



# RAICHUR DISTRICTS, BYAGARA COMMUNITY, DWELLING, DRESS AND ORNAMENTS, FOOD AND DRINKS AND HOUSEHOLD GOOD.

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## Intrudaction

It is very rarely, if at all, that raichur inhabited by the Byagaras could be met with as they usually live in well settled castes in raichr. As a rule Byagaras who are low in the social scale. live in the outskirts, or at times, a little distance away from raichur and their settlement is termed either Byagara

The size of their settlement varies according to their numbers and it may assume any shape whatsoever, there being no restrictions or prescriptions regarding the shape of their settlement. It may, however, be observed that these are usually of a rectangular shape though, linear and somewhat circular patterns are sometimes met with. The houses face east or north it found singly or in a single row. In some of the streets houses may be found on either side facing each other. At Uppala,Badarli their settlement is roughly of a rectangular shape with three narrow and crooked lanes in it. There are three large shade bearing trees in this Byagura-oni and platforms have been built underneath so that these cerve as ideal places for squatting during leisure hours. These platforms are named as Parame waran katte, Durgamman katte and Dasara katte, and the first two are also places of worship. The settlement at kengallu is of a very irregular shape.

A brief description Nandihal visited for field study will shed light on the Uppala neighbourhood pattern of this community. having roughly 9 houscholds contains some twenty and odd households of Lingayats: 25 households of Kurubas; 12 households of Muslims: 12 households of Mang (Madigs) (S.C.); 45 households of Gollas; 4 households of Byagaras and less than `10 households each of Upparas. Kebhaligars. Brahmins, Panchalas, Maratha Butchers. Esdars and Koravars. At Sripuram households are of Eedars (also spelt and pronounced as Byader); 15 households are of Lingayats; 5 households each of Kabbers and Muslims: 8 households of Nandihal 5 households each of Upparas and Kurubas; 4 households of Byagaras; 3 households of Brahmins and a handful house. holds of other castes. hasamakallu a small village with a population of about 8 is mainly inhabited by Lingayats, Kabbaligers, In Maski town, is (also called Masangi or mahasangha)Reddys, Bhahusar Kshatriya (also called Klctri), Kuruba, Komati, Brahmin, Lingayat, Muslims and Mangs (Madiga or Madars) are the important caste-groups besides the Holeyas (also

called Mala). Lingasugur, and Sindhanur, Manvi, Devadurga taluk. Raichur district also portrays a similar picture. At all these places, the Byagaras reside in exclusive quarters and close to them but quite separate, live the Madigas). These two communities are considered to cause pollution by touch to the caste Hindus and they are therefore very much cut off from intercourse. with other castes so much so that most of the influence which may improve their conditions are practically sealed to them. While they are collectively disclaimed by the higher orders, even among themselves, these two castes have degrees of superiority and do not mix freely. They have their own drinking water wells. In these Uppala the Muslims generally follow the pattern set by the caste Hindus regarding their behaviour and attitude towards the Byagaras . Some exceptions to the general rule may be found as in the case of a middle-aged Muslim living amidst the Byagaras of Basavapur and (a sojourner) living with a Nandihal of the Byagara Caste. But the villagers treat these four persons as outcastes. It may be generally concluded that the old practice. the old order per-sists.

Generally, the Byagaras dwell in small, single storeyed, congested houses with neither a compound wall nor enough courtyard either in the front or at the back. Their houses adjoin each other with little space in between. The main components of a house are the kitchen and a living room, though an extra room and a byre may be the additional facilities of a few houses. In small villages their houses seldom have a bath. In some larger villages (e.g. Lakshmi camp) a few households do erect a small bath room (without roofing) adjacent to their dwelling. As it is a common practice in the rural parts to go to nearby fields for answering calls of nature, no house is ever provided with a latrine. Wells, and in their absence, tanks and streams are the chief sources of water. In several villages wells for their exclusive use have been constructed in the past from public funds. These wells usually lie within one or two hundred yards from their dwellings. If their wells dry up or the water is rendered unfit for drinking, the Byagaras have their pitchers filled by upper castes at the latter's wells.

At the outset it may be mentioned that the houses of Byagaras have no distinctive features of their own. Their houses are similar to those of the other poorer sections in the village. The houses invariably have a square or more frequently, a rectangular ground plan. The walls are generally of mud. Sometimes houses with walls built of rough hewn stones in clay may also be seen. Even within a village the material of the wall may vary according to one's economic conditions. Thus at Devadurga there are houses with mud walls and also those with rough hewn stones called Kergallu. At linhasugur there is one recently built house with dressed granite stone. a large number of houses with mud walls and about half a dozen houses with mudplastered twig walls. In have mud walls and only 2 have stone walls. As regards the roof. type, it is observed that in certain parts where the rainfall is relatively heavy, inclined roofs are common while flat-mud terrace appears to be the predominant type in the major part of the Hyderabad-Karnatak region. At Alkur and its neighbourhood most of the houses have inclined roofs, the material used being stone slabs. On the other hand, at Gabbur. Kyatnal and Sirwar all the houses of Byagaras are flatroofed. Though corrugated iron sheets are used in a few cases roof-material, the most commonly used material is a variety of mud, However, at devadurga there are some temporary huts with thatched roof, but houses with mud terrace predominate. The most commonly used materials for thatching are date-palm leaves and apu reeds. The terraced houses are almost always provided with skylights but not windows. The doors are generally of either mango or neem wood and the poorest of the Byagaras

have doors of cheaper material such as split bamboo, tin sheets etc. Gravel is the most common flooring material and it is periodically smeared with cow dung and red clay. The walls are also periodically-usually once a year--plastered with red clay sometimes mixed with cow dung. The Byagaras do not pay much attention to embellish or decorate their houses. Some of the older structures, however, have carved wooden door frames (e.g. Sindhanur). well-to-do Byagara cultivator built a house in he could afford, he has installed a wooden door frame with intricate carvings. Though small. this house is two storeyed and is built of dressed granite stone. However, such expensive constructions are rare to come across.

For construction of houses the Byagaras utilise the locally available material. In Raichur districts there are large numbers of stone quarries and stone: are available at nominal costs. The work the quarry and sell rough-hewn stones called Korgullu and dressed stones called Suthagi Kallu at rupees one to two and rupees 6 to 10 per cart load of 100 numbers respectively. Masonry work is got done by killed workers (Goundi) of Uppara or Kabbaliga caste on a wage rate of Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 3.00 per day. Mud (suitable for the construction of walls as well as roof) which is locally available is collected free of cost and sometimes this is converted into large sized unburnt bricks for constructing the walls. For building the walls also the Byagaras employ skilled labours on contract basis. The wood required for the house viz. neem, mango, etc.. is purchased locally if it is not available in one's own field. The beams are usually of neem wood and the rafters are of a variety of plant locally called Kaddigulli. For roof **termed sprend** on a layer of kanne leaves.

Though indigenous material and labour are largely use. Constructional activity among Byagaras is tardy as they are generally very poor. In their settlements hardly three or four houses come up in a decade and the Bagaras continue to live in over-crowded houses. At Raichur, it is reported that no house has been built since 1956 in the Byagara oni. One of the Byagaras of maski in got a subsidy of R. 400 from the government in 2012 and his house happens to be the .cubits by 12 cubits and consists of a player room, hall a kitchen and verandah beside a sheep pen. It is built of dressed stones in clay and it has a flat mud roofing. The total cost of the house is said. In this village as already stated, 5 households have purchased a two-acre plot at a cost of Rs.450. A regular lay-out has been- formed and the sites have been distributed among themselves. Now, they in a body are putting forth efforts to secure governmental assistance for bu lding houses, At devduga there is a house building Co-operative Society formed by the Byagaras . At present there are 14 membrs and 7 of them have their own housesites. Efforts are now being directed to obtain loans. for construction of houses repayable in easy instalments. Voluntary exertions of this sort on the part. of the scheduled castes are a very welcome sign, and are 'ndict've of a realisation of their hackwardness. and an imperative need of their having to rise by their own boot straps.

**Key Words:** Byagara community Dwelling, Byagara community Dress and Ornaments, Bygara community Food and drinks, Byagara community Household goods.

### **Byagara community Dress and Ornaments**

The influence of regional pattern is noticeable in the matter of dress and ornaments worn by the Byagaras. But. being poor they generally go in for cheaper varieties of cloth. The men's wear consists of a dhoti tied in kachhe style, a baniyan or a full-shirt. patga or rumala the headscarf and a country woollen blanket. called kambli slung over the shoulder to protect them against rain and

cold. Owing to the increased price of Kamblis, the Byagaras at Raichur reported that they have recently taken to the use of gunny bags instead. Though a considerable proportion among the Byagaras are now accustomed to the use of chappals, footwear is still considered a luxury. The annual expenditure on clothing of an adult worker comes to about Rs. 40. The boy's dress consists of knicker and a shirt. Women wear sarees without kachche and a blouse and incur an annual expenditure of about Rs, 20 on dress. The style of ticing the saree is a bit different in the villages border'ne Hyderabad karnataka. Women's counterpart of saree which, besides affording them protection against the elements, serves other sundry purposes. These kunchagis are worn-out sarees pieced together by the women-folk themselves. Women rarely use footwear. Girls aged 10 years or more wear kinni or detti (i.e.. sarees of smaller measurement) and blouses, while the younger ones put on skirts and blouses or frocks. At Raichur young girls were observed to use underwear also. This trend indicates a tendency to imitate upper caste Hindus.

The more commonly used men's ornaments are fingers and ear-study of silver, gold and precious stones. A few men in and around mallkapura village and sasalamari were also seen wearing silver armlets or silver wristlets. A few relatively well-to-do wear on the upper lobe of the right ear the Metimuruvu-a crescent shaped gold ornament. Silver finger ring (sometimes of copper, if poor) worn on the small finger of the right hand is called Honnugura and is normally presented to a man by his in laws on betrothal. Some men, more often boys, wear silver waist-strings. Poverty, however, precludes larger investments on gold and silver.

Their women use a variety of ornaments. All married women and Basavis have to normally wear earstuds, nose-ring or nose-screw, a black-bead necklace with tali or marriage-badge, glass bangles, silver wristlets called Kadaga, waistbelt of silver and silver toe-rings. Custom enjoins giving to a bride the following ornaments:

- (i) Achcherina Kadaga i.e., two silver wristlets each weighing at least 10 tolas.
- (ii) Serina Daba: Silver waist belt weighing 22 tolas.
- (iii) Tall-Gold pendant in a black bead necklace.
- (iv) Moogigonda Muttha: Nose-ring of gold and pearls for the nose.
- (v) Toe-rings.
- (vi) Gold-Half a tola in the form of karivali (necklace) and;
- (vii) earstuds called vali. (The two last items are optional depending upon the economic conditions of the contracting parties).

Widows and the never-married however, should refrain from wearing tali. Also they (widows) wear wristlet of a different shape called pollukadaga or bolkadaga and eschew glass bangles. Affluent women use kariyali -a four stringed necklace of small black beads and a few gold pieces; bugudi-kaddi gold and pearls ornament for the upper lobe of the ear silver armlets, anklets etc. The gold and silver ornaments are made by the local goldsmiths. They share their fondness for tattoo with the other women of this region. Around Gurumitkal it is called chukka hottulu and in Deodurg taluk, hanche hottu. Women folk of a nomadic community called Katbu are the tattooers

and they receive cash payment or grain for their service. Usually one other than the tattooed pays, as it is believed that her/ his memory will thereby be cherished lifelong by the person tattooed. It is believed to be a cure for rheumatism and it is therefore not unusual to see men also with tattoo marks on their knees.

Byagaras are not served by the village barbers and therefore, they help each other. In each village there would be at least one or two sets of the barbers requisites owned by the Byagaras. Barbers are also known to lend theirs at times to Byagaras for use and return. In larger towns there is no such discrimination against them.

### **Bygara community Food and drinks.**

The Byagaras are non-vegetarians and consume mutton, meat, flesh of poultry birds, rabbits, fish etc. In former days, all of them were accustomed to eat carrion and also beef and pork. In fact they participated in the distribution of carcass with the Madigas but most of them are now reported to have given up this habit in an effort to achieve social advancement. At devadurga and maski, the Byagaras have no scruples against beef and a few in Kyatnal even today consume carrion. Those at sindhanur, Kushtagi is reported to have been abstaining from beef, pork, and carrion for the last 06 to 10 years. There is growing realisation among a few of the more enlightened in the community that taking of food shunned by other caste Hindus has been the bane of their social backwardness. As information came to him of carrion being cooked in any house, he and his supporters would raid the premises and pour kerosene on the stuff. The high price of mutton prevents their indulging frequently in meat preparations.

Their staple food consists of such cereals as jowar, bajra, small millets and pulses. Vegetables are consumed when available. They prepare rotti (unleavened round cake), mchchu or buna (cooked jowar flour-a pastelike preparation) in jowar flour and use pudikera (red chillies powdered along with some salt and garlic), bell (cooked tur or beans dhal-a semi liquid preparation with requisite quantities of salt and green chillies) pundipale (semi liquid preparation-cooked leafy vegetables) etc., as side dish. Both adults and children take food thrice a day. The morning breakfast taken in the morning hours consists of two cakes. pudikara and Nuchchu. This may either be taken at home or in the field. The mid-day meal taken in the afternoon also consists of jowar cakes, pudikara, beli and muchchu. The same food is taken, though in lesser quantities, again in the evening around 8 p.m. Their special dishes are holige (called polelu in Telugu). round cakes stuffed with well-ground jaggery and cooked gram dhal, huggi (another sweet preparation) and anna sambar (cooked rice) either of rice or broken and cleansed jowar. Their chief non-vegetarian preparation is Mamscada Saru (Mutton soup).

Cooking is done in earthen vessels. In the former days, the Byagaras, it is said, were using there (earthen pans) but they now use iron pans. The rotti like cakes then used to be very thick, but now-a-days thin cakes are prepared. The fuel is gathered free of cost in and around the raichur district. At some places e.g. Sindhanur, it is reported that food is cooked only once a day in the afternoon while at other places eg. Maski devadurga, it is cooked twice-once in the early hours of the morning and again in the evening. The habit of eating stale food is also not universal. Variation in dietary habits is natural due to their wide spatial distribution.

Byagaras do not have any social inhibitions regarding consumption of liquor. This one-time, wide-spread habit is said to be steadily declining since Independence. As prohibition was not introduced in the district Raichur, toddy and arrack have been freely available. The Byagaras are never known to have had their own home-stills. Toddy is their favourite drink and it can be had in the local shops. Due to its rising cost a few only are regular addicts.

Tea is the popular beverage in this region. Sometimes coffee, All the 24 households of Byagaras in the habit of taking tea. In the places recently. visited, it is observed that tea is mostly taken in teashops by most of the adult male members. Women do not normally visit teashops and as such a few only can afford the luxury of tea at home. Men smoke bidis and pipes. The habit of chewing betel leaves and arecanuts is also wide-spread. specially among elderly women. These women also chew kachu-a black pigment-with betel leaf.

### **Byagara community Household goods**

The material possessions of Byagaras consist of - utensils, a few implements and other articles of every day need. They cook food and store grain. water and other food articles in earthen vessels. These are purchased from local potters or at the weekly shandies. The hearth (vale) is also bought from them. Generally they use metal dining plates, but at some places (e.g. devadurga) earthen plates are also said to be in use. Metallic vessels are also to be found, though few in numbers. Every household possesses an iron pan called Thava (used for baking the cakes) and iron spatula called kadachi. A few aluminum vessels such as Jambu (tumbler for drinking water), ambige (narrow mouthed vessel) plates and one or two brass vessels such as tambige ladle, pitcher etc., are possessed by a reasonably fair proportion of the households. Other items of household articles are the grinding stone. pestle (of wood with iron rings at both the ends). sieves, baskets, crow-bar, axe, spade, pickaxe, sickles. kurpi (weeding implement) etc. Those who are cultivators have wooden ploughs, harrows of different sizes. and sometimes seed-drills. Mats made out of the datepalm leaves kavadi (patch-work coverlets made out of worn-out clothes by the female members of the household), a few bedsheets and some gurny cloth. one or two wooden or sometimes steel trunks are the other articles in use with them. They use small kerosene wick lamps without chimney (each costs about 20 paise) small lanterns (Rs. 1.20 each) or bed lamps (70 paise or more). Very few can afford large sized lanterns costing Rs. 5 or more. Of furniture, mention may be made of horasu trope cet) which is extensively used in this region. Quite a number of households possess one or two rope cots. Each cot costs about. Rs. 5 (Rs. 2 worth of rope and Rs. 3 towards wages of carpenter, wood being supplied by them) which if carefully used may last for about to 5 years.

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