our lands

Golden crops must ripen in green fields.

Region as an experience

-Telangana! You are the earthen pot of the bounded labor (*vetti*) and you are the pickle axe of Gayidollu- Gaddar.

If the region is an experienced space, then whose experience constitutes the region? Is it poet's subjective experience or people's experience? Gaddar in his song *nannu kannu naa kannu thalliro* (the mother who give me birth) song dealt with class struggle, tribal issues, political deprivations and caste problems. He goes different ways to conceptualize the region in his song. Gaddar imagines Telangana as an earthen pot of the bounded labor in his popular song Amma Telanganama (mother Telangana). His mother Telangana is a washerwoman with her bundle of cloth. He brings his own experience, like he and his mother went the field for plantation. So while he brings his own experience also, in the act of singing, the experiences get depersonalized.

In another stanza he jumps to the history and criticizes the rulers in Srisri manner. He re-envisioned the region from the linguistic point of view. He drew the word from the Mahaprasthanam, a progressive poetry written by Srisri⁴⁶. He says, *okkokkadu mahahanthakudu*⁴⁷, he deconstructed the history of Mahaprasthanam. Gaddar experience revolves around the history of structural violence, body politics, social turmoil and emancipatory revolutionary movement. He constructs region with its backwardness, Naxalbari movements, and agency areas. Here nature which is already given, become a plastic backdrop, other elements of the region come forth and

⁴⁵ See *Okkokka patesi*, Anthology of Telangana songs (in Telugu), 2014, P. 86-87.

⁴⁶SriSri (1910-1983) progressive poet, his popular poetry is Maha prasthanam (great journey).

⁴⁷ See *Okkokka patesi*, Anthology of Telangana songs (in Telugu), 2014, P. 86-87.

reconstruct the region. In this sense, the region also a process, a spatio-social becoming (Aloysius 2013:19).

Gaddar is considered one of the crusaders who has not only attacked the authority of an upper-class language but also created a new language. In some of his songs, he makes fun of the media languages used in media like newspapers. He questions the news items: who writes to them why they are writing these issues. He asks: where is the local dialects and languages of the people. He reads them out and satires. He comments that we do not understand a thing if we try to read them our tongue is not able to twist. What we ultimately understand is only pictures. In various ways, he questions the hegemony of the written language.

Gaddar regional model of constructing the region as Jana Natya Mandali's pattern. Cultural symbols and motifs follow in his poetry on the region, with brings mainly different places which he experienced former. Like, Karimnagar *kattula kolatamadina zilla*, mean, mean Karimnagar did the kolatam dance with swords, this phrase comes in many songs of the Jana Natya Mandali. '*Kattula kolata madando* (play the war of kolatam) was one of the popular song, which is a calling song for Maoist revolutionary practice has the physical attack on the police force and political leaders. After 80's Naxalbarry movement shifted to Uttar Telangana, Karimnagar district played an important role. That's why Gaddar says, Karimnagar did the kolatam dance with swords.

Gaddar narrates another experience of, 'we jumped and swam in the Ramappa⁴⁸ tank and Maneru River'. Here brings experience of a place, Gaddar is not telling its history or any of its cultural specificity. It is like owning a place. Artist explores through his physical senses. It gives a sense that the audience of the region, who listening or viewing the performance, has got experience with the certain place of the region. And also he says, memu, mean we, not a single individual, a group of persons swim together in the river Maneru and Rammappa tank. Gaddar brings a specific day experience of the collective group in the construction of the region in his song. Gaddar is a political figure, he brings politics in it.

⁴⁸ Ramappa Lake: it located in the surroundings of the Warangal city. It was built in the 13th century in the reign of Kakatiya dynasty under the supervision of Recharla Rudra, an army general of the king Ganapathi Deva. Kakatiya's are special for their innovative irrigational senses.

Gaddar narrates the historical figures of the places in his songs, he says, ‘this is the birthplace of the Doddi Komaranna⁴⁹, Ilamma⁵⁰, Sammakka and Saralamma⁵¹. These all historical characters have the connection with exploitation and they stood against with it. Telangana movement appropriates their contribution in the reconstruction of the cultural region. Historic memory of Komaram Bheem was very prominent subject to the singers. Heroic deeds of this tribal warrior was neglected by the Telugu communist groups, Varavarao surprised that, communists made Kandukuri, Gurajada, and Gidugu, as epoch-makers, as a real communists, and create Alluri Sitaram Raju as a legend by writing novels, plays, Burra Kathas on him, and finally delineate him an incarnation of the god, but till 1981, after the Indravelli incident, no communist party or other groups bring forth Komaram Bheem⁵². Why Telangana brings back Komaram Bheem, for reason, Kannabiran says,

Demand for a separate Telangana in a sense mirrors the Adivasi demand for the self-determination, against oppression, against repression against colonialism, demands by Adivasi over generations has been right to govern themselves. Today, the people of Telangana are making the similar demand that must be understood in the framework of historical experience.
(Kannabiran etc. al 2010:76)

⁴⁹ Doddi Komaranna: an ordinary volunteer of the Rythu Kuli Sangam (peasant workers association) Kadavendi. In 1946 when he was going in a procession, suddenly a hireling of the landlord Visunuri Ramachandra Reddy fired him, and he died on the spot. This incident created deep discontent and anger among people. After that he become a hero of the moment.

⁵⁰ Chakali Ilamma: A washer women of the Palakurthy, who fight against the Deshmukh, when her husband and son kept in jail. In 1946, Deshmukh order his servant bring her crop. Then the volunteer from the Sangam, came from Suryapet and Devuruppala protected it from the Deshmukh exploitation.

⁵¹ Sammakka and Saralamma: they both are mother and daughters who fight against the Kakatiya kingdom. This a tribal story contained mythical and historical connection. Sammakka, who found in the forest by the hunters, enormous light playing amidst forest, then after the chief of the tribe brought her up. She became chief ton of the tribe and married Padigidda Raju, who was the feudatory chief of the Kakatiya kingdom. She gave birth to three children Sarakka, Nagulamma and jampanna. Then drought hit area and Godavari dried up. That’s why they didn’t pay the tribute to the Kakatiya kings, because of this reason king sent the army to fight with them. Tribal army lost in the battle and sammakka family died in the war. Then Sammakka get angry and her miraculous powers destroyed the Kakatiya army. Later Kakatiya minister offer peace to the tribe, but Sammakka rejected it. She fight bravely and with wounds she disappeared in the forest. Grieving Koyas searched for their queen, they found ochre box (a container vermilion) her bangles, and a pug mark of huge full grown of tigress, where she found as infant by Koyas. Tribals believes that she is their protector and in her memory they do festival every year

⁵² Varavara Rao essay in Praja Telangana vyaasalu (in Telugu) 2011, p. 18.

The Slogan of Komaram Bheem's '*jal, jungle, jameen*' (water, forest, and land) has been quite prominent in regional movement. This historical memory embodies through the performances. *Komaram Bheem kora misamai duvvina Telangana* (2014:126), Telangana strokes the pointed mustache of Komaram Bheem. 'Sense mirror' of Telangana and adivasi, Adilabad are not similar to Palamuru, or Medak. They have differences in an ecological and cultural specification, but they both look similar in terms of dealing with oppression. The sense of place experienced by the individual is different, micro-regions and ethnic tribes have their closed groups. They communicate within themselves with a set of cultural sharing. But displacement, migration and industrialization have deeply affected their ancestral places, traditions, and customs. One of his Oggu Katha⁵³ on *Naxalbary biddalu* (sons of Naxalbary), Gaddar sings a song about how the land located under tanks according to caste ranks in the villages of the region.

Medaku jillalo orinaayana (in the district of Medak)

Near a hamlet, there flows a river, ori naayano

At the left side of the river, there located parched mota bavulu⁵⁴

At the right side of the river, wealthy landlords gush wells

If summer comes, landlords turn water into their fields and give troubles for labors.....

At the outside of the hamlet, there are big tanks

Under the drainage channel of tank there located lands of landlords

Wet irrigated lands which produce paddy, belongs to the Dora

Saline field belongs to the washermen

⁵³ Oggu Katha: a traditional folk drama in singing and narrating. It was developed in a caste based community performers called Golla kuruma community, who devoted themselves to the singing of ballads in the praising of lord Shiva. Their instrument was 'jaggu' is known as Oggu. The Oggu performers narrate the stories of Mallanna, Beerappa and Shakti ballads of Yellamma. These ballads are in 'manjari' dvipada, containing lyrical prose, recited with greater oratorical and rhetorical nuances

⁵⁴ Mota bavi: means big well in which the large leather basket is raised by bullocks (for drawing water for irrigation purposes).

The high land belongs to the barbers

Varre (watercourse) land belongs to the Vaddera

Tharra land belongs to the village servants (talari)

Breach land belongs to the Gaayidollu

For Mala and Madiga's gifted sand land⁵⁵

This clearly shows the discrimination in land distribution in the landlord system and how piece of land gives identification to particular caste and communities.

The process of finding a name for a tract of land necessitates in revealing the story of the people, their history, and their political aspiration. The piece of land evolves into a region, into an identity, into a living culture. The sense of region diffuses along the furrows of water resources like river basins and cultivable land. (Reddy 2003: 108)

There is a conflict between the poets who appropriate the legacy of Nizam and the poets who stood against him. In the act of mobilizing the region of Telangana, Gaddar brings the history of resistance. For example, in a song, he refers to the historical memory of Nallagonda. He calls it with a metaphor, *erra malle*, red jasmine, is a symbol of revolution. Nallagonda is a birthplace of red jasmines. Through his songs, he demonstrates the bravery and resistance of the place in which three thousand farmers sacrificed their lives in the war with Rajakars⁵⁶. He satires that when the Nizam listen to the very name of Nallagonda, their paizama comes out of his body. He satires and make fun of the rulers who otherwise have been valorized in the mainstream history. He caricatures them as utterly funny and coward characters. This sense of association gives a new confidence to the lower strata of people who are still fighting against the present authority.

Later, Telangana propagators and singers tried to appropriate Nizam rule, for the regional construction. They brought monuments and architectures developed by the Nizam. Poet Guda

⁵⁵ Song lyrics taken from Gaddar's *Naxalbary Biddalu* dance drama

⁵⁶ The Rajakars were a private militia organized by Quasim Razvi to support the rule of Nizam Osman Ali Khan. This militia resist the integration of Hyderabad state into the Indian state. They brutally put down the armed revolt by the communists and peasantry.

Anjayya questions radically the Andhra ruling class who were opposing the special statehood for Telangana;

Ayyoniva nuvuu avvoniva (are you from my mother side of father side?)

Did you design the Bhagyanagaram with white color powder?

Did you paint the Charminar?

Did you carry stones for the Golconda?

Did you build a wall on the bank of the Moosi River?

Did you construct the Falaknuma?⁵⁷

It is physical labor that primarily lies at the heart and root of the production and reproduction of lived as well as imagined space of the region (Aloysius 2013:19). Reproduction of the regional space in the singers' performance which is linguistically produced and through the cultural forms it disseminated among people who share same sensibilities.

Poets sing about the draught prone area Palamuru, with their experience of reality. They delineate the houses, walls, pillars, trees, birds, hand wells, fields, tanks, stones, streets and connection with these material objects how people emotions are affected by lack water facilities, draughts, and migrations. *Palle pallena palleru molse Palamurulo Telanganalo* (in every village of Palamuru and Telangana, germinate thorny pod of plants) (2014:206). In the song, '*Palamuru valasa bathuku*', poet Mitra explains the landscape tragically:

No birds have flown on a tree

No gush form in the hand well

Greenish hamlets turn into crystalline rocks

People troubled by not having any work.

⁵⁷ *okkokka patesi*, 2014.

Earth clods, gravel lands

And boulders; breaks them

Hands and legs become crow-bar; they dig irrigation channels

Their sweat drains like rivers, but they cry for drinking water (206).

Poets delineate ecological conditions with the political economy. The ruling groups focused on development in urban areas and neglected the marginalized spaces in the neo-liberal policies. These consequences poets narrate the images, birds, gush in the well, greenish hamlets turn into rocky places, these images seen in dry ecological zones. The local people migrate for their survival and better future leave their own place. They evoke nostalgia to their birthplaces and atmosphere. Because of migration, social relations break up into an unknown uncertain future and unite them in resistance. The beauty of this poetry is poets bring the local culture and vocabulary with life experience. Words like *gerra gaddalu*, *moram bhomulu*, these local names for the land which left barren, evoke a sensorial experience in the native. And laborious work produces nothing for sustenance. This objective reality indicates the role of economic forces in making distance from one's own land. Poets always bring class struggle in the place construction, see the following lines;

They have carry stones, built mansions

With the help of ropes colored them with paints

They don't have a hut to reside; remain in wet in rain and cold

They burn under the heat and turn into the black (206).

This is the Marxist analysis of production process, accumulation of capital went in a few hands of bourgeois class and toing classes struggling for the livelihood. This class consciousness has taken from the Jana Natya Mandali. For example in Cherabanda Raju song;

We have broken hills

We have powered boulders

We have built projects with

Our blood as granite

Whose is the toil?

And whose the wealth? (Balagopal 1982: 1189).

In Telangana movement, poets reproduce arguments with local and particular labor point of view and with particular local vocabulary. The words, like, *ettinaru*, *gattinaru*, *addinaru*, *tadsi* and so on have sharp ending, unlike not in authentic Telugu, as elite Andhra's feels, this words, the syllable before ending syllable, have extended way, as say, *ettinaru* become *ettinaaru*, *addinaru* become *addinaaru*. These sharp ending words which make distinct regional idiom reproduced in this poetry. Another set of words, *midde*, *ravuthalatho*, *undaa gudu*, *salivana*, these local expressions are distinct in the regional poetic debate.

Sacred Geography

Being a Marxist and Ambedkarite, Gaddar is not akin to ritual and religion. He understands the power of their efficacy. He brings local gods into the regional debates. When the movement shifted from the militant struggle to the regional struggle, it required more inclusion of cultural symbols and practices. He praises goddess Sita rather than god Rama. Since Lord Rama becomes a symbol of patriarchal, elite, mainstream hegemonic god of Brahmins. He sided with Sita. He avoids Rama, and he picks up Bhadrachalam from Sita point of view. In another song, he says, *mondi Ramudu*, stubborn Rama. He subverts the image of ideal Rama. Gaddar says in the mythical time Khammam Mettu gave shelter to them. It was a belief that, Rama and Sita along with Laxmana spent their *vanavasam* (dwelling in a forest) in Dandakaranyana where the golden deer story and Ravana abduct the Sita. Gaddar brings sacred geography (Spencer, 1970) to mobilize the region and its people. Gaddar is not bringing religious culture; he brings distinct characteristic features of the geological space.

Stare at Keslapur carnival, where people worships Komaram Bheem

Badrachalam makes a connection between displeasure Sita and obstinate Rama

Look at Yamudala Rajanna who chant every single morning 'Shiva, Shiva'

Look at the seven rivulets of Ganga Jathara

See the Sammakka- Sarakka deities' festival, who gave offspring to the infertile women

Look at the eye-lids of Posamma, Kasamma, Kamma, and mother Gandhi Maisamma

Look at the Komarelli Malanna who hides in hill valleys

Look at she who illuminates the lamp millions of gods, still, she is a mother without food.

The region has something to do with sacred geography because it exists historically and religiously. It is through beliefs and customs, common people identify a region. And therefore, any idea of secular region becomes an instrumental approach. Local deities are also part of the cultural manifestations of the regions. They are the personalities of the regions. Most of the times, he evokes subaltern deity with subversive powers.

Telangana is part of Deccan with strong Kannada influences in some region Shulman and Narayana Rao observe that the cultic history of the Deccan must include the expansion of Virasaivism, originally a militant movement of antinomian worshipers of Siva drawn mostly from the so-called "left-hand" castes, that is, those not tied to the land (artisans, merchants, migratory groups, and so on) (Rao and Shulman 2002:7). *Keslapur, Yedu Payala Jathara, Sammakka-Sarakka Jathara, Bhadrachalam, Yamudala Rajanna, Komarelli Mallana* are very well known local deities in Telangana region. The concept of landscape evolves with cultural imagination. Landscape gives a sense of history. But here Gaddar is not talking about well-known written history. He is singing about oral history of Telangana. Another poet, Vangapandu delineated Uttarandhra region as a local deity in his song '*vandaname Uttarandhra*'.

Salute to you, mother Uttarandhra, salute

You are the wonderful mother, Bangaramma

You are village festival goddess Poleramma⁵⁸.

It can be any name, however, you are the mother to everyone.

He unites the regional people with one mother umbrella. He creates the geography of sacred. Derives from the realm of a symbolic region, Uttarandhra becomes a goddess. She lives in the borders of the region who protects the people of the region. He beseeched her to protect the art forms, culture, and customs. Poleramma does not have a permanent set of a temple in village boundaries. This goddess exists in a temporal form of mud or wood piece. Here we can apply this kind of structure to the region Uttarandhra. The demand for separate Uttarandhra was not recognized in compare to Telangana. This region evolves in a temporal kind in Vangapandu poetry, like village border goddess, who comes occasionally.

Pastoral landscape

Shepard costume was a cultural symbol of the radical left since Jana Natya Mandali to present Telangana movement, even as part of Dhoom- dhom. Gaddar himself is well known for adhering to his typical Shepard costume. Shepard costume is one loin cloth or a dhoti with one end tucked at the back on the waist, remain body leave barely, one hand-woven woolen blanket, a stick on the hand, a red or any color turban on the head. Why this Shepard image and Shepard culture take a dominant role in the cultural politics in Telangana region?

Historian Cynthia Talbot says.

Historically Telangana region emerged vibrantly from Kakatiya period with different kind's people like hunting people, cattle herders, and those doing shifting cultivation and along with ambitious migrants from Coastal Andhra. Martial and mobile quality of this culture is so distinct than the Vengi Coastal culture. The greater sociopolitical dynamism of mixed zone contrast with the status quo of the wet zone the difference due to possibly

⁵⁸Poleramma: is a local form of Shakti, pole +merra, mean, mainly she resides in the village boarders to protect the village. She is called as *grama devatha*. The shrine usually kept outside of the village.

most conservative attitudes of typical of the rice growing area (Talbot 2001:44)

According to Gunter-Dietz Sontheimer who has conducted extensive research on Deccan Pastoralism,

The oral traditions and religious cults of the pastoral communities like the Kuravas, the Dhangars, and the Gollas of the Deccan are centered on themes which provide evidences to reconstruct the development of their economic and cultural system. It is endeavored here to make an appraisal of the oral traditions and cults of the Kuravas, the sheep pastoralists inhabiting the semi-arid regions of the southern Deccan, in the light of archeological evidence (Murty and Sontheimer 1980:182)

Their livelihood came from animal herding. Permanent settled agriculture was not available, shifting agriculture. Agriculture is the dominant profession for the people along with herding culture also existed. Sheep, cows, and goats are very useful economy for the herders. Music culture takes prominent plays in the herding society. 'For herders music was a useful tool', says Gioia (2006: 63) further he argues,

Music helped avoid the extremes of each role, allowing the herder to relax when pressing concerns dominated and, perhaps even more important, to maintain alertness when indolence might otherwise jeopardize the flock. (Ibid, 72)

This pastoral lifestyle and performing tradition played historical roles in Telugu heroic folk ballads from the medieval period to modern revolutionary movement.

While delineating American Midwestern pastoral landscapes, William Barillas argues,

The central conflict in this scholarship, as Lawrence Buell writes in a useful survey, is political: Weather pastoral ideology and art "ought to be looked at as conservative and hegemonic" or "as a form of dissent from urbanizing social mainstream" (Barillas 2006:3)

From this perspective literary elicitation of landscape serve a primarily symbolic function. Pastoral poets describe the country lifestyles, especially about herder's lifestyle. This lifestyle is entirely different from the urban lifestyle. In the village, people live harmoniously with nature.

Telangana regional poets have increasingly focused on historical realities and the demands of ecological sustainability. Herder's life becomes part of the regional reconstruction. They take from their rich cultural resources and apply political ideology to them. They are different herding communities named differently; Gola, Golla, yerragolla, Korba, Konar, Koraba, Reddy, Dhangar, Iddyar and so on. These numerous pastoral castes have different traditional art forms included in their lifestyles, like Palle Suddulu or Gollasuddulu, Oggu Katha. These art forms have been used by progressive from historic Telangana armed struggle. There is a popular pastoral song on village little cowherd, pallaturi pillagada written by Suddala Hanumanthu, a popular leftist performer of the Telangana armed struggle. In this pastoral song poet/singer asks the village lad;

O village lad

O able little cowherd

How long ago was it since you tasted milk?

O fresh-faced lad

When did you begin working?⁵⁹

Poet describes the lifestyle of the herding boy, what type clothes he wear, his torn chappals, hand stick, where he herding, why he is crying. Why is he feeling hungry and so on? Poets romanticize the pastoral lifestyle and their idle, tranquil vocation of watching hours. Poet brings laments of the herding boy in the armed struggle movement. Common themes for the pastoral poetic expression, Gioia argues that 'the ancients saw 'complaints' and 'laments' as two of the three most common themes' (Gioia 2006: 66). Here the herding boy is not a complaining as such, but poet on behalf of him is taking his position. Pastoral poets' generally laments for the bygone era of connecting to nature through nostalgia. But in this case, the poet is discussing the problem of the present. He discusses about a boy who stands in front of the school and wish to study. He

⁵⁹ Suddala Hanumanthu, *palleturi pillagada*, (Suddala foundation, 2010), Pp.64-65.

pungently says that this herding life is useless. Melancholy tone of this song explains the pastoral life in a progressive way. The poet says that from the perspective of the village lad, the Republic Day and democratic slogans are only for top leaders and wealthy people. In this regard, William Empson argues that ‘Good proletarian art is usually covert pastoral (Empson qtd in Emmett 2011:77). As proletarian artist Suddala says in this song, red flag has mercy on labor hunger, this flag must fly on the Redford, did you say this little cow herding boy? This type ‘double plot’ poet uses for a revolution in their songs.

Pastoral vocation is also very much part of Goreti Venkanna. He romanticizes the pastoral vocation, in his song ‘Yalamanda’. Yalamanda is a little cow herding boy as Suddala’s *palleturi pillagada*. The difference is that Suddala shows lament side of the herding boy, where Goreti romanticizes it. . The dignity of the herding vocation shows through their costumes. Which means on his shirtless body covered with *gongadi* (black woolen blanket), *addapanche* (man’s long garment worn around the waist) as his waist cloth, *kirru tholu* slippers (slippers made of thick leather that make sounds while walking) wear on his foot. This also Gaddar performance costume. Image of the poet and singer as Shepard has become trite and conventional (Gioia 2006:64). This conventional image historically continued in Telangana region. Poet asks the people whom the son was following behind the flock. In this song, the poet describes local places where the Yalamanda moves with his sheep. Goreti says, *kandi jonna koyyalalla kanju pittole pothadu Yalamanda*, means Yalamanda goes like a partridge in the red gram and millet stubbles. The musical tradition of Telangana often refers cultural associations with pastoral landscape and characters of the local lifestyle. Present commercial culture most of the time try to imitate western culture passively in the modern sense whereas Telangana poets actively associate with primordial relationships and memories bring forth as a cultural modernity. Yalamanda kind genre song come in the industrial revolution period as a wish to go back to nature. No one wishes to live like a cowherd boy in the present society literally, romanticizing the lifestyle of a cowherd as the mainstream culture of Telangana, a popular culture actively sings in the main movement. Singing tradition of herding society as a part of their work make animal feel comfort, as Gioia argues that, ‘soothing strains acting as a sonic cushion of comfort, is was originally conceived not to please human ear but rather the more acute sensibilities of the animal, for whom listening is often a matter of survival (2006:64)’.’ Sonic cushion’ of Goreti song not only comfort the herding boy Yalamanda, it also alleviates the local people who have a connection with local culture. There is a

kind local expressions and experiences are only possible where the natural feeling is alive and conceived by poets, suppose see the following line;

He sings in the streams and curves

Yalamanda stand on the bank of the tank

Yalamanda smiles like a moon

If there is a shadow of a Babul tree

Yalamanda will forget the lap of the mother.

Keen observation to the nature imitated by language, in a rhythmic sense and constructing a lifestyle of a herding boy story in a song was really interesting to one listen. Working styles and mass people aesthetics almost ignored by elitist culture in this virtual reality. No one has time to view a herding boy and his activities, like *thumma needa vunte ammavodine marachipothadu*, if there see a shadow of the babul tree, he forgets his mother lap. This kind of pastoral nature is connected with childhood life, as to perceive nature which is an irrevocable past. *Thumma* (babul tree), *Narrenka* (a local bush name) and *gottaku* (a kind of leaf) a local flora expressed in this song. The region as nothing to do with this song directly but indirectly this type songs strongly possesses with the negotiating mainstream culture, not to go to with the roots rather, as Aloysius argues that,

The region no more represents the locale of chauvinism and residual primordialism but offers itself as the site of the cultural practices of the mass people in the contrast to that of the elite, and an ensemble that every social group necessarily carries with it to modernity (2013:41).

In modern times, this song was imitated and brought forth its tune in another way with herding boy as a metaphor, a symbol of watchfulness; Yalamanda becomes a political activist in a song which delineates the regional movement written by Nernala Kishore. This Yalamanda has a direct connection to the movement, not like Goreti's Yalamanda, whose world is only flocking, this Yalamanda world is Telangana world like Chalam says 'Krishna Sastri self-pain is world pain, but all world pain is Srisri's pain'. It is surprising that regional poet's use every aspect of life, uses

has to show a regional struggle. They used conventional signs to communicate ideas, feelings as natural forces not inherently but constructed way;

Yalamanda, like a rising dawn

Going on the way of struggle

Look at him, he is lad Yalamanda

But he carries Telangana flag (2014:208)

Now a boy of a pastoral community is a symbol of Telangana who is watchful of the flock. Poet says, Yalamanda asks his mother, why the tank is dried. He roams around the streams, he laments by seeing its state. When he sees parched lands and lean cows, he cried loudly. The concept and content of this song dealing Telangana problems and prepare people for movement. But perspective is different, the poet appropriate Goreti's Yalamanda to the movement. The beauty of this song is sound, the most important to convey emotional meaning to an audience. This sound come under music, this poetry will not exist without its rhythm. Certain reactions and images sensationally manipulate in the sounds of words derived from local dialect. Language and rhetoric emphasize throughout the song, the lad Yalamanda, who passionately want Telangana. The childhood image of mother tries to feed her baby by showing moon and singing song, changed into Yalamanda want to listen to a song of Telangana. The objective reality of the region has become subjective desire and the environmental awareness of Yalamanda, constructed within the given tune. Emotional content embedded in a melodious tune has already embodied in the character of Yalamanda. Significant words like mucchata, poragadu, bukkedu buvva etc., have socially and politically communicative symbols for regional groups.

Region is resonance

The region resonates when performers perform. When the music resonates, the region becomes more alive. This resonance is associated with songs. How do the performers resonate with the region? The way poets move with the region, the way they speak, in their musical utterances, poetic utterance, through these things, the region is constructed.

While performing in Jana Natya Mandali and disseminating Maoist cultural ideology, performers like Vangapandu and Gaddar reproduced Dappu with renewed meanings and sounds. . Vangapandu's song, '*jajjanakari janare januku janare*', Gaddar's phrase '*janjanaka jan dhaddhanak dhan- Dappu mida daruvu chudu*', Mitra's '*adudam dappulla dharuveira*', all refer to the Dappu rhythms. Marginalised instrument Dappu effectively became part of the JNM and Dalit performances. Before this, *Gummeta* and *jamuku* instruments played an important role. These all belong to the drum/percussion categories. Gioia wrote in his book 'Healing songs' (2006) that how drums are prohibited in western society, 'it was held to primitive, barbaric activity capable of expressing only blind or obsessive impulses of a low order' (2006:166). Later in modern times, he says, 'it finally emerged as a social force'. He puts it, 'the percussion instrument brings the social integration' rather than 'disruptive to group cohesion and hierarchical control (ibid, 163)'. Dappu played a prominent role in bringing social integration of masses in many movements. At the beginning of the performance, JNM artists say, '*janam gunde chappudulni vinandi*', 'listen to the heartbeats of the peoples. Dappu is seen as the heartbeat of the people. At the corner of the street when people listen Dappu sound, they immediately come to see a performance. It easily draws the audience attention. Dappu was deeply associated in social life, from rites of passages' to rituals to 'other changes of social status'. When political groups adopted this instrument, Dappu becomes the symbol of protest. It is a weapon to the marginalized sections for the protection of their rights. it was traditionally meant to 'evoke some special powers', when it was played in a ritual or in a rite context, like dance or trance state of participants. Local deities do not move without these Dappu rhythms. In pre-modern days, Dappu was used as 'a communicative tool' rather than a percussion instrument. Dappu used in *Dandora*, 'announcement by the beats of the drum, for proclamation, for sell the goods, etc. when the political awareness spread, when Dalit aesthetics are being emphasized in the mainstream political debate, Dappu not only remain as 'sound, it is also the representation of marginalized voice. Madiga caste, who are owners of Dappu; they are Dappu makers as well as players. Dappu increases people's happy mood, accompany to their sad situation, reduces peoples toil, now it is a symbol of collective consciousness. The instrument has become so prevalent that no movements, agitations, protests go forward without Dappu. Mainly in the songs of JNM and Telangana 'Dhoom-dhaam' performances, Dappu takes a major role. Vangapandu influenced from the Dappu rhythmic patterns, he imitated the sounds literally and created many songs, such as

Jajjanakari janaare Uttarandhra nagaare

Jajjanakari jajjanakari jajjanakari janaare

Nagaare.....nagaare....najjanakari nagaare.

Dappu played a vital role arousing Cultural awareness among subaltern castes. Most of the performers and singers from Telangana have emerged from the marginalized caste background. Dappu might be one reason for this phenomenon. Other instruments like mridangam, dollock, Tabla, and Oggu are also used in the movements. The emergence of strong subaltern cultural movement have a created a sense of passivity for the elite middle class. Vimalakka asks Telangana people to revolt on the hegemonic culture:

Brother! Can you play the Dappu, we will dance

We sing the song of *palle* (village) Telangana

Make a braid format with Kolatam dance movements

Jump on the *Alva*, along with says *dhula*

Everywhere we are listening to T.V nonsense

It is a invade on our work and song

For the *Chindu* dance dramas

For the search of the padyam singing

Brother! Fire the plastic Dappu

Play yours leather instruments (Okkokka paatesi 2014:33).

Dappu arouses visceral power when it gets played. Though Dappu made of plastic doesn't give that sense of feeling, they are equally used in performance. We can easily find out the sound variations between these two. Many of the Dhoom-dhaam songs are composed using the plastic Dappu. The plastic Dappu may create euphoria and noise but the rhythmic and aural quality of the

lather Dappu is unmatched. . What is missing is, calming affects. Dappu does not just remain an instrument; it has also emerged as a scenic element. Performers now days take Dappu as part of their bodies. They move their hands rhythmically and vibrantly on its white surface. Player's hands move rhythmically and vibrantly. Artists named after Dappu, like 'Dappu Ramesh', Dappu Prakash. The conservative middle class due to their prejudices gainst the Dappu, they remain in only political propagators

Where Dappu has the symbol of the subaltern. When the cultural consciousness of these classes valorized, Dappu increasingly comes forth. The poet Mitra says, *Chalo dhoom-dhaam .Telangana jatharocchera*. The phrase *dhoom-dhaam* was the rhythmic pattern of the Dappu resonates the region. Gaddar Telangana is the song of *akali-kekala gaanam*, Yadagiri's Telangana, is '*tyagala muta*'. Cherabanda Raju says, '*errerrani Telangana* (61)'. C.Kasim's '*jamidika nadam motha*'(88), Nandhini Sidhareddy says, '*bhathukamma panduga naa Telangana, bantipula thota naa Telangana* (180). Ande Sri says, '*Jai bholo Telangana gala garjanala jadi vaana*(97), Goreti Venkanna says, '*rela dhula thalallade nela naa Telangana*', '*jilledamma jitta* (93). Varavara Rao says, '*rela rela re Telangana relare* (239), Raja Narasimha says, '*naaga mallelo thiga mallelo*(145)', in traditional songs lyrics, '*jaajiri jaajiri*', '*alaai balaai*', '*asanna usennallara annathammullara*', '*assodhula haarathi*', '*bathukamma bathukamma uyyalo bangaru bathukamma uyyalo*', '*sharanu sharanu maa ammaa raave Shambavi raani* (204) etc. this list will go unending, all the words and phrases resonates the region with music. These words cannot be translated. The beauty of the regional dialect is this and also these are cultural expressions.

When Dalit literature emerged after Kanchikacherla Kotesu, Chundur and Karamchedu incidents, Dappu politically become a symbol of resistance, '*dalitha dhikkara pathaka*'. It is also argued that Dappu represents Dalit poetry. In a new radical interpretation, Dappu vociferously asks, '*pidikedu athma gowravam*', a fistful of self-respect;

I don't know when I was born

But I was killed in this land before thousand years back

Punarapi maranam punarapi jananam

I don't know karma theory

But I have taken birth where I had killed again and again

My body melts in this country

And become the plain of Ganga-Sindh (Kalekuri Prasad)⁶⁰.

Due to discrimination and caste humiliation, Dalit leaders come out from the Maoist party. Kalekuri Prasad's *Karamchedu Oggu Katha* (1989) advises Dalit's to join people's War Group. This *Karamchedu Oggu Katha* was a brilliant artistic exposition of the JNM from the Dalits' point of view. How the performance artistically portrayed? What sorts of artistic elements were used? These things are important as performers also try to reconstruct the reality. The event removed from the oppressed reality helps in setting a paradigm for the future. Kalekuri imitated Gaddar's *Naxalbari biddalu Oggu Katha* style of singing and writing. . One of the interesting things to note is that while theme is from Andhra region, *Karamchedu* the song was written Telangana style. Kalekuri did not use the entire *Oggu* tunes. He also took some tunes from *Burra Katha*. How the Dalit tigers fought with the elite *Kamma* caste, how Dalits were chased in the fields and killed brutally and how women from Dalit were raped. It also shows how the opposition tries to suppress the case, how the People's War group revenged the violence by eliminating the main accused. The story is expressed in *Oggu Katha* style. Kalekuri created new aesthetics for the mass culture. He asks the Dalit leaders who believed in democratic line for their rights, depending on courts and police. He opined how these laws are the watchdogs of the landlords. He says how people will get justice through 'prajapantha' (people's democracy).

O, mothers! Someone painted the earth with green color

This green field's look

If you squeeze the clay, comes out gold

See the stalk of the paddy in the fertile lands

It rattling like a pregnant woman

⁶⁰ Kalekuri Prasad poem, '*pidikedu amthma gowravam kosam*'. See, Kallury, Syamala (Ed). '*Chaitanya Dehali*' (Tel). National Book Trust, 2002, P. 125.

See the heaps of reaches in the cotton fields

It has a festive appearance of the goddess Lakshmi

Tobacco twigs in the high lands,

Appears like, an arrogance of the wealthy families

The Krishna blesses and flows in between palm trees

The village stood arrogantly

This Karamchedu is the village of landlords⁶¹

After seeing caste politics in the class struggle, Dalit radicals were looking for alternative. The movement for separate Telangana also raised a prominent question: whose region? The question brought out the question of social identities. In Telangana movement, Dalit body and aesthetics came out radically to assert its identity. It was a movement from the below in which Dalit artists joined in mass culture movement.

The singers and poets resonated their place and region in their songs. How did the region configured in their songs? How was it resonated in their music? Critics often say that *kalaalu-galaalu*, pens and voices, poets become singers in the movements. Many subaltern writers who were passive in literary culture became active when it came to contribute in song culture. Poetry and prose have limited accessibility to the masses in compare to songs that has better quality of dissemination. With the spread of Internet and television channels, and other media, song and music has emerged as one of the most prominent genres. Singers of the Telangana are politically conscious and culturally aware. In their songs, region becomes more live and active. They see it from different perspectives, they question the hegemony of the Andhra cultural media, class struggles. They also bring the history of pain and repression, gender discrimination, Dalit identity, environmental awareness and so on. Dasarathi says, '*naa Telangana koti rathanala veena*', My Telangana is a Veena that shines with a crore gem'. Telangana has nothing to do with the musical instrument Veena. He metaphorically portrayed Veena as the voice of a crore people who are gems. The poet resonates Telangana with metaphors. The richness of the metaphor is; classical Veena, with gems. The gems choose the wealth of the region. Poets have used the phrase in different ways,

⁶¹ See Jana Natya Mandali Karamchedu Oggu Katha, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=34GyCmGk45o&t=3102s>

'niluvella gayaala Veena Telangana', this Telangana Veena now wounded entirely (Guda Anjayya). This Veena is a high-class instrument, used by the elite class in their leisure hour. It has nothing do with the working class or subaltern, however poets and singers have using it to produce a range of discourses.

Conclusion

By analyzing songs and performances of Gaddar and other artists demanding a separate statehood for Telangana, this chapter has tried to show 'region' as contested space. Many times, contestation takes between class seeking groups and the identity seeking groups. In its journey, Telangana fought feudalism, neoliberalism, and hegemony. The various movements and social groups in Telangana create a complex picture of Telangana. The movement for the separate Telangana and Uttarandhra were able to foreground land, resources and unemployment questions along with the question of art, language and culture Region is largely understood as social science category. Social scientists like Aloysius (2013) have conceptualized region as socially constructed, reproduced in language, as a historical formation, as internal homogeneity, as ideology, and identity. These all perspectives have notably applied to Andhra, Telangana regions. Viewed from performing arts or performance studies perspective 'region' is seen as an emotive category. The region keeps resonating in songs and performances. Region viewed as a sensual experience or an experience of the local groups. It is observed from a specific category, like 'flow', or sacred geography, or pastoral landscape. Many times, artists narrate their own experience to conceptualize their idea of the region. Artists coming from vernacular background localize the monuments and symbolic scenery and create new meanings and discourse around them. In summary, it can be argued that while there is a conflict in regions, from one region to other, region is also a discourse, produced by poets and singers. Their idea of region is versatile and volatile.

Chapter 3

Region as an Unfulfilled Desire

Mama Nagulo! Chiralu destanani raikalu destiviro

(Dear husband! you promised me to bring sarees,

but you brought only blouses) – Gaddar(2017)

This chapter aims to analyze how the poets see Telangana after its realization as a separate state. What happened to the desires and dreams that were part of the separate state movement? They were the poets who were asking for the separate state, but they are the same poets who are now criticizing the role played by the state. On the other side, there is a demand for Uttarandhra. Uttarandhra is emerging as another state which is creating sub-regional movements. Thinking through the new compositions and performance, I would like to see the ways poets had imagined to see Telangana. What were those dreams?

On 2 June, 2014, Telangana was formed as a 29th state in India, after decades of the struggle against the Andhra hegemony. The movement for Telangana started first in 1952, as *mulki* verses *non-mulki* people. People of Telangana were demanding government jobs for the local people. In 1956, Telangana was merged into Andhra Pradesh. After the long apprehensions and fears of Telangana people raised they could not compete with forward Andhra people that settled with the safe guards provided to the Telangana. The movement for the separate Telangana re-emerged with the non-implementation of the safe- guards in 1969. The Indian state violently suppressed the movement. The movement went through different phases till now. This movement went back in 1990's with N.T. Rama Rao's Telugu Self-Respect movement in 1990s somehow weakened the movement. But again, the movement make a strong come back in 2001. It took a new political turn with K. Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR) and his TRS (write full name of the party) jumped into the movement. The demand for the separate state saw its peak with KCR declaring fast unto death in 2009. It was further fueled by the students of Osmania University and Kakatiya University igniting the movement successfully. In the historical movement, more than one thousand two hundred people sacrificing their lives for the demand of the separate state. As the movement took

the mass agitation turn, hundred thousands of people came down to the street. . The demand for the separate Telangana included many things such as the questions of land, resources, investments, employment, education, water and the most importantly the question of self-rule and self-respect. Hundreds of poets and singers participated in the movement and disseminated their songs through live and mediatized performances. The region already has an active political performance legacy coming from the Telangana Peasants' Struggle (1946-51). The movement had a history of Praja Natya Mandali (PNM), Jana Natya Mandali and individual performers. The poets and singers constructed the Telangana bringing the experiences and exploitation of the marginalized and backward community in the center. They stood against the internal colonization carried in the name of Vishalandhra. During the movement of separate Telangana, the poet-singers carried the peoples' demands of autonomy in social, cultural, economic and political matters which they reiterated as '*maadi makugavale*' (we want, what we have). Political leaders participated in the movement also promised to fulfill the dreams of people. The long awaited dream of Telangana realized in 2014 with KCR becoming the first Chief Minister of the newly formed state. The people of Telangana celebrated the moment and hoped that their dreams of self-rule and development are soon getting realized. During the movement, Telangana intellectuals, singers and poets imagined a bright future of the state, once the state will be liberated from Andhra rulers and capitalists. Political scientist H. Srikanth commented that,

...the new state of Telangana will be more democratic and representative to the wishes of its people, especially to the downtrodden. It will be headed by a Dalit or a person from a lower caste, and see to the development of all marginalized community, the economy will be re-constructed, utilizing all resources, human and natural, and there will be rapid industrialization, leading to more jobs for youth. Uncompleted dams will be get adequate water and electricity. The state will acknowledge the contributions of all its heroes... the dreams of martyrs will be fulfilled and Telangana will emerge as a progressive and prosperous state within the Indian nation. (H. Srikanth 2013: 42)

However, after the completion of three years of KCR, not much has been achieved. The dreams of activists, poets and singers started fading away. From activists to singers and poets have

been arguing that how the new state which comes after so much struggle and sacrifice is failing to meet people's expectations.

Politics of Feelings and desires

Jayadheer Tirumala Rao has argued that, 'there is no Telangana without song' (Tirumala Rao 2014:9). It is true that people of Telangana can't imagine Telangana without songs and performances. There is no doubt that songs and cultural performances also played an important role. But in the case of Telangana, performance becomes the main force to mobilize people. No political meetings and gathering could have been imagined without performers. Nagaraju, who did an extensive field work on singers impact on the political movement has argued that 'people throughout the Telangana region would accept the contribution of singers and artists, as they become the voice of the people; they represented the people more than the political parties in the Telangana region (Nagaraju 2015: 100). I would like to argue that If can performance function as a political discourse in Telangana. In the beginning of the political meetings, to attract audience organizers often announces that, dance, song and speech (*ata, pata, mata*) of the some singers'. Even when artists speak, instrumentalists keep drumming in a minimal way. Main singers often lead the musicians, but musicians inclines to produce rhythms to entire program.

It is believed that performance as an affective mode of production generally does not allow rational thinking. Songs and performance rather affect the listeners rather allow them to think. Often Performance reproduces, subverts and naturalizes the ideology. How did the poet-singers imagine the Telangana is important? Singers have produced the suffering history of the Telangana, how it is politically suppressed and culturally not represented. How did the local village arts and cultures extinguish with globalization, how did their land and resources exploited by the Andhra rulers. The poets and singers embodied the region in their songs. Poets created the 'sentimental Telangana or 'Telangana sentiment' with their performances. Clearly, years of cultural and ideological work done by the Telangana intellectual Forum has paid off in making Telangana a highly emotive issue (Ananth 2010: 34). This feeling is works better mobilize masses. The poets-singers in their songs often made the point that Telangana feel the pain, hunger and harassed, 'akali kekala ganama' (2014:19), *kanniti ragamaa, yedala ninda gayama* (262), *thalladillupothundi* (156-122). What does it mean to say that a region is feeling pained and harassed? In the context of nation, Sara Ahmed argues, while describing the subjective and

objective feelings, 'what does it do to say the nation mourns' (Sara Ahmed 2013:13). Her idea of 'nation mourns' can be applied to region. In this assertion, region becomes an entity which has feeling from a mere physical entity it also acquires subjectivity. In poetic articulation region is presented as personality. It means region is a subject that has feeling, but also region becomes an object that generates feeling among the peoples of that region. Once feeling gets embodied, the region can feel pain, it can feel harassed. In this way, the region 'becomes a shared object of feeling'. Poet-singers employ various emotions to the region 'Telangana'. They use emotions feelings like love, anger, love, grief associated with pain and suffering. The feelings of poet and singers is not an individual pain but it reflects the collective pain and suffering of a region. Audience experience this pain with full empathy. This identification leads towards action. This pain also functions as uniting force. While some songs create feeling of hate, some also brings a moment of love and joy. Guda Anjayya's *ayyoniva avvoniva* song create hate feeling against Andhra rulers.⁶² Many times, songs generate a kind of slogans as in a protest. Nandini Sunder while dealing with the Maoist movement writes that how movement was constructed on emotions. She argues,

Social movements are also essentially emotional movements_ where the successful mobilization of righteous anger or a sense of injustice, or the maintenance of solidarity through humour, songs (which evoke emotions) and other rituals of resistance are as critical to the existence of these movements as the structural reasons which drive people to participate in them. (Sunder 2012: 709)

These emotions evokes in people in social movements, arose genuinely in a real situation and constructed via arts. While discussing 'sociality of emotions', Sara Ahmad says, 'Durkheim considers the rise of emotion in crowds, suggesting that such 'great movements' of feeling, 'do not originate in any one of the particular individual conscious nesses' (Sara Ahmad, 2013: 9). She differentiating between individual psychological emotions and social emotions, both have a 'similar form' but 'change of direction' and these creates 'an effect than a cause' (Ibid, p.10). Further she argues,

⁶² Guda Anjayya who was a popular poet-singer from 80's revolutionary time, he wrote many songs all are popular Songs

my argument about the cultural politics of emotions is developed not only as a critique of the psychologizing and privatization of emotions, but also as a critique of a model of social structure that neglects the emotional intensities, which allow such structures to be reified as forms of being (2013:12).

The poets in their songs, express the regional lands, water, resources and employment taken by other region people. These injustices and disparities in 'social structure' intensifies the emotions of the people of the region against other region. The individual attached with region through a common emotions. These emotions moves one person to other by sharing. And also creates a future desire expressing will get these by a unified struggle. It gives reifies to intense feelings. How do the poets imagine the region is related to the ways it gets reflected in unfulfilled desire? Most often, there is repetition in the content, but every song has its own tune. What does Telangana culture stand for? In various manifestations, Telangana culture becomes an amalgamation of *Bonalu*, *Bathukamma*, *Oggu Katha*, *Chindu Bhagavathulu*, *pirla pangulu*, *teenmar*, *Dappu nrityalu* and others.

The problem of region becomes the major theme in song and performance? For instance, how did the Andhra rulers exploit people? Water scarcity, farmers and workers migration to the cities, poor living condition of Adilabad's Adivasi, the shortage of food grain in Medak all become important issues for the poet-singers. Movements were able to bring new cultural movement which also emerged as counter culture to the Andhra. In this construction, the figure of martyrs emerged as one of the major mobilizing forces.

Poet-singer Goreti Venkanna describes Telangana as bird nest. He sings '*My Telangana is relaa dulaa thaalallaade nelaa*; My Telangana is a dissipated bird nested in the hurricane'. This Telangana is a strong expression of democratic Telangana. It was a desired Telangana of people. As Gaddar says, *maa bhumulu makenani marla badda ganama, tiraga badda ragama* Singers not remain performers rather work as 'social actors' in order bring change and make true the 'desire'. These singers also perform ritual like pay tributes the martyrs of the movement at 'amaravirula sthupam'. This was common in every performance.

The poets and performers success depends on audience applause. How he raise their emotional states like anger, chivalry, love, unrest, pathetic etc. in audience is important. These are

general aesthetical values for analyzing performer audience relations. But it is a different subject _ raise collective emotion or emotion which is related to the topic like, 'region' or 'class' and gaining sympathy for social movements. Performer as a social agent how he politicizes the performance? It is a difficult task for a writer or performer. Because 'class', region is not one individual pain. It is related to collective. How the poet legitimizing the performance is the important thing. Poet brings the some data which are reliably facts. How one region people of a whole, suffer from the discrimination of the other region people hegemony. Here poet cannot universalize some people pain. Or if he does, he must include remaining people with showing other causes. Anyway, poets will manipulate the performance with their forms and artistic talents. At the same time, mostly, the conditions of the audience or peoples decide the success of the poets. If the 'base' is strong 'superstructure' will work. Anyway, poets always exaggerate the things in their art.

After the Telangana movement, Goreti express his self-criticism that, is it needed this much anger and emotion? Content which he used in his song on against Andhra culture and language. He says, but at the time of the movement he had to gain applause from fellow Telangana people. His idea does not mean that as he says, he has not given false track under cover of emotions, but it should have convey modest manner. His songs *iddaram vidipothe...*, *jilledamma jitta...* creates hate-partition situation between Andhra, Telangana.

Will the earth break into pieces if we people of Andhra, Telangana Divide?

Is there comes a fence between us like India and Pakistan?

You can come and go, and sell prawns.

Dreams realizes

Now in Telangana state, apart from Gaddar and Goreti and some other Marxists singers, the rest of the poets take two kinds of stands. One section of poets who criticize the state leadership and their policies and rest of the singers who sings the government policies and realization dreams of the Telangana. They mainly sing the Telangana culture and glory of the recent movements. Some poets sing on the restoration of the Tanks by the government. They sing, Again village occupations

are refurbishment with policies of the government. These singers take part in government rule. There is a new trend that emerges that celebrate Telangana cultural glory and spirit of revolution. Other poets who go criticize and questions the ruling party policies, they allies with the opposition parties. Anyway, art in Telangana has direct connection with politics. Actually they reshape the politics. The major issue for the raising movement is land and water, is become more complicated after formation of Telangana. The state power and people wishes, displacement and rehabilitation go against each other. State power went in the hands of wealthy landlords and capitalists of the region, employment problem not solved, farmer's suicides are not stopped, and Dalit's didn't get land.

Emerging discontents

It has not been many years after the formation of Telangana but the discontents are very much there. The formation of Telangana created a hope all around. The ideals were created around the hope. But as soon as poets and singers realize that the dream is getting fulfilled, they started thinking around the poetic discontents. I see two main reasons of this poetic discontent. Poets and singers have created utopia around the region that appears never for the fulfilment in a capitalist system and the second is a genuine failure of the government. The emerging discontent also shows the limits of the utopic vision. Fifteen hundred people⁶³ sacrificed their life for this state but what finally happens? Still, it remains a kind of unfulfilled desire. It also shows the limitation in a kind of utopic vision of region.

Of course, the state of Telangana is formed. The region is also realized. A dream that people want to achieve, to an extent is also fulfilled. But the historical problem with the poets-singers is that they never think in realistic terms. They tend to exaggerate the things. They create a utopia. As we have seen, the poets and singers of Telangana created utopia of classless society. Second, which is relate to the first is the poets and singers' idea of region and its vision are always on move. They are never consistent. They connect with emotion, nostalgia, love, longing. They linger to

⁶³ Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao in assembly session, says over 1500 people died in state struggle. See the news article in India Today, on June, 14, 2014.
<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/south/story/telangana-cm-kcr-says-over-1500-died-in-statehood-fight-196922-2014-06-14>

their past life, childhood, glory, sad and revolutionary moments in the past. They mobilize the past but their visions of the future were full of paradoxes.

In this neo-liberal, global situation there is a kind of dystopia exists in the social relations connect with place and time. In this dystopia situation how poets keep alive people's hope. The people's art is manipulated, primordial way life have been taken out, and mainly human relations put into the economic mode of relation. Every material turn into the market, consumerist mode. There is no ground to stand on ideally and physically. An individual cannot able to claim firmly by saying this is my ground, my place, and my region. Identity movements emerges in order to prove, at least prove his existence and roots. Within the region, people are there who lost their identities. They have lost political and cultural identity among the regional fellows.

In another way, poets remain active is by creating dreamy situation. They create a world of affordable for everybody. They respond to the fellow people by feeling or creating epic through self-pain. They take the question of power hierarchies, caste, class and gender and offers an idealized way to stand against all the odds.

Poets idea of region is connect with emotions rather than rationality. It does not mean that they lack rationality or they oppose to it. Their idea is be to unite audience/ people think in a mode of emotion. Thinking is not alienated from the emotion or in a kind of mental state. Basically, the song is entirely different from the drama. Mostly Brechtian kind of drama, theater in the mode of class-room. In Gaddar or the any other political performer's performances, audience will not alienate from their emotion, not only that they are the subjects to it. The interesting thing is observed in Gaddar performance, that they often asked the musicians to stop playing the instruments. They disconnect/ alienate the rhythm from the song. They force the audience to listen their words. Also creates a gap between the songs with jerk or exclamation sounds, like haa! 'are!' Connect and disconnect the rhythm, this like take the entertainment element, sonorous element from the music. In this way, their performances cannot remain just like formal musical concerts. Of course, they sings most of the time in a political meetings. There what politicians says, it will be repeated in the singing/ performances with simplified language of the common people and straight forward. The common people may not understand the technical terms like, state, repression, economic data or the matter of political manipulations which are instructed by politicians and intelligentsia. Language of emotion everyone understands. In this connection

poet/singer is more nearest person to the common people than a politician or academic intellectual. This kind of poetic manipulation become effective tool for social change whether it is good or bad.

Gaddar, in a public meeting conducted by the CPM party, Telangana, criticized the TRS [Telangana Rashtra Samiti] led government with this song; *mama nagulo! Chiralu destanani raikalu destiviro*. He sings,

Dear husband you promised to bring sarees but you brought only blouses

If your vote and my vote becomes our vote,

The seat of Chief Minister is a crown to our head

Gaddar songs clearly reflect the unfulfilled state of desire. He questions what Telangana political leaders promised to bring at the time of the movement and what they really brought. Gaddar also says 'we are not asking the government to provide welfare schemes. They are our fundamental rights. We are asking political demands'. Coming from the background of extreme left .People's War Gaddar initially gave priority to class than region, even though he always supported the regional demands.

Gaddar's idea of nation is also unfulfilled desire which he kept singing in his *Bharathadesam bhagyaseema* song. He asks a fundamental question: in a wealthy nation, why people remain poor and hungry? Write one-two stanza of the song. He argues how the nation is ruled by the capitalists and land remains occupied by the landlords. There is nothing for farmers and under-privileged. He even criticized the land-reforms carried by the government as farce.

Gaddar in his songs and performances ridicules the RSS's model of Bharat Mata.

He also mocks the *Telugu atmagowravam*, the self-respect movement of N.T. Rama Rao (1983). He called upon people for the utopian state of *sramika rajyam* 'proletariat state'. The dream to have a sramik state remains a distant dream. Though the poets-singers did not stop dreaming. The dreams create discontents when they meet the reality of the present. But still poet dreams for equality. They try to bring forth the questions of 'nation' and statehood'. They try to express the unfulfilled desire of the common people. Poets and singers have created an epic around the working class and how formation of Telangana would fulfill those desires. For instance, Gaddar narrates a story of Lacchumamma who sits under the jasmine tree with torn clothes and dejected

face. After Telangana formation, he questions Telangana comes, what it brought us Lacchumamma?⁶⁴ The Telangana joint action committee (JAC) chairman M. Kodandaram argues,

This is not the Telangana state for which hundreds of people sacrificed their lives and lakhs of people took to streets to fight for years. The power has been confined to a few people of a family and the same old contractors and big business houses which had controlled the government in the combined Andhra Pradesh regime were ruling the roost in the present government as well⁶⁵.

What kind of Telangana he dreamed? Gaddar often says we brought this Telangana with struggle, *kotladi thecchukunnam*'. Singers and activists argues that we collectively fight for the state and they thought it would be an egalitarian state, the state would look after the common people's needs, like jobs for unemployed, land for the marginalized castes, water for irrigation, etc. And the most important thing is that they expected, involvement of the people in the governance. But they observed nothing sort of things happens here as Kodandaram says, the power has been confined to a few people of a family⁶⁶. The same thing expressed in a song by Yepuri Somanna;

Yevadeluthunnaduro Telangana

Wear a cloth on waist, hang a blanket on the shoulders, and tie the anklets on the legs

Hold the Dappu in arm pit, move around every village

We Sang songs of the movement

Now who enjoys the Telangana?

Who rules the Telangana?⁶⁷

⁶⁴ See, face to face with Gaddar on Telangana formation day. V6 News, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jnT76cR77Rg>

⁶⁵ Hindustan Times article, *KCR's protégé Kodandaram launched Telangana Jana Samithi to dethrone TRS government*, May, 05, 2018.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Lyrics taken from Yepuri Somanna song, *evani palaindiro*. See, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUcd_ItUIn4

Here singer-poet reminded how people and poets collectively fight for Telangana but how it went in the hands of the 'dora'. It has become, *dorala paalindiro Telangana*. The song says how Telangana movement was led by the masses of the region but how the upper caste politicians have been using it for their vested interests. The Sri Krishna Committee has also remarked that,

The Telangana upper castes have thrown in their lot with the rest of the region in their demand for separate Telangana as they see greater political and economic opportunities for themselves in the separate state. The leadership of the movement remains with the upper castes while the mass following is provided by the SC's and OBC's. (SKC report 2010: 380)

Not only this, the mainstream political parties have been also trying to appropriate cultural imaginations of the poets and singers. Scholar Najaraju argues that 'the TRS utilized the talents of the writers, poets and other artists in carrying forward the movement and also penetrating into the rural area (2015: 101). The political parties are offering patronage to local artists to enhance their own political agenda. Many times, in the absence of livelihood, artists and poets of Telangana are joining the propaganda of these parties. It is through the political patronage, these political parties have been trying to woo and accommodate these artists whose arts otherwise were radical and subversive. The 'laboring bodies' in these performance produce the surplus was [is] capitalized by the upper-class rulers (Brahma Prakash, 2017). When production become alienated from labour, the arts, knowledge, literature and culture which were born out of the laboring social relations can be easily appropriated by the landlords and capitalists (J. Turumala Rao 1988:2). Poets-singers had imagined a Telangana without the *dora* rule, but even after the formation of the Telangana, poet-singers have still struggling against the 'dora' rule. In a song, [*cheppulu kuttedi madigode kada!*] Gaddar sings,

Madiga make's cheppal, isn't he? Yes!

Barber cut's the hair, isn't he? Yes!

Potter makes pots, isn't he? Yes!

(.....he describes many Castes like this... finally he says...)

Isn't the Brahmin who engulf the temple? Yes!

At the final, the 'dora' who swallow the village, entire lands, isn't he?⁶⁸

Gaddar argues that *dora* rule has been continuing in the Telangana even after it has achieved its statehood. The working class who were in the majority are still getting ruled. Before Telangana was realized there were many scholars and activists who were skeptical about the idea of the People's Telangana. Gaddar says that perhaps they were right that the formation of state would be mainly 'a change actors-keeping the script intact' (Ananth 2010:37). He questions where is the real change?

'A Muslim is asking, where is my nation?

There is no Masjid to pray Allah'

'Tribals have lost their rights on forest

They are getting displaced in the name of projects'

'Being born as Madiga, they don't have a chappals to wear

Being born as a potter they don't have a pot to cook food

We become trees, which bear the fruits of votes'⁶⁹.

Apart from these humiliation, they have no representation in governance.

Social scientist K. Ilaiah argues that 'it is unfortunate that in the state where 93 percent people are OBC, Dalit, Tribal and Minorities have no say in the governance, as the feudal forces that came to power after the bifurcation did not respect any promise given them during the movement (Ilaiah blog). To achieve *samajika* (social) Telangana, Telangana activists and political groups formed political organizations and parties, like T-MASS (Telangana Mass Social Organization-2017), Telangana Jana Samithi (2018). Ambedkarist, Phuleite, communist,

⁶⁸ Lyrics taken from Gaddar song, cheppulu Kuttedi madigode kada, 'Gaddar emotional song on CPM Samara Sammelanam, Mahajana padayatra, TV 10. See, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lpyz5dOerH0&t=583s>

⁶⁹ Gaddar performance on 'Gaddar sensational comments on KCR, uploaded by Eagle Media. See, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KvXY0p_kxZk

humanist, and women organizations have joined under the banner of T-Mass. The banner has been trying to synthesize the ideologies of a Mahatma Phule, Ambedkar and Karl Marx (Ilaiyah blog).

Gaddar has recently come out from CPI (Maoist) party and decided to follow the parliamentary path. He claimed that he will try to merge the ideologies of Ambedkar, Phule and Marx to uplift the caste and class.

Now, to achieve samajika Telangana and social justice various castes alliance with communists. Samajika Telangana symbolizes with the synthesis of red and blue flags.

Re-imagining Telangana

O Yellanna! We shall dream

Our chief minister is dreaming while sleeping in Farm-house

We shall dream a double-bed room with painting colors

We shall dream our relatives come for this occasion; we preparing mutton dishes

We shall dream landless poor got three acres land

We shall dream farmers got fair price for their crop

We shall dream KCR make farmer as a king⁷⁰

This is a sarcastic song written by singer Somanna, he comments on the new formed government that how they have displaced people's dream with their own dreams. And how the people's aspirations remain in dreams not yet realized in the new statehood. Though we are not going to analyse state's policies and their implementations, the focus here on the poets and performers who started reimagining Telangana. This is the samajika Telangana of the poets and activists. They creates new songs and find new meanings in the older ones. The poet-singers coming from the left background still feel that democratic Telangana not formed and only geographical Telangana is realized with the state formation. Gaddar re-imagining the Telangana in his earlier popular Song *Podustunna poddu meda* with a new perspective. This was a celebrated song in the entire Telangana movement. This song comes at the peak of the Telangana movement

⁷⁰ Lyrics taken from poet Yepuri Somanna song, *kalagandamro yellanna*. see, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-g4f0Ej39g>

in 2011. Gaddar wrote this song for a film and acted in it. This song played a key role in popularizing the movement and reached the common masses. Gaddar revolutionized the Telangana movement. He imagined Telangana with metaphors like early rising dawn, mother earth, nature, resemblance of the god. The song gives varied imageries of Telangana with millions of people. He also explored his common theme of ‘martyrs sacrifice’. Our land, our water, and our rule belongs to ours that was main theme of song. That was also the key demand of Telangana. ‘*Maadi maaku kaavaale* (“we want what is ours”) is the chorus of the movement that reverberates throughout the region - it speaks of the essence of the demand for a separate state’ (Kannabiran, etc. al 2010:69). In every stanza, he narrates the situation, then he sings the lyrics. With the hundreds of chorus dancers, Gaddar enacted this song in the film. They were all wearing Gaddar marked costumes. Chorus formed a circle like playing Bathukamma in Telangana.⁷¹ All the time chorus make strong fist in the air with small dance steps. The aural power of Gaddar’s singing creates a soundscape which meets with visuals. After the formation of Telangana as a state, he started re-imagining samajika Telangana. He used the name ‘*tyaagaala Telangana*’, a Telangana of sacrifices. He argues that ‘what I said and dreamed in the song, not yet realized, a geographical rule just established here’. He asks the audience listen what I says rather than enjoy with ‘*my bale bale*’ sounds. Gaddar imagines ‘another raising dawn’, which is the dream of martyrs.

The popular media says ‘Gaddar leave the bullet and take the ballet⁷²’. What just poets convey this type of messages? Is that poets gives the political imagination to the masses. How the Ambedkarite, Phuleite, Marxists and Maoist politics change the geographical Telangana into *samajika Telangana*? In a TV debate Gaddar was asked a question; ‘are you trying for new identity⁷³?’ He replies, ‘there is no new identities, these are old ones, not thus far realized, hence the old content embodies into new forms’. Here, new form mean new political stand. He ties two flags on his stick, red and blue. Gaddar new argument in new Telangana is that the land, water, job and resources not solved yet. And more of the he proposes ‘*maa palana*’, self-rule of down trodden. This is also emphasized his song ‘*podustunna poddu*’. ‘dora’, the landlord come back again in the Telangana. He started singing the song with a new meaning. Spatial, temporal

⁷¹ Means worship life as a festival, it is Telangana women festival.

⁷² See Gaddar Interview, ‘Gaddar: Revolutionary to Politician-TV-9’.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNgjT8egymg&t=1862s>

⁷³ Ibid.

dimensions changed in the Telangana after formation. He imagined struggling Telangana with the rising sun. He says, if there is a spring there is violence and there is a sacrifice. Between he says, 'children of soil asks where my land is'. Now the problem of Telangana is a political problem. 'Power must be handed to the bahujans', he says. He sang *samajika Telangana* in a CPI (Marxist) meeting, the party was earlier against the formation of Telanagana.

As we have seen within 3 years of the formation of Telangana, new poets and activists started re-dreaming for 'saamajika Telangana'. Kodandaram says that 'the struggle was not just for a geographical entity'⁷⁴. There has been a major shift in thinking about Telangana. Poets and singers are no more focusing on geographical Telangana. They are criticizing the ruling party's policies which are not up to the people's expectation. Poets and singers like Gaddar demands Telangana of the downtrodden not the outward Telangana, or a superficial Telangana.

In his performance style, Gaddar holds a stick in a peasant manner, shows up side of the stick and indicates that this is the upper caste Telangana who have it with power. He calls it geographical Telangana. Then he indicates the down-side of the stick by says that this the Telangana of people.. His idea of Telangana is power to the poor and distribution of sources equally. Further he question the politicians 'you said that, there is change, but where is that change?' Gaddar narrates the whole struggles the Telangana, 'there is an armed Telangana, and then, next comes Naxalite Telangana, then special statehood, now it come in the form of samajika Telangana, in all these troubles we, the sons of soil fight for it in every moment. We shed our blood and tears for it. We did everything for it, but you gulped it. We are asking you what about us? As slaves, we trampled under your boots. All subaltern castes asking what we are getting in the new state Telangana?'⁷⁵ as a poet Gaddar idea of the ideal state is perennial becoming. His songs reiterate the state of the people of marginalized, minorities, Tribals and artisans communities whether it is a problem of a region, nation or class struggle.

As a poet, Gaddar approaches people's problems despite of disillusion. Unlike previous position, nowadays he also talks about 'save constitution and save India'. He says that 'if India constitution implements perfectly, at least 25%, there is no need for revolutions'. He expresses his

⁷⁴ Hindustan Times article, "KCR's protégé Kodandaram launched Telangana Jana Samithi to dethrone TRS government". May 05, 2018.

⁷⁵ Gaddar performance on '*Gaddar sensational comments on KCR*', uploaded by Eagle Media. See, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KvXY0p_kxZk

apprehensions that the Hindu-brahmanical fascist forces and imperialists unitedly try to bring the nation with their octopus grip. He started visiting villages in the name of *palle darsnam*. He says 'there is no constitution enforced in villages. His new slogan, *palle palleku paata parliament ku bata*, song in every village, will make path to parliament. He says only by following Ambedkar path, this country will annihilate caste system. He recognizes that without the creating caste based social revolution in the country there no possibility of class-revolution. As a figure of revolution, now he is split into many paths. He embodies a complex figure in relation to Ambedkarite and Marxist politics and from his past to the present.

People mainly recognized him as a revolutionary singer. He reiterates, he have not put down the revolution, neither has he surrendered it. He says, 'shelve it on the jammi tree'⁷⁶.

A question arises what is the ideology of Gaddar now? What kind of incognito life Gaddar started living? Gaddar maintains an ambiguous position with the party. He says that he rejected his mother party's (CPI-Maoist) path and will follow his own path parallelly continuing in the party. But he says 'he cannot sail on the two boats. How could he do creates a new cultural expression of mixing Marxism and Ambedkarism? Earlier he also said that he cannot go on two paths and he chooses parliamentary path. He said that now he will focus on creating consciousness among the voters. He is the same poet-singer who sang and appealed the voters to not to cast votes and now he will appeal the voters to vote. He started following Kansiram line says that, 'the political leaders making policies in the parliament by taking your votes, influence your caste, your religion'. The failure of the state and of the formal political system have provided a space for Maoist revolutionaries to move into (Guha 2007: 3305). But now Gaddar want to the come into the formal politics who severely criticizes the bourgeois parties, imperialistic, capitalist and corporate society. He does not say that he will participate in parliamentary politics but he says that he will also ideologically support it. For his changing position he argues that 'we the Marxists and we are interested in truth. If people are interested in parliamentary politics then we cannot impose our will on them. He says that he always had a full faith in people. He gives examples of the previous movements, like, Karamchedu movement, peace debate with government about the Maoist problem and the movement for the separate Telangana. . He hopes that if revolutionary

⁷⁶ He metaphorically refers that, in Maha Bhratha, when Pandava-s before starting their one year incognito life they keep all their weapons on the sacred *jammi* tree.

forces, progressive forces, anti-caste forces and patriots will unite, the revolution would be inevitable. There comes a revolution in the country. Gaddar gives the hopes to the people that ‘this country is yours, this wealth is yours and struggle for it and achieve it’. Poet-singer Yepuri Somanna creates a song on Mallanna Sagar⁷⁷, how submergedvillagers were forced to sell their lands and how they didn’t want this project? The people’s attachment to the land and the performance of the state fore-fronted in his song; *Amma mana voru agamavuthunde*,

Amma mana voru Agamainde

O mother! Our village is in crisis

It will be submerged into the Mallanna Sagar

The house which we build/the wall which we made

The tree which give shelter/ the path which we walk

Our village being in motion in front of my eyes

The pain which is swallowing in my heart.

Here the poet/singer took the stand of the displaced people. He creates impending fear of the submerged villagers of their whole landscape of memories with the image of scattered nest of a bird and make them cry. He also demand the government to listen their voice.

The song and bullet yet again

The Telugu media, often uses the phrases *paata pai thutha*, which mean song as a bullet. The phrase shows the power of the song. Another phrase is ‘*paata pye thuuta*’ bullet on song. Whenever any artist or singer is attacked, they use such phrases. Though the phrases were used when Gaddar was attacked. Many cultural activists were killed by the state who propagate separatist, Maoist movements in United Andhra Pradesh. If artists were attacked with bullet, the artists counter-attacked them with songs, *Paata* (song) took the role of opposition to the state.

⁷⁷ Mallanna Sagar project: Telangana government prestigiously constructing this 50 TMC water preserving reservoir taking water from Krishna River, in Medak District which is a severe draught effected area. For this, 14 villages needed to be vacated. There was a conflict between state and these village people on compensation and rehabilitation. The village people emotionally connected with the village and land. And moreover is that opposite parties and experts say this project unworthy project. Media says that, Government neglected this criticism and also not willing to listen to the demands of the affected area people.

Amma nannu kanna thalli! Ni kanniti paatanai malli malli vastunna, O mother who gave my birth, I will come as your sorrow song again and again. This popular song is created after attack on Gaddar. In 1997, he was shot and injured-allegedly by police men in plain clothes (S.V. Srinivas 2015:191). But the attack did not stop him continuing with the performances. Whatever political platform he sings the song. This song is symbol of protest against the state and any kinds of societal violence. He sings it as a protest against state violence and his body itself the site for the state's inhumanity. He again and again comes as embodies in a song. His individual subjective pain of memory becomes a collective memory of the society, thus creates the unity of anger on state. State is notorious to kill the dissent voices. Gaddar says, no one able to kill the 'sound', no one was able to detain it. Gaddar, in this song, he resurrected from the deaths like Jesus. Now he take shape of a 'song';

Mee patani vastunna (I am coming as a song)

O the mother hamlets of Telugu! You who give me life

I am coming in the form of a song

I will sing a song of people by chanting *jajjanakajan*

I will sings *rela* song by chanting *relare rela*

I will become a word in the song; I will become an anklets of yours...

This song will born again and again to give breath to the movements. Because this remains as a living testimony of the state violence. Gaddar while singing shows his body parts where the bullets hit him.

The choked lung, asked me to blow with raga

The bullet which gone through the kidney, asked me play the strings of Kinnera

The bullet which pierced the left hand, asked me to lift the red flag

The bullet which is in spine asked me, Brother! Go and sing.

Telugu poet Addepalli Rama Mohana Rao says, ‘Song will not come from the throat: it will come from life. If you bury the life under the earth, it will sprout like a plant. Life will learn singing at the way of death (Chaithanya Dehali 2002: 98). Song become effective tool for the political ideology because as Addepalli says, ‘it is total consciousness of the life (99). Gaddar songs works on masses as ‘incantation’ (Ted Gioia, 2006). The martyrs of Telangana struggle let keep reminding the poets and singers of Telangana that they did not fight for this geographical piece of Telangana. They would like to see the dreams of Telangana. Yepuri somanna says in a song; ‘O martyrs! The dreams of yours fading in the new Telangana.’ Songs become the most political genre in Telangana, no other art forms can match that height and popularity.

Poet as Wander, Region as Wandering

In a song, Goreti Venkanna says, ‘how beautiful is wandering, what else there than this joy’. Goreti Venkanna (b. 1963) has come from a severe drought effected district Mahabubnager in Telangana. He was one of the prominent singer and poet in Telangana movement. He is a poet of his own mood, who loves nomadic landscape. He has acquaintances with different kinds of people, like-bairagis, saints, Naxalites, factionists and politicians. He is also a wanderer. He takes poetic inspiration from life experiences. The poet who detached from the material life, at the same time he is associated with social life. He sharply reacts to the social and political happenings around him. He reacts against disparities and exploitations. . While he draws influences from the spiritual life of saints, it does not stop him create social poetry. He often carries on the tradition of medieval radical poets like Vemana (17th century), Veerabrahmam (17th century) who stood against the social hierarchy. They were poets and saints. They rejected the authority of Brahmins. They fought through their songs and sayings, however they could not resolve the social problems. But they were trying for individual salvation through knowledge. Venkanna’s focus has been on transformation of society. As a modern poet Venkanna tied often ties Marxism, Ambedkarism with saint poems. His form was taken from the ‘tatvalu’, ‘kind of old philosophical songs’ and folk songs. Instead of creating binary, his songs also contain elements of the Marxist philosophy. This radical and humanist poet said that Marxists-*Virasam* (acronym of Revolutionary Writers Association) gave insight for his poetry (C. Kasim, 2011). He says that not only people sings, trees, lakes and birds, everyone do sing. In an interview, he says how imperialism detached people from life and nature. He picks some of the nuanced angles of affective paradigm that perhaps Gaddar

fails to grasp. For this Venkanna replies that Gaddar comes from jati-feudal location. While Gaddar tries to evoke exploitations of lower castes in feudalism, Venkanna finds the roots of these exploitations in the villages. One of his popular song *palle kanneru peduthundo*, the village is weeping is the land mark of how globalization and capitalists natured the village system. He creates the picture of villages. After the neoliberalism, globalization, world market era, every artisan community become a victim. Carpenters, potters, tailors, weavers, Madiga, folk artists, Muslims, farmers, retail sellers all faced the problems of globalization. They all moved to the cities as a migrants. The cultures and life-styles of rural markets have changed to a great extent as global market and consumer culture have made their headway. He sees it as the conspiracy of globalization which has taken over the natural and peaceful life. He says that he did not write this song to hate globalization, but he write this song after seeing the condition of village. He argues that poetry is to be sung, it should be visible and audible, and otherwise it can't be called poetry. He says in an interview that this tradition comes from old tradition. He uses the term 'alternative culture' in terms of form and content for portraying new social movements. He acknowledges that Gaddar has developed this alternative stream. But there is a long alternative tradition of performing evolve historically in Telugu language. Dvipada kavitha of Shiva in 13th century against Sanskritized Telugu, Annamayya pada Kavitha (mood poetry) in 16th century, Tyagayya and Kshetrayya have developed this tradition. In modern Telugu, Gurajada of the Praja Natya Mandali and modern film genre developed this sort of song based tradition. Goreti Venkanna deliberately incorporate alternative poetic styles in class struggle and Telangana movement. He believes that song and poetry come from the same school. In one song he tries to bring different elements like story, drama, and a kavya. Actually his song genre can be called as 'lyrical realism'. Many critics says that village people could identify with 'Goreti's *Palle kanneru pedutundo*' song. Common people experienced the effect of globalization but they may not see the causes for it. Many progressive writers have produced literature on this subject, but it has reached only limited educated people. When the issue came in the form of song, it reached wider public. The collective emotions, social pain or loss asks people to take action. Later the song became catalyst of social movements.

After the formation of Telangana, Goreti Venkanna started singing his old songs with new meaning. In his *galli chinnadi* song, he sings in CPM meetings which says what has changed in these galli, streets and slum. The song *Galli chinaadi* (street is very small) goes like this,

Slum Street is very small, but its dwellers stories are enormous.

Their houses are smaller than a pan shop...

Their water pipes alliance with elite colonies' drainages...

They prepare chicken curry in a week with passionately adding many ingredients

But the dish smells bad due to the bad smell of the drainage

Many governments' changes but these slums remain as it is.

If this slum want change, need some sacrifice or with red flag movements which earlier kills Nizam⁷⁸.

At the end of the song, Goreti gives a jerk to his audience. It can be a political punch or twist that audience did not expect. It is like a satire in drama. Poets and singers of Telangana draw audience attention in two ways. One is by praising the martyrs with sad songs and another through satire. For example, Venkanna mocks the political authorities by saying how they opportunity to sing and comment on them. He sing a song on voting system:

Voteda nevestini (when did I cast my vote)

When did I cast my vote? Brother!

I gave my vote in a drunken state

Who was elected? The same earlier one and start kicking me from back side⁷⁹.

Goreti says he clearly sees inequality in the society. For him nature is the compensation for this disparity and inequality. He brings the example of birds, how they are living, not bothering about tomorrow. Here the poet identifies Marxism in nature. His idea is to connect nature. He also uses a lot of and folk tunes Goreti poetry not only gives entertainment to the audience it also gives

⁷⁸ Lyrics noted from Goreti song, 'galli chinnadi'' from YouTube, 'Goreti Venkanna Emotional and Revolutionary song at CPM samara Sammelanam''uploaded by 10TV News Channel. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_nRQZ5QvgU&t=45s

⁷⁹ Ibid, *Votedanevestini*. song

insight into the society. His poetry is less about the moral message and more about understanding the dialectics of the society. For example, he says, the people uses the phrase, crane doing penance pretentions, but he interpret it, expect human, no other animal shows cunningness and hypocrisy in the world. Goreti expresses he would like to live like a bird, not bound to any institution or name and frame. He believes Marxist ideology, but any ideology for that does not restrict his freedom of expression. Goreti believes in utopian idea of communist state. He says this utopian thought gives pleasure what is wrong believing in it.

Region not yet Demarcated

After separation of Telangana, the territory of Andhra Pradesh became same as it was in 1953. But the things have changed. It was not the Andhra of 1953 when it was an inspiration for people. People fought against Tamil hegemony as they later fought against Andhra's hegemony. The present Andhra Pradesh is full of fragmentations. It is neither united based on language, nor based on culture and development. Andhra people have new hopes from its capital Amaravathi. The old name gives historical continuity with the new rational Buddhist ideology. But the ruling parties have a neoliberal foreign model in mind. They are not interested in creating a progressive inclusive space, but a space for corporate ventures. A sort of negotiation is taking place between the ruling class and a section of people who have an egalitarian aspirations of progressives (as poet's imagination of decentralization of development)

At the time of Telangana agitation, a counter parallel movement was taking place in the Andhra region. Andhra capitalists and intelligentsia wished to the keep the state unite. Again, Andhra intelligentsia tried to bring the past glory of Telugu language and culture to keep this unity. The political parties played double role in the Andhra and the Telangana for their political mileage in both parts. Communist party (Marxist) (CPM) supported United Andhra Pradesh. Most of the people who migrated from Andhra to Hyderabad expressed their apprehensions in new state.

Andhra people felt the loss severely with loosing of Hyderabad. After globalization and liberalization of economy, most of the rich and middle class of Andhra migrated to Hyderabad. They migrated from various places of Andhra to seek education and jobs. Poor people from backward region of Uttarandhra and Anantapuram migrated to seek work in industries and building construction. From one side in Godavari to other side in Krishna, people came to Hyderabad for

various reasons. They were working in IT and Hotel industries. It has also to do with the uneven development in other parts of the state. Though after bifurcation, Telangana become a rich state but with poor people, Rest of Uttarandhra and Rayala Seema of Andhra remain comparatively backward. If we observe the Samaikyandhra movement there were three types of agitators participated in the movement. One section of people was educated. They are university, high school going students who have 'genuine' aspiration to keep the state under one language, one nation and one state. Second section was the middle class people and laboring classes who lived in Hyderabad for years. They felt anxious as Telangana agitators started giving slogans of 'Andhra people go back'. They agitated against fear of living in Hyderabad. For last few years, every village and town in Andhra have connections with Hyderabad. And third section was politicians, capitalists and employers of Hyderabad. They have their big stake in Hyderabad. The last two sections of people did not bother about the language, and nation. They have their vested interests. They tried to provoke Andhra people that state must not get bifurcated even at the time of Telangana formation. Vangapandu Prasada Rao also supported Samaikyandhra movement during the demand for separate Telangana. Through cultural performances he supported this movement. While Maoist party fully supported separate Telangana Vangapandu once part of the Jana Natya Mandali now was against Telangana. His idea was to keep the state united. He was also active in the demand for separate statehood for the Uttarandhra. Professor K.S. Chalam who the chairman of Uttrandhra Adyayana Vedika says that

'We are taken for granted as we have been emotionally attached to the idea of united AP but geographically and culturally separated from others since a long time. It is time we realize the impending danger to us in the case of bifurcation of the state since the experience tells us that the politically strong and advanced districts will take away the benefits and we remain in backward. Therefore it is time for us to think about our share in water, natural resources, political participation'⁸⁰.

However, the demand of Uttarandhra found backseat in the already mobilized environment of Samaikyandhra. Telangana proponents saw it as mere political tactics on the behalf of Andhra. Once part of the same group, while Gaddar supported the demand for separate Telangana,

⁸⁰ The Hindu article, '*Time for North Andhra people to act decisively, says Vedika*'. 7th October 2011.

Vangapandu advocated for unity leading a conflict in ideology coming from regional and political biases. He sings of unity:

Kalasi unte kaladu sukham

There is a pleasure in unity, you must know Telugu man!

What happen when four oxen divide in believing deceitful fox words?

They all caught up in lion's mouth

We build Hyderabad because we were united,

It would not have possible otherwise. ?

He is the same poet in his early songs criticized the government for focusing only in capital. He labeled charges against government that it is only interested in bringing foreign direct investments. He mocked the uneven development. He mocked by saying Hyderabad is developed and another side does not have basic facilities and how do the caste based-occupations in rural villages disappearing day by day. In another song, he explains how the state capital shifted historic mistakenly from Kurnool to Hyderabad, believing that we are all Telugu people.

Vangapandu songs on Samaikyanadhra had a little impact on people. But, his song content create an artistic debate about the movement. Also, his form is also a little shadow of his past experiences. He looked into his old revolutionary tunes *empilado*, *Yuddam puttenu* used in the movement. This is not because of an individual creative block, but also movement in Andhra did not produce any alternative culture. Apart from Vangapandu's performance, many cultural performances also took place during the movement. Most of the songs were imitation of popular Telugu film song tunes. The cinematic imagination of revolutionary characters, which earlier played Telugu heroes Krishna and N.T. Rama Rao. Some songs evoke the memories of martyr Sriramulu. In these songs, singers scold the political leaders who are not resigning from their posts and the central leaders who support for Telangana. They abuse the leaders who divide the Telugu language and state. But the cultural movement fails to produce in terms of reiterate the importance of language, culture, and democratic aspirations of the people. what the cultural movement fail to understand is that what the Telangana propagators raising causes for the separate statehood issues like decimation in terms of employment, resources, land and other issues, Samaikyandhra cultural

songs at least could have raised counter arguments in their songs. Unlike Telangana, movement in Andhra relies on cinema culture. After the formation of Navya Andhra and Telangana Vangapandu sings praising capital Amaravathi. He evokes the memory of Buddhist culture in Andhra. At the same time, he also sang the corporate capital which proposed by corporate agencies. The capital city ‘Amaravathi’ location was severely criticized by the experts. I.Y.R. Krishna Rao who wrote a book called ‘Whose Capital Amaravathi?’ he argues that, ‘the new capital city based commercial, communal and real estate interests’ (Krishna Rao 2018: 63). The Shivaram Krishnan committee⁸¹ recognized the need of decentralization of the governance to develop the backward areas and avoid uneven development and also they suggested that Amaravathi is least possible capital space for Andhra. Because, and also the state leadership does not consider the committee suggestions selected the space for capital their own interests, hence this causes the whole displace of people and environment as V. Shobhanadiswararao argues that,

‘... In the case of Amaravathi nearly 15,000 acres of land are Zareebu lands most fertile, nearly 100 varieties of crops namely food crops, plantations, flowers, etc. are grown. A number of lift irrigation schemes have helped to raise on or two crops in thousands of dry lands. Thousands of farmers, and agricultural labors make a living on these lands. It is a grave mistake on the part of state government to acquire nearly 54, 000 acres for capital (2018:7)’.

As poet Kalekuri Prasad says that, ‘as land is painted with greenery...’, now the green field’s turn into the concrete jungle and the farmers and laboring groups’ displaced from land and work, they will become unemployed.

Uttarandhra movement of statehood turned into socio-economic justice movement. With the influence of Telangana movement political consciousness increased at sub-regional levels, hence we see in the context of many organizations established in North Andhra in order to protect the interests of the local people. Having suffered bifurcation and gain nothing in lieu of it, the intellectuals from Kalingandra or North Andhra are getting organized and crystallized⁸².

⁸¹ Experts committee to study the alternatives for a new capital for Andhra Pradesh submitted its report to the Ministry of Home Affairs, Union of India in 2014.

⁸² Article “Now North Andhra crave attention” in Telugu 360, 7 November 2015. See <https://www.telugu360.com/now-north-andhra-craves-attention/>

Vangapandu sings on unemployment, migration, discrimination and hegemony of the rest of the district leaders.

Yemai poyayiro?

Where has gone the huts of Uttarandhra? Real estate business men made bungalows

Where has gone lands of Uttarandhra? They converted into the checks of real estate business men.

What happens to the MLA's of Uttarandhra? They turned into cash bags of politics.

Where has gone villages of Uttarandhra? They turn into the debits of west-side business men (East, West and Krishna district capitalists)

Where has gone students of Uttarandhra? They become the squirrels of unemployment tree.

Vangapandu has raised same debates what Gaddar and others have raised in the context of Telangana. The issues related to unemployment, exploitation and lack of resources became the reference points for his songs. Whereas Telangana saw Andhra as exploiters, a section of Andhra people went to Hyderabad for their livelihood. Besides, landlords from the middle Andhra bought cheap lands from the poor of this region and became the power pockets. There are enough resources like water and other resources around the coastal line, but common people from the region faced severe water problems. The successive governments neglected the regions of Andhra Pradesh and they focused only on Hyderabad. Even after the bifurcation of state, the state leadership only focuses on capital area for the corporate interests. The crony politician-corporate nexus leads to inter-regional disparities, thus the backward regions Rayala Seema and Uttarandhra emotions quite tangibly growing wide. In another song, Vangapandu questions people from the region,

Enthani chuddamu ro

‘Still what time we need to wait? The region which you born is subject to exploit...

Uttarandhra hills were owned by the outsiders

But the stone breaking labour are from Srikakulam...

The whole Vishalandhra lives with the blood of Uttarandhra'

In another song, he encourage the regional youth to fight for Uttarandhra rights

'Hey Boy! Will you come with me?

The three districts are under the rule of the seven districts

The people are roaming here and there for foods where the fields gives prosperous crops

Hey Boy will you come with me?

Vijayanagaram where all people were migrated

There houses remain without people...'

Vangapandu constructs a painful picture of Uttarandhra using Uttarandhra art and dialect. . He draws his tune from the local folk songs which are special of this region. His small foot movements draw off circles with moving back and front, and plays rhythm with small rings in the right thumb. His appearance is similar to Gaddar, wearing anklets on legs, one blanket hang across on his shoulder following the life style of a peasants, one hand kerchief ties on his small finger. This old balladeer popularized the Maoist ideology with his songs. There was a time, he created a great impact on people. His earlier proletariat ideology has not turns into regional self-respect movement. The poets and singers who were part of the Maoist ideology took two different turns. These regional identity movements led to rest the radical ideology of Marxism and Leninism. R. Beenaveni argues that, 'no Marx, no Ambedkar, no Gandhi, no ideological struggle are slogans today and only Jai Telangana and Jai Samaikyandhra are staunch ideological fights to bring dawn mornings writing till self-looting and self-immolation take place'⁸³. This tradition also continued after bifurcation of United Andhra Pradesh, this is now in Seemandhra, sub-region is become an ideological tool for democratic aspirants and a strategy for political parties. In Telangana democratic aspirants are looking for social Telangana. In Andhra, Jai Rayala Seema, Jai Uttarandhra slogans are becoming part of regional mobilization. Marxist Ideology faces severe crisis in both Andhra and Telangana, all the Marxists become regional propagators, but it cannot

⁸³ Dr. Raamiah Benneveni. Article, '*Upper Caste ethics, spirit of the regionalism and end of ideology*'. Osmania Journal of Social Sciences, Vol. 11. No.2 July-December, 2011.

be argued that they are bringing some elements of Marxism in their imaginations of the region and its people. Seemandhra still remains a not demarcated space with slogans for separation.

The new state Telangana and Andhra both remain an unfulfilled desire of the people, of the poets and poors. As revolutionaries, the poets from the regions are dreaming a utopian state. In a similar context, while describing the Dravidian movement, V. Geeta argues that,

Though Dravidian movement managed to evolve a consensus on the question of a broad Tamil, non-Brahmin identity opposed to an Indian, Brahmin-bania one, it did not effectively articulate a national-popular political theory or strategy to challenge the representative claims of the Indian society. (V. Geetha and SV. Rajadurai 1991:5)

The same looks the fate of Telangana and Uttarandhra movement. While poets-singers and intellectuals bring the hegemony of the Seemandhra capitalists to the fore, they don't have any grand plan to challenge these things at the national level. This is why despite of formation of small states, whether it is Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand or Telangana, the people of the region for whom the state was separated keep suffering in the hands of rich politicians and capitalists

Poets and singers like Gaddar, Vangapandu, Goreti Venkanna, Vimalakka and many from Andhra and Telangana regions still believes that the aspirations of people are not yet realized in the regions. The ideal region remains an unfulfilled desire. Since it is ideal, the unfulfilled desire has to be remained unfulfilled. It is never to be compensated fully. Here we have two kinds of regions, one is concrete, physical kind of entity. Another is, poetic idea of the region. Second disenchantment come from actual politics and policies, people's real expectations in actual terms. What do they expect: people should get water, school, basic education and employment? These are not such ideal desires. They are day to day desires that should be fulfilled in any society.

Poets draw from both sides, from the actual suffering of the people and their own idealize notion of the region. Poets and singers again started re-imagining Telangana that may not be real. This I would like to term as the poetics of the region which moves between fulfilled and unfulfilled desire. The poetic idea of the region is less likely to be fulfilled but it also less likely to sacrifice. It is an emancipatory kind of entity that will come back again.

Conclusion

There has been a shift in the production and circulation of performing arts culture. Regional movements are witnessing new challenges and shifts with neoliberal and global politics. As corporate media has overshadowed democracy, the performing arts culture is facing a shift from orality to mass communicating media, print capitalism to electronic and digital capitalism, live to recording and digital liveness and direct broadcasting. In the cultural enactments, body is being transcribed into archive. Similarly, cultural repertoire of the self-identified regional culture has transformed into the symbiosis of local cultures with global techniques. There has been a global turn where global is negotiating with local and regional. Regional, national and globalization are not necessarily functioning in antagonistic of each other. Regionalism is playing a cultural and psychological function of the course of globalization. Poets and singers are negotiating with new forms of media and technologies. They are increasingly using social media and various other platforms to reach their audiences. Performance culture is getting more mediatized. The corporate channels have been appropriating the people's culture for their own advantage points. Against this background, one needs to ask what has happened to the revolutionary dream. What has happened to the space of Jana Natya Mandali which used to provide platform for new singers and artists? The corporate section has entered into this sphere. These corporate channels are able to bring new artists and disseminate them at the global level..

It would be quite uncanny to say that corporate facilitating a space because they are concerned about a culture. They are intervening because these performing arts traditions have been very popular among the masses.

The relationship between artists and corporate media are reciprocal one. Artists also think that if they are singing for the village, only village people can listen those songs and participate in the activities. But if they sing for the media houses then whole Telugu speaking people can see across the globe. Artists are creating a new kind of political-social-cultural sphere; Songs and performing arts are very much part of the mass culture and public sphere in Telugu speaking region. This public sphere is not a 'liberal public sphere'; it is 'media dominated public sphere' (Douglas Kellner 2013:12). During Andhra national movement, this liberal movement proliferated

through print media. During the Telangana movement corporate channels tried to use people's songs and culture which were once part of the radical politics. Telugu entertainment channels like Maa TV program '*Rela re Rela*' received a huge success and high TRP rates competitively across the other TV channels with mainstream cinemas which is broadcast in those weeks. The channels bring folk artists from different regions and put them in competition. They had presence of prominent poet-singers like Goreti Venkanna and Suddala Ashok Teja and others. Even Gaddar also attended as a chief guest for these shows. They attracted rural audience through the rural setting of the stage, performers and anchors where the folk-performance costume and native musical instruments were used. The channels themselves called the status of the 'people's channel'. Why were they bringing such programs at all? The channels really represent the people's voices or they are cashing people's interests? Scholar, A. Nagaraju, while delineating the media role in the Telangana movement brings the argument that mainstream media neglected the Telangana movement.

With regard to the Telangana movement, it can be said that through the government tried to impose restrictions on the mainstream media, the movement and people opted for the alternative media (space bias) over which the government had no control. Old and traditional forms of media like Janapada kala, Oggu Katha, Burra Katha were revitalized... they were contributed and created as much as the main stream media. (Nagaraju 2015:39).

He argued that the corporate media were in the hand of Andhra capitalists, they had biases against Telangana movement and 'indigenous media' means art forms and songs. On the other side, according to some critics Telangana movement spread with new media and mobile communications. Nagaraju also argues that, 'in fact some of the media houses have come up specially to promote the movement and also the political parties' (2015: 147). After the Telangana formation, the same channels mediatize the local culture and arts. Telangana movement started with liberal public sphere, when it comes to the peak stage (2009-14) it turns into the media oriented public sphere. Corporate political groups dominated the movement on this stage. Adorno's analysis of the cultural industry, in which giant corporations have taken over the public sphere and transformed it from a site of rational debate into one of manipulative consumption and

passivity (Douglas Kellner 2013:12) becomes so true. After the formation of Telangana, the active cultural groups and artists carried the spirits of the movement. It becomes paradoxical to see that the very idea of revolutionary thought and progressive culture allied with the corporate art. The corporate media accommodated this culture.

Telangana has become a special region where folk oriented mass songs producing in every year and released into the YouTube channels and albums. The government also promote and patron the culture and art in TV channels. Popular artists started giving programs in TV channels. Gaddar and Vimalakka frequently giving performances in the TV-5 channel's program called '*Mee patanai vastunna*'. In this program they perform their revolutionary memories and songs. Goreti Venkanna becomes a judge in TV reality singing competitions shows ('Rele re rela' and 'Super Singer'). Earlier, he used to oppose the television domination on rural culture. Telangana cultural front Dhoom-Dham artist turned politician Rasamai Balakishan hosts programs in TV channels called, 'Daruvu' and 'Folk star Dhoom Thadaka'. Many popular movement singers participated in these singing competitions. When people art come under corporate manipulation then art remains a passive entertainment to the audience. Scholar K. Srinivas explained how the very idea of revolutionary culture turns into the mass culture of Telugu. Telangana movement take shift recently with 'marginalization of Telangana dialect and culture' along with resource and under development (K.Srinivas 2015). 1990s was the crucial period when many events were stages in the Telugu political, social, cultural sphere. Two major events that really transformed Telangana region. first thing is neo liberalization arrives, and second one is the Maoists movement set back, liberalization take place and last thing, important one is Telangana cultural turn, these three have connection with culture and cultural forms.

1. Liberalization produces mass culture with mediatization.
2. The cinema appropriates maoist aesthetics.
3. Telangana movement adapts the Maoist cultural forms.

Why the poets and singers do supported Telangana who work earlier in Jana Natya Mandali, Arunodaya and other groups? How do the songs in the 'red genre' so much attractive to the masses? What is difference between Jana Natya Mandali songs and Telangana movement songs? The poets and singers turns from Maoism to regionalism, because their party supported the Telangana movement. Jacobsen, who worked on the reason of the Maoist decline in north

Telangana (where Maoism so profoundly rooted in 1980s), brings an interesting argument that Maoism flees away to neighboring states of northern Telangana not only with the strong 'counter insurgency of the stat', but also, Maoists were not able to mobile masses because their focus still was on 'semi-feudalism':

When the state government of Andhra Pradesh escalated its counter insurgency machinery and Maoist violence subsequently alienate to support base_ that is the course of the standard explanations of Maoist decline. The underlying process of the state formatted agrarian change that we have seen in the northern Telangana ensured that Maoists were unable to retain support and suffered increasing loses, resulting eventually in their demise in the 2000s. (Jacobsen 2016: 259).

This narrative offers a novel way to examine JNM songs. The songs that were produced in 2000s are departure from the songs produced in 80s. It has also to do with the increasing influences on neoliberalism in Indian politics. The Maoist mobilization mainly depended on Jana Natya Mandali songs. If we observe 1980's JNM songs, their contents revolve around the feudal system. Their focus was mainly on the question of land. The political organization saw feudalism as the main problem of Indian society. Feudal classes were their fundamental enemy. In various instances, they identified these enemies and tried to annihilate them with the support of masses. They mobilize people on this cause at a local level. Poets-singers created songs on landless poor, agriculture labour and other occupational people. The songs brought the problems of Dalit and women who were part of larger agrarian system. These songs incited class hatred against feudalism. Keeping this as a base, singers challenged the state by asking masses to boycott election. Jacobsen argue that Maoist mobilization can only be understood by seeing Maoists and local societies in relation (2016: 244). One of the popular songs of JNM goes like this,

O farmer brother! Your hardship will go, when the tiller owns_ tilling land

Closedown the hegemony of landlord and Tata-Birla's (JNM songs).

In 80s JNM poets wrote some popular songs. They include Guda Anjayya's *ee vuru manadira* (village is ours), Vangapandu's *kuli guddaleni kulinalollu*, Gaddar's *Bhratha Desam bhagya seemaraa*, *Rayala Seema rathanala Seemanta*. Most of these songs focused on land issues,

along with fair price, *shahukars* (local retile businessmen) and agent's deception and landlord exploitation. In the agrarian system, women are most exploited; poets call them as 'slaves to the slaves'; they projected as 'they are half of the sky'. Therefore, besides songs on feudalism poets sang on issues of women in order mobilize women for revolution. Women issues like, how women suffer, how the landlord's sons and police men rape women, how they work hard in field and house, but even then they don't have money to buy a decent clothes became some of the major themes of those songs. The songs also portrayed how women suffers in houses like jail, how they suffers from dowry system, how the cinema media portray women merely as sex objects and so on. The song also criticized increasing notion of morality and chastity enforces on this section. They criticize how women are seen as mothers, wives, and sisters of Maoists who die in the state repression. They lament for the death of the beloved sons, brothers and husbands. Songs, powerfully portrays pathetic conditions of the oppressed. The JNM mobilized people and sorrows turn into anger of the masses to take revenge on class enemy.

The most of the socially marginalized, economically oppressed castes in the village system is SCs (Mala and Madiga). The Maoists sees 'Dalit question is in essentially a class question (CPI, Maoist pamphlet, 2014). JNM poets sing, 'O brother! Your life will not change even you change your region and caste; you must rule the state, for that you need to take gun'. The poets sang the braveness of the Dalit of the Karamchedu massacre. How the Madiga suffers as manual scavengers in urban areas. Even they criticized the elite Dalit who hang Ambedkar Photo on their wall and set up homes at Brahmin streets and making relations with landlord after getting a job. They accused elite Dalit that they forget the village and tries disappoint the Maoist movement (JNM songs). This 'lack of sympathy to Ambedkerite phenomenon' in the Maoist movement resulted in 'many ex-Naxalites becoming Amdebkerites, or at least sympathizers of Ambedkarism'. This also came in the background of the state of democracy which tried to a search for their own social identities, whether caste, tribal or gender (K. Balagopal 2006).

There were another type of songs of JNM which addressed the exploitation of shepherds, how the railway gang men work hard and even after their lives are not secured due to no permanent job. They also commented on various workers concerns, for example how the contractors exploit Vaddera caste. The group sang on the problems of rickshaw pullers: they pull their rickshaws with their blood as petrol and hardship of fishermen. And how these workers are getting cheated

by various political parties and how they are revolting against these oppressions. Small number of songs also addressed the company workers who worked in various companies (Singareni and other companies in urban areas). Singareni was the hub of working class and was well-known for dissent culture. Though Maoist party did not have that presence in urban areas as in, rural areas but the JNM also wrote some songs on the issues of urban workers.

As the movement went through violent phases and the party's cadres were brutally killed by the state. JNM wrote songs on martyrs. More than thirty songs out of 105 in the 1979 JNM song book (13th edition in 2004), offered tribute to the martyrs. Many of these songs on martyrs were added in later editions. Gaddar and JNM's main intervention came in 1980s when it made a radical rapture in cultural sphere.

In contrast to this, if we observe the Uttara (northern) Telangana, JNM songs were published in 2004, and another JNM songs book published in 2004. It is not surprised that these songs were not addressing the issues of land and feudalism. By 2004, feudal did not remain the main enemy of the Maoist party; the whole strategies have changed. Songs captured this phenomenon of change, that they address the central problems than people's immediate problems as in earlier JNM songs. Even they sang on agriculture issues, the songs did not discuss the issues of land rather focused on the issues of price rates, suicides, adulterate pesticides, bogus seeds and migrations. The poets find new enemy in the form of liberalization to mobilize the masses into the movement. The JNM songs of 90s mainly focused on two major issues: one was liberalization and its affects and another was state's severe counter insurgency. The poets-singers strongly condemned Chandrababu Naidu's (1995-2004) and his World Bank oriented reforms, privatization, rising communalism and the imperialist war on Afghanistan and Iran. The state turned into strong enemy to the Maoist. In one way it implemented anti-people policies in the name of development and another way it curtailed democratic aspirations of the rising social groups. Out of 80 songs 60 songs were written on pleasing and memorize the combatant martyrs in this period. The song shows how the state brutally suppressing the peoples movement. At same time, JNM songs now focused on specific issues unlike earlier songs bring diverse issues concerning people together.

JNM used to sing these songs during the campaigns in villages from where the martyrs belonged. In a forward of the JNM songs book, an activist says, 'when we conduct meetings in

these areas, the villagers often ask us to sing songs of their village martyrs'. In the recent years, there has been a radical change in with neoliberal policies with unprecedented growth of educational and health facilities, communication, mass mediated culture, presence of parliamentary political parties at the local level and governmental housing schemes in villages and so on.

One of the most significant intervention of JNM came on part of the Telangana movement in 90s. Maoists are credited to resurrect the history of the demand for separate Telangana in 1996 with Warangal declaration⁸⁴. In the new strategies, the Maoists strategically supported the democratic aspirations of the Telangana movement. The decision came also the background of decreasing presence of the Maoist movement in the region and the rising demand of Telangana.

Telangana gives Maoists a new hope to strengthen their movement. 'Telangana movement became the rehearsal for the new democratic revolution'. In an interview, Gaddar replies to the question, why he supports Telangana movement. He clearly said that 'I am not dividing Andhra, Telangana people, but we want separate the elite developed ruling class power which has been dominating the state.'⁸⁵

In one of JNM songs, two characters argues with each other. When a character ask to other, 'come and Join the Telangana movement', while another character replies that 'don't create clamor about struggle, if we shed blood for it some other will steal the state; our broken house, torn cloths and life will not change'. Their argument; 'Telangana villages repressed under the BSF boots and remain deprived from it resources, land and water engulfed by Andhra rulers'. Another character admits it, 'it is all true but, skeptical about the ruling parties_ earlier parties disheartened the movement and even if Andhra rulers go, is there not going to be Telangana Dora? Other one evokes_ 'Telangana as an egalitarian state existed erstwhile after the liberation from the Nizam. But the movement was appropriated by Patel-Nehru led army, the characters discuss that they need to revenge that debt of blood. Both the characters also discuss about the role of parties like TDP and BJP who have been creating obstacles in fulfilling the dream of Telangana. One character says we should drive out these parties from Telangana'. Other character gets convinced with the argument. He says I will come and join the movement but you have to support our demands. You

⁸⁴ C. Kasim, 'Praja Telangana', Virasam vyalalu, p.32, 2011.

⁸⁵ Gaddar interview with ABN open heart with RK. <https://youtu.be/UAXJ-arnylQ>

have to give land to poor. You must pay World Bank debts. You must confiscate the property of the Multinational companies. You must develop irrigation system and provide water for agriculture and you must submit the civil rights to the people'. They decided to join the movement without caring the fact that whether they are going to win or lose.

In most of the cases, nothing is mentioned about Telangana culture. Maoists only see Telangana as a political-economic problem. Pro-Telangana propagators add culture to these problems or somewhat more than these problems, Professor Jayasankar see the Telangana movement as 'a cultural renaissance'. He quotes the prajakavi (people's poet) Kaloji Narayana Rao's words,

If the people lose something on the economic front, it could be recouped;
if they are relegated to the background on the political front, they could
bounce back; but if their socio-cultural and linguistic identity is wiped out,
they will lose their very existence as a distinct cultural group.⁸⁶

About this 'cultural turn, K. Srinivas, argues that, 'the cultural turn of the movement has multiple and complex linkages with Naxalite activists and the forms they developed to propagate their party ideologies (K. Srinivas, 2015:8). He argued that left oriented 'folk culture and Naxalite genre movie culture' portrayed as Telangana culture. With my observation of the regional movement songs with revolutionary songs, he rightly viewed the Telangana culture constructed with these elements, but they add something more to this left propaganda, like 'regional traditions like sacred geography, local gods and their myths, folk art etc. these are not touched by the leftist culture.

⁸⁶ A message quoted in *The Telangana struggle for Identity*, by Kondala Rao Velchala, 2010.

I have tried to draw some comparisons between revolutionary songs and regional movement songs.

Revolutionary song	Regional movement song
1. Praise the martyrs who died in the state violence. Eulogize them into alive	1. Praise the martyrs who were self-immolated.
2. War on exploitation and aim for people's democracy	2. Struggle for self-rule, self-respect and exploitation
3. Limited to class line, rural and hill areas. Exploited class is main strength	3. Pervasively spread in the region. Involvement of all sections
4. Uses folk art but not focus to uplift the rural art.	4. Uses left propaganda forms also give importance to art-forms.
5. Secularize the art-forms	5. Give importance to the religious symbols, sacred places, rivers, festivals, local culture and gods
6. War on class enemy	6. War on cultural hegemony
7. There are songs on caste and gender	7. There is no songs on caste, but there some songs on girl-child
8. Class consciousness	8. Regional-identity consciousness
9. Fetishize the red flag and martyrs memorials	9. Fetishize the Telangana mother goddess and martyrs memorials.
10. Evoke the revolutionary memories	10. Evoke the regional history, culture and also evoke previous struggles

Martyrs songs have had played prominent role in building support of the masses in both Maoist and Telangana movement. And there is no doubt Telangana movement brought this idea from the left movement. But when it comes state violence and self-immolation, there is a major shift. Though the Maoists also eulogize sacrifice but they will not support self-immolation. The Maoist idea of 'sacrifice' to the utopian dream of people's democracy when strongly repressed by the state, but the inherent, 'pre-existed revolutionary political culture' again re-generated in the region with Telangana movement (Jacobsen, 2016:251). Naxalite idea of 'annihilation of the class enemy' saw upside down with activists annihilating themselves to achieve Telangana. 'The idea

of sacrifice of Maoist transferred into the Telangana movement through JNM songs. Also, it is tragedy that the activists and singers (Belli Lailithakka, Maroju Veranna, etc.) of Maoist were killed by the state who raised the voice for Telangana. It would be difficult to say that whether singers work as a catalyst to sacrifice or the activists' self-immolation catalyzed the nature of emotive songs. Martyrs songs console the relatives of the dead and make them alive in society. Another aspect of these songs are about the social actors. Poets and singers have played a major role in the both these movements. Popular cinemas started appropriating genre, tunes and lyrics of popular JNM and Arunodaya songs (K. Srinivas, 2015). The progressive artists and directors also tried to portray the movement in cinematic genre. There was a debate whether appropriation of cinema is right or wrong. Gaddar says that cinema is not an untouchable art form for political purposes. He rather believed that it is a great art form and has capability to reach wider masses in comparative any other art form. However he also underlines that in our time it is an art form of the ruling classes that involve a lot of money and clearance certificate from the government. He still believes that song is the only artistic medium for the movements.

The 'Naxal film' could only become successful because of JNM songs. Though cinema as a medium has its advantage, cinema not necessarily will bring mass mobilization. For any mass mobilization, people need to work at the ground level. Here performer and viewer meet at the same time and place, whereas in cinema and other electronic mediums it becomes indirect kind of exchange. In this regard, Peggy Phelan argues that 'performance's only life is in present; it cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations of representation: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance (Peggy Phelan 2005). This ephemerality we can see in reference to mobilization of the masses within the moment of time and space. Live performance also creates active presence but it still continues in body and memory of the audience. D. Venkata Rao argues 'Gaddar idiom resists translation' (2006: 212).

British Cultural studies has observed about the integration of the working class and its decline of revolutionary consciousness, and studied the conditions of this catastrophe for the Marxian project of revolution (Douglas Kellner, 2013: 16). The working class culture, which is reproduced in the people's movements as a surplus that become consumption in mass culture. This mass culture was playing an important role in integrating the working class into existing capitalist

societies and that a new consumer and media culture was forming a new mode of capitalist hegemony (Ibid).

When revolution fails to capture the masses' imagination, when identity politics stages in global era with digital dissemination, new poets and new genres are making their inroads. Gaddar and Vangapandu's era has almost ended. What are the new things that are happen in poetry and singing? How Goreti Venkanna is different from Gaddar and Vangapandu? His poetry is more complex. Earlier there was a division between song and poetry, song will be simple, and poetry is more a kind of intellectual exercise. With Goreti intervention song, also take a form of argument without losing the folk aesthetics.

Many folk singers who were earlier part of Marxism now shifted to Ambedkarism. The poet-singers identified that social justice and egalitarian state can also achieved through Ambedkarism. They identified vote and knowledge are powerful weapons than bullet. *Deeseeya* (indigenous) Marxism, a combination of Ambedkarism and Marxism would be the ideology of Dalit poets (K. Satyannarayana). The poets Yepuri Somanna, Jayaraju and others see this ideology as hope. Poet Jayaraju sings and says that Ambedkar is an Indian Marx.⁸⁷ Even they change the dress code of people's artist of *gosi - gongadi* (waistcloth and woolen blanket) into pant-shirt. Yepuri Somanna says in an interview, he wants to perform songs wearing suit and boot like Ambedkar⁸⁸. Some of these shifts have happened after the formation of Telangana. Singing folk-based political songs with pant and shirt is a new fashion to attract the new generation. Especially for dalits, the questions of dress matters. The dress code is the symbol of social status. It is about breaking the caste behaviors in a society. Most of the singer-performers come from Dalit background, the dress code *gosi- gongadi* is a marked cultural identity of the Dalit. They want to come out of that history of denigration.

The perception of caste changes in songs and performances from feudalism to liberalization to present political turn towards Ambedkarism. Many poets and singers have positive approach about liberalism. Poets and singers in neoliberal era see caste as village-artisan system will disappear with global market. They believe that marginalized caste youths should get better education. They see caste annihilation through education and shift in occupation.

⁸⁷ See Jayaraju song, *Jaagore iago* Ambedkar in You Tube

⁸⁸ See Yepuri Somanna interview in New Weave Media. <https://youtu.be/PO1a4YMLW-o>

Yepuri Somanna sings,

The hands which stich the chappals must write history

The boys who attend the herds of sheep must educate and become scientists

The untouchable children must learn English and reach higher positions

The children of washer men and barber must study MBBS and become doctors

The sons of Vaddera must study engineering and build big projects

Our days we must come and rule Telangana

The poets identifies the social shifts. They recognizes Dalit emancipation and social transformation with Ambedkar and Phule path. Songs remain most popular expression in the Telangana movement. Performers also used folk dance dramas like Burra Katha, Oggu Katha and so on but their engagement in compare to PNM and JNM is lesser. In Indian theatre history theatre roots movement (1960s) is supposed to counter mainstream Western theatre model that started by popular theatre practicenars, like Habib Tanvir, Rathan thiam, K.N. Pannikkar. In Telugu theatre context, it can be argued that alternative theatre movement started with PNM. Artists like Gaddar, Vangapandu, Kalekuri Prasad and others have not only challenged the western model of theatre and performance but they have contributed in decolonizing the cultural sphere from the below.

Unlike the history of theatre and performance in other regions, there has not been such study in Telugu region. Telugu theater scholarship neglected this genre, except few studies (Jayaprabha 1992, Peddi, 2003). There is a serious lacuna in this field of study. If we look the popular Dance dramas, Palanati veeracharitra, Bobbili Yuddam (Nazar), Kastajeevi (Sunkara Satyannarayana), Bhoomi Bhagavatham, Adivi divitilu (Vangapandu), Naxalbary Biddalu (Gaddar), Karamchedu Oggukatha (Kalekuri), and so on these play offer rich elements of political and cultural history.

These plays break the proscenium settings and the notion of the fourth wall. These plays also disrupt the aesthetic regime borrowed from western and middle class theatre practices. While the language oriented mainstream theatre focuses on padya natakam, Surabhi oriented theatre and parishat focuses on play competition. The class and identity oriented movements find alternative culture and forms to reach masses against Telugu linguistic nationalism. We can find the ‘roots

movement' in Telangana that questions mainstream Telugu theatre. The mainstream Telugu theatre is restricted to message oriented melodrama and it runs from the funding of the state institutions. This theatre has a minor presence in urban spaces. Finally, we can say that poetics of region in Indian context largely remain focused around the linguistic identity. However, with the formation of Telangana, this perception is challenged. I have tried to examine the cultural history and poetics of the region that constitute Andhra and Telangana. It is now clear that the poetic idea of the region is different from the political idea of the region. The poetic idea of the region is an aesthetic and emotive experience. It is rooted in culture. The poets and singers create a special notion of region that may not be analyzed through social sciences perspectives. Their idea of region is poetic, landscpic and ideal. They might not achieve it but their imaginations in regional construction cannot denied. They can create, break and reimagine the region. They are keepers of hope and memories who will be keep recreating the regions. Their desire may remain unfulfilled but it is sure that they will not stop re-imagining the region. This dissertation has tried to capture some of their imaginations in the context of Andhra and Telangana.

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