
CHAPTER VII

SUMMING UP

A new phase began in the life of civilization with the emergence of cities. The geographers, sociologists, town planners view city as an important ingredient in their respective spheres of study, but each class of these specialists study city from their angles of interest. There are variant forms of definition of the city, the view points reflecting changing times. The historians look at the city as a concrete expression of civilization coming very close to the sociologists. The historians are evincing new interest in focussing their attention on the importance of local history at different levels (village, town and city). As the historical perspective of the globe is deepening, concurrently ignorance about local history is growing.

The interest shown in the study of local history is an attempt to correct this situation both among the historians and the students of history. The earlier local studies were rigidly restricted to the study of the villages and their scope is now extended to include towns and cities. There is growing awareness that the future of nations lies in the cities. The present study makes an attempt to understand the contributions made by a particular segment to the significant growth of a city in a historical perspective.

In India this important area has drawn the serious attention of the historians, though some efforts have been made in other aspects of the city like geography, population studies, city planning and sociology. Concerning the historical study of Madras city, the earlier attempts are not comprehensive and therefore the present study assumes significance.

Madras city served as the capital for almost the whole of South India for long. Consequent to the reorganisation of states, Madras became the capital of Tamilnadu. After establishing a settlement at Masulipatam, the British started looking for a better location. They obtained a grant from the Damarla brothers, the Andhra chieftains, to build a fort at Chennapatnam. As the construction of the

fort was in progress, the new settlement started with weavers, migrants from the Andhra region. During the eighteenth century, the settlement blossomed into a city.

The Andhras are of ancient origin and the very word 'Andhra' connotes courage. The Andhras numbering about 9 crores live predominantly in Andhra Pradesh, the fifth largest state in India. The word 'Andhra' is equally applicable to land, the people and the language, in course of time developed name of its own 'Telugu'. The Andhras have migrated to other parts of India and abroad, and their movements to the South (Tamil region) was active during the reign of Vijayanagara Empire. The largest number of Telugu speaking people are found in many parts of Tamilnadu, their concentration being very high in Madras city. There has been harmonious relationship between the Tamils and the Andhras. A number of Andhras have enriched Tamil literature and vice-versa.

The Andhras are the founding fathers of Madras city. The first migration started during the initial years of the East India Company's rule. When Madras was made the capital city, the second influx started and the final phase began after the rise of industry in Madras. There are currently about sixteen lakhs of Andhras living in Madras city. They

are found in all walks of life.

Right from the beginning there were Andhra merchants assisting the British trade. They continued to wield power throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. Though the growth of the city is a captivating story its genesis is a puzzle. The historians have no unanimity about the origin of Madras. An array of achievement stand to the credit of Andhras in the overall development of Madras city. The social movements are generally used to denote a variety of collective efforts to bring about a change in certain social institutions or to create a new order. In dealing with the social contributions of the Andhras the focus is restricted to the areas of social work, journalism, literature, law and local administration.

To counteract the growing influence of the Christians, Vedasamajam was started in Madras. Veeresalingam initiated widow remarriages. Durgabhai Deshmukh launched several women welfare programmes, by founding the Andhra Mahila Sabha. Many women emulated the example of Durgabhai Deshmukh. The literary contributions of Andhras started in Madras as early as the first decade of the nineteenth century. By mid 19th century Madras became the centre for Telugu publications. Vedam Venkataraya Sastry can be considered as a pioneer

publisher of this period. One of the landmarks in the history of Telugu literary contributions was the founding of Andhra Sahitya Parishad in Madras in 1911. Even now Madras continues to be the centre for many Telugu writers and publishers.

There is a long list of lawyers who have made name and fame in the city. Migrating to an unfamiliar environment of the city, many of them rose to the positions of eminence. They won the admiration of English judges for the display of fearlessness, independence and self-confidence. Right from the inception of the Madras Corporation many Andhras occupied, elected and held executive positions. Their contributions went a long way in elevating the status of Madras Corporation to a place of pride in the country. The greatest sacrifice of the Andhras in the service of the Corporation is in the area of scavenging to keep the city clean.

By 1850 the elite of Madras took a keen interest in the formation of socio-political organisations to ventilate the grievances of the public. The elitist organisations appeared in the form of 'Madras Native Association' and 'Hindu Literary Society'. The Hindu Literary Society was created in 1830s to safeguard the traditional institutions

and habits. During its short span of existence, it could revive the Hindu consciousness. The 'Madras Native Association' (MNA) was founded in 1852 in order to safeguard the interests of South India. Throughout the 1850s, period of its meaningful existence, the MNA remained vigilant and critical of the government policies. As an active member of the Association, Gazula Lakshmi Narasu Chetty, a Telugu born in Madras city was a doyen of mass awakening. He launched 'Crescent', an English paper to counteract the spread of influence of the Christian missionaries. He was responsible for bringing home to the East India Company authorities certain wrongs and irregularities perpetuated in the Company's rule. With undaunted courage and indomitable will he fought for the people's liberties.

With the abolition of the Company's rule and the proclamation of the direct rule by the Crown, a new optimism appeared in the nationalist circles of Madras. Politicisation of Madras intellectuals became manifest with the establishment of 'Madras Mahajana Sabha' in 1884. The aim of the body was to watch the public interests and to take such steps from time to time. Many Andhras were the driving force behind the formation of the Mahajana Sabha.

Another important event in the course of political

contributions of the Andhras is in the formation of a new political party. In the first decade of the present century, there were transparent inequalities between the high caste groups and low caste groups. To correct this imbalance a non-Brahmin movement started building up. A political association under the name of 'South India Liberal Federation' was started which later came to be known as Justice Party. Pitti Theagaraya Chetty, an Andhra became its first secretary. The primary objective of the Justice Party was to strive for the allround educational, material and moral progress of non-Brahmins. The party contested 1920 elections and was voted to power. The Andhras held the Chiefministership of the successive Justice party government.

India is fortunate to have a galaxy of immortal personalities of Telugu origin. Their commitment to the freedom struggle was total. The Telugus participated in the freedom struggle activities taking place in Madras city related to Tanguturi Prakasam Pantulu, Durgabhai Deshmukh, K. Nageswara Rao and a few others. Prakasam was the dominating spirit in South India with Madras as his base. His political activities spanned over 47 long years. In 1928 when Simon Commission arrived in Madras he made history by

the courage he displayed before the commission. He was in the forefront of the commission when the situation became critical, he braved his chest to the bayonets of the British soldiers. He led civil disobedience movements from Madras. In 1930 he led the Salt Satyagraha and earned a respectable name for Madras city. With the arrest of Prakasam Pantulu, Durgabhai Deshmukh and Nageswara Rao took the mantle of leadership and led the movement.

The Andhras' contribution to the enrichment of the city life have been multifarious and everlasting. The capital city of Madras still remains as one of the important cultural centres of Telugu speaking people. To many writers, publishers, artists, cine artists, directors, producers Madras still remains an abode. They have created a number of cultural organisations and educational institutions and nurtured them. Raghupathi Venkaiah, a pioneer in the South Indian cinema had his first moorings in Madras city.

The Telugu artists extended far-reaching influences on the South Indian Cinema. The famous composers of the 19th century like Tachur Singaracharlu and Pandala Gurumurthy Sastry lived here. Two legendaries of Carnatic music - Balamurali Krishna and Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu contributed

to the richness of Carnatic music from the city. Another area of fine arts where Andhras made a name is classical dance Kuchipudi. Vempati China Satyam founded Kuchipudi Art Academy in 1963 and transformed Kuchipudi dance to its sublime heights.

There are a sizeable number of Telugu associations devoted to the cause of cultural activities. Among the local Telugu associations prominent are Chennapuri Andhra Maha Sabha, Kalabharathi, Kalasagar, Andhra Kala Samithi, Madras Telugu Academy, Telugu Mahajana Samajam, Telugu Pattana Mandiram, The Federation of Madras Telugu Peoples' Association. The Andhras do not lag behind others in philanthropy to the justifying causes. The innumerable institutions are Kanyakaparameswari Devasthanam Charities, Bysani Madhava Chetty Trust, Singamsetty Yathindrula Chetty Trust, Rao Bahadur Kalavala Kannan Chetty Charities, Pachaiyappa Trust, Kesari Institutions, Kandaswamy Naidu Charities etc.

Another important area where the Andhras have made their presence felt is in the area of medicare. The earlier contributions starting from the last quarter of the nineteenth century came from Kasinadhuni Nageswara Rao, Pandit Divi Gopalacharlu, Kesari Gandham Krishna Rao and

Achanta Lakshmipathi.

Divi Gopalacharlu starting his career as the Chief Physician of the Kanyaka Parameswari Charities free dispensary was instrumental in starting the Madras Ayurveda Laboratories and the Ayurvedic College at Madras. Despite the deeprooted hatred of the British against the oriental medical systems, Gopalcharlu practised Ayurveda. He earned laurels from home and abroad for his outstanding contributions to the Ayurvedic medicine.

Another name that figures among the earlier contributors was K.S. Kesari. Kesari after fighting many odds of life, joined the Kanyakaparmeswari free dispensary. Encouraged by his friends, he founded Kesari Kuteeram. He produced popular tonics like Arka and Amruta. Way back in 1893 K.Nageswara Rao Pantulu introduced Amrutanjanam, a home remedy which has had a history of a century. Dr. Achanta Lakshmipathi's contribution to medicine especially to that of ayurveda is significant. Trained in allopathy he turned his interest to ayurveda. Convinced by the inherent limitations of the western system of medicine and by the proven superiority of the ayurveda, he started spreading the values of ayurveda. His popularity spread across the globe and his patients included many from the South Asian

countries.

In recent years there have been innumerable Andhras who have distinguished themselves as outstanding doctors. The two names that are associated with the concept of corporate hospitals are B.Nagi Reddy, the founder of Vijaya Hospitals and Dr. C. Pratap Reddy, the founder of Apollo Hospitals. Nagi Reddy's contribution to the growth of Madras city was multi - directional. In all his endeavours he was an instant success. He realised that Madras city lacked super speciality hospitals. The creation of Vijaya Hospitals in 1972 was an attempt to fulfil the long-felt desire of the city public. Dr.C.Pratap Reddy is the architect of the Apollo Hospital commissioned in 1983. The Apollo heralded a new era in medicare. While maintaining the character of a super-speciality, one of the primary aims of the hospital is to launch health care delivery system in India. The Apollo centres have started coming up in many parts of the country. Through the efforts of these two eminent Andhras, Madras city has today become the "Mecca of medicare" in this part of the world.

Despite all these contributions, the Telugu migrants to Madras city have been cut off from the mainstream of Telugu influences promoting a tendency of isolation among them.

Their language has been tainted, their food habits localised and their customs and traditions modified. The over all effect is that today they are neither totally Tamils nor Telugus if one goes by the linguistic characteristics. The bifurcation of the state four decades ago worsened the situation. One of the virtues of Telugus is tolerance and acclimitisation. Without taking confrontationalist postures they can fuse themselves with the local population while maintaining their identity. The present study reveals a host of problems encountered by the Telugus living in Madras city. They primarily relate to education, employment avenues, political participation and cultural contribution.

Contrary to the common view that language is a vehicle of expression, it is a symbol of pride and a binding force of any community. The love for the mother tongue among the Telugu appears to be weak. This tendency is reflected in the manner that is spoken and written. It is very difficult to understand the carelessness and indifference. But it is not difficult to understand the reasons underlying the indifference.

Another compelling factor weakening Telugu language is economic. The Telugus have to make a choice between the bread and the language. They have been driven to learn

Tamil in order to secure jobs. This is fast distancing them from the Telugu language.

One of the ways of feeling the pulse of Telugu presence in the city is their conversation in Telugu on the public places. The Telugus have an inherent tendency to avoid speaking Telugu if they know other languages eventhough their competence is shallow. The neglect might be owing to identify with the local people or to suppress their identity. It is no exaggeration to say that if two persons of other Southern language meet, in the natural choice of expression is a matter of spontenity in their mother tongue. The following incident proves that what is true of Telugus. At a prominent Telugu literary conference seven of the nine participants spoke in English, while the remaining two speaking Telugu happened to be from the U.S.A.

Even if opportunities are provided to teach mother tongue to the children of minorities, it is not popular as this is more burdensome to the majority. Naturally, the students are more worried about the percentage of marks than learning their mother tongue in view of the competition in the educational field. Even in Tamilnadu where a two language formula is in vogue, facilities are not created and the students and their parents prefer English and Tamil to

Telugu.

On the basis of the present study the following suggestions are offered.

1. The Government of Andhra Pradesh can initiate steps to promote exchange programmes between the Telugu residents of Andhra Pradesh and those of the city. The exchange will be more meaningful if it is operated at more than one level. The experiences are bound to be rewarding and enriching.

2. Again it is the Governemnt of Andhra Pradesh that can make a liberal provision of seats in the educational institutions for those settled in Tamilnadu. A fair sum of money be earmarked for the award of scholarships to the students on a hundred percent cost basis.

3. The Telugu families living in Madras city often find it difficult to have access to reading materials in Telugu. The materials which are recreational and also in the nature of text books should be made available at subsidised rates. It is desirable to produce materials on the cultural history of Telugus and learner books in Telugu language exclusively meant for bilinguals.

4. All over the world the minorities - Ethnic and Linguistic living in the cities have come to realise that

they have special problems and they need a special forum to seek redressal. It is for this purpose powerful lobby has to be created. The Telugus being numerically strong and wealthy will not find it difficult to bring upon pressure on the government of Tamilnadu to look into their problems.

5. The organisation of meetings, conferences, cultural activities in the Madras city in a periodical basis will go a long way in reviving language consciousness and pride among the Telugus living in the city. The World Confederation of Telugus held recently in the city is one such example.

6. It is desirable to establish an institute in the city for the promotion of Telugu language and literature. The institute should direct its efforts to conduct research on the teaching of Telugu language in bilingual environment and come out with solutions. It is also desirable for this institute to start popular magazines in telugu which can be a channel of expression for the Telugus of Madras city. It can also encourage the publication of materials on the contribution of Telugus to the growth and development of Madras city, compilation of directory like 'who is who' of Telugus in Madras city and establishment of a chain of libraries with stock of books reflecting Telugu culture,

history and heiritage.

7. Telugu should be given a bilingual status. This change will automatically help to (a) provide an equal status to Telugu in terms of instruction in the educational institutions. (b) make more time available for Telugu programmes on Doordarshan and All India Radio. (c) to make Telugu language as a second language in the official communication. The example of Singapore is worth emulating the three languages - Chinese, Tamil and English are officially recognised languages in Singapore, and (d) to make announcements in Telugu at public places like the bus stations, airports and the railway stations.