



A BRIEF ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE GENERICS OF TELUGU PLACE NAMES

(Based on Inscriptions from 14th to 16th Century)

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ABSTRACT

The Place names if studied in scientific manner, are sure to throw welcome light on various aspects like Political history, Social History, Cultural History, Anthropology, Geography and Linguistics. A place name generally consists of two units, namely specific and generic. More than 30 generics are found among the Telugu place names in the inscriptions of the 14th to 16th Century. Among them some generics are not found in the pre 14th century inscriptions ex : Achala, Doddi, Tota. There are some generics which were not found mentioned in the inscriptions of the 14th to 16th Century but mentioned in the pre 14th Century. And more than 20 generics are found from the earliest to the 16th Century inscriptions. In this article the Telugu place names generics found in the inscriptions of the 14th to 16th Century are classified with reference to their meaning. A careful study of the distribution of the Telugu place name generics over different regions of the Telugu speaking states that is Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the then Andhra Pradesh state, will throw welcome light on the economic and geographical aspects. The generics Kallu, Balli, Penta and uru are common all over the then Andhra Pradesh State (present Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states. Among the all collected generics the palli and uru have the highest frequency. Pura and Padu occupy the next place.

Keywords: 1) Telugu Place names. 2) Inscription. 3) Generics. 4) Andhra Pradesh. 5) Telangana. 6) Century.



INTRODUCTION

While in many countries, particularly West, Scientific researches have been carried out in the onomastics scholars in India started evincing serious interest in the field of toponamics since about two decades. Now it is well established that the place names, if studied in a scientific manner, are sure to throw welcome light on various aspects like Political history, Social history, cultural history, Anthropology, Geography and Linguistics. The place names in Telugu occur in inscriptions right from the dawn of the Christian Era. As the centuries roll by the number of epigraphical references to place names becomes very impressive. A careful study of the place names of not only the then Andhra Pradesh state but also of other states suggests. that the pattern of naming a place in different parts of the country has common characteristics. Several places acquired their names from their geographical features like the proximity of hill, mount, water sources like large tanks and small streams and variety of flora. A place name generally consists of two units, namely specific and generic. A careful study of the distribution of the place name generics over different regions of the two Telugu speaking states will throw welcome light on the economic and geographical aspects. It may be noted that the occurrence of some generics is intense while in some cases it is not so. Ex : The generics Kallu, Balli, Penta, and Uru are common all over the then Andhra Pradesh state. Among all collected generics the Palli and Uru have the highest frequency. In this Article the Telugu place name generics found in the inscriptions of the 14th to 16th century are classified with reference to their meaning.

A place name generally consists of two units, viz., specific and generic. The following generics are found among the Telugu names in the inscriptions of the 14th to 16th century.

Achala, arama, chedu, cherla, cheruvu, dala, doddi, dinne, durgam eru, gadda, gamdi, gattu, giri, grama, gudu, gumdla, kanama, kallu, kalava, kodu, komda, kota, kumta, madugu, mala, mangalam, marri, mirru, mitta, mudu, nagara, padu, paka, palem, palli, parru, pattanam, pemta, prolu, pumdi, pura, yeru, sagaramu, saila, samudra, tota, uru, vada, vali and vidu.

The generics achala, adri, doddi, dinna, kanama, palem, sagaram and tota are not found in the pre 14th century inscriptions.

The following are the generics which were not found mentioned in the inscriptions of the 14th to 16th century mentioned in the pre 14th century.

Ambhudi, Angadi, ani, banda, bayalu, chaturvedi – mangalam, chedu, chelama, cheri, devi, dona, dova, eppa, ganru, gummi, gundamu, idi, iki, ili, kada, kadu, kal, kara, karru, kataka, khandi, koduka, konra, koru, kuduru, kuppa, kuruke, kurru, kuruva, kuta, lanka, mada, madi, mudha, manchi, medu, muti, mutra, nandu, norti, nuyyu, padiya, paka, parra, patti, pdaru, pola, pulolu, punta, rayi, tataka, tenki, tippa, toru, uta, vagu and vaya.

Among the above-mentioned generics arama, chedu, cherla, cheruvu, dala, durgam, eru, gadda, gamdi, gattu, giri, gudi, gumdla, kallu, kalva, kodu, komda, kota, kunta, madugu, mala, mangalam, marri, mirru, nitta, mudi, nagara, padu, paka, palli, parru, pattanam, pemta, prolu, pumdi, pura, revu, saila, samudram, uru, vada, vidu are found from the earliest to the 16th century inscriptions.

CLASSIFICATION:

In this article the place-name generics found in the Inscriptions of the 14th to 16th century are classified with reference to their meaning.

The Classification is as follows:

1. Generics which denote mere habitation: grama, parru, pundi, pura, dala, uru, vada and vidu.
2. Generics which denote water resources: cheruvu, samudra, eru, gadda, kunta, kalva, kudu, madugu, prolu and revu.
3. Generics denoting rocks, hills etc : giri, saila, gumdla, komda, mitta and mirru.
4. Generics which denote religion: aramamu, palli and gudi,
5. Generics which denote trading centres : nagara, pattanam and pemta.
6. Generics which denote the type of soil: chedu
7. Generics denoting rehabilitation: Padu
8. Miscellaneous: dinne, durgam, kota, mala and mamgalam.

Generics which lost their original meaning:

There are some generics which lost their original meaning and significance. They are, nagara, pattana, peta and pura.

From the ancient times 'nagara' is associated with merchant guilds. It was used in the sense of a town which was a centre of trade activities. But in modern times the word or generic nagara is used even to denote a part of a town or village. Same is the case with peta also. Peta means a row and it was used in the sense of a locality which had a row of shops. But in course of time peta came to denote a part of a town and finally a village or town.

The word pattana originally indicated a place of maritime trade activity. As a place name generic, it is generally found fixed to port-towns which were usually commercial centers.



However, in course of time the word pattana also lost its significance and came to signify any big town irrespective of its location.

It is significant to note that of the 49 place name generics listed as many as 36 belong to the group of Dravidian languages while the remaining 13 are of Sanskritic origin. Of the generics of the Sanskritic origin Sagara and Samudra are used in the sense of a tank. It is apparent that these Sanskrit words were chosen for generics in place of more popular Telugu word cheruvu to make the place name high sounding. Here it may be recalled that in the hundred Place name generics found in the pre 14th century inscriptions only 21 were of Sanskritic origin. This clearly attests to the predominance of the Dravidian element on the place names.

Naturally some of the place names which are located the border areas have generics of those languages spoken in the neighboring areas. Generally, such place name generics are not found in the interior places. e.g., The place name generic mangalam is found mostly in the areas bordering Andhra and Tamilnadu. However, some times due to cultural or political influence such generics may be found even in the areas which are not on the borders. e.g., The town Visakhapatnam, which is on the east coast, far away from Tamilnadu, had a second name Kulotungachola Chaturvedimangalam which was named after the Chola emperor Kulotungachola. The Kannada place name generic halli which is equivalent to Telugu palli is found in the place names in the areas bordering Andhra and Karnataka. Though it does not fall within the scope of the article it may not out of place to mention that the Persian word Abad gained much occurrence as a place name generic during the 17th and 18th centuries, particularly in the Telengana region. The reason for this is obvious.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE GENERICS

A careful study of the distribution of the Telugu place name generics over different regions of the then Andhra country will throw welcome light on the economic and geographical aspects. It may be noted that the occurrence of some generics is intense while in some cases it is not so.

The generics kallu, balli, pemta and uru are common all over the then Andhra Pradesh. Among all collected generics palli and uru have the highest frequency. Pura and padu occupy the next place. Pura is found in Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam, Guntur, Prakasam, Chittoor, Anantapur, Cuddapah and Mahabubnagar districts while the generic padu is found in the Rayalasila and Telangana Regions.

The generic Kota is found in Visakhapatnam, Warangal, Guntur and in all the four districts of Rayalasila in present Andhra Pradesh state .

The generics which have the next wide frequency are cheruvu as they are found in the districts of Guntur, Prakasam, Chittoor, Cuddapah, Anantapur and Kurnool. Konda is found in the districts of Srikakulam, Krishna, Nellore, Chittoor, Cuddapah and Kurnool. Pumdi is found in the Districts of Visakhapatnam, West Godavari, Krishna, Guntur and Anantapur. Pattana is found in the Visakhapatnam, Guntur, Krishna, Chittoor, Cuddapah and Anantapur districts. The remaining generics are in less frequency.

CONCLUSION:

It has been briefly analyzed above that the inscriptions form from an indispensable source material to understand the correct import of a place name. however, it must be pointed out that complete list of place names occurring in inscription still a desiderating. I believe that the present article contains a substantial list of Telugu place names basing on the inscriptions, the distribution of place name generics and occurrence of the place name generics in different districts. It is shown in figure 1 and 2 respectively.

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