

## **TEMPLE NARRATIVES OF ANDHRA PRADESH: A STUDY ON SACRED BEHAVIOR AND NARRATIVIZATION OF EXPERIENCES**

Kancharla Somaiah

Phd Research Scholar, Centre for Folk Culture Studies, University of Hyderabad.

### **ABSTRACT**

This paper deals with the Temple narratives of Andhra Pradesh: A Study, and holy groups, spatial distribution of the Andhra Pradesh (undivided) and focuses on selected temple. Then it mainly gives priority to the Guntur district selected temples, overall ancient and medieval temples light on the folkloric study. This paper attempts to the focus on temple narratives in the selected district. These narratives are categorized into the theme wise one of the theme is that under the dream category, this article concentrates on that two narratives. Two narratives are happen in the Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh (undivided); the various cult centers are there but this study focus on selected temples which are done fieldwork. However Based on written and oral information neither oral to written information included in this study. then this leads to the manifestation of the sacred behaviors of the peoples and it part of different aspects of the folkloric perspective.

**Keywords:** Sacred Behavior, Narrativization, Cult Centers, Transformed., etc.

The Temple is a sacred domain of worship and embodiment of God, the Supreme Being. The devotees believe that by visiting Temples and worshiping God, they attain spirituality and get relief from all fears and phobias about several issues of their mundane lives. To realize their wishes, the devotees worship multiple Gods in various ways and thereby construct and live an arena of sacred life in and around the Temples. The worship may be in the form of recitals of the miracles of the Gods or rituals or taking and realizing of vows or gifting in cash and kind and so on. Besides being a place of worship, a Temple is a theater for the cultural performances of the communities associated with it and sacred domain for performing the life cycle ceremonies like naming, first feeding, tonsuring, marriage and other auspicious rituals.

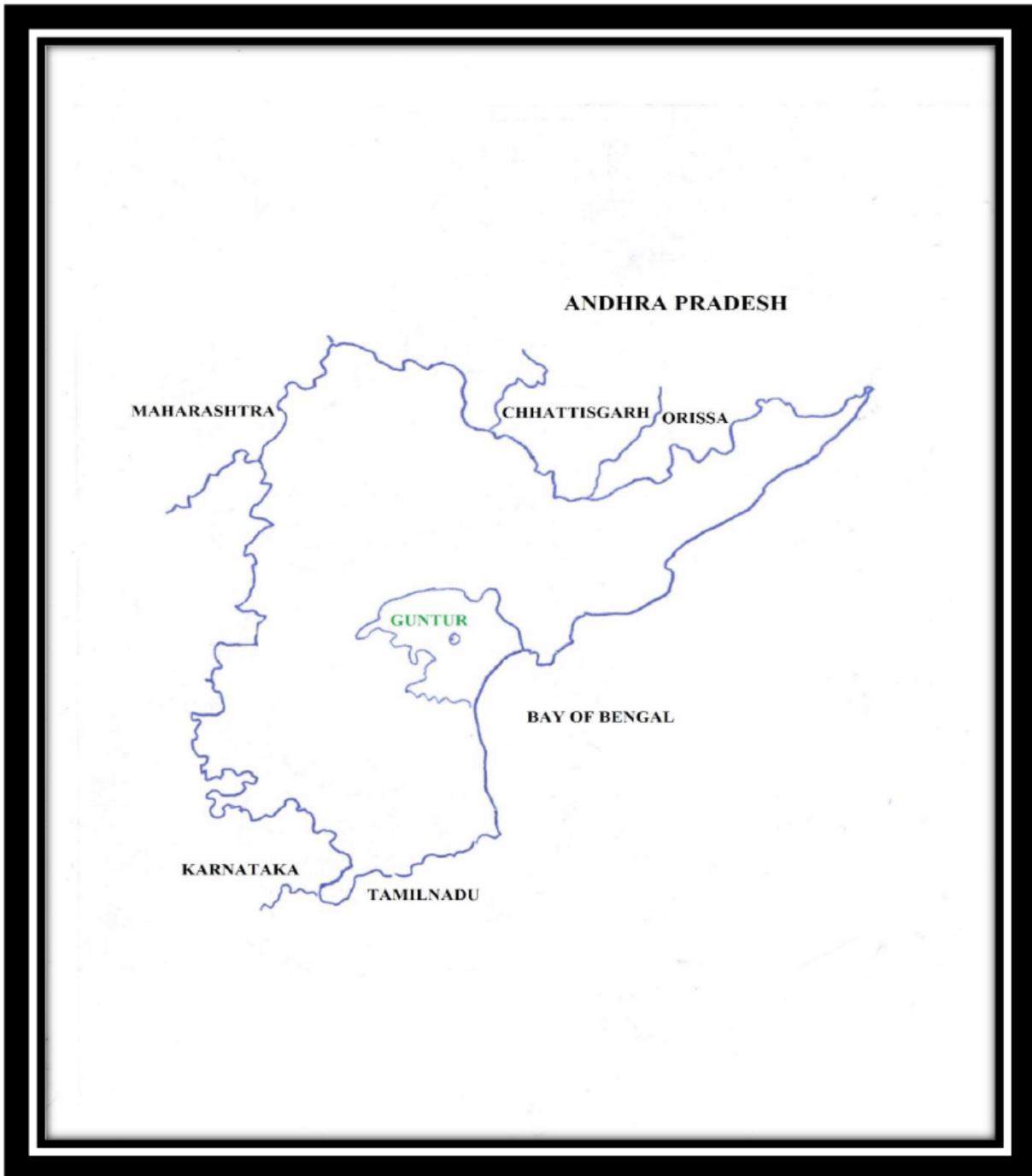
Temple is a citadel of learning for the devotees to seek the knowledge about their respective religious ideology and social-cultural lives. Hence Temple emerged as a culture area and transformed into an institution to which people and communities associated themselves with it and venerate the pantheon embodied in it. Several religious scriptures that ordain the sacred life

of the people was around the Temples of the ritual process and ritual order in oral and written forms. The cultures which do not have written texts to transmit their respective traditions to the next generation relied on orally in the shape of spoken (word of mouth) and nonverbal (material) expressive forms, i.e., folklore.

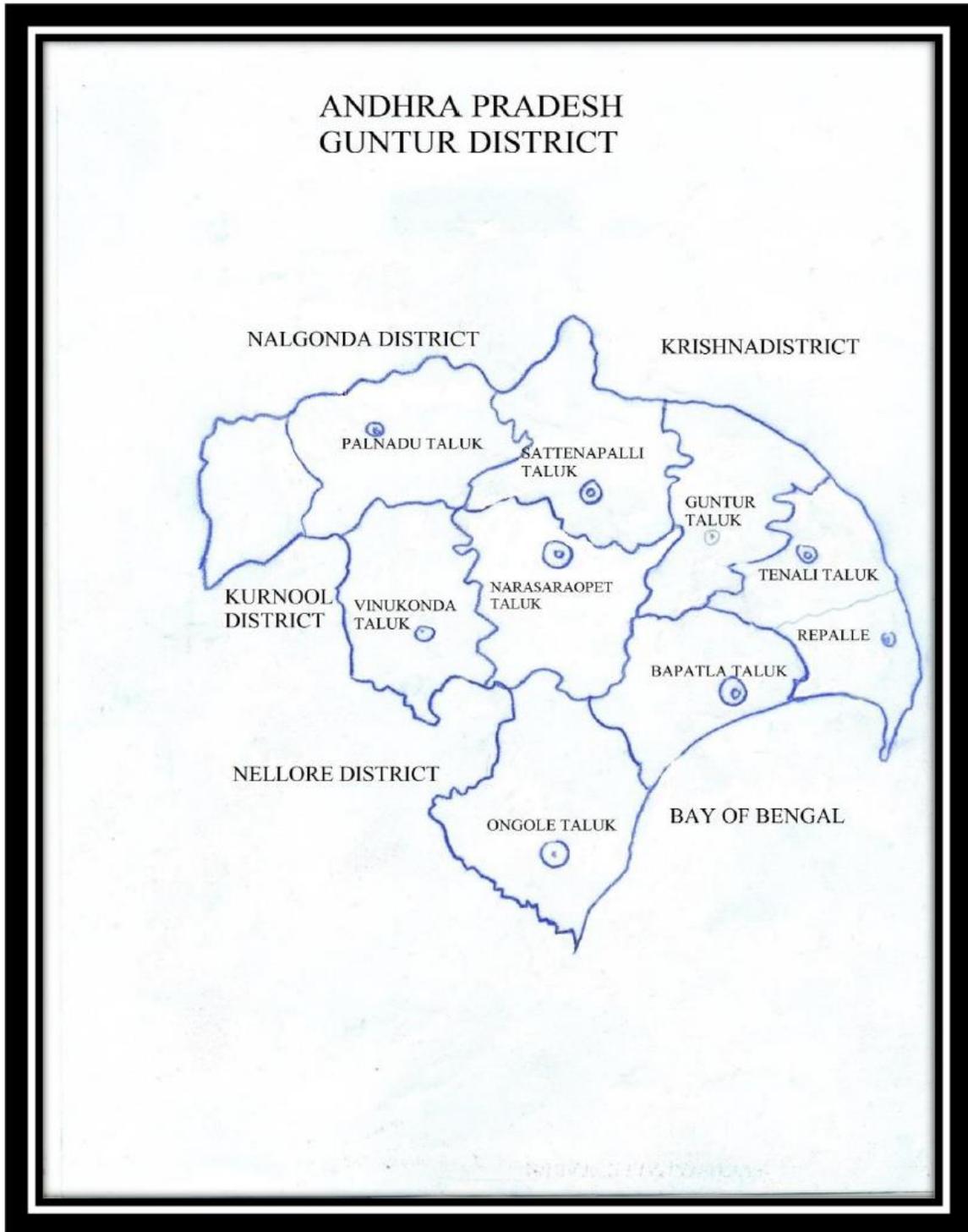
Narratives are "verbal acts consisting of someone telling someone else that something happened". A 'narrative' is an organized reality of human actions and experiences in a storied form. It is generally said that in this method the researcher attends to the ways that culture speaks itself through individuals. Thus, the study of narrative is the study of 'the ways humans experience the world'<sup>i</sup>. In principle, a narrative inquiry is committed to representing the actions of the relatively unknown, perhaps oppressed and ignored social groups whose agendas and meanings have been under, represented in theoretical, practical and policy debates. Researchers are using narratives to enable people to give an authentic account of their own lives. In this method, the researcher moves beyond the traditional forms of inquiry, such as numbers, variables, tables, and questionnaires. The data in narrative research is in the form of stories. These narrative stories are neither linear nor a polished sequence of events, but a reflection of multiple realities.

Hence, the narrative inquiry method is viewed a way of understanding and inquiring into experience through "collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus"<sup>ii</sup>. Since the current research is centered on the temple and Gods, Goddesses myths, the researcher has to rely more on the narratives to collect the data and therefore this method is very vital in this context. In this context this study focus on the Andhra Pradesh, Guntur district in india. Firstly main how it is mapped Andhra Pradesh in the Guntur district how it is showing given below map. Then this study mainly focuses on the Guntur district. In this connection how their invitation of tradition and their beliefs are narratizaion of their experience are leads to the manifestation of the sacred behaviors. It is narrativization of experiences of the all narratives and sacred behaviors of the temple rituals and temple narratives of the Guntur district. Some of the narratives are puranic connection, the some are there is no puranic connection.

**Andhra Pradesh Map (undivided)**



Source: <https://www.google.co.in/search?q=andhra+pradesh+maps,date:3-06-2016>



Source: Census of India 1961 volume II Andhra Pradesh part VII-B (6), fairs and festivals, 1961  
Census Publications Andhra Pradesh.

Geographically, the Andhra Pradesh undivided state is located in between the longitudes of 77' E and 22' N. the total area of Andhra Pradesh spread over, 2,75,045 sq.km. This state fourth biggest state in the Indian sub-continent. This state of south India shares its borders with the state of Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Maharashtra, towards its west and Tamil Nadu towards in south. The eastern side of the state is bordered by the huge water body of the Bay of Bengal though. The total area of Andhra Pradesh has got a coastline of around 972 k.m. It is the 2<sup>nd</sup> longest coastline in the nation. The Andhra Pradesh entire state divided into the following three regions. Telangana Region, Rayalaseema Region, Coastal Andhra Region.<sup>iii</sup>

The Northern side of the Deccan plateau is called as the Telangana region, the Southern side is known as the Rayalaseema region, and river Krishna separates these two regions from each other. The coastal are of the state is mostly formed by the deltas of these rivers of Andhra Pradesh. Historically, the earliest mention of the Andhra appeared in the Aitareya Brahmana (800 B.C). It names called Dakshinapadh during those days, one of the medieval courts also mention the Andhra country, Megasthenese, who visited the court of Chandragupta Maurya (322-297 B.C) Megasthenese says about Andhra country very glories and they have many military forces to defeat the over countries. Also, Buddhist books also reveal that the Andhra established their kingdoms on the Godavari belt at that time.

The great Asoka referred in his 13<sup>th</sup> rock edict to the Andhra. In Sanskrit, Mahabharata is the earliest piece of Telugu literature yet discovered light in Telugu is the official language. Some of the important aspects of the state, both historical and modern. And a rich cultural, religious and literary tradition with major contributions to Karnatic music, where Telugu became the preferred language. Then the classical music in South India and to classical dance through Kuchipudi. The state has many eminent poets also in modern times. Hence Europeans have called it the Italian of India. Some of the prominent religious towns and temples include Tirupati, Annavaram, Bhadrachalam, Basara, Ahobilam, Srisailam, Mantralayam, and Kalahasthi. Administrative, excellence which for instance was seen during the Kakatiya and the Vijayanagara dynasties.<sup>iv</sup>

Geographical distribution of cults centers. What is cult means a system of religious worship, especially with reference to its rites and ceremonies, also many of the sacred cult centers in India very large number of Hindus places of pilgrimage spread all over India? Although there are numerous sects in Hinduism, out of them three sects i.e. Vaishnava, Shiva, and Shakta are more dominant and popular Hindu sects. The sacred centers belonging to these three sects of Hinduism are distributed all over India. Holy places of various sects throughout India have created an essentially continuous "sacred geography" in which various regional cultural diversities become less significant for the movement of pilgrims from long distances. In India, the sacred centers have use power. A power pulls on believers beginning from the most ancient civilization to the

present time. Hence, pilgrimage centers, belonging to different sects and traditions, are nicely distributed in India, which ultimately strengthens the national solidarity. Both at the textual and contextual levels, the pilgrimage rules are liberal so also democratic in nature so Hindu pilgrimage is an indigenous institution and the most popular religious practice among Hindus today.<sup>v</sup>

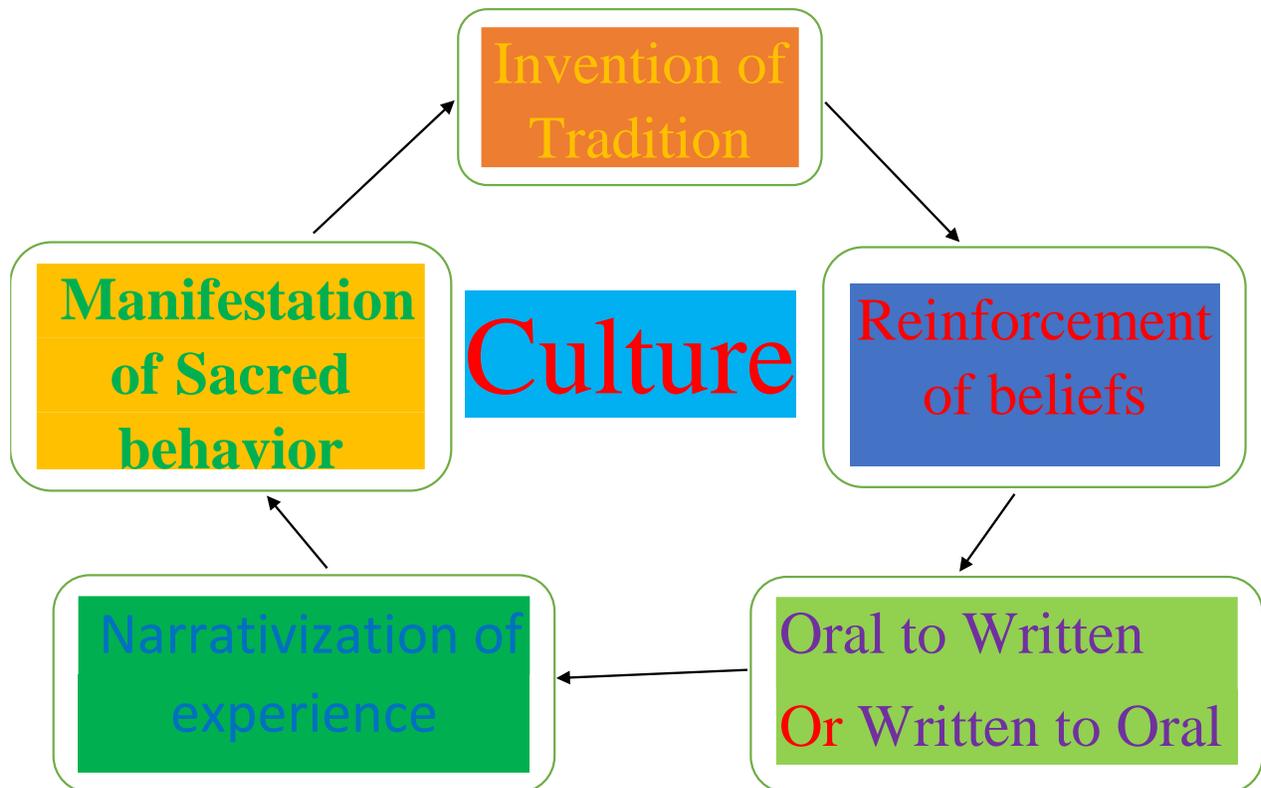
**Table No. 1: Thematic Classification of Temple Myths on Dream**

<b>Sl. no</b>	<b>Guntur district</b>	<b>Mandal</b>	<b>Village</b>	<b>Gods</b>	<b>Written and oral</b>	<b>Myth, legend or folktale</b>
1	Guntur	Tenali	Amruthaluru	Vishnu	Both are available	Myth
2	Guntur	Guntur	Ananthavaram	Vishnu	Only oral myth is available	Myth

Sources: Based on makcanzie kaifiyats matirial categorization done this table

Above table was indicating that myths from two temples in Andhra Pradesh Guntur district. The above two temples come under the dream theme. This paper analyzing dream myths. I have done field work above two temples but at this juncture this paper only two villages myths dealing. These two villages also appeared in the 1961 census report of the Andhra Pradesh, particularly fairs and festivals section. In this report given village census and if it there any myth in the temple given it is not there they are given information about how many temples are there in the village brief information they are given. This paper study two villages that are 1. Amruthaluru and 2. Ananthavaram, these two villages many Temples are there like Siva, Vishnu, Goddesses but this paper focuses on the two villages are Vishnu Temples. One is Sri Miriyala Bhava Narayana Swamy temple written and oral versions are available secondly Sri Venkateswara Swamy, this temple there is no written records oral myth is available, these two Temples have oral narratives are prevailed myths.

This figure indicates the how the culture revolves in the society



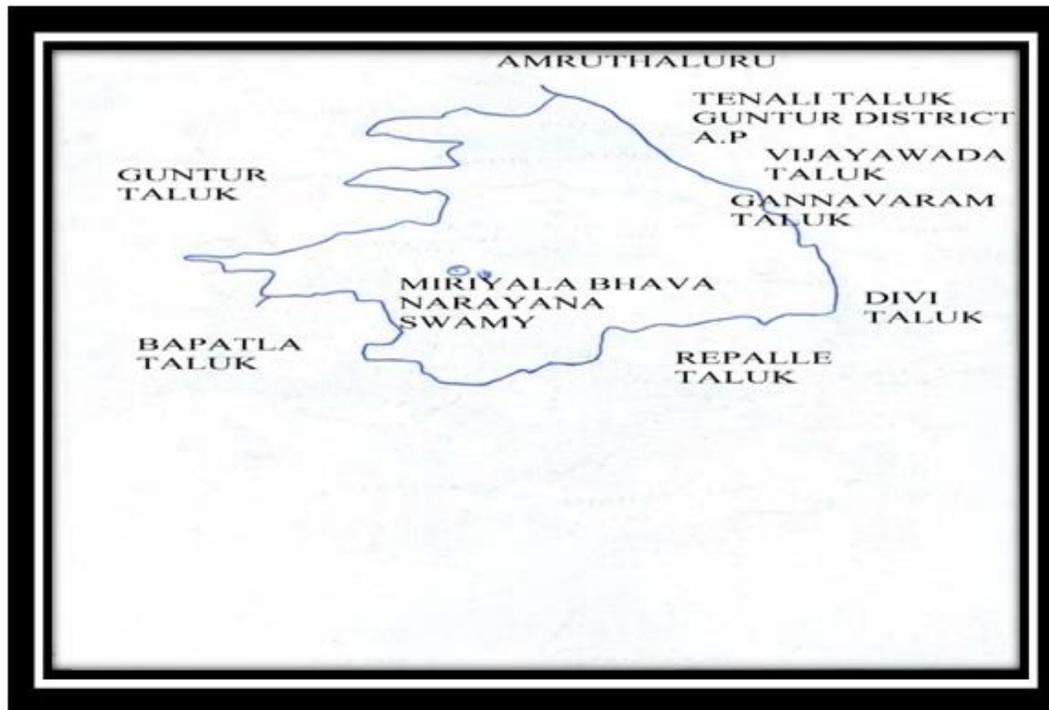
While the complexities of the culture concept were being debated in the mid-twenty centuries, surveys of its different definitions yielded a few common threads that are helpful in organizational research. Most simply, culture involves three basic human activities: what people think, what people do, and what people make. Further, several common properties arise: culture is shared, learned, transmitted cross generationally, symbolic, adaptive, and integrated.<sup>vi</sup> Then culture transformation to one generation to another generation it is evaluation process to be continued narratives also meanwhile some of the generations not continued process that sacred behaviors are continued that's way eighth century scholars also says it is reinvention of cultural process. These narrativization of expressions leads to sacredness and enlight some of temples through their rituals and cultural transformation. Then invention of tradition leads to the strong belief or reinforcement of the beliefs then through this enter into their actions means written text to oral or oral to written text to leads to the personally they have personal narratives or

narrativization of experience then through the their lives are sacred behavior. this process like life cycle process because they were do one generation to coming generation it is not ending process mainly this process mainly those who are priestly wood in their clan. This will leads to the cultural transformation in the society.

This is the one of the village myth village names is Amruthaluru it is situated in the Andhra Pradesh Guntur district, presently Tenali Mandal. These two villages narratives are written and oral (fieldwork) these two narratives are cross-checked both written and oral also inquiry about the temple priest and devotes experiences towards the narrative also rituals.

In this connection Connelly and Clendenin say about the narrative inquiry, the essential difference, Connelly and Clendenin propose, lies in the way the writing or telling of personal experiential narratives in and of itself puts in motion a mode of inquiry. The nature of this inquiry has not yet been well described. Connelly and Clandinin have spoken of the "reconstruction of experience" (a la Dewey) and have described how author experiential stories can reorganize their personal practical knowledge (1988). But in what way is such a story an inquiry? The question about "the inquiry in narrative inquiry" has not been a major topic of an investigation so far. I suspect that candidates doing a narrative thesis are so taken up by the process, enjoying the doing of it, that they are not much interested in characterizing its inquiry quality abstractly<sup>vii</sup>. However, in this paper present a holistic information about the two temples and its ritual process. However, these two villages maps are given out the line of the village and pinpointed the temple in the village.

**Tenali taluk map of the Amruthaluru village**



SOURCE: Census of India 1961 volume II Andhra Pradesh part VII-B (6), fairs and festivals, 1961 Census Publications Andhra Pradesh.

**Amruthaluru Village: Sri Miriyala Bhava Narayana Swamy Temple Origin Myth of the Village**

Once upon a time, this place used to be a forest and it had great vegetation. Because of its vegetation, many people used to graze their animals in the forest area. One among them is a Yadava he owned a lot of animals like cows. Among the herd, one cow used to be very active and it used to give a good deal of milk. Every day the cow used to drop its milk on a Linga in an anthill in the forest. This happened for many days. Whenever the Yadava wants to milk the cow the udder used to be empty. So, he suspected that someone is milking the cow and observed the cow for a whole day when it was grazing in the forest.

Then to his sudden dismay he noticed cow dropping milk in the ant hill. After seeing it he threw an axe on the cow from a tree. Shocked by the unexpected attack the cow fell near the ant hill and kept its hoof on the head of the Linga. Because of cow-keeping its hoof on the Linga exactly a portion of cow's hoof was broken from the head of the Linga. On the same night, the Linga appeared in a ferocious shape in Yadava's dream and showed anger on him, and the Linga told

him that he had done disservice to him. He also told him that with the name of Amrutheswara he was staying in the anthill from a long time and was staying there by drinking milk. He also instructed the Yadava to dig the anthill and construct a temple and in shrine the Lingam in the temple. The Yadava after waking up shared his dream with his relatives and went together to the anthill in the forest. Then they dug the anthill and found the Linga. After that they constructed temple for it and in shrined the idol in it. Later slowly bit by bit they turned the forest into village. As the Lord drank the milk which is like *Amrutha* (Ambrosia) he was known as Amrutheswarudu and as the village got constructed because of the Lord it came to be known as Amruthaluru.<sup>viii</sup>

### **Origin Myth of Temple**

Later as this village started developing trade and commerce flourished in this place. Once Pepper merchants on their way to trading stopped at this place and set up tents on the outskirts of the village. At that time Bhava Narayana Swamy went to the tents of merchants in the form of a Vaishnava Brahmana. He then approached one merchant and asked him to give some Pepper as he was suffering from *Paithyam* (biliousness). The merchant because of his greediness replied that he has only *batch seeds* (Chinese Spinach seeds). Vaishnava on hearing this replied to let them be *batch seeds* and went away. The merchant later went to the market and when he was about to sell pepper realized the changeover and lamented on his greediness. He along with the other merchants went to the village and prayed for the God.

Then Swamy appeared before him and told him it all happened because of his greediness and instructed him to construct a temple and install his idol in the temple and he also told him by doing so his pepper will turn back into their original form and his merchandise will grow day by day. Later the merchant sold all his pepper and with some amount, he constructed a temple and installed Bhava Narayana Swamy's idol in the temple. To the left side, a temple was constructed for Gopala Swamy. As the Swamy asked pepper and it was constructed by a pepper merchant this temple came to be known as Miryala Bhava Narayana Swamy temple.<sup>ix</sup>

### **Oral Narrative**

#### **Narrated by temple's priest Eduri Krishna Perumallacharyulu**

As per records, we come to know that the temple is constructed six hundred years ago. This temple is also known as Miryala Bhava Narayana Swamy temple. Once up on a time some perfume merchants came to this village and stayed for some days. Among them, one merchant was not able to sell his goods properly and had a very bad business time. He then prayed for God and told about his bad business. Swamy then appeared in Merchant's dream like a sage and asked

him what is there with him. He then replied nothing much only pepper. Merchant after waking up realized that all his perfumes turned into the pepper.

He then prayed to God and vowed if he was able to sell all the pepper with him he will construct a temple for him. The merchant with God's blessing sold away all his pepper and with the good profits as per his vow, he constructed Bhava Narayana Swamy temple. According to his words, they call this temple as Miryala Bhava Narayana Swamy temple.<sup>x</sup> Here in this village temple very famous and very old temple when the devotees vow on god. God deffenetly fullpil there vows. It is continued through the ages. The invention of culture or tradition through the reinforcement of their beliefs it will renew through the oral narrative it leads to the narrativization of expressions, then they have sacred behaviors in the society.

### **Devotee Experience**

Narrated by Matlapudi Koteswara Rao aged 39 years. (He doesn't know the narrative of the temple) During festivals, I have visited the temple along with my family members. I visit the temple during Sankranthi festival. Sometimes I pay the visit to the temple when situations at the home are not proper and when there is deficit crop production. Whenever I come here and visit the Swamy everything turns up to be fine with me. All my problems get solved and I feel peaceful. Even my children's studies are good due to swami's blessing. This God is very powerful, and he is the one who is looking after the village. This year everything including agriculture is fine just because of the Swamy's grace.<sup>xi</sup>

### **Festivals of this Temple**

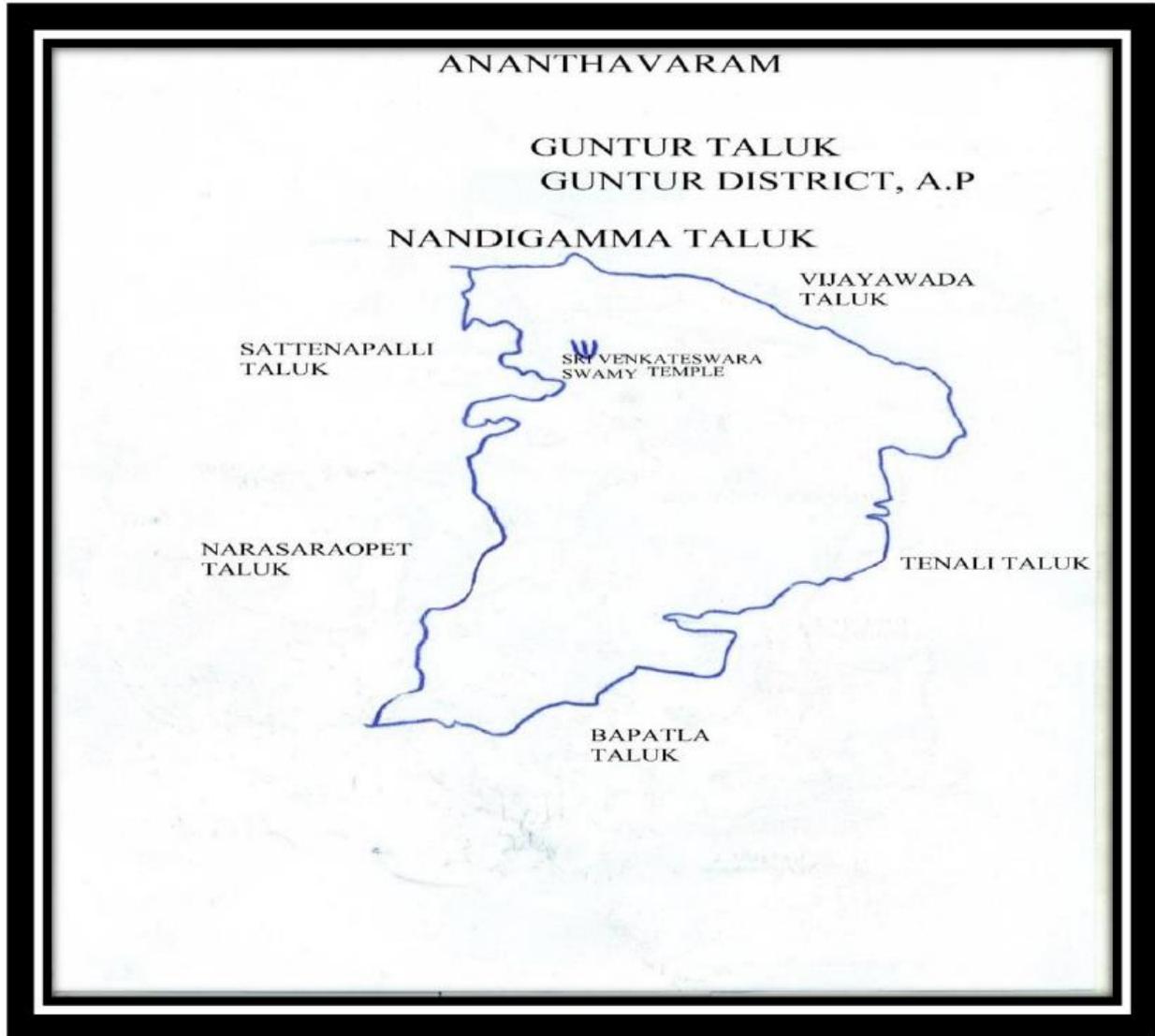
**Sankurathi, Mukoti Ekadasi, Dasara, Sravana festivals in pujas and Dasara Festival rituals held in this temple**

Every day morning and evening priest doing perfuming ritual in the temple

Every Wednesday bhajan performances doing in the temple.<sup>xii</sup>

**ANANTHAVARAM VILLAGE: SRI VENKATESHWARA SWAMY TEMPLE**

**Guntur taluk map of the Ananthavaram village**



SOURCE: Census of India 1961 volume II Andhra Pradesh part VII-B (6), fairs and festivals, 1961 Census Publications Andhra Pradesh.

**Ananthavaram village: Oral Version**

**Temple priest name: Dittakavi Venkataramanuja Charvulu-Age-46**

**Story**

Since 500 years onwards this Temple is existing, in ancient times this place south part one place called Karlapudi. Firstly, this Karlapudi hill top Swamy came to be settled there, then hills said to Swamy we are not bearing your weight, then this place north side big hills are bearing your weight. These north hills are called the Ananthagiri, this place one myth is revealed. In ancient times the north hills from top of the hill, sounds are coming that sounds are Hari Nama psalms hearing some of the people. Then some people went to the top of the hill laydown then immediately Swamy disappear and appeared in the hill down, same day one devotee had a dream in that dream Swamy appeared and said to him I am in this hill side Sridevi, Bhudevi along with me. After they are searching Swamy they found the idol of Swamy. Then onwards they are doing rituals on the tophill.

This Swamy another name called pala pongalla Swamy (Milk God), this name why it exists around this hill top, some villages around these hills top they have very much cows it's given birth the calf's after firstly they are taking milk that milk belongs to God, that's way they are brought that milk to this temple and they are cooking food with that milk for Swamy, then they offer to that food Swamy. Then afterward they are selling their cows milk to the others. Then they don't do this type their cows are fell into illness.

This temple premises Chitti Kesari tree is there, those who are not having babies they come to the temple then they are swing holding the tree and once they revolved to a tree. Then those who are not married they come to temple vows the Swamy, their vows are solved they came to temple they do door jamb (Gadapa puja) these steps lead to the hill top where the Chetti Kesari tree is there then they are the revival that tree three times. So many people they had marriage came to temple they are doing. This Swamy very important palguna Masam, this madam Swamy have Bramoshavalu. This palguna Masam full moon days four Saturdays festivals are doing. These four Saturdays come from the Sivarathri to Ugadi. So many surrounding village people come to this temple at the time of this festival.<sup>xiii</sup>

### **Devotee experiences**

#### **Devotee name: Yedukondalu-age-43 (Guntur)**

I came from this temple first time this Swamy very miracles doing God. I have listened to so many people that's why I want to visit this Sri Venkateshwara Swamy once.<sup>xiv</sup>

#### **Devotee Name: Udarapu Sambhasiva Rao-Age-47 (Ananthavaram)**

I vow to Swamy this year this village harvest crops and my business is good. Next, within six months my vows are fulfilled. We also doing Gadapa puja (Door Jaw worship) 400 hundred coconuts breaks in front of Swamy.<sup>xv</sup>

### **Festivals of this Temple**

1. Daily worshipping in the temple and lighting in the temple
2. Every Saturday so many devotees visiting the temple then their fulfill their vows
3. This temple very famous in the palgunamasa, this palgunamasa four Saturdays they are doing the festival in this palgunamasa full moon they are doing the thrayambaka bhramosthavams in this temple
4. Then after Ugadi festivals in this temple, they are doing special pujas. Then this day they are doing special abhisheka with 108 liters milk.<sup>xvi</sup>

### **CONCLUSION**

This two temples are Vaishnava temples geographically these two are different locations amruthaluru wet zone circle but when it comes to the ananthavaram it is the dry zone area when they are come to the ritual process both villages are doing well not only in the festival season but daily pujas are going on these two village temples are comes under the endowment department. Government maintained everything in the temple. most importantly as for as theory concern devotees narrativization of experiences leads to the sacred behaviors. They have very fasnating about temple when the village festival came whole both villagers are very happy and they are stable in their houses in know a day's globalization impact on these two temples.

How it is affected their cultural life. their are comes to the temple very day but present days they are weekly two day in these day only parents are comes to the temple. They are comes to whole hearted. In these days they are expolied to the media impact on their children's. It is one of the globalization impact in the villagers, then they didn't systematic rituals in their houses. the narrativization of experience is their but sacred behaviors are very less in the society.

---

<sup>i</sup> W. John. Creswell.( 2013), *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, United States of America: Sage Publications.. P.53-84.

<sup>iii</sup>.D. Jean Clandinin(2007), "Situating Narrative Inquiry", in *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: Mapping a Methodology*, New Delhi: Sage Publications, p.p.35-76.

<sup>iii</sup> Durga Prasa(1988 ), *History of the Andhras upto 1565 A. D. P. G. Publishers,Guntur*

<sup>iv</sup> Ibid

<sup>v</sup> Ibid

<sup>vi</sup> Bruce M. Tharp (2009). Defining "Culture" and "Organizational Culture": From Anthropology to the Office

From Internet sources: date: 2-11-2017. Time: 11:42 am.

[http://www.thercfgroup.com/files/resources/Defining-Culture-and-Organizational-Culture\\_5.pdf](http://www.thercfgroup.com/files/resources/Defining-Culture-and-Organizational-Culture_5.pdf)

viii. Carola Conley., (2000): *Thesis as Narrative or "What Is the Inquiry in Narrative Inquiry?"*, Curriculum Inquiry, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 189-214, Taylor & Francis, Ltd.

viii Mackenzie kaifiyaths of Tenali Record book no:27 p. No: 3-6

ix Ibid

x Narrated by temple's priest Eduri Krishna Perumallacharyulu, date:29-06-2015,time: 4:45 pm

xi Narrated by temple's devotee Matlapudi Koteswara Rao same Village 29-06-2015, time: 6:15 pm

xii Op.cit

xiii Narrated by temple's priest Dittakavi Venkataramanuja Charvulu, date:5-06-2015,time: 12:25 pm

xiv Narrated by temple's devotee Yedukondalu he is belongs to Guntur Village 5-06-2015, time:1:35 pm

xv Narrated by temple's devotee Udarapu Sambhasiva Rao same Village 29-06-2015, time: 2:15 pm

xvi Op.cit.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

1. N. Venkataramanayya, *An Essay on the Origin of the South Indian Temple*, New Delhi: Vidya Bhawan, 1983.
2. Burton Stein, the Economic Function of a Medieval Hindu Temple. *Journal of Asian Studies*, 1960.
3. Burton Stein, *Essays on South India*, Hawaii: The University of Hawaii, 1975.
4. Burton Stein, *The South Indian Temples: An Analytical Reconsideration*, New Delhi: Vikas Publications, 1978.
5. Arjun Appadurai, *Worship and conflict under Colonial Rule, a south Indian case*, New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1981.
6. S. Swaminathan, *Early Cholas: History, Art and Culture*, Delhi: Sharadha Publishing House, 1998.
7. S.K. Ramachandra Rao, *The Temple Rituals and Festivals*, Bangalore :IBH Prakashana, 1985.
8. G. Venkatramayya, *Narrative Art of South Indian Temples (Srisailam)*, New Delhi: Bhartya Kalparakasham, 2004.
9. V. Anuradha, *Temples of Srisailam: A Study of Art, Architecture, Iconography, and Inscriptions*, New Delhi: Agam Kala Prakasham, 2002.
10. Temples of India Publication Division Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Government of India, Delhi, 1964.

11. Krishna Deva: Temples of North India: National Book Trust India, New Delhi, 1969
12. J. Ramanaiah, "Temples of South India". concept publishing company, New Delhi, 1989
13. K.R. Srinivasan "temples of south India". national book trust, India, Delhi. 1972
14. S.R. Balasubrahmanyam:"Later Chola Temples" , mudgala trust, Haryana, 1979
15. Henry Cousens: "*Mediaval Temples of The Dakhan*", The Director General Archaeological Survey of India, Janpath New Delhi,1998

**APPENDIX**

some of the photographs **Amruthaluru** and **Ananthavaram** villages



This is Sri Bhavanarayana Swamy Temple entrance, Sri Bhavanarayana Swamy idol inside temple.



Temple priest Eduri Krishna Perumallacharyulu

Temple devotees in the mandapa

Ananthavaram Temple Photos



Sri venkateswara swamy temple entrance arche, To reach the tophill they go these steps



Temple's priest Dittakavi Venkataramanuja Charvulu      Main idol inside the temple rock idol



Temple's devotee Udarapu Sambhasiva Rao Villager