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AN EMPIRE OF LITERARY TELUGU: REMAKING LANGUAGE AND COMMUNITY IN COLONIAL SOUTH INDIA, 1812-1920

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GAUTHAM REDDY

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Abstract

This dissertation offers a new intellectual and cultural history of the colonial encounter in nineteenth and early twentieth-century south India. It analyzes the diverse ways Indian scholars negotiated the changing cultural status of the Telugu language and their contributions to the development of radically new conceptions of language and community under British colonial rule. To this end, it tracks the reorganization of Telugu literary culture over a span of roughly one hundred years by documenting the formation of new intellectual networks, spaces of literary life, and fields of disciplinary knowledge. These changes are examined in close association with shifts in colonial education policy and the growth of print. The period of study begins with the opening of Fort St. George College (est. 1812) and ends with the early years of the Andhra Sahitya Parishat (est. 1911).

The dissertation moves beyond standard assumptions and narratives of the colonial encounter in order to retrieve the complex genealogies of Telugu cultural modernity. Its four chapters ask why and how Indian scholars of the colonial period engaged pre-colonial traditions of Telugu literature. Two distinct types of intellectuals are focused on: English-educated professionals and Telugu pundits. Although typically seen as signifying irreconcilable cultural orientations—one modern, the other traditional—the study uncovers a surprising history of converging intellectual affinities and literary aspirations. In documenting their collaborative projects to "reform" and "revive" Telugu literature, the dissertation sheds critical new light on Indian constructions of regional and national identity and the cultural origins of a new middle class. Ultimately, the dissertation highlights Telugu scholarly interrogations and inventions of tradition as a foundational site in the colonial remaking of language and community in south India.

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Harini Kumar, Ahona Panda, Katarzyna Pazucha, Charles Preston, and Ilanit Loewy Shacham. Friends in several other departments brought new perspectives and ideas to my work. I count myself particularly lucky to have met Zak Leonard, Nida Paracha, Diana Schwartz, and Kate Wulfson.

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Transliteration and Spelling Conventions

There is no generally accepted standard for transliterating the Telugu script. I have chosen to follow the system improvised by Velcheru Narayana Rao and David Shulman in *Classical Telugu Poetry: an anthology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). Their system adapts the conventions of the International Alphabet of Sanskrit Translation (IAST) to Telugu. A significant distinction between Sanskrit and Telugu phonology is the presence of short vowels ĕ and ŏ in Telugu. Shared dipthongs e, o, ai, and au remain unmarked for Telugu as in Sanskrit. In borrowing Sanskrit words into Telugu, certain alterations should be noted. Sanskrit female names and nouns ending in long vowels ā and ī are typically shortened. Hence, *sabhā* becomes *sabha* and *devī* becomes *devi*. Sanskrit nouns ending in short "a" typically take "mu" as an ending. Hence, *sāhitya* becomes *sāhityamu*. Often, particularly in contemporary Telugu, the final u will be dropped to produce *sāhityam.*

I have replicated Telugu spellings as they have appeared in the texts I cite. During the colonial era, Telugu titles were occasionally published with an accompanying English title. These did not always correspond as direct translations. I have included both for ease of reference in the bibliography. Please also note that I have avoided the use of diacritics when referring to modern names of authors or places.

Introduction

Just as the eras of Rajaraja Narendra and Krishnadevaraya invigorated the Telugu language, the reign of Queen Victoria has likewise bestowed great progress. I petition those scholars who strive to write the history of the Empire of Telugu Literature to accept her reign as the inauguration of a new era: The Victorian Era!

-P. Sreenivasa Charlu[1]

In 1908, P. Sreenivasa Charlu (fl. 1870-1915) published a historical essay entitled *The Victorian Era of Telugu Literature* in the popular Telugu newspaper *Āndhra Patrika*.[2] Although an obscure figure by today's account, Sreenivasa Charlu was a Telugu scholar and literary activist of repute in his time. An editor, critic, and novelist, Sreenivasa Charlu belonged to the elite cadre of English-educated Indian professionals who had graduated from the University of Madras. His father, P. Ananda Charlu (1843-1908), had served as one of the first presidents of the Indian National Congress and was the most prominent Telugu politician in the Madras Presidency.[3] Sreenivasa Charlu's *The Victorian Era* aimed to give his fellow "Telugu patriots" (*āndhra bhāṣa abhimānulu*) an overview of the great "progress" (*abhivṛddhi*) that the "Empire of Telugu Literature" (*āndhra kavita sāmrājyam*) had experienced under the last fifty years of British crown rule. It was, in effect, the first Indian effort to construct a history of the colonial encounter in Telugu literary life.

For Sreenivasa Charlu, the nineteenth century was a period distinguished by the increasing prominence of prose and the advent of new fields of literary activity such as fiction,

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[1] Please note, all translations that appear in this dissertation are by myself unless otherwise stated. Panappakam Srinivasacaryulu, *Śrī Vikṭoriyā Cakravartini Kālamunan Āndhra Bhāṣābhivṛddhi* (Madras: Vaijayanti Press, 1910), 14-15.

[2] This is the English translation attributed by the publisher on the title page. However, the Telugu title, *Śrī Vikṭoriyā Cakravartini Kālamunan Āndhra Bhāṣābhivṛddhi*, should properly translate to *The Progress of the Telugu Language under the Reign of Empress Victoria*.

[3] Panappakam Anantacaryulu (1843-1908), better known as P. Ananda Charlu in his English writings, was one of the early Telugu graduates of the University of Madras and an influential lawyer in the Madras High Court. A founding leader of the Madras Mahajana Sabha (est. 1884), he was elected as the President of the Indian National Congress (1891) and served as representative on the Imperial Legislative Council (1895-1903).

literary criticism, drama, and history. In his eyes, these "improvements" to Telugu literature were entirely due to the enlightening "influence of western culture" on Indian society.[4] As his appeal to future historians suggests, the reign of Queen Victoria represented nothing short of a new Golden Age (*mahonnata daśa*) that paralleled the cultural heights the Telugu people had achieved under the Eastern Calukyas (624-1070 CE) and the Vijayanagara Empire (1336-1646 CE).

Sreenivasa Charlu's declaration of a new Victorian Era of Telugu literature will inevitably strike the current reader as unusual. As a literary-historical epoch, the Victorian Era is most commonly associated today with developments in English literature and Anglo-American society. Contemporary scholars of Telugu literature generally periodize the second half of the nineteenth century as the "Age of Viresalingam" in honor of the trailblazing social reformer Kandukuri Viresalingam (1848-1919).[5] Viresalingam is credited with popularizing English literary genres such as the novel, autobiography, and the one-act farce among Telugu readers by promoting them through campaigns around widow remarriage, women's education, and other social reform causes.[6] His influence on social and literary reform in southern India has led many to compare him to Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (1820-1891), an influential scholar and key figure in the Bengal Renaissance.[7] The literary activities and public interventions of Viresalingam and the English-educated Indian gentleman who gathered around him—much like those of

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[4] Panappakam, *Śrī Vikṭoriyā Cakravartini*, preface.

[5] Arudra, *Samagra Āndhra Sāhityaṃ*. 13 vols. (Vijayavāḍa: Prajāśakti Bukhaus, 1989-1991); Kottapalli Virabhadra Rao, *Tĕlugu Sāhityamupai Iṅglīṣu Prabhāvamu - The Influence of English on Telugu Literature* (Secunderabad: Kŏttapalli Vīrabhadrarāvu, 1986).

[6] John Greenfield Leonard, *Kandukuri Viresalingam, 1848-1919: A Biography of an Indian Social Reformer* (Hyderabad: Telugu University, 1991); John Leonard and Karen Leonard, "Viresalingam and the Ideology of Social Change in Andhra," in *Women and Social Reform in Modern India: A Reader*, ed. Sumit Sarkar and Tanika Sarkar (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 230-258.

[7] This comparison has been made by Viresalingam's contemporaries as well as his later biographers. For research on Vidyasagar's relationship to social and literary reform: Brian Hatcher, *Idioms of Improvement: Vidyāsāgar and Cultural Encounter in Bengal* (Calcutta: Oxford University Press, 1996).

Vidyasagar and the Bengali Bhadralok—are widely seen as inaugurating the origins of nationalist consciousness and cultural modernity in Telugu society.[8]

In many respects, Sreenivasa Charlu's background as a graduate of the University of Madras and his appeals to patriotism and progress situate him as one of the new public men of the Age of Viresalingam. He looks west to the example of Great Britain and its ascendant middle class as he champions the advantages of colonial education, western prose genres, and the printing press for Telugu literature. His history even hails Viresalingam, his older contemporary, as the foremost Telugu author of the period.

Yet a closer look at *The Victorian Era* reveals critical and unexpected disjunctures with recent historical constructions of the colonial period. This is most striking in the scholars and authors Sreenivasa Charlu identifies alongside Viresalingam as the leading proponents of Telugu literary life and cultural progress in the second half of the nineteenth century. From his perspective, writers such as Paravastu Cinnaya Suri (1806-1861), Kokkonda Venkataratnam (1842-1915), Vedam Venkataraya Sastri (1853-1929), and Kasibhatta Brahmayya Sastri (1863-1940) are the great luminaries of the age. Today's historians consider these men, all of whom worked as Telugu pundits (language instructors) in colonial schools, to be staunch traditionalists resistant to the great transformations of the period.[9] Cinnaya Suri is regularly condemned for his

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[8] The most rigorous articulation of this is found in Ramakrishna Vakulabharanam, *Social Reform in Andhra* (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1983). Vakulabharanam has also provided a descriptive bibliography on social reform, centering primarily on Viresalingam, in Sumit Sarkar, *Bibliographical Survey of Social Reform Movements in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (New Delhi: Indian Council of Historical Research, 1975).

[9] In addition to Arudra and Virabhadra Rao mentioned above, some of the standard histories of Telugu literature which reproduce this perspective include: Bangorey, *Braunlekhalu: Ādhunikāndhra Sāhitya Caritra Śakalālu - Gacchadvyākhyato* (Tirupati: Śrī Veṅkaṭeśvara Viśvavidyālayaṃ, 1977); Radhakrishna Bhudaraju, *Vyāvahārika Bhāṣā Vikāsam* (Vijayavāḍa: Viśālāndhra Pabliṣiṅ Haus, 1972); P. Chenchiah and M. Bhujanga Rao Bahadur, *A History of Telugu Literature* (Calcutta: The Association Press, 1928); Sisir Kumar Das, ed. *Western Impact: Indian Response 1800-1910. A History of Indian Literature*, vol 8 (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1991); M. Kulasekhara Rao, *A History of Telugu Literature* (Hyderabad: M. Indira Devi, 1988); M. Kulasekhara Rao, *Āndhra Vacana Vāṅmayamu: Utpatti Vikāsamulu, krī. śa. 18va Śatābdi Antamuvaraku* (Haidarābādu, 1972); Golla Narayanaswami Reddy, *The Influence of English on Telugu Literature, 1800-1950 with reference to translations and adaptations*

role in the development of an "artificial" standard of neoclassical prose known as *grānthika* (literary) Telugu. Scholars such as Venkataratnam and Venkataraya Sastri are usually deemed culturally retrogressive due to their creative engagements with older traditions of courtly literature as well as their public opposition to Viresalingam's social reform campaigns.

Departing from the current consensus, Sreenivasa Charlu's history extols Cinnaya Suri as the first modern Telugu author and credits his standardization of the *grānthika* register with successfully making Telugu into a refined medium of prose (*vacana racana*).[10] He declares that next to Viresalingam, no writer had contributed more to the improvement of Telugu literature than Kokkonda Venkataratnam through his contributions in drama, translation, and publishing. Sreenivasa Charlu notes that the great Telugu authors of the Victorian Era, including Viresalingam, uniformly made their improvements to Telugu academic writing, literary criticism, translation, textbooks, and drama through Cinnaya Suri's *grānthika* register. In fact, this was the very standard of neoclassical prose that Sreenivasa Charlu chose to compose his own history of the Victorian Era.

How do we account for Sreenivasa Charlu's substantially divergent perspectives on the Telugu literary developments of the nineteenth century? On what grounds did he conceive traditionalist pundits as inhabiting the same intellectual zeitgeist as social reformers? Why would a man who looked west to imperial London, who boasted of his enlightened Victorian tastes,

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(Tirupati: Satyasri Publications, 1988); G.V. Sitapati, *History of Telugu Literature* (Madras: Sahitya Akademi, 1968).

[10] The only twentieth-century historian to echo this perspective is Nidudvavolu Venkataravu. Nidudavolu Venkataravu, *Āndhra Vacana Vāṅmayamu* (Haidarābādu: Yan. Yas. Sundareśvararāvu, 1977). Niduvavolu, Venkataravu, *Cinnayasūri Jīvitamu; Paravastu Cinnayasūri Kṛta Hindū Dharmaśāstra Saṅgrahamu Sahitamuga* (Madras, 1962). More recently, Velcheru Narayana Rao and Paruchuri Sreenivas have revisited Cinnaya Suri's work and drawn critical attention to his multifacted relationship to prose. Velcheru Narayana Rao and Sreenivas Paruchuri, "Cinnaya Sūri - Giḍugu Rāmamūrti 1," *Īmāṭa: An Electronic Magazine in Telugu For a World Without Boundaries*, September 2016; "Cinnaya Sūri - Giḍugu Rāmamūrti 2," *Īmāṭa: An Electronic Magazine in Telugu For a World Without Boundaries*, January 2019; "Cinnaya Sūri - Giḍugu Rāmamūrti 3," *Īmāṭa: An Electronic Magazine in Telugu For a World Without Boundaries*, October 2019.

celebrate the retrospective neoclassicism of *grānthika* Telugu? For that matter, how did this self-professed Telugu patriot reconcile his commitments to national progress and literary improvement with his support and admiration for British imperial rule?

It is tempting to dismiss the disorienting mélange of the traditional and the modern in *The Victorian Era* as the idiosyncracies of a lone scholar. Yet even a brief survey of Telugu literary movements and textual production in the colonial era proves that Srinivasa Charlu's perspectives were quite conventional for his time.[11] In this regard, *The Victorian Era* testifies to a lost generation of Telugu cultural activism. In proposing a close relationship between the western influence, literary improvement, and national progress, this early attempt at Telugu literary history resonates with mainstream assumptions surrounding the colonial encounter today. Yet in its elaboration of these relationships, the text calls into question existing narratives of historical change and compels us to revisit the ambiguities and contradictions of Telugu literary life under colonial conditions.

This dissertation offers a new intellectual and cultural history of the colonial encounter in nineteenth and early twentieth-century south India. It analyzes the diverse ways Indian scholars negotiated the changing cultural status of the Telugu language and their contributions to the development of radically new conceptions of language and community under British colonial rule. For centuries, Telugu had flourished as one of the prestigious *deśabhāṣas* or elite languages of south Indian courtly life.[12] This privileged position was interrupted by the emergence of the

[11] There is no comprehensive study of the literary genres and textual production that characterized the diversity of this period. However, one only need refer to the British Museum's catalogue of nineteenth century books for a representative sample of Telugu publishing interests in the nineteenth century. L.D. Barnett, comp. *A Catalogue of the Telugu Books in the Library of the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1912).

[12] While earlier scholarship took "courtliness" for granted, recent work has opened up exciting new questions and concerns on what this meant for medieval Telugu literary culture: Jamal Jones, "A Poetics of Power in Andhra, 1323-1450 CE" (PhD Diss., University of Chicago, 2018); Velcheru Narayana Rao, "Coconut and Honey: Sanskrit and Telugu in Medieval Andhra," *Social Scientist 23*, no. 10/12 (1995): 24-40; Velcheru Narayana Rao, "Multiple Literary Cultures in Telugu: Court, Temple, and Public," in *Literary Cultures in History: Reconstructions from*

East India Company as a territorial power toward the end of the eighteenth century. The expansion of colonial rule provoked new forms of governance, knowledge production, and education that significantly restructured the linguistic hierarchies and literary contexts of the region. During the nineteenth century, English—long a minor language of coastal trade—ascended as the paramount language of political and cultural authority while Telugu was reduced to one of the many "vernacular" languages of colonial Indian society.

The constitution of a subordinate relation between English and Indian languages involved considerable compulsion and epistemic violence by the European actors. Yet the terms of this relation were consistently contested, subverted, and appropriated by Indians through a range of intellectual and cultural projects. Scholars have long recognized the importance of these dynamic interactions to the formation of new middle-class communities and the construction of regional and national identities in South Asia.[13] With respect to southern India, a number of important works have explored the complexities of these social and political developments by foregrounding Indian interventions in English and Tamil discursive spheres.[14]

South Asia ed. Sheldon Pollock (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 383-436; Velcheru Narayana Rao and David Shulman, *A Poem at the Right Moment: Remembered Verses from Premodern South India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Velcheru Narayana Rao and David Shulman, comps. and trans., *Classical Telugu Poetry: An Anthology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Velcheru Narayana Rao and David Dean Shulman, *Śrīnātha: the Poet Who Made Gods and Kings*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Ilanit Loewy Shacham, "Kṛṣṇadevarāya's Āmuktamālyada and the Narration of a Śrīvaiṣṇava Community," (PhD Diss., University of Chicago, 2015).

[13] Titles on class and language which have been influential in this study's exploration of "the vernacular" include: Tithi Bhattacharya, *The Sentinels of Culture: Class, Education, and the Colonial Intellectual in Bengal* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005); Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Vasudha Dalmia, *The Nationalization of Hindu Traditions: Bhāratendu Hariśchandra and Nineteenth-century Banaras* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Kavita Datla, *The Languages of Secular Islam: Urdu Nationalism and Colonial India* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2013); Sanjay Joshi, *Fractured Modernity: Making of a Middle Class in Colonial North India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001); Farina Mir, *The Social Space of Language: Vernacular Culture in British Colonial Punjab* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Veena Naregal, *Language Politics, Elites, and the Public Sphere*. New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2001; Francesca Orsini, *The Hindi Public Sphere, 1920-1940*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002.

[14] Much of the earlier scholarship on Indian activism in the Madras Presidency drew attention to cultural and political intereventions in English. D. Sadasivan, *The Growth of Public Opinion in the Madras Presidency, 1858-1909* (Madras: University of Madras, 1974); R. Suntharalingam, *Politics and Nationalist Awakening in South India,*

Studies exploring the colonial encounter from the perspective of Telugu cultural activism have been few and far between.[15] This is surprising given the postcolonial implications of this activism as well as Telugu's significance as the most spoken language in southern India.[16] From the mid-twentieth century Andhra Movement's campaign to redraw India's state boundaries on linguistic lines to current Dalit-Bahujan efforts to replace vernacular instruction with English in government schools, the cultural politics of Telugu have been crucial grounds for thinking region, nation, and class in South Asia.[17] However, most of the studies that currently exist on this topic have privileged the dominant discourses of anticolonial nationalism and the mass political

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1852-1891 (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974); David Washbrook, *The Emergence of Provincial Politics: The Madras Presidency, 1870-1920* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976); David Washbrook, "The Development of Caste Organization in South India 1880-1925," in *South India: Political Institutions and Political Change* ed. Christopher Baker and David Washbrook (Delhi: Macmillan & Co., 1975), 150-203. More recent scholarship has asked us to rethink Indian contestations and their cultural implications with respect to Tamil archives. Stuart Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism in Colonial South India* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2003); Sascha Ebeling, *Colonizing the Realm of Words: The Transformation of Tamil Literature in nineteenth-century South India* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010); Bhavani Raman, *Document Raj: Writing and Scribes in Early Colonial South India* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012); A.R. Venkatachalapathy, *In Those Days There Was No Coffee: Writings in Cultural History* (New Delhi: Yoda Press, 2006); A.R. Venkatachalapathy, *The Province of the Book: Scholars, Scribes, and Scribblers in Colonial Tamil Nadu* (Ranikhet: Permanent Black, 2012).

[15] Some of the most illuminating work in this regard has been by Rama Mantena, *The Origins of Modern Historiography in India: Antiquarianism and Philology, 1780-1880* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Lisa Mitchell, *Language, Emotion, and Politics in South India: The Making of a Mother Tongue* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009); Peter Schmitthenner, *Telugu Resurgence: C.P. Brown and Cultural Consolidation in Nineteenth-Century South India* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2001); Velcheru Narayana Rao, trans. and ed. *Girls for Sale: Kanyasulkam, a Play from Colonial India* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007).

[16] As per the data of the 2011 Census of India, 81,127,740 respondents identified Telugu as their mother tongue. By comparison, 69,026,881 selected Tamil, 43,706,512 selected Kannada, and 34,838,819 selected Malayalam. Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India. 2011. "Statement 1: Abstract of Speakers' Strength of Languages and Mother Tongues - 2011." Data on Language and Mother Tongue. Last modified May 12, 2020. https://censusindia.gov.in/2011Census/Language-2011/Statement-1.pdf.

[17] For an examination of some of the complexities surrounding territory and the Telugu language, see Rama Mantena, "The Andhra Movement, Hyderabad State, and the Historical Origins of the Telangana Demand: Public Life and Political Aspirations in India, 1900-56," *India Review* 13, no. 14 (2014): 337-357. Dalit and non-elite caste agency and experience in the formation of Telugu vernacular publics have not been given adequate treatment. One recent step in this direction is Chinnaiah Jangam, "Dilemmas of Dalit Agendas: Political Subjugation and Self-Emancipation in Telugu Country, 1910-50" in Dalit Studies, ed. Ramnarayan S. Rawat and K. Satyanarayana (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 204-129. For a recent example of Dalit-Bahujan mediations of Telugu cultural politics, I refer the reader to Kancha Ilaiah Shepherd, "Countering Hypocrisy of Ruling Class on English Medium Education in Government Schools," Countercurrents.org, November 12, 2019, https://countercurrents.org/2019/11/countering-hypocrisy-of-ruling-class-on-english-medium-education-in-government-schools/.

mobilizations that first emerged in the 1920s.[18] As a result, the limited scholarship on Telugu responses to the colonial encounter has situated them near exclusively in terms of the political aspirations of the Indian National Congress and the Communist Party of India.

This narrow focus on the late colonial period has had the unfortunate consequence of flattening the historical possibilities and contingencies that drove radical changes in Telugu literary life for most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This dissertation adopts a longer historical perspective on the colonial encounter in south India in order to retrieve the complex genealogies of Telugu cultural modernity. To this end, it tracks the reorganization of Telugu literary culture over the span of roughly one hundred years by documenting the formation of new intellectual networks, spaces of literary life, and fields of disciplinary knowledge. The period of study begins with the opening of Fort St. George College (est. 1812), the first colonial institution of Orientalist research in south India, and ends with the early years of the Andhra

[18] The best survey of Telugu cultural activism provoked by the colonial encounter remains the comparative history of Indian literature produced by the Sahitya Academy. Das, *Western Impact: Indian Response 1800-1910*. These developments are presented as stepping-stones to the high nationalism of the twentieth century covered in the following volume, Sisir Kumar Das, ed. *The Struggle for Freedom: Triumph and Tragedy, 1911-1956. A History of Indian Literature*, vol. 9 (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1995). Another major multivolume overview is Venkatarangaiya Mamidipudi, ed. *The Freedom Struggle in Andhra Pradesh*, 4 vols (Hyderabad: Andhra Pradesh State Committee Appointed for the Compilation of a History of the Freedom Struggle in Andhra Pradesh, 1969). See also important work by Sivunnaidu Penta, *Proscribed Telugu literature and national movement in Andhra, 1920-1947* (New Delhi: Reliance Publishing House, 2002); A.A.N. Raju, *History of Library Movement in Andhra Pradesh, 1900-1956* (New Delhi: Ajanta Publications, 1988); Subrahmanyam K., *The Press and the National Movement in South India, Andhra 1905-1932* (Madras: New Era Publications, 1984); K.H.S.S. Sundar, “Origin and Growth of Political Consciousness in Andhra During the 19th Century” (PhD diss., University of Hyderabad, 1994); Susie Tharu and K. Lalita, “Empire, Nation, and the Literary Text” in Tejaswini Niranjana, P. Sudhir, Vivek Dhareshwar, eds, *Interrogating Modernity: Culture and Colonialism in India* (Calcutta: Seagull, 1993), 293-309; Rajagopal Vakulabharanam, "Anti-Reform Discourse in Andhra: Cultural Nationalism that Failed" in *Ritual, Caste, and Religion in Colonial South*, ed. Michael Bergunder, Heiko Frese, and Ulrike Schroder (Halle: Franckesche Stiftungen zu Halle, 2010), 310-330; Rajagopal Vakulabharanam, "Self and Society in Transition: A Study of Modern Autobiographical Practice in Telugu" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2004); C. Vijayasree, M. Sridhar, and Mahasweta Sengupta, eds. *Colonial Encounter: Telugu-English Literary and Cultural Interface* (New York: Routledge, 2018).

Sahitya Parishat (est. 1911), the first nationalist effort to institutionalize Telugu literary and historical research.

The nineteenth century was a period of great tumult and transformation in south India. Colonial rule introduced sweeping political, economic, and environmental changes that completely upended the rhythms of Telugu social and cultural life. This period was witness to large-scale irrigation projects and agrarian revolutions in the Godavari and Krishna Deltas as well as rapid urbanization. New technologies of communication such as the printing press and telegram as well as travel such as the steam ship and railroad were introduced at this time.

These disruptions inevitably provoked drastic changes in the world of Telugu letters. Indian encounters with European scholar-administrators in the first half of the nineteenth century triggered a vigorous reassessment of Telugu linguistic, literary, and educational concerns. The Company period witnessed an unprecedented boom in Telugu grammatical and philological scholarship and creative experiments with narrative prose. Commercial printing took off in the mid-century and fostered the development of a thriving market for Telugu books, pamphlets, journals, and newspapers. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the colonial government established the University of Madras (est. 1855) and imposed a bilingual system of Anglo-Vernacular education across the Presidency.

It was in this context that English-educated professionals such as Sreenivasa Charlu and his father Ananda Charlu first began to intervene in the Telugu discursive sphere and project themselves as patriotic members of a new middle class. These graduates of colonial educational institutions sought to adapt English genres such as the novel and lyric poem to Telugu literature and introduce new disciplinary practices for the study of Telugu literature and Indian history. They drew on new technologies of print to popularize some of the first newspapers, journals, and

collections of discursive prose essays in Telugu and established new intellectual contexts such as schools, literary societies, and conferences.

Yet rather than simply displace or superede earlier forms of literary and intellectual life, these new "Anglo-Vernacular" intellectuals contributed to a significant expansion and diversification of the Telugu discursive sphere. As the autobiographical writings of the celebrated Telugu poet Chellapilla Venkatasastri (1870-1950) suggest, courtly literary forms and older modes of scholarly production not only remained resilient alongside the new styles of middle-class literature but even intensified in popularity during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. To give just one example, Venkatasastri notes that the literary competitions and honorariums arranged by the Urlam Zamindars at the turn of the twentieth century commanded such respect among the Telugu literati that "no university could come close to rivalling their authority."[19] Ancient zamindari families, led most prominently by Vizianagaram, Pithapuram, and Venkatagiri, maintained robust patronage and appreciation for courtly cultural production throughout the colonial period.[20] Alongside their efforts, upwardly mobile landed elites and traders, as well as English-educated lawyers, judges, and civil servants, emerged as important patrons of these prestigious activities. The interest of these new elites fostered creative engagements with older traditions of courtly literature and led to their adaptation to new urban and institutional settings.

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[19] Cĕḷḷapiḷḷa Veṅkaṭa Śāstri. "Vĕnukaṭi Paṇḍitulu" in *Kathalu-Gāthalu, Prathama Bhāgamu*. ed. Ḍi. Candraśekhara Rĕddi (Haidarābād: Ĕmĕsko Buks, 2011), 298. See also his essay in the same volume, "Mā Muttāta," 305-321. More extensive descriptions of the literary and educational practices that flourished in his childhood during the late nineteenth century are available in Venkatasastri's verse autobiography: Tirupati Veṅkaṭeśvara Kavulu, *Jātakacaryamu* (Bandaru: Minerva Press, 1934).

[20] A small subset of nineteenth-century literary histories focusing on the patronage and literary activities of individual Telugu zamindari estates is available. Thoomati Donappa has offered the broadest historical survey of literary production in Telugu zamindari estates. Curiously, this field of scholarship is generally divorced from larger studies of the period. Tūmāti Dōnappa, *Āndhra Saṃsthānamulu: Sāhityapoṣaṇamu* (Vālteru: Āndhra Viśvakaḷa Parisattu, 1969).

Given this great intellectual and cultural ferment, it is surprising how little we know about Telugu literary culture before the nationalist developments of the last decades of colonial rule. The most comprehensive histories available for the nineteenth century are Kottapalli Virabhadra Rao's, *The Influence of English on Telugu Literature* (*Tĕlugu Sāhityamupai Iṅglīṣu Prabhāvamu*, 1960), and Arudra's historical encyclopedia, *The Complete History of Telugu Literature* (*Samagra Āndhra Sāhityaṃ*, 1965-68). These seminal literary histories document the major authors, titles, and literary trends of the colonial period in an effort to trace the evolution Indian nationalist modernity in Telugu contexts. As Virabhadra Rao's title suggests, the defining feature of this modernity is Telugu's engagement with the English language. *The Influence of English* tracks the emergence of new genres in Telugu such as the novel and essay, the popularization of English narrative styles, Romantic literary sensibilities, and the innovation of new textual practices through print. For Virabhadra Rao, the closer a given Telugu work approximated an English model, the more successfully modern it was. Arudra's *Complete History* expands on many of these same developments. However, it differs from *The Influence of English* by making the larger stageist argument that Telugu encounters with western civilization triggered a great epochal shift from feudalism to modernity. In this work, Indian intellectuals who reflect an engagement with older forms of Telugu literature and learning are summarily dismissed as "traditional" writers opposed to the inevitable march of history.

Suspended between the courtly contexts of the pre-colonial eighteenth century and the nationalist movements of the twentieth century, both Virabhadra Rao and Arudra treat the nineteenth century as one of transition. Their histories bracket the broad range of literary and intellectual developments that took place in this period as preliminary, immature, or hybrid manifestations that anticipate a cultural modernity yet to come into its own. And yet, as Stuart

Blackburn and Vasudha Dalmia have observed more recently, one of the defining features of literary life in nineteenth-century South Asia was its profound ambiguity.[21] As they note, the preoccupation of conventional literary historiography with chronology and western influence has prevented many scholars from engaging the manifold "continuities and borrowings of form and content that crisscross the century."[22] Neither properly traditional nor thoroughly modern, Sreenivasa Charlu's enthusiasm for neoclassical *grānthika* prose and admiration for Telugu pundits exposes the inadequacy of such well-worn dichotomies.

In seeking to explore the ambiguities of nineteenth and early twentieth-century Telugu literary culture, the dissertation draws attention to what Mary Louise Pratt has referred to as the "interactive and "improvisational" dimensions of the colonial encounter.[23] Pratt theorizes the space of encounter between colonizer and colonized as a "contact zone" where "subjects are constituted in and by their relations to each other."[24] As she defines it, the contact zone represents a "space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict."[25]

This dissertation treats Telugu literature as a contact zone in order to investigate the "copresence" of Indian and European intellectuals in the production of Telugu as a colonial vernacular language.[26] Adopting this perspective allows for a more versatile approach to the colonial encounter that moves well beyond the standard narratives of western diffusion and English influence that continue to overdetermine scholarship on Telugu cultural history. As

[21] Stuart Blackburn and Vasudha Dalmia, "Introduction" in *India's Literary History: Essays on the Nineteenth Century*, eds. Stuart Blackburn and Vasudha Dalmia (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004), 6-7.
[22] Blackburn and Dalmia, "Introduction," 6-7.
[23] Mary Louise Pratt, Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation (London: Routledge, 2008), 8.
[24] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 8.
[25] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 8.
[26] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 8.

Sreenivasa Charlu's *The Victorian Era* reminds us, Indian intellectuals of nineteenth century, from English-educated University graduates to Telugu pundits, responded to Telugu's subordination to English in diverse and highly original ways. Dismissing the great variety of these responses as the result of an incomplete transition to an idealized model of western modernity creates a distorted perspective of vernacular literary life in the colonial period. It is far more generative to approach these developments as entry points for exploring the shifting contingencies that Indian intellectuals labored under to actively forge their own social and cultural realities.

What did it mean to be a Telugu intellectual during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? Who were these figures and what roles did they play in making Telugu a colonial vernacular language? This dissertation complicates current understandings of the colonial encounter in south India by revisiting why and how English-educated Indian scholars such as Sreenivasa Charlu constructed continuities with pre-colonial traditions of Telugu literature. These continuities were regularly produced through intellectual and creative collaborations with pundits or traditionalist scholars of Telugu and Sanskrit. Throughout the colonial period, pundits cultivated expertise in elite fields of Indic knowledge and reigned as the prime arbiters of Telugu literature. Although Indian historiography and popular Telugu memory have taken these two groups to represent irreconcilable cultural orientations—one modern, the other traditional—this dissertation uncovers a surprising history of converging intellectual affinities and cultural aspirations. In documenting their collaborative projects to "reform" and "revive" Telugu literature, the dissertation sheds new light on the vernacular as grounds for the articulation of new regional and national identities and the making of a new middle class. Ultimately, the

dissertation foregrounds Telugu interrogations and inventions of tradition as a foundational site in the colonial remaking of language and community in south India.

Polished Vernaculars: Language and Education in Colonial South India

Velcheru Narayana Rao has argued that prior to the colonial intervention, "there was no such a thing as 'Telugu Literature' as we now understand it."[27] His research on pre-colonial traditions of Telugu poetry has consistently demonstrated that Telugu textual production was embedded in diverse literary and multilingual formations. Aiming to retrieve the complex linguistic and cultural orientations crucial to the many histories of Telugu literature, Narayana Rao has proposed a heuristic typology of four distinct yet porous literary cultures. He distinguishes these as Brahminical, Anti-brahminical, Courtly, and Temple traditions based on such features as literary form, modes of reading, sites of patronage, and social investment. Authors, patrons, and audiences of Telugu poetry interacted with cosmopolitan forms of literature in Sanskrit and Persian as well as more local traditions found in Tamil and Kannada. As an elite language of courtly literature, Telugu was cultivated as one of several *deśabhāṣas* or "cultured regional languages" by the literati of south India. While poets demonstrated a clear awareness of composing in Telugu, they never conceived shared language use as the foundation of a common literary tradition. In fact, for authors who composed in elite Telugu genres, notions of literacy and literature were inextricably linked with Sanskrit.

It was only with the advent of British colonial rule in the late eighteenth century that these diverse literary cultures begin to be consolidated into a singular Telugu Literature. The Company administrators who first encountered the languages of south India used a variety of designations to describe them. Telugu was commonly referred to in their records and

[27] Velcheru, "Multiple Literary Cultures in Telugu," 383.

correspondence as a country, district, current, and vernacular language. These categories were used to demarcate the geographic range of Telugu language-use and identify the ways it socially and politically circulated in the region in order to assist their administrative aims. While such terms were interchangeably used by European observers in the early years of Company rule, by the mid-nineteenth century, "vernacular" had become the primary category officially associated with the Telugu language. Consequently, we see that the articulation of new notions of literary culture and community, on grounds of shared language, were intimately connected to the colonial production of Telugu as a vernacular language in relation to English.

The term vernacular originates in the historical experience of Western Europe. The word is etymologically derived from the Latin root *verna*, meaning a native person or a home-born slave, and was deployed in diverse contexts to signify a subordinate linguistic relation. In this regard, the vernacular was used to describe non-standard local and regional dialects, the less prestigious registers of a diglossic language, and languages that were provincially circumscribed. Examples of European vernacular languages in the Middle Ages include English, French, and German. In the literary context, they were usually subordinated to the classical languages of Latin and Greek. Cultivated by a small literary elite, classical languages were standardized through grammars, dictionaries, and canonical literary texts and employed across the European continent as cosmopolitan languages of intellectual expression and textual production. In the European context, classical languages were culturally associated with educated men of social distinction and political rank while vernacular languages were identified with populations commonly marginalized from education such as women and peasants. Consequently, in the hierarchy of European languages, the vernacular was a category that often bore pejorative social and cultural connotations.

One of the most prominent discursive and institutional sites for the production of Telugu as a colonial vernacular language was education. From their earliest efforts, colonial officials treated education as a constructive project to remake Indian society. A reoccurring question in the early decades of Company rule was which language was most appropriate to this task. Martin Moir and Lynn Zastoupil have documented the debates this topic generated among Company policy makers, British reformers, Christian missionaries, and Indian gentlemen.[28] In the late eighteenth century, Orientalist scholar-administrators established institutions privileging the study of classical Indian languages such as Sanskrit and Persian and encouraged the "engraftment" or translation of western astronomy, medicine, and mathematics to traditional genres of Indian scholarship. However, by the second decade of the nineteenth century, a growing number of Anglicist educators had begun to promote the efficacy of introducing Indian students to European learning directly through English. With the passage of the English Education Act in 1835, the language question was largely resolved in favor of the Anglicists. For the remainder of colonial rule, English reigned as the dominant language of higher education and learning.[29]

The Orientalist-Anglicist controversy reflected the constitution of new linguistic relations between English and Indian languages and fixed the vernacular as a recurring category in colonial educational and literary discourse. Strikingly, neither the Orientalists nor Anglicists advocated for the extension of official patronage to popularly spoken vernacular languages such as Bengali and Hindustani. Both camps perceived these languages, no doubt informed by elite

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[28] Martin Moir and Lynn Zastoupil, eds., *The Great Indian Education Debate: Documents Relating to the Orientalist-Anglicist Controversy, 1781-1843* (London: Routledge, 1999).

[29] The Education Despatch of 1854 returned to the question of language by proposing the use of vernacular languages in primary and secondary education. However, as will be discussed in chapter two, government investments in vernacular education were inconsistent and English remained unchallenged as the language of higher education for most of the colonial period. It was not until 1918 with the establishment of Osmania University in princely Hyderabad that we see a vernacular language, in this case Urdu, introduced as a language of collegiate and professional education for the first time. See Datla, *The Languages of Secular Islam*.

Indian perspectives, as rustic mediums unfit for literary or scientific expression. Although these debates rarely make direct reference to vernacular languages, their presence was consistently implied. British officials generally expected that Indian students educated at colonial schools would transmit the moral and intellectual benefits of European knowledge to their illiterate countrymen through the common vernaculars. The underlying presumption was that these Indian elites would shoulder the responsibility of improving vernacular literatures and would, in due course, contribute to the general progress of Indian society.

The conclusive victory of English in the early education debates lead to the cementing of a new sense of the vernacular in colonial India. As Macaulay was to claim in his infamous 1835 Minute, "What the Greek and Latin were to the contemporaries of More and Ascham, our tongue is to the people of India."[30] That is, the vernacular languages of India were to be no longer subordinate or dependent on the older classical languages of Sanskrit and Persian but the new language of prestige: English. This indelibly determined the ways Indians were able to articulate and promote their own perspectives on linguistic and literary reform through the legal and bureaucratic structures of the colonial regime.

References to colonial education and the new prominence of English in Indian society are ubiquitous in studies of literary history, social and religious reform, and the development of nationalist politics. However, there is still much to be learned with respect to the growth and operation of colonial education in connection with vernacular languages. This is especially the case for the fate of Telugu in the perennially understudied Madras Presidency. A few studies have outlined the different schemes of colonial education introduced in the Telugu Districts.[31]

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[30] H. Sharp, ed., *Selections from Educational Records (1781-1849) Part I* (Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1922), 111.
[31] None of these studies have discussed what it meant to teach Telugu in colonial schools. Robert Frykenberg provides an outline of new educational institutions established in the Madras Presidency from the perspectives of

Yet we still do not possess any substantial academic studies examining the University of Madras, individual colleges and high schools, or influential literary and learned societies in relation to Telugu during the colonial period. How did these institutions give particular shape to Telugu as a vernacular language? What were the priorities that organized the colonial curriculum? Who were the scholars involved? What type of intellectual production did they foster? To what degree were the aims of these institutions realized? How were their interventions received by the broader world of Telugu letters?

It is only in recent years that scholars such as Stuart Blackburn, Thomas Trautmann, and Sascha Ebeling have drawn critical attention to the College of Fort St. George as the first institution of colonial education and research in the Madras Presidency.[32] Their efforts have illuminated its place in the development of a colonial regime of knowledge and new forms of linguistic hierarchy. Thomas Trautmann has drawn special attention to how Orientalists based at Madras treated southern vernaculars with a respect and prestige, as "polished vernaculars" that was not accorded to Hindustani and Bengali in the north. For the most part, this emerging focus of research has focused on Tamil with passing references to the College's engagements with

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East India Company administrators. Robert Frykenberg, "Modern Education in South India, 1784-1854: Its Roots and its Role as a Vehicle of Integration under Company Raj," *American Historical Review* 91, no. 1 (1986). J. Mangamma traces the first systematic initiative to introduce government schools in the Godavari District from 1850-70. J. Mangamma, *The Rate schools of Godavari* (Hyderabad: Government of Andhra Pradesh, 1973). Rajah B. Manikam examines nineteenth-century education policy in the Madras Presidency in relationship to the growth of Christian higher education. Rajah B. Manikam, *Missionary Collegiate Education in the Presidency of Madras, India: a Study of the Historical Development, the contributions and the Religious Educational Program of Mission Colleges in the Presidency* (Lancaster: Conestoga, 1929). The most detailed and comprehensive narrative of colonial education policy in south India is a report by Samuel Satthianadhan, a civil servant in the Madras colonial administration who aimed to demonstrate the enlightening influence of colonial education on Indian morals. Samuel Satthianadhan, *History of Education in the Madras Presidency* (Madras: Varadachari, 1894). See also: Vittal Rao Y., *Education and Learning in Andhra under the East India Company (*Hyderabad: N. Vidyaranya Swami, 1979); Vaikuntham Y., *Education and Social Change in South India 1880-1920* (Madras: New Era Publications, 1982). Both of these works are valuable for including information on the growth of missionary and private colleges in the Northern Circar Districts.

[32] Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism in Colonial South India*; Sascha Ebeling, "The College of Fort St. George the Transformation of Tamil Philology during the Nineteenth Century," in *The Madras School of Orientalism: Producing Knowledge in Colonial South India*, ed. Thomas Trautmann (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009); Thomas Trautmann, *Languages and Nations: the Dravidian Proof in colonial Madras* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

Telugu. There is still much left to explore in relation to the particularities of European and Indian interaction around Telugu at the College.

Rama Mantena and Lisa Mitchell have contributed significant insights on the role of colonial philology in the reconceptualization of the Telugu language during the nineteenth century and its implications for south Indian intellectual life.[33] The scholarly pursuits of British Orientalists such as Colin Mackenzie (1754-1821) and Charles Philip Brown (1798-1884)—influenced by European Romantic thought—posited South Asian languages and literatures as markers of distinct nations with their own unique histories.[34] Mantena has detailed how colonial processes of "archivization" in the early nineteenth century brought together disparate Telugu texts and contributed to the development of new definitions and practices of history among Indian scholars. Mitchell has observed that the intense interest in Telugu literary history at the turn of the twentieth century, enabled by such earlier processes of archivization, reflected the emergence of language as a foundational category of society in colonial India. As her work demonstrates, literary histories played a critical role in imbuing vernacular languages such as Telugu with new affective valences as "mother tongues." This enabled vernacular languages to become the grounds for new forms of political mobilization and collective identity.

This dissertation builds on the recent work of these scholars by asking what it meant for Indian intellectuals to study, appreciate, and produce scholarship on Telugu literature during the colonial period. It draws attention to colonial educational institutions as important sites for articulation and contestation of Telugu as a vernacular language. As Partha Chatterjee has noted in his study on the emergence of new forms of disciplinary knowledge in colonial Bengal, the rash of new colleges and universities established in connection with the colonial government

[33] See Mantena, *The Origins of Modern Historiography in India*; Mitchell, *The Making of a Mother Tongue*.
[34] For an examination of C.P. Brown's scholarly and administrative career see Schmitthenner, *Telugu Resurgence*.

were critical to "the emergence of new literary and aesthetic disciplines in the modern Indian languages."[35] From this, we may understand that the impact of the colonial encounter cannot be understood only in relation to the imposition of English and European knowledge but also the reorganization of Indian languages and forms of knowledge.

Consequently, a central aim of this dissertation is to document the range of new disciplinary norms and scholarly practices that produced Telugu as a vernacular language in relation to English during the colonial period. Although many of these developments first originated within the formal context of government colonial schools, they were also codified and cultivated through the establishment of new spaces of Indian intellectual life of such as literary societies and academic conferences. These contexts, established and governed primarily by Indians rather than colonial officials, offered Indian intellectuals much greater liberty to mediate colonial processes of vernacularization. Examining the activities of these literary societies alongside the growth of the Anglo-Vernacular system of colonial schools gives us a clearer sense of the contingencies of power and agency that shaped Indian efforts to redefine Telugu language and literature in this period.

A Dazzling Sun of Letters: Telugu Print Culture in Nineteenth-Century Madras

Printing in South Asian languages was first introduced and promoted by Europeans—first by Christian missionaries and later by colonial administrators—as a civilizing agent.[36] It is therefore no accident that the imperatives of colonial education were intimately tied to Telugu's

[35] Partha Chatterjee, "The Disciplines in Colonial Bengal," in *Texts of Power: Emerging Disciplines in Colonial Bengal* ed. Partha Chatterjee (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 10-11.

[36] The first printing press in South Asia was established in 1556 by the Catholic Jesuits of Portuguese Goa. This press printed Latin, Portuguese, Konkani and Tamil texts. The earliest printed Telugu texts date to 1746. These were produced by Benjamin Schultze, a German Protestant missionary sponsored by the English Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and based at the Danish colony of Tranquebar. Schultze translated several Christian catechisms and prayers into Telugu and had them printed in Roman script in Halle, Germany.

development as a print language. Christian missionaries, Utilitarian reformers, and a range of interested British administrators all championed the pedagogical advantages of vernacular print. They argued that printing in popularly spoken South Asian languages would be an efficient means of rapidly diffusing the beneficial effects of European knowledge. This "godly" and "useful" knowledge was considered crucial to the formation of moral, rational, and therefore eminently more governable, Indian subjects. Enmeshed in various official and unofficial projects to improve Indian society, print stands out as an emblematic feature of colonial modernity and Telugu literary life under British rule.

European patrons spent lavish sums developing print technology in Telugu in order to support their proselytizing and educational goals. The earliest efforts to adapt Telugu to moveable type appeared at the beginning of the century.[37] The Serampore Mission Press (est. 1800), just north of Calcutta, was the first institution to print Telugu titles in South Asia. Telugu printing in southern India developed with the establishment of the College Press at Fort St. George (est. 1813).[38] Over the next few decades, missionary institutions, government agencies and colonial officials were the primary stakeholders in the world of Telugu print. C.P. Brown, legendary for creating the earliest print editions of classical Telugu poetry, published most of his work at the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge Press (est. 1761) in Vepery, Madras.[39]

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[37] Unlike other regions of South Asia, lithography does not seem to have been adopted as an important printing method.

[38] There are a few earlier examples of Telugu advertisements and government notices printed prior to the College press at the beginning of the nineteenth century. However, the College Press is recognized as the first major press to regularly publish Telugu works. Although there is no discrete history of its activities, Thomas Trautmann and J. Mangamma have both shed light on its importance. J. Mangamma, *Book Printing in India with Special Reference to the Contribution of European Scholars to Telugu, 1746-1857* (Nellore: Bangorey Books, 1975). Trautmann, *Languages and Nations*.

[39] Virabhadra Rao, *Tĕlugu Sāhityamupai Iṅglīṣu Prabhāvamu*.

In printing the first Telugu bibles, tracts, textbooks, and scholarly works, Europeans recruited Indian labor to assist them as translators, editors, and pressmen. Although initially discouraged by Fort St. George, enterprising Indians began to set up their own presses for Telugu printing in the 1840s. By the next decade, an indigenous sphere of commercial Telugu print had begun to take shape at the Presidency capital. These early presses adapted classic works of religion and poetry to print while also publishing new scholarship, textbooks, pamphlets, and newspapers. In 1855, the Madras Director of Public Instruction reported that the city was host to at least seventeen independent Indian presses printing in Telugu.[40] Many of these mid-century presses were established by Telugu pundits connected to colonial schools. Cinnaya Suri and Puranam Hayagriva Sastri, both teachers at the University of Madras High School, maintained presses of their own.[41] Telugu printing also attracted the attention of traditional scholars such as Vavilla Ramaswami Sastri (1812-1891) and politically influential merchants such Gajula Lakshmi Narasu Cetti of the Madras Native Association (est. 1852).[42] As one contemporary Telugu courtly poem described this new boom in print:

The city is made elegant by its multitude of printing pavilions. Illustrious pandits carefully examine rays of streaming light spilling from a dazzling sun of letters, a sun forged by the printing press. These pandits nourish their great talent and give great honor to the library of the Goddess of Learning![43]

[40] James Long, "A Notice of the past condition and future prospects of the Vernacular Press of Bengal and the statistics of the Bombay and Madras Vernacular Presses," In *Selections from the Records of the Bengal Government No. XXXII* (Calcutta: General Printing Department, 1859), Appendix A- "Books and Pamphlets Printed and Published in the Town of Madras, during the year 1855."
[41] Cinnaya Suri's press was called Vāṇidarpaṇa Mudraṇālayamu and began operating c. 1850. Puranam Hayagriva Sastri's press was Vivekādarśa Mudraṇālayamu and commenced operating sometime in the mid-1840s.
[42] Vavilla Ramaswami Sastri arrived in Madras with a grant of 300 rupees from the Shankaracharya of the Sringeri Pitham to set up a press for publishing religious works. Ramaswami Sastri established the Hindu Bhāṣasañjīvani Mudraṇālayamu (est. 1854) which was later renamed Ādisarasvati Nilayamu. This press was the antecedent for the famous publishing firm, Vavilla Ramaswami Sastrulu and Sons. Lakshmi Narasu was the proprietor of The Hindu Press, which was established sometime in the mid-1840s. Its continued to be in operation until at least as late as the 1890s. See *150 Vasantāla Vāviḷḷa Vāṅgmaya Vaijayanti*, (Cĕnnai: Vāviḷḷa Rāmasvāmi aṇḍ Sans, 2008).
[43] Matukumalli Narasimha Kavi, *Cĕnnapuri Vilāsamu* (Ellore: Manjuvani Press, 1920), 53.

The emergence of these pundit presses at Madras marked the first time Indian printers began to print Indian texts for Indian audiences. They played a critical in adapting print technology to indigenous intellectual and cultural interests and developing new literary practices. By the early twentieth century, commercial printing flourished across the Telugu Districts of the Madras Presidency and had become integrated into the elite structures of Telugu literary and intellectual life.

Although there have been several excellent studies on the vernacular print cultures of colonial India, those explicitly dedicated to examining developments with regard to Telugu have been few and far between.[44] The few works that exist have focused primarily on the first half the nineteenth century with an emphasis on the interventions of European agents. These histories have been content with reconstructing a chronology for the development of Telugu printing and tracing the technology's gradual spread across south India. A few works have discussed the importance of the print in relation to Viresalingam's social reform campaigns in the late nineteenth century and the rise of anticolonial nationalism in the early twentieth century.

Given prevailing accounts of the colonial encounter in south India, it is unsurprising that most studies of print have treated its introduction as a revolutionary rupture with the pre-colonial forms, practices, and contexts of Telugu literature.[45] Operating with evolutionary and linear notions of historical change, Telugu scholars have imbued the printing press with the power to

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[44] See footnote 13 above on works exploring language and class. To those titles, I also add several works that have focused specifically on vernacular print culture in colonial India: Anindita Ghosh, *Power in Print: Popular Publishing and the Politics of Language and Culture in a Colonial Society, 1778-1905* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006); Francesca Orsini, *Print and Pleasure: Popular Literature and Entertaining Fictions in Colonial North India* (Ranikhet: Permanent Black, 2009); Francesca Orsini, ed. *The History of the Book in South Asia* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013); Ulrike Stark, *An Empire of Books: the Naval Kishore Press and the Diffusion of the Printed Word in Colonial India* (Ranikhet: Permanent Black, 2007).

[45] I cite Arudra and Virabhadra Rao here once more. See Arudra, *Samagra Āndhra Sāhityaṃ*; Virabhadra Rao, *Tĕlugu Sāhityamupai Iṅglīṣu Prabhāvamu*. I would also add B.S. Kesavan, *History of Printing and Publishing in India: A Story of Cultural Re-awakening*, vols. 1-2, (New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1985); Mangamma, *Book Printing in India*; K. R. K. Mohan, *Pāścātya Vidvāṃsulu, Tĕlugu Bhāsā Saṃskṛtulu* (Haidrābād: Śrīmukha Pablikeṣans, 1978); Sundar, "Origin and Growth of Political Consciousness in Andhra;" Vakulabharanam, *Social Reform in Andhra*.

intrinsically remake Telugu literary life in the likeness of Western European print cultures. Their narratives interpret print as an agent of modernization, which in turn is commonly identified as westernization. From the perspective of form and style, the rise of print is closely associated with the rise of modern genres like the novel, the emergence of discursive prose, and the development of new linguistic and textual conventions. Conversely, print is also associated with the decline of Telugu courtly genres such as the *prabandham*, the diminishing prestige of metrical composition, and the rejection of established pre-print literary norms. With regard to its social impact, print has been examined in relation to the democratization of knowledge, the creation of new reading publics, and the formation of new social and political imaginaries. However, in representing print as an ahistorical agent of a peculiarly western form of cultural modernity, these earlier studies have been unable to account for the diversity and complexity of activities that characterized the Telugu print culture in the colonial period.

The technology of print or the mere availability of print materials did not in and of itself trigger a displacement of the older forms and contexts of Telugu literary culture. As Tirupati Veṅkaṭeśvara Kavulu's printed collection of occasional verse *Nānārāja-sandarśanamu* (1908) suggests—print, publicity, and oral traditions of courtly Telugu poetry intersected in rich and creative ways.[46] This work records the range of improvisational and extempore poetic exchanges that took place in Telugu courtly contexts during the late nineteenth century. Other contemporary printed works from this period also document in print the entertaining riddles and clever rhymes that these and other Telugu courtly poets produced for the highly popular oral literary competitions and *avadhāna* performances at the time. Many of the printed transcriptions of these

[46] Tirupati Veṅkaṭeśvara Kavulu, *Nānārāja-sandarśanamu* (Masulipatam: Sree Bhyrava Press, 1908). The popularity of this specific work is testified by its continued availability in print to this day.

events were initially produced as souvenirs and gifts for participants but later attracted a readership of their own and printed on their own terms.

Consequently, as Stuart Blackburn has noted in the context of nineteenth-century Tamil literature, print "supplemented" rather than "supplanted" older literary contexts steeped in orality.[47] As he has forcefully argued, "print did not create new texts and it worked in alliance with other practices...there were...no large-scale conceptual shifts, no new mentalities, no 'logic of print.'"[48] The textual forms, practices, and contexts of literature that had existed prior to the new culture of print continued to flourish alongside and even in relation to print well into the late twentieth century. In the case of Telugu, this is confirmed by a review of the literature printed by commercial Telugu publishers during the nineteenth century. The vast majority of this commercial Telugu output was continuous with older tastes and genres and consisted of editions of well-recognized classics of poetry and religious scholarship or new works in the conventional forms of courtly Telugu literature.[49] Consequently, while there is no doubt that print was integral to the various social and historical transformations of the period, this great archive of "traditional" print demands that we critical reexamine our understandings of Telugu print culture in the colonial period.

Whether conceived by Europeans or Indians, projects to reform and revive Telugu literature were all predicated on print. As discussed in the previous section, Telugu textual production was historically embedded in multiple literary cultures and highly localized.[50] Texts were primarily preserved, reproduced and circulated through oral tradition and palm-leaf manuscripts. This meant that access to Telugu texts was highly mediated by social networks and

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[47] As referenced by Orsini, *The Hindi Public Sphere*, 31.
[48] Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism*, 10.
[49] Barnett, *A Catalogue of the Telugu Books*.
[50] Velcheru, "Multiple Literary Cultures in Telugu."

scholarly lineages. During the nineteenth century, the growth of Telugu print culture unsettled these older boundaries and modes of textual transmission. Print generated a unified field of exchange and communication that facilitated new types of learned interactions and public debate. A vast new world of newspapers, journals, pamphlets, and books drew together Telugu literati from diverse contexts and regions in unprecedented ways and challenged existing notions of cultural authority. These new forums were instrumental to the development of new linguistic standards, literary tastes, reading publics, and practices of publicity.

A few scholars have begun to question standard accounts of Telugu print history and cultivate more nuanced perspectives. Velcheru Narayana Rao and David Shulman have touched on the cultural impacts of print on authorship, literary creativity, and collective memory.[51] Lisa Mitchell has explored the relationship between print and pedagogy in colonial schools in order to examine changing conceptions of intellectual authority and language.[52] Rama Mantena has drawn attention to the importance of print in the creation of "vernacular publics" and their role in fostering "contestations over existing cultural and political hierarchies" that went well beyond nationalist critiques of colonial rule.[53] This dissertation aims to draw on their work to push forward new understandings on the dynamics of Telugu print culture in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Cultural Entrepreneurs: The Middle Class in Colonial South India

Postcolonial studies and earlier trends in South Asian historiography have yielded critical insights on the cultural ruptures, ambivalences, and possibilities that attended the advent of

[51] Shulman and Velcheru, *Poem at the Right Moment*.
[52] Mitchell, *Making of a Mother Tongue*.
[53] Rama Mantena, "Vernacular Publics and Political Modernity: Language and Progress in Colonial South India," Modern Asian Studies 47, no. 5 (2013) 1704-05.

colonial rule in the subcontinent. A great deal of this scholarship has been constructed around the formation of an Indian middle class and its critical role in defining what it meant to be modern in colonial India.[54] More than any sort of economic or sociological basis, Partha Chatterjee notes that the determining features of the colonial Indian middle class were its "social agency" and conscious identification with its own sense of "middleness."[55] Members of this class intentionally fashioned themselves as intermediaries between the British colonial administration and greater Indian society by asserting themselves as the representatives of public opinion and organizing interventions around their conceptions of the public good. For the most part, cultural histories of the Indian middle class have focused on the intensity of their engagements with the English language, western ideas, and colonial education in Bengal. As the administrative center of British India, Calcutta was home to one of the earliest and largest communities of the Indian middle class in the nineteenth century: the Bengali Bhadralok.[56] Their iterations of literary modernity, print capitalism, and anticolonial nationalism have been commonly cited as paradigmatic of the Indian colonial experience as a whole.[57]

However, as David Washbrook has observed, the spread and impact of colonialism in South Asia was highly uneven and did not, in fact, provoke uniform cultural crises and social

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[54] Joshi, *Fractured Modernity*, 1.
[55] Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments*, 35.
[56] Studies of the Bengali Bhadralok are too numerous to recount here. Some titles influential in thinking through the concept of middle-class in south India include: Sumanta Banerjee, *The Parlour and the Streets: Elite and Popular Culture in Nineteenth Century Calcutta* (Calcutta: Seagull Books, 1989); Tithi Bhattacharya *The Sentinels of Culture*; Chatterjee, "The Disciplines in Colonial Bengal;" Ghosh, *Power in Print*; Tapti Guha-Thakurta, *The Making of a new "Indian Art:" Artists, Aesthetics, and Nationalism in Bengal, c. 1850-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
[57]This pattern is visible beginning with B.B. Misra's seminal monograph, *The Indian Middle Classes*. Misra presumes the educational and cultural developments in Bengal are broadly representative of developments in the rest of the subcontinent. B.B. Misra, *The Indian Middle Classes: Their Growth in Modern Times* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961). Later studies by Partha Chatterjee and Ranajit Guha follow in this vein. See Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments*; Ranajit Guha, *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997). More regionally focused histories of Andhra Pradesh by Mamidipudi Venkatarangaiya and Vakulabharanam Ramakrishna represent the cultural and political developments of the Madras Presidency as following the precociousness of Bengal. See Venkatarangaiya, ed. *The Freedom Struggle in Andhra Pradesh*; Ramakrishna, *Social Reform in Andhra*.

tensions.[58] This is certainly apparent when one considers the impacts of colonial education on Indian society. Much has been made of Macaulay's 1835 Minute advocating for a system of English education that would create "a class, Indian in blood and color, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and intellect."[59] While colonial educational policy was determined by officials based in Calcutta (and instituted in that city with the greatest enthusiasm), its enactments and reception across the rest of British India were highly contingent.

In recent years, a growing number of South Asia cultural historians have situated vernacular literary cultures as critical sites for thinking about the formation of local and regional middle-class communities. Veena Naregal's study of the English-educated Marathi elite and the cultural politics of bilingualism in Bombay asks us to consider the shifting "self-definitions" of "local intelligentsias" in relation to vernacular languages, especially before they were subsumed by the rise of mass nationalism in the 1920s.[60] Vasudha Dalmia has brought into sharp focus the importance of "traditionalist" Hindi literary figures and their efforts to "nationalize" vernacular literary pasts in the demarcation of a new middle class.[61] Ulrike Stark has examined collaborative projects undertaken by English-educated Indian professionals and traditional service elites in colonial Lucknow to forge new middle-class norms of civility and civic engagement through the Urdu language.[62]

Efforts to remake Telugu literature by English-educated Indians such as Sreenivasa Charlu and his father Ananda Charlu were inextricably associated with new imaginations of language and community. Throughout the colonial period, the greatest concentration of Telugu literati was found in the Company's southern capital of Madras. They comprised a range of

[58]David Washbrook, "Intimations of Modernity in South India," *South Asian History and Culture 1*, no. 1 (2009).
[59] Sharp, Selections from Educational Records, 116.
[60] Naregal, *Language Politics*, 4.
[61] Dalmia, *The Nationalization of Hindu Traditions*, 7.
[62] Ulrike Stark, "Associational Culture and Civic Engagement in Colonial Lucknow: The Jalsah-e Tahzib," *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 48, no. 1 (2011).

figures hailing from disparate social and economic positions including zamindars, dubashes, traders, moneylenders, industrialists, bureaucrats, accountants, clerks, lawyers, and school teachers. What they had in common was their shared upper-caste status, historical cultivation of Telugu literacy, exposure to English education, and close connections to the colonial bureaucracy. Yet these features alone were not enough to constitute a distinct class of its own. As E.P. Thompson notes in *The Making of the English Working Class*, social classes do not suddenly arise from the mere congruence of economic or sociological features but are self-consciously "made" through the cultural production of shared interests.[63]

It is only from the middle of the nineteenth century, with the rise of a new community of English-educated Indian professionals in Madras, that we see the first glimmers of what we may understand as a Telugu middle class. As with their Bengali counterparts, this group began to forge a distinctive cultural identity for itself through its embrace of English education, utilization of print, organization of voluntary associations, and engagement with the institutions and ideologies of colonial rule. Throughout the nineteenth and into the first decades of the early twentieth century, the emergent Telugu middle class articulated its political interests in terms of loyalism by pressing for greater inclusion in the administrative and military structures of the British Empire. It also made frequent appeals to patriotism and urged its members to contribute to the improvement and advancement of the nation on altruistic terms of sacrifice and service. Terms such as patriotism and nation were circulated in colonial English-language discourse at this time to various ends and were frequently translated into Telugu as *abhimānam* (pride, love) and *deśyam* (nation, region, territory). However, as we have seen in Sreenivasa Charlu's *The Victorian Era*, these terms were not historically stable concepts. The convergence of these new professionals around patriotism and the nation encompassed multiple points of reference, diverse

[63] E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Pantheon, 1964), 194.

allegiances, and different agendas.[64] It is this ambiguity that the dissertation aims to foreground in greater detail.

By and large however, the community of English-educated Telugu professionals that had appeared by the late nineteenth century imagined themselves as a culturally distinct but inseparable part of an Indian nation. They believed that this nation, with due reform and improvement, would be able to achieve the capacity to govern itself as an autonomous "dominion" akin to Canada and Australia within the larger British Empire. In this regard, patriotic professionals initiated diverse initiatives to reform and improve contemporary Telugu language, literature, and education from the 1880s as political efforts to serve their nation. These projects of literary and linguistic reform were integral avenues through which they negotiated their position as Indian political elites in an imperial context where the notions of nation, region, and language were not taken for granted. In their engagements with Telugu literature, Anglo-Vernacular graduates adapted and popularized contemporary European forms of association such as debating societies and academic conferences, practices of publicity such as print pamphlets and periodicals, and disciplinary forms of colonial knowledge such as philology and history. These efforts reshaped Telugu into a modern medium of discursive expression and were instrumental in defining their self-perceptions as a middle class.

While scholarly opinion is divided on whether or not there was a "real" middle class in terms of economic or sociological indicators, it is clear that many English-educated Indian professionals believed themselves to be members of one. As Sanjay Joshi has noted, Indian middle-class identity during the colonial period was actively produced through "cultural

[64] I use these terms with caution due to their prevalence in Telugu and English materials produced in this period. The emergence of these political concepts at this time deserves more extensive treatment that I can provide in this study. Although Lisa Mitchell makes an introductory foray into this problem in her *Making of a Mother Tongue*, there are no conclusive studies on the understanding, use, or proliferation of such terms in Telugu discourses of this period.

entrepreneurship" and conscious efforts "to articulate and share a new set of beliefs, values, and modes of politics."[65] He notes that this entrepreneurship revolved around efforts to reinvest older forms of elite cultural capital or older forms of social hierarchy to become "the producers and products of a new cultural politics" that distinguished them from traditional literate elites and subordinate social groups.[66] In this regard, we need not accept the middle class as a fixed social category but instead as an emergent social process: the making and remaking of their claims to be intermediaries.

One of the defining features of the new English-educated Telugu professionals was the cultural agency they displayed in their aspirations to moral and political leadership over the great body of the Indian nation, the vernacular masses. These consisted of the traditionally educated, the half-educated, the illiterate, the lower castes, the outcastes, and women—in effect, the large majority of the Telugu-speaking population that remained beyond the pale of colonial English education. As Partha Chatterjee has noted, the middle class aspiration to nationalist leadership "was in principle a hegemonic project."[67] In this regard, Margrit Pernau has remarked that nineteenth-century projects to reform women's roles played a critical role in transforming Indian men from “acted-upon-objects” to “acting subjects of the civilizing mission.”[68] Projects of Telugu linguistic and literary reform empowered English-educated upper-caste (primarily but not exclusively Niyogi Brahmin) men to transform themselves from native objects of colonial intellectual and moral reform to patriotic imperial citizens who were uniquely positioned to lead the mission to civilize the Telugu masses. The interest of the new professionals in improving vernacular literatures, notably their "own" vernaculars, was structured by a paternalistic sense of

[65] Joshi, Fractured Modernity, 7.
[66] Joshi, Fractured Modernity, 7.
[67] Chatterjee, Nation and its Fragments, 35.
[68] As quoted in Stark, “Associational Culture," 18.

responsibility to "their" vernacular masses. Through such projects, initiated and promoted through a range of new schools, literary societies, and conferences, Anglo-Vernacular graduates sought to fashion themselves as the representative authorities and guardians of the vernacular masses to colonial authorities as well as Indian society at large. To this end, their early literary activities were foundational to the imagination and articulation of a new Telugu middle class.

Generally, scholarly perspectives on the Telugu middle class and their literary interests have discussed their formation in terms of a particular social or political ideology. They have most commonly drawn on the individual lives and careers of exceptional English-educated leaders to produce more generalized observations of the group. It is in this regard we may return to the "Age of Viresalingam." As discussed earlier, Kandukuri Viresalingam is celebrated as the herald of a new age for his efforts to promote widow remarriage, women's education, and the religious principles of the Bengali Brahmo Samaj. These were pursued in close connection with his pioneering innovations with the Telugu novel and literary history writing. Ramakrishna Vakulabharanam, whose *Social Reform in Andhra (1848-1919)* remains the most in-depth social history of the region, has referred to the "enlightened" cultural activism of the new English-educated professionals that gathered around Viresalingam as the driving force behind transformations in Telugu public life. He argues that their reformist activities served as a catalyst for the growth of Telugu print culture, the establishment of voluntary societies, new experiments with literary form, and middle class claims to social and political leadership in the Telugu coastal districts.

Although Viresalingam and the initiatives of his disciples were undoubtedly crucial to innovations in Telugu literary and public life, the indifference, if not direct resistance, of the majority of English-educated professionals to their projects observed by John Leonard suggests

that the cultural activism inspired by Anglo-Vernacular education was neither uniform nor modular.[69] Many of the opponents of these early "enlightened" movements, whom Vakulabharanam refers to as the "orthodox class," were themselves prominent English-educated urban professionals who proposed their own visions of social and cultural transformation.[70] In her study of Bharatendu Harischandra and nineteenth-century Hindi literary culture, Vasudha Dalmia has explored the role of such "traditionalist" English-educated urban intellectuals. She notes that the traditionalist intellectual was defined by his "stress on the sanātanatā or constancy of tradition" as opposed to "reformists" and "revivalists" who proposed more radical interventions aiming to retrieve "some original, more pristine past."[71] Dalmia states that traditionalist intellectuals were a significant influence on par with reformist intellectuals in addressing "vital issues concerning notions of cultural, religious, and political identity" through print, voluntary societies, and projects of literary activism.[72] What becomes apparent in examining the traditionalist resistance to Viresalingam is that many of these intellectuals advanced and accomodated crucial aspects of the new public life. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that these English-educated professionals also promoted their own projects of cultural entrepreneurship in relation to colonial idioms of reform and improvement.

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[69] See in particular his discussion of the collaboration between the Sankaracarya, pandits, and English-educated professionals in enforcing caste sanctions against supporters of Viresalingam's widow remarriage campaign through the Rajahmundry municipal council. Leonard, *Kandukuri Viresalingam,* 238.

[70] There is very little research available on revivalist and traditionalist activities in Telugu. One figure that comes to mind is Ramanatha Sivasankara Pandayya (1853-1899), an early B.A. (1875) from Madras University and mathematics lecturer at Presidency College and Pachaiyappa's High School. He had a close relationship with one of Viresalingam's most influential opponents, Kokkonda Venkataratnam, the Head Telugu Pundit of Presidency College. Pandayya was responsible for the establishment of a number of institutions in Madras such as the Sowcarpet Literary Society, Hindu Tract Society (est. 1887), Arya Dharma Vidyasala (est. 1886), and Anglo-Vernacular Hindu Theological High School (est. 1889). The only research published in English on Telugu traditionalist activities in this period is Rajagopal Vakulabharanam's study of Kasibhatta Brahmayya Sastri (1863-1940), an English-educated revenue clerk famous for his traditionalist polemics against Viresalingam. Brahmayya Sastri established "Aryamata Sabhas" and published several works to counter the spread of the Brahmo Samaj in coastal Andhra. Rajagopal Vakulabharanam, "Anti-Reform Discourse in Andhra."

[71] Dalmia, The Nationalization of Hindu Traditions, 7.

[72] Dalmia, The Nationalization of Hindu Traditions, 2-4; 7.

To what extent can we consider the range of new English-educated Telugu professionals that emerged in the late nineteenth century as forming a coherent Telugu middle class? Were there shared cultural norms and standards of behavior binding them together as a distinct community? If so, what may these have been and where did they derive their origins? This dissertation seeks to expand the discussion of Telugu middle-class formation from "great men" and specific ideologies to a broader focus on social agency and cultural entrepreneurship. It does not claim to resolve the question of whether or not there was a real middle class. Instead, it looks at the establishment of new literary and intellectual institutions as an important activity in the making of a Telugu middle class. These institutions were central to the development of new norms of civility, modes of debate, and forms of cultural authority among the Telugu literati as well as the articulation of new forms of community. In examining their establishment, the hope is to shed light on the more routine and less ambitious social lives of the low-level revenue officers, judicial clerks, pleaders, schoolteachers, and various government functionaries that composed the great majority of the new English-educated professionals and their associational activities.

Chapter Overview

The four chapters of this dissertation explore the diverse and sometimes contradictory means by which Indian intellectuals negotiated the changing cultural status of the Telugu language during in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (1812-1920). Each chapter revolves around a key site of the colonial encounter and explores the range of responses it provoked in Telugu literary culture. As an intellectual and cultural history, the dissertation draws on official colonial reports and records as well as a range of scholarly and literary Telugu

publications. The methodology used to examine these diverse sources varies by chapter and will be detailed below. The chapters are organized in chronological progression, beginning with Indian and European intellectual exchanges at the College of Fort St. George (est. 1812) and ending with debates surrounding the creation of a national Academy of Telugu Letters (est. 1920). This span of time allows us to trace continuities and ambivalences as well as critical turning points in the historical development of Telugu cultural activism.

Chapter one locates the origins of Telugu language reform in the East India Company's first experiments with vernacular education in the Madras Presidency during the first half of the nineteenth century. It draws specific attention to the College of Fort St. George's "Pundit College" (1812-1836) and the University of Madras High School (1841-1855) as the two most important sites in the constitution of Telugu as a colonial vernacular language. The chapter documents new understandings of the Telugu language that emerged through intellectual interactions between Telugu pundits and European educators. Although British administrators determined curricular goals for Telugu instruction—emphasizing translation, grammar, and prose composition—it was the Telugu pundits of these institutions who taught and produced pedagogical materials.

The chapter argues that the standards of Telugu scholarship first pioneered at the College and High School were integral to the great influence and authority Telugu pundits came to command in the colonial era. To this end, chapter one reconstructs the archive of early-nineteenth-century Telugu grammars and textbooks produced by pundits for colonial schools in order to highlight their role in the development of new intellectual priorities, literary sensibilities, textual practices, and professional ambitions. It draws on philological methods of textual analysis to examine questions of genre, intellectual lineage, and pedagogy raised by these texts. Aside

from their scholarly publications, Telugu pundits at these schools left behind very little information about themselves. Consequently, the chapter also adopts a prosopographical approach in order to outline the scholarly and professional lives of these scholars.

Chapter two studies the expansion of English education in the second half of the nineteenth century and the increasing prominence of English-educated Indian professionals in colonial society. Following the passage of the 1854 Education Act, the colonial administration oversaw the systematic promotion of Anglo-Vernacular secondary schools and colleges across the Madras Presidency. These schools were conducted primarily in English and provided instruction in European arts and sciences. Within a decade, graduates of these educational institutions began to define themselves as culturally distinct from older communities of Telugu literati as well the broader unlettered sections of south India by conscientiously adopting new discursive styles and forms of public association.

The chapter argues that the organization of new literary spaces such as debating societies and reading rooms created important contexts for the development of middle-class solidarity and cultural entrepreneurship in colonial south India. The first half of this chapter draws on the administrative reports of the Madras Department of Public Instruction and the Census of India to outline significant social and demographic aspects of the new English-educated professionals in the Telugu Districts. It then turns to reviewing their role in the establishment of dozens of new debating societies, reading rooms, and other literary societies, as documented in the Reports on the Administration of the Madras Presidency. In reviewing these colonial sources to gain insight into changing social trends, particularly the census, the chapter is careful to address the limitations of these modes of colonial knowledge production and the instability of the categories

they deploy. The chapter concludes with an examination of the proceedings of two early literary societies, the Madras Hindoo Debating Society and Madras Hindu Reading Room.

Chapter three explores early initiatives by English-educated Indian professionals to adapt western forms of public association to specifically Telugu literary and intellectual contexts. It focuses on the establishment of some of the first Telugu literary societies—the Madras Presidency College's Society for the Improvement of the Telugu Language (Āndhra Bhāṣa Abhivardhini Samājamu, est. 1890) and Madras Christian College's Society for the Appreciation of the Telugu Language (Āndhra Bhāṣa Abhirañjani Saṅghamu, est. 1892). It also draws attention to efforts to organize an annual Congress of Telugu Pundits (Āndhra Kavipaṇḍita Saṅghamu) from across the Madras Presidency (1897-99). The chapter explores the new aesthetic sensibilities, reading practices, methods of scholarship and intellectual networks nurtured by these societies.

The chapter argues that the lectures and literary competitions these societies hosted were were crucial to forging new middle-class conceptions of Telugu language and literature. It draws on experimental Telugu essays of literary history and criticism, published transcripts of speeches, and new creative works fostered by these new literary contexts in order to trace the development of new disciplinary practices for the study, appreciation, and production of Telugu literature. The chapter demonstrates the ambiguity surrounding these new practices by examining a debate around what constituted correct Telugu at the 1897 Congress of Telugu Pundits. It reconstructs this debate from the proceedings of the Congress published by its English-educated chairman, Dharmavaram Ramakrishnamacayulu (1853-1912), and a description given in the biography of Vedam Venkataraya Sastri (1853-1929) Head Sanskrit Pundit at Madras Christian College at this time. Both sources provide different outcomes to this debate and illustrate competing

conceptions of the Telugu language. The chapter also draws on aspects of print history to construct a wider sphere of interaction between Telugu pundits and English-educated professionals.

The fourth examines the establishment of the Āndhra Sāhitya Parishat or Academy of Telugu Letters and its role in formalizing new standards of correct Telugu during its first decade of operation (1911-1922). The Parishat was organized by the leading English-educated Telugu professionals and politicians of the early twentieth century on the models of the French Academy and the Bengali Academy of Literature (Bangiya Sāhitya Parishat). It was intended to serve as a national representative of Telugu language and literature. The Parishat's philological and epigraphic projects, diverse membership, and public interventions enabled it to consolidate a large literary public and position itself as the authoritative custodian of the Telugu language to colonial authorities. In its early years, the institution presided over several public controversies relating to colonial education reform, government censorship, the standardization of Telugu prose, and scientific translation. The conferences it organized during its first decade were crucial to consolidating a Telugu literary public at the provincial level and bolstered middle-class claims to cultural leadership.

The chapter argues that the Parishat occupied a critical role in the making of a middle class and early twentieth-century Telugu articulations of region and nation. It was largely through the Parishat's efforts that Telugu came to be imagined as a national as well as classical language in the early twentieth century. The chapter draws on the Parishat's journal, *Āndhra Sāhitya Parishat Pattrika* as well as its institutional records in order to discuss some of the ambivalences and ambiguities that structured its projects to redefine Telugu language and community. In comparing the published journal of the institution with its unpublished internal

records, the chapter allows for greater insight into the routine operations and evolving priorities of a Telugu literary society. In examining its correspondence ledger, membership lists, and petition drives it organized, the chapter reconstructs the political and intellectual networks behind the Parishat and demonstrates the degree to which English-educated professionals and Telugu pundits converged in their regard for classical Telugu literature.

Chapter One

Telugu Pundits and Vernacular Education under the East India Company, 1812-57

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the East India Company undertook several initiatives to provide instruction in the Telugu language for its European civil servants as well as Indian subjects. These efforts fostered an explosion of new grammars, dictionaries, and textbooks that grounded the formation of Telugu as a distinctly colonial subject of study. This chapter draws attention to Telugu pundits at the College of Fort St. George (1812-1836) and the University of Madras High School (1842-55) and to the legacies of their linguistic scholarship. These scholars demonstrated an unprecedented interest in the Telugu language and spearheaded the production of more Telugu grammatical works than any previous century. Four pundits stand with particular prominence in this period: Vedam Pattabhirama Sastri (1760-1820), Ravipati Gurumurti Sastri (1770-1836), Puduri Sitarama Sastri, and Paravastu Cinnaya Suri (1806-1862). By examining the grammars and textbooks these pundits produced for colonial schools, the chapter documents diverse ways Indian intellectuals drew on pre-colonial traditions of Telugu and Sanskrit learning in order to claim new professional identities and articulate new conceptions of language, literature, and scholarship in colonial south India.

Colonial education was one of the most important sites of encounter and exchange between Indian and European intellectuals. It drew together Telugu poets, Sanskrit scholars, Company administrators, British social reformers, and Christian missionaries. The complex transactions that took place between these actors generated new educational standards, scholarly priorities, literary sensibilities, and textual practices that had lasting implications for Telugu cultural life.

Accounts of colonial education in south India have have not explored the activities of Telugu pundits with any depth. This is due in large part to the invisibility of these figures in the English

sources commonly used to reconstruct the developments of this period. Government educational records, reports by textbook and missionary societies, and debates on colonial education rarely mention Telugu pundits. Nor did these figures leave behind much in the way of biography or contemporary commentary. Who were these pundits? What were their social backgrounds, religious and sectarian affiliations, intellectual networks, and scholarly ambitions? The answers to these questions remain to be answered. By and large, even the names of many of these early nineteenth-century figures are unknown.

Dependent on European patrons and subordinate to educational objectives promulgated in far-away London and Calcutta, Telugu pundits occupied positions of marginal influence in the new colonial schools. Yet the robust corpus of Telugu textbooks they produced—grammars in particular—suggests a more complicated picture. These largely forgotten vernacular works illuminate a history of dynamic intellectual engagement that compels us to recognize the substantial degree of agency and authority that Telugu pundits asserted in institutions conventionally associated with European dominance.

Recent scholarship by Philip Wagoner, Lisa Mitchell, and Rama Mantena has shed new light on Telugu intellectuals as important participants in colonial knowledge production.[1] Tony Ballantyne defines "colonial knowledge" as "the form and content of the knowledge that was produced out of and enabled resource exploitation, commerce, conquest, and colonization."[2] Historians such as Bernard Cohn, C.A.Bayly, and Thomas Trautmann have debated the influence of Indian intellectuals and indigenous epistemologies in the production of colonial knowledge

[1] Philip Wagoner, "Precolonial Intellectuals and the Production of Colonial Knowledge," *Comparative Studies in Society and History 41*, no. 3 (2003). See also Mantena *The Origins of Modern Historiography*; Mitchell, *Making of a Mother Tongue*.
[2] Tony Ballantyne, "Colonial Knowledge," in *The British Empire: Themes and Perspectives* ed. Sarah Stockwell (Oxford: Blackwell Publications, 2008), 177.

and the development of European scholarship.[3] Cohn has argued that Indian intellectuals were little more than passive "native informants" who supplied raw data for projects conceived by European scholar-administrators. On the other hand, Bayly and Trautmann contend that Indian participation in these projects was characterized by more interactive processes of negotiation, collaboration, and contestation. They have demonstrated that Indian intellectuals, despite deep asymmetries of power, were important cultural brokers who actively shaped colonial knowledge production through the introduction of their own categories and frameworks of analysis.

Studies of colonial knowledge generally invoke questions on the nature of colonial power and the history of empire. They rarely speak to the broader social and cultural aspects of Indian intellectual work. This chapter seeks to move beyond questions related to the participation of Indian intellectuals in colonial knowledge production. Instead, its primary aim is to recover the broader array of interests that drove Indian scholarship under colonial conditions.

Telugu grammars of the early nineteenth century appeared in a variety of Indian as well as European pedagogical genres. Although they were commissioned by Company administrators, they cannot be flatly reduced to the instrumental compulsions of colonial knowledge production. As officially prescribed textbooks for colonial schools, they were inexorably implicated in larger British imperatives to civilize and govern Indian subjects. Yet as works produced by Indian authors, Telugu grammars were multivalent texts that reflected scholarly priorities and literary considerations well beyond the needs of colonial governance. As this chapter demonstrates, Telugu pundits produced new grammatical scholarship in order to advance their own intellectual interests and professional reputations.

[3] C.A. Bayly, *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India 1780-1870* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); C.A. Bayly, *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Bernard Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); Trautmann, *Languages and Nations*.

Company-era engagements with the Telugu language have been explored primarily in relation to the philological pursuits of the Orientalist scholar and Company civil servant Charles Philip Brown (1798-1884).[4] The most prolific and accomplished European scholar of Telugu in the nineteenth century, Brown looms large in the modern Telugu imagination with several historians even referring to the Company period as the "Age of Brown" (*braunya yugamu*).[5] He is commonly referred to as the "savior" of Telugu literature due to the extensive library of Telugu manuscripts he amassed (later deposited at the College) and his efforts to print critical editions of several classic works of Telugu poetry. Brown introduced European methods of textual criticism in constructing "correct" editions of these classics and appending them with glossaries, notes, and other reading aids. This monumental philological project was carried out in collaboration with a large staff of Telugu scholars—colloquially referred to as "Brown's College"—that he maintained through his own private expense for several years.

Telugu historians have represented Indian interactions with Brown either as the enthusiastic assimilation of "enlightened" European editorial and textual practices or a thickheaded stubborn rejection of them.[6] Seen from this perspective, Telugu scholars are precluded from functioning as influential mediators of intellectual and cultural change. The complexities of Brown's interactions with Telugu scholars, much documented but little theorized, merit revisiting. Despite his influence at the College of Fort St. George and his prominence in the Company civil service, none of the Indian scholars employed by Brown appear to have been promoted as Telugu pundits

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[4] Schmitthenner, *Telugu Resurgance*. Brown spent most of his career moving across the Telugu Districts as an officer of the Company revenue department. Toward the end of his career he served as Postmaster General of Madras. He served as Secretary of the Fort St. George College Board (1838-55) and was an editor of the *Madras Journal of Literature and Science*, the leading Orientalist journal of south India.

[5] Virabhadra Rao's *Tĕlugu Sāhityamupai Iṅglīṣu Prabhāvamu* is divided into two parts: The Age of Brown and the Age of Viresalingam. Bangorey refers to an age of Brown in his *Braun Jābulu* and *Braun Lekhalu*. Other references are readily available in Telugu studies of the nineteenth century. Bangorey, ed., *Braunlekhalu: Ādhunikāndhra sāhitya caritra śakalālu - Gacchadvyākhyato* (Tirupati: Śrī Veṅkaṭeśvara Viśvavidyālayaṃ, 1977); Bangorey, ed., *Braun Jābulu: Tĕlugu Jarnalijam Caritra, 1832 Nuñci 1857 Dāka* (Nĕllūru: Baṅgore Pablikeṣans, 1973).

[6] Bangorey and Arudra have been the most persistent proponents of this view. Arudra, *Samagra Āndhra Sāhityaṃ*.

in colonial schools. Nor do we see any of these figures independently advancing his experiments in Telugu print through presses or publishing projects of their own.[7] Further, among the many works authored by Telugu scholars and dedicated to Company administrators in this supposed Age of Brown, it is conspicuous that not a single major title from this time was dedicated to him.

It is only very recently, with new scholarly interest in the "Madras School of Orientalism," that the College of Fort St. George has been recognized as an important center of intellectual collaboration between European and Indian scholars.[8] From its establishment in 1812, the College recruited Telugu intellectuals as pundits to assist it with teaching language, supporting research, editing manuscripts, and producing translations. The colonial administrators and Orientalists of this early period imagined themselves as reviving traditional Indian learning through the College. In reality, the institution's activities led to the reorganization of Indian disciplinary norms and the establishment of new fields of knowledge. Telugu pundits played an important role in these processes by developing a range of new scholarly, textual, literary, and pedagogical practices under Orientalist rubrics of "tradition," "revival," and "improvement."

While historians have started to reconstruct the activities of the College, the University of Madras High School and its engagements with vernacular language instruction have yet to draw attention.[9] The High School's establishment in 1841 marked a paradigmatic shift in colonial

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[7] Velcheru Narayana Rao and Srinivas Paruchuri have also noted that a review of pundit publishing in the late nineteenth century clearly demonstrates that Indian publishers did not follow Brown's innovations. They have used his manuscripts, but they edited them to suit their own conventions and standards. Velcheru Narayana Rao and Srinivas Paruchuri, "Manaku Tĕliyani Braun Dŏra: Cārls philip braun," *Imāṭa: An Electronic Magazine in Telugu for a World Without Boundaries*, no. 5 (2014).

[8] The term was first coined in Thomas Trautmann, "Hullabaloo about Telugu," *South Asia Research* 19, no. 1 (1999). The concept is more fully explored in Trautmann, *Languages and Nations*; Thomas Trautmann, ed., *The Madras School of Orientalism: Producing Knowledge in Colonial South India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[9] There are a few studies that have referenced the High School. See Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism*; Frykenberg, "Modern Education in South India;" Sumati Ramaswami, *Terrestrial Lessons: The Conquest of the World as Globe* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2017); Suntharalingam, *Politics and Nationalist Awakening in South India.* None of these works focus on the operation of the High School or its programs of

education policy. The earlier model of Orientalist education that emphasized instruction in classical Indian learning through Indian languages was abandoned in favor of an Anglo-Vernacular model emphasizing instruction in European knowledge through English.

The imposition of English and European sciences at this time is generally seen as one of the most defining moments of epistemic rupture in colonial Indian society. From philosophy to science, Indian forms of knowledge were categorically displaced by "modern" European disciplines at the High School. Yet in the field of language, Indian expertise and scholarship continued to persist in unexpected ways. The Anglo-Vernacular model incorporated the study of Indian languages such as Telugu and Tamil as supplementary "vernacular language subjects" and continued to recruit pundits to teach them. Although pundit modes of scholarship and pedagogy elicited consistent criticism from European educators, the expertise of pundits in Indian languages was considered unimpeachable. As a result, European officials grudgingly accommodated pundits as teachers at the Madras University High School and the later Anglo-Vernacular schools that followed.

Telugu pundits at the College and High School generated a variety of Telugu grammars, textbooks, translations, and experimental writing in new prose genres that reflected changing European and Indian discourses on language and education. Of these early grammars, only Cinnaya Suri's *Bālavyākaraṇamu* (1858) remains in print and continues to command the interest of modern-day Telugu linguists and literary scholars. The pundit grammars that preceded Cinnaya Suri have not received any significant scholarly attention and have been all but forgotten.[10] However, many of these earlier works were prescribed in Anglo-Vernacular schools

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vernacular language instruction. The most comprehensive account of the High School is found in Sattianathan, *History of Education in the Madras Presidency*.

[10] In the 1950s, the Vavilla Press republished the other early grammars with short historical introductions. Ji. Lalita mentions these titles in passing. Ji. Lalita, *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamula Caritra*. (Madras: Velagapudi Foundation, 1996).

throughout the nineteenth century and critically contributed to making Telugu a colonial subject of study. In this regard, both the College and the High School were instrumental in recasting Telugu linguistic and literary expertise to new ends and anchored the Telugu school pundit's ascendance as an authoritative intellectual intermediary under colonial paradigms of tradition, revival, and improvement.[11]

The College of Fort St. George and the Making of High Telugu

The College of Fort St. George was the leading institution of colonial education and knowledge production in the Madras Presidency during the first decades of Company rule. Its primary purpose was to train and certify European recruits to the Madras Civil Service in Telugu and Tamil.[12] However, as Thomas Trautmann has argued, the institution's investments in these languages far exceeded the exigencies of colonial rule.[13] The main architects of the College were Madras Orientalists such as Francis Whyte Ellis (1777-1819), the collector of Madras and a reputed scholar of Tamil. Ellis and his Orientalist cohort organized the College in a manner that would not only support Company administration in the south but also encourage a "revival" of Indian learning across the region. To this end, the College sponsored philological projects to recover, correct, and print classics of Indian literature and stimulate original new works by Indian scholars. It also introduced courses in language and law for Indian employees of the

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Lisa Mitchell is the first scholar to seriously excavate these grammars as sources of cultural history. Mitchell, *Making of a Mother Tongue*.

[11] Michael Dodson and Brian Hatcher have provided important theoretical insights on the generative encounter between Indian and European forms of scholarship under Company rule. Michael Dodson, *Orientalism, Empire, and National Culture: India, 1770-1880* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Hatcher, *Idioms of Improvement*; Brian Hatcher, "Pandits at Work: the Modern Shastric Imaginary in early colonial Bengal," in *Trans-Colonial Modernities in South Asia*, eds. Brian Hatcher and Michael Dodson (New York: Routledge, 2012).

[12] Telugu and Tamil were considered the most "useful" vernaculars for the Presidency administration. Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi and Hindustani were deemed less valuable for governance and hence given lower priority at the College.

[13] This is explored at length in Trautmann, *Languages and Nations*.

Company in order to "improve" the general standard of Indian pedagogy and linguistic knowledge. This gives the College the distinction of being the earliest colonial experiment in Indian education in southern India.

The activities of Telugu scholars at the College were fundamentally structured by its Orientalist orientation toward classical and literary learning. In developing the plan of the College, Company officials in Madras drew on the experience of several decades of Orientalist experiments in education such as the Calcutta Madrasah (est. 1781), the Benares Sanskrit College (est. 1792), and the College of Fort William in Calcutta (est. 1800). These northern institutions conceived questions of education, revival, and improvement in relation to the prestige languages of Persian and Sanskrit. In this, Orientalist educators were informed by eighteenth-century European notions of elite education as well as the cultural sensibilities of their Indian interlocutors.

Many Company men were products of a European classical education in Greek and Latin and brought their literary and philological training to bear on their engagements with Indian languages. As languages that had been systematized through grammars, standardized by robust traditions of belles-lettres, and cultivated by social elites across the subcontinent, Orientalist scholars commonly referred to Persian and Sanskrit as the "classical" languages of India. Conversely, their philological perspective situated popularly spoken languages such as Hindustani and Bengali as the "vernacular" languages of India. These vernacular languages were conceptualized as the "fallen," "broken," and "corrupt" derivatives of the classical languages. European perceptions of linguistic hierarchy and value were reinforced by their interactions with Indian elites who shared critical affinities with their valorization of the ancients, the importance of aristocratic birth, and disdain for popular dialects.

Orientalist models of education for European as well as Indian students were developed around a literary and philological focus on classical languages. For European students, these early colonial institutions promoted the literary study of Persian and Sanskrit as reliable linguistic touchstones against the countless "jargons" and "idioms" spoken in the subcontinent. Orientalist educators believed that a mastery of these classical standards would equip Company civil servants with the most refined and generalizable principles of Indian speech. This was argued to be the most effective method of preparing them to navigate the wide range of derivative spoken vernaculars they would encounter during their service. With regard to Indian education, Company officials envisioned a revival of classical Persian and Sanskrit learning that would mirror the flowering of classical Greek and Latin learning in Renaissance Europe. They calculated that the patronage of India's classical languages and the employment of educated Indian elites would lend the Company administration the cooperation and esteem of their Indian subjects.

Prior to the establishment of the College of Fort St. George, Company initiatives to promote Indian education and revive Indian learning in the south was characterized primarily by neglect.[14] Unlike the northern schools, the College of Fort St. George was a uniquely hybrid institution designed to support the education of European as well as Indian students. European recruits to the Madras Civil Service trained in Telugu and Tamil at the College in order to carry out their administrative duties as revenue collectors and court magistrates. They were required to

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[14] Reports on the advantage of studying southern vernaculars first emerged in the 1780s but do not seem to have influenced the Company's language policies. See John Sulivan, *Observations Respecting the Circar of Mazulipatam in a Letter from John Sulivan to the Court of Directors of the East-India Company*, (1770), 46-47. Even conventional suggestions to establish Orientalist institutions of classical learning comparable to the Calcutta Madrasah and Benares Sanskrit College went ignored. In 1794, Company administrator James Grant suggested the formation of a Madrasah at Simhachalam and Sanskrit College at Masulipatam. James Grant, *Political Survey of the Northern Circars: Being a memoir of the history, government, resources, and revenues of the Northern Circars,* (1784). This recommendation was not pursued. It was only with the inauguration of Colonel Colin Mackenzie's Survey of Mysore and the Carnatic (1800-1810) that we see the first Orientalist forays into the region.

pass examinations that demonstrated linguistic proficiency in at least one of these languages before receiving their first posting. Indian students trained at the College to serve as munshis or language instructors for European students as well as vakils (pleaders) and munsiffs (legal experts) for Company courts.

Although intended as a regional outpost, the College quickly diverged from its northern predecessors and became the center of a distinct "Madras School of Orientalism." The most distinguishing feature of the Madras Orientalists was the high degree of cultural prestige with which they endowed the vernacular languages of south India. They approached these languages with a philological rigor and literary appreciation that the Orientalists of Calcutta and Benares typically reserved for classical languages.

In the case of Telugu, the College emphasized the study of "High Telugu" for its literary and scholarly value. High Telugu was identified with the linguistic register found in classics of Telugu poetry such as Nannaya's eleventh-century *Āndhra Mahābhāratam* and the courtly prabandha narratives of sixteenth-century Vijayanagara. The reports and publications of Madras Orientalists are filled with aggrandizing proclamations seeking to elevate the status of Telugu from a derivative regional vernacular to a refined language of literature and learning. Contrasting Telugu to the "barren jargon" of Hindustani, the College's founding father Ellis argued in an 1811 report that Telugu was "at one period highly cultivated" and hence more "beneficial and praiseworthy" as an object of Orientalist study and scholarship.[15] The first Secretary of the College Board, Alexander Duncan Campbell (1789-1857), described the language in his 1820 Telugu grammar as "one of the most useful and polished languages of India."[16] Upon his

[15] See 1811 "Report of the Committee," as quoted in Trautmann, *Languages and Nations*, 196.
[16] Alexander Duncan Campbell, *A Grammar of the Teloogoo Language, Commonly Termed the Gentoo, Peculiar to the Hindoos Inhabiting the North Eastern Provinces of the Indian Peninsula.* 2nd ed. (Madras: College Press, 1820), Advertisement.

graduation from the College, a young C.P. Brown even went so far as to place Telugu on par with the classical languages of Europe. In the introduction of his 1827 study of Telugu and Sanskrit prosody, he declared that, "the Telugu language is perhaps no less conspicuous among those spoken in India, for the extent, antiquity, and critical refinement of its literature, than were either of the languages of Greece or Rome."[17]

These laudatory attitudes substantially determined the organization of vernacular language instruction at the College. The College Board, composed primarily of Orientalist scholars, developed a philological course of study in the literary classics of Telugu and Tamil for European as well as Indian students. This concentration on the high vernaculars was driven by the same Orientalist presumptions of linguistic purity and descent that commended the classicist study of Sanskrit and Persian in northern institutions. However, these logics of linguistic differentiation and valuation were now adapted to establishing gradations of purity and prestige among the southern vernaculars. Much as Persian and Sanskrit were held to be the ancestor languages of Hindustani and Bengali in the north, the High Telugu and Tamil of the ancient vernacular poets were considered to be the parent dialects of the diverse spoken idioms of the south.

The College Board advocated the study of these literary dialects under the impression that they were the most refined and systematized exemplars of these languages. The Board believed that a strong foundation in the high vernacular would furnish European students with a fixed grammatical standard of the language. This would enable the itinerant civil servant to deftly navigate the bewildering array of non-standard derivatives spoken across the different districts of

[17] Charles Philip Brown, *Āndhra Gīrvāṇa Chhandamu - The Prosody of the Telugu and Sanscrit Languages Explained* (Madras: College Press, 1827), i. Over the years, his opinion would change and he would come to eventually describe most Telugu literature "worthless." Charles Philip Brown, *Literary Autobiography*. ed. Bangorey and G.N. Reddy (Tirupati: Sri Venkateshwara University, 1978).

the Presidency. As for its Indian students, instruction and certification in the grammars of High Telugu and Tamil was promoted as part of a broader Orientalist program of revival. The Board anticipated that the linguistic and pedagogical training imparted through a “classical” curriculum would not only prepare its Indian students to serve as knowledgeable munshis for their European students but also as the torchbearers of a southern renaissance.

During its years as a teaching institution (1812-36), the College developed separate programs of education for European and Indian students. However, as will be discussed below, these programs were closely entwined with one another and had important consequences for how Telugu instruction would be structured in later institutions of colonial education. For its European students, the College Board instituted a progressive system of language instruction that began with a preliminary course in the colloquial “low” dialect and concluded with a study of the literary high dialect. Junior civil servants were required to demonstrate proficiency in both forms of the vernacular before receiving their first assignment.

We can infer that the foundations of this progressive system were based on the long legacy of missionary scholarship in Tamil.[18] Madras Orientalists were particularly influenced by the eighteenth-century Jesuit scholar Constanzo Beschi’s (1680-1742) research on the Tamil language. Beschi distinguished two distinct forms of Tamil: the elegant and the vulgar. Elegant Tamil covered the domain of elite poetry and literary commentary while vulgar Tamil encompassed the language’s remaining written and spoken forms. These distinctions formed the basis of the College Board’s understandings of the “High” and “Low” vernaculars. The Board collected and printed manuscripts of Beschi’s works at the College Press and used them to develop a model curriculum of vernacular study. The first work printed at the College Press was Beschi’s Latin grammar of vulgar Tamil, *Grammatica Latino-Tamulica, Sive de Vulgari*

[18] See 1811 "Report of the Committee," as quoted in Trautmann, *Languages and Nations*, 122.

Tamulicae Linguae Idiomate Kotuntamil Dicto (1813). This was later followed by the publication of an English translation of his Latin grammar of elegant Tamil, *Grammatica Latino Tamulica ubi de elegantiori linguae Tamulicae dialecto (Centamir) dicta cui adduntur Tamulicae poeseos rudimenta*. The College also published Beschi's two dictionaries—a Latin-Tamil dictionary for the vulgar dialect and a Tamil-Tamil dictionary for the elegant dialect.

In its attempts to develop a comparable system of progressive study for Telugu, the College was hard pressed to find works similar to Beschi. The history of missionary scholarship on Telugu had been much more limited and Madras Orientalists did not have access to an older syllabus of Telugu language study.[19] Consequently, the College Board was compelled to develop an entirely original course of Telugu study.

In 1816, the College Press released its first Telugu publication—Superintendent of the College Board A.D. Campbell's *A Grammar of the Teloogoo Language*. Drawing on Beschi's elegant-vulgar division, Campbell divided Telugu into a "superior" dialect used in "all books and studied compositions" and an "inferior" Telugu dialect used in "conversation" as well as "familiar correspondence and official business."[20] Noting in his introduction that knowledge of both these dialects was vital, he claims that his grammar was produced "as much to enable the student to understand the rules which regulate the classical compositions of the Natives, as to teach him to speak or write the common Teloogoo."[21] However, Campbell's grammar displayed a strong philological interest and focused primarily on High Telugu as the "original source" of the language.[22] Basing his work on medieval grammars of Telugu, he methodically reviews the

[19] The most thorough study in this regard is Mangamma, *Book Printing in India*.
[20] Alexander Duncan Campbell, *A Grammar of the Teloogoo Language, Commonly Termed the Gentoo, Peculiar to the Hindoos Inhabiting the North Eastern Provinces of the Indian Peninsula*, 3rd ed. (Madras: Hindu Press, 1849), iii - xiv and 20.
[21] Campbell, *A Grammar of the Teloogoo Language,* 3rd ed., iii - xiv.
[22] Campbell, *A Grammar of the Teloogoo Language,* 3rd ed., iii - xiv.

principles of High Telugu with only occasional notices on the "derivative" iterations of Low Telugu.[23]

Campbell's grammar of High Telugu became the anchor of subsequent works produced for European students at the College. In 1819, the College Press published its second Telugu text—Deputy Telugu Headmaster Ravipati Gurumurti Sastri's *Tales of Vikramarka*.[24] This was a graded prose reader that presented a series of Telugu moral tales translated from the Sanskrit *Dvātriṃśatśālbhañjika* (*Tales of the Thirty Two Damsels*). It began in the Low Telugu dialect before graduating to the High Telugu dialect.[25] In an introductory remark, Gurumurti Sastri states that his text was commissioned by Campbell in order to assist European "doras" (lords) with speaking and reading Telugu. A second edition of Campbell's *Grammar of Teloogoo* was issued by the College Press in 1820. This was followed in 1821 by another work by Campbell, *A Dictionary of the Teloogoo Language*. Claiming to be a dictionary of both dialects, it was compiled on the same principles of linguistic hierarchy as his grammar. The high dialect was taken as the normative default standard of Telugu with entries including rare supplementary references to the low dialect. This is apparent through its use of literary orthography, notices on

[23] Campbell, *A Grammar of the Teloogoo Language,* 3rd ed., iii - xiv.
[24] A Telugu title for this text is given as *Dvātriṃśatśālbhañjika Kadhalu* but it is more commonly known by its English name, also listed on the title page, as *Tales of Vikramarka*. Ravipati Gurumurti Sastri, *Dvātriṃśatśālbhañjikala Kadhalu - Tales of Vikramarka* (Madras: College Press, 1819).
[25] How exactly scholars at the College understood what constituted a standardized "low" dialect of Telugu remains to be studied. In Gurumurti Sastri's work, this appears to mean avoiding more complex sandhi while maintaining the grammatical forms found in old Telugu poetry. *Tales of Vikramarka* states that its first 80 pages are written in simple sandhi common to speech while its last 30 pages introduce the more complex sandhi used in poetry along with a more erudite vocabulary. Brown's 1840 *A Grammar of the Telugu Language* sought to supplement Campbell's focus on high Telugu by developing a grammar to assist in the study of "low" Telugu. Contemporary Telugu scholars have taken this for granted to mean a grammar of "spoken" or "*vyavahārika*" Telugu in contrast to literary or "*grānthika*" Telugu. However, Brown refers to literary texts as his authorities of the low dialect. The distinctions of high and low Telugu as they were drawn at the College were ambiguous and produced through the scholarship of this period. Charles Philip Brown, *A Grammar of the Telugu Language*, (Madras: Vepery Mission Press, 1840).

alternative "vulgar" spellings, and occasional clarifications on the "common" usages of words.[26] In 1823, the College Press released another Telugu reader—Deputy Telugu Translator to the Government J.C. Morris' *Telugu Selections*. The majority of this work consisted of short prose tales designed to support reciprocal translation exercises between Telugu and English for beginning students. It frequently referenced Campbell's *Grammar* and, as with Gurumurti Sastri's work, progressively increased in difficulty from Low to High Telugu. *Telugu Selections* also included a small collection of dialogues, samples of bureaucratic correspondence, and a glossary of technical revenue terms culled from Campbell's *Dictionary* in order to familiarize European students with "less regular" idiomatic forms of Telugu that flourished in Company cutcherries (low-level revenue offices).[27]

Campbell's notion of High Telugu as the original source and normative standard of the Telugu language did not just structure Telugu instruction for Europeans but also Indians. As mentioned earlier, Indian students trained at the College to serve as language teachers, legal experts, and pleaders for the Company administration. The College Board constructed "classical" curriculums in Indian language, law, and philosophy for their Hindu and Muslim students. Madras Orientalists were particularly concerned that prospective munshis develop a correct knowledge of vernacular grammar in order to ensure that they tutored Europeans with accuracy. Aspiring Telugu munshis studied the grammar of High Telugu alongside the Sanskrit subjects of *vyākaraṇa*, *dharmaśāstra*, and *tarkaśāstra* and took supplementary lessons on English grammar

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[26] The dictionary employed literary orthography in its use of *arasunna* (half nasal) and *sakatarepha* (trill r). Although he was keen to identify words by their language of origin (whether Sanskrit or neighboring vernacular languages), Campbell curiously did not include an overall scheme for denoting which entries were proper to the High or Low Telugu dialects. However, definitions for entries occasionally reference this distinction. For examples, see the entry for *ariṣṭam*: "In the common dialect, it has, in general, the first meaning" and the entry for *kani*: "kanikonu, vulgarly written kanukkonu…" Alexander Duncan Campbell, *A Dictionary of the Teloogoo Language, Commonly Termed the Gentoo, Peculiar to the Hindoos of the North Eastern Provinces of the Indian Peninsula,* 2nd ed. (Madras: Hindu Press, 1848).

[27] J.C. Morris, *A Vocabulary of English and Teloogoo Words* (Madras: College Press, 1832), Preface.

as well the legal regulations of the Madras Government.[28] This classical curriculum was imparted through an "improved" system of native education that saw the introduction of European seminar-style classrooms, new textbooks, new methods of examination and certification, and an emphasis on new linguistic competencies such as grammar, prose composition, and translation.

Headmasters and Munshis: Telugu Pundits at the College of Fort St. George (1812-36)

The College of Fort St. George organized European and Indian instruction as separate but complementary programs of education. Both of these programs had substantial overlap in curriculum, pedagogical materials, and teaching staff. Unlike the College of Fort William in Calcutta, teaching at the College was conducted by an all Indian faculty of pundits under the supervision of the College Board. These pundits were divided into "headmasters" and "munshis" on the basis of their status, pay, and responsibilities. Headmasters were tasked with teaching Indian students the College Board's "classical curriculum," producing new pedagogical materials, supporting the research enterprises of Madras Orientalists, and managing munshis. They were initially recruited from reputed Indian scholars based in Madras and well rewarded. Munshis were hired by the College to serve as language instructors and tutors for European students and were under the supervision of the headmasters. They were initially trained by the College headmasters and received certificates of qualification by passing examinations set by the College Board. In comparison to headmasters, munshis were poorly paid and frequently left their posts for more lucrative clerkships under one of their European students once they had received an assignment. Others went on to take judicial assignments at Company courts or teaching posts

[28] Mangamma, *Book Printing in India*, 105. Mangamma reproduces a College advertisement for Telugu headmaster and Superintendent of Indian Instruction.

at missionary and private schools. The division into headmasters and munshis seems to have been largely an administrative one, as Europeans and Company servants seem to have referred to them more generally as "pundits."

The College recruited numerous Telugu intellectuals to serve as pundits for Telugu, Sanskrit, and English. The Tamil headmasters at the College have drawn significant academic attention in recent years.[29] The personal biographies of these teachers alongside their intellectual interests, record of textual production, social and intellectual networks, contributions to Orientalist research, and interactions with the broader world of Tamil learning have been well documented. Surprisingly, we have yet to see any comparable accounts of their Telugu peers who appear to have played a more prominent role in the affairs of the College.[30]

As a teaching institution, the College of Fort St. George employed two Telugu Headmasters.[31] The first Telugu Headmaster was Vedam Pattabhirama Sastri (1760-1820), a Puduri Dravida Brahmin who hailed from the Atmakur taluk (subdivision) of Nellore District. Under the patronage of the College, Pattabhirama Sastri produced several influential works of linguistic scholarship. His earliest work was a Telugu prose commentary on

[29] See: Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism*; Ebeling, "The College of Fort St. George;" Trautmann, *Languages and Nations*; A.R. Venkatachalapathy, "'Grammar, the Frame of Language:' Tamil Pandits at the College of Fort St. George" in *The Madras School of Orientalism: Producing Knowledge in Colonial South India*, ed. Thomas Trautmann (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009); Bhavani Raman, *Document Raj*; Kamil Zvelebil, *Companion Studies to the History of Tamil Literature* (Leiden, 1992).
[30] Recent publications have referenced the significance of the College to early nineteenth century Telugu scholarship but there is much to be excavated. Mantena, *The Origins of Modern Historiography*; Mitchell, *Making of a Mother Tongue*; Trautmann, *Languages and Nations*; Philip Wagoner, "From Manuscript to Archive to Print: The Mackenzie Collection and Later Telugu Historiography" in *The Madras School of Orientalism: Producing Knowledge in Colonial South India*, ed. Thomas Trautmann (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009). Mangamma's work on the College focuses primarily on European scholars. Mangamma, *Book Printing*. Nidudavolu Venkatarao offers a preliminary outline of Telugu scholarship at the College. Nidudavolu Venkatarao, "History of Telugu Linguistics," *University of Madras Annals of Oriental Research* 8, Centenary Number (1957).
[31] This information is compiled from several secondary and primary sources. The most detailed and useful secondary are: Mangamma, *Book Printing in India*; Trautmann, *Languages and Nations*; Virabhadra Rao, *Tĕlugu Sāhityamupai Iṅglīṣu Prabhāvamu*.

Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi, a medieval Sanskrit grammar of the Telugu language.[32] This Telugu commentary appears to have been a prelude to his composition of an original grammar in Telugu verse, *Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* (1816), for Indian students of the College.[33] However, he is perhaps best remembered today for his unprecedented formulation of a list of Telugu verbal roots (*Āndhra Dhātumāla*, 1816?). This list represented a major advancement in grammatical thinking around the Telugu verb and provided critical support for the Orientalist conceptualization of an independent Dravidian language family.

In 1820, Pattabhirama Sastri was succeeded in his post by the College's Deputy Telugu Headmaster, Ravipati Gurumurti Sastri (1770-1836) whom we met earlier. Little is known of Gurumurti Sastri's life other than the fact that he was an Aruvela Niyogi Brahmin whose origins lay to the north of Madras.[34] As mentioned above, during his time as Deputy Telugu Headmaster he translated and adapted the Sanskrit *Dvātriṃśatśālbhañjika* as a Telugu prose reader titled *The Tales of Vikramarka* (1819) for European students.[35] This work was published at the College Press and gave Gurumurti Sastri the special distinction of being the first Telugu author to see his own work in print. As Telugu Headmaster, he went on to compose a Telugu prose translation of the Sanskrit *Pañcatantra* (1834) and an original Telugu prose grammar, *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu* (1836), for Indian and European students.

Gurumurti Sastri was assisted in his teaching responsibilities by Deputy Telugu Headmaster Tiruvatesvarapeta Venkatarangayya. Nothing is known of Venkatarangayya except that he was one of the earliest Indian scholars to edit and publish one of the first classical Telugu

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[32] Dating *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* has been a topic of debate. See Footnote 58 below for more detail.
[33] The editor of the Vavilla edition notes that it was published posthumously in 1825. Vedam Pattabhirama Sastri, *Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* (Madras: Vavilla Ramaswami Sastrulu and Sons, 1951), 12.
[34] In the preface to his *Tales of Vikramarka* he is refers to himself as a "northerner" (*uttarasthuḍu*).
[35] The first 80 pages use a simple vocabulary and sandhi common in speech. The remaining section introduces more complex vocabulary and rules of literary sandhi.

works in print. He edited the seventeenth-century *Bhāskara Śatakamu*, a collection of *nīti* verses, to serve as a textbook for "students who are studying Telugu in understanding the moral path."[36]

Regarding the Telugu munshis of the College, we have very little information. Thomas Trautmann notes that the College enrolled eight to ten civil servants per year and that each of these men were assigned their own munshis.[37] From this, we may presume that the College employed a couple dozen munshis for Telugu and Tamil instruction during its heyday as a teaching institution. Passing references to Telugu munshis and their activities at the College may be gleaned from the correspondence of C.P. Brown.

In an 1840 letter introducing himself to Brown, Velagapudi Virayya writes that he had worked "as a munshi at the College for fourteen years" before moving on to serve as an expert (munsiff) of Hindu civil law in Company courts "for the past fifteen years."[38] Given these intervals, it appears Velagapudi served as a Telugu munshi at the College from its earliest years. In an 1846 letter to Brown, Paturi Ramasvami Sastri introduces himself and his family's connections to the College.[39] He writes that his elder brother Narasimha Sastri served the College as a Telugu munshi before being promoted to Deputy Telugu Headmaster. On his brother's death, Ramasvami Sastri was initially appointed as his replacement but, owing to a lack of English proficiency, was soon demoted to the position of second Telugu munshi for the former Secretary of the College Board J.C. Morris (1798-1858). Ramasvami Sastri mentions that his younger brother Ranga Sastri also worked at the College as a Telugu munshi during this period. All three Paturi brothers, as munshis at the College, are reported to have produced Telugu

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[36] Velcheru Narayana Rao has discussed colonial efforts to map the European notion of "morality" onto Indic conceptions of "*nīti*" through his study of early editions of the popular *Sumati Śatakamu*. Velcheru Narayana Rao, "Multiple Lives of a Text: *Sumati Śatakamu* in colonial Andhra," in *Ritual, Caste, and Religion in Colonial South*, eds. Michael Bergunder, Heiko Frese, and Ulrike Schroder (Halle: Franckesche Stiftungen zu Halle, 2010).
[37] Trautmann, *Languages and Nations*, 136.
[38] Bangorey, *Braun Jābulu*, 46.
[39] Virabhadra Rao, *Tĕlugu Sāhityamupai Iṅglīṣu Prabhāvamu*, 249-50. See also: Niḍudavolu Veṅkaṭarāvu, *Āndhra Vacana Vāṅmayamu* (Haidarābādu: Yan. Yas. Sundareśvararāvu, 1977), 65.

prose readers. Narasimha Sastri had adapted the story of Harischandra while Ranga Sastri had produced an epitome of the seventeenth-century *Vijayavilāsamu*, a classic of Telugu courtly poetry.[40] Ramasvami Sastri had been commissioned by the College to produce a prose adaptation of the final chapter (*uttarakāṇḍamu*) of the popular fourteenth-century Telugu *dvipada* poem, *Raṅganātha Rāmāyaṇamu*. Writing to Brown in 1846, he notes that he had recently completed a new textual edition of the Sanskrit collection of tales *Śukasaptati* and was in the process of translating it into Telugu prose. However, none of these works appear to have been printed.[41]

While these letters provide us with the names of a few munshis and the types of Telugu texts they produced, Betapudi Sundarayya's *Nīlagiri Caritra* (1864) offers a sharper picture of their position at the College.[42] Part travelogue, part memoir, Sundarayya's narrative recollects his visit to Ooty, the Presidency's summer capital in the Nilgiri Hills, as well as his early years as a Telugu munshi at the College. It is an early experiment in Telugu prose writing and appears to have been printed as a reader for Indian students with an appendix of Telugu petitions suitable for the different departments of the Government.[43]

A native of Masulipatam, Sundarayya writes that he moved south to teach Telugu, Sanskrit, and English to European as well as Indian students at the "Cĕnnapaṭnam Kāleji." He lists his salary as a Telugu munshi at 15 rupees per month, which we may compare to the monthly salary of the Telugu and Sanskrit headmaster at 175 rupees during this time.[44] Sundarayya left this position to serve as a teacher in Governor Thomas Munro's short-lived Tahsildari-Collectorate

[40] It is unclear from which source Narasimha Sastri drew his Harischandra rendition.
[41] Nidudavolu Venkatarao claims that Ramasvami Sastri's *Śukasaptati* was printed and still circulates as an anonymous edition. It is unclear what he has based this observation on. Nidudavolu, *Āndhra Vacana Vāṅmayamu*, 59.
[42] This information is based on extensive quotations of the text given in Virabhadra Rao, *Tĕlugu Sāhityamupai Iṅglīṣu Prabhāvamu*, 216-219. I have been unable to directly examine the text myself.
[43] Virabhadra Rao speculates that this journey took place in 1846-47. He discussed the nature of the prose and use of English in his text. Virabhadra Rao, *Tĕlugu Sāhityamupai Iṅglīṣu Prabhāvamu*, 219.
[44] Mangamma, *Book Printing in India*, 105.

school system for Indian students (1826-1836). After this system was discontinued, he returned to the College to offer his services as a munshi once again.[45] At this time he obtained a certificate of qualification (*yogyata pātramu*) from the College, a fact that he prominently advertises on the title page of his *Nīlagiri Caritra*.

Sundarayya mentions the names of some of his Telugu peers at the College, munshis who were teachers of Sanskrit, Telugu, and English. These include Perumbuduru Krishnamacaryulu, Saidapet Minakshayya, and Ravipati Guruvayya, son of the Telugu Headmaster Ravipati Gurumurti. Ravipati Guruvaya served as a munshi for Telugu government translator M.W. Carr and collaborated with him in the production of *Āndhralokokticandrika* (1869), an anthology of Telugu proverbs with English translation.[46] We are also given the name of Adakki Subba Ravu, a Telugu and Kannada munshi who worked at the College and Government translator's office. Subba Ravu collaborated with J.C. Morris in the creation of a Telugu and English Vocabulary (1832) and also published a Kannada prose reader (1846) and Telugu primer (1851) for European students.

Sundarayya's account underscores the multilingual orientation of early nineteenth-century Telugu intellectuals and demonstrates that their presence at the College far exceeded their connections to the Telugu language. From College's very inception we find that they were also recruited as experts in Sanskrit and English. For example, the College's first Telugu Headmaster, Vedam Pattabhirama Sastri, was also appointed its first Sanskrit Headmaster. He was responsible for superintending the classical curriculum and instructing Indian students in Sanskrit grammar,

[45] It appears that even after the teaching program had been discontinued, an exam to certify pundits was still conducted up to the final dissolution of the College in 1854. Aside from Sundarayya's reference to obtaining a certificate post-1836, there is another reference to a graduate of the later High School, G. Changanna Sastri, obtaining a certificate in 1847. *Report of the High School Governors, 1853-54,* "List of Proficients of the High School for 1854," Appendix.

[46] M.W. Carr, *Āndhra Lokokti Candrika - A Collection of Telugu Proverbs Translated, Illustrated, and Explained; Together with some Sanscrit Proverbs printed in the Devanagari and Telugu characters* (Madras: Vepery Mission Press, 1868), Preface.

logic, and law. He appears to have been succeeded in this post by another Telugu scholar, Ahobalacaryulu, about whom little is known at present.[47] The College's first English Headmaster, Bommakanti Sivasankara Sastri (1771-1817), was a Telugu Niyogi Brahmin who had previously worked as the sheristadar of the Madras collectorate. Sivasankara Sastri did not leave behind any scholarly works but seems to have been an important interlocutor for Madras Orientalists as they developed their understanding of the Telugu language and hypothesized the "Dravidian Proof."[48] After a short stint at the College, he returned to his sheristadar duties and the role of English headmaster was occupied by another Telugu Niyogi Brahmin, Udayagiri Venkatanarayana. An 1813 report from the College Board refers to a Sanskrit grammar of Telugu that Venkatanarayana translated into English but there are no later references to this text.[49] Venkatanarayana served as Telugu munshi to A.D. Campbell (1789-1857) and closely assisted him in the preparation of his *Grammar of Teloogoo*.[50] Venkatanarayana later left this position to serve as an interpreter for the Madras High Court.

This review of Telugu scholars and the range of texts they produced provides important insight into the type of linguistic knowledge and training fostered by the College. Madras Orientalist investments in the literary and the classical institutionalized the study of High Telugu grammar and grounded early experiments in Telugu prose. Telugu Headmasters Pattabhirama Sastri and Gurumurti Sastri produced grammars of High Telugu for their Indian students while

[47] This reference comes from Virabhadra Rao who cites a review of College Secretary Henry Morris' publication of *Saṃskṛta Śabdamañjari*. Ahobalacaryulu is listed as the first reviewer and head Sanskrit pundit of the College. Virabhadra Rao, *Tĕlugu Sāhityamupai Iṅglīṣu Prabhāvamu*, 327.
[48] Trautmann discusses Sivasankara Sastri's close relationship to Ellis and his original proposition that Telugu was a "mixed language" derived from Sanskrit and Tamil. Trautman, *Languages and Nations*, 178-185.
[49] Trautmann, *Languages and Nations*, 198. I would speculate this is *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* based on Campbell's dependence on the text as well as Venkatanarayana's in composing his English grammar.
[50] The first edition of Campbell's *Grammar of Teloogoo* was published in 1816. Campbell also thanks Telugu Headmaster Pattabhirama Sastri for his supervision and proofreading. As per his diary, he claims to have completed this translation as early as 1814. Campell's Diary, Private Papers of A.D. Alexander Duncan Campbell, British Library, London.

English Headmaster Venkatanarayana collaborated in the creation of a similar grammar in English for European students. As we shall see shortly, these grammars led to an unprecedented boom in Telugu linguistic scholarship.

The new interest in grammar was also paralleled a shift from poetry to prose. Driven by its philological interest, the College Board commissioned its Headmasters and munshis to recast older Sanskrit and Telugu works of poetry as Telugu prose readers. We see multiple translations and abridgements of Sanskrit *kathā* texts such as *Dvātriṃśatśālbhañjika*, *Pañcatantra*, and *Śukasaptati* as well adaptations of Telugu classics such as the *Raṅganātha Rāmāyaṇamu* and *Vijayavilāsamu* into Telugu prose.[51] These early prose readers were initially produced for munshis to instruct beginning European students in Telugu grammar, reading, writing, and translation. It appears College officials saw these High Telugu prose readers as stepping stones for European students that prepared them for more properly philological engagements with classical Telugu poetry.[52] However, by the 1840s, we see prose readers such as Gurumurti Sastri's *Tales of Vikramarka* and *Pañcatantra* also being adapted for Indian education through new Company initiatives such as the University of Madras High School. This reflects shifting expectations in colonial schools for what proficiency in vernacular languages for Indian students constituted—often with similar emphases on grammar, prose, and translation. By the time Betapudi's *Nīlagiri Caritra* was published in 1864, it appears that the Telugu prose reader had

[51] Although Sanskrit *kathā* texts had inspired creative adaptations among earlier generations of Telugu poets, this appears to be the first time these works were rendered in Telugu prose or adapted to exemplify Telugu grammar. The creation of Telugu prose epitomes for classics of Telugu poetry as well as their use in language teaching were also entirely unprecedented developments.
[52] Morris, "Dialogue with a Munshi," *Teloogoo Selections*, 170. C.P. Brown had a very negative impression of Ravipati's prose readers, the most popular of this genre, and believed the direct study of poetry was preferable. Charles Philip Brown, *A Grammar of the Telugu Language*, 2nd ed. (Madras: Vepery Mission Press, 1857), iii and 171.

evolved into a vehicle of original literary expression and an accepted model of textbook for Indian instruction.[53]

As pundits at the College of Fort St. George, Telugu intellectuals collaborated with Orientalist scholars in establishing a classical Telugu literary curriculum and producing new grammars, readers, and other instructional materials for European as well as Indian students. Many of the College's English and Telugu publications came to be adopted as standard textbooks in subsequent colonial efforts to promote Indian education. The philological focus of the European program and the revivalist orientation of the Indian program structured the activities of Telugu intellectuals at the College in important ways. Novel and unexpected intersections between the European and Indian programs led to the production and dissemination of new linguistic knowledge, literary norms, textual and editorial practices, pedagogical methods, and experiments with printing. These engagements were foundational to the development of Telugu pundits as influential intellectuals in Indian literary life as well as the organization of Telugu as a colonial school subject.

Pundits, Prose, and Grammar: Reinventing the Telugu Scholar

The College Board's early experiments in Telugu instruction drew together different traditions of Telugu textual production. This had the radical outcome of integrating diverse literary cultures into a unified field of knowledge and laid the disciplinary foundations for Telugu as a modern subject of study. As Velcheru Narayana Rao has discussed, the pre-colonial literati of southern India had cultivated knowledge of Telugu for different purposes and affiliated

[53] Prior to Betapudi's work, there are two other original prose narratives that were produced, it seems at least in part, for student instruction—Enugula Viraswami's *Kāśiyātra Caritra* (1838) and Kola Sesachala Kavi's *Nīlagiriyātra* (1846). The history of these original prose "readers" demands revisiting. C.P. Brown derides Viraswami's text as being in the colloquial "mixed dialect" of Madras. Brown, *A Grammar of the Telugu Language*, 1st ed., 223. Kola and Betapudi's texts are in the High Telugu dialect.

themselves with diverse textual communities.[54] This crucially determined the nature and practice of their linguistic competencies in Telugu and what it meant to know Telugu.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, there were two preeminent orientations toward Telugu literacy. Telugu *paṇḍitas*, as scholar-poets, combined theoretical rigor in Sanskrit with a mastery of canonical works of Telugu poetry to develop strong competencies in versification and linguistic analysis. On the other hand, *karaṇams* or village officials developed more pragmatic scribal competencies in Telugu and other regional languages that privileged documentary and administrative prose.[55] There were, in effect, multiple ways of being literate in Telugu.

The College's philological and educational projects brought Telugu literati from diverse textual communities together for the first time to produce new forms of knowledge on Telugu language and literature. In the process, disparate linguistic competencies, reading practices, and literary traditions were consolidated in the making of Telugu as a vernacular language subject and the emergence of a new and distinctly colonial class of Indian intellectual: the Telugu school pundit.

Paṇḍita perspectives on Telugu wielded significant influence in determining Orientalist conceptions of High Telugu. In an 1811 report advocating for the establishment of a College at Fort St. George, the Madras Orientalist F.W. Ellis complained that the Indians who presented themselves as language tutors for Europeans in Madras were low-level clerks and accountants with few qualifications beyond a smattering of English and a few memorized vocabularies.[56] Ellis argued that the Company could improve the instruction of its European servants while also

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[54] Narayana Rao, "Multiple Literary Cultures in Telugu." See also: Velcheru Narayana Rao, "Coconut and Honey."
[55] Velcheru Narayana Rao, David Shulman, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam have explored aspects of *karaṇam* textuality. Velcheru Narayana Rao, David Dean Shulman, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Textures of Time: Writing History in South India 1600-1800* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2001). Philip Wagoner also explores the legacies of *karṇam* literacy in the early Company period. Wagoner, "Precolonial Intellectuals and the Production of Colonial Knowledge." We can also identify other types of literacies and also note that individuals could occupy both modes.
[56] Trautmann, *Languages and Nations*, 124.

contributing to the improvement of Indian learning by reviving literary and grammatical knowledge among its native language teachers.

For Orientalist scholars of the early nineteenth century, grammar was the bedrock of linguistic knowledge and a defining competency in claiming expertise in a language. The College Board developed a program of vernacular language instruction for its European as well as Indian students under the philological premise that the study of poetry, as per the model of European classical education, was the ideal method of learning grammar.[57]

The College recruited Telugu literati from a variety of backgrounds to support its teaching and scholarly aims. With their focus on the high dialect of Telugu and grammatical learning, College officials were drawn to the *paṇḍita's* competencies in Sanskrit linguistic analysis and classic works of Telugu poetry. The first Telugu and Sanskrit Headmaster Vedam Pattabhirama Sastri hailed from the Puduri branch of Dravida Brahmins, a community that was highly regarded for its Sanskrit and Telugu *pāṇḍityam* (scholarship). At the same time, the College's primary aim in developing vernacular language instruction was to enable European civil servants and their Indian functionaries to work with prose documents related to colonial administration. These activities relied heavily on the pragmatic competencies of *karṇams* in transactional everyday prose. Pattabhirama Sastri was followed as Telugu Headmaster by Ravipati Gurumurti Sastri, a member of the Niyogi Brahmin administrative elite. Niyogi Brahmins monopolized *karaṇam* positions across Hyderabad State and the Northern Circar Districts and were some of the highest placed native officials in the Madras administration. The College's English Headmasters as well as many of its Telugu munshis also appear to have been Niyogi Brahmins.

[57] As C.P. Brown noted, "Experience daily proved to me that the [Telugu] grammar is best studied in metrical compositions. This we know to be the case in Greek, Sanscrit, and French; and it is equally true as regard the modern languages of India wherein we are constantly obliged to transact business." Brown, *A Grammar of the Telugu Language*, 1st ed., ii.

As such, the College was instrumental in institutionalizing different but intersecting competencies in Telugu within the same intellectual space.

Entwining grammar and prose with the rhetoric of revival and improvement, the College recast the standards of Telugu *pāṇḍityam* as well as Telugu scribal practice to generate an unprecedented linguistic competency: grammatical prose. Drawing on *paṇḍita* tradition, the College Board adopted the medieval *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* (*The Wish-Jewel of Telugu Speech*) as the standard grammar of High Telugu for European as well as Indian instruction.[58] This text was a Sanskrit grammar of the Telugu language conventionally venerated by Telugu *paṇḍitas* as the most ancient authority on the subject. College Headmasters Vedam Pattabhirama Sastri, Ravipati Gurumurti Sastri, and Udayagiri Venkatanarayana along with the Secretary of the College Board A.D. Campbell, all based their grammars of High Telugu on this canonical work.

The early prose textbooks meant to supplement these grammars reflect *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi's* influence in their sandhi, orthography, and diction. The College trained and certified its Telugu munshis in the grammar of High Telugu and expected them to introduce its European students to the classical standards of the *paṇḍita* through new prose readers. Over the years, munshis left the College to secure more rewarding jobs as government translators,

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[58] There is a debate on the date of *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* and its authorship. Most scholars today believe the text was actually produced in the 17th century and was retrospectively attributed to Nannaya. This is due to the fact that the there are no earlier references to it—the text's earliest appearance is with the Telugu commentary of Balasarasvati, who also takes responsibility for recovering the forgotten text. Balasarasvati's commentary is followed by another Telugu commentary by Appakavi and later a Sanskrit commentary by Ahobalapandit. Both of these scholars belong to the seventeenth century. The attribution of this grammar to Nannaya has been argued to be a strategy of legitimizing new scholarship in an era where innovation was often presented as rediscovery. Nannayya is an attractive "author" for the *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* because he is also recognized as Telugu's "first poet" of the *paṇḍita* tradition with his *Āndhra Mahābhāratamu*, a creative adaptation of the first two and a half books of the Sanskrit work. In fact, there are more reliably dateable grammars of Telugu in Telugu, the oldest of which is Mulaghatika Ketana's 13th c. *Āndhrabhāṣabhūṣaṇam*. But by the early nineteenth century, Ketana's text had been forgotten and the *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* was treated as the earliest authority of Telugu grammar. This debate is reviewed by Korada Mahadeva Sastri as well as David Shulman. Korada Mahadeva Sastri, *Historical Grammar of Telugu with Special Reference to Old Telugu c. 200 B.C. - 1000 A.D (*Anantapur: Sri Venkateswara University, 1969); David Shulman, "First Grammarian, First Poet: A South Indian Vision of Cultural Origins," *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 38, no. 4 (2001).

legal scholars, vakils, and secretaries. In later colonial experiments with Indian education, College munshis were also recruited to serve as Telugu teachers. Anglo-Indian parlance often lumped this broad range of literate professionals, particularly Telugu schoolteachers, under the catchall term of "pundit," recollecting the traditional *paṇḍita's* impress on munshi expertise in grammar and prose.[59]

However, the *paṇḍita's* influence at the College was not an unmitigated expansion of his standards and authority. The College sought to redirect his linguistic and literary competencies toward the Company's educational and administrative goals. One of the College Board's most critical interventions in this regard was its elevation of Telugu grammar over other fields of *paṇḍita* expertise. Indigenous conceptions of Telugu *pāṇḍityam* considered grammar a highly specialized, if not arcane, subject. The Telugu *paṇḍita* was historically recognized for his scholarly competence in Telugu through creative works of learned and intertextual poetry.

It is important to note that the study of grammar, so central to the definition of Sanskrit and Tamil *pāṇḍityam*, was a relatively marginal field for Telugu *paṇḍitas.* When *paṇḍitas* produced scholarly works on the Telugu language, they were historically more drawn to other topics of linguistic analysis such as prosody, orthography, and etymology. These topics were considered essential to poetic craft and Telugu *paṇḍitas* developed a substantial array of lexicons and manuals of prosody in Telugu and Sanskrit to aid fellow scholar-poets.[60] Although some *paṇḍitas* did produce grammatical scholarship over the centuries, none of these texts achieved the cultural prestige or renown of *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi*.

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[59] This is also evidenced in the College's own confusion around social background and scholarship in Telugu. The College insisted in rewarding its Headmasters of Telugu with the title "Sastri," as a token of its esteem and mark of excellence in traditional learning. However, Sastri was not an open rank title in the Telugu regions and was traditionally restricted to members of the Vaidiki Brahmin community. Ravipati Gurumurti, as a Niyogi Brahmin, added "Sastri" to his name after significant pressure. Paravastu Cinnaya, as a non-Brahmin scholar, was put in an even more difficult position. He ended up proposing the title "Suri" as an acceptable alternative.

[60] Some of these poetic manuals would contain a chapter or two relating to grammatical analysis, usually with respect to sandhi and word formation. But texts with a stand-alone interest in Telugu grammar were uncommon.

As for *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi*, despite its reputation, it was always a relatively esoteric text that never became central to the cultivation of Telugu *pāṇḍityam*. It seems to have circulated largely through a late seventeenth-century Telugu commentary called the *Appakavīyam*. This text reads more like an independent work of scholarship on the magical qualities of Telugu phonology and metrics than a study of Telugu grammar. The popularity of the *Appakavīyam*, as against the *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi,* is indicative of the Telugu *paṇḍita's* longstanding interest in prosody and other topics of linguistic analysis beyond grammar.[61]

Madras Orientalists consistently lamented the Telugu *paṇḍita's* indifference to grammatical scholarship. In 1823, A.D. Campbell produced a *Report on the State of Native Education in Southern India* that reviewed the texts and educational practices popularly used for Telugu and Kannada instruction in the Bellary District. He noted that "books on the principles of the vernacular languages…without which no accurate or extensive knowledge of the vernacular languages can be attained…[are] of all books the most uncommon in native schools."[62] Campbell interpreted the general absence of vernacular grammar instruction in Indian schools as representing a decline in classical Indian learning. Fifteen years later, C.P. Brown observed in his *Essay on the Language and Literature of the Telugus* that among Telugu *paṇḍitas*, "the celebrated grammar of Nannaya Bhatta [*Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi*] has, with all his commentators, nearly fallen into oblivion: perhaps not twenty men can at present day be produced throughout Telingana who can prove their acquaintance with it."[63] Brown, like Campbell, perceived this

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[61] I also draw this conclusion from a review of the manuscript record. The number of manuscripts relating to grammar, or the *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* in particular, is quite limited, especially when compared to the abundance of lexical and prosodical works.

[62] Alexander Duncan Campbell, "On the State of Education of the Natives in Southern India," *Journal of the Madras Literary Society* 1, no. 5. (1834), 354.

[63] Charles Philip Brown, *Essay on the Language and Literature of the Telugus: Part First*. (Madras: J.B. Pharoah, 1839), 5.

limited knowledge of Telugu grammar as indicative of a Telugu dark age and the ignorance of contemporary Indian scholars.

We have seen how the College Board developed a Telugu curriculum for European students that was modeled on Beschi's missionary scholarship in Tamil. The Board was also inspired by the example of indigenous Tamil scholarship in its efforts to construct a classical Telugu curriculum for its Indian students. The long history of Tamil grammatical scholarship in the Tamil language provided the College with ample materials to design an "improved" course of classical Tamil learning for Indian students. But when it came to forming a comparable course of traditional learning in Telugu, the College was confronted by a significant obstacle: Telugu's most ancient and authoritative grammar was in Sanskrit. Consisting of 274 *sūtras* and providing no Telugu examples, *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* required an extensive command of Sanskrit grammar. This meant it could only be meaningfully understood by an advanced scholar of Sanskrit. C.P. Brown believed that it was due to this founding work's "extreme difficulty" that the study of grammar by Telugu *paṇḍitas* had "fallen into a degree of undeserved neglect."[64] The position of the Sanskrit *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi*, at the root of what was conceptualized as an independent vernacular tradition, frustrated Orientalist attempts to revive grammatical learning in the Telugu language.[65]

Vernacular Renaissance: Telugu Pundits and the Project to Revive Telugu Grammar

Telugu pundits at the College were commissioned to address this obstacle by translating and adapting *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* into simpler, more accessible, grammars in the Telugu

[64] C.P. Brown's note on *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* manuscript no. 1237 at GOML. Reproduced in S., Kuppuswami Sastri, "Grammar, Prosody, and Lexicography," *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Telugu Manuscripts in the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras*, Vol 5 (Madras: Government Press, 1935).
[65] As Brown notes, "it is much to be wished that a plain grammar were written in Telugu for the use of natives." Kuppuswami Sastri, "Grammar, Prosody, and Lexigography," 1558.

language. These translations appear to have been encouraged from the founding of the College in 1812 by College Officials. Though represented as a revival of classical learning, this was in fact a period of great experiment, innovation, and intellectual exchange between European and Indian scholars.

Given its central place in the nineteenth-century definition of Telugu grammar, let us first examine *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* in more detail.[66] Despite its obscure influence, *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* reflects an attempt to systematize and theorize prevailing notions of Telugu *paṇḍita* poetics. As such, it encapsulates many of the deep cultural suppositions of language and grammar that shaped the *paṇḍita's* unique competencies in Telugu. From its opening *sūtra*, "*viśvaśreyaḥ kāvyam*" or "poetry is for universal welfare," it introduces itself as a work dedicated to poetic composition. The rules of grammar are described as primordial (*ādyam*) and eternal (*atisthaviram*), representing a continuity of language synonymous with the usage of ancient poets (*ārṣasamaḥ*). From this, we see that *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* understands grammar as a prescriptive exercise; a method of holding Telugu to a fixed linguistic standard that is imagined to be universal, timeless, and pre-ordained. In a word: classic.

This sense of grammar follows from a broader conception of Telugu as part of a divine and multilingual order of languages rooted in the supremacy of Sanskrit. Throughout *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi*, the primary designation for Telugu is "*vikṛti*" or "the derivative language." This consistently reinforces Telugu's relation to Sanskrit and Prakrit as one of dependence (*anusar*). This derivative or dependent relation is important for the conceptualization of Telugu as a refined language of poetry. It imbues Telugu with the same universal and

[66] My discussion of the *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* is guided by the recent English translation of Deven Patel and Rallapalli Sundaram. However, Sanskrit translations presented here are my own. R.V.S. Sundaram and Deven Patel, eds. and trans., *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi: A Grammar of the Telugu Language in Sanskrit* (Mysuru: Central Institute of Indian Languages, 2016).

unchanging linguistic structures that characterize the venerable language of the ancients. This means that the same principles of linguistic analysis used to analyze Sanskrit and Prakrit could be adapted to Telugu. Consequently, the ultimate purpose of *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* is to refine the literary capacities of Telugu (*samskārārtho niyamaḥ*) in order to transform it into an auspicious vehicle of aesthetic experience (*rasavṛttiḥ*). As *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* reminds us, those whose thoughts are captivated by art (*rasapralubdhadhiyaḥ*) are always partial to the language, customs, and poetry of their own land (*svasthāna-veśa-bhāṣābhimatās…vaikṛta-kāvyāni*). And so Telugu, when handled in the wise hands of *paṇḍitas*, becomes a uniquely charming and refined language of aesthetic pleasure.

Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi consists of 88 *Ārya* verses binding together 274 *sūtras* intended for memorization. The *sūtras* are topically organized in five chapters (*pariccheda*): 1) *samjña*: technical terminology 2) *sandhi*: phonology and orthography 3) *ajanta*: pronouns, case endings, and word formation relating to nominal and verbal stems ending in vowels 4) *halanta*: pronouns, case endings, and word formation relating to nominal and verbal stems ending in consonants and 5) *kriya*: verbs. These *sūtras* are constructed and ordered according to the metadiscursive conventions of the ancient Sanskrit grammarian Panini. The seventeenth-century text's use of technical terms, organization of topics, and model of explanation reveal a deep awareness of the Sanskrit grammatical tradition. In their recent translation, Patel and Sundaram point to the influence of later Sanskrit and Prakrit grammarians such as Vararuci, Bhattoji Diksita, and Hemacandra on the author of *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi*.[67] The observations of these grammarians have been adapted alongside Panini in the analysis of Telugu phonology, orthography, and prosody, particularly in relation to the incorporation of Sanskrit and Prakrit words into Telugu

[67] Sundaram and Patel, *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi*.

verse. The bulk of *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* revolves around these topics with only a fraction of verses dedicated to analyzing verbal action.[68]

College Telugu and Sanskrit Headmaster Vedam Pattabhirama Sastri's *Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* (1816) was the first Telugu adaptation of *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi*. Prior to this grammar, Pattabhirama Sastri had produced two other works of grammatical scholarship: *Āndhra Dhātumāla* (c. 1815) and a Telugu prose commentary on *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi*.[69] Both of these texts appear to have laid the foundations for the composition of his *Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* in Telugu verse. *Āndhra Dhātumāla* was an unprecedented effort to produce a list of Telugu verbal bases on the model of Panini's Sanskrit *Dhātupāṭha*. It was composed in Telugu verse and intended for memorization. Pattabhirama Sastri's Telugu prose commentary on *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* is no longer available. However, from a comparative perspective, it is interesting to note that the production of this prose commentary paralleled the College Tamil Headmaster Cidambara Vadiyar's production of a similar Tamil prose commentary, *Tamil Curukka Vilakkam* (1815) on the classic Tamil grammar *Tolkāppiyam*. This suggests the possibility of a broader College policy of developing accessible prose introductions to traditional verse grammars for its Indian students.

Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu was a milestone in the development of Telugu grammatical scholarship. It was the first Telugu grammar to be composed for the purpose of educating students in the analysis of Telugu grammar. Earlier works of linguistic analysis—grammars, lexicons, prosodical works—had been produced for the use of practicing poets and accomplished *paṇḍita* scholars. These were erudite texts that were not intended as systematic introductions to the language. *Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* was produced expressly for the instruction of Indian

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[68] Thus, if we divide up the verses according to each topic, we get: 47 verses for samjna, 43 for sandhi, 86 for ajanta, 49 for halanta, and a mere 49 for kriya.
[69] The text is unavailable and we do not have a title for this work.

students at the College. It was composed in 122 Telugu verses consisting mostly of elementary meters such as *sīsa*, *teṭagīti*, *aṭavĕladi*, and *kandam*. As a verse text, Pattabhirama Sastri's student grammar conformed to contemporary Indian pedagogical practices such as memorization, recitation, and exposition. We may presume that the text was designed to be expounded by teachers and recited by students in the conventional oral contexts of the *pyal* school. The text adopts a first-person voice that directly addresses the student. Its verses flow in an extremely forthright and transparent style reminiscent of narrative prose.[70]

The *Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* we have today appears to be an incomplete text. The grammar is said to have been printed some ten years after its composition (c. 1825) and was not reprinted again until 1951.[71] The sole manuscript copy we know of contains three distinct sections, namely 1) *samjña*: technical terminology; 2) *sandhi*: phonology and orthography; and 3) *śabda*: pronouns, case endings, and word formation. It does not include any benedictions, dedications, or prefatory statements on the authorship or design of the text. Given that Pattabhirama Sastri based his grammar on *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi*, it appears to be missing a chapter on the verb. His *śabda pariccheda* has compressed material taken from the older work's *ajanta* and *halanta* chapters. *Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* draws on much of the same Sanskrit technical terminology and methods of linguistic analysis used in *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* and dwells with similar interest on the rules of sandhi and the incorporation of Sanskrit and Prakrit words into Telugu verse.

In designing a Telugu grammar for student use, Pattabhirama Sastri rearranged the text of *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* in a more straightforward manner and introduced occasional examples and expanded definitions. The introduction of examples was especially significant as

[70] See verses 1.18, 1.26, and 1.28 for example.
[71] The 1951 Vavilla reprint states that Pattabhirama Sastri's grammar was first printed posthumously in 1825. No copies of this printed text appear to have survived. The Vavilla edition is based on an incomplete manuscript copy held at the Madras GOML. Vedam Pattabhirama Sastri, *Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* (Madras: Vavilla Ramaswami Sastrulu and Sons, 1951).

Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi, being a Sanskrit text, did not include illustrations of Telugu usage. For example, in *sūtra* 1.46 the text abstractly states that there are four categories of Telugu words: *sama (tatsama*-those equivalent to Sanskrit and Prakrit in form*), tajjā (tadbhava*-those derived from Sanskrit and Prakrit in form*), deśya* (those sanctioned from Telugu and other regional language words), and *grāmya* (unsanctioned Telugu and other language words). It then returns to these categories in its later *ajanta* and *halanta* chapters and explores their particularities in scattered verses. By contrast, *Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* introduces and elaborates on these categories in a sequential fashion with definitions and examples in the opening chapter itself (1.18-28). As an example of Pattabhirama Sastri's style, we can see his verse on *grāmya*:

> 1.28) "Words opposed to the path of grammar are designated '*grāmyamu*.' If you wonder what these are: *dānni cūstānu cestānu dīnni vasti cūsti potānu vāḍiki isti vāṇṇi*."

These examples are commonplace words taken directly from the spoken Telugu of the day.

Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu follows *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* in representing Telugu as a derivative language descended from Sanskrit and Prakrit. It refers to Sanskrit as the "first language" (*mŏdaṭi bhāṣa*) and suggests that Telugu is considered beholden to the same primordial and eternal principles of linguistic analysis as these prestige languages.[72] It is then no surprise that the text also preserves *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi's* association between grammar and poetry. It hails its students as "poets" and advises them to "vigorously employ only those words which are in regular usage by the world (*lokavyavahāramu*) and fixed by the usage of canonical poets (*sukavi*)."[73] In this, we see Pattabhirama Sastri propagating the *paṇḍita's* prescriptive vision of grammar as a tool of linguistic refinement and aesthetic pleasure for the Indian students of the College.

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[72] See verses 1.1 and 1.19.

[73] See verse 1.29. The usage of poets is also invoked in 2.55.

The second effort to adapt *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* for Indian students at the College was Telugu Headmaster Ravipati Gurumurti Sastri's *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu*.[74] It is unclear when he composed the work but we know that its first edition was posthumously published by his son in 1836. Prior to its publication, Gurumurti Sastri had published two Telugu prose readers—*Tales of Vikramarka* (1819) and *Pañcatantra Kathalu* (1834). Gurumurti Sastri dedicated his grammar to A.D. Campbell who had commissioned this Telugu grammar in prose (*vacana rūpamu*) so that students might learn the subject with greater speed and ease. The language of *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu* is the High Telugu illustrated by Gurumurti Sastri's earlier readers. It follows the advanced rules of literary sandhi and orthography and exemplifies its own grammatical regulations through an accessible prose style.

As a prose text, *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu* reflects College attempts to reform Indian pedagogy on European models of instruction. Unlike Pattabhirama Sastri's *Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu*, it was not meant to be internalized through memorization but read and consulted in the manner of the printed European reference grammars of the period. Gurumurti Sastri's grammar consists of 316 "*sūtras*" divided into six chapters: 1. *akṣara lakṣaṇa*: script and orthography, 2. *sandhi*: phonology, 3. *viśeṣya*: substantive nouns, 4. *viśeṣaṇa*: substantive adjectives, 5. *samāsa*: nominal compounds, and 6. *kriya*: verbs. Rather than mnemonic formulations, these *sūtras* are more appropriately understood as topical points or paragraphs. In this, *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu* mimics the ascending method of numbered points found in Campbell's *Grammar* as well as Brown's *Prosody*. It also adopts a discursive tenor that cites and deliberates with earlier Telugu grammatical authorities in the style of these European philological works. For example, in a discussion on the correct number of letters in pure (*acca*) Telugu, Gurumurti Sastri cites differing positions taken by *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* and *Appakavīyamu* before resolving the

[74] Ravipati Gurumurti Sastri, *Tĕluṁgu Vyākaraṇamu* (Madras: Church Mission Press, 1836).

question with a rule drawn from *Āndhra Kaumudi*.[75] *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu* also introduces new methods of visually organizing and representing grammatical information through numerous lists, tables, and pull-out diagrams. This shift from the mnemonic and the oral to print and the visual is clearly embedded in self-referential statements within the grammar itself—Gurumurti Sastri consistently refers his readers to consider points that he has "written below."[76]

A closer inspection of *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu's* organization and content suggests that it was not only inspired by Campbell's *Grammar of Teloogoo Language* but that it also extensively borrowed from it. In terms of organization, its chapter structure closely parallels Campbell's, arranging the discussion of phonology, script, sandhi, substantive nouns, substantive adjectives, and verbs in the same ascending fashion. The only difference is that Campbell includes a chapter on syntax while Gurumurti Sastri includes a chapter on compound formation. Gurumurti Sastri uses Sanskrit grammatical terminology to approximate Campbell's English terms such as in the case of *viśeṣya* for substantive nouns and *viśeṣaṇa* for substantive adjectives. Departing from Pattabhirama Sastri and *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi*, Gurumurti Sastri follows Campbell in introducing and defining technical terms only when they become relevant to his analyses. *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu* does not begin with the methodical overview of all technical terms that is traditionally given in the first chapter of earlier mnemonic grammars. Instead, the typical elaboration of the four categories of Telugu words—*tatsama*, *tadbhava*, *deśya*, and *grāmya*—is only introduced by Gurumurti Sastri (no. 82-83) in his third chapter on substantive nouns, just

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[75] For example, sūtra no. 6 states: "According to the opinion of Nannayya Bhattu, r [sadhu repha] and ṟ [bandi repha] are considered the same and the number of pure [acca] Telugu letters is 36. Appakavi distinguishes between these two and has given a separate *sūtra* for this. The author of the Kaumudi has said that in words such as "cesi-cesĕda" the beginning letter becomes a palatal when it is associated with a vowel and the s becomes an ś. Consequently, if we accept the opinion of the author of the Kaumudi that ś should be included, then there are 38 letters in pure Telugu."
[76] See *sūtra* no. 74.

like Campbell (no. 126-128).[77] Both scholars issue the same framework of analysis for these categories, stating that they will examine the first three categories in their study of the Telugu noun but will only reference *tatsama* and *deśya* (*acca Telugu*) words in their subsequent chapters on the Telugu adjective and verb. Both agree that the rules for *tadbhava* or *anyadeśya* words can be easily derived from the first two categories and do not need specific elaboration. As for *grāmya*, both scholars are also in agreement that the words of this category are produced by irregular corruptions and contractions of pronunciation and hence beyond the systematizing gaze of grammar.[78] In terms of content, we see whole passages and even chapters of *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu* abridge or directly translate Campbell's grammar. The chapter on adjectives, for example, is effectively a point-for-point translation into Telugu. The exact same examples and even lists and tables of information are imported *in toto* to Gurumurti Sastri's grammar.[79]

These borrowings are important to recognize given that Gurumurti Sastri does not give any explicit indications that he is familiar with Campbell's grammar. Madras Orientalist scholarship on south Indian languages heavily shaped the conception of the Telugu language in *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu*. We can take just two examples of how Gurumurti Sastri integrated these perspectives into his own treatment of Telugu. The first example is how he delineates the relationship of Telugu to Sanskrit. He adopts what I refer to as a "Telugu-first" order. He patterns his discussion of phonology on Campbell, beginning first with pure Telugu consonants and vowels before moving to discuss the assimilation of sounds from Sanskrit, Prakrit, and other languages. This follows a comparative philological sense of linguistic purity based on Madras Orientalist understandings of a Dravidian family of languages. This shift upends the sense of

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[77] However, both authors refer to these terms in earlier chapters before specifically naming and defining them.
[78] Compare Campbell's point no. 128 with Gurumurti Sastri's *sūtra* no. 83. Gurumurti Sastri uses "*śīghroccāraṇa*" or "hasty pronunciation" for Campbell's "corruptions."
[79] Compare Campbell's point no. 289 with Gurumurti Sastri's *sūtra* no. 219.

phonological order we see in Pattabhirama Sastri's grammar as well as *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* which begin with Sanskrit and continue in descending order to Prakrit, Telugu, and other language phonemes. This Sanskrit-first ordering encodes the *paṇḍita* tradition's understanding of Telugu as a derivative (*vikṛti*) language that is dependent on the original language of Sanskrit. These earlier grammars were designed under the assumption that the student of Telugu was already familiar with Sanskrit grammar. Campbell and Gurumurti Sastri's "Telugu-First" ordering is repeated throughout their grammars and continuously inverts the older Sanskrit-Prakrit-Telugu hierarchy. Their chapters on substantive nouns, substantive adjectives, and verbs consistently open with a discussion of *deśya* (pure Telugu) words followed by a supplementary secondary focus on *tatsama* (Sanskrit-origin) words. This organization consistently reinforces the Orientalist notion of Telugu as a historically independent language superimposed by Sanskrit.[80] These grammars were designed under the assumption that the student of Telugu did not require previous knowledge of Sanskrit in order to understand Telugu.

Another example of how *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu* is steeped in Madras Orientalist understandings of language is its articulation of the scope of Telugu grammar. In the preface, Gurumurti Sastri notes that he had based his work on *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* and classic *paṇḍita* commentaries by Balasarasvati, Appakavi, Ahobalapandit, and Virabhupala as well as his predecessor at the College Pattabhirama Sastri's *Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu*.[81] Notably, he does not mention Campbell as a source or reference for his grammar. This seems to suggest that *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu*, much like Pattabhirama Sastri's grammar, preserves the poetic orientation of *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* and *paṇḍita* perspectives on language for student instruction. However, while Pattabhirama Sastri is clear that the study of Telugu grammar is to aid poetic composition,

[80] Check if Gurumurti says this explicitly or is merely mum on the origin of Telugu.
[81] He refers to these all as grammars, but we would understand them today as commentaries and not independent grammars.

Gurumurti Sastri is more opaque. Where *Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* refers to *kavulu* (poets) and *kāvya* (poetry), *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu* does not remark on the literary identity of the Telugu author or make a single reference to poetry. Instead, it discusses grammar in relation to the more nebulous category of "*granthamulu*" (books). In comparing Gurumurti Sastri with Campbell, it is apparent that *granthamulu* is used as a direct translation for what Campbell refers to as "all books and studied compositions" in the High Telugu dialect.[82] Likewise, Gurumurti Sastri regularly uses *grāmya* where Campbell variously mentions the inferior, common, and vulgar dialect of Telugu.[83] Following Campbell, Gurumurti Sastri organizes his grammar primarily in relation to the ideal linguistic principles of *grānthika* or High Telugu with only passing references to the non-standard and irregular exceptions of *grāmya* or Low Telugu.[84] As an example of this method, I refer to *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu* prose *sūtra* no. 73: "Within the vulgar dialect (*grāmya bhāṣa*), *krāravaḍi* letters, those consonant sounds with an r in the first syllable, lose their associated r. ||Ex|| trāḍu - tāḍu || progu - pogu || vrelu - velu ||."[85]

Although Gurumurti Sastri's analysis of *grānthika* Telugu neatly aligns with Campbell's High Telugu, his efforts to transpose the older grammatical concept of *grāmya* to Low Telugu betray critical divergences in their conception of Telugu. Campbell defines *grāmya* as those Telugu words which are unfit for literary usage because they are "provincial" and "peculiar to the vulgar."[86] The prime determinants of his definition relate to geographical provenance and social class. *Grāmya* is projected as a functional equivalent to the European sense of the

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[82] Compare Gurumurti Sastri's *sūtra* no. 193 with Campbell's point no. 258. See Campbell's definition of High Telugu in his *A Grammar of the Teloogoo Language*, 3rd ed., iii-xiv.
[83] Compare Gurumurti Sastri's *sūtra* no. 225 with Campbell's point no. 294.
[84] It does not appear that Gurumurti Sastri ever uses this adjectival form of *granthamu* but his grammar appears to be the origin of what would later be come to known in the mid-nineteenth century as "*grānthika*" Telugu prose. This concept was variously translated into English as classical, literary, bookish, and grammatical prose.
[85] Gurumurti Sastri, *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu*, 22. Compare this to Campbell's point no. 124: "Many Teloogoo words which have r in the first syllable, frequently lose it in the vulgar dialect; thus *progu* or *provu* an ear-ring, is commonly both written and pronounced *pogu* or *povu*."
[86] Campbell, *A Grammar of the Teloogoo Language*, 3rd ed., 37.

vernacular and associated with local dialects and non-elite groups. Driven by comparative philological concerns with linguistic purity, Campbell also expands the concept of *grāmya* to include words he determines to be "foreign" influences on the native genius of Telugu. This included all words whose etymologies could be traced to languages other than Sanskrit, Prakrit, or Telugu.[87] Gurumurti Sastri, on the other hand, simply defines *grāmya* as "those words that are generally used by all people in contradiction to grammar. They are not used in books (*granthamulu*) except with rare exceptions."[88] For Gurumurti Sastri, *grāmya* operated first and foremost in relation to a sense of literariness. He classifies all forms of Telugu, written or spoken, that depart from the rules of grammar as insuitable for literary composition. Notably, he does not discourage the use of *grāmya* words on grounds of geography, social class, or language of origin but solely on the basis of its use in non-literary contexts. In this case, Gurumurti Sastri disagrees with Campbell and is more in line with the *paṇḍita* tradition of Telugu grammar.

Beginning with Appakavi in the seventeenth century, *paṇḍita* commentators on *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* had argued that Telugu words belonging to the *deśya* category could be further divided into two sub-categories: 1) *accadeśya* or pure Telugu words and 2) *anyadeśya* or Telugu words borrowed from languages other than Sanskrit and Prakrit.[89] This was a division based purely on phonological considerations and related to the rules of *sandhi*. Gurumurti Sastri followed these earlier scholars in sanctioning the use of *anyadeśya* words in Telugu literature provided that they conformed to the rules of grammar and followed a precedent of literary usage.

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[87] Campbell's 1821 *Dictionary* categorically marks all borrowed words in Telugu as "*grāmya*" and lists their "original" language and etymological source in brackets. He is particularly alarmed by the heavy presence of Persian and Hindustani words. These Orientalist anxieties around linguistic purity also shape Brown's dictionaries. In his 1854 Dictionary of Mixed Telugu, he provides (maybe even invents?) "pure Telugu" equivalents for all "foreign" Persian and Hindustani words in Telugu even as he notes such words are not in common use. It appears both Campbell and Brown were influenced by the organization of Samuel Johnson's English Dictionary in their understanding of linguistic purity and disdain for the use of "foreign" terms.

[88] Gurumurti Sastri, *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu*, *sūtra* no. 82.

[89] Confirm, I think this division may actually date to 13th c Ketana.

As such, *anyadeśya* words from Persian, Hindustani, and other languages that had entered Telugu poetic usage did not necessarily meet the criteria for *grāmya*.

Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu reflects new colonial methods of teaching and studying language as well as changing conceptions of Telugu. Throughout his work, Gurumurti Sastri displays a sophisticated engagement with both *paṇḍita* scholarship and Campbell's *Grammar of Teloogoo Language*. His grammar maintains a prescriptivist attitude that draws upon *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* and Sanskrit terms of grammatical analysis to reproduce a classic standard of Telugu grammar. At the same time, it is deeply structured by Campbell's notion of High Telugu and new Orientalist understandings of Telugu's relationship to Sanskrit. More than anything, *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu* reflects an expanding sense of the grammatical and the literary that goes beyond *kāvya* to make room for new modes of Telugu prose composition. The most immediate candidates for this new vision of Telugu *belles-lettres* are Gurumurti Sastri's own prose *granthamulu*—his earlier prose readers *Tales of Vikramarka* and *Pañcatantra Kathalu*, and of course, his prose *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu*.

Telugu Pundits at the University of Madras High School (1841-55)

Gurumurti Sastri was the last Telugu Headmaster to serve at the College. Following an "anti-Orientalist" turn in colonial education policy, formal instruction at the College was discontinued in 1836 and its Board was reduced to a purely examining body. However, the legacies of its early experiments in Telugu instruction continued to shape colonial programs of education and influence Telugu scholarly activities in Madras. In 1841, Fort St. George inaugurated its most ambitious effort to educate Indian students—the University of Madras. Company administrators first established the University High School with the expectation that a University College would

follow soon afterward. However, it was not until the passage of Wood's Education Act in 1854 and the Government of India's official commitment to developing higher education in presidency capitals that a collegiate department would be added. In 1855, the University High School was reorganized as the Madras Presidency College and its Secretary [Principal] Alexander John Arbuthnot (1822-1907) was appointed the Director of a newly created Department of Public Instruction. This new government department, as will be detailed in the next chapter, exported the pedagogical experiments conducted at the University High School throughout the Madras Presidency in later decades.

The University High School succeeded the College of Fort St. George as the most important institution of colonial education in southern India. Its establishment marked the inauguration of a new "Anglo-Vernacular" model of colonial education that promoted the study of European arts and sciences through the direct study of English in contrast to the older literary and classical curriculum through Indian languages privileged by College Orientalists. In its first decade, the High School's faculty of "Headmasters" and "Tutors" were European teachers recruited directly from Britain.[90] The only subjects taught by Indians at the University High School were the "vernacular language subjects" of Telugu, Tamil, and Marathi. Incidentally, these were also the only subjects to be taught through Indian languages. As at the College, the Indian language teachers of the High School were interchangeably referred to by the Governors of the University Board as "moonshees" and "pundits." However, in comparison to their predecessors at the College of Fort St. George, the pundits who taught at the University High School did not receive nearly the same degree of respect or financial compensation from their European patrons. As will be demonstrated, pundits occupied the lowest position in the Anglo-Vernacular system and were

[90] The first Indian tutor to teach at the University High School was the well-known Bengali poet Michael Madhusudhan Dutta, beginning in 1851.

constant targets of ridicule, criticism, and reform. The rigid boundaries between English and Telugu that were first instituted at the University High School marked the beginning of a new intellectual hierarchy where Telugu pundits and Indian forms of scholarship and pedagogy were considered marginal and in need of reform.

Nevertheless, as the primary scholars and teachers associated with the vernaculars, pundits continued to wield substantial influence in determining the scope and content of the language curriculum. This influence is not immediately apparent in the educational policies, reports, and communications of the University High School. Authored exclusively by European government officials, these sources did not allow for the perspectives of Indian educators. However, the complaints and evaluations European officials submitted in relation to school pundits allows us to read against the grain and reconstruct some of the more prominent aspects of pundit pedagogy at the High School.

Another testament to the influence of Indian intellectuals at the University High School is the rich corpus of vernacular teaching materials they produced. Telugu pundits at the University High School drew on the work of their predecessors at the College of Fort St. George to continue developing new Telugu grammars, prose textbooks, and other instructional materials. They also began to play important roles in the growth of commercial Indian printing. As a result, despite the constraints of their declining status in the new Anglo-Vernacular educational paradigm, pundits continued to be critical intermediaries in the colonial encounter and carve out positions of influence and authority in the rapidly changing world of Telugu letters.

The first Telugu pundit at the High School was Puduri Sitarama Sastri. A Puduri Dravida Brahmin, he hailed from the same community of Sanskrit and Telugu *paṇḍitas* as the College's first Telugu Headmaster Vedam Pattabhirama Sastri. Sitarama Sastri taught at the High School

during its inaugural years (1841-43).[91] Details of his early professional career are unclear as are his connections to the College.[92] However, it is apparent that he was an exceptionally well-connected scholar even before his appointment at the University High School. During the 1830s, Sitarama Sastri served as the Sanskrit pundit of a short-lived Anglo-Vernacular school organized by the Madras Hindu Literary Society.[93] The Literary Society was formed in 1833 by prominent Indian merchants and bureaucrats connected to the Company administration in collaboration with Advocate General of the Madras Presidency George Norton (1791-1876). Its goals were to encourage classical and literary research along Orientalist lines by Indian scholars as well as promote the education of Indian students. It appears to have opened its school within the same year.[94] The Literary Society School was the first Indian-run institution in Madras dedicated to providing Indian students education in "[European] scientific knowledge in English and Oriental languages;" it maintained "four seminaries for instruction in English, Sanscrit, Tellinga, and Tamul."[95] The School lasted several years but eventually closed due to a lack of financial support from the Government.[96] Little is known of this first attempt to establish an Indian school in Madras on a European model. However, several of the figures connected with the Literary Society were key to the establishment of Anglo-Vernacular schools in the next decade—namely,

[91] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University*, 1842-43; 1843-44.
[92] Budaraju Radhakrishna's biography *Paravastu Chinnaya Suri* states that Sitarama Sastri worked as a munshi at the College prior to its closure. However, it is unclear what his evidence for this claim is. Budaraju also provides incorrect dates on Sitarama Sastri's tenure at the University High School, claiming that he worked up to 1847. Budaraju Radhakrishna, *Paravastu Chinnaya Suri* (Bangalore: Sahitya Akademi, 1995).
[93] Sitarama Sastri refers to this organization in Telugu as the "*hindu vidyā sabha*" in the title pages of *Praśnottara Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* and *Bālaśikṣa,* 2nd ed. Puduri Sitarama Sastri, *Praśnottara Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* (Madras: Church Mission Press, 1834). Puduri Sitarama Sastri, *Bālaśikṣa*, 2nd ed., (Madras,1837).
[94] Satthianadhan gives the date as 1833 while R. Suntharalingam gives it as 1834. Satthianadhan, *History of Education in the Madras Presidency*. Suntharalingam, *Politics and Nationalist Awakening in South India*.
[95] Mantena quotes Kavali Lakshamayya, one of the founders of the Literary Society. Mantena, *The Origins of Modern Historiography in India*, chapter 3.
[96] It appears to have been in operation at least until 1837, as per Sitarama Sastri. Sitarama Sastri, *Bālaśikṣa,* 2nd ed., preface.

the Pachaiyappa schools (est. 1842) and the Madras University High School.[97] In this context, we may surmise that Sitarama Sastri's appointment as the first Telugu pundit at the High School was founded on his earlier experiences at the Literary Society School.

During his time as a pundit at the Literary Society School and the University High School, Sitarama Sastri established a presence as one of the leading authors and editors in the nascent field of Telugu print. Today, he is best remembered as the author of *Bālaśikṣa* (1832), an enduringly successful elementary primer for Telugu school children.[98] This extremely popular textbook was frequently reprinted; adaptations and enlargements of it continue to be printed to this day under the title *Pĕdda Bālaśikṣa*.[99] During his first year as a Telugu pundit at the High School, Sitarama Sastri edited and published the sixteenth-century *Sabhāpati Vacanamu* (1842).[100] This was a rare Telugu prose text illustrating the knowledge and character required of a just ruler.[101] Presumably, Sitarama Sastri edited this text to serve as a moral prose reader for

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[97] I refer specifically to Vembakam Raghavacaryulu, Komalesvarapuram Srinivasa Pillai, and George Norton.The Pachaiyappa schools were the most eminent Indian-run Anglo-Vernacular institutions in Madras city during the nineteenth century. The first Pachaiyappa Institution was its primary school opened in 1842. Pachaiyappa's High School (est. 1850) and College (est. 1880) were especially influential during the late nineteenth century. Vembakam Raghavacaryulu was the first president of the Pachaiyappa Trust and its early educational institutions. He was succeeded by Komalesvarapuram Srinivasa Pillai who also served as a governor on the Madras University High School Board for at least a decade. During this same period, the President of High School Board of Governors was George Norton (1842-53).

[98] For dating *Bālaśikṣa*, see: Mitchell, *Making of a Mother Tongue*, 242. Arudra has provided a date of 1832 but with no source for this. She states that the earliest attested version is from 1856 while a reference to it is made in an 1842 cited by Mangamma. However, I have located an 1837 second edition, which suggests that Arudra's date is likely accurate.

[99] The text was revised and enlarged in 1865 and it is variants of this work that are reproduced. Mitchell, *Making of a Mother Tongue*, 242.

[100] Puduri Sitarama Sastri, *Sabhāpati Vacanamu* (Madras: Kŏkkilagĕḍḍa Deśikulu, 1842).

[101] *Sabhāpati Vacanamu* is an independent text that was incorporated into the seventeenth-century Telugu prose history, *Rāyavācakamu*. Aside from a few introductory and concluding sentences, the substance of the work is one long extended sentence joining a series of clauses with one final verb at the end. It reads like a general index of knowledge that is grouped by number and in ascending sequence: "…having known the 3 gods Brahma, Viṣṇu, and Maheśvara…having known the 4 eras *Kṛta*, *Treta*, *Dvāpara*, and *Kali*…having known the 5 great sacrifices *Brahmayajña*, *Devayajña*, *Ṛṣiyajña*, *Pitṛyajña*, and *Bhūtayajña*…having considered the 6 sects *Śaiva*, *Vaiṣṇava*, *Gāṇapata*, *Skānda*, *Śākta*, and *Saura*…and knowing all other remaining paths of dharma, that man who rules without incurring any sins in this manner is called a *Sabhāpati*." This is my abridged translation. See also: Philip Wagoner, *Tidings of the King: a Translation and Ethnohistorical Analysis of the Rayavacakamu* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993), 89-94. It would be useful to compare this text to the way cultural knowledge is organized in Sitarama Sastri's *Bālaśikṣa*.

students in the vein of Gurumurti Sastri's *Pañcatantra Kathalu*. However, it does not seem to have been prescribed by the High School.[102] Sitarama Sastri's *Sabhāpati Vacanamu* is one of the earliest examples of a classical Telugu text edited and published by an Indian scholar.[103] That same year, he also edited and published *Viveka Saṅgrahamu*, a selection of verses from the Sanskrit *Mahabhārata* with prose abridgments in colloquial Telugu, "for the welfare of all people."[104] Like *Bālaśikṣa*, *Viveka Saṅgrahamu* appears to have also enjoyed immense popularity and saw a second edition in 1849.

Following *Bālaśikṣa*, Sitarama Sastri's most pioneering contribution, was his 1834 *Praśnottara Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* (*A Catechism of Telugu Grammar*). This grammar appears to have been intended as a complement to his *Bālaśikṣa* for Telugu students at the Literary Society School. Though largely forgotten today, it was in regular circulation during the mid-nineteenth century with reprints in 1852 and 1859. Both *Praśnottara Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* and *Bālaśikṣa* were commissioned by a certain "Mister Kululo (Kuḷulo)."[105] Sitarama Sastri's grammar preceded Gurumurti Sastri's *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu* in print by two years. It is the first available

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[102] Perhaps because it was in a colloquial idiom and did not illustrate the grammatical principles of *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi*. Unlike later pundit editors, it seems Sitarama Sastri did not adopt the editorial practice of revising texts to fit the rules of High Telugu.

[103] This same year we also have an edition of *Bhāskara Śatakamu* edited and published by Tiruvateshwarapeta Venkataramanayya, Deputy Telugu Headmaster at the College. This text was also edited as a text to teach Telugu and morals for students. Tiruvatesvarapeta, Venkatarangayya, ed., *Bhāskara Śatakamu* (Madras, 1834). The title page of *Sabhāpati Vacanamu* mentions only that the text was edited by Sitarama Sastri and printed by one Kokkilagedda Desikulu. The name of a printing press, patron, or even location is not provided. It is unclear if Desikulu is the printer, publisher, or both for Sitarama Sastri's text. Given Sitarama Sastri's stream of educational works, it is highly likely that this was a project of his own initiative. Of course, C.P. Brown maintained a staff of scholars who edited texts for him to be put into print during this same period. However, there is no evidence to suggest any of these scholars professionally took up the editing or printing of Telugu texts on their own initiative at this time or afterward.

[104] Puduri Sitarama Sastri, ed. *Viveka Saṅgrahamu* (Madras: Advertiser Press, 1842), preface. As with the *Sabhāpati Vacanamu*, the Telugu prose used in *Viveka Saṅgrahamu* does not conform to High Telugu.

[105] The 1837 edition of the *Bālaśikṣa* does not mention Kululo though the prefatory introduction is otherwise identical to the *Praśnottara Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu*. However, Arudra mentions that his name is mentioned in his citation of the 1832 first edition. The identity of this "Kululo" is a mystery. Sitarama Sastri's reference to him as a "*dŏra*" indicates that he was a European. Two likely candidates for this are: 1) Joseph Clulow, sub-treasurer of the Madras Government Bank (1832) and associated with the London Missionary Society. 2) R.C. Cole, serving in the Madras Medical Establishment and editor of the *Madras Literary Journal* (1836). It is most likely Joseph Clulow.

Telugu grammar to be printed for Indian students and reflects new textual practices such as pagination, punctuation, spacing between words, section headings, and paragraph breaks.[106] Sitarama Sastri followed in the footsteps of Pattabhirama Sastri in basing his grammar on the rules of *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* and the Sanskrit-first method of analysis that characterized the *paṇḍita* tradition. *Praśnottara Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* follows the general progression of topics in *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* and features five chapters: 1) *samjña*: technical terminology and orthography 2) *sandhi*: phonology 3) *śabda*: word formation and pronouns 4) *kārakādi*: case roles, nominal compounds, and miscellaneous topics and 5) *kriya*: verbs.

Praśnottara Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu's innovation came in form rather than content. Replicating neither the structured verse of Pattabhirama Sastri's *Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* nor the discursive prose of Gurumurti Sastri's *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu,* Sitarama Sastri's Telugu grammar took the dialogic arrangement of the European catechism. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the catechism was an extremely popular English educational genre. It drew on older models of doctrinal instruction and reflected a new social concern with mass education and the dissemination of scientific subjects to non-specialist, working class, and young adult audiences. Catechisms were particularly suited for the monitorial system of education that was promoted by nineteenth-century European educators as a cheap and large-scale method of primary instruction around the globe.[107] In *Praśnottara Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* we see an effort by an Indian pundit to present Telugu grammatical knowledge in the mold of European popular scientific instruction.

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[106] As mentioned earlier, Pattabhirama Sastri's *Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* is said to have been published in 1825. However, the claim is made with no evidence in Vavilla's 1951 reprint of the text—which based itself on an incomplete manuscript copy and not the first printed edition.

[107] The monitorial system was based on European efforts to imitate the efficiency and economy of Indian pyal schools they encountered in Madras. These schools had senior students serving as teachers for junior students and used teaching as a method of student review and learning. They began to be popularized with the work of Andrew Bell (1753-1832) at the turn of the eighteenth century and became popular with the Church of England. For the use of the catechism and monitorial system see Eugenia Roldan, "Reading in Question and Answers: The Catechism as a Educational Genre in Early Independent Spanish America," *Book History* 4, no. 1 (2001).

The text is structured as a series of questions and answers intended to be memorized and recited by students as formal drills. The language used to transcribe the dialogue was a highly stylized Telugu prose characterized by classical spellings and verb forms that anticipated the High Telugu prose of Gurumurti Sastri's grammar. Each chapter (*paricchedamu*) is organized into stand-alone modular units (*prakaraṇamulu*) that can be orally recited, reviewed, and taught by different levels of students. As an example, I cite a section of the *bhāṣa prakaraṇam* from the *samjña paricchedamu*:

(9) Q: What is meant by the *deśya* category?
A: *Deśya* are those words that are commonly used and not prohibited by grammar.
(10) Q: How many types of *deśya* are there?
A: The two types are *triliṅgadeśya* [pertaining to the Telugu region] and *anyadeśya* [pertaining to other regions].
(11) Q: What are features of *triliṅgadeśya* words? What are some examples of them?
A: Telugu words which are transparent in meaning and lack aspirants and other such categories of sounds are *triliṅgadeśya* words. Examples for these words are *pālu* (milk), *pĕrugu* (yogurt), *nĕyyi* (ghee), *rolu* (mortar), *rokali* (pestle), and others.

Praśnottara Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu conceived Telugu grammar as a fixed set of rules and definitions to be memorized. In this, Sitarama Sastri's understanding of grammatical instruction did not differ from Pattabhirama Sastri or Gurumurti Sastri. However, the distinction of his grammar is that its interrogative form created a script for classroom interaction based on new methods of teaching and examining students. The modular units of *Praśnottara Āndhra Vyākaraṇamu* were oriented as much to aiding the instructor in managing a large and diverse body of students as functioning as didactic devices for individual student memorization and learning. Its organization enabled the instructor to effectively deputize senior students as instructors for junior students and maximize the number of students he could efficiently teach. Consequently, we see that the identity of the "questioner" in this catechism is authoritative and anonymous. Sitarama Sastri also reinforces the prescriptive linguistic notions of

Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi without making any cultural references to poets, poetry, or the *paṇḍita* tradition. Instead, the rules of Telugu grammar are taught as a sequence of decontextualized universal truths to be memorized and tested through drills as one would learn mathematical formula.

Both Sitarama Sastri and Gurumurti Sastri's works were mainstays of the University High School over the next two decades. As at the College, the High School organized Telugu instruction around the study of High Telugu grammar and prose. Students were trained and tested in their ability to parse grammar, read and write prose, and translate between Telugu and English. The annual reports of the University governors (1842-53) reveal that Sitarama Sastri's catechism was assigned as an elementary grammar for beginning students while Gurumurti Sastri's prose grammar was used for advanced students. In a similar manner, Sitarama Sastri's *Bālaśikṣa* was prescribed for elementary reading while Gurumurti Sastri's *Tales of Vikramarka* was prescribed for intermediate reading and *Pañcatantra Kathalu* for advanced reading.

Following Sitarama Sastri's short stint at the High School, Telugu instruction was managed by Kanchi Ramakrishna Sastri, the Vernacular Superintendent of Telugu and Tamil (1843-47). We do not know much about Ramakrishna Sastri except that he was extremely well-regarded by the High School Board and authored a Telugu-English Vocabulary and a Telugu translation of the *Arabian Nights* with Major G.W. Whistler.[108] These works were occasionally taught at the High School with the Vocabulary assigned for beginning students and the *Arabian Nights* assigned alongside Gurumurti Sastri's *Pañcatantra Kathalu* for advanced students. Works by College Orientalists also surface in the High School's Telugu curriculum. In earlier years, beginning students were assigned short prose tales from J.C. Morris' *Telugu Selections* alongside Sitarama Sastri's *Bālaśikṣa*. In later years, advanced students were given reading assignments

[108] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1844-45*.

from Morris' selections of prose revenue letters in addition to Gurumurti Sastri's *Pañcatantra Kathalu*. Occasionally, intermediate students were taught C.P. Brown's *English Irregular Verbs explained by Idiomatic Sentences in English and Telugu* as a supplement to Gurumurti Sastri's *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu*. Strikingly, in one year we even see Campbell's English *Grammar of Teloogoo Language* taught alongside Gurumurti Sastri's grammar for intermediate students.[109]

Until now, the Telugu pundits I have discussed in this chapter all belonged to communities of Brahmin literati. This reflected the general monopoly on literacy Brahmins wielded over Telugu (as opposed to the case of Tamil). However, in 1845 the High School appointed Paravastu Cinnaya Suri (1806-1862) as its Head Telugu pundit. Cinnaya Suri was a rare non-Brahmin *paṇḍita* of Telugu and Sanskrit. He hailed from a family of Sātāni Śrīvaiṣṇavas with a tradition of cultivating scholarship in Telugu, Tamil, Sanskrit, and Prakrit. His father, Paravastu Tiruvenkata Jiyar, was affiliated with the Sātāni Paravastu *maṭhamu* of Tirupati and served in Tanjore, Sriperumbudur, and Madras (Triplicane) as a Śrīvaiṣṇava religious teacher.[110] Cinnaya Suri began his career as the Telugu pundit for Pachaiyappa's primary school when it first opened in 1842.[111] In this same year, it appears he was also appointed head of the Madras School Book and Vernacular Literature Society.[112] In 1845, he was recruited to replace Sitarama Sastri as

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[109] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1851-52*.

[110] Sātāni Śrīvaiṣṇavas, alternately known as Sāttāda Śrīvaiṣṇavas, were non-Brahmins initiated in the Teṅkalai tradition. They historically held influential roles in ritual worship and temple management across southern India from the 11th-16th centuries. See: Robert Lester, "The Sāttāda Śrīvaiṣṇavas," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 114, no. 1 (1994). On the Paravastu family, see: *Pachaiyappa's College, Madras: Centenary Commemoration Book* (Madras, 1942).

[111] Budaraju Radhakrishna's biography of Cinnaya Suri provides interesting but ultimately speculative details on his life that are not supported by any cited evidence. He reports that Cinnaya Suri trained to be certified as a law pundit in the Company courts by the College of Fort St. George. Afterward, he began his career at the Opton (Apton?) Mission School as a Telugu pundit. Radhakrishna, *Paravastu Chinnaya Suri*. I have not been able to find any references to this Opton mission or school. Our earliest reference to Cinnaya Suri is in a letter he wrote to the Telugu newspaper *Vartamāṇa Taraṅgini* in 1842, which he signed as "pundit at the pachaiyappa free school." Bangorey, *Braun Jābulu*, 60.

[112] More research is needed on the activities of this Society. It is also unclear what this meant in practice as the School Book Society was mostly inactive until it was revitalized in the 1850s. *Report on Public Instruction in the Madras Presidency 1855*. See also Virabhadra Rao, *Tĕlugu Sāhityamupai Iṅglīṣu Prabhāvamu*, 278.

Telugu pundit for the University High School where he spent the remainder of his professional career.

Like Puduri Sitarama Sastri, Cinnaya Suri was also a well-connected pundit who maintained relationships with influential Telugu leaders of Madras society such as Komaleswarapuram Srinivasa Pillai of the Hindu Literary Society and Gajula Lakshmi Narasu Cetti of the Madras Native Association (est. 1852).[113] He was also a participant in the nascent associational life of Madras, donating and participating as an honorary member of the Madras Upayukta Grantha Karana Sabha or Society for the Composition of Useful Works (est. 1847).[114] Cinnaya Suri was also a Telugu publishing entrepreneur who established a short-lived printing press of his own named Vani Darpanamu in the early 1850s.[115] The titles issued by this press were either Telugu pedagogical works directly authored or edited by Cinnaya Suri or Sanskrit texts related to Śrīvaiṣṇava theology.[116]

Cinnaya Suri was a prolific pundit who produced Telugu grammatical knowledge in both Indian and European genres of educational texts. In this, he advanced earlier Madras Orientalist projects to revive and improve classical learning in the Telugu language. However, as opposed to his predecessors Pattabhirama Sastri, Gurumurti Sastri, and Sitarama Sastri, he was not merely content to experiment with adapting *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* into Telugu for students. He actively built on its methods and content to identify original new linguistic insights. The earliest

[113] Stuart Blackburn has examined the relationship between the Madras Native Association and Tamil Headmasters at the College. Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism*.
[114] It was initially established as the Gaṇita Śāstra Prasaṅga Sabha (Arithmetical Society) and engaged in the composition of the first Telugu arithmetic textbook, published in 1848. *Report of the Madras Upayukta Grandha Karana Sabha*, 1849-53; 1853-54.
[115] The exact dates of Vani Darpanamu's operations are yet to be reconstructed, but contemporary references suggest it lasted only a few years in the early 1850s.
[116] The Sanskrit titles listed by Rev. Long were the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and *Nyāya Bhāskara*. The Telugu titles listed that were authored by Cinnaya Suri include *Nīticandrika*, *Nīti Saṅgrahamu*, *Akṣaragucchamu*, and *Bālavyākaraṇamu*. The list also included *Nalacaritramu*, an excerpt from Nannaya's *Āndhra Mahābhāratamu* edited by him. Although Long's report states that it is based on an 1855 note by A.J. Arbuthnot, this is not entirely accurate as the first edition of the *Bālavyākaraṇamu* was issued in 1858 from the Hindu Press. James Long, "A Notice of the past condition and future prospects of the Vernacular Press…", Appendix A."

attestation of his career as a Telugu grammarian is an 1840 text entitled *Padyāndhra Vyākaraṇamu*. This was a small and incomplete grammar in Telugu verse. In 1842, he produced *Sutrāndhra Vyākaraṇamu*, an original grammar in Sanskrit *sūtras*.[117]

The vernacularist milieu of colonial Madras ensured that he did not rest with this accomplishment, as *paṇḍita* scholars in earlier times may have, but immediately translated it into Telugu with his 1844 *Śabdaśāsanamu*.[118] Following his appointment to the University High School in 1845, Cinnaya Suri seems to have been preoccupied by the demands of his new position and we do not see any new attempts at scholarship until the debut of his 1853 *Śabdalakṣaṇa Saṅgrahmu*. This text reformulated his earlier *Śabdaśāsanamu* as a formal set of Telugu *sūtras* and was published by Cinnaya Suri at his own press.[119] Prior to the publication of this grammar, he also produced two elementary school books— *Akṣaragucchamu* and *Vibhaktibodhini*—on the rudiments of Telugu phonology, spelling, and reading and on the Telugu case roles.[120]

Cinnaya Suri's efforts culminated in his *Bālavyākaraṇamu* or *A Beginner's Grammar* in 1858.[121] This grammar was an enlarged and refined version of his earlier *Śabdalakṣaṇa Saṅgrahmu* and consisted of 466 Telugu *sūtras*. Although composed in Telugu and claiming to be an introductory text, *Bālavyākaraṇamu* presumed a strong knowledge of the Sanskrit

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[117] Budaraju's description and dating of this text differs from the information given by P.S. Subrahmanyam. He refers to its title as *Āndhra Śabdānuśāsanamu* and states it is a Sanskrit text produced in 1840 or 1844. I have been unable to review the text as yet and cannot speak to the source of this difference. Paravastu Cinnaya Suri, *Bālavyākaraṇamu*, ed., ann., and trans., P.S. Subrahmanyam (Thiruvananthapuram: Dravidian Linguistics Association, 2002); Radhakrishna, *Paravastu Chinnaya Suri*.

[118] All three of these early grammars do not appear to have been printed during Cinnaya Suri's lifetime. They were later collected and printed together by the Andhra Sahitya Parishat in 1931.

[119] Intriguingly, the grammar contains several verses in praise of Vishnu but is not dedicated to any patron. Budaraju inaccurately reports that the title of this text is *Śabdalakṣaṇa Anuśāsanamu* and dedicated to Gajula Lakshminarasu Cetti. Radhakrishna, *Paravastu Chinnaya Suri*.

[120] The earliest references to both of these texts appear in the *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1853-54*. They were prescribed for students in the most junior class of the High School's newly organized primary school division.

[121] Citations and references to *Bālavyākaraṇamu* here refer to the edition translated and prepared by P.S. Subrahmanyam.

language.[122] Following *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi*, Cinnaya Suri structured his *sūtras* according to the metadiscursive conventions of Panini and heavily modeled the text on Bhattoji Diksita's seventeenth-century grammar of Sanskrit, *Siddhāntakaumudi*. Although he drew on Sanskrit models and terms of analysis, he recognized that the linguistic structures of Sanskrit and Telugu were different. Cinnaya Suri adroitly adapted and coined new terminology in the Paninian mold to account for the specificities of the Telugu language.[123] *Bālavyākaraṇamu* consisted of ten chapters: 1) *samjña*: technical terminology 2) *sandhi*: phonology and orthography 3) *tatsama*: Sanskrit and Prakrit-equivalent substantives 4) *accika: deśya* substantives and pronouns 5) *kāraka*: case roles 6) *samāsa*: compounds 7) *taddhita:* secondary derivatives 8) *kriya*: verbs 9) *kṛdanta*: primary derivatives and 10) *prakīrṇaka*: miscellaneous topics. It followed the order of topics in *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* but, like Vedam Pattabhirama Sastri's earlier verse grammar, rearranged them in a more linear sequence.

As with earlier colonial-era adaptations, Cinnaya Suri devoted considerable attention to analyzing the assimilation of Sanskrit and Prakrit words in Telugu and the conventional range of phonological concerns. He followed the *paṇḍita* tradition in reproducing a Sanskrit-first structure of analysis, beginning with Sanskrit phonology and *tatsama* nouns in Telugu before moving to a discussion of *deśya* nouns. Yet he was also crucially influenced by the Orientalist interest in non-Sanskritic elements of High Telugu as articulated in Campbell and Gurumurti Sastri's grammars.

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[122] As just one example, consider *sūtra* 7.1 which defines the "-*tana*" suffix in Telugu in terms of Sanskrit, stating it operates in the same sense as the Sanskrit suffix "-*tva*." This is akin to defining "-*tana*" as operating in the same sense of the English suffix "-*ness*." Such references pepper the *Bālavyākaraṇamu* throughout. In this, the grammar follows *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi*, compare *sūtra* 4.28 on "-*tva*."

[123] For example, consider Cinnaya Suri's treatment of the habitual future in Telugu. In Sanskrit, this sense of habit is conveyed by the present tense. The Paninian term for the present tense is "*laṭ*." Cinnaya Suri uses "*laṭṭu*" for the Telugu present tense and coins the new term "*lāṭṭu*" to mark the habitual future in order to mark its difference as well as continuity with the original term. See Cinnaya Suri, *Bālavyākaraṇamu*,196. On the other hand, as Subrahmanyam also notes, Cinnaya Suri occasionally neglects to comment on aspects of Telugu verbs that are not morphologically distinguished in Sanskrit such as the difference between transitive and causative senses. Cinnaya Suri, *Bālavyākaraṇamu*, 242.

Without displacing the Sanskrit-first framework, Cinnaya Suri subjected the *deśya* stratum of Telugu poetry to a rigorous Paninian analysis that tremendously expanded the scope of non-Sanskrit linguistic content under the *paṇḍita* gaze. As he observed in his introduction, "The ancient grammars available today provide many rules relating to Sanskrit [and Prakrit] equivalents, but they do not offer such detailed rules for the remainder of the language."[124] While earlier grammars had been largely content to rely on the precedent of poetic usage to judge the correctness of *deśya* words, *Bālavyākaraṇamu* theorized and systematized them. P.S. Subrahmanyam notes that Cinnaya Suri made critical contributions to the study of *deśya* words through his original analyses of primary and secondary derivatives and theorization of Telugu verb morphology.[125] With regard to his study of the Telugu verb, it is apparent that Pattabhirama Sastri's 1815 *Āndhra Dhātumāla* was an important resource for Cinnaya Suri. However none of the earlier Telugu grammars, ancient or colonial, were as precise, systematic, or exhaustive as Cinnaya Suri's text. Given the dexterity and expedience with which he translated the Paninian method into Telugu *sūtras*, this was an achievement all in itself. Consequently, *Bālavyākaraṇamu* was a feat of linguistic scholarship that rendered the grammars of his predecessors incomplete. Shortly after its publication, the Madras Department of Public Instruction adopted the work as its highest authority on Telugu grammar, displacing the founding *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi.* The Department's standards of Telugu instruction and examination—from the elementary through the post-graduate levels—were now developed in relation to Cinnaya Suri's grammar and no Telugu pundit worth his name could claim ignorance of it. By

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[124] Cinnaya Suri, *Bālavyākaraṇamu*, xli.
[125] Cinnaya Suri, *Bālavyākaraṇamu*, xxxiv.

1900, an estimated seventeen editions of *Bālavyākaraṇamu* had been printed, making it the single most successful work of Telugu scholarship published in the nineteenth century.[126]

Pundits and the Institutionalization of Telugu as a Vernacular Language Subject

As part of the vernacular renaissance envisioned by the Madras Orientalists, Telugu school pundits translated and adapted the Sanskrit *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* to make it more accessible to a broader audience. As a result, we saw new Telugu grammars taking the form of simple verse, prose, or question and answer. Why then would Cinnaya Suri choose to cast his *Bālavyākaraṇamu* as a set of opaque Telugu *sutras*?

While the *sūtra* was a well-established form in Sanskrit (*Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* itself being a *sūtra* text), its use in Telugu literature was extremely rare. As a scholarly genre, the *sūtra* is characterized by its brevity, technical precision, and formulaic structure. *Sūtra* texts reduce their subject to a concise skeletal outline designed to aid memorization and accurate textual transmission. They necessarily demand further exposition and interpretation by a knowledgeable teacher through oral instruction.[127] The abstract nature of this form contradicted the basic principles driving colonial adaptations and translations of *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* into Telugu—to allow the quick dissemination of grammatical knowledge to a broad range of students. The *sūtra* possessed neither the directness of verse, the accessibility of prose, nor the simplicity of the catechism. Indeed, as soon as *Bālavyākaraṇamu* was published, the Head Telugu pundit at Pachaiyappa's High School was commissioned to produce a commentary.[128] A few decades

[126] Radhakrishna, *Paravastu Chinnaya Suri*. As per the quarterly lists of the register, it appears that the print run of an edition was on average 1,000-1,500 copies.
[127] The use of examples in Cinnaya Suri's grammar is minimal. For example, he provides examples of Sanskrit tatsama words with irregular sandhi in sūtras 3.80-84.
[128] Gajula Lakshminarasu Cetti of the Madras Native Association and Hindu Press commissioned Vinjamuri Krishnamacaryulu, Cinnaya Suri's successor at Pachaiyappa's School. Krishnamacharyulu passed away before he

later, another Telugu pundit recast Cinnaya Suri's *sūtras* as a more accessible poem in Telugu verse.[129] By the early decades of the twentieth century, an entire field of commentarial activity dedicated to explicating the *Bālavyākaraṇamu* had emerged in Telugu print.

Historians of Telugu literature have been at a loss to explain why Cinnaya Suri resorted to a pedagogical form as abstruse and archaic as the *sūtra*. Even more perplexing has been the question of how these *sūtras* attained such preeminence in a system of colonial education that predicated itself as an agent of European enlightenment. Nearly all studies of the nineteenth century portray Cinnaya Suri as the arch-exponent of a *paṇḍita* cultural conservatism alienated from the westernizing zeitgeist of colonial modernity.[130] To quote a prominent Telugu historian, "[Cinnaya Suri] made the progress (*ĕdugu*) of the Telugu language halt entirely, as if its course were abruptly thrust into the past [...] and made distant from the Telugu people."[131] In this vein, *Bālavyākaraṇamu* is treated as a fundamentally anachronistic production. Curiously, despite the lack of any supporting biographical material, many have also sought to psychologize Cinnaya Suri as a vain and autocratic scholar.[132] This has been used to justify the most commonly

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could complete this work in 1866 and there is no extant copy of his text. Radhakrishna, *Paravastu Chinnaya Suri*, 34.

[129] This was produced by Oruganti Somasekhara Kavi. Radhakrishna, *Paravastu Chinnaya Suri*, 34.

[130] The posthumous mythologizing of Cinnaya Suri's life and character offers a striking illustration of some of the preconceptions and biases in the contemporary construction of the Telugu pundit. See: Arudra, *Samagra Āndhra Sāhityaṃ*; Bhadriraju Krishnamurti, "A Controversy of Styles in Education in Telugu," in *Language, Education, and Society* ed. Bhadriraju Krishnamurti (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1998); Mangamma, *Book Printing in India*; Radhakrishna, *Paravastu Chinnaya Suri*; Reddy, *The Influence of English on Telugu Literature*; Sundar, "Origin and Growth of Political Consciousness in Andhra;" Vakulabharanam, *Social Reform in Andhra*; Virabhadra Rao, *Tĕlugu Sāhityamupai Iṅglīṣu Prabhāvamu*. For years, Nidudavolu Venkatarao was the only scholar who presented a more balanced perspective on Cinnaya Suri until Velcheru Narayana Rao and Paruchuri Sreenivas reinitiated a discussion on his prose. Cf. footnote 10 in the introduction.

[131] Bangorey, *Braun Jābulu*, 69.

[132] For example, Budaraju Radhakrishna points to a Sanskrit colophon ostensibly written by Cinnaya Suri in a manuscript of the *Āndhra Śabdānuśāsanamu* (1844) that reviews his achievements and qualifications to author this text. He argues this speaks to an arrogant and immature personality. Radhakrishna, *Paravastu Chinnaya Suri*, 28. In fact, claims to be famous (*diganta viśrānta cirantana kīrti virājamāna*), knowledgable in the 8 languages (*samskṛtādi bhāṣāṣṭaka lakṣya lakṣaṇa jñāna mahāpaṇḍita*) or an expert in teaching Sanskrit grammar (*sarvadarśana saṅgraha kusumāñjali mahābhāṣya pravacana pārīṇa*) are highly normative descriptions for establishing *paṇḍita* authority. They do not provide any unique insights into the person of Cinnaya Suri other than the fact that he aspired to be recognized as a Sanskrit and Telugu *paṇḍita*. Further, it is entirely possible that this

accepted explanation for *Bālavyākaraṇamu's* influence in the colonial system—that Cinnaya Suri single-handedly subverted and manipulated the colonial establishment into prescribing his works through the sheer force of his iron will.[133]

The most elaborate iteration of this argument appears in Bangorey's work, which draws heavily on C.P. Brown's reports as Telugu Examiner to the High School Board. Bangorey treats Browns reports as eyewitness testimonies of Cinnaya Suri's baleful *paṇḍita* intransigence. In his report for 1847-48, Brown complains that High School students performed terribly in their Telugu examination, being "unable to read common letters or understand common accounts in their Native tongue."[134] In this, Brown "did not blame the pupils but the tutor [Cinnaya Suri]" for he trained them in "much that looks learned and poetical."[135] The following year, Brown belabors this concern, noting that "the tutors, proceeding on the native method, prefer that course which gives the greatest degree of labor and the smallest profit." Brown is particularly critical of Cinnaya Suri's methods of examination which he notes as "intended merely to astonish the audience" and "contain no useful knowledge."[136] Reading through these reports, it is beyond doubt that Brown had little respect for Cinnaya Suri or his pedagogy. Yet rather than accepting these reports as literal assessments of Cinnaya Suri's performance, we should understand them as

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colophon was written by someone else. P.S. Subrahmanyam comments that the only copy of this work was a poorly copied manuscript made by Cinnaya Suri's cousin. Since the colophon describes Cinnaya Suri as a pundit of Presidency College (*āṅgla rājakīya sarvakalāśālāndhra paṇḍita*), which only came into existence in 1855, it seems to have been added long after the original composition. Paravastu, *Bālavyākaraṇamu*, xxiii.

[133] The influence of this trope also appeared initially in Velcheru Narayana Rao's study of Cinnaya Suri where he refers to him colorfully as a "language czar." Velcheru Narayana Rao, "Print and Prose: Pundits, Karanams, and the East India Company in the Making of Modern Telugu," in *India's Literary History: Essays on the Nineteenth Century*, eds. Stuart Blackburn and Vasudha Dalmia (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004), 154. However, Narayana Rao and Paruchuri Sreenivas have revisited Cinnaya Suri in a series of more recent essays. Cf. footnote 129 above and footnote 10 in the introduction.

[134] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1847-48*, 78.

[135] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1847-48*, 78.

[136] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University,1848-49*, 71. Here, Brown is condemning Cinnaya Suri as well as the assistant Telugu pundit, Puranam Hayagriva Sastri. Hayagriva Sastri was a Puduri Dravida Brahmin who was related to the Vavilla family of pundit printers and maintained a Sanskrit-Telugu press of his known as the Vivekadarsa Press.

reflecting Brown's long-standing and well documented scorn for Indian scholars and indigenous methods of learning.[137] If anything, it is in fact Brown, rather than Cinnaya Suri, whose voluminous scholarly record, personal papers, and autobiography betray a profoundly arrogant and authoritarian disposition.

Bangorey, like most Indian historians of this period, treats Brown's perspectives on Telugu as generally representative of the colonial establishment's "modernizing" views on vernacular instruction. In this framework, the ascendance of Cinnaya Suri and his *Bālavyākaraṇamu* certainly appear as anomalies on the wrong side of history. Yet, if we adopt a more comparative multilingual approach to the High School, a more complex picture of colonial attitudes toward vernacular instruction appears. Contemporary Tamil and Marathi Examiner reports suggest that colonial officials and educators connected to the High School were not monolithic in their understandings or expectations of vernacular instruction.

Parallel to Brown's 1847-48 report, Major J. Crisp, Marathi Translator to the Government, hailed the "vast stride" made in Marathi instruction, which reflected a "great credit upon Gunnish Sastree, the able and zealous teacher of the Mahratta classes."[138] In the following year, the Commissioner of the Northern Circar Districts Walter Elliot reports that students in Marathi had made inadequate progress but attributes this to larger structural issues at the High School such as the "defective classification" of students and the "secondary importance attached to the study of vernacular languages."[139] Elliot takes special care to mention this was not the fault of the Marathi Pundit "whose qualifications as a teacher are of a high order" and whose exertions in

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[137] While Brown makes scattered references to the ignorance and pedantry of Indian scholars throughout his published work, the most coherent critiques of Telugu pundits are found in his autobiography. Charles Philip Brown, *Literary Autobiography*.
[138] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1847-48*, 79.
[139] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1848*-49, 75.

improving the “corrupt and faulty jargon spoken by the Mahrattas of the Carnatic” were to be especially recognized.[140]

This same degree of sensitivity and regard was also held for the High School’s Tamil pundits. In his 1851-52 report, Tamil Translator to the Government W.H. Bayly writes that, “it would be hardly fair to judge the method of native teaching by the standard of modern European systems, but it appears to me that under the management of Vizagaparoomaul Iyer [Visakhaperumal Iyer], the native method has been made as efficacious in imparting a critical knowledge of the language as it possibly can be.”[141] Bayley, like Elliot, also points to larger structural issues in developing vernacular instruction, regretting that “the time allowed for Tamil studies is not sufficient to produce any scholastic knowledge.”[142]

In fact, Brown’s predecessor J.C. Morris, the Telugu Translator to the Government, also submitted quite favorable reviews on the progress of Telugu instruction at the High School. For 1845-46, Cinnaya Suri’s first year as High School Telugu pundit, Morris reports that he was “much pleased” by the results of the examination as well as the “attention…paid according to my suggestion to the study of the grammar.” Morris urged the “necessity for a continuance in this course.”[143] These Marathi, Tamil, and early Telugu Examiners all expressed an appreciative, if patronizing, attitude toward the High School pundits and displayed a commitment to improving the “native method” of vernacular instruction. Brown’s acerbic criticisms of Cinnaya Suri and desire to scrap the native method altogether left him a lone activist examiner whose recommendations were more radical than anything conceived by the High School Board.

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[140] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1848*-49, 75. In fact, the students who took these courses all had identifiably Telugu and Tamil names.
[141] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1851-52*, lxxxv.
[142] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1851-52*, lxxxv.
[143] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1845-46*, 86.

As discussed earlier, the High School was an Anglo-Vernacular institution that was established following the ascendance of an "Anglicist" policy of colonial education. This policy emphasized educating Indian students in European literature and science through English as against an education in Indian knowledge through classical Indian languages. The greatest exponent of the Anglicist policy was Thomas Babington Macaulay, a close advisor to the Governor-General of India, who believed in "the intrinsic superiority of…western literature" and claimed that Indian learning was generally "barren of useful knowledge."[144] Macaulay advocated that the government's limited education budget should be solely invested in forming a "class of persons Indian in blood and colour but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect."[145] This class of "interpreters," as Macaulay called them, would be tasked with the long-term project of "refining" Indian vernacular languages to be "fit vehicles for conveying [European] knowledge to the great mass of the population."[146]

The High School Board, consisting of Europeans as well as Indians, frequently echoed Macaulay's Anglicist sentiments. In their reports, Telugu and Tamil are consistently derided as literatures "almost totally barren of what Europeans deem useful or substantial knowledge" and stylistically burdened by a "perversely ingenious artifice."[147] Such observations indicate a marked shift from the Madras Orientalist conceptions of Telugu and Tamil as polished vernaculars that had reigned for the previous thirty years.

As opposed to the Telugu Headmasters of Fort St. George College, Cinnaya Suri taught Telugu in a context where Indian languages and forms of knowledge were subjugated to English and European knowledge. This dynamic manifested itself in a variety of institutionally structured

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[144] Sharp, *Selections from Educational Records*, 109-110.
[145] Sharp, *Selections from Educational Records*, 116.
[146] Sharp, *Selections from Educational Records*, 116.
[147] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1845-46*, 10.

ways. As per the new Anglicist dispensation, teaching at the High School was divided between a Department of English and a Department of Vernacular Languages. The English Department had greater priority and occupied the bulk of the High School's budget and students' time in the classroom. British masters and tutors were recruited from England to teach European subjects such as History, Geography, Mathematics (Algebra, Geometry, Bookkeeping), Natural philosophy (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Astronomy), and moral philosophy.

The Vernacular Department hired local Indian pundits to teach Telugu, Tamil, and Marathi through Indian languages. It is noteworthy that classical Indian languages such as Sanskrit and Persian were entirely excluded from the High School curriculum. Cinnaya Suri and his fellow pundits were paid substantially less than the English Department's British instructors as well as the earlier Telugu and Tamil headmasters of the College. Vernacular instruction was limited to just one or two hours a day and consistently relegated to the end of the High School's seven-hour day. These courses were often cancelled due to half-days and astrological holidays.[148]

As we have seen from the comments of the Examiners, European educationists were keen on improving the "native method" of pedagogy. It is unclear what this native method involved or in what senses it maintained continuity with conventional Indian educational practices. Like their counterparts at the College, High School pundits taught students new linguistic competencies in grammar, prose, and translation in European seminar style classrooms using printed textbooks on the basis of a curriculum determined by the Board. In improving native vernacular instruction, the High School Board aimed to produce a more "rational" and "philological" system of language study that would prepare its students to join the ranks of Macaulay's elite cadre of

[148] No moon and Full moon days and the days after were cancelled exclusively for vernacular language classes. All other classes continued on these days.

"interpreters."[149] It sponsored the preparation of "correct and sensible vernacular class books" with "a view to strengthening the meaning and power of words, and enriching the vocabulary of native tongues—more especially as regards prose composition."[150]

The benefits of this philological training were considered in two ways. First, the study of vernacular grammar, etymology, and prose composition would improve the translation skills of Indian students. This was considered essential in combatting the "notorious evil" plaguing contemporary Company offices, namely, the "defective native translations of all public and business documents," many of which were reported to be "utterly intelligible and almost all are more or less so."[151] Second, it would provide Indian students with ideal models of vernacular prose and a systematic understanding of vernacular expression that would enable them to authoritatively "direct its application to scientific and truly literary subjects."[152]

At the discursive level, the High School Board conceived vernacular language instruction as part of a larger Anglicist project to fundamentally reform Indian literatures on the pattern of English literature. Yet in practice, there was no clear consensus on what this looked like or how it was to be achieved. While the High School Board agreed on the importance of cultivating a robust vernacular prose medium, more subjective standards of style, taste, diction, and usage were less apparent.

As with the Orientalists, Board members looked to Campbell's "High Telugu" as the correct grammatical standard of Telugu. During Cinnaya Suri's sixteen years as a Telugu pundit at the High School, the vernacular curriculum was revised on an almost yearly basis. However, one feature that is clear is that the Vernacular Department displayed a marked continuity with the

[149] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1849-50*.
[150] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1844-45* and *1849-50*.
[151] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1844-45*.
[152] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1844-45*.

earlier Orientalist curriculum developed at the College of Fort St. George. College Headmaster Ravipati Gurumurti Sastri's Telugu grammar and two prose readers were consistently prescribed by the High School during Cinnaya Suri's career. We also see Orientalist publications such as Campbell's *Grammar* and Morris' *Telugu Selections* appearing in the Telugu course. For Tamil, a similar case is observable with course fixtures such as College Headmaster Tandavaraya Mudaliar's catechism of Tamil grammar and other works produced at the College. The prescription of these texts indicates a continued investment by the High School Board in teaching the high vernacular dialects and cultivating them as standard mediums of vernacular prose.

In this regard, Fort St. George's new commitment to Anglicist models of education did not signify a complete displacement of earlier Orientalist perceptions of vernacular languages in the Presidency. The great chasm that emerged between Anglicists and Orientalists in the Bengal and Bombay Presidencies did not take root in Madras in quite the same way. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the College of Fort St. George was not officially an Orientalist institution of Indian education on par with the Calcutta Madrasah or the Benares Sanskrit College. It was an institution dedicated to the education of European civil servants with a subsidiary training program for Indian language teachers. Further, its emphasis on reviving classical learning in the high vernaculars put it at odds with more properly Orientalist investments in Sanskrit and Persian literatures.

Despite contradictory discourses on Indian education, the High School drew heavily on the College's work with the high vernaculars in organizing its own program of vernacular instruction. The College's early efforts at producing Telugu and Tamil prose readers that would introduce European students to vernacular grammar and literary styles intersected with the High

School Board's search for new models of vernacular prose for Indian students.[153] These early College readers had already begun the process of adapting the high vernaculars of Madras to English models of narrative prose. As texts produced for European students, they were amenable to language instruction based on European philological interests in grammar and etymology. This is why Orientalist productions of the College such as Gurumurti Sastri's *Tales of Vikramarka* were so readily imported into the High School's Anglicist programs of vernacular language reform and instruction.

Within just a few years of the High School's establishment, Orientalist interests in literary revival and classical learning began to formally reconstitute themselves in the Vernacular Department. In the earliest years of the High School, vernacular instruction emphasized the study of grammar and prose while neglecting the study of classical poetry. However, beginning in the High School's seventh year (1847-48), poetic texts and a renewed classicist interest begin to appear in the advanced classes of the vernacular curriculum. It is unclear what prompted these curricular innovations at this specific time but the shift is indisputable.

Senior Tamil students were assigned selections from the ancient *Tirukural* while their peers in Telugu were given passages from the sixteenth-century *Manucaritramu*.[154] It was in this same year that we also see the introduction of the thirteenth-century *Naṉṉūl*, a classical Tamil grammar in *nūṟpā* (*sūtra*) verses, for the advanced class. The following year, advanced students were also assigned a Tamil translation of the Sanskrit legal text *Smṛticandrikā.*[155] This recalled earlier efforts by the College to translate Sanskrit *dharmaśāstra* texts and promote classical legal

[153] There are indications that the Board was found these textbooks inadequate and that they were brought in as place holders. Nevertheless, their adoption demonstrates that these readers were considered a step in the direction toward the Anglicist's reformed and rationalized vernacular prose.
[154] It is curious why *Manucaritramu* rather than a text more comparable to the *Tirukkural* such as the *Sumati Śatakamu* or Vemana's verses was assigned. The *Manucaritramu* was one of the classics of Telugu courtly poetry and celebrated for its erudition and elaborate style. It was not a didactic "*nīti*" text. For more on niti and morality, see Velcheru, "Multiple Lives of a Text: *Sumati Śatakamu* in colonial Andhra."
[155] I have not seen this text or been able to ascertain its origin or whether it was a prose or verse translation.

studies in the high vernacular dialects as part of its revivalist project.[156] This classicist Tamil curriculum of the *Nannūl*, *Tirukural*, and *Smṛticandrikā* was taught to advanced students at least until the promotion of the High School to Presidency College in 1855. During this period, we also see a gradual increase in the number of verses prescribed for study and examination.

During Cinnaya Suri's tenure, the advanced Telugu course did not achieve the stability of the advanced Tamil classes. However, the same classicist impulses that restructured the advanced Tamil curriculum also influenced changes in Telugu. In many years, Telugu poetic selections for the advanced class were drawn from *Manucaritramu*. However, verses from *Harīśchandra Dvipada* (1849) as well as *Āndhra Māhābhāratamu* (*Virāṭa Parvamu,* 1853) also appear on different occasions. Incidentally, the first printed editions of *Manucaritramu* and *Harīśchandra Dvipada* had recently been edited and printed by Brown and it is possible that his editions were employed at the High School."[157] Brown arranged "correct" editions of these works and appended them with short commentaries and glosses according to European methods of textual criticism. He promoted his print editions as allowing Orientalists to study the Telugu classics without the pedantic mediation of Telugu pundits. Whether or not these texts were employed by the High School, how Cinnaya Suri may have taught Brown's editions in the classroom is another question.

As the Vernacular Department sifted through different titles for a suitable standard of classical Telugu poetry, it remained consistent in assigning Gurumurti Sastri's *Tĕlugu*

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[156] An 1815 report tells us that the College Board had supported the Tamil translation of *Vyavahāra Kāṇḍa* from the twelfth-century *Mitākṣarā* by College Head Tamil pundit Cidambara Vadiyar and his brother Porur Vadiyar. Trautmann, *Languages and Nations*, 140. It is unclear if any similar translations into Telugu were undertaken, but the report cited speaks of this as a broader project not specifically related to Tamil.

[157] *Harīśchandra Dvipada* was one of the first texts printed by Brown. As per an 1842 advertisement in an early Telugu newspaper, it appears to have been in print by this time. Mangamma, *Book Printing in India*, 195. The earliest attested edition of *Manucaritramu* was printed in 1851 although we see "the first six pages" were assigned in 1847 and "pages 9 to 29" in 1848. This suggests there was a printed standard that was being assigned for instruction.

Vyākaraṇamu as its standard grammar for the advanced class. However, indications of a classicist dissatisfaction with Gurumurti Sastri's prose reference grammar began to arise in the early 1850s. In 1851, *Āndhra Nāma Saṅgrahamu*, a seventeenth-century Telugu lexicon in verse, was introduced alongside Gurumurti Sastri's grammar to support the study of Telugu etymology. A couple of years later, both of these texts were directly substituted by the Sanskrit *sūtras* of *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi*.[158]

As a Telugu pundit at the High School, Cinnaya Suri was exposed to the range of Anglicist and Orientalist priorities that guided colonial experiments with vernacular instruction. The resurgence of a classicist interest in the Vernacular Department formed an important backdrop to his scholarly activities and suggests that *Bālavyākaraṇamu* was neither an anachronistic nor isolated development. Instead, it appears as a contemporary work of Telugu scholarship forged in the educational debates and contexts of mid-century colonial Madras.

Bālavyākaraṇamu appealed to earlier Madras Orientalist conceptions of vernacular revival and improvement in fundamental ways. As documented earlier, the College had worked to promote a "vernacular renaissance" through commissioning vernacular translations of Sanskrit *śāstric* learning and patronizing original new scholarship in the high vernaculars. These initiatives complemented efforts to improve the general standards of vernacular literacy and pedagogy by promoting the study of grammar. Cinnaya Suri not only translated the classical learning of *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* into Telugu but produced an original work of scholarship that improved the scope of Telugu grammar.

More than the Sanskrit *sūtras* of *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* or the Telugu prose of *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu*, it was the Telugu *sūtras* of *Bālavyākaraṇamu* that ultimately met the Vernacular

[158] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University*, *1853-54*. As this is the last report I have had access to, the 4 years immediately before Cinnaya Suri's publication of his *Bālavyākaraṇamu* in 1858 still need to be reviewed.

Department's approval. The archaic form of Cinnaya Suri's *sūtras* imbued his scholarship with the weight of tradition that made it ideal for an educational institution that conceived classical texts as normative and authoritative. Upon its publication, the High School immediately prescribed *Bālavyākaraṇamu* as its standard grammar for advanced Telugu just as it had prescribed the *Nannūl* for advanced Tamil a decade earlier. In this sense, *Bālavyākaraṇamu* represented the culmination of decades of Madras Orientalist influence and revivalist engagements with Telugu intellectuals that sought to improve and promote grammatical scholarship in the Telugu language.[159]

However, the institutionalization of *Bālavyākaraṇamu* need not be solely attributed to a lingering Orientalist influence on the Vernacular Department. Anglicist conceptions of vernacular reform and improvement also played an important role in constructing the text's cultural authority and influence. Cinnaya Suri's investments in prescriptive grammar, conservative orthography, and literary propriety found ready affinities in the English curriculum.

During his tenure, the standard English grammar used to teach students of all levels was Lindley Murray's *English Grammar adapted to the Different Classes of Learners*. First published in 1795, Murray's grammar was one of the best-selling and most widely available school grammars in the Anglophone world during the nineteenth century. Murray designed his grammar to teach "learners" and "young persons" (i.e. not scholars) norms of correct English. Prescriptivist thinking dominated English linguistic scholarship throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Samuel Johnson, in his landmark *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) remarked that, "[grammar] is the art of using words properly" and the works of English literary figures such as Shakespeare, Milton, Bacon, Locke, and Pope as exemplars of proper

[159] This continued at least into the end of the nineteenth century, as we see a similar development in Malayalam with the production of *Keralapaniniyam* (1896) in *sūtras*. See Ambrosone, *Making Modern Malayalam*, 26-27.

usage.[160] Murray followed Johnson in defining grammar as "the art of speaking and writing the English language with propriety."[161] Consequently, the study and teaching of English grammar was understood as a cultural practice that was to be conscientiously learned and cultivated. Like Johnson, Murray based his norms of correct English on the standard usages of canonical English authors. His arguments for grammatical propriety appealed as much to linguistic structure as aesthetic criteria and social register. The correct use of grammar was intimately tied to forming an educated elite status that displayed a purposeful remove from the language of general or popular usage.

In this milieu, we see that Cinnaya Suri's normative approach to language, as evidenced in his *Bālavyākaraṇamu*, eminently conformed to current colonial expectations of not only vernacular language instruction but also English instruction. The High School English Department assigned Murray's grammar alongside selections of Johnson's standard English authors for all classes of students.[162] Advanced and intermediate classes were regularly assigned Murray's *Appendix* on crafting an elegant and literary prose style suited to "grave treatises."[163] His *Appendix* introduced students to the stylistic importance of "purity" or the avoidance of foreign, ungrammatical, irregular, and obsolete words; to "propriety" or the avoidance of "low expressions" and "familiar style;" and to "precision."[164] Scholars of English in recent years have

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[160] Samuel Johnson, *Dictionary of the English Language*: *Digital Edition of the 1755 Classic* (https://johnsonsdictionaryonline.com/), Preface.
[161] Lindley Murray, *English Grammar, Adapted to the Different Classes of Learners with an Appendix Containing Rules and Observations for Assisting the more Advanced Students to Write with Perspicuity and Accuracy* (Bridgeport: Josiah B. Baldwin, 1824), Preface.
[162] For junior students an abridgment of Murray's grammar was assigned.
[163] Murray, *English Grammar*, Appendix.
[164] Murray, *English Grammar*, Appendix.

noted that Murray's grammar displayed a conservative attitude toward language such as prescribing traditional spellings against more simple contemporary forms.[165]

Many of these concerns converged and overlapped with Cinnaya Suri and the earlier Telugu *paṇḍita* tradition's efforts to systematize an elevated literary standard. As with contemporary English grammarians, Telugu pundits at colonial schools constructed and justified their prescriptive regulations on the basis of linguistic structure as much as considerations of aesthetic criteria, social register, and the usage of canonical authors. The Anglicist, the Orientalist, and the pundit all conceived the function of grammatical study as the refinement and improvement of linguistic expression. Of course, what this refinement consisted of—how purity, propriety, and precision were to be executed in prose—was an altogether different matter that preoccupied colonial educationists, Telugu pundits, and the Indian public into the next century.[166]

Aside from expanding the *paṇḍita's* scope of linguistic analysis, *Bālavyākaraṇamu*'s most powerful contribution lay in its conceptual integration of Telugu grammar and prose. Although Cinnaya Suri developed his grammar almost entirely in reference to the classical poetry of the *Āndhra Mahābhāratamu* (11-14th centuries), his express purpose was to support "students" (*bāluru*) in "the art of composing prose with confidence" (*nissandehamugā vacanaracana seyu*

[165] Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade, ed. *Two Hundred Years of Lindley Murray.* (Munster: Nodus Publikationen, 1996).

[166] At the High School, Anglicist educators began to disentangle a "grammatical" vernacular standard from what Orientalist scholars had originally referred to as the High Vernacular Dialect. This was in pursuit of suitable vernacular prose models in relation to Murray's notions of purity. We see this emerging in an Examiner's observation on Tamil prose composition, where he states that "the general defect is a struggle to force in words only used in the so called High Dialect mixed with Sanskrit occasionally, and exhibiting much bad orthography. As far as I can yet judge much encouragement is required to be given to a style of Tamil suited for 'the many.'" *Report from the Governors of the Madras University*, *1849-50*, 57. Similar preoccupations with purity are found throughout Brown's works on Telugu. Brown criticized the High Telugu dialect in terms of style and obsolete orthography and the low Telugu dialect in terms of incorrect grammar and poor orthography. This is a topic that deserves further exploration.

kauśalamu).[167] He claims that the great virtue of his grammar was its ability to efficiently instill a strong proficiency in Telugu grammar—specifically its historically undertheorized *deśya* elements—without the lengthy perusal of literary classics traditionally required to obtain a knowledge of correct usage and literary practice. In this, Cinnaya Suri responds directly to the reformist concerns of the High School Board, which had earlier complained of the "difficulties in attaining anything like a proficiency" in High Telugu and Tamil, noting that "many years must elapse before a consummate vernacular scholarship can be looked for."[168]

This application of Telugu grammar to prose represented a continuing colonial drift from an older literary imaginary, encapsulated by *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi*, that tied the study of Telugu grammar to poetic composition (*kāvya)*. The advent of colonial education reordered cultural boundaries between Telugu grammar, poetry, and prose. We have already seen that Gurumurti Sastri's *Tĕlugu Vyākaraṇamu* portended the formation of a new literary sensibility. He associated Telugu grammar with the wider more indefinite category of *granthamulu* or, in the words of A.D. Campbell, "books and studied compositions." Cinnaya Suri's grammar follows Gurumurti Sastri and Campbell in cementing the connection between grammar and prose. Hewing to *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi's* adage that the purpose of grammar was to refine language (*samskārārtho niyamaḥ*), Cinnaya Suri conceived grammatical prose as a refined medium of expression that was capable of embodying the dignity, elegance, and depth classically reserved for poetry. Thus, *Bālavyākaraṇamu* did not just open new fields of grammatical inquiry but advanced changing cultural conceptions of Telugu language and literature.

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[167] Paravastu, *Bālavyākaraṇamu*, xli. Strikingly, Cinnaya Suri included a second verse preface that followed the prose preface. In the verse preface he restates that his grammar was produced in Telugu for student instruction (*bālāvabodhamu*) but does not explicitly mention prose composition. A later verse also suggests that he intended his work as wider scholarly contribution, stating that *Bālavyākaraṇamu* was suitable for anyone interested in the structure (*śabdalakṣaṇamu*) of the Telugu language. Paravastu, *Bālavyākaraṇamu*, xliii.
[168] *Report from the Governors of the Madras University*, *1844-45*, 9-12.

Cinnaya Suri illustrated the new literary potential of Telugu prose through two major works of his own. The first was his *Nīticandrika*, a free Telugu rendering of the Sanskrit *Pañcatantra* and *Hitopadeśa*.[169] This work actually preceded his *Bālavyākaraṇamu* by five years and was one of the first titles published by his press. *Nīticandrika* was dedicated to the Secretary of the High School A.J. Arbuthnot and immediately prescribed in the High School curriculum, displacing Gurumurti Sastri's *Pañcatantra Kathalu* as the prose reader for advanced Telugu students.

However, Cinnaya Suri did not intend his work to serve as just a textbook for High School students. He also aspired to produce a work of literature that would be recognized by the broader Telugu literary world. Historically, the use of prose as a Telugu literary medium was confined by *paṇḍitas* to elaborate descriptive passages (*varṇana*) that were interspersed between verses in order to heighten the overall poetic impact of *kāvya* works. *Nīticandrika* was an effort to pioneer a new style of literary prose that emphasized narration rather than description. As an experimental text, it worked to concertedly signal its belletristic character through standard literary devices such as the practice of beginning with the auspicious word *śrī*, three *Vaiṣṇava maṅgaḷa* verses, and a verse in praise of the first Telugu poets. It also has several verses reflecting on the benefit of moral training and the value of *Nīticandrika* before moving onto its main narrative in prose.

The prose style of this work illustrates a systematic use of literary sandhi and poetic orthography that makes it much more complex than Gurumurti Sastri's *Pañcatantra Kathalu* and *Tales of Vikramarka*. Gurumurti Sastri claimed to aspire to the literary standard but was far less consistent and fastidious in his sandhi and orthography. At the same time, Cinnaya Suri's prose maintained an idiomatic quality that included many proverbs from Telugu and Sanskrit. The text

[169] Paravastu Cinnaya Suri, *Nīticandrika*. Madras: Vani Darpana Press, 1853.

also minimized the use of esoteric Sanskrit or pure Telugu vocabulary and the use of lengthy nominal compounds that typified the *varṇana* prose of classical poetry.

Nīticandrika was instantly recognized by many of Cinnaya Suri's peers and students as a masterpiece of artful Telugu prose. The High School Board recommended it as an ideal model of grammatical prose the year following its publication. The text was celebrated throughout the colonial period as the first great Telugu work of modern literary prose and remains the most enduring Telugu adaptation of the *Pañcatantra* and *Hitopadeśa* to this day.

Cinnaya Suri's second major work of prose was *Hindū Dharmaśāstra Saṅgrahamu* (1858), a Telugu translation of Thomas Lumisden Strange's *A Manual of Hindoo Law as Prevailing in the Presidency of Madras* (1856).[170] Like *Bālavyākaraṇamu*, this translation was also published by Gajula Lakshminarasu Cetti's Hindu Press. Strange's text was an English compendium describing the theory and practice of Hindu family law with citations from Sanskrit *Dharmaśāstra* texts and Company court judgements. It is noteworthy that Cinnaya Suri translated this text with the assistance of Narahari Gopala Sastri, a clerk in the Company's revenue department.[171] This collaboration between an Anglo-Vernacular school pundit and an administrative assistant in Company employ represents the colonial synthesis of older *paṇḍita* and *karṇam* forms of Telugu literacy, a synthesis we saw first taking place at the College of Fort St. George. Through their joint endeavor, we see the prosaic documentary domains of *karṇam* textuality integrated with *paṇḍita* sensibilities of literary eloquence and intellectual gravitas.

[170] Niḍudavōlu Veṅkaṭa Rāvu, *Cinnayasūri Jīvitamu; Paravastu Cinnayasūri Kṛta Hindū Dharmaśāstra Saṅgrahamu Sahitamuga* (Madras, 1962). In fact, prior to this translation, Cinnaya Suri appears to have made an earlier translation in 1851. This was a Telugu translation of the second discourse of Norton's *Rudimentals of Political Government* with a recent graduate of the High School, P. Dinadayalu Nayadu. *Report from the Governors of the Madras University, 1853-54*, Appendix.

[171] Incidentally, Narahari Gopala Sastri is also credited with attempting the first novel in Telugu, *Śrīraṅgarāju Caritramu* in 1872. At the time of this work's publication, he was a clerk in the Deputy Collector of Kurnool. Virabhadra Rao, *Tĕlugu Sāhityamupai Iṅglīṣu Prabhāvamu*, 313.

The prose style of *Hindū Dharmaśāstra Saṅgrahamu* differed significantly from *Nīticandrika*. It reflected an effort to craft a formal variety of discursive Telugu prose that was suitable for transmitting technical and scientific information. The translation consisted of short pointed sentences devoid of the rhetorical flourishes and complex sandhi that had been central to signifying *Nīticandrika*'*s* literary character. Yet it nevertheless remained thoroughly in line with the regulations of *Bālavyākaraṇamu* and the classical usages of the *Āndhra Māhābhāratamu* in its use of sandhi, lexical choices, and verb forms.[172] As such, *Hindū Dharmaśāstra Saṅgrahamu* offered itself as a new model of academic translation in Telugu prose.

It is noteworthy that Cinnaya Suri and Gopala Sastri's translation was not the first effort to render Sanskrit legal literature into Telugu prose. Several years before their co-production, Vathyam Vasudeva Brahmayya Sastri had issued a Telugu law manual entitled *Vyavahāra Darpaṇamu* (1851). This text was an original compilation of Sanskrit quotes culled from the *Mitākṣarā* and *Smṛticandrikā* with attached Telugu prose translations in a popular colloquial style. Brahmayya Sastri, who identifies himself as a *paṇḍita-kavi* (scholar-poet), was highly sensitive to the perceived inadequacies of his literary style. Each chapter of his translation concludes with the same three colophon verses defensively asserting that since he had produced his work in Telugu for the use of the general population (*akhilalokopakāram*), he was thus at

[172] I thank Paruchuri Sreenivas for this important observation on the distinction of Cinnaya Suri's prose styles. Vĕlceru Nārāyaṇarāvu and Śrīnivās Parucūri, "Cinnaya Sūri - Giḍugu Rāmamūrti 3," *Īmāṭa: An Electronic Magazine in Telugu For a World Without Boundaries*, October 2019. Virabhadra Rao makes a passing comment on the stylistic differences in Cinnaya Suri's prose but does not seriously explore them. Virabhadra Rao, *Tĕlugu Sāhityamupai Iṅglīṣu Prabhāvamu*, 244. Paruchuri Sreenivas also notes that *Hindū Dharmaśāstra Saṅgrahamu* displays a simplified orthography in its first edition, avoiding the use of *arasunna* to mark silent nasals for example. However, I have only had access to the third 1869 edition, and the spelling follows the typical poetic conventions, including the use of *arasunna*. It is entirely possible it was later edited to conform to this convention.

liberty to neglect *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi's* standards of grammar and refinement ("[…] *nannaya sūtra saṃskāramulanu viḍicipĕṭṭuṭa doṣamai velayadacaṭa*).[173]

Yet this self-consciously "liberated" character of Brahmayya Sastri's prose offended colonial expectations of correct grammar as much as new pundit sensibilities of literary propriety. Unsurprisingly, *Vyavahāra Darpaṇamu* was not considered viable as a textbook for Anglo-Vernacular schools or an appropriate standard of academic translation. On the other hand, the refined prose style used in *Hindū Dharmaśāstra Saṅgrahamu* enjoyed greater acceptance. It is likely that Cinnaya Suri and Gopala Sastri's translation of Strange's *Manual* was commissioned by the Department of Public Instruction for law courses recently introduced at the Presidency College in 1855. The work was popular as a Telugu legal resource into the late nineteenth century—second and third editions of the work were printed in 1867 and 1869 and from 1880 to 1890 it was officially prescribed for Madras University's second-class pleader exam.[174]

Conclusion

An overlooked group of scholars, Telugu pundits at the College of Fort St. George and the University of Madras High School were critical intermediaries of the colonial intellectual encounter in southern India. Initially recruited from diverse communities of pre-colonial Telugu literati—namely *paṇḍita* scholar-poets and *karṇam* clerks—the "Telugu pundit" emerged as a new and distinctly colonial professional identity. As vernacular language instructors, textbook authors, and print entrepreneurs, Telugu pundits drew on long-standing traditions of Indian linguistic scholarship to claim new platforms of intellectual authority and cultural influence. However, even as pundits sought to cultivate new roles for themselves, their ambitions were

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[173] Vathyam Vasudeva Parabrahma Sastri, *Vyavahāra Darpaṇamu - John Fryer Thomas Bhupaliyam* (Madras: Vepery Mission Press, 1851).
[174] Virabhadra Rao, *Tĕlugu Sāhityamupai Iṅglīṣu Prabhāvamu*, 241.

constrained by the diminishing prestige of Telugu and the subordination of Indian pedagogy and learning under the colonial regime. Nevertheless, the corpus of grammars and new prose works they left behind demonstrates that pundits were crucial to the institutionalization of Telugu as a subject in colonial schools and to the transformation of language, literature, and scholarship in the Madras Presidency.

Dynamic interactions between Telugu pundits and European Orientalists led to the production of radically new standards of "correct" language in colonial south Indian society. East India Company officials frequently lamented the "inaccurate" language of Telugu clerks and the "ungrammatical" nature of their translations. One consequence of this was that colonial schools required Indian students to begin developing a theoretical as well as pragmatic grasp of what Orientalist scholars had deemed "High Telugu." Whereas earlier generations of Indian literati had treated Telugu grammar as a specialized niche in the study of courtly poetry, colonial educators foregrounded grammar as a foundational component of Telugu literacy. Engaging European preoccupations with respectability and correct language, Telugu pundits at the College and High School embarked on diverse efforts to adapt the grammatical insights of the Sanskrit *Āndhraśabdacintāmaṇi* into more popularly accessible Telugu-language textbooks. This was a complex process that drastically expanded the purview of this medieval text from its narrow focus on courtly poetry to all contexts where Telugu was written in an official or public capacity. In an unprecedented cultural shift, administrative records, government translations, business transactions, and personal correspondence were all suddenly subject to the classical authorities of Telugu grammar.

The expanding scope of Telugu grammar in the early nineteenth century was closely intertwined with a shifting sense of what counted as literature. Historically a minor medium of

literary expression, Telugu prose grew to acquire new cultural respectability through the textbooks and translations of pundits. The earliest Telugu prose works produced at the College were intended as teaching aids to help European students develop a command of Telugu grammar and to support Orientalist research relating to the classics of Telugu poetry. To this end, pundits developed a consciously didactic literary diction in their prose that illustrated the stylistic conventions and grammatical constructions one would encounter in courtly poetry.

As the demand for colonial textbooks grew, so too did the range and versatility of High Telugu prose. The Madras University High School's Anglo-Vernacular framework was premised on the notion that its instruction should prepare Indian students to transmit the riches of English education to their fellow countrymen through the high vernacular dialects. In this context, European educators prescribed textbooks by Telugu pundits not only as illustrations of correct grammatical usage but as exemplars of narrative prose and academic translation. These pundit compositions expanded conventional conceptions of elite Telugu literature, as the domain of courtly poetry, by integrating new genres of prose such as the moral tale, scientific and technical writing, and the travelogue with established literary tastes and sensibilities. In this fashion, Telugu notions of literature were drawn substantially closer to contemporary European understandings that understood it as the expression of learned matters in elegant language, whether in verse or prose.

As a new and experimental medium, the prose of High Telugu was inconsistent and represented an evolving literary standard. A review of early textbooks demonstrates that choices in sandhi, orthography, punctuation, and spacing differed from author to author and were often arbitrary. It is nevertheless clear that the aspiration of early Telugu pundits such as Ravipati Gurumurti Sastri and Puduri Sitarama Sastri was to cultivate a formal prose style that was

recognizably "grammatical" and “literary” to Company officials as well as the broader world of Telugu letters. The early compositions of Telugu pundits explored in this chapter laid the foundations for what is popularly referred to today as *grānthika* prose. Alternately translated into English as "classical," "literary," or "grammatical" Telugu during the colonial period, *grānthika* became synonymous with correct Telugu in Anglo-Vernacular schools as well as the burgeoning world of commercial Telugu print. By the late nineteenth century, newspapers, journals, novels, dramas, and scientific writing were all produced in *grānthika* Telugu.

The University High School's appointment of Paravastu Cinnaya Suri as its Head Telugu Pundit marked a watershed moment in the stabilization of *grānthika* prose and redefined what it meant to claim scholarly expertise in the Telugu language. During his lengthy tenure (1845-61), the High School served as the model and apex institution of a rapidly expanding system of Anglo-Vernacular colonial education. The grammatical standards established by Cinnaya Suri in his *Bālavyākaraṇamu* as well as the prose style he modeled in his *Nīticandrika* structured the Department of Public Instruction's Telugu curriculum from the primary to the collegiate level. Telugu students from the youngest ages were trained in the new standard of High Telugu. Normal schools across the Madras Presidency fostered new expectations of correct language on the basis of Cinnaya Suri's works. These government institutions sought to "improve" vernacular language instruction by training (or more often than not re-training) Telugu scholars and certifying them as pundits qualified to teach in Anglo-Vernacular schools.[175]

Later generations of Telugu pundits at the Madras Presidency College (formerly University High School), as well as missionary schools such as Madras Christian College and private schools such as Pachaiyappa's College, produced their scholarship in deference to Cinnaya Suri's

[175] To date, there have been no published studies on Government Normal Schools in the Madras Presidency.

Bālavyākaraṇamu and *Nīticandrika*.[176] New grammars, textbooks, and pedagogical aids that consolidated and propagated the new norms of correct Telugu rapidly proliferated. Textbooks composed in more colloquial styles of Telugu prose, such as Vathyam Vasudeva Brahmayya Sastri's *Vyavahāra Darpaṇamu*, were deemed insuitable for prescription in the colonial syllabus and overshadowed by more properly "grammatical" works. Scholars who wished their texts to remain in circulation, as in the case of the Vizagapatam Normal School's Head Telugu Pundit Vedam Venkataramana Sastri, were compelled by European educators to re-write their works to conform to standards enshrined by Cinnaya Suri's texts.[177]

Following the example of Cinnaya Suri's Vani Darpanamu, many Telugu pundits established commercial printing presses of their own. In this, pundits were crucial to the institution of new norms and practices of textual scholarship and the development of Telugu print culture. These presses published original textbooks authored by their owners as well as older works of literary and intellectual significance. An important incentive for the publication of older works was the lucrative possibility that they might be selected as textbooks for the Department of Public Instruction's year-end Telugu exam. Many of these early editions were appended with brief glosses and notes outlining their grammatical niceties for students. In later decades, these explanatory aids developed into full-blown commentaries and works of criticism, constituting a new era of Telugu philological scholarship. A symbiotic relationship developed

[176] I refer here to the work of pundits at Presidency College such as Vaiyakarana Ramanujacaryulu, Kokkonda Venkataratnam, Kandukuri Viresalingam, and Vavilikolanu Subbararao, pundits at the Madras Normal School such as Rekam Ramanuja Suri and Bahujanapalli Sitaramacarylu and pundits at the Madras Christian College such as Niscinta Devaperumalayya and Vedam Venkataraya Sastri.

[177] Vedam Venkataramana Sastri notes that the first edition of his *Laghu Vyākaranamu* (1859) had been composed in a simple colloquial language for the ease of young children. However, he was requested to rewrite the work in "grammatical" Telugu by Henry Bower, a school inspector for the Madras Department of Public Instruction. Bower, incidentally, was an Orientalist scholar of Tamil grammar who produced an English translation of the 12th century *Naṉṉūl* in 1853-54. Vedam Venkataramana Sastri, *Laghu Vyākaraṇamu - Telugu Grammar Revised and Improved*, 2nd ed. (Vizagapatam: Albion Press, 1870), Preface.

between pundit presses and the colonial educational establishment, with the titles they printed being incorporated into the colonial curriculum. A significant ramification of this development was that pundits drastically altered and reconstructed the language of many older texts to illustrate the new standards of grammar. In editing the "flaws" and "irregularities" of these works, pundits effectively re-classicized many of the classic works of Telugu courtly poetry and projected the "traditional" authority of Cinnaya Suri's *Bālavyākaraṇamu* far into the literary past.

The complex cultural transactions that took place in colonial schools during the first half of the nineteenth century generated new educational standards, scholarly ambitions, literary sensibilities, and textual practices among the Telugu literati. The grammars and textbooks produced by Telugu pundits suggest that these developments were not the result of a straightforward imposition of European priorities. Nor were they the result of a blind unyielding commitment to Indian scholarly traditions. Instead, these largely forgotten vernacular works illuminate the remarkable degree of cultural agency and authority Telugu pundits, despite their marginal positions, were able to cultivate in colonial institutions. In examining the linguistic scholarship of Telugu pundits at the College and High School, this chapter has sought to retrieve a more dynamic history of intellectual engagement between Europeans and Indians during the Company period.

Chapter Two

Debating Societies, Reading Rooms, and the Making of an English-educated Telugu Middle Class, 1854-1900

This chapter documents the emergence of a new group of English-educated Telugu professionals and their role in the establishment of new spaces of south Indian intellectual and literary life during the second half of the nineteenth century. Although English had been a significant language of commerce and diplomacy for more than a century in southern India, it was only with the establishment of a colonial Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in 1854 and the opening of the Indian Civil Service to Indian candidates in 1857 that English began to assume a hegemonic intellectual and literary position in South India. The Department of Public Instruction instituted a system of "Anglo-Vernacular" education that offered collegiate and professional education in English while secondary and primary education were offered in vernacular languages. This system was promoted across the Madras Presidency by privileging graduates of its institutions in government employment and professional advancement.

Through such efforts, the Anglo-Vernacular system and the English language became institutionalized as vital forms of cultural capital and social mobility in colonial Telugu life. During the second half of the nineteenth century, graduates of the colonial educational system began to define themselves as a distinct social group. These new English-educated professionals were drawn from pre-colonial communities of Sanskrit scholars and Telugu clerks and played a critical role in redefining the relationship between Telugu and English. Their projects to reform Telugu language and literature made them an increasingly influential constituency in Telugu literary culture. By the turn of the twentieth century, their interventions had begun to radically transform the contours and possibilities of Telugu literary, intellectual, and social life and contribute to the making of a Telugu middle class.

In the previous chapter we discussed the appearance of the first iterations of Anglo-Vernacular education in Madras through the establishment of the University of Madras High School and Pachaiyappa's Central Institution in the 1840s. Students at these institutions constituted the core of the first community of new English-educated Telugu professionals in south India. They took employment as government bureaucrats, lawyers, principals, and teachers. In the following decade, these new professionals took to organizing themselves in voluntary societies, public meetings, and conferences.

Following the establishment of a Department of Public Instruction in the 1850s, educational models developed at the University High School and Pachaiyappa's were systematically exported and institutionalized across the Presidency. By the 1870s, the new forms of associational culture and civic activism that initially emerged in Madras had also become a characteristic feature of public life in the rapidly growing urban centers of the Telugu Districts.

This chapter tracks the rise of the colonial Anglo-Vernacular system of education and English-educated professionals in the Telugu Districts. To date, there have been no attempts to compile available colonial reports to produce a clear account of the growth and operation of colonial education in this part of South Asia during the second half of the nineteenth century. I draw primarily on colonial statistical data relating to literacy, education, and language that was collected and organized in the reports of the Indian Census (1871-1901), the Madras Department of Public Instruction (1854-1901), and the Report of the Indian Education Commission (1882). The purpose of this is to support a broader empirical perspective on the number, rate of growth, geography, and demographic qualities of the new professional elites.

Alongside the expansion of Anglo-Vernacular education, the chapter also documents the establishment of new spaces of intellectual and literary life. Thus far, the development of new

forms of public association and civic activism in the Madras Presidency has been examined primarily in relation to social reform, caste, and nationalist movements.[1] However, reports of the Department of Public Instruction as well as the annual Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency provide some insight into what colonial observers referred to as "Scientific and Literary Societies." These accounts contain valuable information on the growth and spread of these new forms of association that were critical to articulations of middle-class Telugu literary culture. In this chapter, I chart the spread of English debating societies and reading rooms in the Telugu Districts of the Madras Presidency. I argue that these early forms of literary association were important models for the establishment of new Telugu literary societies which emerged in the last quarter of the century and will be discussed in the following chapter.

Toward a Colonial System of Anglo-Vernacular Education

> …the English in India, have for once in a way founded an Institution full of vitality; and by this University and by the other Universities, by the Colleges subordinate to them, and by the Department of Education, we are creating rapidly a multitudinous class, which in the future will be of the most serious importance for good or for evil.
>
> —Address to the Madras University Senate, 1865[2]

A significant feature of early nineteenth century Telugu cultural life was the absence of an emergent middle class of Anglo-Vernacular intermediaries comparable to the Bengali *Bhadralok*. It is certainly true that the study of English had been cultivated as a valuable professional skill among Telugu speakers since the eighteenth centuries. Telugu-speaking

[1] As discussed in the introduction, key scholarship on this field includes Leonard, *Kandukuri Viresalingam*; Leonard and Leonard, "Viresalingam and the Ideology of Social Change;" Mamidipudi, ed. *The Freedom Struggle in Andhra Pradesh*; Sundar, "Origin and Growth of Political Consciousness in Andhra;" Suntharalingam, *Politics and Nationalist Awakening in South India*; Washbrook, *The Emergence of Provincial Politics*; Washbrook, "The Development of Caste Organization;" Vakulabharanam, Social Reform in Andhra.
[2] "Address to the University Senate," *Madras Journal of Education* 7, no. 12 (1865).

dubashes (multilingual agents), merchants, and bureaucrats earned fabulous wealth through their association with the East India Company. However, during Company rule, Indian knowledge of English in southern India was acquired primarily through direct encounters with colonial operations, relatives already acquainted with English, or indigenous *pyāl* schools.[3] Missionary and government initiatives to formally disseminate European learning and the English language through schools during the Company period were limited to Madras city and a few Tamil Districts. Located on the fringes of the Telugu Country, Madras harbored a small, though influential, minority of Telugu-speaking traders and government agents. However, the city lacked the comparable concentration of colonial educational, financial, and administrative institutions that supported the emergence of the Bengali *Bhadralok* in Calcutta. Consequently, the conditions around early Telugu encounters with English and colonial enterprises in Madras did not inspire the formation of a distinct social or cultural group that was noticeably different from the conventional landed and mercantile elites of the period.

Due to the unstable fortunes of traditional Telugu political authorities and colonial reforms in systems of land tenure, Telugu literary and cultural life faced a significant "crisis of patronage" under Company rule.[4] Aside from the pundit scholarship at colonial schools discussed in the last chapter, Telugu literary life remained in large part continuous in form and character with the trends and developments of the pre-colonial era. Therefore, prior to the

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[3] Vennelacunty Soob Row's autobiography contains details of education and English acquisition during the late eighteenth century. Vennelacunty Soob Row, *The Life of Vennelacunty Soob Row, Translator and Interpreter of the Late Sudr Court, Madras, From 1815-1829*, ed. Vennelacunty Venkata Gopal Row (Madras: C. Foster and Co., 1873). He refers to pyāl schools, common fixtures in south Indian villages and towns. Teachers held lessons on the *pyāl* or front stoop of their homes or local temples at the primary level. Subjects included Hindu lore, Sanskrit and vernacular poetry, writing, and elementary arithmetic.

[4] Lisa Mitchell, "Literary Production at the Edge of Empire: The Crisis of Patronage in Southern India under Colonial Rule," in *Fringes of Empire: People, Places, and Spaces in Colonial India*, eds. Sameetah Agha and Elizabeth Kolsky, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009), 236-251.

emergence of an English-educated Telugu professional elite in the 1850s, there were no significant Telugu developments that approximate the middle-class projects of cultural entrepreneurship, civic activism, or social and religious reform that were characteristic of the "Bengali Renaissance." The literary and intellectual tastes of Telugu social elites, including those who dwelled in the Presidency capital, remained broadly conventional.

With the transfer of the Madras Presidency to the British Crown in 1857, new educational and administrative policies were put in place that encouraged the formation of a culturally distinct class of English-educated Telugu speakers. Foremost among these policies was the implementation of a new paradigm of Anglo-Vernacular colonial education. The new paradigm, based on a Despatch issued in 1854 by the Company's Court of Directors, reaffirmed colonial commitments to diffusing "the improved arts, science, philosophy, and literature of Europe."[5] The 1854 Despatch criticized the Anglo-centric model of education that prevailed at the University High School in Madras. It registered an official policy shift toward vernacular, primary, and mass education. As the Board of Control observed, "a knowledge of English will always be essential to those natives of India who aspire to a high order of education…[yet] it is neither our aim nor desire to substitute the English language for the vernacular dialects of the country."[6] In this regard, the Board proposed a more expansive vision of Indian colonial education that made the development of mass education in vernacular languages as vital to its civilizing efforts as the development of higher education in English. The new Anglo-Vernacular paradigm integrated vernacular language instruction into the colonial educational apparatus

[5] J.A. Richey, ed. *Selections from Educational Records (1840-59) Part II* (Calcutta: Superintendent of Publishing, 1922), 366.
[6] Richey, *Selections from Educational Records*, 367.

through a graduated system of vernacular primary education, vernacular and English secondary education, and English collegiate education.[7]

Following the Board's Despatch, the provincial authorities in Madras quickly organized a provincial Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in 1854. The Madras DPI oversaw the immediate introduction and expansion of Anglo-Vernacular education in the Telugu Districts. In 1854, an ambitious scheme for affiliating indigenous Telugu *pyāl* schools with the government as "primary schools" was initiated in the Godavari District and a government Anglo-Vernacular high school was established at Rajahmundry.[8]

It is important to note that the DPI did not directly sponsor the establishment of many educational institutions on its own. Its preferred model was to rely on an indirect "Grants-in-Aid" system that offered financial subsidies to private schools that accepted its curricular standards and opened themselves to annual departmental inspections. As such, the DPI preferred to assimilate existing educational institutions rather than establish entirely new ones. The Department concentrated its organizational energies on producing a standardized Anglo-Vernacular curriculum, training a cadre of Anglo-Vernacular teachers, and maintaining an inspectorate to monitor the progress and conformity of schools to its curricular standards.

This meant that most of the colonial schools established in the second half of the nineteenth century were actually the result of private initiative. At the primary level, most of the Anglo-Vernacular primary schools were originally local *pyāl* schools that were integrated into the colonial system. On the other hand, Anglo-Vernacular secondary and collegiate institutions were generally new establishments. These schools were either set up by missionary organizations, as was most common in the Tamil Districts, or zamindari patronage, as was most

[7] However, in practice, the Department of Public Instruction continued to focus its resources primarily on the development of English higher education until the early twentieth century.
[8] Mangamma, *The Rate Schools of Godavari*.

common in the Telugu Districts. In 1857, the government established the University of Madras as the capstone of the Anglo-Vernacular system. It was set up on the model of the University of London and hosted its first examinations for B.A. that same year.

The 1854 Despatch envisioned the Anglo-Vernacular curriculum as a project of moral and civilizational reform as much as a professional education. As a liberal course of study, it was to remain qualitatively consistent across all tiers and mediums of instruction. The Board was adamant in stating that "we include Anglo-Vernacular and Vernacular schools in the same class [of education] because we are unwilling to maintain the broad line of separation which at present exists between schools in which the media for imparting instruction differ."[9] As the previous chapter discussed, earlier government efforts at Indian education in the Madras Presidency had marginalized vernacular and primary education and directed their energies toward forming a purely English-language curriculum for Indian secondary education.[10]

The Board recognized that Indian vernacular languages were not currently suited to offer the same standard of education as English-medium education. As such, it proposed that disparities between the English and vernacular curriculums could be addressed through officially sponsored efforts to reform and improve Indian literatures. In this regard, the Anglo-Vernacular curriculum sought to promote European forms of disciplinary inquiry and knowledge such as history, geography, and biology as forms "general knowledge" through the production of new vernacular textbooks, reference works, and teaching materials. This vernacularized general knowledge was considered useful not only for its technical aspects but also for its "improving" moral and rational effects on the Indian vernacular mind. It was expected that such efforts to

[9] Richey, *Selections from Educational Records*, 377.
[10] There were antecedents to the Anglo-Vernacular model in Madras, namely Munro's collectorate and tahsildar school system established in 1826. However, following the English Education Act of 1835, the Government of Madras interpreted this as prohibiting all forms of official support for vernacular education and discontinued them.

adapt European learning would progressively transform vernacular languages into effective vehicles of mass education, particularly at the primary level, and enable more ambitious schemes for civilizing Indian subjects in the future.

While colonial officials and missionaries demonstrated significant concern around the reformation and expansion of vernacular instruction, Indians remained generally disinterested in their efforts. Their interest in Anglo-Vernacular education was primarily motivated by the opportunity to acquire proficiency in English. Historically underserved by colonial and missionary educational institutions, inhabitants of the Godavari District initially welcomed the DPI in anticipation of greater access to English language education. Many villages voluntarily affiliated their Telugu *pyāl* schools to the DPI beginning in 1854 and incorporated the Anglo-Vernacular curriculum, printed books, and fixed time-tables it prescribed. Villages sent local school teachers for teacher training at the DPI Normal School in Narsapur, schools were opened to annual DPI inspections, and villagers submitted themselves to a special tax in support of these reforms.[11] However, it soon became apparent that the Anglo-Vernacular primary curriculum was an entirely vernacular course of general knowledge that did not include English language instruction. Disappointed by the absence of English and unconvinced by the utility of colonial general knowledge, Telugu village leaders began to petition the District Collector to dis-affiliate their schools from the DPI and absolve their financial commitments.[12] It seems that many Telugu villages did not see the virtues of colonial attempts to reform vernacular instruction and were content to remain with their own indigenous forms of education.

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[11] Mangamma, *The Rate Schools of Godavari*, 5.

[12] The *Report on the Administration of Public Affairs* states, "There was also found the apathy of the natives on the subject of vernacular education. The attendance in most schools in Northern Circars was very low." As quoted in: Y. Vittal Rao, *Education and Learning in Andhra under the East India Company*. (Hyderabad: N. Vidyaranya Swami, 1979), 211. Mangamma also discusses problems with vernacular Telugu primary schools in the Godavari District. Mangamma, *The Rate Schools of Godavari*, 22.

Growth and Visibility of the English-Educated Telugu Professionals

However, Telugu investments in Anglo-Vernacular education substantially changed in 1858 with the introduction of a system of examinations that certified candidates for employment in the colonial administration's uncovenanted civil service. These examinations were conducted by the University of Madras and considered a compulsory requirement for government service. The most elementary of these examinations was the Matriculation examination. This exam certified a mastery of the Anglo-Vernacular secondary school curriculum and included test papers on Mathematics, Elementary Science, History, Geography, English, and a Second Language (vernacular, classical, or foreign).[13] Given that admittance to Anglo-Vernacular secondary schools was predicated on the completion of the system's vernacular primary course, the ensuing decades saw the number of Telugu *pyāl* schools submitting themselves to the Anglo-Vernacular curriculum and the supervision of the DPI inspectorate grow tremendously. Higher examinations, such as the First Arts (FA) exam and Bachelor of Arts (BA) exam, were also introduced and formally correlated to government employment and opportunities for professional advancement.[14]

Associating the examination system with government service provided Anglo-Vernacular education from the primary to the collegiate level with its greatest stimulus. As one observer from the Department of Public Instruction noted in 1865:

> The thing must be seen to be believed. I do not know which was more astonishing, more striking—the multitude of the students, who, if not now, will soon have to be counted, not by the hundred, but by the thousand; or the keenness and eagerness which they displayed. For my part, I do not think anything of the kind has been seen by any European university since the middle ages.[15]

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[13] The matriculation examination is comparable to U.S. tenth grade.
[14] The F.A. is equivalent to the completion of today's twelfth grade or the Indian "Intermediate" level. B.A. certified completion of a three-year course of higher education.
[15] "Address to the University Senate," 3.

In 1870, just fifteen years after the introduction of the exams, the DPI counted 115,212 students enrolled in schools under its inspection. Students received instruction in multiple languages with 43,472 students studying in English and 30,473 studying in Telugu.[16] The greatest concentration of Anglo-Vernacular institutions was in the Presidency capital, where 150 schools offered instruction in English or English and vernacular languages to a total of 7,464 students.[17] Approximately 65 of these Madras schools or 44% offered instruction in Telugu.[18] The number of students who enrolled in the Anglo-Vernacular system continued to expand dramatically over the next few decades. By the end of 1881, student numbers had nearly tripled to 327,808. This number nearly doubled again in 1891 to 644,164. By 1901, the Census documented a record enrollment of 850,224 students.[19] As in previous years, the great majority of these students were enrolled in vernacular primary schools that lacked English as a subject.[20] Only 11,405 students were enrolled in the fifth or sixth forms that constituted Anglo-Vernacular secondary education and less than 4,000 were enrolled at the collegiate level.[21]

The examination system for secondary and higher education grew at a commensurably dramatic rate. By the end of 1871, the Anglo-Vernacular system had successfully graduated a total number of 2,728 matriculates, 852 FAs, 197 BAs, and 6 MAs.[22] When the Government of India appointed the Indian Education Commission in 1882 to review its educational initiatives, graduate totals had risen to 10,781 matriculates, 2,476 FAs, and 923 BAs.[23] By the turn of the

[16] The Director of Public Instruction notes in his report, "As many of the pupils study more than one language, the same children enter the foregoing numbers twice or oftener." *Report on Public Instruction (1870-71)*, 8.
[17] *Report on Public Instruction (1870-71)*, "Table VII," 96.
[18] *Report on Public Instruction (1870-71)*, "Table VII," 96.
[19] *Census of India (1901) Volume 1—Report,* 173.
[20] Some primary schools, particularly those run by missions, did offer English instruction but these were the exception rather than the norm.
[21] Primary and secondary enrollments drawn from *Report on Public Instruction 1900-01*, 42. Collegiate enrollment drawn from *Census of India 1901 Volume 15,* 82.
[22] *Report of the Indian Education Commission*, 21.
[23] *Report of the Indian Education Commission*, 21.

twentieth century, Anglo-Vernacular education and the examination system had emerged as fundamental mechanisms of social mobility, political clout, and economic prosperity in the Madras Presidency. As the DPI Report for 1900-1901 suggests, in just that year alone, the University of Madras certified the successful graduation of 2,427 matriculates, 488 BAs, and 10 MAs.

The impact of the Anglo-Vernacular paradigm should not be measured in terms of successful graduates alone. In fact, when one considers the examination system in terms of its failures, the scale and systematic expansion of Anglo-Vernacular secondary and higher education becomes even more striking. While 8,053 students successfully passed the matriculation exams in the years between 1872 and 1881, 23,019 students actually sat for this examination.[24] With a low pass rate of 35%, this suggests that most students who desired to enter government service were poorly prepared. Likewise, 1,624 students passed the FA exams as against the 4,116 who sat for examination and 726 of 1372 examinees passed the BA exams.[25] Similar rates of failure continued even as the actual numbers of test takers continued to increase. In the 1900-01 matriculation examination, 7,658 students appeared for the test and only 2,427 or a paltry 32% passed with success. Consequently, it is the absolute number of test takers, more than the number of successful graduates, that most suggests the growing hold of the Anglo-Vernacular paradigm most powerfully on the intellectual aspirations and professional ambitions of colonial Telugu society. For every candidate who successfully progressed through the Anglo-Verancular curriculum and passed the matriculation exam, there were dozens more who were left with a

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[24] *Report of the Indian Education Commission*, 21.
[25] *Report of the Indian Education Commission*, 21.

varying acquaintance of vernacular general knowledge, a smattering of English, and the inability to enter the ladders of professional service in the colonial administration.[26]

By the last decades of the nineteenth century, Anglo-Vernacular education and the examination system had become firmly entrenched in the political economy of the Madras Presidency and a hyper-visible minority of anglophile professionals had emerged as a critically influential constituency in the intellectual and literary life of the Telugu Districts. The continuous expansion of the provincial bureaucracy alongside the colonial educational system during this period ensured a consistent supply of clerkships, teaching positions, and lower-level administrative posts for graduates of the Anglo-Vernacular secondary school curriculum and the matriculation examination.[27] While the number of graduates at the matriculate level swelled to the tens of thousands in the Presidency during the late nineteenth century, recipients of higher education degrees such as the First Arts, Bachelor of Arts, and the Master of Arts (the highest degree available in India at the time) remained a much smaller and more select group. These elite graduates occupied the most prestigious professional and administrative positions available to Indian applicants at the time and dominated leadership roles among the English-educated. Government service was their most common destination, particularly in the judicial and educational subfields, but a large number of graduates also took employment with private schools affiliated with the DPI, in the service of Princely States, and as independent vakils.[28]

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[26] Although in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, this system was modified and departments such as police had lower requirements and separate tests. Positions that paid under 20 rupees a month also removed the requirement for matriculation.
[27] This is against the pattern in Bengal and Bombay, where the unemployment of University graduates was a major political grievance of the new professionals. Aparna Basu, *The Growth of Education and Political Development in India 1898-1920* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1974), 221.
[28] *Report of the Indian Education Commission*, 21.

Mapping English Education and Telugu Literacy

As demonstrated above, the reports of the DPI indicate that the Anglo-Vernacular paradigm and the examination system experienced a spectacular expansion during the nineteenth century. However, when read against the broader statistics on literacy and language collected by the Indian Census beginning in 1871, the scale of this growth must be balanced against the "microscopic" presence of English literates in relation to the general population of literates as well as the dismal rates of literacy in the Madras Presidency on the whole.[29] The 1871 census estimated a Presidency-wide literacy rate of 5% or 1,530,150 literates.[30] This Census assessed literacy in terms of "the ability to read and write" and did not attempt to collect particulars on the specific languages of literacy.[31] Consequently, it is difficult to accurately estimate the rate of literacy in Telugu during this period. However, we can obtain a provisional sense of Telugu literacy if we examine returns at the district level. It is notable that Telugu-majority Districts consistently returned figures that were below the Presidential average. The Krishna District reported the highest literacy rates with 4% of the total population or 58,173 literates while the Godavari District reported the second highest rate with 3% of the population or 47,202 literates. Although the 1871 Census did not record the language of literacy, later census data suggests that the majority of the literates in these Districts were educated in Telugu.

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[29] The Superintendent of the 1901 Census notes that literacy in English had remained "microscopic" and that English literacy was substantially higher in the Tamil districts in comparison to the Telugu districts. *Census of India 1901 Volume 1*, 79.
[30] *Census of India 1871*, 190-191.
[31] *Census of India 1871*, 190-191. With regard to problems in defining literacy, this meant that Census enumerators classed the ryot who was able to rudimentarily sign his name in Tamil with an English professor at the University of Madras who published a tome on Sanskrit philology. This emphasis on graphic literacy also neglected Indian cultural sensibilities in relation to orality. Traditional forms of scholarship that were cultivated in largely oral-aural contexts would not have been accommodated by Census measures of literacy and Telugu pandits who were orally versed in "reading" (reciting) the Vedas, Purānas, and Śāstras but lacked the ability to write would have been deemed "illiterate" by Census operatives. Consequently, we must assume that the rates of "literacy" in the Presidency would have been significantly lower if they were conducted from the perspective of educational attainment and scholarship.

Literacy rates from the Telugu Districts compared unfavorably to the literacy rates found in the Tamil Districts. The highest returns here were for the Tanjore District reporting at 8.8%, Tinnevelly at 8.2% and Chingleput at 7.9%. Drawing on a longer legacy of missionary educational activity and urbanization, Tamil Districts also returned significantly higher numbers of Anglo-Vernacular schools and rates of student enrollment as compared to the Telugu Districts. Telugu print culture also lagged behind Tamil, with nearly half of the Presidency's book trade located in Tamil-majority Madras and "notable printing activity" reported for the Tanjore (Tamil), Nilgiris (Tamil), South Canara (Kannada) and Malabar Districts (Malayalam).[32] The Census finds no point of remark on printing in the Telugu Districts.

Literacy rates in the Presidency increased slowly as against population growth and remained generally marginal for the remainder of the century. Despite the spectacular growth of Anglo-Vernacular education, the Census of 1901 reported only a slight jump in the Presidency's overall literacy rate to 6.3%.[33] This meant that despite a 23% increase in the overall population of the Presidency from the first Census in 1871, the proportion of literates to the general population had only increased by 1.3%. Just as in previous census reports, the Krishna and Godavari Districts returned the highest literacy rates for the Telugu Districts with 5% and 4.6% respectively. However, in terms of absolute numbers, a comparison with the 1871 Census reveals that the literate population of the Krishna District had nearly doubled to include 107,433 individuals. A similar rate of growth in the literate population of the Godavari District produced 99,261 individuals. In considering the growth of literacy in absolute terms, it is also important to note that the 1901 Census abandoned the earlier understanding of literacy, as the mere ability to read and write, to endorse a more rigorous conception of literacy i.e. the ability "to write a letter

[32] *Census of India 1871*, 186-187.
[33] *Census of India 1901 Volume 15*, 93.

to a friend and read the reply received from him."[34] This suggests that the nature of the literacy being tracked by the census had substantially increased in complexity and was more limited in scope than the earlier census. Consequently, these growth rates underestimate the improved quality of literacy in the Presidency.

The 1901 Census tracked statistics on the language use and literacy at the Presidency and District levels for the first time and makes more detailed observations on Telugu and English literacy at the turn of the twentieth century possible. Literacy remained rare at the turn of the twentieth century with the vast majority of the Madras Presidency i.e. 93.7% deemed illiterate. Telugu literates had the highest pre-dominance of Brahmins and the lowest rates of female education among all the vernaculars of the Presidency. When considered in terms of its total number of speakers, literacy in Telugu was comparatively lower in ratio than Malayalam, which had a large number of female literates, or Tamil, which had a large number of Non-Brahmin literates. Even in terms of male literacy, the rates of Telugu trailed behind Malayalam and Tamil.

However, in terms of population, Telugu literates formed the second largest constituency in the Presidency after Tamil. Madras city boasted the highest rates of literacy in the Presidency with a concentration of 115,481 literates. Of these, 66,940 or 60% claimed literacy in Tamil, 43,705 or 39% claimed literacy in English, and 21,314 or 18% claimed literacy in Telugu.[35] Those who claimed literacy in English included Europeans and Eurasians but consisted primarily of the Indian graduates (and failures) of the Anglo-Vernacular educational system.[36]

While Telugu speakers and literates were in a minority at Madras, the city boasted the highest single concentration of Telugu literates in the Presidency. At the time of the 1901

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[34] *Census of India 1901 Volume 15*, 81.
[35] With regard to the question of multilingualism, as the Census Superintendent notes, "Except in the case of English, which is always given if it is known at all, the only languages shown in the figures are those best known by the people, the others being neglected." *Census of India 1901 Volume 1*, 88.
[36] *Census of India 1901 Volume 15-b*, "Table V," 101.

Census, the Telugu Districts lacked any urban center that reached the Census minimum of 50,000 inhabitants to qualify as a "town." The region was fundamentally agricultural and its largest urban centers were Kakinada (48,096), Vizagapatam (40,892), Masulipatam (38,507), Vizianagaram (37,270), and Rajahmundry (36,408). More like large villages than proper towns, these urban sites could not support the dense print market or associational culture that underpinned Telugu literary culture in Madras. Although the Census did not frame these urban centers in terms of their literate populations, it does provide accounts of literates at the Taluk (subdistrict) level. If we interpret Taluk data as representing the urban center and its surrounding environs, we see that the concentration of literates at these sites is simply not comparable to Madras. The largest concentration of Telugu literates was at Masulipatam (Bandar Taluk) which housed 14,979 Telugu literates and 2,194 English literates. This was followed by Kakinada (Coconada Taluk), with 11,180 Telugu literates and 2,347 English literates, and Rajahmundry (Rajahmundry Taluk), with 9,080 Telugu literates and 1,869 English literates. From the perspective of its literate population, Madras was by far the largest "Telugu town" in the Presidency.

Turning to the *mofussil* (rural districts), a majority of the literate population in the Krishna District (96%) and the Godavari District (96%) claimed the ability to read and write a letter in Telugu. We also see that 6,871 or 6.3% of literates in the Krishna District and 8,691 or 8.8% of literates in the Godavari District claimed a similar ability in English. The Telugu District with the highest proportion of English literates was Vizagapatam with 7,344 or 11% of the District literate population. The majority of these English literates, as in Madras, consisted primarily of the Indian graduates and failures of the Anglo-Vernacular system. As the literacy data relating to Taluks suggests, while English literates had emerged as significant minorities

among the literate population of the Telugu Districts, they were concentrated in their greatest numbers at the District capitals. However, their proportion to the overall population remained infinitesimal throughout the nineteenth century. In 1901, after nearly forty-five years of government-backed Anglo-Vernacular education, English literates did not amount to more than .5% of the total population of the Presidency.[37] And yet, despite their small proportion, Anglo-Vernacular graduates occupied an increasingly visible role as social, political, and intellectual intermediaries between the British colonial administration and broader Telugu society during the late nineteenth century.

New Forms of Literary Association: The Debating Society

As products of the Anglo-Vernacular system of colonial education, many of the new professional elites sought to purposefully distinguish themselves from traditional intellectual and cultural elites such as Telugu Pandits and old zamindari families by emphasizing their relationship with the English language, European forms of knowledge and learning, and the colonial administration. One of these ways of distinguishing themselves was through the adoption of European discursive practices and forms of public association. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the Madras Presidency experienced a significant transformation in its forms of public life. New forms of association such as voluntary societies, public meetings, and conferences were established on an unprecedented scale by graduates of colonial schools. Historians have primarily referenced the popularization of this new associational culture in the Telugu Districts in relation to the social reform campaigns of the 1870s and the rise of Indian National Congress in the 1880s. However, this emphasis has obscured more prevalent and less radical forms of public association that were typical of the English-educated during the Victorian

[37] *Census of India 1901 Volume 15-b*, “Table V,” 101

era. These were the network of debating societies, reading rooms, libraries, dramatic societies, and literary associations that rapidly mushroomed across the region and structured the formation of a new literary public.

These new spaces began to shift the center of intellectual and literary life in the Telugu Districts from rural agraharam villages, zamindar estates, and elite salons to the new urban centers of colonial administration and education.[38] This marked a significant restructuring of the Telugu literary economy. Of course, this didn't mean the new professionals were entirely divorced from older forms of association. They remained embedded in their kin and caste networks and participated in more conventional spaces of elite literary life as well. As the celebrity poet duo Tirupati Venkata Kavulu document in their 1908 collection of "courtly" occasional verse, *Nānārāja-sandarśanamu* or *A Tour of Andhra Kings*, many of the "kings" they encountered were prominent English-educated Telugu professionals.[39] Further, several of the larger zamindari estates such as Vijayanagaram recruited English-educated Telugu professionals to support their own administrative and educational requirements. This made zamindari estates important spaces of literary interaction and innovation between old and new literate elites as well. Finally, urban English-educated professionals were also enthusiastic patrons of *Avadhāna*, *Harikatha*, and other traditional literary pastimes and not infrequently recognized as accomplished scholars in traditional fields of learning in their own right.[40]

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[38] Agraharam villages were a traditional form of patronage that endowed Brahmin scholarly families with designated shares of income for a particular village. Zamindar estates were a colonial form of land tenure that was a mainstay of older Telugu aristocratic families.

[39] The poets mention performing and receiving the patronage of figures as diverse the Maharaja of Vijayanagaram, at the head of one of the most prominent ancient zamindar families, his diwan, the pioneering Telugu literary historian Gurajada Sriramamurti, the Deputy Collector of Visakhapatnam, Jayanti Ramayya Pantulu, and Gode Gajapati Rao, one of the influential Andhra dubash families that had purchased numerous proprietary estates around Visakhapatnam. Gurajada Sriramamurti had been educated in Anglo-Vernacular schools and Jayanti Ramayya had received his BA from the University of Madras and can be considered part of the new professional elite.

[40] Rajagopal Vakulabharanam's study of the legendary Harikatha exponent Adibhatta Narayanadasu's (1864-1945) autobiography *Nā Yĕruka* briefly notes this phenomenon. One of Narayanadasu's more important patrons was Jayanti Kamesam, an English-educated high court lawyer based in Berhampur and reputed for his knowledge of

It is quite apparent that elite spaces and contexts of Telugu literature were in flux during the late nineteenth century. However, the new forms of literary association pioneered by the new professionals were central to redefining Telugu notions of publicity and cultural authority. They were also critical in establishing new middle-class codes of social conduct and models of literary engagement. These spaces also increasingly came to be the main sites through which government, zamindari, and public patronage of literary and intellectual efforts were dispersed. The rise of this new colonial associational culture in the Madras Presidency, and among Telugu-speakers in particular, is a history that has been neither documented nor studied in great depth. The neglect of this critical aspect of Telugu cultural history is one of the reasons why the complex and sometimes contradictory impulses that shaped the formation of Telugu literary modernity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have been so difficult to identify. In this next section, I will provide a short overview of the emergence of literary societies at the turn of the twentieth century and the increasing influence they occupied in the Telugu Districts.

Archival traces of early literary societies in south India are slim. An important primary source for reconstructing the new contours of literary life in this period are government reports. Beginning in 1878, the DPI began to collect details on the formation of new societies. These details were published under the heading "Scientific and Literary Societies" in the appendices to its annual Report.[41] Societies that came under this heading included: debating societies, reading rooms, libraries, dramatic societies, social clubs, teachers' associations, and literary appreciation groups. The DPI appendices recorded the names of these associations along with their object,

traditional learning in Sanskrit and Telugu. Vakulabharanam, "Self and Society in Transition: A Study of Modern Autobiographical Practice in Telugu," PhD diss., (University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2004), 156-57; 164.

[41] "Scientific and Literary Societies" was the general category used by the Madras Presidency Administration and Public Instruction reports that kept track of associations related to literary and intellectual interests. It did not track institutions that were affiliated to religious or communal interests such as Christian missionary, Theosophical, Brahmo Samaj, or other such societies. On the other hand, the new caste associations related to education, such as the Vanniyakula Ksatriya Sangham of Madras (est. 1888) or Muslim-oriented societies such as the Muhammadan Literary Society of Masulapatam (est. 1900) would occasionally find mention.

income, details on gender and age of members, registration status, and date of establishment. Information on the societies was organized by district.

It is unclear why the DPI began to collect this information or why it stopped publishing these appendices in 1901. Statistics on the growth of the associations and overall membership rates at the Presidency level continued to be published in the DPI annual report. However, DPI reports stopped tracking details of individual associations at the district level. DPI observations on literary associations were always terse in its formal report and do not indicate any official interest in organizing or promoting the formation of such associations.[42] Notably, these government accounts did not strive to comprehensively collect details on such societies and do not provide systematic information. Societies which are attested in other sources appear and disappear from its lists with no explanation. With rare exceptions, the associations listed are almost all related to English literary interests and almost no societies with an explicit commitment to studying vernacular literature appear. It is likely that many of the societies that qualified for this category were simply overlooked. In 1880, the DPI counted a total of 8 societies with 381 members. Six of these societies were in Madras while two were in towns of the Tamil Districts.[43]

The growth and diffusion of these societies accelerated in the next two decades. By 1899, the recorded number of scientific and literary societies in the Presidency had reached the largest to date with 375 societies and counted 64,985 members.[44] Many of these were attached to schools or colleges and were located in all Districts of the Presidency. There were 113 societies in the Telugu Districts alone with 4 mentioning an explicit interest in Telugu literature. By the

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[42] With the exception of teacher's associations in the 1890s.

[43] These were the Nagapatnam Reading Room and Pollachi Literary Society. Societies listed for Madras city were: Madras Literary Society and Auxiliary of the Royal Asiatic Society, Madras Religious and Tract Book Society, Madras Branch Christian Vernacular Education Society, Madras School Book and Vernacular Literature Society, Madras Mahomedan Public Library, and the Saidapet Reading Room.

[44] *Report on Public Instruction 1900-1901*, 44.

turn of the twentieth century, voluntary societies had clearly become an inescapable part of Telugu literary and intellectual life.

During the late nineteenth century, the most common literary societies found in the Telugu districts were debating societies and reading rooms.[45] These were modeled on the debating societies and reading rooms that were a prominent part of middle-class associational life in England during this period. It is likely that many of these societies produced pamphlets on the proceedings of their meetings, reports on the management of their affairs, and catalogues of their libraries. However, due to the ephemeral nature of these materials, I have not been able to locate any from the direct period under study. My inferences on colonial debating societies and reading rooms are informed by a few pamphlets produced in the 1850s by the Madras Hindu Reading Room (est. 1853) and the Madras Hindoo Debating Society (est. 1853). Although founded a year prior to the Department of Public Instruction, there is little reason to doubt they differed in their aims, practices, or structure from the debating societies and reading rooms that emerged in later decades as the examination of Telugu societies in the next chapter suggests. The standards of secondary and higher education remained largely continuous with the experiments of the preceding decade. Members of the Hindoo Debating Society and Hindu Reading Room were drawn from recent graduates of the Madras University High School who had come together for "cultivating their minds, refining their tastes, and improving their habits by an interchange of sentiments."[46] The Hindu Reading Room and the Hindoo Debating Society were considered valuable extracurricular additions to English secondary education and organized for "the mental

[45] Little is currently known about these early societies other than what is documented in the appendices of the annual *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency* and the *Report on Public Instruction in the Madras Presidency*. These do not provide systematic information and societies which are attested in other sources appear and disappear from its lists with little explanation.
[46] *Third Annual Report of the Hindu Reading Room, 1855* (Madras: Hindu Press, 1856).

and moral improvement of Hindu young men."[47] Both societies were organized on voluntary principles, governed by an elected board, and met their financial needs through donations and subscriptions.

In the colonial context, debating societies and reading rooms were considered useful for not only for the opportunity to improve member's general knowledge in the arts and sciences of Europe but also the opportunities to improve their English language proficiency. These early literary associations were not organized to improve vernacular oratory or education. They were dedicated to expanding the range and depth of Indian engagements with the English language and fostered many of the social and intellectual practices that are typically attributed to "western education." The Hindoo Debating Society maintained a small library and hosted formal discussions on contemporary matters of the day. The Debating Society also organized lecture series on subjects such as rhetoric and logic and scheduled regular public readings of English works "from the most approved authors" by prominent local missionaries.[48] The Hindu Reading Room possessed a large collection of print materials that were available to members for circulation and provided an extensive selection of 23 periodicals. Most of these were English-language periodicals published in Madras but several were subscriptions to leading British periodicals such as the *Edinburgh Review*. Two vernacular periodicals, the commercial Telugu weekly, *Vartamāna Taraṅgini*, and a Tamil journal published by the DPI, *Tinavartamāni*, were also received. An evening "discussion class" was also held on a regular basis at the reading room. This class afforded members "an opportunity of improving their stock of knowledge, collecting new ideas by reading some select works, and interchanging their ideas."[49] The discussion classes were moderated by a local British missionary and revolved around topics such

[47] *Third Annual Report of the Hindu Reading Room*.
[48] *Sixth Annual Report of the Madras Hindoo Debating Society, 1856-58* (Madras: Rising Sun Press, 1859).
[49] *Third Annual Report of the Hindu Reading Room*.

as “1) Whether railways are at present advantageous to India 2) Whether emigration is at present advantageous to India and 3) The importance of native young men availing themselves of the advantages offered by the Madras Medical College.”[50] As such, debating societies and reading rooms were also sites at which the new professionals reflected on the ramifications of English rule—changes in transportation, labor migration, and health—and the benefits and tensions the modernity of colonial life produced.

These extracurricular arenas became invaluable spaces for testing their English learning through debate informed by enlightenment principles of reason, utilitarian values of improvement, liberal notions of self and government, and imperial notions of civility. Reverend A.R. Symonds, Secretary for the Madras Society For the Promotion of the Christian Gospel, praised the Debating Society not only for its moral and educational effects but for the “perfect freedom of discussion” it brokered among “men of various castes and opinion.”[51] According to Symonds, this was a “distinguishing feature” of the Debating Society and held great promise for the future of Indian society. Such early literary societies were seen as powerful crucibles for the forging of an Indian civic ethos and public spirit. The potential Symonds saw in the Hindoo Debating Society was not ill founded—it appears the Debating Society not only fostered a sense of camaraderie among its English-educated Indian members but also served to coordinate public action and produce representative public opinion. In 1860, the Society held a public meeting at which leading inhabitants of Madras gathered in order to debate the merits of an income tax increase proposed by the Government of India and pass a series of public resolutions condemning it.[52]

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[50] *Third Annual Report of the Hindu Reading Room.*
[51] *Sixth Annual Report of the Madras Hindoo Debating Society.*
[52] *Proceedings of the Native Inhabitants of Madras Held at the Public Meeting of the Madras Hindoo Debating Society which Took Place on the 7th May 1860 [...]* (Madras: Caxton Press, 1860).

The debating societies and reading rooms that were organized by Anglo-Vernacular graduates in the Telugu Districts in later years followed these earlier moral, intellectual, and civic concerns. Debating societies in the Telugu Districts were generally introduced as auxiliary extensions of secondary Anglo-Vernacular schools. They began to emerge in significant numbers in the 1880s. In these cases, debating societies were typically housed in the schools themselves, supported through member subscriptions, and organized along similar voluntary principles. Examples include Vizagapatam's Debating Society of Mrs. A. V. Narasinga Rao College (est. 1891) or Masulipatam's Debating Society of Noble College (est. 1893).[53] A few debating societies, such as the Bellary Veera Sangam (est. 1873) or the Bimlipatam Hindu Debating Club (est. 1882), seem to have been free-standing associations for the new professionals. Like many contemporary debating societies, Vizagapatam's Debating Society aimed "to cultivate and improve the faculty of reasoning and the power of expression by occasional debates and essays."[54] These societies, much as the Madras Hindoo Debating Society, were conducted in English and acquainted Telugu students with the rhetoric and repertoire of English oratory as well as the English method of rational argument. Debating society meetings followed a formal structure with meetings presided over by chairmen while society secretaries recorded and recounted the business of previous meetings. They sponsored essays, lectures, and debates in English on selected topics and invited questions from society members. By participating in these societies, Telugu students became familiar with the procedural formalities of English parliamentary procedure such as the moving and seconding of resolutions, suggesting amendments, forming committees and sub-committees, registering dissent and opposition, and imperial modes of polite speech and address. Debating societies were fundamental to educating

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[53] *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency 1899-1901*, "Appendices CLXXIX-CLXXX."
[54] *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency 1899-1900*, "Appendix CLXXVI."

and socializing aspiring professionals in the norms of English parliamentary procedure and public debate. These were the same procedural norms and standards of civility that structured emerging middle-class norms of "debate" and "due process" in conferences, public meetings, the local and municipal government boards, and any form of public deliberation they participated in. As such, these associations were critical to the formation of self-confidence, moral certainty, and a sense of leadership among the English-educated beyond the didactic instruction in Victorian morals and European sciences they had received in the schoolroom.

New Forms of Literary Association: The Reading Room

While debating societies seem to have been oriented more directly toward students, reading rooms catered to a broader educated public.[55] Most of this public consisted of graduates of the Anglo-Vernacular system. However, these spaces were not exclusive to them and allowed for the inclusion of their associates, friends, and relatives. Little is known about the activities or social composition of these societies. Many of these reading rooms were amalgamated or transformed into libraries, social clubs, and other types of societies in later decades. However, during the last two decades of the nineteenth century and the first of the twentieth, reading rooms were the most prevalent form of colonial literary association. The 1899-1900 Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency observes that, "In many mufassal stations where there are a few officials and pleaders, 'reading rooms' have been established with the object of maintaining libraries, procuring copies of periodicals and holding discussions."[56] Many reading rooms, such as the Rajahmundry Newspaper club (est. 1890), also had attached lawn tennis courts and hosted card

[55] G. Samba Reddy is the only scholar who has published an in-depth review of reading rooms in Telugu context. He discusses these as early sites for the formation of nationalist consciousness. G. Samba Siva Reddy, "Creating Consciousness among the Colonized: Reading Rooms in 'Rayalaseema:' 1858-1947," in *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 70 (2009-2010). Passing references to reading rooms are found in studies of the Andhra Library Movement. See: A.A.N. Raju, *History of Library Movement in Andhra Pradesh, 1900-1956* (New Delhi: Ajanta Publications, 1988).
[56] *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency 1899-1900*.

playing. The Ongole Reading Room (est. 1891) supported "newspapers, general reading, and innocent in and outdoor games."[57] This gave reading rooms a convivial social and recreational atmosphere. In this regard, early reading rooms were public sociable spaces in which activities such as reading and intellectual debate were integrated into an emergent economy of middle-class leisure.

In effect, wherever a concentration of Madras University graduates assembled, there was likely to be a reading room nearby. By the last decade of the nineteenth century, English-educated professionals had established multiple reading rooms at the headquarters of every Telugu district and opened similar establishments in many of the subdistrict centers as well. Though well-established reading rooms of the district capitals may have offered small collections or "libraries" of books for their members, most reading rooms appear to have been oriented toward contemporary periodicals. It was due to their close association with periodicals, specifically newspapers, that some reading rooms were also known as circulating newspaper clubs. The Nellore Reading Room (est. 1864), which had an annual total income of 457 rupees, maintained a regular library for its members and guests.[58] On the other hand, the reading rooms in Nellore's subdistricts, such as the Kavali (est. 1890), Kanigiri (est. 1890), and Udayagiri (est. 1890), which necessarily had smaller memberships, prioritized their more modest income toward newspaper subscriptions.[59] As the example of the Madras Hindu Reading room suggests, back issues of periodicals could also be retained from subscription or collected as donations and lent out to members on a limited basis.[60] This suggests that periodicals also filtered into the informal

[57] *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency 1890-1891*.
[58] *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency 1890-1891*.
[59] *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency 1890-1891*.
[60] *Third Annual Report of the Hindu Reading Room*.

contexts of the homes and workplaces of professionals and contributed to the formation of a middle class reading and informational culture.[61]

There is no direct evidence as to what types of periodicals reading rooms in the Telugu Districts subscribed to during this time but, following the example of the Madras Hindu Reading room and the Anglophilia of the new professionals, we can assume they were primarily oriented toward English materials. Certainly, most reading rooms would have subscribed to the English weekly newspapers that issued from Madras such as *Madras Mail*, *The Madras Times* or *The Hindu* to keep up with events in the capital and province at large.[62] At least one reading room, the Literary Society of Kadiri (est. 1887), explicitly stated that it subscribed to "newspapers from abroad" though we can presume it was not the only association with an interest in international events.[63]

The extent to which these reading rooms would have subscribed to Telugu journalism is more difficult to gauge. In the first place, the Telugu print industry was dominated by book publishing at this time. The few Telugu periodicals that existed had low circulation figures and catered to niche scholarly or social reform interests. Perhaps more socially liberal members of a reading room might have recommended a subscription to Kandukuri Viresalingam's reform-minded *Vivekavardhani* (1874-1885), one of the few journals published in the Telugu Districts to reach an average circulation that exceeded 500.[64] On the other hand, others may have preferred to receive issues of the more conventional *Āndhra Bhāṣa Sañjīvani* (1871-1883; 1892-1900), a monthly journal edited by the Head Telugu Pandit of the Presidency College Kokkonda Venkataratnam. If reading rooms were to have subscribed to any Telugu periodical during these

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[61] Stark, "Associational Culture," 23.
[62] *Madras Mail* had the highest circulation of English newspapers at this time.
[63] *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency 1889-1990*.
[64] *Vivekavardhini* was published out of Rajahmundry. The issue run is given in K.H.S.S. Sundar, "Origin and Growth of Political Consciousness," 135-37.

years, it would most likely have been the *Āndhra Prakāśika* (1888-1928). This weekly newspaper from Madras was a votary of the Indian National Congress and the only Telugu paper to have a circulation exceeding 1,000 at the turn of the century.[65] However, without access to the catalogues or subscription records of reading rooms of this period, it is difficult to make any conclusive claims.

These voluntary societies enabled members to collectively pool their resources together in order to subscribe to a shared selection of printed reading matter. Subscriptions to English newspapers were not cheap. A yearly subscription to the *Madras Mail* in 1881, the most circulated weekly paper in the Presidency, cost 13.3 rupees.[66] Telugu journals were significantly cheaper but were also less in demand or circulated. A yearly subscription to the reformist journal *Puruṣārtha Pradāyini* in 1876, the self-proclaimed "first and largest circulated monthly in the Telugu Country," cost 3.5 rupees.[67] At a similar yearly rate of 3 rupees in 1886, one could also enroll in a subscription to the esteemed journal of Telugu literary criticism *Amudrita Grantha Cintāmaṇi*.[68] By contrast, yearly memberships to reading rooms could range anywhere from 9 rupees a year at Bellary's Young Men's Reading Room (est. 1888) to 7.2 rupees a year at Parvatipur's Victoria Jubilee Club (est. 1887).[69] At these rates, reading rooms provided a greater variety of reading materials for members at a far cheaper rate than if they were to subscribe on an individual basis.

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[65] *Āndhra Prakāśika* was published out of Madras. The issue run is given in the *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency 1901-1902*.
[66] *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency 1901-1902*.
[67] K.H.S.S. Sundar estimates an average circulation of 500 for this journal. See Sundar, "Origin and Growth," 135-37.
[68] These prices derived from advertisements placed on the front pages of the *Madras Mail* January 1, 1881, *Puruṣārtha Pradāyini* July 5, 1876, and *Amudrita Grantha Chintāmaṇi* July 1, 1886. The subscriptions quoted here are for the advance rate and include postage.
[69] *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency 1890-1891*. The information provided is the total yearly income and number of members. It is unclear if there were different degrees of membership for reading rooms. The numbers presented here assume an equal scale of membership fees.

Through their subscriptions to newspapers and their promotion of social intercourse and recreational activities, debating societies and reading rooms were vital to laying the foundations of a middle-class "public sphere" in the Telugu districts. Reading rooms sprang up in the colonial centers and outposts of revenue administration and were linked through the colonial postal system. Members were able to keep abreast of news issuing from large villages, subdistrict offices, district offices, and the Presidency capital with relative ease. As intentional spaces for conversation and leisure, reading rooms encouraged critical debate on contemporary news and matters of social and cultural interest. Reading rooms also provided the new professionals with archives of periodical literature for the speeches, petitions, and resolutions that characterized their public activities and representations of public opinion. For example M. Vencataroyaloo Naidu, founder of the Madras Debating Society and early graduate of the University High School, drew on four different English-language periodicals in order to abstract "the sentiments of respectable English and Native journals of Madras, Calcutta, and Bombay" and construct a portrait of united public opposition to a proposed tax increase by the Government of India in 1860.[70] These extracts were likely drawn from the Debating Society's own collection of periodicals or perhaps those of another local reading room. In this way, reading rooms emerged as critical nodes in the circulation of periodicals, dissemination of new ideas, and articulation of political perspectives in an expanding colonial network of English and Telugu print.

The cross-caste cross-religious interactions that arose as part of a new civic ethos in the Madras Hindoo Debating Society and Hindu Reading Room were reproduced in the reading rooms of the Telugu Districts. These were mixed social spaces in which members of diverse castes from "respectable" backgrounds were encouraged to socialize. The nature of this

[70] Vencataroyaloo Naidu cites the *Madras Times* (Madras), *Rising Sun* (Madras), *Hindoo Patriot* (Calcutta), and *Rast Goftar* (Bombay). *Proceedings of the Native Inhabitants of Madras*.

respectability was shaped as much by Anglo-Vernacular education and a socialization in the new English-derived conventions of public speech and civility as it was by older hierarchies of class, gender, and caste. As such, reading rooms in the Telugu Districts were typically constituted by financially comfortable upper-caste Hindu men who were graduates or had close connections with them.[71] This is not surprising given their continued patronage and participation in older literary contexts. In terms of number, the membership of reading rooms was generally small and did not exceed on average more than a few dozen members at any given time. A certain degree of wealth was inevitably prerequisite to afford the membership fees and spare-time necessary for the leisurely pastimes of reading rooms.

According to the DPI surveys, women appear to have been a rare presence in reading rooms across the Presidency. Most reading rooms listed no female members although some, such as the Poole Memorial Hall Reading Room of Masulipatam (est.1887), seem to have registered a few. In 1890, this reading room listed 7 female members out of a total membership of 59 members.[72] The admission of women to reading rooms was not limited to larger cities. The reading room of Ongole, a subdistrict of the Nellore District, counted 4 female members out of a total membership of 77.[73] However, these numbers were by and large exceptions to the rule throughout the nineteenth century. In 1899, even the oldest and most prestigious literary society of the Presidency, the Madras Literary Society and Auxiliary of the Royal Asiatic Society (est. 1817), retained a mere 6 female members out of its total of 164 members.[74]

The *Times of India* reported the proceedings of several public meetings in 1871 arranged by prominent English-educated professionals at Madras in order to host a series lectures in

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[71] Exceptions to this can be found in the limited organization of Muhammadan literary societies in the Telugu Districts. It appears these societies fostered Persian and Hindustani literary interests rather than Telugu.
[72] *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency 1890-1891*.
[73] *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency 1890-1891*.
[74] *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency 1899-1900*.

Telugu on "The Human Being" by Srirangamma, a "Hindu caste lady."[75] These meetings appear to have followed the new civic protocols of electing presidents, chairmen, and structuring discussion through motions and proposals. The *Times* considered Srirangamma's lectures to be momentous in that they that marked the "first instance of a Hindu lady appearing before a male audience" to deliver a serious lecture in the Madras Presidency.[76] Srirangamma opened her talk by "rebutting the general idea of her countrymen that a woman should not appear to lecture before the public."[77] The Professor of Vernacular Languages at Presidency College, T. Sesha Iyengar, as well as the College's Sanskrit Pundit, Srinivasacharyulu, followed her lecture with comments that approved of her sentiments and praised the aptitude of women to deliver lectures and participate in meetings. However, women would not become a regular presence in the new associational culture until the early twentieth century.[78]

With regard to the caste composition of reading rooms, there are no formal records available but several inferences may be made. Statistics on caste were kept by the DPI on the students who enrolled in its institutions and pursued higher education.[79] Based on the general social composition of the colonial higher education during the late nineteenth century, we can readily presume that the great majority of Telugu men who took part in these societies were Brahmins and that they hailed primarily from Niyogi families. However, the primacy of Niyogi Brahmins in these spaces should not undermine the fact that reading rooms facilitated regular

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[75] See *Times of India* issues July 6, 1871 and September 1, 1871. These are based on extracts of notices published in *Madras Mail* and *The Madras Times*.
[76] *Times of India,* September 1, 1871.
[77] *Times of India*, July 6, 1871.
[78] Vakulabharanam Ramakrishna discusses some early womens associations, specifically around women's education, that developed in the 1890s. Ramakrishna, *Social Reform in Andhra*.
[79] Although caste-based exclusion was, in theory, opposed by the Department of Public Instruction, in practice many of the government, missionary, and private institutions of higher learning maintained distinctions between "respectable caste" Hindus and "Panchamas" or Dalits. Further, the vast majority of students enrolled in Anglo-Vernacular schools did not belong just to respectable castes but to Brahmin castes. The grievances of the Non-Brahmin movement that emerged in the early twentieth century developed around this disparity.

social intercourse among different Brahmin sub-castes—a feature that in itself was a radically innovative social development during the late nineteenth century.[80] “Respectable” Non-Brahmin castes such as Velamas, Rajus, Kammas, Reddys and Komatis were also welcomed in these spaces. However, it was not until well into the twentieth century that members of Dalit castes would appear as participants and initiators of these new literary and intellectual spaces, a reflection of how the new professionals drew upon and redefined older forms of privilege and exclusion to position themselves in Telugu society.[81]

Conclusion

The impact of these new forms of literary association lay not so much in the promotion of radical social ideologies or political agitations but in the more fundamental way they restructured the social and intellectual life of the literate population of the Telugu Districts. The social dimension of reading rooms nurtured the formation of friendships, the setting up of business ventures, and the inspiration of projects of cultural entrepreneurship. As such, reading rooms encouraged a new form of public sociability that privileged social relations across and beyond the traditional interpersonal networks of kin, caste, and sect that conventionally determined Telugu social life and laid the foundations for a vibrant middle-class literary culture in the emerging urban centers of the region. Within the walls of these reading rooms and debating societies, the shared experiences of the new professionals, as products of the Anglo-Vernacular educational system, as well as their intimate affiliations with the colonial courts and bureaucracy, crystallized into a new social and cultural solidarity. Through these unassuming and today

[80] Kŏmarrāju produced a near-contemporary reflection on conflicts between Niyogi and Vaidiki Telugu Brahmins in the late nineteenth century. See: Kŏmarrāju Veṅkaṭa Lakṣmaṇa Rāvu, "Āndhra Brāhmaṇulaloni Niyogi-vaidika-bheda-kāla Nirṇayamu” in *Lakṣmaṇarāya Vyāsāvaḷi* (Vijayavāḍa: Ādarśa Granthamaṇḍali, 1965).
[81] Chinnaiah Jangam has documented some of the early mechanisms of caste exclusion that shaped Telugu associational culture in the early twentieth century. Jangam, "Dilemmas of Dalit Agendas.”

largely forgotten rooms, a newly self-aware English-educated Telugu middle class began to cohere that believed its moral destiny lay in the leadership of the greater vernacular masses that composed colonial Telugu society.

Chapter Three

English-educated Professionals and Telugu Literary Organizing, 1890-1900

In the previous chapter we looked at how the spread of Anglo-Vernacular education across the Telugu Districts had led to the emergence of English-educated professionals as an influential new presence in Telugu society. One of the ways these new professionals began to culturally assert themselves was through the establishment of new spaces of literary and intellectual life such as debating societies and reading rooms. These new spaces were self-consciously based on western models of association and were crucial to the cultivation of new civic norms and forms of public life among the graduates of Anglo-Vernacular schools. As the examples of the Madras Hindoo Debating Society and Hindu Reading Room suggest, they were largely oriented toward engagements with English newspapers and European forms of knowledge. The establishment of these institutions reflected an important mode of cultural entrepreneurship that allowed English-educated Telugu professionals to articulate new forms of intellectual and social authority and lay the foundations for a distinctly "middle-class" literary public.

This chapter examines the adaptation of western forms of association to specifically Telugu literary and intellectual contexts. Graduates of Anglo-Vernacular schools did not simply reproduce these institutional forms in order to facilitate their participation in the Anglophone colonial public sphere. As aspiring cultural intermediaries, these bilingual elites also worked to organize new spaces to support their interventions in Telugu public life. Early Telugu literary societies established by the new professionals created new public contexts to engage with Telugu literature and were critical in mediating the adoption of English protocols of reading, appreciating, and studying classical Telugu literary texts through the Telugu language. As with

debating societies and reading rooms, the new Telugu literary societies were also organized on western voluntary principles, supported by member subscription and donations, and conducted along the same conventions of parliamentary debate and procedure that characterized other forms of associational life initiated by the English-educated. They sponsored Telugu lectures, essays, readings, and writing competitions on English models and were crucial sites for forging new public relationships to Telugu language and literature.

This chapter focuses on the activities of the first generation of Telugu literary societies that emerged in the 1890s and their role in encouraging new modes of literary activism and engagement with the Telugu language. In comparison to the last chapter, it adopts a more qualitative approach by offering close readings of Telugu literary scholarship cultivated in these spaces and exploring the variety of ways the new professionals constructed Telugu as a "vernacular" and "national" language. The chapter highlights the ambiguities that surrounded these new forms of engagement by concluding with an extended discussion of the Congress of Telugu Pundits (1897-1899). Although forgotten today, the Congress was organized by prominent English-educated Telugu lawyers and politicians and was much lauded in its own day as an unprecedented herculean effort. The Congress brought together leading Telugu scholars, publishers, and editors of a rapidly growing Telugu print sphere in order to systematize the reform and improvement of the Telugu language at the provincial level.

Indian associations formally dedicated to the critical study and appreciation of the literary arts were uncommon even for English. Although reading rooms and debating societies may have collected small libraries of books and hosted discussion groups and public readings of “approved authors” in English, their primary aim was not the cultivation of English literary studies.[82] The few societies that were formed for this purpose, as with the early debating societies, were closely

[82] *Sixth Annual Report of the Madras Hindoo Debating Society*.

affiliated with Anglo-Vernacular educational institutions. Unsurprisingly, the earliest attested examples of such societies were also based in the Presidency capital. These include the Madras Christian College Literary Society (est. 1877), The Presidency College Literary Society (est. 1881), and Pacchayappa High School's Literary Society (est. 1880), Reading Club (est. 1886), and Dramatic Club (est. 1889).[83]

The appearance of Telugu literary societies in the 1890s marks a new cultural interest in Telugu literature among English-educated professionals and the growing importance of colonial forms of association in Telugu literary culture. There is evidence of at least five such societies dedicated to Telugu literary arts during this period. The Scientific and Literary Returns of the 1898-99 DPI Report lists 4 associations:

1) Āndhra Bhāṣa Abhirañjani Saṅghamu (est. 1887) with 28 members
2) Triliṅga Bhāṣa Poṣiṇi Saṅghamu (est. 1893) with 30 members
3) Sarasavinodini Sabha (est. 1896) with 60 members
4) Āndhra Kavipaṇḍita Saṅghamu (est. 1897) with 60 members. [84]

A fifth association is mentioned elsewhere in the report—Āndhra Bhāṣa Abhivardhini Saṅghamu (est. 1890).[85] The Āndhra Bhāṣa Abhirañjani Saṅghamu was affiliated with the Madras Christian College and the Āndhra Bhāṣa Abhivardhini Saṅghamu was affiliated with the Madras Presidency College. These were the two most eminent Anglo-Vernacular colleges throughout the colonial period and were the alma mater of nearly all the BA, BL, and MA recipients trained in the Madras Presidency at the turn of the century. With regard to the Triliṅga Bhāṣa Poṣiṇi Saṅghamu, I have been unable to find any references beyond the DPI Report and can only determine that it was based in the North Arcot District and supported by member subscription.

[83] *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency 1899-1901*, "Appendices CLXXIX-CLXXX."
[84] *Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency 1899-1901*, "Appendices CLXXIX-CLXXX." I have rendered the Anglicized spellings of these organizations into a standard transliteration for ease of review. In English, these names roughly translate to: 1) Association for the Appreciation of the Telugu Language 2. Association for the Encouragement of the Telugu Language 3. Society of Amusing Delights. The organizers of the fourth give the English name of their society as the Congress of Telugu Pundits.
[85] *Report on Public Instruction 1898-1899*, "Appendix H."

The Sarasavinodini Sabha and the Āndhra Kavipaṇḍita Saṅghamu (Congress of Telugu Pundits) were based in Bellary and will be discussed toward the end of this chapter.

Given the stated interest of the Department of Public Instruction in cultivating vernacular languages and literatures, it is surprising that the emergence of Telugu literary societies in the 1890s was not recognized as a significant development in its reports. Government observations produced during this decade do not specifically distinguish them from the general growth of other literary and scientific associations. However, some of the lectures and essays delivered at these societies were published as pamphlets and survive in the archive of early Telugu print materials. These materials enable us to reconstruct the activities of these societies to a limited extent and provide tantalizing clues to some of the intellectual and political concerns that shaped the literary activism of English-educated Telugu professionals.

Rediscovering the Vernacular: New Forays into Telugu Literary Scholarship

In 1891, the Jagirdar of Kalahasti Panaganti Ramarayaningar (MA) read an address at the first anniversary of the Madras Presidency College's Telugu literary society entitled, *The Desirability of Andhra Societies* (*Āndhra Sabhalayŏkka Avaśyakatanu Guriñci*).[86] Echoing decades of colonial educational discourse around vernacular languages, his essay focused on the need to improve (*abhivṛddhi*) the condition of the Telugu language through the translation (*tĕnigiñcu*, *āndhrīkariñcu*, *bhāṣāntarīkariñcu*) of European learning into Telugu.

Ramarayaningar provides his audience with a brief history of the English language in order to argue that it was through the sustained process of translation from Greek and Latin that the language had been progressively transformed from a vernacular tongue into one of the most

[86] Panaganti Ramarayaningar, *Āndhra Sabhalayŏkka Avaśyakatanu Guriñci - The Desirability of Andhra Sabahs* (Madras: Hindu Press, 1892). Ramarayaningar had a BA in Sanskrit and Chemistry at the time of this address. He received an MA in 1902 and was a fellow of the University of Madras.

eminent languages of the world. In the past, Indian vernacular languages (deśya bhāṣalu) such as Telugu had also shown remarkable resilience and grown rich through their historical relationships with Sanskrit, Persian, and Marathi. It was due to translation that the Telugu people had been given "the joy of reading works like the Mahabharata, Ramayana and the Puranas as well as new works like the Vasucaritra and the whole corpus of courtly [*prabandham*] poetry."[87]

However, although there were countless Telugu gentlemen who were well educated in English and had passed the highest science exams at the University of Madras, efforts to transmit the advancements of European knowledge to their countrymen had been few and far between. As a result, the Telugu people had been rendered an ignorant and debased community. Ramarayaningar condemns this contemporary indifference to vernacular languages, noting:

> The unreasonableness of making everyone read in English has been well criticized. In fact, even those men who have studied English but remained ignorant of their own language (*svabhāṣa*) will fail to properly understand the content of their education. It is clear that for many, their own language is their only means of learning. It is imperative that all countrymen (*deśīyulu*) should study vernacular languages... It is our moral duty to improve the vernacular languages.[88]

With this appeal, Ramarayaningar urges his English-educated peers to embrace their obligations to their "own language" and support the establishment of Telugu literary societies for the encouragement of translation and cultural advancement. Through such efforts, the Telugu language—and by extension the nation as a whole—would be able to revert to the elevated condition it enjoyed in previous centuries.

As Ramarayaningar's address suggests, English-educated Telugu professionals held a broad disregard for the Telugu language for much of the late nineteenth century. There were a few members of this group who participated as patrons, scholars, and lovers of literature in the realm of Telugu letters, but these were exceptional. By the 1880s, anxieties regarding the

[87] Ramarayaningar, *The Desirability of Andhra Sabahs*, 5.
[88] Ramarayaningar, *The Desirability of Andhra Sabahs*, 4.

disinterest of Anglo-Vernacular graduates in the vernacular languages began to be expressed in terms of cultural and national alienation by colonial as well as Indian observers. In the opening of his address, Ramarayaningar remarks sardonically that "some among us believe that it is best to use English, language of business and government, for even domestic activities (*gṛhakṛtya*)!"[89] This lament points to social tensions that had erupted in Indian society with the growth of Anglo-Vernacular education and the colonial imposition of a new linguistic hierarchy. Ramarayaningar notes that just "two or three generations earlier, our ancestors had been under Muslim rule and successfully studied their languages in our own homes and supported their needs without abandoning our own tongues."[90] The new language dispensation of the colonial era had rendered Telugu marginal in the lives of educated elites in unprecedented ways.

During the late nineteenth century, the use of English in the non-official associational contexts of voluntary societies, conferences, and public meetings mirrored the use of English in the official colonial apparatus of legislative councils, local boards, and municipal councils of the Madras Presidency. The professionals who organized and dominated these new forms of colonial association in the Telugu Districts were trained in the protocols of English debate, English elocution, and English speech making. Their ability to powerfully penetrate and wield the new forms of statistical and disciplinary regimes of knowledge opened to Indians through the colonial education were conditioned through English. The technical concepts and terminology necessary to formulate matters of public concern, to successfully bring the learning of political philosophy, history, or medicine to bear, were not easily adaptable to contemporary Telugu discourse. Well into the first quarter of the twentieth century, the Telugu print sphere lacked a consensus on how

[89] Ramarayaningar, *The Desirability of Andhra Sabahs*, 3.
[90] Ramarayaningar, *The Desirability of Andhra Sabahs*, 3.

aspects of the new associational life—concepts as “member,” “resolution,” or “sub-committee”—should be rendered to the broader society of Telugu literates.

In a context with little professional incentive or structural support, attempts to “improve” (*abhivṛddhi*) Telugu literature through the adaptation of English forms of knowledge relied heavily on appeals to patriotism such as Ramarayaningar's call to serve the nation (*deśa-abhimānam*) and protect the native tongue (*svabhāṣa*). From this we may understand that the formation of literary societies such as the Presidency College’s Telugu society were not the result of a sudden burst of enthusiasm for vernacular literatures among the new professionals but a response to growing Indian anxieties around the deracinating effects of Anglo-Vernacular education. The following decade saw the organization of several Telugu literary societies on voluntary principles for the purpose of fostering patriotic interests in Telugu among the new professionals and promoting projects of literary and linguistic reform and improvement in nationalistic terms.

In 1894, on the fourth anniversary of the Presidency College’s Telugu society, the Zamindar of Polavaram K.R.V. Krishna Rao (BA) delivered a more optimistic assessment on the current state of Telugu through an essay entitled *The Progress of the Telugu Language* (*Āndhra-Bhāṣa-Abhivṛddhi)*.[91] This essay charted a progressive overview of Telugu literary history by arguing that Telugu reached virtuosic heights during the Vijayanagara period with the development of prabandham poetry and a refined taste for erotic sentiment (*śṛngāra rasam*). However, these literary exertions induced a certain “fatigue” (*baḍalu*) in the literature in subsequent years and produced a state of literary stagnation. However, Telugu's encounter with English had awakened a new era of dynamism and enthusiasm for the language:

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[91] K.R.V. Krishna Rao, *Āndhra Bhāṣa Abhivṛddhi - The Progress of Telugu Literature* (Rajahmundry: Vivekavardhani Press, 1896).

...Our people have never before known the writing of prose narratives (*vacana prabandham*), dramas, and scientific writings in an accessible style as they have now. Due to its association with English, Telugu literature is forging new paths. The people of today are getting a new desire to read Telugu, acquire scholarship in Telugu, compose poetry, and write new texts.[92]

Krishna Rao's lecture at the Presidency College's Telugu society was followed by another essay later that year on the linguistic history of Telugu entitled *An Abridged History of the Telugu Language* (*Āndhra-Bhāṣa-Caritra-Saṅgraham*).[93] This lecture was delivered by R. Gopala Naidu, about whom I have not been able to recover any details at present.

The interest in linguistic history demonstrated by Panaganti Ramarayaningar, K.R.V. Krishna Rao, and R. Gopala Naidu followed broader contemporary interests in Telugu philology. During the nineteenth century, colonial scholars and administrators considered philology to be one of the most authoritative forms of producing the history of South Asia. This was due to a Romantic turn in European philological studies that associated languages and literatures with nations and conceptualized them as the "outward expression" of a people's "inner essence."[94] In the earlier part of the century, this relationship between language, literature, and nation informed Orientalist research at Fort St. George and grounded various "civilizing" enterprises deployed by Europeans as moral justifications for imperial rule. However, by the last quarter of the century, Indian subjects had begun to appropriate and subvert these identifications to their own ends. Thus, even as philology served the Empire as a productive means of negotiating Britain's civilizational superiority and hegemonic cultural position, it also offered Indians a mode of negotiating their own position in the cultural and political frameworks of Empire. Projects of literary reform and universal education initiated by the English-educated at the turn of the

[92] Krishna Rao, *Progress of the Telugu Language*, 24.
[93] See Barnett, A Catalogue of the Telugu Books, 66.
[94] Mantena, "Imperial Ideology," 63.

century were motivated by the conviction that the Indian nation and its languages could one day achieve the developed status and autonomous status of the English within the Empire.

During the last decade of the nineteenth century, the new professionals had begun to turn to the Vijayanagara Empire (1336-1646) as a model of “Telugu Empire” on account of its historical patronage of classical Telugu literature. As one English-educated Telugu scholar noted as early as 1898, "Vijayanagara had become an imperial State, and the Telugus, bound to her [Vijayanagara] not merely by legal bonds but by indissoluble ties of interest and affection, brought to her their civilization.”[95] Vijayanagara and its successor states came to be seen as representative of great political and cultural moments in the history of the Telugu nation. This fascination with Vijayanagara, as opposed to earlier eras of Telugu literary history, related to a contemporary political desire among the English-educated to fashion Telugu speakers as members of an exceptional nation endowed with a rich imperial history of civilization and martial prowess. Within a couple decades, Telugu political activists were invoking Vijayanagara as evidence that they were an "imperial race" who deserved, among other entitlements, to be recruited to serve in the British Indian army.[96] As such, it is apparent that the new professionals cultivated literary and historical research as valuable political resources and representations of a Telugu political identity at the turn of the century consistently invoked Telugu literature from this era as a testament to the Telugu nation's imperial pedigree. In this regard, they turned to classical literary texts as valuable sources of historical research and national identity.

As language and literature came to be inextricably associated by graduates of Anglo-Verancular schools with the imagination of their “national destiny,” questions of literary taste and

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[95] G.R. Subramaiah, “Discursive remarks on the Augustan Age of Telugu Literature,” *The Indian Antiquary: A Journal of Oriental Research* 27, no. 12 (1898), 335.
[96] Mamidipudi, *Freedom Struggle* vol. 2, 334-338. Military recruitment from the Madras Presidency had been gradually phased out after the introduction of Crown Rule in 1857 under the notion that the "martial races" of the north were superior to those of the south. One of the political issues that early Telugu political activists mobilized around was resuming recruitments in the region.

improvement became implicated with questions of national history and progress.[97] These connections inform the work of Venneti Ramachandra Rao's 1899 *A Critique on the Literary Styles of Manucaritram and Vasucaritram* (*Manu-vasucaritra-racanā-vimarśanam*).[98] Venneti, a BA student of the Presidency College, was awarded first prize for his essay in a competition hosted by the Society. The essay presented itself as an "appeal to the Telugu reading public for the cultivation of a more correct taste for poetry" and solicited the particular attention of those who had the "discerning eye of the English cultured mind."[99] As Venneti notes in a short English preface appended to his essay:

> Readers of Shakespeare and Shelly, of Milton and Wordsworth, need not be told what it is in poetry that makes for the elevation of man to high-wrought moods of feeling and thought. It is the combination of a sense of intense reality—peculiarly the result of the imagination of the true poet, with the highest altitudes of thought which a philosopher may soar up to, that endows all poetry with effects at once consoling and inspiring. The chief aim, with which the following pages have been written, was to press home this method of appreciating poetry on the Telugu reading public—especially on the rising generation.[100]

Venneti's essay brought values derived from English Romantic poetry, configured here as "correct taste," to weigh on the merits of Telugu's two most celebrated works of medieval prabandham poetry. He expressed critical appreciation for the *Manucaritram* due to its original imagination, complex characterization, and ability to evoke a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" in the Wordsworthian manner. On the other hand, his essay condemns the *Vasucaritram* for its preoccupation with musicality, wordplay, and ornate Sanskrit compounds--qualities that had long been celebrated and emulated by earlier generations of Telugu poets and critics. In rereading these texts through the filter of an improved "correct taste," literary criticism emerged as a new means of canonization and tool of literary reform.

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[97] Mantena, "Imperial Ideology," 63.
[98] Venneti Ramachandra Rao, *Manu Vasucaritra Racanā Vimarśanamu - A Prize Essay on the Relative Merits of Peddanna's Manucharitra and Bhattu Murti's Vasucharitra* (Madras: Chintamani Press, 1899).
[99] Ramachandra Rao, *A Prize Essay*, i.
[100] Ramachandra Rao, *A Prize Essay*, i.

Venneti's method of literary criticism followed in the footsteps charted by P. Dakshinamurti's earlier 1892 treatise, *A Critical Essay on Pingali Surana*.[101] This essay had been presented before the Madras Christian College's Society for the Appreciation of the Telugu Language. In true Romantic fashion, Dakshinamurti, a BA student at the College, states that he is interested in illuminating the "poetic genius" (*kavitā-prauḍimam*) of the sixteenth-century poet Pingali Surana and lavishes praise on him for his creative imagination (*bhāvanāśakti*) above all else. Surana is represented as being ahead of his time and anticipating the narrative modernity of the English novel:

In his *Harīścandra-Nalopākhyānam*, the poet Rāmarājabhūṣaṇa gives excessively stylized descriptive passages (*varṇana*) in his description of a city... by contrast, Piṅgaḷi Sūrana's *Prabhāvati-Pradyumnam* does not give us such conventional descriptions of a city. Instead, from the very first verse, he begins the story with a conversation between Indra and Matali who observe the glories of Dwaraka to one another as they descend to Earth to visit Lord Krishna. And how lovely it is! Surana he does not rely on such extensive stylized descriptions but only the narrative to spark *rasa*... He is a poet very knowledgeable in poetics (*alaṅkāra śāstra*) and knows how to produce *rasa* and *bhāva* well.[102]

For Dakshinamurti, Surana is an ideal poet because of his avoidance of the lengthy descriptive passages that characterized Telugu *prabandhas*. Dakshinamurti prized Surana's seamlessness integration of description and narrative as opposed to the *varṇana* passages typically found in the work of canonical master poets such as Ramarajabhushana, and Peddanna. These he found disruptive to narrative flow. Further, we see Dakshinamurti drawing upon and redefining terms rooted in Sanskrit poetics, such as *rasa* and *bhāva*, in support of radically different poetic values. However, the greater part of the essay is actually an attempt to historically reconstruct the poet's biography by citing colophons and introductory verses from Surana's other works and comparing them with inscriptions collected by the Department of Archeology. In this regard, the essay

[101] P. Dakshinamurti, *A Critical Essay on Pingali Surana,* (Madras: Jyothishmaty Press, 1892).
[102] Dakshinamurti, *A Critical Essay on Pingali Surana*, 9-10.

represents a new historicist mode of engaging Telugu literature and displays new concerns around questions of genius, originality, and influence.

Dakshinamurti's essay appears to have generated new attention for Suranna's work and the "modernity" of his poetic style appears to have become a point of intense interest among English-educated Telugu students. In 1899 the Madras Christian College's Telugu society held a competition for essay writing and the top prize was awarded to yet another study of Surana and the novelistic qualities of his *Kalāpūrnodayam* and *Prabhāvati-Pradyumnam*. This latter essay was written by C.R. Reddy, a BA student of the Christian College and considered by many as the "Father of Telugu Literary Criticism."[103] That same year, Reddy received another top prize from the Society in a competition to encourage new poetic writing (*navya kāvya racayitalaku*).[104] Reddy produced a short story in verse, *Death of an Old Woman* (*Musalamma Maraṇam*), that combined stylistic elements of prabandham poetic genre with English narrative values to produce an original example of reformed Telugu poetry. Another reference to the activities of Christian College's Telugu society appears in A. Ramachandra Nayudu's 1901 translation *Sumati* of Lord Alfred Tennyson's Romantic poem *Dora* into "pure Telugu verse."[105] Nayudu's translation was awarded the top prize in the Society's poetry competition of that year.

Early Telugu Literary Societies: Members and Aims

Presidency College's Society for the Development of Telugu Literature and Madras Christian College's Society for the Appreciation of Telugu Literature represent two early attempts to institutionalize the study and appreciation of Telugu literature by Anglo-Vernacular

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[103] This would become the core of his pioneering work of literary criticism that he would publish in later years. Cattamanchi Ramalinga Reddy, *Kavitva Tattva Vicāramu Anu Piṅgaḷi Sūranārya Kṛta Kaḷāpūrṇodaya Prabhāvatipradyumnamula Vimaraśanamu - Principles of Poetry with Special Reference to the Works of Pingali Surana* (Madras: H.V. Krishna and Company, 1914).
[104] As quoted in Venkatasubbayya Gorrepati, *Ḍākṭar Si. Ār. Reḍḍi* (1963).
[105] Barnett, *Catalogue of Telugu Books*, 173.

students and graduates. Both of these societies hosted lectures, essay readings, and competitions for new works of literary criticism, literary translation, and original composition. Motivated by colonial notions of "revival" (*ujjīvana*) and "improvement" (*abhivṛddhi*) these societies sought to generate an interest in classical Telugu poets such as Peddanna and Bhattumurti among men more familiar with Milton and Wordsworth. Through the essays and lectures they sponsored, these college societies encouraged the application of literary standards and analytical methods typically used to assess English poets for Telugu poets. In this regard, Telugu literature was consistently compared and re-evaluated in terms of English literature and literary history and works of classical poetry such as the *Kalāpūrnodayam* or *Manucaritram* were, in effect re-written through new protocols of reading as enlightened vernacular works that anticipated English novels and Romantic sensibilities.[106] Consequently, these early societies were instrumental in recasting the conditions of literary and cultural significance that determined the interest of English-educated professionals in Telugu.

This is demonstrated in the progressive historical perspective that informed Ramarayaningar and Krishna Rao's treatment of Telugu literature. Centering the social and moral concerns of the Victorian era, their essays represented changes in Telugu literary style and

[106] Sometimes, literary works were not merely "re-written" through new protocols of reading but actually re-written through new editorial practices. As early as 1882 Telugu pundits had begun to produce expurgated versions of Telugu texts for colonial schools. See: *The History of Nala in Poetry with Notes, Expurgated Edition - Nalopakhyānam Nannaya Bhaṭṭāraka Praṇītamu Śrī Āndhra Mahābhāratamunandalidi* ed. and ann. B. Seetharamacaryudu, C. Seetharama Sastrulu, and C. Soobbarayaloo Naidu (Madras: Kalaratnakaram Press, 1882). Later English-educated editors not only removed objectionable passages but even rewrote them. As P. Sreenivasa Charlu writes on an edition of an eighteenth-century poem he had arranged, "[I have taken the] liberty of removing some verses and altering others in order to satisfy the demands of modern taste as regards descriptions of feminine charms." Kotisvara Kavi, *Bhojasutā Pariṇayamu* ed. Panappakam Srinivasacaryulu (Madras: Vaijayanti Press, 1909), Preface. Similarly, K. Gopaul Rao not only boasts of "rewriting" the text "with a view to preserve whatever literary excellence there is" in his edition of the eighteenth-century *Candrarekha Vilāpam* but prays for the day that "manuscript copies of the original, which now hold the field and sin against purity and literary taste, will gradually go out of existence." Kucimanci Jaggakavi, *Candrarekha Vilāpamu*. ed. and revised by Kalluri Gopala Ravu (Madras: Jyotishmati Press, 1913), Preface. These new editorial practices reflected a sensibility that intervening in texts to "correct" them was acceptable in order to improve them. It can be seen as an extension of earlier paṇḍita editorial practices to "correct" scribal errors, perceived mistakes in grammar, or other imperfections (*doṣas*). These sensibilities sat uneasily alongside the emergence of a new historicist sensibility and notions of textual authenticity.

form in evaluative terms of civilizational progress and decline. In this regard, Telugu literature came to be seen as a barometer of the social and cultural conditions of the Telugu people. The introduction of a historical interest in reading Telugu poetry inspired a new fascination and investment in Telugu literature among the new professionals. Great works of Telugu poetry came to be conceptualized as "historical facts" that could function as "evidence" in producing new and authoritative knowledge about the moral character and civilized origins of the Telugu people. Consequently, the act of reading and appreciating a classical work of poetry such as *Manucaritram* in these college societies was not simply a rarified experience of aesthetic enjoyment, as may have been the case in more traditional literary gatherings of the period, but a reading and retrieval of the Telugu people's national identity. The era of the Vijayanagara Empire and the rise of the prabandham genre came to signify a Golden Age of Telugu literature and the rise of the Telugu people as, in the idiom of Victorian English, an imperial race. As the essays of Krishna Rao and Venneti suggest, the aesthetics of the prabandham genre—whether it be the delight in śṛngāra rasa or the fascination with euphony—eventually induced a decadent literary and moral state of affairs from which Telugu people and their literature still struggled to break free. The only hope of remedying this situation, to conscientiously "improve" this situation as Ramarayaningar and Krishna Rao argued, lay in reviving the past imperial glory of Telugu through the introduction of English literary forms and knowledge.

It was precisely along these lines of improvement and revival that the college Telugu societies hosted competitions encouraging the use of new English-based styles and themes in Telugu prose and poetry. The essays of literary criticism produced by Venneti, Dakshinamurthi, and Reddy for these competitions incorporated English methods of textual analysis and were praised as successful models of Telugu discursive prose. Reddy's short story in verse and

Nayudu's Tennyson translation indicate experimental attempts to combine the taste and sensibilities of Romantic poetry with Telugu poetic form. Such works reflect the active cultivation of what Venneti had referred to in the English preface of his Telugu essay as the "correct taste" of the "English cultured mind." This, in turn, was considered to be a critical step toward reinvigorating the Telugu moral character and returning its literature to the advanced state it once held.

We can infer, based on the fact that they were attached to colleges, that the members of these societies were largely drawn from students. Ramarayaningar, who spoke at the first anniversary of the Presidency Telugu Society, was himself an alumnus of the College. It is possible that alumni and other eminent graduates who were resident in Madras also participated as sponsors, speakers, and important guests at these societies. These societies were, as with the debating societies and reading rooms discussed earlier, welcoming to men of "respectable" castes. Uniquely, while the general social composition of the English-educated had a preponderance of Brahmins, the majority of authors mentioned above hailed from non-Brahmin communities.[107]

It is unclear to what extent the events and competitions of these societies may have been open to a larger public. However, as evidenced by the pamphlets, the essays and lectures that emerged from these societies were published by leading Indian presses of the period and circulated beyond the immediate contexts of society meetings. Ramarayaningar's essay was published as a pamphlet by the *Āndhra Prakāśika* office. As mentioned earlier, this was a weekly Telugu newspaper that was sympathetic to the politics of the Indian National Congress. The

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[107] Ramrayaningar was a Velama, C.R. Reddy was a Reddy, Ramachandra Nayudu was likely a Balija Setty (his father is mentioned as having the name Gopisetty Muniswami). Ramachandra Nayudu's specific caste is not known but Nayudu was an appellation taken by non-Brahmins. Venneti Ramachandra Rao's caste is also indeterminable as Rao was used by several castes including Niyogi Brahmins. The only clearly distinguished Brahmin in this group is Krishna Rao, who held the characteristically non-Brahmin position of a zamindar.

essays of Krishna Rao, Gopala Naidu, and Venneti were published by the Chintamani Press which had been established by the social reformer Kandukuri Viresalingam and was associated with the popular reformist-minded literary journal *Cintāmaṇi*. Venneti's essay on classical Telugu poetry was successful enough to even be prescribed in the University's 1901 Telugu syllabus. C.R. Reddy's 1899 prize-winning essay on the Pingali Surana was not printed at this time but he writes that was invited to personally deliver it on several different occasions. In particular, he mentions being invited to present at a meeting of Rajahmundry's Vidyā-Abhivardhanī Saṅghamu (Society for the Improvement of Knowledge) by a fellow member of the Christian College's Telugu Society. Reddy's essay received the warm support of his English-educated peers such as Chilakamarti Lakshminarasimham, editor of the aforementioned *Cintāmaṇi* journal as well as scholars such as Durba Subrahmanyam, a Telugu pundit based in Nellore.[108] Notably, Reddy's essay formed the core of his later 1914 work of literary criticism, *Principles of Poetry* (*Kavitva Tattva Vicāram*) which was to become one of the most influential works of Telugu literary criticism authored by an English-educated Telugu scholar in the early twentieth century.

As we can see through such examples, the activities of these societies may have been limited to a small clique of college students but their capacity to influence and reshape public interest in Telugu literature was not insignificant. The college Telugu societies were critical spaces through which theories of historical progressivism, Victorian moral concerns, and Romantic literary sensibilities were experimentally engaged and intentionally assimilated into Telugu literary discourses by the new professionals. Through print and personal networks, these discourses travelled well beyond the elite rooms of Madras' top English colleges and were integral to the formation of a new middle-class Telugu literary ethos. Members of these societies

[108] Reddy, *Kavitva Tattva Vicāram*, v. Durba even wrote several verses in praise of the essay.

produced works that were considered models of modern Telugu writing and their stylistic and intellectual concerns permeated Telugu society wherever Anglo-Vernacular schools and their graduates could be found. Their impact is attested in the explosion of new prose genres such as the novel, critical essay, and the remarkable number of translations from English Romantic poetry that were produced in the following decade.

Pundits and Early Telugu Literary Societies

As new spaces of elite literary life were established in cities and older spaces transformed, what did this mean for traditional Telugu and Sanskrit *paṇḍita* scholars? Where did they fit into this transition and how did the new English-educated professionals relate to them? The fates of these scholars have been generally unexamined. During the Company Period, older patronage structures began to erode with transformations in land tenure and the shifting cultural interests of the elite. Many of these scholars were impoverished by the fragmentation or loss of ancestral lands that had been a source of income and compelled to look to less rewarding and less prestigious forms of employment.

As we saw in Chapter one, a small number of Telugu and Sanskrit *paṇḍitas* were recruited to serve in the research and educational projects of the East India Company. Their interactions with European Orientalist scholars played a formative role in the development of Telugu as a colonial school subject and their reinvention as Telugu "school pundits." With the expansion of Anglo-Vernacular education, many more *paṇḍitas* were able to recast themselves as school pundits and enter the service of the Department of Public Instruction. However, these new

positions were mostly at the primary school level and were poorly paid, low status, and culturally marginal.[109]

A limited number of school pundits, particularly those affiliated with the Anglo-Vernacular institutions of higher learning at Madras such as Presidency College, Madras Christian College, Pachaiyappa's College, and the Madras Normal School wielded substantial influence in setting the colonial Telugu school curriculum. These school pundits played an important role in creatively bridging *paṇḍita* literary sensibilities and modes of linguistic scholarship with the pedagogical aims of the Department of Public Instruction. A little remarked upon feature is that the Telugu pundits of these higher institutions were all familiar with English. It was a requirement that they pass the matriculation exam of the Anglo-Vernacular system in order to secure employment with the Department.[110] Some pundits, such as Vedam Venkataraya Sastri (1853-1929), the Sanskrit and Telugu instructor at Madras Christian College during the 1890s, had even studied up through the BA curriculum.[111] Others, such as Kokkonda Venkataratnam (1842-1915), the Telugu pundit at Madras Presidency College for much of the late nineteenth century, were known to be fluent in English and familiar with British Orientalist scholarship. To this end, we may say that Telugu school pundits, though no strangers to English, were identified first and foremost by their skill and expertise with pre-colonial modes of scholarship.

As authors, editors, publishers, and booksellers, more resourceful pundits adapted classical works of Telugu poetry, Sanskrit religious texts, and older styles of scholarship to print and were

[109] Although not exactly the same context, Krishna Kumar discusses the low position of Indian schoolteachers in the colonial period in his chapter on the "Meek Dictator: The Paradox of Teacher's Personality." Krishna Kumar, *Politics of Education in Colonial India* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2014), 67-101.
[110] This was not true at lower levels – normal school certifications were encouraged, but due to demand these were often waived in practice.
[111] In a biography by his grandson, it is noted that Vedam had passed the FA exam and had taken multiple courses in the BA curriculum but dropped out to take a teaching post at the Madras Christian College. Vedam Venkataraya Sastri (Junior), *Vedam Venkaṭarāya Śāstrulavāri Jīvitacaritra Saṅgrahamu* (Madras, 1943).

able to recuperate a modicum of financial support and intellectual renown through the Telugu book market. Both Vedam and Kokkonda were Telugu print entrepreneurs in this regard and operated their own printing presses. Kokkonda was an editor of one of the longest running Telugu literary journals of the nineteenth century, *Āndhra Bhāṣa Sañjīvani* (1871-1883; 1892-1900).[112]

One might expect that the Telugu pundits such as Vedam Venkataraya Sastri and Kokkonda Venkataratnam who were employed by Anglo-Vernacular colleges would have been responsible or at least involved in the activities of the new Telugu literary societies to some degree. As we saw in chapter one, their predecessors such as Cinnaya Suri of the Madras University High School had subscribed and participated in the activities of early voluntary societies established by the first generation of Anglo-Vernacular graduates such as the Madras Upayukta Grantha Karana Sabha (Society for the Composition of Useful Works). However, the connection of Telugu pundits to the new literary societies connected to Anglo-Vernacular Colleges in the 1890s is entirely unclear. It is noteworthy that despite their prominent public presence in Telugu literary debates and print culture during this period, none of the lectures or essays delivered at these societies were by pundits. This illuminates the new middle-class nature of these new literary spaces and an emerging cultural distinction between Telugu school pundits and the new English-educated professionals.

However, this does not necessarily suggest the existence of a rigid division between the literary interests of Telugu pundits and the new professionals, a growing chasm between "tradition" and "modernity," as is often suggested in the secondary scholarship on this period. It

[112] Unfortunately, copies of *Āndhra Bhāṣa Sañjīvani* appear to be unavailable at any of the major public archives. This is a major gap for any attempt to study late nineteenth-century Telugu literary culture. I have had to rely on secondary sources for descriptions of this historically important journal. See: Nidudavolu Venkata Rao, "Literary Journalism" in *Studies in the History of Telugu Journalism* ed. K.R. Seshagiri Rao (New Delhi: The New India Press, 1968); Vi. Lakṣmaṇa Reḍḍi, *Tĕlugulo Patrikāracana* (Vijayavāḍa: Lakṣmī Pablikeṣans, 1988), 57-59.

is noteworthy that the only contemporary Telugu author to be explicitly named by Ramarayaningar in his first address to the Presidency College's Telugu society is his former teacher and the College's Telugu pundit Kokkonda Venkataratnam. Ramarayaningar points to the recent publication of Kokkonda's *Bilveśvarīyam*, a kṣetra mahātmyam on the Siva temple of Tiruvallam in the North Arcot District, as a laudatory example of "unprecedented" contemporary poetry.[113] *Bilveśvarīyam* had been published by P. Ananda Charlu, a prominent English-educated vakil at the Madras High Court, one of the founders of the English newspaper *The Hindu*, and the leading Telugu Congressman of the decade. In a retrospective of this period, Ananda Charlu's son Sreenivasa Charlu refers to Kokkonda as one of the greatest Telugu prose writers of the "Victorian Era" of Telugu literature. Ananda Charlu's patronage of Kokkonda and Ramarayaningar's high praise for his work suggests that the concerns of English-educated professionals with reviving and improving Telugu literature during the 1890s were not exclusively restricted to adapting English literary genres or translating European forms of knowledge.[114]

Likewise, Telugu pundits were not unilaterally opposed to the new experiments in applying Romantic and historicist modes of criticism to Telugu literature. C.R. Reddy writes that at a presentation of his 1899 prize winning essay mentioned earlier, Vedam Venkataraya Sastri welcomed his efforts and offered helpful revisions in developing the essay's line of argument. Reddy shared early drafts of his "modern" literary criticism with Vedam and adjusted his work to reflect this engagement. Yet this connection is not mentioned in biographies of Reddy and his decisive role in defining middle-class sensibilities around classical Telugu literature in the twentieth century. It is true that Reddy's methods of literary criticism introduced significant

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[113] Ramarayaningar, *The Desirability of Andhra Sabahs*. This appears to have been a *kṣetra mahātmyamu* that was a translation of a Tamil work of the same name.
[114] Panappakam, *Śrī Vikṭoriyā Cakravartini*, 6-7.

“breaks” in the way classical Telugu was studied and read even to this day. This is no doubt due to his familiarity with Victorian sensibilities of literary taste and morality. But it is equally true that the “break” he imagined occurred in a context of close conversation and engagement with Telugu pundits such as Vedam Venkataraya Sastri, his Telugu teacher at Madras Christian College.

Pundits were also not above adapting the new genres of discursive prose or methods of critical analysis to assert their own perspectives. The Telugu pundit Kasibhatta Brahmayya Sastri writes in the introduction of his *An Illumination of the Manucaritram and Vasucaritram* (*Manu-Vasu-Prakāśika*) that the assignment of Venneti’s critical essay in the University’s 1901 Telugu syllabus provoked him to publish his own response in the Telugu literary journal *Manjuvāni*.[115] Kasibhatta argued that the formalist interest demonstrated by Telugu poets in language, i.e. wordplay and euphony, the interest that Venneti found so artificial and repugnant, was in fact universally appreciated by poets in all languages. In support of his argument, Kasibhatta cites ample examples from well-known English poets of the day, including most conscientiously verses by the famous architect of the colonial government's Anglo-Vernacular education policy, Thomas Babington Macaulay. Kasibhatta’s prose essay was enthusiastically received by many scholars of the day, including a number of English-educated professionals. In 1906, it was prescribed for the University’s Telugu syllabus.

As such, intellectual and social relations between Telugu pundits and English-educated Telugu professionals was much more complicated and entangled than is commonly acknowledged by current scholars of Telugu literature. Most, if not all, of the students who participated in these societies would have studied Telugu as a subject under one of the college

[115] Kasibhatta, Brahmayya Sastri. "Manu-Vasu-Prakāśika - An Illumination of the Manucaritramu and Vasucaritramu," *Manjuvani* 2, no. 9 (1900).

Telugu pundits and many would maintain a loyal and deferential support to their authority well into their later lives. As the admiration of the Panappakam father and son duo for Kokkonda Venkataratnam suggests, these relationships could even extend through several generations.

Although pundits did not directly appear as intellectuals or interlocutors in the literary societies organized by the new professionals, they were certainly connected to their dissemination through print. Dakshinamurti's essay was published by the Christian College's Vedam Venkataraya Sastri at his Jyotishmati Press. As mentioned above, the essays by Krishna Rao, Gopala Naidu, and Venneti were published by Viresalingam's Chintamani Press in Rajahmundry. At the time of these publications, Viresalingam was the Head Telugu Pundit of the Rajahmundry Provincial College, the most important Anglo-Vernacular college for Telugu speakers north of Madras.[116] C.R. Reddy mentions that he had been approached with an offer by Vavilla & Sons, a pundit press famous for its editions of classical Telugu and Sanskrit poetry, to print his early essay.[117]

Of course, printing an essay cannot be taken as an overt endorsement of the values it represents. However, we cannot also say that Telugu pundits were unaware or necessarily resistant to contemporary literary and intellectual developments as they have been consistently represented. If anything, Telugu pundits were key mediating figures in the circulation of these new discourses and forms of literary engagement. Pundits and Anglo-Vernacular graduates shared the same print sphere during this critical period of change and were often driven by similar concerns of improvement and revival. School pundits attached to colonial institutions had been initiating efforts to improve Telugu's expressive capabilities through prose and poetry since

[116] Viresalingam would later become the Head Telugu Pandit at the Presidency College, serving in this post from 1899-1904.
[117] Reddy, *Kavitva Tattva Vicāram*.

the 1860s.[118] It was only in the 1890s that English-educated professionals began to take a sustained interest in the condition of the Telugu language and its literature and that its improvement came to be constituted as a "public matter" through their associational activities.

Although pundits and the new professionals may have differed in their imagination and approach to linguistic and literary reform, during the late nineteenth century and into the first decades of the twentieth, they more likely to see one another as allies and cooperate with each other's projects than compete with one another. In fact, it was not until the 1920s that we see an intractable antagonism emerging between pundits and the new professionals as arbiters and producers of Telugu knowledge. Many of the figures mentioned above—Telugu pundits Kokkonda, Vedam, Viresalingam, and Kasibhatta as well as Anglo-Vernacular graduates such as Ramarayaningar, Krishna Rao, and Reddy—continued to collaborate and support projects oriented toward the improvement of Telugu through translation and new compositions for the rest of their lives. The nature of this collaboration, as well as its limits, will become clear in the following section where I will discuss the activities of the Congress of Telugu Pundits.

Consolidating a Literary Public: The Congress of Telugu Pundits

The First Congress of Telugu Pundits (*Āndhra Kavipaṇḍita Saṅghamu*) was organized in 1897 as a public forum for the resolution of certain linguistic and literary debates that had emerged over the past decade of new literary activism. It was an unprecedented event that sought to consolidate an emergent scholarly public and establish a permanent institution to coordinate efforts to

[118] I refer here once more to Kokkonda's *Āndhra Bhāṣa Sañjīvani*. This was the first journal to coin Telugu synonyms for English scientific and technical words and pioneered early book reviews, political commentary, and new styles of poetry. Kokkonda published an 1895 article in this journal on the art of newspaper editing, *Vārtāpatrikā Lakṣaṇa Praśaṃsa*. We may also consider *Sujanarañjani* (1864-67) run by Bahujanapalli Sitaramacaryulu and other pundits of Madras Normal School. This early journal worked to develop new Telugu terminology for English words and published notes for Telugu texts prescribed by the University. The motivation and operation behind such efforts deserves further investigation. Lakṣmaṇa Reḍḍi, *Tĕlugulo Patrikāracana*, 57-59.

improve Telugu language and literature. The Congress emerged in the associational context of the late 1890s in which conferences, and the standing committees that organized them, had become increasingly common forms of organizing constituencies and advocating for particular interests on a representational basis. As with voluntary societies, conferences were a new form of associational culture in southern India. Voluntary societies could sponsor or participate in conferences and conferences could generate the establishment of new voluntary societies. The difference between them was one of duration. Conferences were temporary events at which matters of concern would be debated and a course of action would be collectively decided in the form of resolutions that were passed through votes.

Aside from the proliferation of district and taluk conferences associated with the Indian National Congress, conferences were also being organized by departments of the Madras government. Toward the end of the decade, the Department of Public Instruction hosted a series of conferences at which education in vernacular languages was an important topic.[119] As the literary developments nurtured at the new Telugu societies demonstrate, English-educated Telugu professionals had begun to display a new interest in improving Telugu literature. However, just what this improvement entailed—its standards, methods, and even its conception—was not immediately clear to the actors involved. The Congress attempted to bring together leading Telugu pundits of the day from across the Telugu speaking region in order to produce a consensus on the direction and projects of linguistic and literary reform that were necessary to reshape Telugu as a language of modern artistic, intellectual, and political expression. This included projects to foster modern scientific knowledge in Telugu, encourage the use of discursive prose over verse, and conform to imperial Victorian standards of literary taste. The

[119] Between 1896-98 a series of education conferences were hosted by the Department of Public Instruction at Madras dealing with the topic of vernacular education.

uniqueness and significance of the Congress was recognized in its own day and praised by the likes of Telugu newspaper editors, college professors, lawyers, poets, and pundits.[120] Like many of the activities that constituted Telugu literary life during the late nineteenth century, little is known about the Congress. In putting together the following account and observations on the Congress, I have drawn on an 1898 report published by the Congress as well as a biography of one of its most notable participants, Vedam Venkataraya Sastri.[121]

The first Pundit Congress was convened in 1897 by the Sarasavinodini Sabha, a Telugu literary society based in Bellary, at the frontiers of the Telugu and Kannada-peaking region. This society had initially been established in 1871 as a famine relief organization. In 1873 it was transformed into a debating society named Veera Sangham with a special interest in reading English and Sanskrit plays. In 1886 the organization was restructured once more as a dramatic society that staged dramas in Telugu and Kannada. The prime mover behind the various lives of this organization was Dharmavaram Ramakrishnamacharyulu (1853-1912), an English-educated lawyer who had passed the F.A. and pleader's examinations and hailed from a family of Telugu and Sanskrit paṇḍita scholars. He had acquired substantial wealth working as a private vakil in Bellary's cantonment and, through the voluntary societies he initiated, had become an influential patron of the arts whose reputation reached fall beyond Bellary.[122] The Sarasavinodini Sabha's stated objective was, "to raise the level of the drama in the vernacular literature which has been

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[120] The proceedings of the Congress begin with letters congratulating its organizers from the likes Parthasarathi Nayudu, editor of *Āndhra Prakāśika*, T.M. Seshagiri Sastri M.A., Professor of Vernacular Languages at Presidency College, Kandukuri Viresalingam, and several well-known pundits of the day.
[121] Dharmavaram, Ramakrishnamacharyulu, *Āndhra Kavipaṇḍita Saṅghamu Prathama Vatsaramu Jarigina Nirdhāraṇamula Yŏkkayu Nupanyāsamula Yŏkkayu Caritra Saṅgrahamu - The Report of the First Congress of Telugu Pundits* (Bellary: Rama Vilasa Press, 1898). Venkataraya Sastri (Junior), Vedam Venkaṭarāya Śāstrulavāri Jīvitacaritra.
[122] His grandfather had been a local teacher and vaidya or medical practitioner. His father had also worked as a healer (vaidya) and served as Telugu pundit at the Wardlaw High School of Bellary, a missionary institution affiliated to the London Missionary Society. Ponangi Sri Rama Apparao, *Dharmavaram Ramakrishnamacharyulu*. trans. Dharmavaram Ajitha Simha (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1994), 14.

lamentably poor."[123] Dharmavaram's organization counted both Kannada and Telugu speaking members and the first play it staged was a Kannada play authored by Dharmavaram himself. Although he began his career as a playwright in Kannada, the majority of Dharmavaram's dramas were in Telugu. Drama was a new genre in Telugu that did not have a historical precedent. It was only since the 1870s that Telugu translations of Sanskrit plays had begun to be published in print. In this regard, Dharmavaram was considered a pioneering literary figure for authoring original Telugu plays on the model of Sanskrit *rūpakas*. By 1910, Dharmavaram had authored over twenty plays and staged them in Madras, Hyderabad, and several smaller cities.

The Congress was convened during the Easter holidays of 1897 by Dharmavaram at the Sarasavinodini Sabha's performance theater.[124] This would have allowed those pundits connected to Anglo-Vernacular schools and English-educated professionals in government employ to arrive. The event lasted for three days and all costs were borne by the Sabha. The Congress hosted 32 scholars although many more appear to have been invited. The most prominent scholars who attended were the Head Telugu Pundit of the Presidency College Kokkonda Venkataratnam and the Head Sanskrit Pudit of the Madras Christian College Vedam Venkataraya Sastri. Pundits arrived from across the Presidency but most of them seem to have been based in Madras or the Ceded Districts. Bellary was well connected to these areas through the Southern Mahratta Railway. The railway connection between the Northern Circars and Madras were not properly connected by railway until 1899 and posed a challenge for many who would attend from this region. It also appears that the invitations were sent at somewhat of a short notice since many pundits wrote to Dharmavaram regretting their inability to avoid their obligations and requested

[123] *Report on Public Instruction in the Madras Presidency 1898-1899*, "Appendix H."
[124] This theater appears to have been little more than an open public space with temporary of palmyra thatched shelters. The Sabha obtained its first permanent hall in 1907 with a 6,000 rupee donation from Dharmavaram. Ponangi, *Dharmavaram*, 30.

that the first Congress be postponed to the following year so that necessary travel arrangements could be made. Despite the limited attendance, the overwhelming response to the Congress by pundits was one of enthusiasm and encouragement. Many prominent pundits who were unable to attend, such as Kandukuri Viresalingam, Vaddadi Subbarayadu, and Vavilala Vasudeva Sastri, submitted verses of praise poetry and ringing endorsements in prose of Dharmavaram's initiative.

Once the pundits had gathered at the Congress the first order of business was the election of P. Ananda Charlu (B.L.), the most prominent Telugu congressmen of the day, to preside over the event. Ananda Charlu had recently served as the President of the Indian National Congress in 1891 and was a current member of the Imperial Legislative Council (1895-1903). He was an avid collector of Telugu manuscripts as well as the editor and publisher of a Telugu literary monthly named *Vaijayanti* (1894-1899). The Congress also attracted local students, actors, and generally interested townsmen of Bellary. Discussions were held for two days from 7am until noon. During the evenings, attendants were treated to theatrical performances staged by members of the Sarasavinodini Sabha. The presence of such prominent scholars and politicians, the theatrical events, and its grandiose cultural ambitions imbued the Congress with great public interest and its proceedings were covered by contemporary English and Telugu papers.

The Pundit Congress was extraordinary not only for its imagination and centralization of a geographically diffuse Telugu scholarly public, but through the formal mechanisms it relied on to structure debate and build consensus. Ananda Charlu celebrated the relative novelty of convening such a large number of Telugu pundits together in one place. He also acknowledged in his Presidential address that since the Congress was organized in a "new fashion" (*nūtana pathakam*), it might be unfamiliar to several of the pundits who were attending such a gathering

for the first time. Consequently, he spent a significant portion of his speech explaining the protocols of debate and speech-making that were to be followed at the Congress. These were introduced as measures to ensure an efficient use of time. Ananda Charlu announced the formation of a subject subcommittee of 14 pundits that would be invested with the authority to specify the subjects of debate and appoint speakers whom it considered qualified to deliberate on them. The subjects of the debate were to be presented to the Congress in the form of resolutions (*nirdhāraṇamulu*). Speakers would address the audience from a podium and would be required to conclude their speech when Ananda Charlu rang a bell of warning. With the consent of the President, speakers who had not been appointed by the sub-committee could receive permission to deliver short comments on the topic at hand. Following the speeches on a given topic, the audience of pundits would demonstrate their consent for the proposed resolutions through applause. These were all conventions that were drawn from English debate norms but were not common to traditional paṇḍita-style gatherings.

What emerged as the most important concerns at the Congress of Telugu Pundits? Eight resolutions were passed at the first Congress.[125] These provide insight into what literary reforms and scholars felt the most pressing concerns facing the world of Telugu letters at this time. These can be essentialized as:

1. The establishment of a yearly Pundit Congress in order to produce useful literature, resolve linguistic debates, ensure that its regulations are not transgressed, and strengthen the Andhra language.

2. The activities of the Pundit Congress will be conducted by a standing committee that will maintain correspondence with pundits in all Telugu districts. It will have the power to form subcommittees as necessary.

[125] See Appendix One.

3. The formation of a subcommittee to oversee the creation of a new Telugu grammar that regulates the formation of words without relying on Sanskrit grammars.

4. The formation of a subcommittee to settle the origins of Telugu etymologies through the study of Dravidian (*sajāti*) and other languages.

5. That members should endeavor to always speak Telugu and conduct their daily affairs in correct (*grānthika*) language and avoid irregular non-standard language (*grāmya*).

6. That contemporary authors strive to produce original dramas, technical writings, and writings in new styles in order to improve Telugu (*bhāṣābhivṛddhi*).

7. That Congress members will conduct fundraising from Telugu patriots (*āndhra-bhāṣa-abhimānulu*) such as Maharajas, Rajas, and the wealthy men of their respective districts on behalf of the President P. Ananda Charlu.

8. To appeal to Director of Public Instruction Dr. Duncan and High Court Justice Subrahmanya Iyer to ensure that students who choose to take the vernacular language test should be given sound training in literary criticism.

As per the report published by the Congress, all of these resolutions were passed unanimously by the pundits in attendance through hearty votes of applause. However, Vedam's biography contradicts this representation by documenting several controversies at the event, most notably between the two most senior pundits at the event. The fifth resolution, that all members of the Congress should strive to speak in the literary register, was a particularly significant source of contention. This resolution claimed that while English and Sanskrit adhered to the same grammatical principles in speech as well as in text, Telugu speech was full of ungrammatical "*grāmya*" or uncivilized words. Kokkonda Venkataratnam, who appears to have been the inspiration for this resolution, gave a speech arguing that just as colonial schools trained Telugu students to speak and write grammatical English, the same institutions should be used to socialize students into speaking the grammatical *grānthika* register of Telugu. He claimed that

pundits could set an example through their own usage of this form of Telugu and that their conduct would gradually influence the broader population.

In chapter one, we reviewed how early grammatical experiments by the pundits at Fort St. George and the Madras University High School had led to the development of grammatical Telugu prose. *Grānthika* was the name given to the register of Telugu prose that had evolved in connection with Cinnaya Suri's grammar *Bālavyākaraṇam* and prose rendering of the Sanskrit *Pañcatantra*, *Nīticandrika*. Both of these texts were taught in colonial schools as the standards of Telugu language and style and central to pundit claims to linguistic expertise. In practice, *grānthika* was more of an aspiration than a reality and a variety of prose styles flourished during this time under the name.

In chapter one, I noted that Telugu grammarians classified Telugu vocabulary into four categories: *tatsama*, *tadbhava*, *deśya*, and *grāmya*. Poets were allowed to use the first three categories and heavily restricted in relation to the fourth. The first two categories were derived from Sanskrit while *deśya* included Telugu and other non-Sanskrit origin words attested by poetic usage. The last category included a range of foreign, dialectical, and local Telugu words that did not have a precedent of poetic usage. The efforts of early Telugu school grammars had led to the proscription of *grāmya* words in poetry to be extended into the new contexts of formal and academic prose as well as the dramatic arts in the late nineteenth century. For Kokkonda, the elite cultural status of English and Sanskrit was due to the grammatical purity and consistency that existed across the domains of speech and text. In a context of social and cultural reform, Kokkonda believed that the same Anglo-Vernacular educational institutions and pedagogical practices that were responsible for producing English as a high-status language could be harnessed in support of improving and elevating the linguistic status of Telugu. By expanding the

use of *grānthika* Telugu from the realm of elite literature to the realm of everyday life, the community of Telugu speakers could transcend their status as a vernacular people and achieve a civilized status on par with the grammatically polite speakers of English and Sanskrit.

Kokkonda's desire to amplify the scope of the Congress's authority from the regulation of Telugu texts to the regulation of Telugu speech was highly controversial. Up to this time, the debates and questions around the linguistic and literary improvement of Telugu had centered entirely around its written forms. Naturally, not a few members of the Congress found Kokkonda's resolution highly objectionable. Members petitioned the President to grant permission to Vedam Venkataraya Sastri, who had not been approved to speak on this resolution by the subjects committee, to provide a counterargument. When Vedam was called by the President to address the Congress, he began by agreeing with Kokkonda on the scholarly virtues of communicating in the standard language (*vyākṛta bhāṣa*) fixed by Telugu grammars. However, he then went on to argue that it was an ineffectual means of communicating with the broader non-scholarly world and proposed the use of irregular language (*grāmya bhāṣa*) for everyday affairs. While this was not especially controversial, he proposed to amend the resolution to state that while the use of grammatical Telugu should be encouraged in oral and written communications among pundits but that the *grāmya* language should be used in speaking with the rest of society (*grāmya janulu*) and in representing their speech in literary contexts. Intriguingly, Vedam's biography contradicts the Congress' Report by claiming that Vedam's resolution prevailed at the Congress with grand applause.

Curses and Coercion: The Dissolution of the Pundit Congress

The tension that appeared between Kokkonda and Vedam at the First Pundit Congress continued to escalate after its conclusion.[126] A Second Congress of Telugu Pundits had been scheduled to take place during the Easter holidays of the following year under the auspices of the Sarasavinodini Sabha at Bellary once more. During this interval, Vedam produced an original Telugu play and a work of dramatic criticism that threatened the newborn fraternity and authority of the Pundit Congress. Vedam's play, *Pratāparudrīyam* (1897), was his first foray into the world of Telugu drama. It was a historical piece that, like most Telugu dramas of the period, was modeled after the Sanskrit *rūpaka* form. However, unlike Kokkonda, Dharmavaram, and several other leading Telugu dramatists of the period, Vedam chose to retain the Sanskrit convention of character-specific language (*pātrocita-bhāṣa*) as a gesture of realism.[127] In Sanskrit, character-specific language meant that higher status characters spoke in classical Sanskrit while lower-status characters such as women and people of lower castes spoke in Prakrit. The contemporary dramatic convention in Telugu, from its recent origins in the 1870s, had been to employ the granthika register of Telugu for all speakers. This convention was followed in translations as well as original compositions. Vedam rebuked this trend by having his high-status characters speak in granthika Telugu while his lower status characters spoke in *grāmya* Telugu. Vedam's literary criticism, *Śārada Kiṅkiṇi* (*The Tinkling Anklet of the Goddess of Learning*, 1898), was a study of Kokkonda's recently published *Āndhra Prasanna Rāghavam*, a Telugu translation of Jayadeva's twelfth century Sanskrit drama.

Vedam's play and critique of Kokkonda's work generated a public controversy that quickly exposed the deep fissures underlying the superficial consensus of the First Pundit Congress and provoked a crisis of authority that would eventually shatter the organization's aims to position

[126] Venkataraya Sastri (Junior), *Vedam Venkaṭarāya Śāstrulavāri Jīvitacaritra*, 74-78; 88-98.
[127] In this, Vedam followed the example set earlier by Gurajada Apparao in his play *Kanyāśulkam* (1897).

itself as the legitimate representative of scholarly opinion. Prior to printing his criticism of Kokkonda, Vedam circulated a draft of his work informally among several pundits. When word of Vedam's criticisms reached Kokkonda, he was incensed. A bitter public feud between the Head Pundit of Sanskrit at the Madras Christian College and the Head Pundit of Telugu at the Madras Presidency College ensued.

Using his position as the editor and publisher of the literary monthly, *Āndhra Bhāṣa Sañjīvani*, Kokkonda attempted to publicly intimidate Vedam in several ways. First, he published a poem (*padya kāvya*) on the proper etiquette of modern literary criticism. Kokkonda praised critics who reserved their comments to share with poets in private and cursed critics who reveled in publicly revealed them. When he heard that Vedam had initiated the process of printing his criticism, Kokkonda published a more extreme poem cursing anyone who issued a critique of his *Āndhra Prasanna Rāghavam* to die at the instant of its publication. However, the pages of Vedam's critique continued to flow through the printing press undeterred. As a last-ditch effort, Kokkonda directly attacked Vedam in his journal by condemning his use of *grāmya* in the *Pratāparudrīyam* and declaring that it deserved to be burned.

Vedam's critique was released as a book to the public a few months before the Second Pundit Congress was set to convene. The work was a deeply personal attack on Kokkonda's scholarship that verged on slander. Vedam questioned Kokkonda's knowledge of Sanskrit, ridiculed his inability to read the Devanagari script, claimed he was entirely uneducated in the science of Sanskrit Drama (*nāṭakalakṣaṇam*), and disparaged his religious beliefs and intelligence. Prominent pundits of the period took sides and the literary debate over the use of character-specific language took a darkly personal color. Vedam was supported by his friend Pundla Ramakrishnayya, the editor of the Telugu journal of literary criticism *Amudrita Grantha*

Cintāmani (*The Wishstone of Unprinted Works*), Tanjanagaram Tevaperumalayya, a Telugu pundit and editor of classical Telugu manuscripts for print, and Vaddadi Subbarayadu, a Telugu pundit at the Provincial College of Rajahmundry and an acclaimed translator of Sanskrit plays. Kokkonda had the support of Kolacham Sreenivasa Rao, a prolific Telugu playwright, Vavilikolanu Subba Rao, a Telugu pundit at the Presidency College and future translator of the *Vāḷmīki Rāmāyaṇa* into Telugu, and perhaps most importantly, the founder of the Pundit Congress Dharmavaram Ramakrishnamacharyulu himself. Dharmavaram visited Madras prior to the Second Congress in an attempt to convince Vedam to retract his criticism of Kokkonda. He argued that the controversy was undignified and degraded the public's esteem for pundits. When Vedam replied that his criticisms were analytically sound and justifiable, Dharmavaram said that the issue would be dealt with at the Congress.

True to his word, Dharmavaram proposed the formation of a new subcommittee of literary criticism (*kriti-vimarśa-upasangham*) at the Second Pandit Congress. The pundits of this committee were selected from the followers of Kokkonda and its first order of business was to resolve that the use of *grāmyam* in Telugu dramatic works be proscribed. The debate over the propriety of character-specific language in Telugu theater had been simmering since Telugu dramas first began to be staged in the 1870s and had even informed the broader discussion around Kokkonda's resolution to regulate colloquial speech during the last Pundit Congress.[128] Yet despite the caution of the Congress' presiding speaker and the protestations of Vedam and his followers, the resolution to ban the use of *grāmya* in dramatic works was unilaterally passed by the subcommittee. Proposals to include speeches on the topic by Vedam and his supporters such as Pundla Ramakrishnayya were overridden by the Subjects Committee. Dharmavaram then pressured Vedam to publicly submit to the new resolution on *grāmya* at the Congress. However,

[128] See Venkatachalam Sastri's question to the Congress in Appendix One.

Vedam flatly rejected the authority of the subcommittee by arguing that the absence of many important pundits from the Congress deprived it of the representative status necessary to pass such resolutions. Moreover, although the subcommittee may have been empowered to discuss and recommend such resolutions, it was by no means imbued with a prescriptive authority. The Congress lacked the by-laws and institutional mechanisms to execute or enforce resolutions that had been passed. Furthermore, the pundits in attendance had not consented nor been informed of any such arrangements. As such, Vedam successfully argued that he, as well as any other pandit present, was under no binding obligation to submit himself to any of the Congress' resolutions.

The eruption of the *grāmya* controversy challenged the Pundit Congress' ability to position itself as a representative and therefore authoritative voice in the world of Telugu literature. The First Pundit Congress had begun with grand ambitions and a flurry of public enthusiasm. It was believed that the Congress would provide a regular forum of communication that would enable efficient and systematic collaboration among Telugu pundits in projects of linguistic and literary reform. In this, the Congress would be integral to the improvement and elevation of Telugu from a vernacular language to an equal of Sanskrit and English in terms of cultural status and expressive capacity. However, Dharmavaram's attempt to subject Vedam to the regulations of the subcommittee at the Second Pundit Congress raised critical questions over the body's prerogative to govern the artistic expression of Telugu poets. Suddenly, the Congress was no longer the open forum for debate and consensus it had presented itself as but an overbearing court that operated through intimidation and coercion. This in turn lead to more fundamental questions on the nature and legitimacy of the Congress' authority to effectively mediate contemporary literary debates or arbitrate disputes between pundits.

The public feud between the Head Sanskrit Pundit of the Christian College and the Head Telugu Pundit of the Presidency College created an insurmountable divide among the attendants of the Congress that destabilized the prospect of consensus. Such disputes were not a matter of mere interpersonal conflict but reflected a structural reality in the world of Telugu scholarship and print at this time. Factionalism, as produced by the guru-disciple networks of Kokkonda and Vedam, was a very real feature of this period. Many of the Telugu pundits and Anglo-Vernacular graduates who attended the congress had been students or associates of Kokkonda at the Presidency College. In fact, the degree to which the factionalism shaped the expression of consensus through the debates and resolutions of the Congress, as opposed to the more democratic deliberations it aspired to, suggests that the image of a consolidated scholarly public conjured by Dharmavaram in his Report of the First Telugu Congress was an aspiration more than a reality. As Kokkonda would later describe in an account of the Second Pundit Congress for his *Āndhra Bhāṣa Sañjīvani*, "Like a stormy wind, Vedam Venkataraya Sastri and Pundla Ramakrishnayya sank the ship of the subcommittee on literary criticism belonging to Dharmavaram Ramakrishnamacharyulu and Macca Venkatakavi."[129] Vedam's rejection of the subcommittee dealt a crippling blow to the reputation of the Congress that it never recovered from. Although an invitation for a Third Congress of Pundits to be hosted in Nellore the following year had been issued, there are no further references to the Congress. We can assume that its inability to traverse its first significant challenge—a controversy between two different coalitions of professionals and pundits—lead to its abrupt dissolution.

Conclusion

[129] Venkataraya Sastri (Junior), *Vedam Venkaṭarāya Śāstrulavāri Jīvitacaritra*, Chapter Thirteen.

This chapter has outlined some early initiatives by English-educated Telugu professionals to adapt western forms of association to specifically Telugu literary and intellectual contexts during the 1890s. The Telugu literary societies they established in connection with the Madras Presidency College and Madras Christian College were important spaces for developing new public relationships to the Telugu language. These societies fostered new aesthetic sensibilities, reading practices, and methods of scholarship. In hosting lectures and literary competitions, they were crucial forums in forging and disseminating new middle-class conceptions of Telugu language and literature.

The most ambitious literary undertaking initiated by the new professionals during this decade was the Congress of Telugu Pundits. The Congress brought together graduates of Anglo-Vernacular educational institutions as well as the Telugu pundits who taught at them to resolve what were felt to be the most pressing concerns of the period. In inviting Telugu pundits to participate in the Congress, tutoring them in the protocols of British parliamentary debate, and organizing them through committees and sub-committees, the Congress served as an important forum for the English-educated professionals to assert cultural leadership. They saw the Congress as a patriotic initiative to bring "order" to a fractured literary sphere and improve the Telugu nation. Further, their efforts to integrate pundits as respected members of this new literary sphere suggests the importance they attributed to these scholars as important allies and participants of their projects to reform and improve Telugu literature.

The development of Telugu middle-class sensibilities during the late nineteenth century are often treated as the product of a radical and self-conscious break with "tradition." However, the organization of the Congress of Telugu Pundits suggests that the articulation of this new ethos was much more complex and ambivalent. The resolutions passed by the two styles of

Telugu intellectuals at the Congress demonstrates how Telugu had come to be understood as an object of shared public interest and reflected the new concerns of a emergent middle-class literary public. Although the Congress represented an important effort in bringing together Telugu scholars of diverse backgrounds and locations in order to build cultural consensus, it also revealed the deep divisions and factionalism that underlay this new public. Strikingly, the debates that foundered the Congress did not follow typical dichotomies of "traditional pundit" and "modern English-educated professional" but instead more ambiguous lines of patronage and guru-sishya connections. The new professionals and Telugu pundits would continue to collaborate and support one another in projects of literary reform into the next century, crucially contributing to remaking notions of language and community in early twentieth century south India.

Chapter Four

Telugu Classicism and the Andhra Sahitya Parishat, 1911-1915

Kings once patronized great poets
making their fame shine in all directions.
Look at them now!
They patronize horses and great elephants
casting the burden of honoring the worthy on the people!
—Anonymous, (1912)[1]

This final chapter examines the early years of the Andhra Sahitya Parishat (1911-1915) and its role in consolidating a Telugu literary public across the Madras Presidency.[2] The Parishat, also known as the Academy of Telugu Letters, became the first Telugu literary organization to successfully draw together a cross-section of scholars, poets, and patrons from across the Presidency onto a shared institutional platform. In this, it can be seen as a successor to the legacies of the Congress of Telugu Pundits discussed in the last chapter. The Parishat was one of the most ambitious projects of cultural entrepreneurship undertaken by English-educated Telugu professionals in the first half of the twentieth century and was a critical forum for the articulation of new middle-class cultural politics.

A subscription-based voluntary society, the Parishat outlasted all its peer institutions and dominated Telugu literary affairs for many decades before it was formally merged with the Andhra Pradesh Department of Archaeology in 1974. Through its scholarly journal, the *Āndhra Sāhitya Parishat Pattrika*, the Parishat pioneered modern practices of historical and epigraphic studies in Telugu, recovered and published medieval works of Telugu philology, and

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[1] *Āndhra Sāhitya Parishat Pattrika* 1.1, 7.

[2] In putting together this profile of the Parishat, I have consulted the Andhra Sahitya Parishat Institutional Records housed at the Andhra Sahitya Parishat Government Museum and Research Institute in Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh (ASPGM). I have also consulted Madras Presidency administrative records stored at the Tamil Nadu State Archives (TNSA).

reconceptualized the canons of classical Telugu literature by introducing the Telugu public to the *Rāyavācakamu* and other "lost works" of the sixteenth and seventeenth-century Nayaka states. The organization put together a significant library of rare Telugu and Sanskrit manuscripts, and held annual scholarly conferences for several decades. The Parishat's most significant scholarly production was the compilation of its seven-volume historical dictionary of Telugu, *Sūryarāya Āndhra Nighaṇṭuvu*. This work is considered one of the major Telugu philological achievements of the twentieth century and remains a standard lexical reference to this day.[3]

Despite its integral role in the formation of Telugu linguistic and literary modernity, leading Indian scholars have generally dismissed the significance of the Parishat's activities and projects. Telugu historian Arudra describes the Parishat's classicist initiatives as a mark of its "feudal" character and represents it as a "reactionary" organization of zamindars and pundits antagonistic to "progress" and "modernity."[4] The linguist Bhadriraju Krishnamurti follows Arudra in depicting the Parishat as a bastion of "traditional scholars" who resisted "scientific thinking on language" and claims that it "naturally collapsed under its own weight of internal contradiction."[5] Contemporary scholars continue to reproduce these perspectives on the Parishat. N. Venugopal Rao's 2017 essay, "Revisiting the 'Modern Telugu' Debates a Century Later," for example, identifies the Parishat as a reactionary collective of "traditionalists" staunchly opposed to

[3] The *Sūryarāya Āndhra Nighaṇṭuvu* consists of seven volumes that were published over a span of 38 years, from 1936-1972. No comparable project to produce a dictionary of classical Telugu has been attempted since. Its first four volumes were financed and published by the Maharajah of Pithapuram while its remaining three volumes were printed with grants from the central government of India and the state government of Andhra Pradesh. By the time its final volume was published, copies of its earliest volumes were no longer available on the market. Owing to its unique significance, the entire set has been reprinted by the Andhra Pradesh Sahitya Akademi several times. We may compare the *Sūryarāya Āndhra Nighaṇṭuvu* to the seven-volume *Tamil Lexicon* (1924-39). Other comparable projects in Indian languages during this time include the Nagari Pracharini Sabha's compilation of the *Hindi Shabdasagara* and the work of the Scientific Society of Aligarh in Urdu.
[4] Arudra, *Samagra Andhra Sahityam*, vol. 11, 359.
[5] Krishnamurti, "A Controversy of Styles in Education in Telugu."

linguistic and literary reform.[6] Such stereotyped assessments of the Parishat rely primarily on the polemical observations of its chief critic, Gidugu Venkata Ramamurti (1863-1940) rather than a serious engagement with the Parishat's own records and publications.[7] In fact, the Parishat does not appear as a significant organization in any historical account of this period except in direct relation to Ramamurti.[8] This remains true even in western scholarship such as Lisa Mitchell's work on the conceptualization of Telugu as a "mother tongue" or Rama Mantena's research on "vernacular publics." Both of these scholars refer to the Parishat exclusively in the context of Ramamurti's language activism.[9]

Although it certainly included traditionalist leaders of society such as zamindars and pundits, the Parishat was first and foremost an organization spearheaded by graduates of pre-eminent Anglo-Vernacular institutions such as the Madras Presidency College and Madras Christian College. As the previous chapters have shown, these new English-educated professionals attempted to draw on their exposure to western forms of learning and access to colonial structures of power in order to position themselves as influential intermediaries between colonial

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[6] N. Venugopal Rao, "Revisiting the "Modern Telugu" Debate a Century Later: The Pre- and Post-history of Gurajada Appa Rao's Minute of Dissent" in M. Sridhar and Sunita Mishra, eds, *Language Policy and Education in India: Documents, Contexts, and Debates* (New York, 2017).

[7] I refer here specifically to Ramamurti's English essay, *A Memorandum on Modern Telugu* (1912), as well as his Telugu works, *Āndhra Paṇḍita Bhiṣakkula Bheṣajam* (1933), *Gadya Cintāmaṇi* (1933), and *Śrī Sūryarāya Āndhra Nighaṇṭuvu Vimarśanam* (1939). These works fiercely condemned the Parishat's classicist projects and advocated for the introduction of *vyavahārika* or spoken Telugu as the educational standard of Telugu prose instead of the reigning *grānthika* or neoclassical register endorsed by the Parishat. Today, Ramamurti's texts continue to be reprinted and circulated by progressive and left activists as manifestos for a modern and egalitarian Telugu society. By contrast, documents produced by the Parishat such as its chairman Jayanti Ramayya's *Defense of Literary Telugu* (1913) are virtually unknown. Examining the Parishat primarily through Ramamurti's gaze obscures the historical fact that the organization conceived of itself as an agent of modernization. Consequently, Ramamurti's long-standing conflict with the Parishat points not to a contest between "modernity" and "tradition" but competing visions of Telugu modernity.

[8] The only exception is Jammālamaḍaka Śrīpāpa's bibliographic review of the Andhra Sahitya Parishat Pattrika. Jammālamaḍaka Śrīpāpa, "Āndhra Sāhitya Parishat Pattrika: Ŏka Pariśīlana," MPhil thesis, (Waltair: Andhra University, 2002).

[9] Mitchell refers to the Parishat just once, in the context of a close reading of Ramamurti's understanding of "modern Telugu" in relation to English. Mitchell, *The Making of a Mother Tongue*, 184. Mantena provides more information on the Parishat but again her interest is also to situate Ramamurti's language politics. She describes the Parishat's members as "self-conscious traditionalists" who were hostile to "Ramamurti's ideas of democratizing Telugu." Mantena, "Vernacular Publics," 1704-05.

administrators and Indian society. As a group, they were the main publicists and architects of projects to transform Telugu into a "modern" language of literature, education, and politics. The Parishat's establishment in 1911 followed upon more than two decades of Telugu literary organizing by English-educated professionals. It marked a critical milestone in their ascendance as leaders of Telugu cultural life and played an integral role in the making of a modern Telugu middle class identity.[10]

During its first decade, the Parishat mobilized a large network of university graduates, nationalist politicians, schoolteachers, and literary societies to successfully institutionalize itself as the authoritative and representative academic body of Telugu language and literature to colonial authorities as well as the wider Telugu public. It displayed a commitment to transforming Telugu into an effective medium of modern of education, scientific research, and government administration. It pursued this through a carefully considered project of "Anglicization" that mirrored recent developments in other South Asian languages such Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, and Bengali.[11] Anglicization involved a series of linguistic and literary projects to translate and adapt European knowledge into Indian languages. In this regard, Parishat members corresponded with Hindi and Bengali intellectuals on theories of translation and were at the

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[10] As chapter two has discussed, the Indian middle classes were made as much through projects of "cultural entrepreneurship" and conscious interventions in public life as economic factors. Joshi, *Fractured Modernity*, 7. The initiative to establish the Parishat by English-educated professionals reflected a bold new effort to claim social leadership on the basis of their cultural distinction from older aristocratic elites and the illiterate majority. Drawing on their hereditary caste privileges—the vast majority of Anglo-Vernacular graduates came from upper-caste backgrounds (and were by and large Niyogi Brahmins) —as well as their university credentials, members of the Parishat articulated an intermediary or "middle class" status that they believed placed them in a uniquely authoritative position to define Telugu modernity.

[11] Here again, I refer to the work of societies comparable to the aims of the Andhra Sahitya Parishat, namely the Nagari Pracharini Sabha (Hindi), Scientific Society of Aligarh (Urdu), Osmania University Bureau of Translation (Urdu), the Madurai Tamil Sangam (Tamil), and the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat (Bengali). There is very little scholarship on the formation or activities of such early literary organizations. Some of the available work I have been able to draw upon includes: Kavita Datla, *Languages of Secular Islam*; Christopher King, "The Nagari Pracharini Sabha (Society for the Promotion of the Nagar Script and Language) of Benares 1893-1914: A Study in the Social and Political History of the Hindi Language," PhD Diss., (University of Michigan, 1976); David Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977); Zvelebil, *Companion Studies to the History of Tamil Literature*.

forefront of efforts to remake Telugu into a vehicle of modern science.[12] The Parishat's projects included coining Telugu technical and scientific terminology, commissioning original scientific and historical research in Telugu, pioneering new forms of scholarly exchange such as the research essay and conference paper, and advocating for the full vernacularization of the colonial secondary school curriculum.[13] At the same time, the Parishat also invested heavily in classicist projects of philological research and publication, represented itself as the custodian of Telugu heritage, and championed the use of the neoclassical *grānthika* register of Telugu prose. It was specifically on account of these latter projects that the Parishat came to be identified as a feudal and traditionalist organization by later generations of scholars.

Given its English-educated membership and promotion of European knowledge, how do we situate the Parishat in the cultural politics of early twentieth-century south India? In what ways were its linguistic and literary projects implicated in emergent movements of regional and national assertion? How do we understand its interactions with older cultural elites such as pundits and zamindars? What do we make of the Parishat's English-educated members' deep fascination with Telugu Classicism? What I refer to as Telugu Classicism was a diverse range of initiatives that emerged in the late nineteenth century to: 1) collect, edit, and publish canonical as well as minor works of Telugu poetry in print; 2) produce philological, epigraphic, and historical research on Telugu literature; 3) patronize contemporary poetry and drama in "neoclassical" styles; and 4) promote the use of *grānthika* prose. Notably, the Parishat was the first institution to successfully consolidate and coordinate these initiatives on a provincial level. While many

[12] ASPGM, "Letters and Despatch Register 1914-15," letter no. 116 dated August 5, 1914. Parishat Secretary Achanta Lakshmipati wrote to the Secretary of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat for advice on the method of collecting "dialectical words as well as words relating to the various arts and industries in use in different parts of the Telugu country."

[13] Up to this period, education through the vernacular medium was only offered in primary schools and select secondary schools. For a full range of the projects initially proposed by the Parishat, please see its 1913 *Memorandum of Association* in Appendix Two.

scholars have caricatured the Parishat's interest in Telugu Classicism as the dying gasp of an *ancien régime*, I argue that it was a dynamic cultural response to the contemporary social and political realities of British imperialism in the early decades of the twentieth century. Thus, my analysis recasts the Parishat as an important institutional mediator of the colonial processes of change that redefined Telugu language and literature.

This chapter examines the establishment of the Parishat—documenting its key figures, social composition, and institutional affiliations—and examines its role in contemporary debates surrounding the standardization of Telugu prose and the first obscenity case in the Madras Presidency. I draw on the Parishat's financial and membership logs, institutional correspondence, minutes of general and senate meetings, and the educational and administrative records of the Madras Presidency. By reviewing the Parishat's membership, early interventions in public literary controversies, and its successful attempts to position itself as a nationalist intermediary, I demonstrate that Telugu Classicism was an important aspect of early twentieth-century Telugu negotiations with colonial modernity. Indeed, it constructively contributed to the popular imagination of Telugu as a "national" as well as a "classical" language as well as the articulation of a new middle-class literary ethos.

Nationalizing Vernacular Education: New Contexts of Telugu Literary Activism

> The village elders gather on the porch of the Rama temple
> to recite *Mahabharata* and talk of other things.
> "Telugu is a good language," they say.
> "This hissing-spitting *Engilis* that our boys are speaking
> goes no farther than their lips,
> even if they pass F.A., B.A., or some other A."
> —Dasu Sriramulu[14]

[14] David Shulman and Velcheru Narayana Rao, eds. and trans., *Poem at the Right Moment*, 40.

The last two chapters have provided an overview of the growth of Anglo-Vernacular education in the Telugu Districts and the emergence of English-educated Telugu professionals as a new social presence during the second half of the nineteenth century. We have discussed how these new professionals organized new spaces of literary and intellectual life in an effort to promote themselves as influential intermediaries between the colonial state and broader Telugu society. At the beginning of the twentieth century, certain educational, social, and political developments converged to generate a heightened sense of urgency and greater public interest in projects to revive and improve vernacular languages and literatures. The Indian Universities Act of 1904 introduced curricular reforms that laid a new emphasis on vernacular languages in colonial secondary education. In 1910, the study of vernacular languages was further bolstered through the replacement of the Matriculation Examination with the Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC). While the Matriculation examination had left the study of vernacular languages optional, "Vernacular Composition and Translation" became a compulsory examination for all aspiring colonial employees and upwardly mobile professionals. The prescription of vernacular language study for all secondary school students meant that the government agencies charged with examinations, curricula, and textbook standards suddenly came to wield substantially more cultural authority. As such, they became important sites for contesting, regulating, and authorizing visions of vernacular modernity during this period.

These educational and curricular reforms coincided with the continuous expansion of Anglo-Vernacular education at all levels, with each year producing more English-educated professionals than the last. By 1910, more Telugu speakers than ever before enrolled, graduated, and found employment in colonial institutions of learning.[15] As the number of Anglo-Vernacular graduates continued to grow, the influence of the Indian National Congress and colonial forms of public

[15] Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency, 1909-10, 81.

association also expanded in the Telugu Districts. The 1905 Partition of Bengal inspired new and more radical forms of political activism across British India. In the Telugu Districts, this led to the rise of the Bande Mataram Movement (1905-1912) and the first political articulations of identity in terms of the Telugu language.[16]

These developments inspired the emergence of a new range of actors, institutions, and press outlets within the discursive field of Telugu language and literary reform. Nationalist interests in education led to the establishment of the Andhra Council of National Education (est. 1907), Rajahmundry National School (est. 1907), and the Andhra National College of Masulipatam (est. 1910). These institutions were established by English-educated professionals who advocated the complete vernacularization of the colonial curriculum through the secondary school level on the nationalist principle of *svabhāṣa* or indigenous language.[17] Specifically, they called for the instruction of "non-language subjects" such as physics, geography, and history in the Telugu language. Since the establishment of the Madras University High School, as discussed in chapter one, the only subjects taught through Indian languages in Anglo-Vernacular secondary schools and colleges were the languages themselves i.e. the "language subjects." It was in this context that many of the new professionals came to see Telugu as a viable public language for the first time and suitable for projects of national education and mass political mobilization. Bande Mataram activists also established literary and scientific publishing organizations such as the Vijñāna Candrika Maṇḍali (Society for the Illumination of Useful Knowledge, est. 1906) on the model of British societies for the diffusion of useful knowledge. The Maṇḍali pursued an

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[16] The Bande Mataram movement (1905-1911) refers to the burst of new political activism triggered in the Telugu Districts of the Madras Presidency in relation to the partition of Bengal and the nationalist Swadeshi Movement. Bipin Chandra Pal toured the region in 1907 and popularized economic boycott as a political strategy. The movement was marked by an intensification of nationalist fervor in Telugu newspapers and lead to the rise of the Andhra Movement (1910), the first articulation of a regional Telugu political identity. See Mantena, "The Andhra Movement."

[17] Mamidipudi, *The Freedom Struggle in Andhra Pradesh (1906-1920)*, vol. 2, 51.

Anglicizing agenda by patronizing the publication of new English-derived prose genres in Telugu such as novels, scientific works, and histories, and initiated a project to produce a Telugu encyclopedia.[18] In addition to these institutions, a number of Telugu libraries such as the Kṛṣṇadevarāya Bhāṣa Nilayam of Hyderabad (est. 1901) were opened and a range of new Telugu periodicals with nationalist perspectives such as *Kṛṣṇa Patrika* (1902), *Āndhra Patrika* (1908), and *Deśamata* (1910) were launched. It was in this network of institutions and printing outfits that the Andhra Sahitya Parishat, with its entwined interests in literary improvement and Telugu Classicism, first emerged.

The Formation of the Andhra Sahitya Parishat

> Many English-knowing people have, within the last few years, come to realize what they owe to their mother tongue and are trying to discharge the debt by organized effort culminating so far in the establishment of the Telugu Academy, the latest and, in its possibilities, the greatest form of this effort.
>
> —Jayanti Ramayya
> *A Defence of Literary Telugu* (1913)[19]

The idea for a centralized Telugu Academy was first floated by Presidency Magistrate, Jayanti Ramayya Pantulu B.A., B.L. (1861-1941) in *Āndhra Patrika's* 1911 Ugadi special issue.[20] Shortly after, the Pithapuram Maharaja hosted a meeting of English-educated gentlemen and Telugu pundits at his Madras residence. The attendees resolved to establish the Andhra Sahitya

[18] The Maṇḍali was established by Komarraju Venkata Lakshmana Rao (1877-1923) in association with *swadeshi* education activists such as Ayyadevara Kaleswara Rao (1882-1962) and Gadicherla Harisarvottama Rao (1883-1960). It became a model for later Telugu educational publishing societies and literary activism such as the Vegucukka Granthamala (est. 1911), Andhra Pracarini Granthamala (est. 1911), and Andhra Bhasha Abhivardhamu (est. 1911).
[19] Jayanti Ramayya, *A Defence of Literary Telugu* (Madras: Addison & Co., 1913), 67.
[20] Ugadi is the Telugu New Year and typically falls between March and April. I have been unable to locate a copy of this essay, but it is cited by Dvādaśa Nāgeśvara Rāvu Śāstri. Dvādaśa Nāgeśvara Rāvu Śāstri, *Sāhityasaṃsthalu: Ubhaya Gōdāvarijillālapai Pratyeka Pariśōdhana* (Haidarābād: Viśālāndhra Pabliṣiṅg Haus, 1996), 82-84.

Parishat for the "improvement of Telugu literature on the basis of a comprehensive scheme."[21] It was agreed that the Parishat's first major project would be the creation of a historical dictionary on the model of Murray's Oxford English Dictionary. In May of that year, a public meeting was arranged at the Anglo-Vernacular Triplicane High School (Madras) to announce the formation of the Parishat and canvas for suitable donors and members. By the following year, the Parishat included 217 members paying dues, and 26 honorary members.[22] It also counted 113 subscribers for its newly launched journal, *Āndhra Sāhitya Parishat Pattrika*.[23] In 1913, the Parishat officially embarked on its dictionary project and began an effort to systematically coordinate the efforts of approximately 90 Telugu literary societies spread across the Madras Presidency.[24]

The establishment of Telugu literary associations, publishing outfits, and periodicals at the behest of English-educated professionals is generally believed to herald the formation of a distinctly modern literary culture in colonial South India. At the same time, zamindars and pundits remained influential cultural authorities in Telugu society throughout the colonial period. As the previous chapter's study of the first Telugu literary societies and conferences has shown, the development of this modern literary culture was not simply a straightforward reproduction of European standards. Telugu scholars have generally reduced the complex negotiations and ambiguity that characterized the establishment of new literary contexts to a battle of competing social imaginaries—with the traditional seeking to conserve the ethos of a pre-colonial social

[21] Dvādaśa, *Sāhitya Samsthalu*, 82-84.

[22] In 1912, the financial structure of the Parishat membership was: 2 Founders (10,000 Rs.), 6 Supporters (1000Rs.), 15 Life Members (100 Rs.), and 181 Ordinary Members (6 Rs.). Except for the ordinary members who paid a yearly subscription, the rest were pledges to be paid as one-time donations. ASPGM, "List of Subscribers and Members, 1912."

[23] In 1912, a yearly subscription to the *Pattrika* cost 3 Rs. Subscribers of the *Pattrika* included schools and literary societies from across the Telugu Districts such as the Āndhra Bhāṣa Sañjīvani (Tenali), Bhāṣa Abhivardhani Samāj (Berhampur) and Noble Christian College (Masulapatam). A few subscribers came from the Princely State of Hyderabad such as Āndhra Bhāṣa Abhivardhani (Secunderabad) and Rājarājendra Nilayam (Warangal) or from farther afield such as the Upper Telugu School (Rangoon). ASPGM, "List of Subscribers and Members, 1912."

[24] The Parishat secretary wrote to these organizations soliciting their support in collecting regional dialectical terms relating to the "arts and industries" of the Telugu Districts. The fate of this early effort is unclear and the operations of the Dictionary project require much closer study. ASPGM, "Letters and Despatch Register 1914-15."

order even as the modern sought to produce a radical epistemic rupture. The Parishat's accommodation of traditional patrons and scholars in this era led many to classify it as a "traditional" institution in contrast to the enlightened, scientific, and democratizing initiatives of "modern" English-educated Telugu professionals. Yet even a cursory examination of the Parishat's membership and its literary and intellectual projects exposes the inadequacy of this framework for explaining the ideological investments and pragmatic concerns that drove the Parishat's commitments to *grānthika* prose and Telugu Classicism.

In the first place, the Parishat was not the exclusive preserve of zamindars and pundits that it is generally caricatured as. That the Parishat is commonly perceived this way is as much due to the indifference of modern scholarship as the Parishat's own attempts to project itself as the rightful custodian of Telugu literary heritage. It is certainly true that the Parishat made a great spectacle of its association with the prominent zamindari patrons of Telugu literature of the day and cultivated highly publicized relationships with leading Telugu pundits and poets. The primary financiers of the Parishat were the Maharajas of Pithapuram, Venkatagiri, and Bobbili as well as the proprietors of zamindari estates such as Polavaram and Kalahasti.[25] Through their collective patronage the Parishat amassed a sizeable endowment of 25,000 rupees by 1912.[26] The Maharaja of Pithapuram was also the sole funder of the Parishat's dictionary project, after whom the *Sūryarāya Āndhra Nighaṇṭuvu* was named in gratitude.[27] The Parishat also cultivated relationships with eminent pundits and poets by granting them honorary memberships, inviting them to serve as presidents and dignitaries at its conferences and public meetings, and soliciting

[25] The Maharajah of Vizianagaram and Venkatagiri pledged funds for the Parishat as Founders (10,000 Rs.). The Zamindars of Nadimi Vallur, Kalahasti, Polavaram, Munagala, Mutyala, and Bhadrachalam pledged funds as Supporters (1000 Rs.). The Zamindars of Punganoor, Telaprolu, Vayyur, Kurupam, and Nuzuvid all pledged at lower unspecified amounts. Later, the Maharajah of Bobbili also pledged as a Founder. ASPGM - *List of Subscribers and Members, 1912*.

[26] ASPGM - List of Subscribers and Members, 1912.

[27] The Pithapuram zamindar, Maharaja Rao Venkatakumara Mahipati Suryarao (1885-1964), was one of the most prolific patrons of Telugu literature in his day.

their scholarly and literary contributions for its journal and intellectual projects.[28] Leading Telugu pundits of the day, many who had earlier been connected to the Congress of Telugu Pundits, were influential participants in the Parishat's early activities.[29] The Parishat had the support of pundits such as Kokkonda Venkataratnam (1842-1915), Kandukuri Viresalingam (1848-1919), and Vedam Venkataraya Sastri (1853-1929). Vedam Venkataraya Sastri even served as a secretary of the Parishat for its first five years and was the first editor and manager of its dictionary project.[30]

However, these zamindars and pundits cannot be taken as straightforward emissaries of a static traditional social system. The zamindars mentioned above were all associated with projects of literary and linguistic reform before the Parishat was founded. They articulated their patronage in terms of patriotism (*bhāṣa-abhimānam*) and national improvement (*deśa-abhivṛddhi*).[31] As for the pundits, many of them were entrenched in the colonial educational apparatus. Vedam Venkataraya Sastri was the Head Sanskrit Pundit and Superintendent of Vernacular Languages at Madras Christian College; Vavilikolanu Subba Rao (1863-1939) was the Head Telugu Pundit at Presidency College; and Kandukuri Viresalingam was the Head Telugu Pundit at Rajahmundry Provincial College. These were the leading institutions of English education for Telugu speakers

[28] At a Senate meeting in October 1912, the Parishat confirmed honorary memberships for 26 pundits. Reputed scholars such as Tanjanagaram Tevaperumallayya and Sripada Krishnamurti Sastri were associated with the Parishat as were celebrity pair-poets (*janṭa kavulu*) such as Tirupati-Venkata Kavulu, Ramakrishna Kavulu, and Venkata-Parvatisvara Kavulu. ASPGM - *Proceedings of General and Senate Meetings, 1911- 23*.
[29] At this time, Kokkonda and Viresalingam had both retired as Head Telugu Pundits of the Madras Presidency College. Vedam had retired as Head Sanskrit Pundit of the Madras Christian College. Other notable pundits associated with the Parishat included Vavilikolanu Subbarao F.A., the then Head Pundit at the Presidency College, and Kasibhatta Brahmayya Sastri F.A., a journal editor and prominent literary critic.
[30] ASPGM - Proceedings of General and Senate Meetings, 1911- 23.
[31] I refer back to Raja K.R.V. Krishna Rao B.A. (1878-1919) of the Polavaram Zamindari's 1896 essay *Āndhra Bhāṣa Abhivṛddhi* or *The Progress of the Telugu Language* discussed in the last chapter. A year earlier, this patriotic Raja had established a literary society for the improvement of the Telugu language known as Āndhra Bhāṣojjīvani (*The Telugu Language Reviver*) in collaboration with the leading Telugu Congressman of his day, P. Ananda Charlu, B.A., B.L. (1843-1908). Ananda Charlu had also served as the President of the First Congress of Telugu Pundits (1897-1898). Admittedly, K.R.V. Krishna Rao was an exception in the 1890s as the only zamindar to have a University degree. However, Anglo-Vernacular higher education would become increasingly standard among the landed elite in the next decade, further blurring the lines between aristocratic zamindars and middle-class professionals.

during the colonial period. Furthermore, Vedam Venkataraya Sastri was a dropout from the University B.A. curriculum while many of the other pundits had passed University exams up to the F.A. level.[32] All of these figures had their works prescribed in the colonial Telugu school curriculum and were known publishers and authors in the burgeoning world of Telugu print. These were not marginal *paṇḍita* scholars confined to petty courts and remote villages but critical agents at the centre of colonial processes of social and cultural change.

At the same time, the Parishat's relationships with high-profile pundits and patriotic zamindars should not obscure the fact that the vast majority of its membership, senate leadership, conference participants, and journal subscribers were drawn from graduates of Anglo-Vernacular institutions. A review of its dues paying "ordinary members" reveals that the organization was constituted primarily by teachers, headmasters, principals, pleaders, deputy collectors, magistrates, sheristadars, tahsildars, munsiffs, chairmen of municipal councils, secretaries of taluq boards, newspaper proprietors, and estate managers.[33] Members of the Parishat Senate were drawn from the most important English-educated Indian bureaucrats and professionals of the period and represented a veritable "who's who" of Telugu public life. As Presidency Magistrate, the Chairman of the Parishat Jayanti Ramayya Pantulu B.A., B.L. held one of the highest posts available to an Indian in the colonial administration at the time. Prominent scholars and literary activists who served on the senate included Komarraju Venkata Lakshmana Rao M.A. (1877-1923), founder of the Telugu Encyclopedia project (est. 1906), Chilakamarti Laksminarasimham (1867-1946), popular novelist, dramatist, and editor of several Telugu literary journals, Kattamanchi Ramalinga Reddy M.A. (1880-1951), History Professor at the Maharaja's College in Mysore and respected literary critic, and Achanta Lakshmipati B.A., M.B. & C.M. (1880-

[32] The matriculation examination is comparable to U.S. tenth grade. The F.A. examination certified completion through U.S. twelfth grade.
[33] ASPGM - List of Subscribers and member 1912-14.

1962), scholar of Ayurvedic and western medicine and author of Telugu medical and scientific textbooks. The Parishat also attracted leading Telugu politicians associated with the Indian National Congress like Nyapati Subba Rao B.A., B.L. (1856-1941), decorated veteran bureaucrats like the retired Dewan of Cochin N. Pattabhirama Rao B.A. (1862-1937), and members of the Imperial Legislative Council such as Panaganti Ramarayaningar, M.A. (1866-1928). Senate members were founders and prominent leaders of nationalist movements such as the Justice Party, the Andhra Movement, and the Home Rule League and held important positions in their respective caste associations.

As an organization of the English-educated professionals, the Parishat was incontrovertibly modern in its organizational structure. It possessed an elaborate set of by-laws that stipulated the nature of its membership policies, administration, and voting procedures. Although membership was technically open to anyone over the age of 18, in keeping with contemporary Telugu associational norms, the organization consisted almost entirely of middle-aged upper-caste Hindu men. The Parishat was managed by three elected secretaries and conducted on a parliamentary model with a governing senate of fifty representatives elected from among its members. With the exception of Vedam Venkataraya Sastri, the management of the Parishat was exclusively in the hands of English-educated professionals. Parishat meetings and conferences were carried out along legalistic discursive norms of English debate and structured by "motions," "resolutions," and "amendments." In 1913 the Parishat formally registered itself under the 1860 Registration of Societies Act that afforded its by-laws the weight of law and allowed it to participate in the colonial court system as a legally discrete entity. It also invested its substantial endowment with the Bank of Madras. These features imbued the Parishat with the distinctly social, legal, and

financial presence of a modern voluntary society that was in no sense comparable to the *sabhās* and *iṣṭāgoṣṭhis* that characterized traditional Telugu literary culture.

Imagining and Representing the Empire of Literary Telugu

> It is more likely that when once the Empire of Literary Telugu is broken up and dissolved, local dialects would set up petty independent principalities, each in its own place and then—we would go back to the times prior to Nannayabhatta.
>
> — Jayanti Ramayya, *A Defence of Literary Telugu* (1913)[34]

During the first public debates on the standardization of Telugu prose (1911-15), the Andhra Sahitya Parishat saw itself as the representative and defender of what its Chairman Jayanti Ramayya referred to as the "Empire of Literary Telugu." This reference to empire and its connection to the neoclassical *grānthika* register of Telugu was not an inconsequential metaphor. It represented a literal attempt to summon visions of a national formation in the imperial political framework of the period. The Parishat arose during the height of the British Empire in an early era of nationalist agitation that preceded the rise of mass politics or popular electoral franchise. This critical feature has been overlooked in studies of Telugu literary activism and contributed to misperceptions around the aims and origins of the Parishat. The investments of the new English-educated professionals in Telugu Classicism were intimately tied to political projects of modernization that were articulated in terms of national improvement and cultural patriotism. The philological projects that substantiated the Parishat's work were seen as preparing the archival materials necessary for the construction of a national history of the Telugu people as well as aiding the systematic assimilation of English textual genres and forms of disciplinary knowledge into Telugu. As such, the cultural fascination with and public investment in Telugu

[34] Ramayya, *A Defence of Literary Telugu*, 48.

Classicism during this period was not simply a traditionalist reaction against projects of Anglicization and modernization but in fact a critical iteration of them. Rather than opposing poles, Telugu Classicism and Anglicization should be seen as complementary reference points within a discourse of cultural nationalism that was forged in the context of British imperialism.

The conceptualization of "nation" by most English-educated professionals in Madras during the late nineteenth century and the first few decades of the twentieth was situated squarely within the greater political economy of the British Empire. As discussed in the second chapter, the new professionals expressed their political interests in a loyalist idiom that advocated for greater inclusion in the administrative and military structures of Empire. They also identified as patriots who sought to contribute to the improvement and advancement of their nation on altruistic terms of sacrifice and service. English-educated Telugu professionals believed that through their projects to reform and educate their vernacular brethren the Indian nation would one day govern itself as a "dominion" akin to Canada and Australia within the larger British Empire. Consequently, the idea of empire loomed large in the imagination of Parishat members and determined their conceptions of literary community, history, and nation.

The new professionals established the Parishat with a view to advance philological research and knowledge in Telugu as means of supporting the production of Telugu national history. This was considered integral to the consolidation of a Telugu national identity that would allow the English-educated Telugu elite to stake viable claims in the institutions and discourses of the British Empire. Since the early literary societies of the 1890s, Anglo-Vernacular graduates had turned to the Vijayanagara Empire (1336-1646) as a model of "Telugu Empire" and proof that the Telugu people were an "imperial race."[35] This image was constructed on the basis of older cultural memories surrounding Vijayanagara as well as the new literary criticism and

[35] Mamidipudi, *The Freedom Struggle*, vol. 2.

historiography cultivated by these societies. Vijayanagara and its successor states came to be seen as great moments in the history of the Telugu nation. In this vein, the Parishat's first manuscript collection campaign was directed toward retrieving Telugu manuscripts that had been produced in the seventeenth and eighteenth-century Nayaka States that succeeded Vijayanagara.[36] Most of these texts did not have a history of circulation outside the Tamil Districts and the Parishat was responsible for integrating them into the archive of classical Telugu literature and the middle-class imagination of a national history.

Perhaps no project of the new bilingual elites' intersecting commitments to Anglicization and Telugu Classicism is more telling than their endorsement of the *grānthika* register of Telugu prose. In a sense, the early debates around Telugu prose encapsulated an emergent tension among English-educated professionals around two competing "scripts" of colonial modernity. *Grānthika* Telugu was variously translated into English at this time as "literary" or "classical" Telugu and used as a synonym with *lākṣaṇika* or "grammatical" Telugu. It was a highly stylized register of prose that had been employed by pundits, publishers, literary activists, social reformers, and educationists since the establishment of the Department of Public Instruction. I have traced the origins of this register to the early interactions between Telugu scholars and British Orientalists at the College of Fort St. George in chapter one. As we have seen, Cinnaya Suri's 1853 *Nīticandrika*, a prose translation of the Sanskrit *Pañcatantra* and 1858 grammar *Bālavyākaraṇam* had become the standard authorities of *grānthika*. Drawing on medieval manuals of Telugu grammar and versification, Telugu pundits who followed Cinnaya Suri elaborated a prose style that bore a distinctly classical diction that connoted erudition and

[36] In 1912, the Parishat deputed an "Andhra resident" of Tiruchirapalli to collect Telugu manuscripts in the Tamil Districts. Prior to his appointment, this individual had already donated 14 palm leaf manuscripts produced in these areas to the Parishat. By the following year, the Parishat had acquired nearly 400 manuscripts, most of which were texts historically composed by Telugu poets of the Tamil south. See "*Arava Deśamunandali Yāndhravāṅgmayam*" in *ASPP*, 2.1.

refinement. The development of *grānthika* coincided with the rise of Telugu print and undergirded a revival of Telugu pundit scholarship in the form of new commentarial literature, essays in literary criticism, and translations from Sanskrit poetry and *śāstras* throughout the late nineteenth century.[37]

During the 1870s, Kandukuri Viresalingam developed a simplified form of *grānthika* with easier orthography and more contemporary syntax in support of his efforts to promote universal education. His *saraḷa grānthika* quickly became the new public standard of Telugu discursive prose. It was the prose of public debate in which essays and pamphlets for and against child marriage, widow remarriage, and women's education were circulated. It was also the prose of new scientific, historical, and novelistic writing in Telugu and the literary histories and criticism fostered by the new literary societies of the 1890s were also entirely in *grānthika*. The register also filtered into spoken contexts through its use in theatrical performances and public lectures.[38] Finally, it was the standard endorsed by the Parishat as well as the larger network of nationalist, educational, and publishing institutions founded by Anglo-Vernacular graduates at the turn of the twentieth century.

The hegemony of *grānthika* was first challenged in 1911 when a group of Indian educational reformers led by Gidugu Venkata Ramamurti B.A., Professor of History at the Raja's College in Parlakimidi, successfully convinced the University of Madras to include schoolbooks written in *vyavahārika* or spoken Telugu in the school curriculum. Based on the spoken dialect of the educated upper castes belonging to the Krishna and Godavari deltas, *vyavahārika* was believed

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[37] Velcheru Narayana Rao has discussed some of the new cultural implications of *grānthika*. Velcheru, *Print and Prose*.

[38] For example, Ramarayaningar's *Desirability of Andhra Sabahs* discussed in the previous chapter describes itself as a public address but is written in *grānthika*. It is unclear whether or not the language of these lectures was altered for publication or written in this manner. As the debates around the use of *grānthika* in dramatic dialogues and public speaking at the Congress of Telugu Pundits reveal, the contexts of this register were contested. They reflected shifting notions of the literary and the public.

to be a more democratic and accessible medium for instructing women, peasants, and the lower castes.[39] Ramamurti argued that the inclusion of *vyavahārika* schoolbooks would substantially improve government efforts to expand vernacular mass education and contribute to building a national consciousness.[40]

The Parishat, formed just months after this innovation to the curriculum, exercised its newfound authority as the representative of educated Telugu opinion to reject the University's decision. Parishat members felt that since the *vyavahārika* register lacked an authoritative grammar or a history of literary production, there were no suitable reference works or textbooks through which the University could instruct or examine its students. *Grānthika*, by contrast, possessed a scientific rigor with its grammatical fixity and a record of time-tested literary excellence. Furthermore, it consolidated the disparate dialects, castes, and regions of Telugu speakers under the banner of the "Empire of Literary Telugu" and held the potential to link the Telugu nation with a classical past and an Anglicized future. Thus, a 1914 memorial condemning *vyavahārika* observed:

> Grandhic or Literary Telugu has uniformity and a standard to follow, while the so-called "Modern" Telugu has none. Chemakuri Venkatakavi writing in Tanjore, Potanna in Warangal, Peddanna in Bellary, Tikkanna in Nellore, Nannaya in Rajahmundry and Srinadha in Guntur wrote in exactly the same language. The same remark applies to the language used by Mr. K. Krishnamachari of Bellary, Mr. V. Subbarao of Madras, Mr. Venkataraya Sastri of Nellore, Mr. Veeresaslingam Pantulu of Rajahmundry and Mr. Mandapaka Parvatisa Sastri of Vizag. Furthermore the language used by the modern writers just named is quite the same as that used by the ancient authors mentioned above.[41]

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[39] In recent years, Telugu Dalit and Feminist critiques has drawn attention to the contradictions underlying Ramamurti's efforts to evolve a more democratic standard of Telugu from an upper-caste dialect. N. Manohar Reddy, "Assault of the Grantha Gaze on Dalit Bahujan Gramya Language," in *Anveshi Broadsheet on Contemporary Politics*, vol. 2 (4&5), 2014.

[40] Gidugu Venkata Ramamurti, *A Memorandum on Modern Telugu* (Madras: The Guardian Press, 1913).

[41] The first sentence refers to major poets in Telugu literary history while the second lists important authors of the early twentieth century. In creating this list, the author of this petition—most likely Parishat Chairman Jayanti Ramayya himself—cleverly maps the territory of the Empire of Literary Telugu back through different historical epochs. TNSA - Education Department, GO 960 mis educational 14-8-14.

The Parishat and the broader English-educated Telugu public it mobilized believed that *grānthika* produced a cultural continuity with the classical writers of the past and was therefore a critical medium of Telugu national identity and an emblem of Telugu's imperial pedigree. This identification between the literary past and present was an integral dimension of how the Parishat understood the stakes of the early prose debates. *Grānthika* was considered important not only for its ability to consolidate the diverse speech communities of the Telugu Districts but for the direct line it kept open with Telugu's classical legacy.

Though the Parishat embraced prose as a necessary medium of expression for modern intellectual needs, it did not see prose displacing the national or historical significance of poetry. Consequently, the defense of *grānthika* was tied to a vision of a classicist Telugu education that would prepare Telugu speakers to be equally at home in the world of modern prose and classical poetry. On the other hand, the Parishat believed that the study of *vyavahārika* would ruin the national character of Telugu students by failing to prepare them to read the classical works and introduce an anarchy of regional and caste idioms that would destabilize the very foundations of Telugu's incipient national identity.

The Parishat organized a series of meetings across the major towns of the Telugu Districts in 1912 and 1914 in order to constitute a public opposed to the institutionalization of *vyavahārika* in colonial schools. These meetings hosted speeches by respected pundits such as Kandukuri Viresalingam and the Parishat's secretary Vedam Venkataraya Sastri as well as prominent figures associated with the Indian National Congress and the Andhra Movement.[42] While pundits were prominent head signatories on many of the petitions, the vast majority of signatories were English-educated men employed by the colonial bureaucracy or working as

[42] For example, Konda Venkatappayya B.A. B.L, Mocherla Ramachandra Rao B.A. B.L., Bayya Narasimha Sharma B.A. B.L., and the Zamindar of Polavaram K.R.V. Krishna Rao B.A.

legal professionals in the colonial court system. In 1912 the Parishat collected nearly 10,000 signatures from across the Telugu Districts demanding the revocation of *vyavahārika* textbooks from the Telugu syllabus.[43] Two years later the Parishat organized another campaign against *vyavahārika* with equally impressive returns.[44] These 1914 petitions not only resolved that *grānthika* should be the exclusive register of Telugu language instruction and but also demanded that the Bande Mataram Movement's calls for the full vernacularization of colonial secondary education be implemented. The 1914 petitions coincided with sustained attempts by Parishat leaders and Telugu members of the Madras Provincial Legislative Council to pass resolutions encouraging government investment in the development of modern scientific education in Telugu.[45] These resolutions consistently referred to the vernacularizing efforts of the Vijñāna Candrika Maṇḍali mentioned above, a major institutional partner of the Parishat.

English-educated students and professionals also participated in the Parishat's mobilization through Telugu literary societies connected to Anglo-Vernacular colleges. Members of the Presidency College's Telugu literary society, Āndhra Bhāṣa Abhivardhani Samājam, for example, invited their school pundit Vavilikolanu Subba Rao to deliver a public address condemning vyavahārika. The students of this society published this address as an essay, *Ādhunika Vacanaracanā Vimarśana* (A Critique of Contemporary Prose Writing), along with a collection of news clippings and articles related to the debate alongside an appeal in support of *grānthika*.[46]

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[43]Jayanti Ramayya, *Kakinada Andhra Sahitya Parishad Vrttantamu: Rajatotsava Samputam 1911-1935* (Kakinada: Andhra Sahitya Parishat, 1935), Appendix 8. Petitions from Madanapalle and Vijayawada are available at TNSA – Education Department, GO 092 MIS 1912; GO 252 MIS 1912.
[44] Petitions were submitted from Vijayawada, Guntur, Peddapur, Proddatur, Yellamanchili, Visakhapatnam, Masulipatam, Annavaram, Rajahmundry, Berhampur, Kakinada, and Nellore. Petitions from the western Telugu Districts are curiously absent. TNSA – Education Department, GO 909 MIS 1914; GO 921 1914; GO 928 MIS 1914; GO 937 MIS 1914; GO 960 MIS 1914; GO 968 MIS 1914.
[45] TNSA - Education Department, GO 682 MIS 1914; GO 693 MIS 1914; GO 980 MIS 1914.
[46] Puranam, Suri Sastri, ed. *Grāmya-Agrāmya Vivādam* (Madras: Āndhra Bhāṣa Abhivardhani Samājam, 1913), 2.

Arguing that the University did not have the authority to unilaterally change the Telugu language without consulting the "Telugu people," the Parishat drew on its vast network of English-educated members to organize public meetings and petition drives in towns across the Telugu Districts in order to lobby colonial authorities such as the Department of Public Instruction, the University of Madras Senate, and the Governor of the Madras Presidency.[47] Through this effort, the Parishat successfully positioned itself as the legitimate representative of the Telugu literary public. After a protracted public struggle, the University was compelled to concede in 1915 that it was "not in a position to recognize what is known as "modern" Telugu for university purposes."[48] The Parishat and contemporary Telugu nationalists regarded the decision as a victory in securing the autonomy of the Empire of Literary Telugu. Following the Parishat's interventions, *grānthika* reigned as the language of Telugu higher education and scholarship into the 1970s.[49]

Toward a Nationalist Defense of Erotic Literature

> A few poets have introduced erotic sentiments in their works here and there. In this case, the idea is embedded in erudite and sophisticated language. Anyone who knows the Telugu language knows that unless such ideas are unpacked and explained, they are not transparent. The full corpus of poetry in any language is not accessible to the broad general population. Poems are read on the basis of a reader's capacity.
>
> --Conference of Telugu Pundits, 1915[50]

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[47] As Jayanti argued, "It is for the Telugu People to decide what the form of literary Telugu should be." Jayanti, *A Defence of Literary Telugu*, 64.

[48] TNSA - Education Department, G.O. No. 196 1915; Jayanti, *Rajatotsava Sañcika*, Appendix 9.

[49] The hegemony of *grānthika* in the Telugu print sphere only began to recede in the 1940s with the emergence of the *Abhyudaya* (Progressive) and *Viplava* (Revolutionary) writer's movements that took up *vyavahārika* as their linguistic standard. See Velcheru Narayana Rao, trans. and ed., *Hibiscus on the Lake: Twentieth-Century Telugu Poetry from India* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), Afterword.

[50] *Āndhra Paṇḍita Sabha Vṛttāntamu* in *ASPP*, 1.1. By "capacity" what is meant here is the Sanskrit concept of "*adhikāri*" or readerly authority. This concept encompasses a sense of "eligibility," in terms of social position or sectarian initiation as well as educational training.

The first prose debates took place against the backdrop of another assault on the empire of literary Telugu: the merits of publishing classical works of Telugu poetry containing erotic themes (*śṛṅgāra kāvya)* in print.[51] The spread of Telugu print was intimately tied to the expansion of colonial education. Many canonical Telugu poems, as well as new works of poetry, were published by printers and poets in the hope that they would be picked up for the colonial syllabus. At the same time, missionaries, colonial educationists, and social reformers had long complained of the unsuitable nature of vernacular poetry for educating "impressionable" women, children, and the lower castes. Efforts to produce "expurgated" or even "rewritten" Telugu classics had been undertaken by missionary as well as Indian educators since at least the 1880s.[52] However, for the most part, Indian printers continued to publish vernacular poetry--most of which contained at least some erotic elements—unabashedly. With the continued expansion of colonial education and new government investments in primary school education, anxieties around the morality and "obscenity" of vernacular literature only increased. However, it was only in 1911 that the first official case of government censorship in the Madras Presidency was lodged on the grounds of obscenity.

Little more than a week after the Parishat was formed, the Deputy Commissioner of the Madras Police shuttered the offices of Vavilla Ramaswami & Sons, a respected publisher of Telugu literary classics. Many of the editions published by the Vavilla Press were prescribed by the University of Madras through the colonial curriculum.[53] The proprietors of the press were charged with breaking the obscenity statutes of the Indian Penal Code and its stocks of recently published Telugu classics were seized as evidence. This shifted contemporary contestations

[51] What I present here is an extremely abridged overview of the relationship between censorship, print, and obscenity in colonial Madras. For more focused studies, reference: Deana Heath, *Purifying Empire: Obscenity and the Politics of Moral Regulation in Britain, India, and Australia* (New York, 2010); Susie Tharu and K. Lalita, "Empire, Nation, and the Literary Text."
[52] Cf. footnote 106 in Chapter 3.
[53] University of Madras Calendar, 1915.

around the moral and aesthetic propriety of eroticism in Telugu poetry from the diverse public arenas of Telugu print to the final jurisdiction of the colonial courts. Both the publishing and *grānthika* controversies arose in response to unprecedented and highly disruptive forms of intervention by colonial government authorities in what was perceived to be the sovereign self-regulating domain of Telugu literature.

The Parishat hosted meetings and consultations in Madras as well as the major towns of the Telugu Districts in order to consolidate representative scholarly and popular opinion around these two controversies. With regard to the former, perhaps the most significant event was the Parishat's May 1911 two-day pundit sabha held in Madras.[54] This sabha attracted over fifty Telugu scholars from across the Telugu-speaking districts. A number of pundits who were unable to attend the sabha contributed essays relating to the controversies that were read before the gathering. Notably, although most of the attendants were pundits, there were a significant number of Anglo-Vernacular graduates present as well. The sabha operated along the modern procedures of parliamentary debate that characterized the public meetings, conferences, and debate clubs of the new professionals and its pronouncements on Telugu literature were formulated as "resolutions." We may see this in contrast to the earlier Congress of Telugu Pundits, where many of the Telugu pundits in attendance encountered the associational norms of the English-educated for the first time and had to be tutored in the new protocols of public debate. In fact, a number of pundits at the Parishat's pundit sabha had been attendants at the earlier Congress.

The pundit sabha united against the government's intrusions into the Telugu literary domain by passing a series of resolutions in defense of classical erotic poetry and *grānthika*. The sabha argued that classical erotic poetry had been historically produced for limited circulation among

[54] *Āndhra Paṇḍita Sabha Vṛttāntamu* in ASPP, 1.1.

literary specialists and scholars. Recognizing that classical poetry in the erotic mode had been the most prolific style of Telugu literary production during the Vijayanagara period, the sabha argued these works were invaluable sources of linguistic, literary, historical, and national knowledge. As the pundits argued:

> There is no doubt that efforts to destroy texts with erotic passages will be a disaster for language and literature. If this is undertaken, texts in languages across India, not just Telugu, will vanish. The ancient grammarians have composed their treatises on the basis of innumerable poems containing erotic passages. The usage of words by classical poets are important sources in determining the form and nature of Telugu words. The destruction of these sources will make it impossible to preserve the language. As such, it is the firm opinion of this meeting that censoring texts, or even passages in texts, should be avoided.[55]

Prohibiting the publication of classical erotic poetry threatened to destroy the Parishat's nationalist project to reproduce rare and vulnerable manuscripts in print and censored not only works of great literature but the Telugu people's claims to an imperial past. With regard to *grānthika*, the sabha overwhelmingly condemned the inclusion of "grammarless" *vyavahārika* in the Telugu curriculum while also acknowledging the importance of producing schoolbooks in a simple accessible style that would aid the nationalist project of mass education.[56]

The pundit sabha's resolutions served as an important source of expert testimony and were regularly cited in the Parishat's attempts to represent Telugu public and scholarly opinion to the colonial government. The sabha's resolutions on classical poetry with erotic themes were referenced in legal defenses of publishers while its resolutions on *grānthika* were frequently produced by the Parishat in its negotiations for Telugu cultural autonomy with colonial authorities. In 1912, the Parishat sent a deputation of seven leading members—most of whom were prominent political leaders and professionals—to present the pundit sabha's resolutions to

[55] *Āndhra Paṇḍita Sabha Vṛttāntamu* in ASPP, 1.1.
[56] According to the later *Rajatotsava Sañcika* summary of this sabha, the only two members to vote against *grānthika* were Gurajada Appa Rao and Peri Kasinathuni Sastri. Gidugu Venkata Ramamurti, the most vocal proponent of *vyavahārika*, did not attend this meeting.

the Governor of the Madras Presidency.[57] In 1913, B.N. Sharma B.A., B.L., a founding member of the Parishat and leading Telugu member of the Indian National Congress, referenced the scholarly opinion of the pundit sabha when he introduced a motion against *vyavahārika* in the Madras Provincial Legislative Council.[58]

Imperial Memories: The Annual Conferences of the Andhra Sahitya Parishat

The Parishat introduced a new associational paradigm for Telugu literary activism with its annual rotating conferences. Rotating conferences were arranged in different towns and districts of the Presidency with the purpose of mobilizing widespread political constituencies. The rotating aspect of the Parishat's conferences mirrored the general growth of rotating conferences in contemporary Telugu political life. This can be seen in the rise of the District and Provincial conferences of the Indian National Congress as well as those of the Andhra Movement.

Figure 4.1
First Ten Conferences of the Andhra Sahitya Parishat

Year	Conference	Location
1912	First Conference	Madras
1913	Second Conference	Rajahmundry
1914	Third Conference	Kakinada
1915	Fourth Conference	Bellary
1916	Fifth Conference	Guntur
1917	Sixth Conference	Kadapa
1918	Seventh Conference	Madura
1919	Eighth Conference	Nellore
1920	Ninth Conference	Vijayawada
1921	Tenth Conference	Eluru

[57] These included: Mocerla Ramachandra Rao, B.N. Sharma, Pandita D. Gopalacaryulu, Tallapragada Suryanarayana, Gunupati Yanadi Reddy, Vemavarapu Ramadasu, and Nemali Pattabhirama Rao.
[58] TNSA - Education Department, GO NO 682 MIS 1914.

Parishat conferences were high status cultural events that attracted prominent Telugu poets, scholars, and politicians from across the Telugu-speaking districts and enabled the Parishat to build affiliations with individuals and institutions beyond the Presidency Capital. They were conducted in different towns of the Presidency on a rotating basis and organized by the Parishat senate in collaboration with local members. Due to their prestige, Parishat members eagerly competed with one another for the honor of hosting a conference in their own towns. It is noteworthy that the Parishat, unlike its models the Royal Asiatic Society or the Bengali Sahitya Parishat, never aspired toward establishing regional or branch offices. Instead, it relied on the cooperation of its cross-district member network of literary activists, scholars, and politicians to organize conferences, public meetings, and petition drives for its public campaigns outside Madras. Following the University's 1914 de-recognition of *vyavahārika* in the colonial Telugu syllabus, public meetings and petition drives ceased to be significant features of the Parishat's associational program. Instead, the Parishat's public engagements came to be primarily channeled through its annual yearly conference.

During its first decade, Parishat conferences were typically organized in late spring and lasted several days. They typically included a presidential address by a leading public figure, poetry recitals, presentations of scholarly papers, and reports on its literary and intellectual activities. Annual conferences also functioned as the formal assembly of the Parishat's general members and significant decisions relating to the organization's projects, policies, and administrative affairs were deliberated on these occasions.[59] However, conference attendance was not exclusively restricted to registered members. Enshrined in the Parishat's by-laws as an obligation to the Telugu public, these conferences were arranged for the purpose of enabling

[59] Attendants at the yearly conference debated and resolved Parishat matters along the parliamentary system. These resolutions were then forwarded to the Parishat senate for implementation. The senate met on a far more regular basis during the course of the year at Madras in order to supervise the Parishat's projects.

"discussion on matters related to Telugu literature."[60] As such, conferences were also organized as a means of recruiting new members, intellectual collaborators, and journal subscribers for the Parishat. As the Parishat's senate chairman Jayanti Ramayya was to remark in later years, the primary goal of these conferences was "to inspire enthusiasm for the service of the Telugu language among the people."[61] As such, the Parishat's conferences were envisioned not only as forums for literary exchange, deliberations on organizational matters, or opportunities to recruit new members, but as nationalist events that were vital to building public interest and engagement in projects of recuperating and improving Telugu literature. That is, these events were not seen as stand-alone affairs but as part of an active social process of consolidating a Telugu public and contributing to the rise of a patriotic consciousness. In this regard, the Parishat's annual conference became one of the primary platforms through which the organization sought to project its cultural influence and cultivate its representative authority in Telugu literary life.

In pursuit of its representative aspirations, the Parishat worked to ensure that its conferences were distributed along the geographic contours of the "Empire of Literary Telugu." This meant Parishat conferences were held not only in Madras or the Northern Circars, the most active centers of Telugu associational life in this period, but also the western Ceded Districts and Tamil Country. The Parishat also worked to build relationships with the Telugu zamindars and pundits of Hyderabad but multiple attempts to arrange its yearly conference in the princely state proved unsuccessful.[62]

Conference sites were also selected according to the Parishat's interest in producing public memories of the imperial ancestry of the Telugu nation. The Parishat's reference to its conferences as "sabhas" in Telugu played with the ambiguity of the term's older signification of

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[60] *ASPP 1912, 1.1*. "Appendix," By-law 3, section viii.
[61] Jayanti, *Rajatotsava Sañcika*, 10.
[62] Jayanti, *Rajatotsava Sañcika*, 23.

"royal court." Parishat sabhas were organized in urban centers that conjured what were imagined to be the constituent parts of the Empire of Telugu Literature. These modern colonial towns were purposefully identified with older royal centers in their vicinity that were traditionally associated with the patronage of great Telugu poets and the production of classical Telugu literature. Thus, the Parishat's second conference in 1913 was held at Rajahmundry, near the capital of the eleventh-century Eastern Chalukyas, its fifth conference was held at Guntur, near the capital of the fifteenth-century Reddy kings, and its eighth conference was held at Nellore, the thirteenth-century capital of the Telugu Cholas.[63]

However, more than these principalities, it was the Vijayanagara Empire and its Nayaka successor states that crowned the Parishat's understanding of Telugu's imperial character. The Parishat's fourth conference in 1915 was held at Bellary, which was described as being "not too distant from Vijayanagara, the birthing room of Telugu *prabandham* poetry."[64] Following the conclusion of this conference, the Raja of Anegondi provided hospitality to Parishat members and arranged a tour of the ruins of the old Vijayanagara capital. Given the remoteness of the archeological site and difficulties in travel at this time, the Raja's tour was a rare and unprecedented opportunity for Parishat members to encounter the imperial ruins firsthand.[65] This is perhaps one of the earliest documented examples of Telugu poets and scholars visiting the physical site in search of a national past. In a similar manner, the Parishat chose to host its seventh conference in 1918 at Madurai, "the erstwhile capital of the Telugu Nayaka Rajas."[66] From the perspective of contemporary Telugu print culture and associational life, Madurai was a strange location to convene a Telugu literary conference. The city was a stronghold of Tamil

[63] Jayanti, *Rajatotsava Sañcika*, 10-12.
[64] Jayanti, *Rajatotsava Sañcika*, 10.
[65] The site was rarely visited even by Europeans during this time. Even as late as 1936, scholars preferred to use literary over site-specific evidence in Vijayanagara historiography. George Michell, "A Never Forgotten City" in *Vijayanagara Progress of Research, 1983-1984*, Ed. MS Nagaraja Rao.
[66] Jayanti, *Rajatotsava Sañcika*, 11.

publishing and literary activism and Telugu had a marginal presence in the city's intellectual life. However, the city's critical place in the Parishat's Vijayangara-colored vision of literary empire made it an ideal site for the Parishat's attempts to arouse a Telugu nationalist consciousness in an imperial idiom.

The Parishat viewed the conference at Madurai as an opportunity to reunite "the Andhras of the north and the Andhras of the south" and urged both communities to "rejoice as brothers long separated." Many Telugu-speakers from the Tamil districts were reported to have attended the event where they were invited to join the Parishat in "working together for the welfare and improvement of our birth mother, the Andhra language."[67] The Parishat also recorded that its conference attracted the attention of local Tamil pundits and intellectuals who arrived at its event in significant numbers. Most notably, the Parishat welcomed leaders of the Madurai Tamil Sangam (est. 1901), an organization with philological and historical interests as well as a publishing program comparable to the Parishat, to its conference as honored guests. Sangam pundits gifted issues of its Tamil-language research journal, *Sentamil*, and copies of their recent publications to the Parishat as a gesture of goodwill. Through such activities, the Parishat crafted a cultural vision of the Telugu nation that included Telugu-speakers across southern India that departed from contemporary political efforts such as the Andhra Movement that restricted themselves to the Telugu Districts.

In addition to carefully curated conference locations, the Parishat also forged strategic relationships at its conferences with elites who claimed aristocratic status through their ancestral associations with the Vijayanagara Empire. As mentioned earlier, the Parishat had been financially endowed by the leading zamindars and patrons of Telugu literature in the Victorian Era. However, these zamindars did not for the most part substantiate their aristocratic

[67] Jayanti, *Rajatotsava Sañcika*, 12.

qualifications with reference to Vijayanagara or its successor states. The Parishat invited and promoted Telugu aristocrats from Hyderabad and the heart of Tamil country, individuals and areas that were beyond the pale of colonial Telugu public life at the time, to preside over its conferences as figureheads and reminders of Telugu's imperial past.

It was on this basis that Sri Rangadevarayalu (1889-1918), the Raja of Anegondi mentioned above, was invited to preside over the Parishat's fourth conference at Bellary in 1915. A relatively unknown figure, the Raja was feted by the Parishat as "a descendent of the Narapati Kings [Aravidu Dynasty] who once ruled Vijayangara" and a current jagirdar under the Nizam of Hyderabad.[68] As a living representative of the Vijayanagara Empire, the tour of the city's ruins that he arranged for conference attendants bore great symbolic value for the Parishat. The Raja was also invited to preside over the Parishat's seventh conference at Madurai in 1918, giving him the unique distinction of being the only person invited to preside over a Parishat conference twice.[va] This seventh conference was arranged in Madurai at the behest of one of the Parishat's senior members, the Zamindar of Doddappa Nayakan Ur [Vadagarai], Sri Venkata Ramabhadra Nayaka. Ramabhadra Nayaka was introduced by the Parishat as "an Andhra man" who descended from Samukhamu Venkata Krishnappa Nayaka, the chief military commander of the Madurai Nayaka Kingdom during the early eighteenth century.[69] His family was one of the many Telugu-speaking palegars that had migrated to the area during the Vijayanagara period. Ramabhadra Nayaka subscribed to the Parishat as a lifelong member and contributed a special grant of 500 rupees to have the *Jaimini Bhārata* of his illustrious ancestor edited and published

[68] Jayanti, *Rajatotsava Sañcika*, 11.
[69] Samukhamu Veknata Krishnappa Nayaka served under Vijayaranga Chokkanatha, Nayaka Raja of Madurai (r. 1706-1732). He is credited with composing four works in Telugu.

by the Parishat in its research journal.[70] The presence of such aristocrats claiming direct affiliation with the legacy of Vijayanagara lent the Parishat conferences an air of regal authority and contributed to the Parishat's production of an imperial genealogy for the Telugu nation.

Conclusion

A largely understudied association, the Andhra Sahitya Parishat occupied a critical role in early twentieth-century Telugu efforts to articulate a sense of region and nation. The Parishat was constituted primarily by English-educated Telugu professionals and emerged as an important institution in the making of a Telugu middle class. Through its efforts to collect manuscripts and recover minor and forgotten works of classical Telugu literature, the Parishat built an archive for its historical dictionary and laid the foundations for a national history of the Telugu people. A review of the Parishat's early interventions in public literary controversies, and its successful attempts to position itself as a nationalist intermediary sheds powerful light on the fascination of Anglo-Vernacular graduates with classical Telugu literature and recovers a "Lost Era" of literary activism and national identity formation in the shadow of Empire. In an imperial Victorian context, where discourses of European Classicism were pervasive and used to highlight the superiority and exceptionality of Western Civilization, it was precisely the classicist diction of *grānthika* and the impressive imperial veneer it provided to nationalist projects of literary reform (Anglicization) and universal education (vernacularization) that lent it such authority among the new professionals.

An examination of the Parishat's aims and activities also cautions us against treating English-educated professionals and Telugu pundits as monolithic groups with mutually exclusive

[70] The *Jaimini Bhārata* is introduced as an early model of Telugu prose by the Parishat. The text is based on an earlier Telugu poetic adaptation by Pillalamarri Virabhadrudu of the lost *Aśvamedha Parva* attributed to Jaimini in the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*.

interests. Although the Parishat was primarily organized and managed by the new professionals, pundits were regular participants at its annual conferences and frequently submitted papers for publication in its journal. The pundit sabha demonstrated the Parishat's ability to coordinate the converging cultural concerns and intellectual interests of its English-educated and pundit members in a productive and collaborative manner. The classicist interests of the English-educated professionals were shaped by contemporary political and cultural discourses. These interests were also in tune with pundit notions of tradition that centred around grammatical integrity, scholarly reading practices, and aesthetic values. As such, the relationship between pundits and Anglo-Vernacular graduates during this period cannot be easily reduced to one of competition, antagonism, or a great war between "tradition" and "modernity." It must be seen as an ambivalent and entangled relationship between different imaginations of a vernacular future.

Motivated by a shared patriotic sensibility (*bhāṣa-abhimānam*), the pundits and English-educated professionals of the Parishat were committed to expanding vernacular education and knowledge production, while simultaneously seeking to raise the status of vernacular languages in colonial public life. In this regard, the Parishat recruited pundits to support its philological projects such as the compilation of its historical dictionary and the editing and publication of its manuscript collection. Tensions and conflicts between English-educated professionals and pundits, as distinct classes of knowledge producers, certainly existed. Anglo-Vernacular graduates considered their Anglicized forms of knowledge to be "modern" and hence superior to the Sanskrit and indigenous forms of knowledge mastered by pundits. Yet the new professionals also bore a deep respect for the linguistic and grammatical expertise of pundits and patronized pundit scholarship in much the same way as the English Orientalists and philologists at the College of Fort St. George had done in the early nineteenth century. Throughout the late

nineteenth century and first few decades of the early twentieth, English-educated professionals were just as likely to share ideological commitments and collaborate on intellectual projects with pundits, as they were to disagree and oppose them. Friendships, working partnerships, teacher-student relationships, and patron-client dynamics were forged between members of both groups in this era.

Relationships between the new English-educated professionals, older social elites, and Telugu pundits were fostered by annual rotating conferences. The identification of colonial administrative centers with the capitals of ancient dynasts as well as the promotion of Vijayanagara nobility at its conferences was intentionally pursued by the Parishat. By conducting its conferences in this manner, the Parishat actively invoked allusions to the imperial grandeur of "Telugu" royal courts of yesteryear. These courts were recognized as "Telugu" on the historical basis of their patronage of Telugu poets and considered representative of great political and cultural moments in the history of the Andhra nation. The Parishat consciously wove its conferences into an historical geography that conflated modern towns and districts with the courts and kingdoms of the past and dissolved the boundaries between Telugu's colonial present and imperial past in order to create a captivating image of a glorious and timeless Telugu nation.

Consequently, the Parishat's investment in Telugu Classicism and its defense of *grānthika* cannot be reduced to the anachronistic or reactionary interests of traditional elites such as zamindars and pundits but must be seen as an integral component of how English-educated Telugu professionals envisioned their relationship to language and nation at the peak of Empire. It was largely through the Parishat's efforts that Telugu came to be conceived as a national as well as classical language in the early twentieth century. The Parishat's philological and epigraphic projects, diverse membership, and public interventions positioned the institution as

the modern heir and authoritative custodian of the "Empire of Literary Telugu" and empowered it with substantial discursive power in the educational, cultural, and political arenas of nationalist activity and public life in the early twentieth century.

Conclusions

This dissertation has produced a new cultural and intellectual history of the colonial encounter in nineteenth and early twentieth-century south India. It has demonstrated the diverse ways Indian intellectuals negotiated the changing cultural status of the Telugu language and contributed to radically new conceptions of language and community under British colonial rule. The preceding chapters outlined the development of new fields of disciplinary knowledge, intellectual networks, and spaces of literary and intellectual life in order to bring attention to the complex and ambivalent genealogies of Telugu cultural activism. Overall, the dissertation has argued that Indian projects to improve the Telugu language inspired multiple middle-class formations and diverse iterations of regional and national identity.

The constitution of a subordinate relation between English and Indian languages involved considerable compulsion and epistemic violence by the European actors. Yet the terms of this relation were consistently contested, subverted, and appropriated by Indian intellectuals through a range of cultural projects. In examining the diverse ways Indian intellectuals sought to improve Telugu literature, the dissertation has emphasized the interactive aspects of the colonial encounter and challenged mainstream historical narratives of western diffusion and English influence.

One of the most prominent discursive and institutional contexts for the production of Telugu as a colonial vernacular language was education. Debates around the curriculum and practice of vernacular language instruction had lasting implications on Telugu literary sensibilities, scholarly ambitions, and textual practices. From the grammatical scholarship of the first Telugu pundits at the College of Fort St. George to the new philology of the English-educated graduates of the University of Madras, Indian intellectuals forged rich and creative

continuities with pre-colonial traditions of courtly Telugu literature. At the same time, these figures critically engaged the shifting pedagogical imperatives of colonial education. Complicating static understandings of "tradition" and "modernity," this dissertation has highlighted the dynamism and ambiguity of Telugu literary life in this period. To this end, it has worked to identify the local and historical contingencies that shaped Indian efforts to actively forge their own social and cultural realities.

The four chapters of this dissertation have explored the diverse and sometimes contradictory means by which Indian intellectuals mediated the constitution of Telugu as a vernacular language in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (1812-1920). Each chapter has revolved around a key site of the colonial encounter and explored the range of responses it provoked in Telugu literary culture. The chapters followed a chronological progression, beginning with Indian and European intellectual exchanges at the College of Fort St. George (est. 1812) and concluding with the organization of a national Academy of Telugu Letters (est. 1920). This span of time enabled the dissertation to trace continuities and ambivalences as well as critical turning points in the historical development of Telugu cultural activism.

Chapter one located the origins of Telugu language reform in the East India Company's first experiments with vernacular education in the Madras Presidency. It drew specific attention to the College of Fort St. George's “Pundit College” (1812-1836) and the University of Madras High School (1841-1855) as the two most important sites for the constitution of Telugu as a colonial vernacular language. The chapter documented new understandings of the Telugu language that emerged through intellectual interactions between Telugu pundits and European educators. Although British administrators determined curricular goals for Telugu instruction—emphasizing translation, grammar, and prose composition—it was the Telugu pundits of these

institutions who taught and producing pedagogical materials. In this regard, the chapter reconstructed the archive of early-nineteenth-century Telugu grammars and textbooks produced by pundits for colonial schools in order to highlight their role in the development of new Indian intellectual priorities, literary sensibilities, textual practices, and professional ambitions.

A significant contribution of this chapter was the introduction of Telugu pundits as important intermediaries of the colonial intellectual encounter in southern India. Initially recruited from diverse communities of pre-colonial Telugu literati—namely *paṇḍita* scholar-poets and *karṇam* clerks—the "Telugu pundit" quickly emerged as a new and distinctly colonial professional identity. The early compositions of Telugu pundits explored by this chapter laid the foundations for what came to be popularly referred to as *grānthika* prose. Alternately translated into English as "classical," "literary," or "grammatical" Telugu during the colonial period, *grānthika* became synonymous with correct Telugu in Anglo-Vernacular schools as well as the burgeoning world of commercial Telugu print. By the late nineteenth century, newspapers, journals, novels, dramas, and scientific writing were all produced in *grānthika* Telugu. As vernacular language instructors, textbook authors, and print entrepreneurs, Telugu pundits drew on long-standing traditions of Indian linguistic scholarship to claim new platforms of intellectual authority and cultural influence. The linguistic and literary standards they developed at these first institutions of colonial education influenced Telugu literary life well into the twentieth century.

Chapter two studied the expansion of English education in the second half of the nineteenth century and the increasing prominence of English-educated Indian professionals in colonial society. Following the passage of the 1854 Education Act, the colonial administration oversaw the systematic promotion of Anglo-Vernacular secondary schools and colleges across the Madras Presidency. These schools were conducted primarily in English and provided

instruction in European arts and sciences. Within a decade, graduates of these educational institutions began to define themselves as culturally distinct from older communities of Telugu literati as well the broader unlettered sections of south India by conscientiously adopting new discursive styles and forms of public association. The chapter argued that the organization of new literary spaces such as debating societies and reading rooms created important contexts for the development of middle-class solidarity and cultural entrepreneurship in colonial south India.

A key observation of this chapter was that the impact of these new forms of literary association lay not so much in the promotion of radical social ideologies or political agitations but in the more fundamental way they restructured the social and intellectual life of the literate population of the Telugu Districts. The social dimension of reading rooms nurtured the formation of friendships, the setting up of business ventures, and the inspiration of projects of cultural entrepreneurship. As such, reading rooms encouraged a new form of public sociability that privileged social relations across and beyond the traditional interpersonal networks of kin, caste, and sect that conventionally determined Telugu social life and laid the foundations for a vibrant middle-class literary culture in the emerging urban centers of the region. Within the walls of these reading rooms and debating societies, the shared experiences of the new professionals, as products of the Anglo-Vernacular educational system, as well as their intimate affiliations with the colonial courts and bureaucracy, crystallized into a new social and cultural solidarity. Consequently, as the chapter has demonstrated, the organization of these new literary spaces was critical to the articulation of middle-class community and cultural authority in colonial south India.

Chapter three explored early initiatives by English-educated Indian professionals to adapt western forms of public association to specifically Telugu literary and intellectual contexts. It

focused on the establishment of some of the first Telugu literary societies, the Madras Presidency College's Āndhra Bhāṣa Abhivardhini Samājamu (est. 1890) and Madras Christian College's Āndhra Bhāṣa Abhirañjani Saṅghamu (est. 1892), as well as efforts to organize an annual Congress of Telugu Pundits from across the Madras Presidency (1897-99). The chapter examined the emergence of new aesthetic sensibilities, reading practices, methods of scholarship and intellectual networks nurtured by these societies.

As the chapter demonstrated, the lectures and literary competitions these societies hosted were crucial to forging new middle-class conceptions of Telugu language and literature. However, as the proceedings of the Congress of Telugu pundits have revealed, what this meant in practice was far from clear. The development of new middle-class sensibilities during the late nineteenth century is typically treated as the product of a radical and self-conscious break with "tradition." Yet the English-educated organizers of the Congress expressly invited Telugu pundits, typically represented by earlier historians as unyielding traditionalists, to collaborate with them in "patriotic" projects to reform and improve Telugu literature. The resolutions passed by Congress attendees demonstrate that Indian intellectuals were coming to understand Telugu as an object of shared public interest. On the other hand, the Congress' sudden dissolution reveals the deep divisions and fragility that underlay middle-class efforts to consolidate a literary public. Strikingly, as the chapter has shown, the debates that foundered the Congress did not follow typical dichotomies of "traditional pundit" and "modern English-educated professional" but instead more ambiguous lines of patronage and guru-sishya connections.

The fourth chapter examined the establishment of the Āndhra Sāhitya Parishat or Academy of Telugu Letters and its role in formalizing new standards of correct Telugu during its first decade of operation (1911-1922). The Parishat was organized by the leading English-

educated Telugu professionals and politicians of the early twentieth century on the model of the French Academy and intended to serve as a national representative of Telugu language and literature. Its philological and epigraphic projects, diverse membership, and public interventions enabled the organization to consolidate a large literary public and position itself as the authoritative custodian of the Telugu language to colonial authorities. In its early years, the Parishat presided over several public controversies relating to colonial education reform, government censorship, the standardization of Telugu prose, and scientific translation. The chapter argued that the Parishat bolstered middle-class claims to cultural leadership and shaped early twentieth-century Telugu articulations of region and nation. To this end, it examined the Parishat's conferences and their role in consolidating a Telugu literary public at the provincial level.

Like the Congress of Telugu Pundits, the Parishat brought together Telugu pundits and English-educated professionals to reform and improve the Telugu language. In examining the Parishat's role in fostering collaborative projects to actively transform the Telugu language, between these two groups, this chapter has brought critical attention to the interrogations, inventions, and crystallizations of “tradition” that were crucial to remaking language and community in colonial south India. Specifically, it has provided insight into early twentieth-century cultural investments in *grānthika* Telugu prose. Initially developed by Telugu pundits in the mid-nineteenth century, the neoclassical register had acquired national significance by the early twentieth century. As the chapter has shown, the classicist diction of *grānthika* made it attractive to English-educated professionals in a context where discourses of European classicism were integral to claims of British superiority and provided an impressive veneer to the

Parishat's efforts to elevate Telugu's status from a vernacular language to a national and imperial language.

This dissertation has been driven by an interest in reconceiving the history of nineteenth-century India through the rich archive of Telugu-language sources. To this end, it focused on Orientalist scholarship and early commercial publishing in Telugu. However, a significant gap in this study has been the limited engagement with missionary and zamindari contexts of Telugu literature. Christian missionaries were major proponents of Telugu print culture and played an important role in the expansion of colonial education during the second half of the nineteenth century. They developed their own set of priorities in relation to Telugu language reform and vernacular education that deserve to be examined in greater detail. The histories of individual missions, their translation and publishing projects, and the Telugu scholars who worked in these contexts remains to be detailed. Many of these missions were crucial in extending literacy and professional opportunities to non-elite caste groups for the first time. Likewise, the vibrant cultural life fostered by zamindari estates also deserves to be studied in greater detail. Removed from the colonial metropole of Madras, estates such as the Vizianagaram Zamindari were major centers of Telugu literary and intellectual production. Poets and scholars based in zamindari establishments demonstrated a significant degree of creative autonomy and engagement with the new tastes and genres promoted at Anglo-Vernacular schools. Many of these zamindaris established their own printing presses in the early twentieth century and developed into important centers of Telugu print culture in their own right. It is hoped that future research will enable these contexts to enrich our understanding of the diversity and ambiguity of the Telugu literary sphere during the colonial period.

To date, Telugu cultural activism in the colonial period has been studied primarily in relation to dominant discourses of nationalism and of mass political mobilizations beginning in the 1920s. In taking a longer perspective on the history of this activism, the dissertation has been able to accomodate a broader range of Indian scholars, intellectual developments, and cultural projects that contributed to remaking conceptions of language and community in colonial south India. It has sought to retrieve Telugu literary networks beyond ideologies and political movements by reconstructing lesser known grounds of interaction and exchange such as friendships, teacher-student relationships, and patronage. In observing the ways these networks overlapped, intersected, and differentiated themselves, this study has been able to provide new perspectives on the diverse investments and complex motivations that drove the literary trends and the cultural activism of the colonial period.

The dissertation has set the stage for new avenues of research related to the cultural and intellectual history of southern India As it has shown, one of the outcomes of the colonial encounter was the intensification of traditionalist scholarship and literary production. There is much more to explore in relation to the activities of Telugu pundits, particularly as printers and publishers, as well as the new philology and neoclassicism of English-educated professionals. The dissertation also opens up new possibilities for thinking about the history of education and scholarship in South Asia. The history of Telugu scholarship and education at major institutions such as the Madras Presidency College, Madras Christian College, and Madras Normal School have yet to be properly detailed. Finally, the complex social and political legacies of the various notions of region and national identity that circulated in this period remain to be documented. The dissertation has laid the groundwork for more sustained explorations of how discursive concepts articulated in English such as "nation," "progress," and even "literature," were

assimilated into Telugu and acquired new meanings and significance among new Telugu publics. We may also look at the diverse political legacies of Telugu literary activism. Many of the most prominent members of the Andhra Sahitya Parishat went on to become influential leaders in the Non-Brahman movement and the Justice Party during the 1920s and 30s. As Madras was the most important center of the new intellectual and literary developments generated by the colonial encounter, the dissertation also opens up opportunities for thinking comparatively about multilingualism in southern India, the development of an urban print-based literary culture in colonial Madras, and literary and intellectual exchanges between scholars of Telugu and other Indian languages.

APPENDIX ONE

Congress of Telugu Pundits: Attendants, Invitees, Standing Committee and Resolutions

I. 32 Attendees:

[Madras] Kŏkkŏṇḍa Veṅkaṭaratnam
[Madras] Vedam Veṅkaṭarāya Śāstri
Kilambi Ādinārāyaṇa Rāvu Nāyaḍu
[Bellary] Nelaṭūru Rāghava Śāstrulu
[Bellary] Kolācalam Śrīnivāsa Rāvu
[Bellary] Tāḍiparti Nṛsiṃhācāryulu
[Bellary] Maddikera Rāghavācāryulu
[Bellary] Kūḍligi Hanumantācāryulu
[Nellore] Pūṇḍla Rāmakṛṣṇayya
[Kurnool] Kŏḍumūru Lakṣmaṇācāryulu
[Anantapuram] Rŏddamu Hanumanta Rāvu
[Kadapa] Mallavarapu Pĕñcalayya
Nelaṭūru Pārthasārathi Ayyaṅgārlu
Ḍī. Sūryanārāyaṇa Śāstrulu
Hārti Raṅgācāryulu
Upparlapallĕ Raṅgācāryulu
Ār. Jagannāthayya
Kovūru Subbarāmayya
Mallādi Veṅkaṭaratnam, BA
The Reverend Mr. Louis
The Reverend Mr. D. Anantam
Ṭī. Veṅkaṭarāmayya
Khaṇḍavalli Rāmacandra Rāvu
Bi. Hanumanta Rāvu
Ĕm. Rāmakṛṣṇayya [Mānavalli?]
[Bellary] Cittavāḍigi Hanumanta Gauḍ [Kannada scholar]
Gāraladinnĕ Ādinārāyaṇa Śāstri
Ayyanakoṭa Pārthasārathi Śreṣṭhi
Sŏṇḍūru Nṛsiṃha Śāstri
Śāyjī Ānanda Rāvu
Bi. Rāmācāryulu
[Bellary] Dharmavaramu Rāmakṛṣṇamācāryulu

II. 28 Invitees who could not attend but sent letters of support and commitment:

[Domakonda] Veṅkaṭacalapati Rāvu
[Ellore] Rājā Mantripragaḍa Bhujaṅga Rāvu
[Kakinada] Śṛṅgārakavi Sarvārāyaḍu
[Kalahasti] Nāgapūḍi Kuppusvāmi Ayya
[Madras] Hāsamu Veṅkaṭasubba Śāstrulu
[Madras] Kŏṇḍibhŏṭla Subrahmaṇya Śāstrulu
[Madras] Komāṇḍūru Anantācāryulu
[Madras] Pārthasārathi Nāyaḍu
[Madras] Rāmanātha Śivaśaṅkara Pāṇḍayya
[Madras] Samarthi Raṅgayya Śeṭṭi
[Madras] Ṭī. Ĕm. Śeṣāgiri Śāstrulu, M.A.
[Masulapatam] Nādĕḷḷa Puruṣottama Pantulu
[Nellore (Naidupet)] Nelanūtula Śivarāmayya
[Parlakimidi] Macca Veṅkaṭakavi
[Peddapuram] Naḍakuduṭi Vīrarāju [via Tirupati]
[Pottapi] Mallavarapu Peñculayya
[Rajahmundry] Ācaṇṭi Sundararāmayya Pantulu
[Rajahmundry] Kandukūri Vīreśaliṅgam Pantulu
[Rajahmundry] Kopalli Veṅkaṭaramaṇa Rāvu
[Rajahmundry] Śiṣṭu Jagannātha Śāstrulu
[Rajahmundry] Vaḍḍādi Subbarāyaḍu Pantulu
[Rajahmundry] Vāvilāla Vāsudeva Śāstri
[Rajahmundry] Vyāsamurti Śāstri
[Srikakulam] Dabbīru Kṛṣṇamūrti
[Srikakulam] Saṅgīta Rāvu Bāpirāju
[Viravallipalem] Veṅkaṭasūrya Gopālam
[Vishakhapatnam] Bayapuneḍi Veṅkaṭajogayya Pantulu
[Vizianagaram] Vajjhala Nārāyaṇa Śāstrulu

III. Members Nominated for the Standing Committee [not all were present]

BELLARY
Dharmavaramu Rāmakṛṣhṇamācāryulu (Secretary)
Nelaṭūru Rāghava Śāstrulu
Kūḍligi Hanumantācāryulu
Tāḍiparti Nṛsiṃhācāryulu
Maddikera Rāghavācāryulu

Cittavāḍigi Hanumanta Gauḍ
Bādanahaṭṭi Mādhava Rāvu

NELLORE
Pūṇḍla Rāmakṛṣṇayya

MADRAS
Kŏkkŏṇḍa Veṅkaṭaratnam
Panappākam Śrīnivāsācāryulu
Ji. Śeṣācāryulu
Samarthi Raṅgayya Śeṭṭi

KURNOOL
Asūru Śrīnivāsācāryulu
Koḍumūru Lakṣmaṇācāryulu

ANANTAPURAM
Rŏddamu Hanumanta Rāvu

KADAPA
Kovūru Paṭṭābhirāmayya
Mallavarapu Pĕñcalayya

KRISHNA
Nādĕḷḷa Puruṣottama Pantulu

GODAVARI
Kandukūri Vīreśaliṅgam Pantulu
Vāvilāla Vāsudeva Śāstri
Vaḍḍādi Subbarāyaḍu Pantulu
Ācaṇṭi Sundararāmayya Pantulu

VISAKHAPATNAM
Bayapuneḍi Veṅkaṭajogayya Pantulu
Devaguptam Sanyāsi Rāju
Maṇḍapāka Pārvatīśvara Śastri

GANJAM
Macca Veṅkaṭakavi

SRIKAKULAM
Ḍabbīru Kṛṣṇamūrti

VIJAYANAGARAM
Ĕn. Sundara Rāvu Pantulu
Gurujāḍa Śrīrāmamūrti Pantulu

IV. Eight Resolutions Passed by the Kavi Pandit Sangham[1]

Resolution 1: Commitment to an Annual Congress

This Congress pronounces that in order to strengthen the Andhra language, to ensure that its regulations will not be transgressed, to resolve linguistic debates, to produce useful good texts (*sadgranthamulu*), there should be a Congress of Telugu Scholars and that it should convene every year.

speaker: Rājaśrī Kilambi Ādinārāyaṇa Rāvu
speaker: Kolācalam Śrīnivāsa Rāvu
speaker: Nelaṭūru Pārthasārathi Ayyaṅgārlu
speaker: Mallādi Veṅkaṭaratnam, BA
speaker: Ṭī. Veṅkaṭarāmayya

Resolution 2: Organization of the Congress

It is determined that this Congress' activities will be conducted by the standing committee and subcommittees. The standing committee will maintain correspondence with scholars in different districts and determine however many subcommittees that the members of the congress should be formed into and strive to develop the subcommittees. And within the ideas of the subcommittees, the standing committee will determine the regulations it sees fit and present them to the congress in the following year. The standing committee has the liberty to include others in itself.

speaker: Pūṇḍla Rāmakṛṣṇayya
speaker: Kovūru Subbarāmayya
speaker: Mallavarapu Pĕñcalayya

Resolution 3: Formation of a Grammar Subcommittee

Due to the fact that the Telugu language has been reliant on the Sanskrit language for the most part, and that the grammars that currently exist for Telugu are not sufficient to regulate word formation (*śabda nibandhanamu*), and since it appears that without adapting sections from Sanskrit grammar for Telugu it is not possible to say Telugu grammar is complete, the following

[1] Please note the text of these resolutions has been abridged and summarized. The only exception is resolution 5, which I have given in full translation.

members below have been appointed by this Congress to a grammar subcommittee in order to ascertain their opinions. The standing committee also has the authority to contribute to these efforts. It was resolved that for the production of a sufficient Telugu grammar, the subcommittee should arrange the necessary efforts and that in the following year the extent to which this activity has been fulfilled should be made known to the main body of the Congress.

Designated members of the Grammar Subcommittee:

Kŏkkŏṇḍa Veṅkaṭaratnam
Aṣṭāvadhāni Nṛsimhacāryulu
Vedam Veṅkaṭarāya Śāstri
Nelaṭūru Rāghava Śāstrulu
Ḍī. Sūryanārāyaṇa Śāstrulu
Vāvilāla Vāsudeva Śāstri
Nelaṭūru Pārthasārathi Ayyaṅgārlu
Ār. Veṅkaṭasubayya, M.A.
Hārti Raṅgācāryulu

speaker: Kŏkkŏṇḍa Veṅkaṭaratnam
speaker: Aṣṭāvadhāni Nṛsimhacāryulu
speaker: Gāraladinnĕ Ādinārāyaṇa Śāstri
speaker: Rŏddamu Hanumanta Rāvu

Resolution 4: Formation of an Etymology Subcommittee

It is resolved that it is important to determine meanings of the etymologies etc. of Telugu that need to be either fixed or else researched through neighboring Dravidian and other languages (*sajātīyetara*). As in the manner above, a subcommittee has been appointed and they have the authority to increase their number as they wish.

Designated members of the Etymology Subcommittee:

Ṭī. Ĕm. Śeṣāgiri Śāstrulu, M.A.
Siddhānti Śivaśaṅkara Śāstri
Ḍī. Sūryanārāyaṇa Śāstrulu
Vedam Veṅkaṭarāya Śāstri
Kŏkkŏṇḍa Veṅkaṭaratnam
Ār. Veṅkaṭasubayya, M.A.
Pī. Veṅkobācāryulu
Pālūrū Śaṅkaranārāyaṇa Śāstri, M.A.R.E.S.

speaker: Nelaṭūru Rāghava Śāstrulu
speaker: Khaṇḍavalli Rāmacandra Rāvu

speaker: Ḍī. Sūryanārāyaṇa Śāstrulu
speaker: Panappākam Anantācāryulu

<u>Resolution 5</u>: Mandating Use of Standard Grammatical Language in Speech

When English and Sanskrit are spoken correct grammar is used. However, in the Andhra language, with the exception of a few pundits' letters, its spoken usage is laden with non-standard slang (*grāmya*). To the extent possible, this practice should be changed and standard language (*vyākṛta bhāṣa*) alone used.

Speaker: Brahmaśrī Kŏkkŏṇḍa Veṅkaṭaratnam — "Gentlemen (*āryulārā*)! This resolution makes known that standard language (*vyākṛta bhāṣa*) alone should be used to the extent possible in writing letters, business, and conversation. It may appear difficult to speak grammatical language (*salakṣaṇa bhāṣa)* at first. However, this is not a reason against it in and of itself. If teachers introduce its use in schools, students will gradually get used to it. This is the way we all know English. Don't you agree that we should be using standard English when speaking? Then why is that we do not speak Telugu in the same way? There are four categories of words in the Telugu language— Sanskrit loans (*tatsama*), Sanskrit derivatives (*tadbhava*), words sanctioned by the best writers (*deśyam*), and irregular slang (*grāmyam*). Among these, irregular slang should be avoided. If scholars avoid gramyam and commit themselves to correct language (*cakkani bhāṣa*), this will gradually spread to the rest of the people and Telugu will lose its deficiencies.

They say that using incorrect (*asādhuvu*) and ungrammatical (*apaśabdam*) words should be avoided. It is entirely inappropriate to lower our standards because it may be difficult to use correct words. It is not just students who have taken up this lowered standard. Negligent pundits unable to leave behind irregular slang have also contributed to this. In earlier times, the only language appropriate for scholars to speak was Sanskrit. Since the general population didn't understand the first of all languages, it eventually became appropriate to use Telugu for everyday needs. However, where is it said that Telugu should be spoken in a broken fashion (*apabhramśagā*) with scores of ungrammatical words? Everyone here has studied English. Wouldn't it be laughable if you attempted to speak that language by ignoring its grammar and making many mistakes? When you are so strict in observing correct English, why neglect Telugu? If scholars aren't preserving the grammatical features of Telugu, then how are they any different from non-scholars? How can scholars command any authority in this case?

Isn't it the case that only by urging students to make efforts to speak correct Telugu and addressing mistakes as they occur that the language will reach a more elevated state? Non-standard Telugu may pass among Kuchipudi dramatists, common actors, libertines, and musicians, but it is the scourge of educated scholars and students in search of knowledge. There is simply no doubt that correct Telugu can become well known through practice.

I, your humble servant, have attempted to speak standard Telugu from my earliest years. Students also attempt to speak to me in standard Telugu. There are now many students in Madras

who speak Telugu without any irregular slang in their homes. I pray to God that this development may continue to increase. One cannot become quickly accustomed to clean language (*śuddha bhāṣa*) just by reading books or writing the odd letter here and there. Above all other means, one develops a firm acquaintence with it through conversation. Therefore, I implore all of you to use only standard Telugu in your conversation and improve the condition of the Telugu language."

Speaker: Brahmaśrī Vedam Veṅkaṭarāya Śāstri — "Gentlemen (*āryulārā*)! I request that you all heed my appeal. This praise for standard language (*vyākṛta bhāṣa*) is most excellent. No grammatical text indicates that non-standard language (*avyākṛta bhāṣa*) ought to be used for speaking. It is beneficial to use the standard language. Prior to education, we cannot help but pick up non-standard irregular language (*grāmya bhāṣa*). What is the benefit of education and grammatical study when we get older? When we have received the education to speak correct language (*cakkani bhāṣa*), what reason is there not to purify our speech? Even learned pundits cannot escape making mistakes when they make their first attempts to speak the clean language. Whenever this occurs, these mistakes can be removed through education and the desired goal can be quickly fulfilled. This is not an especially difficult matter. We don't have to worry to much about making mistakes. That ability won't develop any other way but through education. Even scholars of English have trouble with spelling in their writing. This is due to a lack of practice. Unless we study the standard language, we won't be able to avoid such troubles and move beyond an elementary understanding of language. That way, mistakes can be stricken with just a little consideration as soon as they occur.

I have here argued that the standard language is above all is worthy of reverence. However, there is another matter that we must consider related to this. It is my opinon that it is inappropriate for us to speak the standard language with common people (*sādhāraṇa janulu*) who are unable to use it themselves or with those people who are unable to understand the ideas it is used to express in the first place. If we speak in that manner, we might display our own learning but it wouldn't be fit for our worldly transactions. For example, if we were to summon a barber (*maṅgali*) and ask, "*orī, kṣurakarmambŏnartuvā?*" [Boy! Will you give me a shave?] or send for a washerman (*jākivāḍu*) and ask, "*orī, madvastrambula kṣāḷnārthambugŏni poyĕdavā*?" [Boy! Will you pick up my clothes for washing?], they would be stupefied and look about in ignorance. That's why it seems that the standard language is unfit to communicate with them in a way they could understand.

Once, there was a pundit who had vowed to only speak in Sanskrit. Several thieves set upon his home and stole his wealth. The pundit went to report this to Nūkarāja, the village headman. He said without any hesitation in Sanskrit, "*taṅḍulārtha tadartha tadartha grāmapālakā!*" Of course, no one understood this. The thieves had returned to their own village and settled in for hours before anyone was able to figure out what had happened!

It seems to me that using the standard language in our daily affairs when it is not understood is just as ridiculous as this story. How will we communicate with those have not made the vow to

speak in only the standard language? Therefore, it's best to speak in the standard language only with other pundits as it might be appropriate. Certainly, it is just for pundits to speak and exchange letters with one another in the standard language. However, it's my opinion that speaking the standard language with coarse people (*nīca pātrulu*) or making coarse characters (*nīca pātrulu*) in dramas speak the standard language is artificial (*asahajam*) and distasteful (*rasābhāsam*). If we make the coarse characters of a drama speak correct Telugu (*cakkani bhāṣa*), then whatever mood (*rasa*) we may have aimed for in a scene will be completely ruined. When a barber appears in a narrative, having him say "*devā! kṣurakarmakanujña yitturā?*" rather than something more characteristic to his nature such as "*bābū! savaram puccukŏṇṭārā?*" [Sir, will you have a shave?] will thoroughly spoil the mood. Of course, this is just my opinion – this can't be fixed as a literary principle until the rest of you concur."

Speaker: Brahmaśrī Rŏddamu Hanumanta Rāvu — "Gentlemen (*āryulārā*)! Those who addressed you before me spoke with regard to literary language (*grānthika bhāṣa*) and irregular language (*grāmya bhāṣa*). In considering this resolution, it seems to me it would be beneficial to subdivide language use into three parts: books (*grantha paddhati)*, correspondence (*patrikā paddhati*), and irregular slang (*grāmya paddhati*). It would be best if books were restricted to the standard language with the exception of a few dramatic contexts. Correspondence could be composed according to the skill of the writer, hence pundits could exchange letters in the standard language while the unlearned (*rahitulu*) and others could use the irregular language (*grāmya bhāṣa*). In the matter of irregular slang, standard or non-standard language could be used based as befitting the people involved. Is it possible to rely solely on the standard language for idle conversation in the street? Would it be desirable? This is up to all of you to consider and resolve."

Speaker: Brahmaśrī Pūṇḍla Rāmakṛṣṇayya — "Gentlemen (*āryulārā*)! There is only a slight difference among the three speeches we have just heard. As the resolution states, standard language is to be used "to the extent possible." Why consider this matter more? Pundits should speak with correct words (*suśabdam*) and serve as guides for how to speak the standard language (*vyākṛta bhāṣa*). They must speak only in this language. It is not by accident that Brahmaśrī Maṇḍapāka Pārvatīśvara Śastri remarked so appropriately, "Poetry is full of excellent words" (*kabbamulan balĕmañci śabdamul*). Brahmaśrī Kŏkkŏṇḍa Veṅkaṭaratnam Pantulu is foremost among those who have pledged to speak with correct words at all times. He even speaks in this manner to the beggars who come to his home, stitching together sentences such as, "*ayyā yicco biccambiccuvāruleru*" [Sir, there is no one here to give alms]. Another person who is known to have taken up this difficult rule is N. [Nāgapūḍi] Kuppusvāmi Ayya. We must all salute the efforts of these two men who have taken on this observance for the sake of reestablishing the language [bhāṣodhhāraṇam]."

Speaker: Brahmaśrī Veṅkaṭācalam Śāstri (with permission of the president) — "Gentlemen (*āryulārā*)! I have been an actor for the last 13 years in Madras. From the beginning I have had a doubt about whether or not irregular speech (*grāmya bhāṣa*) was acceptable to use. Only scholars such as yourselves can unite together (*saṅghībhaviñcu*) and pass a resolution on this

matter and show us the way. Kalidasa and the other great Sanskrit poets used Prakrit and other such languages in their dramas. In our dramas, instead of Prakrit, you should resolve whether or not we can also use the merchant language (*sĕṭṭi bhāṣa*) in their place.

Resolution 6: Encouraging Experimentation in Literary Style

With respect to narrative, description, and other literary matters, our authors of today imitate the great works of previous authors to a certain degree in just one style. Original dramas and technical writings (*śāstra granthamulu*) are not being written for the most part. There is no place for the improvement of language (*bhāṣābhivrddhi*). Therefore this Congress appeals to contemporary authors (*adhunātana kavulu*) to compose texts in new ways (*krŏtta pāthakam*).

speaker: Vedam Veṅkaṭarāya Śāstri
speaker: Ĕm. Rāmakṛṣṇayya
speaker: Cittavāḍigi Hanumanta Gauḍ
speaker: Bi. Hanumanta Rāvu

Resolution 7: Fundraising

It is resolved that — for the efforts of these gatherings, money is necessary. As such, endowments and other methods will be established along with societies. These local societies will make themselves known in their towns and members will appeal to patrons of Telugu (*āndhra bhāṣābhimānulu*) such as maharajas, rajas, and wealthy men on behalf of the President.

speaker: Ār. Jagannāthayya
speaker: Pūṇḍla Rāmakṛṣṇayya
speaker: Kŏḍumūru Lakṣmaṇācāryulu

Resolution 8: Encouraging Literary Criticism

This Congress praises all principals of colleges who have resolved to grant those who pass in examinations in the vernacular languages (*deśabhāṣa*) titles as encouragement for the improvement of the language. We especially praise Dr. Duncan Dora and Justice Subrahmanya Iyer who have encouraged this. However this Congress is afraid that if test takers are not prepared to use critical analysis appropriately, then there may be awkward outcomes to these good intentions. Therefore this Congress resolves to respectfully appeal to Duncan and Subrahmanya Iyer encourage good literary criticism.

speaker: Dharmavaramu Rāmakṛṣṇamācāryulu
speaker: Kolācalam Śrīnivāsa Rāvu
speaker: Pūṇḍla Rāmakṛṣṇayya
speaker: Nelaṭūru Pārthasārathi Ayyaṅgārlu

APPENDIX TWO

Andhra Sahitya Parishat: Memorandum of Association

4th April 1913

1. The Name of the Association shall be Andhra Sahitya Parishat.
2. The object of the Association is the improvement of the Telugu language and literature and the encouragement of their study. This is sought to be accomplished in the following, among other, ways: —
    - I. By the compilation and publication of a comprehensive etymological dictionary of the Language.
    - II. By the compilation and publication of a comprehensive philological grammar of the language showing its relation to other languages.
    - III. By the preparation of a glossary of Scientific terms for use in works on modern Sciences.
    - IV. By encouraging research into the antiquities of the Telugu country and the compilation of a comprehensive history of the country and its people based upon the best authentic sources available.
    - V. By encouraging the writing of books on all useful subjects.
    - VI. By issuing correct and scholarly editions of valuable Telugu works.
    - VII. By the publication of a Magazine devoted to matters relating to the Telugu language and literature.
    - VIII. By holding annual conferences for discussing literary subjects.
    - IX. By holding examinations in Telugu literature and awarding rewards, diplomas, and certificates of merit.

X. By founding and maintaining a Library, principally, of Telugu books including manuscripts.

XI. Generally by doing all that is necessary in the interests of the Telugu language and literature.

APPENDIX THREE

This list is excerpted from the Andhra Sahitya Parishat Memorandum of Association. In several places I have included additional information in brackets relating to the contemporary professional positions held by these members in order to clarify their public influence

Andhra Sahitya Parishat: Members of the Governing Senate

4th April 1913

1. Sri Rajah Rao Venkata Kumara Mahipati Surya Rao Bahadur Garu, Rajah of Pithapuram.
2. Maharajah Sir Velugoti Sri Rajagopala Krishna Yachendra Bahadur Varu, K.C.I.E. Panch-Hazari Mansabdar, Rajah of Venkatagiri.
3. M.R.Ry. Dewan Bahadur M. Audinarayanayya Garu, Deputy Commissioner, Revenue Settlement, Retired, Tondiarpet Madras.
4. M.R.Ry. P.V. Krishnaswamy Chetti Garu, B.A., B.L., High Court Vakil, Kilpauk Madras.
5. M.R.Ry. N. Pattabhirama Rao Garu, B.A., Retired Dewan of Cochin, Egmore Madras.
6. Rao Bahadur B.N. Sarma Garu, B.A., B.L., High Court Vakil, Mylapore Madras.
7. M.R.Ry. P. Nagabhushanam Garu, M.A., B.L., High Court Vakil, Mylapore Madras.
8. Dewan Bahadur S. Venkataramadoss Naidu Garu, B.A., B.L., Secretary to Board of Revenue, Settlement Department [and former Dewan of Pudukkottai], Vepery Madras.
9. M.R.Ry. J. Ramayya Pantulu Garu, B.A., B.L., Presidency Magistrate, Vepery Madras.
10. M.R.Ry. A. Lakshmipati Garu, B.A., M.B., C.M., Medical Practitioner, Chintadripet Madras.
11. M.R.Ry. G. Venkataranga Rao Garu, M.A., F.M.U, [Secretary to the Madras Landholders Association], Triplicane Madras.
12. M.R.Ry. Vaidya Ratna, Ayurveda Marthanda, Bhishangmani, Pundit D. Gopalacharlu Garu, Ayurvedic Doctor, Acharappan Street Madras.
13. M.R.Ry. D.V. Hanumantha Rao Garu, Merchant, Komaleswaranpet Madras.

14. M.R.Ry. V. Venkataraya Sastry Garu, Proprietor of the Jyotishmati Press, Georgetown Madras.
15. M.R.Ry. G. Kanakarazu Pantulu Garu, B.A., B.L., Telugu translator to Government, Triplicane Madras.
16. M.R.Ry. Ch. Bhanumurti Garu, B.A., L.T., Assistant Telugu Translator to the Government, Triplicane Madras.
17. M.R.Ry. Vavilikolanu Subba Rao Garu, Telugu Pundit, Presidency College Madras.
18. The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur P. Thyagaraya Chetti Garu, B.A., Merchant, [Member of the Corporation of Madras, President of the South Indian Chamber of Commerce], Tondiarpet Madras.
19. M.R.Ry. Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Rao Garu, C.I.E., Retired Dewan of Travancore, Triplicane Madras.
20. M.R.Ry. C. Tirumalayya Naidu, B.A., M.R.A.S. [Member of the Royal Academy of Sciences], Ganasrama, Triplicane Madras.
21. M.R.Ry. R. Venkatasubba Rao Garu, B.A., B.L., High Court Vakil, Mylapore Madras.
22. M.R.Ry. A.C. Parthasarathy Naidu Garu, Editor Andhraprakasika, Mount Road Madras.
23. M.R.Ry. Rao Bahadur K. Ramanujacharlu Garu, M.A., B.L., F.M.U. Principal, Maharajah's College Vizianagaram.
24. M.R.Ry. G.V. Appa Rao Garu, B.A., F.M.U., Vizianagaram.
25. M.R.Ry. M.V. Subbarayudu Garu, B.A., Dewan to the Rajah of Pithapuram.
26. The Hon'ble K.R.V. Krishna Rao Bahadur Garu, B.A., Zamindar of Polavaram, Cocanada.
27. M.R.Ry. N. Subba Rao Pantulu Garu, B.A., B.L., High Court Vakil, Rajahmundry.
28. M.R.Ry. Rao Bahadur K. Viresalingam Pantulu, Rajahmundry.
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30. M.R.Ry. Rajah M. Bhujanga Rao Bahadur Garu, B.A., B.L., Zamindar, Ellore.
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32. M.R.Ry. Y. Ankinidu Prasad Bahadur Garu, B.A., Kumara-Rajah of Challapalli, Masulipatam.
33. M.R.Ry. K.V. Lakshmana Rao Garu, M.A., Dewan of Munagala Estate, Nadigudem Krishna District.
34. Dewan Bahadur Y. Janakiramayya Pantulu Garu, Retired District Judge, Bezwada, Krishna District.
35. The Hon'ble P. Ramarayaningar, M.A., Member of the Imperial Legislative Council and Jagirdar, Kalahasti Chittore District.
36. M.R.Ry. N. Kuppuswamayya Garu, B.A., Pleader, Tirupati, Chittore District.
37. M.R.Ry. N. Chengayya Garu, B.A., B.L., High Court Vakil, Nellore.
38. M.R.Ry. Gunupati Yanadi Reddi Garu, Landholder, Kothur Nellore District.
39. M.R.Ry. C. Ramalinga Reddi Garu, M.A., F.M.U., [Professor of History at Maharaja's College], Mysore.
40. M.R.Ry. V. Gopalayya Garu, B.A., B.C.E., Special Engineer, Parlakimidi Ganjam District.
41. M.R.Ry. Rao Sahib G.V. Ramamurti Garu, B.A., [Professor of History at Raja's College], Parlakimidi Ganjam District.
42. M.R.Ry. K. Brahmayya Sastri Garu, Cocanada.
43. M.R.Ry. Rao Bahadur R. Venkataratnam Naidu Garu, M.A., [Principal of Pithapuram Rajah's College], Coconada.
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46. M.R.Ry. Kondula Ramachandra Reddi Garu, Landholder, Suddapalli Cuddapah District.

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