Chapter 4

Gaddar

Art is not for Art's sake, art is for people's sake

4.0 Introduction

Gaddar merges the attributes of poet, singer, and a groundbreaking performer. He composes songs, sings, and performs. At present, Gaddar composes songs from his own house in Venkatapuram, Secunderabad. Gaddar's room resembles his ideology and understanding the society. He says, that "I listen to all kinds of music. I take my ideas from different cultures. But finally my songs have a political and social and economical consciousness." The songs composed by Gaddar always reflect the struggle of the people, their concerns and their painful lives.

Gummadi Vital Rao universally branded as Gaddar in the contemporary song cultures of Andhra Pradesh, India. The Indian singer can scarcely finish a sentence without satiated into song, constantly recites about the subjugation of the masses. Gaddar was once a foot-combatant in the jungles of India with the People's Army, a Maoist insurgent militia. Years ago, Gaddar bowed from violence to music, becoming a modern prodigy of song cultures and writing hundreds of admired songs. The system is taking notice of the power of Gaddar's music. He was born into a poor Dalit family in Toopran village in Medak district on the outer edge of Hyderabad. His parents Seshaih and Lachumamma worked

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as farm labourers. He is predominantly inspired by his father who is an Ambedkarite. Still his mother works as a land-less labourer in farms for her livelihood.

Gaddar completed his schooling in his village. After passing SSC, he came to Hyderabad for higher education and joined in government junior college and passed his intermediate exams with 77% marks. Later he joined the Osmania University Engineering College to pursue a BE degree and dropped out after the first year to earn a living. He married a woman named Vimala and is blessed with two boy children named Sureedu, Chandrudu; the latter died of some health problems in 2003, and a daughter called Vennela.

4.1 As a Singer in Social and Political Movements

Gaddar in 1969 formed a troupe of folk artists and that was named after Mahatma Gandhi to spread the messages of social plans for the Indian government. For a small time he gave his performances on family planning and other social issues by using a folk art form called Burrakatha, which is one of the famous folk art forms that are associated with the lives of the common people of the rural India. After a period of time he worked as a labour-intensive in a chemical factory. In 1972, he joined the Art Lovers association founded by B. Narsing Rao, producer of Telugu movies such as “Our Land” “Colourful Dream”, and Dasi (Slave). Gaddar acted in the first two films. His political association began when he heard about the Srikakulam armed struggle by

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tribal in north coastal Andhra under the headship of the communist party of India. Gaddar chose the songs to fight against social disparity in society.

Gaddar is a landmark in Telangana song cultures. Perhaps, the personal, socio-political and cultural experiences might have contributed to him to become the best song composer in the world of song cultures of Telugu language. Apart from composing thousands of songs, Gaddar also wrote two illustrious books on song cultures. One is “Is there a story behind a song? Yes there is...!” And the second book is Endless Treasure: The history of peoples’ songs. The two books are valid resources about the process of writing songs and song cultures.

When he was working in the Naxalite movement, he has commenced campaigns to demonstrate against the state’s subjugation in the countryside and killings of scores of Naxalites by the police in what he calls fake encounters. In “Salutations to you, Oh! Our Children” song Gaddar calls upon the pain of the umbilical cord of the mothers for their children who lost their lives in the people’s movement. In the song, “Oh! Sister Swarnamma. Salutations to you” Gaddar, celebrates the women in the movement. He praises the bravery of a sister from a weaker section of the society who joined the movement. Gaddar makes her life and soul immortal in the world of protests with his song.
Gaddar believes that those who exert political and administrative power will, one day, realise that the Naxalite issue can be tackled only by addressing the social and economic issues in the rural areas. On April 1997, there was an assassination bid on Gaddar. While two of the five bullets the assailants fired into him, two were removed. One was left in the body because of some medical worries. But the attack on Gaddar did not stop him from his singing the ground breaking songs against injustice.

Gaddar has been highly conscious and highly critical about the political leaders and the parties in Andhra Pradesh and even the national politics. In a song, "Wow! Look at our Assembly", Gaddar satirises the nature of political parties and the fight between the leaders of various parties. Gaddar in the song intends to tell the uneducated people about the real nature of the politicians who think for their own benefits and the way the assembly functions. In another song on the theme of local politics "Have you seen Pochanna\(^6\)", Gaddar is extremely critical of the congress government in general and the chief minister YS Rajasekhar Reddy, in particular for following in the footsteps of the earlier Telugu Desham party regime led by Nara Chandrababu Naidu; for the latter had made agricultural sector helpless and spent more money for the hi-tech city and information technology. Unlike the other song composers like Suddala, Bandi Yadagiri, Vangapandu, in the contemporary song cultures, Gaddar is more famous and well known in India. His songs in the modern Telugu song cultures cut across the barriers of region, religion, and dialect, caste, social and economical status in Andhra Pradesh.

\(^6\) Gaddar, Unpublished interview, (Hyderabad: 12/08/2011).
In the expression of well-known academician Dr. Kancha Ilaiyah, ‘Gaddar was the first Telangana intellectual who established a link between the production of the masses and the literary text and of course, that text established a link between the masses and educational institutions. Gaddar's attire is as well known as his songs. In the beginning we used to perform wearing woA. But then, since women too formed a part of the audience, we thought that costume was not appropriate. Therefore he preferred gochi (००). In the same way a thick coarse woollen blanket worn across the chest had its own advantages. On the left he had drum and two anklets for our ankles. Gaddar, thus became a great legend in the contemporary song cultures, and composed thousands of songs in singing of the masses in the world.


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4.2 Gaddar and Jana Natya Mandali (Peoples' Dance Group)

The JNM has produced innumerable songs and performed thousands of times all over the nation with varied audiences. Most of the songs are still alive and people own them passionately. More than three lakh copies of the books of songs of the JNM are reported to have been sold and popular through the audio cassettes. So far, he has written 3000 songs and 35 audio cassettes have been released on different themes. Gaddar and Jana Natya Mandali, a Peoples' Dance Group, used folk tunes, Dholak and Dappu.

Gaddar in JNM gripped his audiences through his powerful tunes. The JNM was born out of a historical necessity and Gaddar filled the gap of singer as no other artist ever could. Initially, he experimented with the art form burrakatha, later adopted several other folk art forms to express his ideology. The popularity of Gaddar’s song cuts across the barriers of region, a dialect and social status. The JNM under the guidance of Gaddar discovered several poets, artists and performers and trained them to spread the message of the revolution. Gaddar’s discovery of folk art forms has to be understood in tune with the demonstrative effectiveness of the principle of “from the masses to the masses” to propagate revolutionary ideology.

Gaddar travelled singing songs to Chhattisgarh, Orissa, and Maharashtra and recently Pune where he was given a hero’s welcome. At a press conference in Pune, accusing the left parties of straying from their original philosophy he said “कम्युनिस्टों तो जैंदा हाल है लेकिन उनका दिल साफ है” (The flag of the communists is red but the heart of them is clear). A salute to a peoples’ hero at a time during the elections when the common man is made to believe by the ruling establishment and the so-called opposition that they are the best to lead them, a man wearing a shawl, dhoti and wielding a stick gives them hope, and his singing and asserts the common people to a nonviolent struggle for their just right. He rose to prominence by singing highly dramatic and magnificent songs that were popular among the poor and the rural hinterland of the Telangana region notorious for the People’s War Group, Maoist organization that uses violence to achieve its goals. His style of singing involves use of high pitched tunes in the local Telangana variant of Telugu, thus touching chords among the locals as popular media and songs only show the fluent Telugu. His use of Urdu words is also seen to be perfect fit since people from this region often mix a few Urdu words unlike the Telugu speakers from other parts of the state. His songs are also used in many Telangana centric movies enacted by various cine personas from the Telugu film industry. Due to his affiliations with the previously banned party was prevented him from singing in public for the recent days. He is prominently visible on any stage by his trademark black shawl that is typical of the Telangana shepherd dress.


Gaddar not only sings a song, but he also performs it. His rustic voice and vibrant body, which sways to the rhythm of song, and especially, the social connections he makes, bring to life the spirit of the lyric. It is difficult to evaluate his performance according to the conventional principles of aesthetics. He has evolved his own aesthetics. The aesthetics of his art is located in his commitment to the cause he believes in. The peoples movement in Andhra Pradesh has produce Gaddar. The significance of Gaddar cannot be understood until we put him in that context. He is not an isolated “great artist”. Gaddar is both a phenomenon and also a product of phenomenon. But a phenomenon like Gaddar is extremely rare in any other Indian languages in the contemporary times. I feel that It is not for nothing that literary artists call the present age in the Telugu poetry as the age of Gaddar. The growing popularity and importance of Gaddar can be understood from the attack on him, allegedly by state functionaries on April 6th 1997. He miraculously escaped from the death and still carries a bullet in his body. In simple words, he becomes a culmination point of all alternative struggles of Telugu society. His voice is felt in the meetings of all alternative movements such as of Dalits, of women, and Telangana. Though he has performed on all these platforms, he has maintained the stand of the Maoist party.

4.3 Emerging Song as a Powerful Bond

Gaddar is a celebrated song composer, singer, and performer in contemporary song cultures of Telugu. He writes and sings what he sees and what is stirring around him in the present society. He embodies the intentions of the people who are not seen and not represented and are not heard in the normal socio-political system. The elected political
leaders are not addressing the issues of the people. Gaddar composed thousands of songs on all the social issues of Indian society by addressing the common people and their struggles. There are good number of songs on peasants, agricultural labourers, and industrial workers. The songs categorize with Dalit sub-castes, railways workers, stone quarry workers, gardeners, and rickshaw-pullers, women labourers in agriculture, beedi workers, coal mine workers and road transport drivers (RTC workers). He unites all the groups of working class communities and sections of society under a "working class" or "labourers". He perceives the other rich class as "bourgeois" or the "capitalists". In simple manner he divides the society into two divisions: working people and capitalists. Capitalism or capitalists work through extensive use of machines and produce goods in large scale. The ultimate goal of capitalism or bourgeois is to get more profits by expanding the production of the goods. The capitalist merchandises everything. Bourgeoisie look at the life as and human relations as the value of utility. Life becomes mechanical. Gaddar has composed and sung many songs against the bourgeoisie and the mechanical life. The song "how the machine works?" Gaddar explains the process of production of goods by machines and how it sucks the blood of worker in the industries. The song gives an idea of capitalists' exploitation of labour.

The song, "aapuro Rickshodo (stop Rikshaw)" not only bursts his miseries, but also ridicules the capitalism in a subtle form. I will run my rickshaw with my blood and my blood is the petrol for my rickshaw, says the song. In the song "it will not end until the rule of looters ends, the hunger fight will not end" Gaddar sings ferociously and sends an
indication that the strong protest will not end until social and economical equality comes into the society. The weaker section is about to pounce on the looters, bourgeoisie and capitalists.

From the 1980s, Telugu women’s movement has started influencing Gaddar in significant way to understand the problems of the women in the society. Gaddar wrote many songs under the influence of Telugu Mahila Udyamam in Andhra Pradesh in 1980s; till then there was no focus on the issues and problems of women, especially those they face in the social and personal life. Women’s oppression was considered as one of the class struggles. The songs Gaddar has sung until then had seen women only from the revolutionary perspective- “Under a Jasmine tree” “Oh! My Beloved, Come to see me Once” and “Lashkar Bonaalu”. Thus Gaddar composed many songs exclusively on women’s problems. The theme of the songs on women resembles the issues of a mother, wife, and Sister, and women at the time of celebration.

In 1985, a brutal massacre happened in a village named Karamchedu in Andhra Pradesh, where Madigas were killed by upper caste landlords. Many people lost their lives in the incident. It started when Dalits asked the people belonging to upper caste not to wash their cattle in the lake that was being used by them for drinking. They were beaten up severely and in the night the Kamma land-lords attacked them with weapons killing 6 dalits and 3 Dalit women were raped. The Karamchedu Massacre influenced Gaddar to
think and understand the Indian (Telugu) society with Marxist perspectives of caste, class and gender. Until then the Naxalite movement was not an exception for their criticism. Till then the Naxalite party was not serious about the issues of the caste and gender. The incident at Karamchedu has forced all the alternative movements to understand Indian social reality from the point of caste in addition to the class point of view. In the realm of Telugu song cultures, henceforth emerged the feminist and Dalit song cultures.

In 1980s, this kind of political and social atmosphere pushed Gaddar to write songs with the more concrete social reality in India. Being a man from Dalit community, he is one of the internal critics of the Maoists on to the issues of caste. Being a committed worker in the Naxalite political struggle, he is critical about the happening in the society around him. Gaddar developed the song cultures as a link between the struggles of the women and voiceless, landless, weak people and social and political oppression. It is true that, Gaddar in the early song compositions he wrote for Koololla rajyam (the state of labourers). Even prior to this he came out with a song of protest “why this life of Madiga life in another song “Dalit Panthers” he described the dalits as Dalit Tigers. In the song Gaddar praises the courage of Karamchedu Dalits for fighting against the feudal lord like lions. The Karamchedu Massacre was followed by another massacre in another village named Chunduru in Andhra Pradesh in the year of 1991. In this massacre eight Dalits were killed by reddy community landlords. Gaddar responded to the massacre to protest against the caste atrocities and to protest the reddy community hegemony with his song, “Dalit of Chundur”. Gaddar strongly believes that the liberty of the weaker section is
linked with the land struggle in the villages because most of the weaker section depended on the agriculture sector. Still there are landless people who work as the daily labourers and short term bonded slaves.

In another song, “how many days you will live like this” he categorically explains that there would be no change in the lives of the weaker sections of society unless and until they get political power. In the same song he suggests that, even if you change your caste or religion, there will be no change in your life. The armed struggle is the only way to bring the changes in the lives of the weaker sections and landless people. The condemned life style of the Dalits and voiceless people has been transformed into a symbol of protest. He composed songs on Chappals “I am Chappal”, “Garbage Bins” “Lavatory,” Through these songs Gaddar has made an effort to bring the dignity and respect to the laboring lives in India. From 1990s the era of globalization is started. And there had been a clear transformation that India is undergoing. The globalization is now in full swing and it has had an impact on the working class people and the local artisans including the agricultural sector. The globalization also had its impact on lifestyles of the people, cultures, values, traditions in the developing countries. Gaddar resisted the ongoing lava of imperialism. “Look at the American” song combats the nature of globalization; imperialist dominance is mediating through the information technology and other bio-products. “The Colour TV created a fight” is another song on the globalization and information technology. The song analyses the impact of satellite channels on the culture of Telugu societies. Gaddar, in the song sings that, the colors TV with invasive channels
are plaguing conflicts between the wife and husband in a family. “The Field Farms are asking” is one of the famous songs from Gaddar’s compositions which analyses the immediate effect of the globalization could be seen in the suicides of a number of farmers and handloom workers in India.

As a supporter of separate Telangana, Gaddar has written several songs on Telangana movement which has been a burning issue from the 1960s. “The Rising Sun” song explains how the people suffer in the state under non local political leaders rule. “Oh! Telangana, Song of hunger” is another song on the theme of Telangana movement, which describes the problems of water, land in the villages. Though the rivers like Krishna flows from the Telangana region, there is no water for the local fields. The song questions the injustice that has been perpetrated over the last 6 decades. And recently Gaddar has got the Nandi award for his song “The Rising Sun”.

Now it is clear that the songs of Gaddar got sparked the contemporary Telugu society. Gaddar’s songs have more visual and performative meaning than the textual meaning. The songs represent the problems of the contemporary society and respond to them in musical way. He says that he took the language, tunes, and themes from the people and that he is giving all his songs back to the people with a radical change such as an ideology to fight for the injustice and bring some changes into the lives of weaker
sections. Moreover he adds that his role in the song cultures is merely of a communicator
and an enhancer of the songs which are effective as well.

Gaddar’s songs, in Telugu song cultures of the modern times provide a rich source
material for the struggles and culture of the people which have not entered the official
and historical academic researches. Let us see the exploration of above and other songs of
Gaddar and other political or social movements influenced Gaddar in following chapters
into deeper levels. Now I would like to make a division amongst his songs according to
the themes. I don’t find any problem in calling his genres Gaddar Genres in
contemporary song cultures in Telugu.

4.4 A Living Legend of Song Cultures in Contemporary Times

“Gaddar is one of the electrifying performers in the song cultures of the modern times.
But you must not forget that the peoples’ movements created Gaddar. No individual
important to a movement92”, he adds. Many songs from his long life of composition have
been adapted to some of the famous films in the Telugu language. Many film-makers like
R. Narayana Murthy know Gaddar. Gaddar believes that mass media and films are a
medium to make the songs reach wider audiences. But he does not take money from any
movie makers for giving the songs to adopt for films.

92 Gaddar, My Village after Sixty Year, (Hyderabad: Unpublished text), p. 90

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Gaddar always remembers that the song composers always use the medium of the people to reach them through songs and find no problem in using the peoples’ technology like film and audio cassettes. As a song composer, he missed his life and spent most part of his life combating for common people and left his wife Vimala and his three children to fend for themselves. He says that “I am a singer and my life is song, whatever happens, I will not end singing. I am always with the people and no one can stop me for going to the people with songs and there is no death for peoples’ song and peoples’ poet." Varavara Rao in his poem “the Bard” (kavi) describes about life of a poet even after his death. The poet is...

“The bard
When the order is amiss
And billowing pitch-clouds of time
Strangle the throat
Neither blood trickles
Nor the tears drop lightening swirls into
Thunder,
Drizzles surge into deluge, and,
Absorbing mother’s tears of agony
Purl out from prison grill

Voice of the poet's missive
When the Tongue pulsates,
Tone manumits the air, and
Song turn missile in battle"94

Well! To Gaddar the whole globe is arena for performance. The liveliness pours fourth from his embodied performance as he pounds on his table as if it was a drum for him, and renders a song. We can't find him speaking for two minutes without going into a song. He goes with a song and takes us back from his singing into discussion. This is Gaddar's particular style of giving interviews and talking to people in public sphere; which means song, is his life and his song in the modern times. Now it is time to look at his songs with a clear view as to how he writes songs and what themes he composed song on.

4.5 Major themes in Gaddar's compositions

Gaddar

- Songs on women
  - On working class women
  - Oppression on women
    - Female Infanticides
  - Mourning songs

- Social satires on socio-political problems
  - Protest Songs
  - Complaining songs
    - Pastoral Elegies on Village disruption

- Work Songs
  - Songs on Railway workers
  - Question Songs
    - Questions
    - Songs on Caste violence

- Songs on globalization
  - Songs on caste, class discriminations
4.6 Songs on Women

4.7 Vocalizing the agony of marginal women

Gaddar composed of ground breaking songs on working class women and their lives. The songs on women in Gaddar genres, exclusively deal with the different roles of woman as mother of newborn female child, a mother of martyrs, wife of martyr, mother as a legendary figure in a community, role of woman as a sister, woman as oppressed wife in her domestic life and so on and so forth.

The main goal of this kind of songs is to represent the working class women or the subaltern women. The lyrics in the songs, describe the problems of women in realistic manner. I do not know whether Gaddar burst into tears while he writes the songs on the theme (he claims in his book “is there a story behind a song? Yes, there is! That he cried to write songs of tears.) (If not exaggerating, as a researcher, working on the songs, I have cried many times literally at the time of translating them into English and in the process of analysis for my thesis. You also (the readers) will definitely face the difficulty of controlling yourself from bursting into tears, when you read/listen his songs by heart, but not by mind).

The song “A baby-girl born on a No-moon day” describes the problematic and agony of her life since she has given birth to female child. She does not know what to do with the female child. She does not know whether to kill the baby girl. Her agony is that her
husband and her mother-in-law did not come to see the new born baby. Now she is helpless and asking the society which made the female infanticide a sin.

“under a Jasmine tree” song visualizes the agony of mothers in the region. The mother is helpless and sits in her house under a Jasmine tree with her lamenting face. The singer is asking the mother why you are sitting with a dull face.

“How much you will pay me” describes lives of women how they have ill-treated in their domestic life by the men (husbands). The song is composed with series of questions that are posed by a wife to her husband. The wife asks her husband what is the price that men will pay for the service of women in their life. The singer “wife or woman” describes her service in her daily life to her husband. The woman has sacrificed her whole life in serving him. But he does nothing in return. “A Beautyful Lady” is one of the most distinctive songs in Gaddar Genre in contemporary song cultures. The song clearly visualizes how a woman is exploited by landlords in the villages and ends their life after they have been exploited. The woman at the end of the song walks away and wants to kill herself for her misfortune happened because of landlord in the village. She walks to cut jilledu plants to kill her by dirking poisonous milk of the tree. Gaddar, in almost all of his songs gives a suggestion or clue to put an end to the human (male or female) struggle by joining a revolutionary movement like the PWG. But in the song of Madanasundari, he left the song at the conclusion by not giving such a suggestion to woman to join into a movement. He just ended the song by showing the woman’s weakness by sending the
woman to kill herself, which shows that village women are helpless and they find ending life is the only solution for their problems.

"Do you remember me my son?" is another autobiographical song in his genres after "I am coming as a song of you". This song shares his personal experiences that he had when he went to his village after 60 years he meets all the people in the village, and one of the women from washer men community shares her memories of her when Gaddar was a child. Gaddar composes a song by transforming her memories into a song of personal memories. In a way Mnemocultures represent the memories of one’s history which might be personal, communal, cultural or regional.

"As a canopy to a jasmine bush" song shows the lovely and ambitious desires of a responsible brother towards his sister. The brother, (the singer in the songs) shares his views as to how a woman child gets constraining orders from her family elders after she became an adult. But the nature of the brother is not as such, and he wanted to let her play like a peacock (a free bird in the forest). We can see the clear explanation in the following pages about the meanings of the lyrics.

"Oh! My b is a song beloved come to see me once" of tears of a woman in countryside village after her husband joined the revolutionary movement. The wife, in the song tries to communicate her agony to her husband. The song in the context of song cultures, functions as a messenger between a helpless wife and a husband who went to eradicate suffering in the lives of other women and men. But unfortunately, the life of his wife has
become more miserable after he left his family. And the other women in the neighborhood hurt his wife with unpalatable comments.

“Oh! Mother Alisamma” is song of legendary figure in a Dalit hamlet in Karamchedu. Alisamma is the legendary women who fought against the harassment of the local Kamma landlords at the time Karamchedu Massacre. Gaddar pays her tributes of the whole working class people in the world. The song in this context is praising the women martyrs and their heroic life.

There are other song composers in the song cultures, who composed songs on similar theme to give their views about the working class women or women from subaltern society as well. But, they have not chosen writing songs as their life; they could not become legendary figure like Gaddar in contemporary song cultures. Gaddar has become a legendary poet-singer whose life is song and singing. Gaddar is not only a writer, singer and performer but we can find a researcher in Gaddar. The three exclusive books, 1) “Is there a story behind a song? Yes, there is...! 2) Never-Ending Treasure: The history of people song cultures and 3) My song after Thirty Years, on song writing proves him a researcher.

Since the context demands, I must talk about limitations of Vangapandu’s writing in comparison with Gaddar’s work. “The other song composers are Vangapandu Prasada Rao, famous for his song “Tie your saree to the waist and take the sickles into hands”
from the Andhra Pradesh. Vangapandu, in his song recommended the women to take the sickles and fight injustice in the very beginning of the song. Who is the enemy of the marginalized women, why the woman are oppressed, for what reasons the women should take up the weapons are not clear from the song. Almost all of the song composers from past to the present have been composing songs on the theme of women’s songs. The theme of the women’s songs has been brought into the people with JNM (Jana Natya Mandali) where from Gaddar has become a mature song-composer and singer. The theme, “women’s songs” is one of the major categories of song genres in the contemporary Mnemocultures of Telugu.

Gaddar in this genre not only writes about struggling women and also shows a positive suggestion to overcome their agony. For instance, in “Baby is born on a no-moon day”, at the beginning of the songs, the mother of the new born baby girl, attempts several times to get rid of the baby girl by throwing her into the dust bin and by putting a rice seed into the babies throat. But at the end of the song, Gaddar transforms the same mother as courageous women, and she sings that she never will try to kill her baby girl, and she will grow her up as “Sammakka and Sarakka", who were the symbols of revolt in Telugu society. In “Under a Jasmin Tree” song the mother’s character is represented as weak, and helpless in the beginning. At the end of the song, Gaddar shows her a revolutionary way by singing about other women in her (the mother’s) neighborhood, and

that they joined the movement to annihilate the social suffering. Gaddar tells her to go to meet her son, where there was a fire of movement is being raised on the hill.

Thus, the contemporary song cultures have emerged from the lives of the marginal women; these song cultures carry their struggle by moving on from the present to future. Well! I think it is the time to do some practical work by taking a broader look at a good number of songs to understand the depth of Gaddar genres, his diction of oral poetry, and its importance in the contemporary song cultures with a clear analysis.

4.7.1 A Baby Girl Is Born On a No-Moon Day: A Haunting Melody

A baby girl was born on a no-moon day. People in Telugu society, believe that, birth of a baby girl on a full moon day brings a good omen. But, the cultural notion is quite changed and the same people feel baby girls as a burden. Dowry is one of the major reasons for female infanticides in India. The song shows how a mother of baby girls undergoes painful experience. The mother in the song never likes to leave or kills her new born baby. But she is not left with any other options except to leave the baby. The reasons that forced her are on the one hand are that her husband, the father of the baby; on the other hand her mother-in-law. Neither one of them came to see the baby after her birth. Therefore the mother attempts several times in different ways to get rid of the baby. The mother poses a series of questions to the society, what she has to do with the baby, and what is the sin of the infant that came into the world.
The role of the poet is to respond to the problems, and the social evils in the society with his writings or poetry. As we have seen in the early song (devotional) cultures, as the poets like Annamayya and Vemana, responded to the social ethics through their song-poetry. Since the time is changed and society underwent a lot of good and bad developments, the role of the poet and his writing has changed too. Female infanticides are one of the (worst) developments, which have become a curse for female child. The song is a critical response of Gaddar to the social evil. The song is divided into stanzas. Each phrase of the song represents the mental variations of the mother. “O Lacha Gummadi” is a word repeated in the whole song by chorus. The song goes on...

Translation

A girl is born
On a deep Moonless day
The mother-in-law has not peeped into the hut
Husband did not come to kiss her

I put her in offscourings basket
Went to throw her into trash
A puppy constrained me, said not to abandon,
Folded the baby girl into the cloths
Went to dispose her into river
The Ganges restricted,
Said, Sister! Donate the baby

On a moonless day,
I throw her at anthill
A cobra put her “hood as an umbrella

I put a rice seed into her throat to strangulate and kill her
But her lips constrained and
The baby laughed at me
I stopped feeding her
But the milk fell into her mouth

It is said woman is for food
And man is for children
What is the sin this baby girl has committed
When there is no sin from the male child

I will not throw you into trash,
Will not push you into the well,
Will not put rice seed into your throat,
I will not hang you,
I will make you Sammakka
I will make you sarakka
I will make you Jansi Lakshmi bai
I will train you to become Rani Rudrama
I will prepare you to become shobhakka
I will prepare you as Kumarakka

Interpretation

Gaddar began to compose songs, sing and perform when he was barely fifteen years. He went through many twists and turns socially and ideologically. As a child born in Dalit family, he worked as a child labourer. However, his songs retained the connecting thread between the class and caste exploitations. The hard life that Gaddar led might have made him understand the ground realities of the society in relation with class and gender indifferences. As I said earlier, Gaddar strongly believes that “a poet should know the history of the story of a song and the problem that he wants to write a song on such a theme like women”. The first paragraph of the song tells us what happened after the woman gave birth to the child and why she had to attempt to get rid of the baby as she attempts to kill her at some point of time.


97 Kancha Ilaiah, Buffalo Nationalism: A Critique if Spiritual Fascism; The Bard whose Song is his weapon, (Delhi: Bhaktal and Sen Publications, 2005), p.46.

The mother realizes that she had to leave the baby somewhere or she had to kill her. So she puts the baby into dust basket and goes to imperil her into the trash. Then a puppy tells the mother not to throw the baby. Here Gaddar shows the humanity in the animals which is lacking in the humans. The mother folds the baby in cloths to throw her into the river. The Ganges confined her to donate the baby. Thus one or two weeks are passed. On a moonless day the mother throws the baby in front of an ant hill. The snake comes out of the anthill and protects the baby with its hood.

Then mother tries to kill the baby by putting a paddy seed into the baby’s throat. The lips of the baby constrain and the baby laughs at the mother. The mother stops feeding the baby but miraculously gets the milk from the mother’s breast.

In the following stanza, the mother after many failed attempts thinks that, what is the sin that a new born baby girl has committed? And why there is no sin from the baby boy? Why can’t the society realize that women are the symbol of love and creation of the world and the man is for children?

After severe self-questioning the woman, strongly determines not to kill the newborn. She women sings that she is going to bring her up as a great woman of history like Sammakka, Sarakka, Jhansi ki Rani, and Rani Rudrama. Thus the tearful story ends with a heroic conclusion in the song. Gaddar transforms stories of the weaker and marginal
women in the society into daring and courageous women by showing alternate ways in his song-poetry.

4.7.2 Under a Jasmine Tree

After Gaddar joined Janamatya Mandali, his struggling life and the words that come from him tell us that he underwent hardships in forests. The present song is one of the haunting melodies composed by Gaddar in recent times. It tells us the story of an incident happened in his life. Gaddar comes to know that by his villager that his mother was crying for him, sitting under a “Tamarind tree” in his house. Then Gaddar starts thinking of a mother crying to see her son. The song is about Gaddar’s mother but the song represents other women who are leading similar life in the villages while they work in the fields. The song visualizes how a woman suffers to lead her family. “Lachumamma” is Gaddar’s mother and she is the main protagonist in the song. She was working in the fields to fill the emaciated tummies of her children. The song demonstrates role of a woman in the countryside families. The protagonist Lachumamma stands as the symbol of the whole working class women in the villages. Gaddar sings of the women who work in the fields of local landlords to gain some food for each day. Though she works for the whole day she hardly earns food for the day. And when there is no work the whole family had to fill their tummies with gruel or water and lead their lives. Let us look at the lyrics of the song to get into the meaning of the song.
Translation

O mother Lachumamma!

Why do you sit and cry under a jasmine tree,

Why do you sit with dull face?

O Mother Lachumamma!

Your blouse is torn,

Your hair is soiled;

Your sari is in rags,

You have no money to buy new ones.

Even in that condition what have you done?

You planted saplings,

Walking backwards like a bull,

In order to produce food from the mud

Dusserah festival is looming,

You don't have a single coin in your hands,

Deapavali is next

You have nothing in your hands

There is Sivaratri celebration,

You have to go on a fast

You life is full of fasting

And your life is full of sorrows
What can you achieve?

With your howl and nit-picking?

O Lachumamma!

The sisters and brothers akin to you,

United in the movement,

Sharpened their weapons and sickles,

O mother Lachumamma$^{99}$!

**Interpretation**

The above song won the hearts of the Telugu people. Gaddar has written the song around the life-expectations of his Mother. He educated the rural masses about their innate self, their creativity and the inhuman exploitation to which they are subjected, through his singing and performing. It was no accident that Gorky’s most popular novel is about the mother’s role in revolution. $^{100}$ “Under a Jasmine tree” is one of the classics from Gaddar compositions. Gaddar in the song represents marginal woman’s life. The song is in

$^{99}$ Gaddar, “Gaddar Patalu”, (Hyderabad: JNM Audio Cassettes, 1994), Song Number. 3.

$^{100}$ Kancha, Ilaiah Buffalo Nationalism: A Critique if Spiritual Fascism; The Bard whose Song is his weapon, (Bhaktal and Sen Publications, 200)5, P.46-49.
relation to the struggles of working class woman and how they are treated unjustly in the rural villages.

4.7.3 O Beloved! How much you will pay for my services?

O My Beloved!
You blame me,
As if I would sit and eat all the time,
O beloved!
I have a small question,
Answer me.

I wash the containers
I sweep the house
I become a towel in the washroom
I become idly on dining table
I remain silent all the times
You scold me and pass comments,
Now tell me!
How much you will pay for my washing,
Sweeping, for your beating and for all the service
What is the price for all the service?

I gave you towel after your bath
I gave you comb when you stand in front of the mirror
I gave your shoes
I give your file to your hands
I put pen in your pocket
I have given you a kiss

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I said bye from the gate
What is price that you will pay for this hai and bye service?

Interpretation:

There is pair of doves playing and kissing each other. There is a lot of happiness between the two birds. They woke up early in the morning and earn their food come back to their nests in the evening. The feed their children and look after them until they get ready for flying. Gaddar says, he did not see any quarrel or fight between the birds. Why? This is because, for Gaddar, they have nothing called property. They lead a life of interdependency.

The pair of deer is so happy. Elderly people say that, the idea of “I” itself is the main reason for all the miseries of human life. The women have been a thing for providing satisfaction, and the woman has been oppressed, downgraded, and exploited by man for centuries. The woman is burning with the tears. The singer in the song is a wife and she is asking a series of questions to her husband. The woman in her domestic life, from the morning to the bedtime, the woman has to serve a lot of things to her husband.

In the first stanza, the wife is asking a question, O beloved! Could you please answer? a small question? I woke up at dawn, cleansed the utensils swept the whole house; I have become soap in the bathroom; I became idli (an edible) on your dining table. I linger silently when you scold for less salt in food. Now tell me, how much you would pay for sweeping, cleaning, for your scolding, and how much you would pay for all the services.
In the second stanza, the wife describes, the services that she provides early in the morning for her man. She gets ready a towel for him, gives him shoes after he dresses up. She stands ready with a comb for his hair. She kisses him before he leaves to his office. Now tell me how much you would pay for the personal service.

In the following stanza, the wife gives an account of her painful experiences in giving birth to a child. She adds that she turned her blood as milk and she has nurtured the baby. She acted dumb to teach speech to the baby. She became handicapped to make the baby walk. She says that, her husband plays with the baby after she beautifies the baby with powder and cosmetics. And when the baby pisses on her husband he throws the baby on to her. She is describing how she always undergoes some sensitive mental trauma. She is asking him she has to clean the baby and the husband will kiss the baby and play with him. She is asking him a question: how much should he pay her for feeding, and kissing.

In the next stanza, Gaddar expresses his agony about women who had been dominated in their domestic life. He is asking what religion gives a woman. He says that woman has become a sex toy in the society; she has been made a prostitute; she has been turned into a nude in the name of beauty contests. He feels that the woman from this hell-like society should go into the movement. Gaddar is asking the husband (the man) whether he will go with the woman or he will leave her all alone in the world.
4.7.4 Madanasundari (A Beautiful Lady)

A beautiful lady
Has put wild flowers into
Her cascading locks,
He looked at the shining red mark
Shining between her eyebrows
He gazed at the moving gloom
Of her beauty in the water,
He ogled at the faultless color
 Awaited in the nooks
 And gestured,
 O Madanasundari!
Lightening ends of
The sickles in the waist
Walking on the way to cut
The spurge of poisonous plant (Jilledu palu)\textsuperscript{101}

\textsuperscript{101} Gaddar, "Gaddar Patalu", (Hyderabad: JNM Audio Cassettes, 1994), Song Number, 5.
Interpretation

I can clearly see that the structure and the form of the song are quite different from the other songs composed by Gaddar. Therefore, each stanza in the song is of lines. He ended the stanza with a refrain or chorus, “Madanasundari”. As I said earlier, Gaddar ends his song with suggestion to the weaker section of the society to fight against the injustice which is making them suffer. But in the song, Gaddar did not give any suggestion and the song ends when the woman walks on with shining ends of the sickles tucked in the sari on her waist. The songs ends with a line of lyrics that the poor oppressed and exploited woman walking the path of cactus plant. It has hazardous element in the milk that comes out from the branches and leaves.

Gaddar in the first stanza, describes that the woman looks beautiful with her long hair and a shining ‘red spot’ on her forehead. There is the cruel landlord in the village who exploited many poor women’s lives in the village. Now the landlord kept his eyes on the woman, the subject of the song. The landlord waited in lanes of the village and followed the woman. And finally one day he gets his chance and ruins her life. There are countless women who faced the same problem and ended their life. The helpless woman is walking with sickles in her waist. The ends of the sickles are sharp and shining. She walks into the fields to cut a catastrophic tree to swallow its milk and kill her.
O son! Do you remember me?

In the song, “Do you remember me my son?” Gaddar describes his personal experiences of his recent visit to his village. He talks about his autobiographical book titled as *My village after 60 years or the deserted village* which is completed in the recent past. He went to change his village where he came from. For the purpose of changing the village and the book he went to his village to see and meet the people. He was excited to see the people and composed songs on the spot spontaneously.

It is important to look into the compositions of Gaddar to know how he transforms his experience into a song.

O Son! Do you remember me?
I will give you one clue
Would you recognize me?

He went to his village to meet his people. A woman, from the washer community is asking Gaddar, “Do you remember me?” She is recalling her memories with him when he was a child. She is giving him some hints to recall the olden days. And the old motherly lady is asking him, if I give you one clue, will you find me out from your memory? Thus the old lady is recollecting her memories. The conversation happened when Gaddar went to his home town after a long time. The poet – singer, transformed the whole conversation into a beautiful song of memories of his childhood. The song is composed in dialogic form. The song goes on as the old lady goes on sharing her memories ...
Near the large pond
At the laundry port
You came to wash
Your shirt and short
You looked at my face with
Sweet looks
Gave some share of
The food that I got in alms
O son!
I am the mother who
Taught you
How to wash the pants and shirt
Now did you recognize me son? 102?

The washer woman is recalling her experiences in the song. She says to Gaddar, when you are a child you came to the big river in the village. There I used to wash the clothes. You did not know how to wash your shirt and pant. You were looking into my face with sweet looks. Then I gave some share of my food which I was given by the villagers. Then I taught you how to wash the color and the pant. The motherly lady asks him whether Gaddar remembered her.

As a canopy to a Jasmine bush

As a canopy to the jasmine creeper
O my sister!
As a moonlight in fuzzy dark shade
I will become mole on your feet
And I pay the debt of sibling

From the day you menarche
There will be scores of constraints to a girl
They say you should not see this, and that,
Should not laugh out loud
O sister! I am not as such,
I am your friend of your childhood
As a peacock in the forest,
You play and sing songs as you wish.

If you sit incur??
I feel my back is broken
If you do not appear for a single moment
O my Sister!
My eyelids will be putrid
I will become an orphan
If you do not take food with displeasure
I feel as my arm is broken
O sister!
I will let you study well
I will let you grow greater as you want

Until you get ready for wedlock
I will accumulate some riches
I will put your hands in the hands of the one you wish
I would wash your feet with my tears
O my sister!
I will make my rickshaw a palanquin
And I will see you off to the house of your husband\textsuperscript{103}.

**Interpretation**

This is one the beautiful song about the high dreams of a brother for his sister. The song tells us the lovely relation and a brother’s dreaming about her sister moving up in the society. The brother promises his sister that he would never put any restrictions as the others in the society. He pleads her to be free as peacock in the wild and tells her he is her childhood friend. The song describes the beauty of human relation between an innocent and responsible brother and sister. The song shows the love and affection of a poor, innocent brother toward his sister. He says that he protect her sister as canopy protects the jasmine tree. The brother wants her sister to play like a happy and free peacock in the wood.

The bother says, O sister if you disappear for a movement, my eyelids will be putrid??, that he would feel like an orphan. He pledges that he will let her sister study well and let her grow howsoever she wants.

\textsuperscript{103} Gaddar, “Gaddar Paatalu”, (Hyderabad: JNM audio cassettes, 1995), song number 4.
He will earn some money for her wedding and he will prepare his rickshaw as a palanquin to send her to her matrimonial house. And he says that he will see his sister to reach her husband. In the next stanza tell that how a brother feels sad if his sister sits too sad in dull mood. The major positive thing about Gaddar’s songs is that each song differs from another. The brother says that, there are much restriction would be there after a girl become adult. They say that girl should not laugh and see at other things. But sister I am not such a person to pose you all the nonsense restrictions like others. I am your childhood friend.

O My Beloved! Come to see me

Translation

O Beloved! Please come to see me once
O my man! I would be with you,
Please take me with you
In your absence,
The house has decayed
There are no bounds
To the police and the landlord,
The local thugs and goons are
Posing like conquerors
The fellow-women
Are passing hurtful comments
O Beloved! There are many wounds in my heart
O Beloved! Please come,
I would hug you tight to my heart.

I see your memories in the little ones
I see you
When I cry, the little ones are asking
Why I am lamenting
O Beloved! Come to see the
little ones at least,
O Beloved!
Come to rub my tears away.

O Beloved! You may come to see the little ones,
Your younger brother and your mother,
If you are seen by the police
They may shoot you down
And make us orphans

O Beloved! No problem if you do not come,
Anyhow we will lead our lives like this,
O Beloved! You please dispirited

**Interpretation**

The central character in the song is a wife. Her husband went into insurgency movement and he did not return for a long time. She wants to send a message to her man about the anxiety-ridden life after he left her with two kids in the village. She represents the whole

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women in the villages who live in helpless conditions when their men joined the movement to fight against the local land lords and other social inequalities. The song plays vital role of messenger between unaided woman and their husbands.

The woman conveys a message that after he left the village, their home has turned into a derelict empty place. The crops and the cattle are no more in the house. The crops have gone waste and of no use. The landlords have continued to harass them. The police officer and local rouges are posing as heroes of the village. The woman is pleading O my Beloved please come once to see me.

The wife in the song is sending a message of her problems to her husband. She wants him to come back to her and she wants to hug him tight. We can take glimpse at the lyrics, translation and the interpretation of the song to understand it clearer. The local goons have become the trouble makers now. The other neighboring women are passing aching comments. Therefore, the woman is asking her husband to come and see her once, so she can hug him tight to her heart. She says that she see his memories in her son and daughter. When she cries for her misfortune, her children peep into her face and ask Oh! Mother why you cry. The wife prays him at least to come see the children and asking him to come to wipe out her tears. She asks him to take her with him.

In the last stanza, though the woman is uneducated, she understands the situation in the village. At the end of the song she says that “if you come to see the children, mother and your younger brother, the police may catch him and kill”. As a result, she tells him not to
come. Instead of facing the dangerous condition every day, she says that leading a wasted life like the other working class women and men, she asks her man to come to give her his weapon.

The suffering woman in the song, asks her husband to give his weapon to her so that she can fight with her enemies around her. Because the problems that she has been facing for a long time have made her thoughts those she had before. Therefore she could not find any other option to overcome the troublesome life in the village, since she hasn't been helped by anyone in the family and even in the village.

4.7.8 Oh! Mother! Alisamma

O mother! Salutations
O mother! Alisamma
You became a powerful knife
Frightened the Karamchedu Landlords
You work the entire day
But you have no food
You work as bull
But you're hungry
Your life is plundered
The beastly land lords
Made you inert
O mother! Alisamma
You solicited the land lords to
Treat you as a being
You opposed the rule of land lords
You stopped them from coming to your hamlet
The land lords widened enmity for you
Have they burnt your hut?
O mother! Alisamma¹⁰⁵ ...

Interpretation

The story behind “O mother Alisamma” is taken from the real incidents happened in the village called Karamchedu, Prakasam District, Andhra Pradesh. The main leading character in the song, Alisamma is from untouchable community, branded as impure from the moment of her birth, one out of six, who were killed by arrogant upper caste Kamma land lords in Karamchedu village. The song portrays the life of the people who always think that their Karma is bad and they have to undergo the oppression until they die. These people depend on the leatherwork earlier; still there are some communities in the villages who made leather Chappals to get daily food.

Gaddar explains the story of Karamchedu, in similar song, entitled *Dalita Pululamma* (the Dalit panther) that one night the Kamma Landlords came with their goons and attacked the Madiga palle. They burnt the huts of the helpless people. They beat the women, and children. The message from the land lords was clear: stay at the bottom where you belong.

After the confrontation happened continuously, Alisamma is one of the women who strongly opposed the upper class and caste domination on the poor Dalit hamlet. Most of the writers like Katti Padma Rao has responded to the issues with their writing and arranging public meeting and demanding Justice to the common, working class people in the village. Gaddar, whose song is his weapon, is opposing the oppression and praising the courageous woman named Alisamma from the same village and from the same community.

In the first stanza of the song, Gaddar is admiring, and praising the courage of the old woman who stood and fought with the beastly landlords of the Kamma community. Alisamma icon is glorified as an inspiration to the other marginalized women. In the second stanza, Gaddar is singing the working lives in the village. Alisamma works in the fields for the whole day to earn livelihood. But she barely gets any food to fill her stomach. The land lords have robbed the labour of the working class and made their lives hopeless. Gaddar transforming the sorrow of the people into a song and returning their
lives back to them and fills the song with a positive suggestion. The suggestion make the people feel confident with a positive attitude. The songs in the song cultures in the contemporary times give the care and dare to the common people. Making the people feel brave is another important feature of the song cultures.

In the concluding stanza, Gaddar is describing why the problem occurred in the village why the woman and children are attacked and beaten up by the arrogant land lords in the village. But the dalits are not treated as human beings. Alisamma asks the land lords to treat them as human beings as they are. Then the land lords’ ego is hurt. They could not bear the opposing attitude from a woman and they wanted the people as oppressed from the ages ago. Finally the land lords burnt her hut and made her shelter less.
4.8 Mourning Songs

4.8.1 Death and Martyrs

Before one study Gaddar songs on martyrs, one should know who the martyrs are, and why the martyrs exist in a society. Martyrs are the ones who choose to suffer and be ready to die for the sake of the struggling people. One who makes great sacrifices or suffers much in order to conquer a belief, cause or principle. The one endures great suffering. The lives of the martyrs give an idea about of suffering in order to arouse sympathy. Gaddar songs give visual answers to these questions. This genre is unique in all the song cultures that we have been studying in Indian regions from centuries ago. The great lives of the martyrs are recounted in the songs of Gaddar from the decades from the day he entered into people’s cultures of the Telugu. Before Gaddar, there are no songs sung and composed in any song cultures in India on (death of somebody) martyrs.

In contemporary times, in Telugu song culture Gaddar is the one and only song composer who vocalize the death of the departed in his songs. When Gaddar writes his songs, he transforms himself into form of a mother, a father, sister and brother and fulfills the role of a writer, singer, and performer. Thus, the songs of Gaddar won the thousands of the people in all over the Indian regions.
4.10 Embodied Performance of Gaddar

When Gaddar performs a song of dead (martyrs) in public meetings, he lives in it. He performs it with his heart and body. He takes his red-kerchief and treats it as a mother treats her child. If not exaggerated, languages of the world and the researches like this are not enough to describe the pain the song carries in it. That is why the text is a failure in the context of performative cultures. The text cannot capture the song and performance the pain and sorrow in the song cultures.

In Indian song cultures from fourth century onwards all the song composers are found as singers and performers. They do not sing the song by standing in one place; they perform the song by moving or shaking their body parts such as features of their faces, eyes, dancing with their legs and playing with their hands. In the process of singing a song, the things involved are: the song (text), mind and body. The body is not simply a given physical reality; it also shaped through cultural beliefs. In this sense we can talk of the body being a cultural construction. It is produced by the interplay between anatomy and physiology, and psychological and cultural forces.

The physical attributes of the body are mute outside the context of how we refer to them. It is through language that the body acquires meaning. Indeed the body can be seen as a text in itself on which our history is recorded: birthmarks, injuries, blemishes and
wrinkles punctuating our life stories. While most people are familiar with the notion of body language—that you convey meaning through bodily movement and that sometimes this portrayal of meaning can be more truthful than the verbal communication—the bodies infuses everyday language with many idioms, expressions and metaphors. Not only can body be a medium of language, it also can be a canvas upon which we communicate. Just about every culture has different ways of decorating the body with these decorations symbolizing the status, celebration, social roles and so on.

The performer’s body then socialized into the world constructed by the producer’s interpretative frames of references. Memory is embodied through repeated gesture. The disciplined and rehearsed body of the performer is one of the most significant resources in the conduct of dramaturgy\textsuperscript{106}. Gaddar performance and his songs notify that there are thousands of martyrs in the world of peoples’ movement. All sacrificed their lives to fulfill the desires of the working class and marginalized. Wherever and whenever the lives of the marginalized betrayed, movement will be raised there, and martyrs would be born from the movement. The martyrs are none other than sons of a mother and may be brother to another woman, and may be a son of helpless father. Gaddar, with his songs, attempts wipe out the sorrow in the lives of the people who lost their children in the movement or killed in the name of (fake) encounters.

Gaddar or any other poet in Telangana song cultures composes a song on martyrs when they are killed in the war. They glorify the death of a martyr through their songs. They recall all the memories in their life those they have spend with them. When Gaddar composes a Martyrs song he becomes a mother and father and recalls the sons and daughters who accepted their lives in the movement. In the genre, one song soothes the heart of a mother who is long awaited for his son’s arrival from the movement; another song appeals a father’s agony. The great means of the song is, make the mothers and fathers believe that their loving children are alive (though they are dead) in (the form of) the movement. The songs glorify their sacrifices. Some more famous songs in the Gaddar’s compositions are, “where have you departed our children” “Oh! Sons and daughters, where have you been?”, “on the day of Sivaratri, “Salutation o our children”, and red salutation to you O martyrs.

4.09.1 Where did you go our sons and daughters?

Where have you departed our sons and daughters?

When will you come back?

Could you come as crows to?

Wake us up from the bed

Will you come as parrots?

To have the fruits of Guava tree

Can you come to talk to us?

Can you become the moles on the bodies?
Interpretation

“Where have you departed” is another poignant song with the parallel song lines. The mothers in the song do not know whether their children are still breathing. But they trust that their children, who are martyred, are alive and they certainly will come back ‘alive’. Approximately all the mothers who wait for the children like in the song in the villages do not know why their children went into the movement and how they are fighting. But they are very sure that they are fighting to wash out the filth in the society and will bring some changes in the working class.

Gaddar in the song describes the sorrowful stories of the martyrs who turned their mother into tearful lives. The poet-singer in the songs shows the aching experiences of the mother in the villages. The mothers have been waiting for their children’s’ arrival. If one mother waits for her son, another waits for her daughter. The songs line “biddalaara kodukulaara” tell us that there are not only men went into the movement but also the woman. The mothers are asking their children who are far away, and the mothers hope
that they will come to know their painful hearts and sing the songs, if their sons and
daughters come in the as crows. They ask would you come as crows and wake us up in
the morning. O children would you come as parrots and have the fruits on the Guava tree
and talk to us. The mothers are singing of their tears and praying the martyrs, whether
they will become the moles on the new born cubs. The mothers ask O children! Where
have departed? Would you come as relatives to spend with us?

4.09.2 On Sivarathri Festival

O our Children!
On Sivaratri
Whilst we leave fasting
There is twinge in the umbilical cord
The lord Siva is drowned
When the whole villages of Telangana
Went to Yamulada
And laid ashes on our forehead
The Yama constrained
Heeded for you
O our children!

They killed nine on Pongal
Another ten members on Sivaratri
Said, souvenir for the fest

Sivaratri is one of the famous festivals celebrated every year, in reverence of lord
Siva. It literally means the great night of Siva.
O our little ones!

We take oath on the lord Siva
We will take the thrishula of Siva
Blow the conch of the war and create thandava
We will bring the lord Siva for your lives
We will come there for you
We will come, dare to fight for you
We will take your path
O our little ones!

Interpretation

The song is on the revolutionaries who died in attempts to over through the regime that works against the struggles of voiceless people. Gaddar, in this song distinguishes the deceased as the martyrs and singing the grandeur of the revolutionary. During 1990s, there were many people joined into the revolutionary movement and became martyrs. Gaddar transformed himself as a mother and grieving the pain of the lost children.

Gaddar, in the first stanza, describes that there is an ache in the umbilical cord of the mothers. The pain literally indicated the bad omen on the day of Sivaratri. When we were about leave the okka poddu (fasting) our umbilical cord ached. When we all were

going to *Yamulada Rajanna*\(^{110}\) temple we were constrained by Lord Yama and were notified as if some awful thing is going to happen. In the second stanza, Gaddar makes it clear why the mothers were frightened of their children and pray the god always

In the last stanza, Gaddar reinforces the notion of the mothers into warfare in the same pathway that their children have taken. The parents say that, O our little ones! If any dreadful thing happens to you, we are taking an oath; we even will take the conch of Siva and blow the horn for the war. We will acquire the thrishula and make a thandava (a fierce dance). We will bring the lord Siva (who is the destroyer as per the Indian mythology) and take your dynamism back and make you alive. If not, we also will walk on the way you left and we battle the way you fought.

4.09.3  Salutations to you our children

When I write a song, grief in my heart cannot be explained, I face so many problems when I try to enter into the life of a common man. The tears of a common and come into my tears and reflexes in my eyes. The injuries of their hearts become the beat of my heart; the tears transform into letters and fill a white paper with letters. The letters

\(^{110}\) *Yamulada Rajanna* is a famous temple of Lord Siva, in Karimnagar, Telangana. It is believed that Rajanna is an incarnation of Siva. All the Siva’s devotees visit this temple on Sivaratri.
become lines and the lines fall into a form of song for the dead. One by one died and
became the stars in the sky Oh! My brothers, my Soul is a broken Heart which is filled
with grief. After days and months of unbearable grief, the story of a song has started\textsuperscript{111}. Gaddar, in the song vocalizes the pain of the mothers by transforming himself into a
motherly woman. The song describes that the tears flow from her eyes when she loses her
child in the war against the cruel system. The agony of the mother is a reality that is not
often discussed. The song shows that there is no bond as strong or as unique than that of
the mother and child.

Translation

Salutations, salutation to you, O our children!

We salute and hail our children

O brave ones, brave children of Naxalbari

The valorous sons of Naxalbari

Children of coolis and farmers

Have you fallen and merged with the stars in the sky?

And sprouted like suns?

We who had nowhere to turn- our children

Have you become stars to show us the way, our children

\textsuperscript{111} Gaddar, \textit{Is there a story behind every song? Yes there is...!}, (Hyderabad: JNM
As the crows caw-cawed we open
Our doors to speak to them
Tell us who is going to come; we stand waiting in the yard
Will you come as crows our children?
Will you answer the call of our heart and fly away our children
When the village Sparrows comes, we let them build their nest
We will keep watch of the pair, so the pair does not break
Will you become the eggs of the sparrows our children?
From that parrot's egg, will you become our children?
We salutes you O our children!

In the patch of land in front of the house
We have ploughed the sorghum crop
We will hold *vrat*, standing on one leg, praying for a son
Will you be born as the fruit of that sorghum, our children?
Will you become the children in our arms, our children?
We will nurture and rear the motherless pup
We will give it your share of food
Our children, with your puppy paw
Will you shake our hand before you go our children?
The proud cock will get the hen to pair with
And when the egg is laid we will hatch it in your name
When the chick breaks out we will name it after you
If vulture and kites swoop down to snatch,
We will protect the eggs like the mother chicken
We will hug them close to our hearts and look after them our children
We will fulfill our maternal longing, our children
We salute and hail O our children

We will keep the pregnant cow as our eyes
We will feed her with green grass, protect her like our life
When she is in labour, we will deliver the calf and guard it
When she licks her newborn we will relieve mother’s love
Will you come to us as labour pain, our children?
Will you come to us again, our children?

As the Dussheraa is nearer we got the tailor to stitch
A pair of pants for your brother and one shirt for you
I don’t want anything, you said in childish temper,
You did not even eat,
Then we got white pants and a red shirt tailored for you
Will you come as the young sparrow to look at them?
Our children
Will you press against my hand jambiakai leaf our children?
Our eyelids fly open with slightest noise of the door
Maybe the one who is gone has returned, and called
I have your meal ready, and hidden
Your father and brother don't now,
The back door is shut, but unbolted
Will you come with stealthy steps of cat, our children
Will you play hide and seek and go away, our children
Do not, do not my son; don't fight with land lords we said
We pleaded you but, you never listened to us
Obstinate one, full-hearted one, brimming with valour
You did not let go of the red flag,
As long as there was life in you
Will you give your blood to the flag and go away,
Our children?
Will you be happy when we lift you in our arms?
Our children
We salute you our children,
We hail you our brave children\(^{112}\)!

**Interpretation**

The mothers in the song expect their children to return in various forms such as, sparrows, parrots, cows, crop and cows. The mothers recall the impulsive nature of their

\(^{112}\) Gaddar, *Is there a story behind every song? Yes there is...!* (Hyderabad: JNM publications, 1986). p. 89.
children in the movement against the local land lords. They recollect their memories that warning their children not to fight against the land lords, was of no use. For, their children never listened to them and went into the fight. Therefore the mother's lives are grief-stricken.

The mothers in this sorrowful song sing of the pain in their hearts when they lose children. In the second stanza, the anguish of the mothers turns into a song and shows how the mother is awaited for the return of the son. She sings that when a crow-cawed they open the doors and will speak to them to know if you are returning home. The mothers are asking their children to fly as crows after their pain is shrunk. We let the sparrows to knit their nest in our houses and look after the pair so that it is not broken. By thinking that you would become the eggs of the sparrow, O our children could you come back as children from the eggs of the parrot children, the mother wails.

In the third stanza, the poet-singer shows the agony singing that the mothers are ready to do any vrat to get their children back. They sing that, they have ploughed the land in front of the house and hold a vrat by standing on a single leg for their children to return. We nurture a motherless puppy and give the food of your share, would you come and shake our hands with the puppy paw, they ask.

In the following stanza, the mothers sing and recall the memory of their children's childish temper when their father brought a pant to his brother and him. They say that he did not even take food. Then they got a white pants and red shirt for him and saw that he
was happy. The mothers are asking the children to come as sparrows and take a look at the clothes.

The next stanza visualizes the waiting of the mothers for their children. When there is a slight noise of the door they open their eyes wide thinking that the one who went into the movement might have returned. We have kept you food ready and hidden, without letting your father and brother to know about it, the tell him. The back door is shut but not bolted, O children would you come in stealthy steps of a cat and have your food, they ask. You play hide and seek games with us and go away, they plead.

We pleaded with you not to fight with the land lords of the village but you never gave a damn to our words. You were ready to die but you did not leave the red-flag. The mothers are asking their children if they would be happy if the mothers lifted the red flag into their hands. O our children we salute you, hail you, they pray.

4.09.4 Red Salutes

Salutations
Red salutations
Though your fingers are cut,
Though your eyes are taken out
You did not separated from the
Ideology of war
Gaddar got the command over more than two languages such as Hindi, apart from Telugu. He never hesitated to state that the tunes for his songs are taken from the various communities and song cultures of the people. For instance, the tune of the song “Salutations, Red salutations” is taken from the prayer traditions of the Muslim brotherhood. Gaddar, in his magnum opus, “Is there a story behind every song? Yes! There is...!” he shares his experiences of weaving a tune for a song of martyrs. “I was one of the boys who go to collect the dung everyday behind the cattle. There was a tamarind tree; its name is Mondi Chintha. Beside the tree there is a burial ground of Muslim brotherhood. There is a masque of Muslims adjacent to the burial ground. If someone dies in their community or families, they pray to the Allah before they bury the dead body. They even come to the masque and pray during the festivals. They pray with their full heart. The tune and lyrics of the prayer are “यशाफी अलविदा सलामुल्लाहाई, जामाफी अलविदा सलामुल्लाहाई”. I often go with them and listen to the prayer and its form. Then, since I was a child I did not know the meaning of the prayer. But the prayer and its tune haunted me for a long time. After I joined the Art Lovers’ Association, I was determined to write a legendary song with the tune. I travelled to my village with my thoughts. I recall the tradition of the prayer, that our Muslim brotherhood bows their heads and pray.

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113 Gaddar, Gaddar, Is there a story behind every song? Yes there is...!, (Hyderabad: JNM publications, 1986), p.197.
I too bowed myself and started the heart-touching song\textsuperscript{114}. The song articulates the
gratefulness of the brotherhood in the movement. The singer recollects the sacrifices of the
legendary figures who have taken the red-path.

4.10 Social Satires (Satirical songs)

Satirical songs are the important part of the Gaddarian genres. Gaddar, while keeping the
song to transmit serious themes in it, he makes use of his witty and hilarious comments
on the problematic, inhuman, ruthless, shameless people like money minded doctors,
political leaders who take elections as business of five years of tenure in the Indian
society. In this theme, Gaddar usually carves the songs in a satirical approach by means
of the intent of disgrace the individuals and society itself, into improvement. Though a
satirical song is usually meant to be funny its greater purpose is often constructive social
criticism, using wit as the main weapon. The songs are loaded with a strong irony and
sarcasm as the major element. Comparison, analogy, parody and hyperbole and
juxtaposition of these motifs are all frequently used expressions in these thematic songs.
Let us look at some songs to understand Gaddar’s writing style and what his songs bear
in them.

\textsuperscript{114} Gaddar, Gaddar, \textit{Is there a story behind every song? Yes there is...!}, (Hyderabad:
In “Father I will not go to study” Gaddar visualizes how the educational institutes have become the blood-suckers in the social order. Gaddar makes it clearer how the uneducated parents in the form of fees in the corporate educational system in the Telugu world. Thus the songs have become famous in the Telugu society. In the present society the education for the poor people has become an impossible dream. One’s deprived life becomes an advantage to someone who runs after money. In “Super specialty hospital” song Gaddar writes about various incidents that take place in the hospital. The song tells the sad story of a patient who comes to get treatment for his ailing foot and unfortunately his whole leg is axed by the unprofessional doctors in a corporate hospital. In an added analogous song, “Oh! My son Bandoda” Gaddar describes the shameless and money minded political leaders who have been playing with the lives of the voiceless people. In the song the singer, depicts the cynical behavior of the politicians. “Oh! Vote” the song tells us the people believed in the democratic election system in India hoping that it will fetch their lives definitely. But the common people realized that the elections help the leaders to cheat the voters and earn a lot of money during their period of rule.

Gaddar is good at mocking the political leaders and parties by giving the truthful information which educates the people. Gaddar also is very much known for his sense of humor in his lively performances. In “Look at the Assembly” song he gives the realistic knowledge to the common and uneducated people about the state assembly. In the song Gaddar mocks the leaders and their brawl for their personal benefits.
4.10.1  O father! I do not set off to study

O father! I do not set off to study
A washer man is better than an educated
All arts are to get food
I do not go to study
Which won’t get me food

A shepherd went along with a complaint
About his missing sheep
He came to know there is no help
Without bribe
He went to Thahasildar
He sold his bull and went to court
There he found the judge asking for bribe

The one who studies fitter course,
Got the jobs of vender
And the venders got the job of engineering course
The one who studied doctor and appointed
He doesn’t know how to see the dharma meter

It is spoken so great about,
Engineering study Doctor Study
And the professional students
Are they slaves of the professor?
If they won't follow them
They won't give good marks

The minster gave a lecture on
Education in the mother tongue
But he sent his sons and grandsons
To England for English education

Morning, they give lectures on education
They do business behind the screen
O father! They are witty
To suck the blood of the
Poor and uneducated people

O father! Send me to kharkhana
There I will learn and gain food
Or else, send me to study how to start a union
Then I will bring their loopholes
And I will bring the changes in the society¹¹⁵

Interpretation

The song starts as a discourse involving a son and father. The son says, “I would not go to study”. The father asked him why he would not go to study. The first stanza shows reasons why the son does not want to study. The son says to father ‘the washer man is better than the educated’. The main aim of the song is to critique educated people who are addicted to corruption. People study to earn their livelihood by working in an office.

The second stanza of the song gives us a visual experience of a shepherd. Once he goes to police station to give a complaint about his missing sheep. The shepherd comes to know the no work will be done without bribe. Then he goes to thahasildar who is the higher official of the Mandal. There he comes to know the situation is same. Then the shepherd sells his bull and goes to court; there he finds the judge asking for the bribe. Thus the stanza explains how the bribery is taking place in the government offices.

In the following stanza, Gaddar is attacking the education system and process of jobs. When somebody studies a course of fitter, he is appointed as vender; when somebody studies for vender he got the job of electrician. And the one who is got the doctor post does not know how to check the thermometer. But he earned a lot of money by pushing people into poverty.

In the next stanza, Gaddar attacks the whole list of courses which are so called great courses in the college education. He sings that the engineering education is felt great and
the people who study professional courses are the slaves to the professor because they
won't give good marks if they don't follow them properly.

In the following stanza he differentiates the poor and rich people. The education minister
gave a long speech that we should always study and respect our mother tongue and study
in mother tongue; but the minister sent his children to England to get English education
for them. In the following stanza, the singer is expressing his opinion that this education
system has become a business. And the educational institutions in the present world have
become the blood suckers. Thus the son in the conclusion of the song says that, he will go
to study the work in the mechanic-shed or else he will go to study how to start a
movement against the system of bribery and to change the state of the goons and looters.

4.10.2 Super specialty hospital

Super specialty hospital
Blood sucking jail of poor people
I went to hospital
With the small disease
It said Good morning sir!
When I go with limping leg
The wheel chair welcomed me
I was made to asleep on the bed
Put me between the scissors
And sucked my blood
Interpretation

The song describes how the society is treating its humans in recent times. He is critiquing dehumanized corporate hospital system in India; the singer envisages the blood sucking nature of the people in the corporate hospitals. In the first stanza, the singer voices against the ruthless manners of the people in the hospital. He explains that when patient goes to hospital (corporate) they greet you very politely and take you into the hospital on a wheel chair. They will sleep you on cushioned bed and slowly start the process of the looting the patient.

When somebody takes a child suffering from cold fever, they will refer many blood tests, urine tests and the spinal test to loot the money from the parents of the child. And they gave a long list of pills and medicine and asked to bring it faster. And spoke great about the treatment in the hospitals. After some time they take a long print out from the computer and explained: some amount is for room charge, bed charge, and sales tax on all the expenditures.

The next stanza, describes a new story of another patient who went to the hospital for the treatment of his toenail. Then the doctor said, the nail should be x-rayed, and there is some infection in the stomach. Said the nail should be removed but instead of the nail the leg is removed.
In the following stanza, Gaddar sings of the patient who goes to the hospital to get rid of his flu. While he was testing the breathing system the doctor asked how much money he has in his pockets. Then, there is some problems with the kidneys and put him on the ventilation. When they enquire whether the patient is alive, he ordered to pay the one and half lakh for the dead body.

In the concluding stanza he criticizes the merciless nature of the state and government. The singer states that the government has busted the government hospitals. The state gave the lands to the corporate hospitals. Lastly the state has put the organs of the patients as the security for World Bank and shares of the leaders.

4.10.3 Oh! My Son Bandoda

O my son! Bandoda
Whom you have your vote to?
The elections have erupted
A fight amid two brothers
Amid a cheerful husband and wife,
Divergence between two best friends
But the leader went to Delhi with his conquest
And the voters have been thrown into ruins

The leader who by no means
Draw closer and chatting to
The people considerately
He betrayed the voters and want
The lives of the voters remain
The same as they were before

A duffer bought the votes
For beer and Brandy
One has pledged
The whole community for liquor
It is thought as a business of five years
And it is a venture for their future business
They will squeeze the voters
Right away after the victory

Alas! The one who dressed up
With costly dresses??
Have flagged the flag on his house??
And getting ready for
The election business
He will show you picture in his hand
And close you under his hands\textsuperscript{116}

\textsuperscript{116} Gaddar: \textit{Gaddar Galam}; (Hyderabad: JNM Audio CDs, 2001), Song Number 3.
Interpretation

The first stanza starts with a question that, to whom the bandodu has given his vote. And describes what a vote can do between people. It says that the vote can make anything in the world. The vote has created a fight between two own brothers. The vote has created fight between a happy couple a wife and husband. The vote has created a fight between two best friends. But the leader who won the elections has got his seat and shown his shoe to the voters.

In the following stanza, the singer sings of the changes of the voter and the leader after the elections. The leaders who never came earlier to the hut visited the hut and called everybody brother and sister. They manipulated the people with thier skills like a jackal. The one who won the elections went to Delhi happily but the one who voted him went into ashes.

The poet in the next stanza makes it clear that the leaders will buy the whole hamlet with their money and liquor. If one buys the people altogether with beer and Brandy another leader buys the whole community with country liquor. The leaders feel the money they spend for votes feel that it is an investment for their business of five years in future. And right away after they become the victors they start wring the people to earn money back.
The singer in the stanza put in the picture that the elections are a sort of business to the leaders. When the elections approach they put the flag of their party on their house and gather the people to influence the voters.

4.10.4 Vote! My mother,

Oh! My mother,
I believed the democracy (the election system)
Will better our lives,
But there is no change in lives,
Still, our lives remain the same,

Interpretation

Gaddar in the above song persuades the people to be cautious about the political parties. The poet puts his efforts to educate the people politically. The poet in the songs talks about the flaws of the political leaders and their rule. Gaddar appeals to the people to utilize their votes for selecting a good leader. In these kinds of songs the real nature of the political party is shown how the leaders have been cheating the common people for ages. The song-poet says that the leaders come at the time of elections to get the votes of the common people to win in the elections. They will disappear right away after they won the elections and forget the people and their problems. Thus the singer describes that people expect a lot for positive changes in the lives with the democratic system but there is no party that tried to change the lives and their poverty.
Globalization is the worldwide procedure of homogenizing prices, products, wages, rates of interest and profits. The term globalization refers to these collective changes as a process or else as the cause of the turbulent change. It is a process by which the people of the world are unified into a single society and it leads to the integrations of national economies into the international economy through trade, foreign direct investment, capital flows, and migration and spread technology.

The present genre, “songs on globalization” gives the insights of the singer and his consciousness of the society and his love towards the cultural forms and art forms in the locale which are losing its liveliness in the present times. The song that Gaddar composed in this genre gives a picture of the impact of Globalization on individual, personal, family, social and cultural lives of the people in cities and in urban areas. In these songs we can understand how a cultural icon like Gaddar feels and cries for his cultural forms which are losing their greatness in the recent times. The composer is never opposed to the so called technological development. We cannot find a single line in opposition to positive development in the world. But he cries to let the forms of our cultures live for as long as the people live. The songs describe clearly that the children and youngsters are attracted towards the western culture.

4.11.1 Look at the American

Look! Look!

How the American is coming

With loaded bags of bombs
The American is coming
With loaded weapons

The American put his feet
On the chest of the mother India
The Colgate company owner wished him
Hindustan liver company owner
Sang vandemataram for him\textsuperscript{117}.

The above song is written by Gaddar who had been composing songs on various themes and protesting against the social evils through his thought provoking songs. Gaddar, in the first phase of the song expresses his views about the invasion of the American dogma and globalization at different levels. The poet magnificently shows the audience how the Indian corporate sector such as Colgate and Hindustan Liver companies salute the American companies and its brands. He says that even the Indian political leaders including the prime minister and the chief minister are bending their heads in front of the American brands.

\textsuperscript{117} Gaddar: \textit{Gaddar Galam}; (Hyderabad: JNM Audio Cassettes, 2001), Song Number, 1.
The Colour TV created a fight in my family

The color TV caused a fight
Between my wife and children at home
She cuts the vegetables while she watches
She learns how to dry out the food
She is amused at the cricket shot
Throws the onion and shouts: catch it as a ball

It needs a table,
Cover,
Remote control
Connection to get the programmes
It has become a prestige
When our neighbor had got it
I sold my rooster which gives eggs
I went after I sold the cow which gives milk every day

Still the money was not enough
Then I had to sell the mangalsutra of wife
When the TV started
The children threw their books
Constantly watching it with never ending desire
They laugh at the screen always
They look at the face of Michael Jackson
The children are asking their mother
What is the meaning of love?
The fight starts, right away when the TV starts on
Wife represents Pakistan
And children from India
What we get if one wins and one loses
There have been fights among the people
Because of the TV

Interpretation

In early days before the cultural invasion of the west on the peoples' lives and their culture in India, people used to come and sit in the streets to see the kolattam, and perform various folk arts. Today people stick to the screens of the TV., Therefore the shapes of the cultural forms are being broken. The songs are the forceful symbols of the poet-singer's agony.

In the first stanza, the singer talks how the products of globalization have occupied the cultural and family space in Indian families. The singer makes it clear with the song that the households have been acquainted with the TV programs where even they are trying to learn some simple cooking items.

In the following stanza, we will understand that until we buy we may think of the price of the TV. But the song makes it clear to us that we also have to spend more money to get a table, and cover for the TV. And finally it will turn on when we get a cable connection for it. The singer in the thirds stanza contrasts the impact of the neighboring people on one’s family. He also sings of the tempting nature of the human in the society. The man assumes that having a TV is status symbol, and then he goes to sell his hen and cow which helped the family for ages. Then he went to buy the TV and comes to know that the money he gathers is not enough and demands his wife’s mangalsutra. Gaddar illustrates the acts of the children after they found the TV is turned on. The singer says that the children throw their book around the house and get down to watch the TV. When they see Michael Jackson on the TV they try to imitate him and ask their mother the meaning of love. Thus the colour TV is ruining the Indian families and young children.

In the conclusion of the song, Gaddar depicts the cricket fever in the whole country. He makes it clear how the globalized game shows will divide the cheerful family into two. The cricket game shown on the TV divided a mother and son, mother supports Pakistan and the son supports Indian team. The singer says that the people would obtain nothing great with the game shows. Now a days the TV reached all over the small villages in the
country and not only divided the human relations on the countryside and destroyed the cultural gatherings and the art forms of the folk life in the rural areas. People find a small space to meet each other for cultural meetings and cultural gatherings. Most of the time they spend with the TV sets.

4.11.3 The Cry of Farm Fields

The fields of the paddy
Ask, where is
The farmer who give us water
The cotton fields are asking
Where is he, who fills us with his blood?
They are crying for him
It is unknown
What happened to them?
Different paddy fields
Are enquiring and crying
For the absence of the farmer
The reason is not known why
They are bursting into tears.

The field of spinach
Asks,
Where is the father like person?
The field of coriander
Asks
Where is the man of honesty?
They have become lifeless
For crying a long time
The cotton fields altogether
Have prepared a new cloth
The dry grass has become a bed
To protect from the pain of bones
The betel fields have kissed him
The new pot has become
A food box for him
The blob has shone on
The forehead of the farmer
They are crying aloud
To go with the same father like farmer\textsuperscript{119}

**Interpretation**

The song is about the farmers' suicides. Since **India** is an agrarian country with
approximately 60\% of the people directly or indirectly depend upon agriculture.
Agriculture in India is often attributed as gambling with monsoons because of its almost
exclusive dependency on precipitation from monsoon. The breakdown of the monsoon
can lead to a sequence of draught; lack of better prices, and exploitation of the farmers by
middlemen, all have led to a series of suicides committed by farmers across India. Gaddar
in the song represents the problems of farmers' lives. This is one of the heart touching
songs composed by Gaddar on the farmers deaths.

\textsuperscript{119} Gaddar: *Gaddar Galam*; Audio CD, JNM Recording Song Number 3, released in
This is one of the emotive songs in Gaddar’s compositions. Most of the people might have come across the love and affection among the humans and pets. But this song tells a different story of love and story of tears and affection between the farmer and crops. Gaddar personifies the crops in the song as they are waiting for the father ‘the farmer’. The crops in the song cry like the mothers cry for their children in the martyrs songs. In the song, the farmer is fighting with the economic evil called draught and globalization which make him helpless and hopeless to lead his life. The affection between the crops and farmer is broken into and the song takes us to the levels beyond textual description. Here one could see the failure of the textual language in the context of oral song cultures. I feel that the text cannot capture the emotion that is carried in a song or performance.

4.11.4 Impact of Real-estate on the villages

When I was child
The village was so good
With its trees and budding branches
But now the village ran dry like desert
And the village has become shelter less
The village has become place for
Real estate.\(^{120}\)

\(^{120}\)Gaddar, Unpublished interview. (Hyderabad: 12/08/2011).
In another song, Gaddar recollects his memories about his village. When he was a child, the whole village was happy with love and affection. The whole people of the village such as farmers, labourers, were leading their life on the land by cultivating it for different crops. But now the village is totally enveloped in a real-estate circuit. The land has become the business. Villagers are migrating to the cities to find out their bread and butter. He is singing of the agony of the homeless. He attacks the real estate boom on the villages of the region. He says that he composed great songs on various themes such the changes in the rural areas.

Gaddar has been responding to the socio-economic and cultural problems in the society in contemporary times. His songs differ from each other. And also he is a strong social organizer who has been working hard to make the song cultures live.

**Conclusion**

In the present chapter as I have examined Gaddar is a famous song-cultural icon in India in contemporary times. He is an inexhaustible song composer, singer and performer in Telugu song cultures. He can scarcely finish a sentence without bursting into song and tapping a “Dappu” in his hands, often describing the oppression of the masses. Gaddar’s compositions run into several hundreds of popular songs written over more than four decades. He had been composing songs on various themes such as songs on martyrs, songs on working class women, on unorganized labourers and so many and so forth.

In the next chapter, I will examine the themes and famous songs composed by Venkanna who is an added popular song composer, singer and performer in Telugu song cultures
born in 1963. He popularized the song cultures in the popular media like TV. He is one of
the Judges on a programme *Rela Re Rela on Maa* Telugu TV channel and the cultural
icons in Telugu song cultures in recent times. From his child hood he spent in singing the
native folk songs describing the lives of the peasants and farmers of the region.