

**TELUGUS DIASPORA AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION:  
THE IMPACT OF TELUGU CULTURE  
IN SOUTH EAST ASIA, NORTH EAST AND SOUTH AFRICA**

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In this paper an attempt has been made to highlight the contribution of Andhras outside Indian peninsula right from the earliest times. The Telugu migrants had contributed for the economic development of the immigrant nations and also strenuously contribute to spread Telugu Culture and Civilization in the far islands.

The word ‘Diaspora’ means ‘Migration’. Migration is an essential ingredient of global social change. People migrate to places where resources are more easily available.

The term Diaspora is derived from the Greek word ‘Dia’ which means ‘through’ and ‘Kpeiro’ which means ‘to scatter’. It was originally used for dispersion of Jews after the exile from Babylon in 600 B.C. and later to refer to all the Jewish people scatter in exile outside Palestine. Today the term has usually used for the people who scatter away from their home countries with a distinctive collective memory.

Andhra was a meeting place for the Roman traders Printed cotton fabrics of Andhra weavers were exported to Axum (Ethopia), Arabia, Egypt, and other places. Roman coins were found in Andhra Pradesh which testifies that there was brisk trade between Rome and Andhra. We find that five hoards contain exclusively coins of Tiberius (1437 AD) and the coins of Augustus at Karim Nagar. Roman trade was extensively flourished in Andhra Pradesh (Gupta 1965, 13-17).

Telugu Culture had penetrated into Sri Lanka during 13<sup>th</sup> Century. The majority of weavers of Jafna town are Telugus. Telugus were widely found in the Northern Sri Lanka.

The last four kings of Kandi region in Sri Lanka were Nayakas of Telugu dynasty. The bangle traders at Kadirigam are Telugus. Majority of Municipal employees at Colombo are Telugu speaking people.

There was close resemblance between Sri Lanka and Andhra with regard to art and architecture. The frescoes of Syria show the influence of Ajantha and Amaravathi Sculptures are the sources of inspiration for Sri Lanka Buddhist architecture (Seckel 1964, 44-45).

The colonial expansion of Andhras gave the South East Asian Regions a new religion, art and Architecture and created a zest in them for higher life. Even today the Ramayana and the Mahabharatha have a high place in Indo Persian intellectual and social life.

Indian Mission achieved great source in spread of Buddhism in south East Asia. The images of Buddha found Malaya coincides with that of Buddha images found at Buddam in Guntur District (Moorehead 1957, 34).

The art of Amaravathi reached its high water mark in the later of half of the second and third century AD at 'D'Jember in Eastern Jawa. Buddha image of Palembang shows affinities in the art of Amaravathi. The Daasas of Anuradhapuram in Srilanka head the carvings of Amaravathi art (Sircar 1983, 235).

Himansu Bhushan Sarkar remarks that the Ananda temple in Burma was built by King Kyon Zittha ( 1084-1112 AD) had resembles with that of Andhra styles (Sircar 1983, 235).

The Hindu settlements in Java and Sumatra because the channels for the tradition of Indian culture. The stories of Ramayana and Mahabharata were written on the walls of the temple at Angkorvat in Cambodia.

Jayavarman who ruled Kamboja in 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. compared himself with Sree Sailam, a holy shavite centre in Andhra Pradesh.

The influence of Balinese Paintings were found in Andhra paintings, Jagadesh Mittal observes that the rock forms the treatment of the cave fascination of Rama and the Jungle as well as the clouds and trees are the reminiscent of what are finds in the paintings of distant Bali.

The color schemes of almost all the paintings in Ramayana copy available at Salarjung Museum at Hyderabad radiates a Balinese scroll like effect (Mittal 1965, 31).

The immigrants from South Asian Regions of Hazratmaulat, Mahara and Yaman had contributed much for promotion of Arabic literature. The foreigners at the courts of Abullah and Abul Hasan Qutb shah had made Hyderabad an important centre of Arabic literature in the second half of the seventeenth century (Muhibibi s.d., 697).

Hyderabad in the middle and the late 17<sup>th</sup> century the foremost centre where Arabic Poetry was cultivated by poets drawn from Arabian Countries especially from Syria, and followers of Shiite Creed.

According to Mahavamsa a Srilankan Buddhist Book reveals that thousands of Buddhists used to visit Nagarjunakonda from Anuradhapura of Srilanka. Shashi Asthana says that the intercourse between Andhra and Srilanka gave an impact to the trade between the two countries (Shashi 1976, 210).

The Andhra contribution is very splendid in South Africa On 28<sup>th</sup> June 1891, a ship called S.S. Umtata carried 159 Telugus to Durban from Madras. Basu Naidu was the first Telugu man who landed at South Africa. G.B. Tambi Naidu had assisted Gandhiji non violent struggle in South Africa in 1914.

The Telugus were widely located at Netal, Peter Marijikhhar, Durban Stranger Cape town and port Elizabeth. Telugus contributed was outstanding in gold mining industry in South Africa. A furniture factory of Telugu Ganga Raju family was popular in Stranger in South Africa. Nallavari family contributed much for Indians industrialization in South Africa. Telugu Baptist Mission in South Africa had done excellent work for the promotion of Telugu language with its headquarters at Kersene in South Africa (Venkateswara Rao 1975, 119).

There were 10lakh Telugus during 1939 alone in Burma. Andhras are more in number in the areas located at Rangoon, Moulmeen, Mergu, Tawai, Basin, Pegu, Thatan etc. (Chinnaya Swamy 1975, n.k.)

Telugu Associations are doing yeoman service for the promotion of Telugu Language and Culture in Overseas. In 1927 Maritius Andhra Mahasabha was founded and doing excellent service for promotion of Telugu culture (Chennaya Reddy 1975, n.k.).<sup>12</sup>

Andhra Maha Jana Sangam is rendering economic assistance to Telugus in Burma. Andhra Sangam in Fizi is running a Telugu School at Latoka in Fizi Country (Chinnaya Swamy 1975, n.k.).

There are 50,600 Telugus in South Africa and In 1931 South African Andhra Maha Sabha was started. In 1924 Sarojini Naidu visited South Africa and insisted that the need for Telugu renaissance (Chinnaya Swamy 1975, n.k.).

Malaya Andhra Sangam was founded in 1956 by Sri Kunda Siddaiah in Malaysia and rendering service for the promotion of Telugu language.

To conclude, Telugus Played a tremendous role in spreading Telugu culture and they taught Telugu Language to its Kindred and Preserved Telugu identity and syncretic traditions. Further, Telugus had done yeoman service for the economic development of where they lived.

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