Chapter 7

CONCLUSION
The concept of theatre over a period of time is developed from the understanding of physical space to that of mental space. The word theatre comes from the Greek root word *Theatron* that means *seeing place*. In this sense it is viewed as a physical space meant for a specific enactments. In the initial phases, the stress was on physical space and hence arenas and prosceniums were constructed and viewed as theatres. This physical space is constructed based on making a distinction between performance space and non-performance space. Performance space is the space of performers and non-performance space is the space of audience. This watertight compartment of spaces metamorphoses theatre into a distinguished place for an event wherein both the performers and audiences merge and converge.
In due course, a shift had taken place in the cognition of space itself from a mere physical space to that of mental space. The idea of mental space refers to a place, which the human mind associates itself to a past experience or visualises an unknown space from a subconscious experience. The cultures started redesigning their physical spaces appropriately to present enactments from the past experiences. In other words, the mental space started affecting the physical space in such a way that the enactment becomes the experience of the entire viewer's community. Therefore the shift is towards enactments or performances that are dynamic in opposition to the static physical spaces of theatre.

This significant shift changed the very concept of theatre and contributed to its development in the history of world theatre. The mental space incorporated not only the experiences but also framed ideas and ideologies of human cultures. Conscious effort to pursue ideas brought forth ideologies. The question started emerging of not only understanding the experiences of human cultures but also interpreting those experiences of the cultures itself. This further brought forth the understanding of worldviews of human culture. The fundamental questions related to the world and its environment became the core concern of enactments. Thus, the enactments are transformed from mere experiences to that of 'plays'. The play is a conscious effort of staging an idea or a set of ideas. This shift injected a new force into theatre. It started making a distinction between the performers and the playwrights. A contested zone of
experiences between performers and playwrights emerged in theatre and to negotiate those conflicts, directors emerged between playwrights and performers. Direction as a specialized craft introduced several artistic expressions in presenting the enactments. This process led to the development of technical theatre such as stagecraft, make-up and costumes, lighting, music, sound etc.

The first conclusion of the thesis is that the conceptual frame of theatre is developed as a modernist enterprise and perceived into certain philosophical milieus. Marxist-Leninist thought is one such philosophical milieu that divided the philosophies into two broad categories. One is, Idealism; the other is Materialism. They are further divided into subjective and objective perspectives. In this thesis an attempt is made to apply this categorization to theatre in order to cognate oneself with the philosophical milieus of theatre practices around the world through the ages. It is found that theatre under Idealism is branched out into various forms namely Ritualism, Classicism, Neoclassicism, Romanticism, Futurism, Dada and Surrealism, Existentialism and Absurdism. Similarly Materialism can be seen in the forms of Realism, Naturalism, Epic theatre, Environmental theatre, Poor theatre, Post-Modernism.

Idealism is grounded on the premise that idea precedes matter. It is based on the maxim that the spiritual and non-material is primary and the material is secondary. Therefore it brings closer to the dogmas of religion on the finiteness of the world, in time and space, and its creation by god.
This further regard the consciousness belongs to the realm of spirituality and therefore is the gift of the god. It is the consciousness of the human beings which cognate things, organize them and reproduce them to the well being of the world in general. It is because of the quality of generating ideas that humans are different from inanimate and zoomorphic strata of the world.

Idealism as a philosophical drive contributed to theatre in two major areas of human development. Firstly, it sought the happiness of individual as the basis for the well being of humanity. Secondly it imparted morality as primary for spiritual growth of human kind. The first principle of idealism being the subjective (Self) happiness, led to the dogma of ‘art for art sake’. Once this principle started operating, the enactments became much artistic and bound to be displayed or exhibited to people. For this reason, the theatre adapted the notion of proscenium. The concept of proscenium innately advocates osternin principle, which means making an event ‘strange’. In other words, enactment needs to be different from the routine walks of life. This major contribution of Idealism segregated the performer from his viewer. Hence a physical distance is created between the two, the performer and the audience during the performance. This is done so in two ways; one by raising the performance space as a platform to appear as a stage, and by distinguishing that performance space by lighting during performance. The viewers are made to sit in 90 degrees angle in front of the stage. With this, the space of the performers on the raised
platform is divided in two spaces. One the visible space the other is non-visible space. The visible space is actual enactment place where viewers are allowed to watch the performance. The non-visible space is converted as greenroom and for other technical purposes to be used by musicians, lighting men etc.

The second driving force of idealism being morality, the theatre is influenced by the religious realm of human kind. The metaphysical presence as pervaded in the religious preaching of the human cultures started invading in theatre as enactments. The themes from the religious texts became the popular subjects for plays. To transcend the metaphysical realm into physical realm, theatre made use of popular images of Gods and Goddesses. For this, the use of masks is introduced in theatre. Two kinds of masks prevailed in theatre. The first kind is facial make-up itself as mask and the second is external mask. Converting face into mask resulted in exuberant and elaborate make-up practice in theatre. Different kinds of colours and materials were used to transform normal faces into the face of metaphysical beings. In the practice of external masking wood, plastic, fiber and other such material was fabricated into the faces of gods, goddesses and satanic forces. Hence a separate skill of mask making became a specialized field in theatre. Added to this, costumes also underwent a change. Extensive costumes in different sizes and lengths are tailored to suit the characters in the play. Costumes made up of simple clothes to fine fabrics were used to make the actors appear
as the characters. Stitching concurrently became a specified craft in dress making for theatre.

Concurrent to this development, the theatre also added innumerable properties in staging the plays. The divine and evil forces are represented by certain properties in every religious belief system. The properties like wings for angles, crowns for gods, swords for evil forces etc were introduced. These hand properties also clubbed by the stage properties to make the play situational. The backdrops of the stage are painted into different settings like abodes of gods and evil forces. With this, artists as stage designers emerged as a specialists in this field.

The stage did undergo a change due to Idealism. The linear stages are transformed into nonlinear stages by dividing the stage itself through raised platform, dividers, levels etc. This further contributed for the specialization in lighting by way of spotlights, floodlights and special effects. All these are done only to make the audience experience the metaphysical realm through theatre. Further, song and dance sequences are introduced in theatre as part of stylizations. With this, the performance has also undergone a change. The body language as expressed through kinesics and proximics became a part of narration in theatre.

Materialism as a philosophical milieu pondered on the well being of human kind on the basis of sharing the resources equally. This principle brought the theatre a purpose, which aims at social well being of human
kind. Materialism argues that matter precedes idea and hence considers consciousness is a property of matter. In other words, it is matter that generates ideas. There are two kinds of materialism, the one, subjective materialism (spontaneous materialism) and the other one is objective materialism (philosophical materialism). Subjective materialism relies on belief of all people live on objective existence of external world. This is also known as pre Marxian, ancient and renaissance materialism. Several of these materialistic philosophical theories appeared as a result of the progress of scientific knowledge in Astronomy, Mathematics and other fields in the oriental world. The general feature of the Orient materialism lies in the recognition of the materiality of the world and its independent existence outside of man’s consciousness. They tried to find the diversity of natural phenomena and common source of origin of all that exists. It is this, which made the ancient Greeks to formulate a hypothesis on autonomic structure of matter. This further strengthens the mythological ideology, which rests on the idea of eternity of nature. The Renaissance and the post-Renaissance materialism viewed mechanistic conception of motion as the property of nature, which means that it is inalienable and universal.

The second type of Materialism is recognised by Marxists as Philosophical or Objective Materialism. It is also known as Marxist-Leninist materialism or Dialectical Historical Materialism. It is evolved by Marx and Angles and later developed by Lenin and other Marxists. Dialectical
materialism proceeds from the recognition of matter as the sole basis of the world, the universal interconnections of object and phenomena, the movement and development of the world as inherent contradictions operating in the world itself. Dialectical materialism regards consciousness as a property of a highly organised form of movement of matter, as a reflection of objective reality. Therefore the dialectics become the universal method of cognition in dialectical materialism. By applying the principal propositions of dialectical materialism to an explanation of the phenomena of social life, Marx and Engels established Historical materialism (or a materialist understanding of history) Lenin made an immense contribution to the development of historical materialism, by generating the experience of the proletariat's class struggle in the epoch of imperialism, proletarian revolution and the building of Socialism in the USSR.

According to Historical Materialism, the real basis of human society is the mode of production of material wealth. The replacement of one mode of production by another leads to a transition from one socio-economic formation to another higher one. The history of society is the successive replacement of the primitive communal, slave owning, and feudal, capitalist and communist formations. The law, which determines the essence of the historical process, is the law of the correspondence of production relations to the character and level of development of the productive forces. Developing within the framework of the given
production relations, at a certain stage the productive forces come into contradiction with them. This results in a social revolution, which is a law-governed form of transition from one socio-economic formation to another.

Idealism in theatre transposed the physical realm to the metaphysical realm but materialism brought the physical realm to social realm. Theatre influenced by materialism grossly depended on objectivity rather than subjectivity (which is the case of Idealism) as its methodological tool in the theatre practice. Man’s relationship with nature and man’s relationship with other men is objectively treated as themes in the theatre. This brought forth the dialectics between the forces of production and the relations of production to the forefront in the themes of the materialistic theatre. With the result inequality in sharing of resources and exploitation of men and environment by the ‘haves’ is critically portrayed in theatre.

In order to enact the above said dialectics, the context of theatre also underwent a change. The real life events and social settings of exploited class/group became the major concern of the enactment. Instead of gods and goddesses and metaphysical beings the rich, the poor, and the common man became the characters of the plays. In order to take up the roles of everyday life of different categories of people the materialistic theatre came up with the idea of realistic presentations. In
order to achieve this, it introduced theatre labs as a major contribution to the field of theatre. The process of training became much vigorous and the actors were made to be fit for different roles as and when required. In idealistic theatre the actors are considered as 'born actors'. Where as in materialistic theatre it is only through proper training and practice that the 'actors are made'. Theatre is not 'art for art sake' but 'art for man's sake'. Therefore it is the well being of mankind alone is concealed as pleasure in making theatre. Social relevance and political commitment became the driving force for the makers of theatre such as director, actors, and technical personal of theatre.

This further changed the costumes, makeup and technical aspects too. The social roles that humans play in everyday life being themes, the costumes and makeup became indexical to them. Therefore the old age, youth, and childhood - all are imitated as it is through costumes and makeup. A poor man is represented in rags and a rich man in costly suits and so on and so forth. The stage properties and hand properties also found represent the real life events. The indexical sign is much used in the theatre and forms the basis for making hand and stage properties, where symbolic signs were much used in theatre of the idealism.

The street play did not give much attention to light and other technical aspects. With the result the cost of the play production got increasingly decreased. This aspect encouraged large audiences on one-hand and amateur theatre groups to take up theatre as their part time.
occupation. This broadened the scope of theatre as well the frequency of play productions. Since materialistic theatre viewed any thing, which presents every day sorrows of life, born out of exploitation and inequalities. Numerous playwrights emerged in theatre and different themes on exploitation, social issues, gender issues and others were staged. This led to different stylistics in theatre. Each director interpreted the theme through visuals and scenic divisions. The actors also imitated different groups of people of different regions while enacting the roles. This brought forth the community theatre as a specialised craft in theatre. People belonging to the themes of the play are recruited as actors through training process and presented in the plays, sticking on to the maxim of 'actors are made'.

Thus the materialistic theatre put forth utilitarianism as its principle and social relevance as its immediate concern. Social change through theatre is demonstrated as an Utopian ideal. The revolutionary themes, the labor movements, topics the world war as subjects were universally taken up by the theatre practitioners and craved for the emergence of theatre as people’s movement.

The second conclusion of the thesis is that the Telugu theatre has a connotation of ‘politics of representation’ but seldom viewed it from that angle by those that are involved in Telugu theatre either as practitioners, scholars or as critiques. The history of Telugu theatre can be divided into two broad segments from the perspective of politics of representation;
one, the folk theatre whose roots cannot be pinpointed to a particular time frame, and the other is modern Telugu theatre that is said to have started in A.D. 1880s.

Telugu theatre in the folk sphere though has basic elements of theatre such as performer, audience, text and context; it is less regarded as theatre for it violated the Western definition of theatre. The western definition innately delimits the actor from its audience, the text from the context and vice versa. The actors are trained to perform any text to any context to any audience. This overall fluidity is one major criterion for theatre to develop as modern art and hence modern theatre. Contrary to this situation, the folk theatre is fixed and rigid in sharing the elements of theatre. Particular performer in a particular context enacts a fixed text to the fixed audience. Therefore theatre appears as repetitive in its presentation. This also changes the other aspects of theatre like stage, makeup, costume and other technical properties. The proscenium is considered as modern, whereas non-proscenium is of folk. The non-proscenium invariably narrowed the application of light, sound, costumes, makeup etc. therefore folk theatre by and large represented their audiences and their worldview. It is done in two ways: One through the performances of caste myths and the other through the enactments of puranic myths.

The politics of representation in folk theatre are confined to caste and region. For instance the Chindu Madigas through their caste myth,
Jambapuranam represent the community how it originated and why it segregated and what they expect to do in the social realm. Similarly the Pagativeshams of Ganayatha Jangamas are region oriented and cater the needs of people of the region. Through their enactments they satirically expose the fallacies of different communities and castes. In both the cases mentioned, there is a certain type of rigidity in the application of theatrical elements. The performers are itinerary in nature and therefore exercise an obligation to perform to their stock audiences the text drawn from orality, which is claimed as hereditary. Therefore the contexts in which these performances occur are calendrical and hence fixed. What is important in folk theatre is what they represent is not simply that art but the way of life of the community to which they belong. This dimension makes most of the folk theatrical forms ethnocentric in nature.

Another dimension of politics of representation in folk theatre is connected with philosophical melue of Idealism, which is seen in the cases of enactments of puranic myths. The metaphysical realm is created in their theatre through the representation of images of gods and goddesses. The themes of the Bhagavathams are by and large drawn from the folk versions of the great puranas of India such as Ramayanam, Mahabharatham, and Bhagavatam. The ideal depiction of conflict and resolution leading to peaceful coexistence is rhetorically expressed through the enactments of the themes of puranas. In order to do this, metaphors and similes are vibrantly used in their enactments. Therefore,
politics of representation of folk theatre contributes to the depiction of ideal society, which the people should sought after.

In the Modern Telugu theatre, the politics of representation are by and large confined to the issues of modernity. The driving principle of modernity is 'difference'. Difference as concept of critical thinking gave the modern world a new tool to analyse the cultures and their products. The modern man with the principle of difference divided the objects of the world into two sets. One is based on ‘similarity’ the other one is based on 'difference'. The set of similarities is conceived as “paradigms" and the interplay of difference is conceived as "syntagmas". Syntagmatics are linear in nature and paradigms are vertical in nature. This basic division made the modern man not only to analyse the language but also the other cultural products. The human beings organised themselves into groups and hierarchies based on these principles. The social divide based on relations of production started becoming overtly expressed in modern times. Modernity begets urban centers functioning on the mechanised productions. Therefore technology became on essential ingredient of modernity. Modern theatre did rely on two principles i.e., the principle of difference and principle of technology. As technology alienated the labor from its laborer, the modern theatre alienated actor from his actions (character). The actors are recruited through training processes. In other words the actor is alienated from the character. An actor who is trained need not necessarily recruited to a character, which he views as fit. This
alienation principle innately contributed to the development of competition as in the case of market economy.

Capitalism an offshoot of modernity paved the way for industrialization and market economy. Competing in producing and selling the products in the market became an essential feature. In order to optimise costs and to deliver effective prices, the business households went in for competitive products and tried to make profits in order to sustain the industry. Modern Telugu theatre more or less followed the similar principle during its inception times in various genres of Telugu theatre; for instance Padyanatakam is sustained on the principal of competition. The contractors gathered talented actors together to stage the plays. The consumer, here invariably the theatre enthusiast, is the prime target to be reached by the contractors. Hence they not only recruited the popular creative artistes but also relayed on advertisement in order to sell the Padyanatakam. In the process unconsciously competition grew in among the artists and with the result specilisation in performing characters grew in theatre of Padyanatakam. A product of industry is not manufactured in one entity but as different components and then assembled. The same way contractors recruited different actors from different regions for their plays. This in fact looks more like a consortium of specialists than a holistic performance. The phenomena of assembling different specialised artists though appeared to be one of the causes of success of Padyanatakam, it innately started killing the very art form. The
skills of the actors were confined to certain roles and therefore, did not result in developing the theatre as such. The theatre requires a just combination of different elements. In the case of *Padyanatakam* a highly imbalanced mixture of these elements are to be seen. Only the ability to recite *Padyams* is given importance than the body language, sound, light and stagecraft. This lopsided development of *Padyanatakam* theatre is "contributing to its decaying process in the present days due to lack of new entrants from the young generation who are not much for exposed to literary skills and poetical (*padyam*) recitations.

The *Parishatnatakam*, which is another offshoot of modern Telugu theatre, emerged as a venue for social dramas. It has replaced *padyam* with dialogue and treated the other theatrical elements equally. The competition became the live nerve for the existence of *Parishatnatakam*. The politics of representation in *Parishatnatakam* shifted from actor to playwright and director. It is the directors and playwrights who prevailed in *Parishatnatakam*. The contractors as in the case of *Padyanatakam* are being replaced with the organisers of *Parishats* who can be categorised into four, (1) Institutions, (2) Families and memorial trusts (3) Amateur artists formed into committees and (4) Individuals. The politics of representation in *Parishat Natakam* by and large depended on the above categories of organisers. It is the organisers who fix the venue, remunerations, winners and other terms and conditions of plays to be performed.
The politics of representation of the theatre education is of different nature. Theatre education in India is done on two fronts, training in theory and in practice. Most of the members of the faculty in the institutions, which are promoting theatre education, are themselves either actors or directors, or technical personnel. As part of theatre history and theory they expose the students to world theatre, developments in theatre, ideas and concepts in theatre so on and so forth. This background gave both faculty and students to go for experimental theatre. The narrative techniques in presenting the play is designed and blocking the stage movements, choreography in the scenes, illuminating the stage with different lights and visuals through symbolic structures on stage - all become the concern of this theatre. After the introduction of theatre education in Andhra, the Telugu theatre witnessed more number of plays from the other languages translated into Telugu. The European plays, the plays of the Black theatre and the plays from Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Kannada, Bengali of Indian languages were exposed to Telugus. In this manner it contributed significantly in expanding the horizons of Telugu theatre. Yet another significant contribution of the theatre education is that it has influenced even the Parishatnatakam. The Parishatnatakam is narrative oriented rather than visual oriented. The students who had undergone the theatre education became critiques of the theatre, which is another significant contribution of the theatre education. Theatre journalism is also promoted. Critiquing once own plays though not
accepted whole-heartedly still started the discourse in theatre. However
the theatre education is not devoid of flaws. The politics of representation
of this group is to project themselves as 'elitists of theatre'. They consider
themselves as the literate of theatre. This in a way is contributing towards
distancing themselves from mainstream theatre. The 'big brother' attitude
in *imperialising* the theatre though dangerous to the movement it has
become a necessary evil in the theatre movement of Andhra.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh is also acting like a *Parishat*
and indulging in the name of promotion of theatre under auspices of the
department Film, Television and Theatre Development Corporation of
Andhra Pradesh. The famous Nandi awards started picking up in Telugu
theatre circles. Pro-Government plays, pro-establishment plays and pro-
political ideology plays are being encouraged in *Nandi Natakostavams*.
The nexus between the persons of theatre educationalists and the
bureaucrats from the Government is increasing in the Telugu theatre
scenario. Concomitant to this development the theatre is also facing the
politics of representation from *N.R.I.* groups by *fixing* high remunerations
and attaching royal insignia attracting the theatre practitioners from all
sections. In the process, partly the *Parishats* and totally the folk are
marginalised.

On the whole the modern theatre encouraged competition among
the theatre practitioners. However, the politics of representation bounded
mostly on the compulsions of the theatre practitioners. It is what they wish
to present is what the audience are supposed to receive. The gaze is from
the theatre practitioners and not from the audiences. This super imposition
of principle of modernity undermined the representation of *marginality*. In
other words, socially, politically, culturally and economically marginalised
groups were either ignored or silenced in their theatrical productions. With
the result, a strong need emerged for certain political parties to voice the
concerns of the marginalised. This brought forth a desire in those political
parties to seek for the art forms of the marginal communities. In the
process they constructed 'theatre of the *marginalised*' by hybridising the
'literacy' with 'orality'. Literacy, in the sense, written play scripts were
produced with a conscious effort to propagate the party's ideologies. The
concept of orality on the other is a direct reference to the folk theatre
whose plays are *produced*, and transmitted on oral compositions. Thus
new theatre known as 'theatre of the marginalised' was entrepreneured by
the party politics through their representation of marginality.

The *third conclusion* of the thesis is that the political theatre in
India is started by the Right-wing parties. It developed due to the colonial
rule of the British. It is the colonial state versus anti-state powers formed
into national forces, primarily used theatre as a premise to express
independence. Unlike the European experience, where the political
theatre started by the Left-wing parties, in India the Right-wing parties
gear ed it up. Therefore the notion of political theatre as the left-wing
theatre needs to be questioned because of the Indian experience. It is a
conscious effort done by the freedom fighters of India under 'Cultural Renaissance' that paved the way for political theatre. Several plays were produced and performed with the theme of social reform in order to inculcated the spirit of unity among the subjects of the British regime. In the history of Telugu theatre the play production of pre-Independence times were seen mostly as social plays vowing to their content. In fact, they are of political theatre if viewed from the context in which the plays were written and produced. The discipline of theatre in a way undermined the importance of contextual theories and therefore relays only on content analysis. Typologies and classifications were made only based on content rather than context. This thesis made an attempt to view the typologies from a contextual premise. This view fundamentally changed the whole understanding of political theatre form a mere Left oriented theatre and incorporated as well the Right-wing political theatre.

The Right-wing theatre during pre-Independent period represented the whole Indian people as marginal because of their subjugation to the British. During the post-independent period, their representation of marginality shifted to those people of India who are socially and economically poor. To bring them to the mainstream under welfare state, schemes were planned and plays were produced showing upliftment as the core concern of the Right wing politics. This of course laid limitation on the Right-wing political theatre. They became more or less social plays
and did not acquire much status of political theatre for lack of their own characteristic feature.

The Marxist theory is based on the primary principles of social change through the initiation of ideology. Ideology for them is a conscious effort to transform the lives and environment of the people. This consciousness is due to the relationship that develops between the forces of production and relationship of production. Innately the dialectics that develop and operate between the forces of production and relations of production leads to the emergence of power structure and social hierarchy. Those who have the say over the forces of production veiled the power and formed into a political system. The power structures in a given political system represent the social consciousness of those that are outside the power structure for their own advantage. Arts and literature of the people became the areas wherein power structure of a given political system would choose to operate and represents its innate political agenda through them. Therefore theatre became one of the modus Operandi of the groups, which access the political power. Therefore political theatre innately corresponds to theatre that represent people by and large on whom they survive for political gains. In the bourgeois politics of representation, theatre is immensely used to sustain in power. Hence the bourgeois theatre staged plays representing the consciousness of the proletariat and to vent their feelings of suppression it attributed them to the concept of ‘fate’. The religious consciousness becomes the foremost
themes of the plays written to support the bourgeois status. Entertainment served as the primary goal of the bourgeois to come out of the realities of misery and live in a world of fantasy for a while. Like wise to uphold the bourgeois state as the 'welfare state', theatre is immensely used for several kinds of propaganda. The bourgeois is defined here in the classical sense of 'city dweller' that does not participate in the production force but instrumental in organizing them. The bourgeois state in later stage was identified as the state, which emerged in Capitalism, or the Capitalist State. The Capitalist State in general put forth the manifestoes towards achieving 'welfare state'. The Left wing party politics produced a category of intelligentsia that would articulate their ideology through literature and arts. Theatre therefore oriented towards promoting welfare activities under the bourgeois state. Most of the Right wing politics represented such theatre.

The Communists on the other used Egalitarianism as the chief goal of the state. The antithetical norm for egalitarianism is 'surplus value'. The surplus value generated out of alienation principle contributed to the exploitation of the 'have-nots' by 'haves'. The chief weapon in the hands of 'haves' to do so is by owning the means of production. This principle generated capital and produced the feudal and industrial societies. In both the cases the land less labour and industrial labour is hierarchically positioned in the Feudal/Capitalists state formations. The forms of entertainment therefore used by the communists was to question the
privileges of the ‘haves’ over the ‘have-nots’, in terms of ownership of the means of production, such as land and capital. The political theatre of the communists basically geared on the issues of landlessness, urbanisation, industrial disputes, exploitation of labour, exploitation of women and property and so on and so forth. The Marxist ideology specifically concerns with social change in terms of de-hierarching classes/groups and the theatre, which represents such plays and enactments, is clearly initiated by the intelligentsia of the Left wing parties.

The Communists were formed as Andhra Maha Sabha in the Nizam dominions during 1930s. Their ideals were based on the class struggle. Hence it has to address the lower class, farmers and agricultural laborer and all other working communities at a larger extent. Majority of their target people were illiterate and reside in rural areas. The only form of entertainment for them is folk arts. All these factors made the Communist Party to create a new genre of performance, which can be performed in any rural area with out much preparation and a form that can be understood even by illiterate people. The requirement of the hour for Communists in A.D. 1940s was to cater to the needs of the uprising Telengana armed struggle. In this context Communist Party had to propagate two issues simultaneously. (1) There is class difference between the farmers and landlord; hence a class struggle has to be built up in the interest of the working class under the leadership of Communist Party. (2) The atrocities of Fascist forces must be condemned and a
massive support should be built up among the Indian people. In order to address the masses on these issues, the Party had concentrated upon the traditional art forms of the people.

During the pre-Independence times in the Telangana regions one of the branches of the Communists was formed as Praja Natya Mandali and concentrated on the folk performing arts of Andhra Pradesh. It picked up most of the solo based performances for adaptation. Forms like Koya Vesham, Burra Katha, Jamukula Katha, Sodi, Kolatam were picked up and adopted for a social change. Around forty performing art forms were taken and adopted for a political purpose. In this phase the themes were not based on class struggle. The thrust of all the themes is freedom, anti fascism, Bengal drought and other related issues. Many scripts were developed in Burra Katha style. Writers like Vasireddi Bhaskerrao and Sunkara Satyanarayana who already had an experience in writing Burra Kathas made it easy to mould any theme into the form. In A.D. 1941 June 22, Hitler declared war on Russia. In the same year the Communist Party had taken out a movement against Fascism. This movement gave a chance to the cadre to agitate against Fascism. On the other side the drought in Bengal made Praja Natya Mandali to collect money and clothes through their performances. Popular Burrakatha artist Nazar wrote a katha by name Bengal Karuvu and performed all over Andhra. Later, the thrust is shifted from solo performances to playlets and plays. Even though there were considerable solo performances in this phase, the
efforts of the entire organisation were diverted to theatre. Plays like *Mundadugu, Maa Bhoomi* were written and performed in this phase.

After Praja Natya Mandali’s sincere efforts to address the masses with their own art forms, it was Jana Natya Mandali (JNM), which continued that tradition. Even though both the organisations were with the same ideological commitment, their approaches were different from each other. The parties heading these organisations have two different understandings on class struggle in India. Their understanding and manifestoes were reflected in the cultural arena also. Hence, Jana Natya Mandali’s cultural activities are different from the previous Praja Natya Mandali. Specifically JNM’s understanding of theatre is different from Praja Natya Mandali’s. Praja Natya Mandali (PNM) was interested in attracting the urban middle class audiences into cultural movement, for most of the leadership of PNM also hails from the middle class. Even though there were many performers in PNM, like Nazar, they remained as they are as artists but did not become leaders of the movement. The JNM does not have any kind of interest on middle class audiences. It did not have leadership from the middle class. It believed that the revolution comes with armed struggle, that too from the interior rural areas. Hence the party suggested the cadres to go to the villages. As a result JNM adopted traditional art forms like *Voggu Katha* and *Jalari Bhagotham*. Though Praja Natya Mandali followed traditional style of folk art forms in the beginning, later it showed much interest of proscenium plays. Where
as JNM never had any kind of interest on proscenium. As a result it developed it's own theatre form having a strong traditional base. All the performances of JNM were aimed for the rural audiences. The songs, tunes, instruments and the forms were designed to attract the rural masses at large. This ideological clarity of JNM made it a revolutionary cultural movement in Andhra. The main art forms of the organisation were song and street plays. It developed many songs on all most all oppressed communities. The very unique contribution of JNM was that it brought out a performance style in singing the songs. It used acting as a supportive medium for singing. The tradition of using the song for the propagation of the ideals was started ever since the Bhakti movement. A performer using style of song, a little bit of rhythmic body movement and dance, dialogue and with instrumental support was the basic performance style of Harikatha. The same style done by three people with different content can be seen in Burrakatha. Where as the singing style of Jana Natya Mandali was quite a different one in style when compared with the above mentioned art forms. Gaddar, a legendary figure of JNM was the one who popularized this style. He is a poet, performer, singer and main narrator. His contribution to the cultural movement of Andhra was immensely great. His style became so popular that even the governmental agencies adopt the same for publicising their political activities and schemes. All the leftist cultural groups, non-governmental agencies and apolitical organisations are following the same pattern.
The fourth conclusion of the thesis is that in the context of Telugu theatre one can trace out a category of theatre, which can be termed as "Theatre of the Marginalised" within the typology of theatre. Fixing the conceptual frame of theatre into idealism and Materialism is a modernist enterprise and therefore served for a limited purpose. This division is more useful for critiquing the intellectual backdrops of theatre practices than for constructing theatre to a social relevance. The on going debate on social relevance is to find out for whose goal that the theatre served? This innately connected to the idea of politics of representation. In finding out this issue a new dimension is brought forth into the epistemology of theatre, which is concerned towards marginalised, and their representation in theatre.

It is found from the analysis that marginality in India can be defined from two broad viewpoints. One is 'outcaste' and the other is 'out laws'. This social category of out caste in India resulted in keeping away certain communities from the mainstream of social behaviour. Hierarchically they are placed beneath the Varna system and considered as Panachama Varna. This relegated them the position of untouchables throughout the history from ancient to modern until the independence of India. This social stigma uniquely places them as polluted once and delegated the services related to purifying the habitats of the upper castes (Chaturvarna).

The category of 'outlaws' is based on the principle of deviance from the established social order. The social orders are always established by
the dominant powers and label others who deviate from such as out laws. Therefore it is power relationships that constitute the core element of marginality in the cases of construction of the idea of 'out castes' and 'out laws'. Marginality as such then brings forth the issue of identity. Who identifies a group or a phenomenon as marginalised? Whether the dominant ones? Or the marginalised itself? This dichotomy brings forth the politics of representation of marginality.

The theatre of the marginalised is constructed on a discourse pattern. 'Discourse' is not simply what people (or individual) say but what people (individual) think. What goes between thinking and saying constitute the core element of discourse. In other words, an utterance is a constituent of physical realm, which represents experience as knowledge. In this sense what is being said tantamount to what is being experienced. Experience when gets into mnemonic system, forms the part of psyche and become the basis for the thought process. Thinking therefore represents such psyche, which comes from the experience. The thought process when becomes systamatised forms ideology. Ideology when translated into play generates experiences at metaphysical realm, which constitute the very plot structure of the play. The theatre of the marginalised therefore presents metaphysical experience of the land less and to subvert such reality seeks explanations from ideology, which in turn becomes the power of the marginalised. This complexity is well depicted in the plays of *Maa Bhoomi* and *Bhoomi Bhagotham*. Therefore the
theatre of the marginalised is not simply a state for contesting ideology but a place for transforming the ideologies into reality. In order to gain such transformation, the theatre of the marginalised adopted itself to the native methods of presenting performances. In order to achieve this goal some of the techniques were adopted and they form as the significant features of theatre of the marginalised.

**Salient features of Theatre of the Marginalised:**

In order to define a theatre into a particular type, it needs certain special features. For instance Padyanatakam as a genre of Telugu theatre exists because of the feature of Padyam as the form of dialogue between the dyed characters. Similarly rendition of Padyam acquires prominence than the presentation of the play in its theatrical formats. Like wise Parishat plays as a distinct genre can be identified with the context of competition. It is the competition, which decides the type of the theme, manner of presentation, size of the group and length of the play etc.

To identify a theatre as theatre of the marginalised, it should also have certain characteristics. From the analysis of the data presented in the thesis the following significant features are identified as the features of theatre of the marginalised.
1. Theatre of the marginalised is a hybridised theatre wherein the plays can be staged both as proscenium kind and non-proscenium type. The proscenium kind is basically guided by the written plays wherein the entry and exit of the characters are clearly marked during the play. They are presented in the linear fashion. In the case of non-proscenium theatre the stages are either circular or semi circular and a demarcation between the performer and audience is blurred. In this case the entry and exit of the characters is symbolic and supported by the chorus, which is also placed on the stage itself. The plays Maa Bhoomi and Bhoomi Bhagotham are suitable for both the stages as they are written plays and at the same time presented through the dance and song sequence in non-linear fashion.

2. The second feature of the theatre of the marginalised is that the entry and exit of the characters are constructed on the basis of folk theatre. In the folk theatre such as Yakshaganam, Veedhi Natakam, Bhagavatham, Toorpu Bhagavatham etc., the characters introduce themselves not only their names but also their nature and personality. In folk theatre two persons hold a curtain when the character being behind the curtain introduces to the audiences. However the theatre of the marginalised no such curtains is placed between the audiences and actors. The actors enter in a rhythmic style and introduce itself in a verse
form. The body language of the character is used as an additional feature to indicate the nature of the character. This is unique to the theatre of the marginalised.

3. The theatre of the marginalised is constructed on song and dance sequences and interlude with the dialogues. Song and dance is also a feature of folk theatre but is used more for entertaining than for the construction of the text of the play. In the theatre of marginalised song and dance sequences are basically used to construct the text of the play and as well as to create the moods and emotions during the play. This textual feature is considered as another significant feature of theatre of marginalised.

4. The plays of the modern theatre can usually be divided into acts and scenes and are strictly adhere to while presenting the play. They are constructed as units of the play to show linear progression of the play. In the case of theatre of the marginalised, the division of the play into acts and scenes are not strictly followed. The song and dance is used as continuum between the scenes and acts and therefore a strict demarcation of the units is not all that comfortable. For this reason the duration of the plays in the theatre of the marginalised become flexible. The duration of the play can be denoted based on the
convenience and context. This flexibility is not found in the modern play productions.

5. The plays of the theatre of marginalised are inconclusive and open ended, indicating the ongoing struggle with the powers of dominance represented in the form of state, landlord, police etc. these plays show unity and hope as climax of the plays winning over the dominant by the marginalised is shown as a temporary phenomena and to continue that it seeks unity as the force behind the success of the marginalised. This paradox of gain and less is shown theatre of marginalised.

6. Another feature of theatre of the marginalised is that the negative characters representing the dominant power are always more in number than the positive characters which represent the marginalised. Ironically the marginalised being the week are represented fewer in number as characters. Subverting the minority into dominance being the theme of the plays, the theatre of the marginalised created more space and time duration for the characters representing marginality.

7. Though the characters representing negative roles are more in number the time duration they take on stage while presenting the play is less when compared to the characters representing positive roles. In fact the positive characters, which represent
the marginalised, are less in number but take more time duration on stage. This art of subversion of the week appearing as strong on stage is a unique feature of theatre of the marginalised.

8. The composition of actors of theatre of the marginalised is from both professionals and armatures. It is interest in the party ideology, which becomes the driving force of actors rather than theatre itself. However professionals whose interest in theatre force them to look for creative avenues to express party ideology through theatre. The armatures, on the other, are party’s activists who are trained to spread it through theatre. This professional/armature combination of actors is unique to the theatre of the marginalised.

9. The party ideology being the driving force of the actors casting in the plays do not strictly confine to the rules of theatre. The actors whose physic is suitable for expressing villainy need not cast villainy characters. Moreover the characters do not have much make-up and costumes and therefore they are symbolically suggested through the body language and textual reference.

10. In the folk theatre the males perform mostly the women roles. Hence cross-dressing is a feature of the folk theatre. In theatre
of marginalised women’s roles are played by women only and also the women party workers participate in the chorus. Whereas the modern theatre is facing scarcity of women artists. In fact in modern theatre, keeping in view the scarcity of women actors, the playwrights introduce less number of women characters. This is not the case with theatre of the marginalised. In fact both men and women characters are in equal number.

11. The modern theatre productions gave much importance to technical aspects of theatre such as lighting, set design, sound, special effects etc. The theatre of the marginalised, contrary to this, give less importance to technical aspects of theatre. In folk theatre make-up and costume is given much importance and properties are used as suggestive. The theatre of the marginalised does not give much importance to make-up and costume. In other words, make-up and costume function not as indexical or iconic but symbolic sign.

12. The context of the play production surround on party meetings, movements, agitations, strikes, demonstrations and dharnas etc. This unique feature of the theatre of the marginalised incorporates the audience into the play and therefore the audiences do not remain as passive onlookers as it is in the case of modern theatre but became active recipients of the ideology which is imparted to the theatre and gear them up to
actions. This incorporative element of theatre of the marginalised transforms ideology into action and audience into event makers.

Thus the theatre of the marginalised emerges as an entity in the history of Telugu theatre and warrant special attention both from the academicians and practitioners.