

Origin and Development of “Vaddar” Community

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Abstract

Many books have reference that the name vaddar is origin by the creation of sculpture, stone work, art work on stone. Vaddar s are migrated from odra, addra, of madras and hitel said that the meaning of vadde vanu as slaves of lake diggers.

1. Introduction

Dr. Shankar Narayan has mentioned castes in his K.G.S.N. book he has found panchala,as carpenter, goldsmith, potter and vaddars. By saying this he has added vaddars into panchalas.

Vaddars have got their name from oddra, oddra means todays odissa and the out ward characteristics of vaddars are soft languid and innocent said by Hayavadan Rao.

“Vaddayya, vadda, vaddar, bhovi, bovi” all these terms are supposed to indicate the same meaning and refer the vaddar community. These terms indicate Orissa state (Odhra desha) situated in the northern part of Madras. Odra, vaddar, odiya, odhra these terms generally refer the Orissa province, where the Vaddar community is supposed to have originated.

According to Lewis Rice “ the vaddar as their name indicates were originally immigrant from Orissa and telgu country and they generally speak telgu the sub divisions are bailu, bhoja, boyi, hele jarpa, jangal, patte, burusa, telgu, tigala, uppu and uru they are most humorous in the eastern and northern districts government order of 1946 had especially mentioned the name Bhovi inst of boyi, perhaps the courts has justified in arguing that there was no caste specially known as bhovi in the old mysore state and the name “BHOVI” stands exclusively for the vaddar of old mysore but strangely enough the high court also held that ever since the order of 1946 the vadda caste has been variously spelt as boyi, bovi,and bhovi in English through the kannada equivalent is one and the same ”(**Karve, I: “Anthropometric Measurements in Karnataka and, Orissa and a Comparison of these two Regions with Maharashtra”; Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay VoL8(I), 1954 PP. 45-75.)**

Originally vaddars are “ dravidas” basically their language was “VADDARI” but gradually with the influences of local play back it had mingled with telagu language which is one among the pancha dravida language but light some differences are there in present vaddar language the relative matters of this language has found in the book called sant, panta, vatanta of “ CHAPAN” language study shri .M.Mate

had mentioned vaddari language in his study this language study gives sources to origin of vaddar language.

The stone cutter were called pushnikas where as the masons were known as the selavaddhiki. The name of vaddhiki nagathra and damas as selavaddhiki are found from nagarajuna konda “.

L.K. IYER writes the name of the caste is vadda said to mean the people of odra country which is indentified with Orissa the title appended to their names are Raju (Chieftain) boyi (a carrier) and (gauda (a head man)

According to another vesion of the name legend recorded by **nanjundaya and ananthkrishan iyer (1931:660)** their (waddars) first man and woman were created by pramsehawara (another name for shiva) out of his own perspiration on a sultry day. While he and paravati were wandering on the earth. Parameshawara gave them a crowbar a pickaxe and a basket and asked the couple to dig a well to quench their (prameshawara and paravati) thirst when the gods were gratified they asked the couple what boon they expected for the services rendered by them. The demand made by the latter was so high that parameshwara got disgusted with their cupidity and cursed them and their descendants to earning their bread only through digging wells and tanks.

Siddrama was the priest of vaddar community in 12TH century he was called as miracle man and poets and Allamaprbhu of this age called this hermetist person as vadda there must be some reason for Siddaramas pen name “ KAPILA SIDDAMALLIKARJUN” .

Nanjundayya and Iyyar: The Mysore Tribes and Castes; Vol. II, University of Mysore Press, Mysore, 1928, PP.135-136 : The Waddars are a fine looking people. They are dark in complexion and capable of much endurance and generally hard working. The males are well-built, and wear Vaishnavite trident marks on their foreheads, arms and breasts. As a class they are dirty, thriftless and hard drinkers. They wear scanty clothing. The male's dress consists of Dhotar (loin-cloth) or Cholna (short-drawers) Angi or Pairan (shirt) a Rumal or a piece of Cloth for the head, a Hachda (coarse sheet) and Kambal (blanket) or shoulder-cloth worn over the shoulders. Women's dress is a sari with the upper end passed over the head and across the bosom. Men do not wear shoes and women do not wear the bodice nor glass bangles on the right hand. They wear brass or kasabracelets. The looks of many of the younger women would compare favourably with women of the better class The word bhovi, bovhi, are recognized only in Karnataka and added to scheduled caste. According to usha Rao “ from 1951 census the word “ bhovi” has given to vaddar community. According to 1946 government order copy “ bhovi” word indicates vaddar community. Hence in all kind business vaddars used to call as “ bhovi”

Only from the script change the words like vaddara, waddar, vadru, vadra, bhovi, bovhi, are in use but all these words indicates vaddar community. To the extent of india odra, todays odissa is the seminary of vadda community.

M.V.Rajgopal said that : the vadrangis are carepenters, boys Rajakar, Mangalas, kummars and vaddars “ by this statement he has clear that who dig earth and stone cultters are called as vaddars.

The stone cutter were called pushnikas were as the masons were known as the selavaddhiki, the name of vaddhiki nayathara and dmas as selvaddhiki are found from nagarajuna konda said by .M.L.Nigam.

L.K.Iyer writes the name of the caste in vadda said to mean the people of Odisha country, which is identified with Orissa the titles appended to their names are Raju (Chieftain) Boyi (a carrier) and gandu (a head man).

N.J.Usha Rao given reference that vaddars are from Odisha place and Raju, Gouda are the names of leaders of this community. Above all mentioned books are given importance for place. This word is the reason for getting a name vaddars. Architecture sculpture quern are the works of vaddars rather than they will not mention community name.

If we see the historical background of the word “ vaddar” dual opinions are explaining the origin of vaddar Odisha from north side of Odisha and Madras are the origin of vaddars. If a community origin from a particular place or that community lives long time in that particular place it is natural that that community gives back architecture and sculpture to these places, and made popular these places. The verification continues about community. A person who created history is considered as guru of this community. “ Siddarama” was the priest of vaddar community. In 12TH century he was called this miracle man and poet and Allamprabhu called this hermit person as “ Vadda” there must be some reason for Siddarama's pen name Kapila Sidda Mallikarjun Kapilavastu is the capital of Odisha. This Kapilavastu place is donated by Kapil Maharishi. This Kapil Maharishi blessed Siddarama and Kapilavastu and Shri Saila are the near by places so Siddarama believe that Kapila as his guru and Channamallikarjun as his god. This community consider this miracle man's name as community guru. The surname of Siddarama is Vaddarama so this name may come to vaddar community.

Billesh Bommayya is the disciple of Siddarama. He immigrated from Odisha to Solapur so we can guess that Odisha is the ancestor place of Siddarama.

It is true that Odisha is the origin place of vaddar community. Jagannath swami of Odisha is the community god. It is miracle and curious matter of getting community name.

Sub divisions of vaddra community

The vaddar caste divides itself in two main branches the Kallu and Mannu vaddas between whom there is no social intercourse of any kind or inter marriage Lewis Rice said sub division are bailue, bhoja, boyi, halu, Jurupa, partee, brurusa, telgu, tigala uppu and uru.

L.K.Iyer according to him the caste is made up with three endogamous groups names 1.kallu or uru handi vaddas 2. Mannu or bailu or deshada vaddas 3.uppa vaddas .Cambell in his gazetteer of Dharwad districts mentions bhoja, vaddars bandi vaddars and manu vaddars .

The Waddars hold that they had number of sub-castes of

which eleven are known today. They are as follows:

1. Mannu Waddars - Earth workers
2. Kallu Waddars - Stone workers
3. Uppu Waddars - Salt traders.
4. Bandi Waddars - Cart users.

5. Girini Waddars - Grind Stone workers.
6. Raja Waddars \ J-Lac-Sellers
7. Aragu Waddars >
8. Tudugu Waddars - Thieves
9. Uru Waddars - Town dwellers.
10. Takku Waddars- Robbers and House breakers and 32 11. Ghatti Waddars - Live in Forests

Mannu Waddars are largely found in the districts of Gulbarga Mandya and Mysore. They are employed in earth work such as well sinking, construction of railway tracks, irrigation canals, tanks, dams, bridges and its repairs. According to a note, compiled by a sub-inspector of police by name, Rashid-Ulla Khan, from Yeotmal district, they always travel in disguises, so that the distinguishing characteristics were not easily observable. The Kallu Waddars are employed in stone quarries, building constructions, road-metaling and cutting or grind stones. They were more in the districts of Bangalore, Bellary, Chitradurga and Kolar. Uppu Waddars trade in salt and tamarind. They are found in Bangalore, Kolar and Chitradurga districts. In Andhra Pradesh, they are found in Chandragiri Mandal of Chittoor district. Bandi Waddars are stone workers. They live in huts made of mats, grass etc. They are accompanied by their families, pack donkeys. Girini Waddars derived their name from their profession of cutting grind stones. Raja Waddars are employed in public construction works. Tudugu Waddars are highway robbers. This group of Waddars were referred by Edgar Thurston and Muhammad Abdul Ghani. Aragu Waddars collect and sell forest products like gum, and wax. Uru Waddars weave ropes. Ghatti Waddars encamp in the forest or on waste lands. They were also accompanied by their families, pack asses, goats etc. The Waddars believe that they originally formed a single endogamous group but in due course were split into a number of smaller endogamous groups. Each sub-caste is named and the name indicates the occupation.

The vaddar community has been regarded different as being backward caste, scheduled tribe, by different states in india, because they settle where they go for work. And they maintain their individuality by preserving much of their uniqueness. Historically speaking in the beginning they bused to work only with a piece of cloth tied round the waist to the knee, so they considered to be a tribe.

The tribe has its own language, custom, tradition, folklore, literature etc. kinship is important element in this community every individual understand internal aspects of community. The socio- cultural system of the vaddars depends on kinship.

Mannu vaddars come to next vaddars in Karnataka, they are largely found in mandya. They derived their sub caste name from mannu. They are also known as bailu vaddars since they work form laborers.

They have strong faith in Hindu religion and they worship deities pertaining to family, village and tradition vaddar priests perform various rituals, they also celebrate and festivals like, ugadi, dasara, deepavali, etc.

They accept water and food from other communities like lingayath, brahaman, jain, vakkaliga,etc. uncooked food items also exchanged with all we can see engineers, teachers, doctors, administrators and political leaders in vaddars community.

Vaddar community may mentioned differently in different works. But on the of their work dividing three sub divisions are more appropriate.. there are many clans in these sub divisions, on the basis of these clans

the relations develop among people. The girl and boy belong to same clan will be sister and brother. In this community boy will marry his niece, aunt s daughter or uncle s daughter.

C.Hayavadhana Rao : there are three divisions mannu, kallu, uppu vaddars like this Hayavadhana Rao divided into three sub parts. And suryanath kamath too divided vaddas as followed : mannu , bandi, tudugu, kallu, girani, vadda and vaddars.

As above mentioned in all books the division of three is done. Some writers divided on the basis of clan and some are divided on the basis of work they do, the division done on the basis of work is explained as bellow:

1. Stone pounder (sculptor) : who creates quern ishwara idol, Hanuman idol, architecture, sculpture, different types of pillars, arche.etc with the help of small chisel. He is experts of hand craft , and experienced person in giving spruce shape to stone. Once he sees shape or structure, he can give it to stone very beautifully. This kind of sculptors are very intelligent like a small chisel. They give shape to stone with the help of chisel, small hammer, round chisel, so these are called as shaper, stone pounder sculptor. They use their knowingness rather than physical effort, and usually they stay at one place, having own homes.
2. Rock Vaddars : a very powerful category among vaddars, they are known for weight lifting, supply a big rocks to working places they dig big rocks with the help of land-grabber. They are expert in digging big stones on earth and hills with the help of hammer of 25 kg. these workers give shape rocks as to extent of work. So these are called as rock vaddars (Bandi vaddars). They have knowledge of architecture and buildings, land – grabber hammer are the weapons of their work.
3. Soil Vaddars : these kind of vaddars are physically strong enough, they create lake, well, soil, on the basis of contract. They dig soil from earth and uses donkey to load a soil and they too load soil. They knew only soil work so basically they are dull. Always they are busy with soil works so these are called soil vaddars (mannu vaddars) shovel, hoe and basketry are the weapons of mannu vaddars. According to Thurston: they work with rocks so Bandarl, they sell salt so salt vaddars, always conduct justice court so bhoja vaddars, they immigrate to village to village on work so they are out door vaddars they relate to royal families, so they are vadderaja. Like this vaddars got their names, and some got their on the basis of their clan., and the community guru siddarama had established 62 lingas each clan this explanation had given by elders of solhapura.

In olden days these three category people were not in touch know the civilization develops the mentality of people changes these category people mingled and work together respectively each category people work another category s work.

There may be many clans there may be many nick names for community but the world agrees that there are three category in vaddar community. In modern society some vaddars work as carpenters. Poters mat makers etc. at some places vaddars are goldsmith like this clans and works are different but we should divide vaddars in to three main category.

Waddars in Karnataka :

In 1972, Havanur committee has introduced in Karnataka, according to this committee report vaddar community should add to group of backward tribes, in 1975 committee has reported to government to recommend social, educational and occupational reservation of vaddars.

As often this community is facing many changes and challenges, some of the leaders from vaddars community of Karnataka like late. G.P.Vadayaraj, K.S.Bilagi, late Gurappa Sudi from Hubballi, and Lamani communities R.L.Nayak from Hubballi, all these leaders had been fight for equality in community. They oppose to call various names for same community.

The Waddars claim that they had a number of sub-castes of which only nine exist today. They are Kallu Waddars (stone breakers), Mannu Waddars (earth workers), UppuWaddars (salttraders), BandiWaddars (cart users), GiriniWaddars (grindstone makers). Raja Waddars (employed by royal families), Aragu Waddars (Lac-sellers), Tudugu Waddars (thieves) and Oru Waddars (town-dwellers). All these sub-castes appear to have been named after their traditional occupations. The first three sub-castes namely, Kallu, Mannu and Uppu Waddars - form the bulk of the Waddars population in Karnataka State.

Vaddar has sub caste the kallu vaddar is main sub caste. It has largest population among vaddars. The sub caste name derived from their traditional occupation of stone work. Their works are cutting of grand stones, building construction, stone quarries etc. the kallu vaddars are numerous in the districts of banglore, bellary, chitradurag, kollar, shimoga, and dharwad.

The aim of this study is to describe that have taken place the socio economic cultural organization of the waddar community (**also called Bhovi**) over the last hundred years and to analyse the effects of these socio economic cultural changes upon their traditional institution.customs.belief and value system on the lines followed by **Bailey (1958) EPSTEN (1962) GOUGH (1952) AND SHRP (1952)** since a complex relationship exists between the socio economic cultural aspects of society, I have discussed this relationship within the frame-work of socio economic cultural motives and dispositions on the one hand ,and the socio-cultural contexts and meanings of the waddars ways of Blief,on the other .this study is not only in keeping with the traditional of socio economic and cultural anthropological studies (**Malinowski,1922,1944 forde,1934: Radcliffe brown 1964,Firth 1946,1959,:and Tax 1953**) where the goal is to acquire knowledge of society and socio economic, cultural but also has the potentiality of being useful in planned socio economic and cultural development and sponsored changes among similar other communities.

The vaddar have decreased in population considerably. They are immigrants from southern India mainly from Andhra Pradesh and are earth workers, and are constantly moving about in search of work. waddar in Karnataka, they have recently changed their name to Bhovi with the approval of the state and central governments.

The vaddar Hindu or Bhovi people trace their origin to Odra desh or Orissa, from where they are beloved to have migrated to various southern states. The word Bhovi is a corrupt form of **bhavi** which means well in it also mean earth- digger they have been involved in the digging of wells. They have various other names to such a bhovi , wadda, tudugvaddar, voddar, girinivaddar, od and odde.

The kallu vaddars sub caste has the largest population among the vaddars of Karnataka state the sub caste name has derived from their traditional occupation of stone work .they are mainly employed in stone quarries, building construction road metal ling and cutting of grand stones .though the kallu vaddars are spread all over the state they are more numerous in the districts of Bangalore Bellary chitra durga kollar

shimoga.and Dharwad. (Enthoven, R.E. : The Tribes and Castes of Bombay; Vol.11 Government of Bombay Presidency, Bombay, 1922, P.333-42.)

The vaddar community has been regarded differently as being backward caste, nomadic race, tribe or scheduled tribe, by different states in India because they settle where they go for work those people have been able to maintain their individually by preserving much of their cultural uniqueness historically speaking vaddar seems to be a caste or race in the beginning they used to work only with a piece of a cloth tied round the waist to the knee, and so were considered to be a tribe.

Kinship is the most important elements in this tribe every individual understands the internal aspects of his community. The socio-cultural system of the vaddar depends on kinship. The tribe has its own language, customs, traditions, folklore, literature etc.

Mannu vaddars come to next vaddars in Karnataka they are largely found in the districts of mandya .they derive their sub caste name from Mannu they are also known as Bailu Vaddars since they work farm laborers.

They have strong faith in Hindu religion and they worship deities pertaining to family, village and region* of the great tradition. Priests from other communities as well as from Vaddar community perform various rituals, treat spirit sickness etc. Festivals like Ugadi, Dasara, Deepavali, Karhunnime etc., are observed by them with a great enthusiasm

They accept water and cooked food from the Brahman, Lingayat, Jain and Vokkaliga communities. Uncooked food items are accepted and exchanged with all. They share water sources with others. Among Vaddars there are engineers, doctors, teachers, administrators and political leaders at both regional and national level to forge modern inter community linkages.

According to the “**Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics**” their origin is probably Dravidian, but they now all trace their descent from the Brahman or Raj put tribes of North India. According to **Nanjundayya and Iyyer** "Traditionally, the Waddars or Bhovi, have been carriers of supplies and drivers of pack-bullocks. They are known variously in different parts of the country, as vanjari (wanderers in the jungle) Mati, Kala, Patharvat, Jati, Bhoaj All these words except the first are derived from the Sanskrit word ---, meaning , which was one of their principal items of trade". The word Bhovi is said to be derived from the Sanskrit word Bhavi , wanderers of the jungle.

Today the backward communities such as the vaddars are subjected to greater interference in the life, as they are subjected not only to the usual processive, but also to the induced changes - all these operating simultaneously. The vaddars had been listed by the state government as one of the areas of study and as a scheduled caste since July 1977 (though they do not suffer from any untouchability), the vaddars are exposed to welfare programmes such as the special educational incentives, provisions for sanitary and public health facilities, grant of lands for cultivation and house building etc.

By the over view it is clear that the consequences of change in their occupational and social changes began to undergo, but since the change in their social status was not commensurate with that in their occupational status social opposition and tension has arise in their relation with other communities.

Vaddar community people invented many stone apparatus which can be used in our daily life but today this type work is not require to the present study the traditional work is decreasing day by day due to modern technology, atomization and globalization the use of traditional apparatus taken place by new electrical equipment which leading tom increase in unemployment of this community.

As the Vaddars settled down and contacts with other castes increased, certain customs and values of the great tradition must have influenced even the relatively isolated Vaddars, even though they themselves did not observe them within their community. They used to refuse to take food from communities like Muslims, Christians and untouchables and accept it only from those considered as equal or superior. The farmer accepted food from the Vaddars but the latter did not reciprocate. But the interesting point is not so much that the rules were understood, but that the Vaddars did not usually come into enduring contact with the groups in relation to whom they could think in terms of hierarchy, the rules, therefore lacked functional significance and represented rather an ideal - system relevant in the area.

Campbell and Enthoven opined that "Vaddars ranked below the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Lingayat, Jain, Gavali, Kuruba and other cultivating and crafts castes, but above the Washerman, Walmikis, Korvas, Shikligars, Helawas and untouchables".(Campbell, Jamesh : Bombay Gazetteer - Karnataka (Dharwar); Government of Bombay Presidency, Bombay 1884a, P. 122.)

The Reform movement among the Waddars gained momentum during the early 1940's and led to the formation of caste associations at Chitradurga and Kolar in the first instance. The first caste association was started at Chitradurga in 1940 with fifteen members and was known as the Chitradurga District Waddara Sangha. For the first time important members of different Waddar sub-castes were brought together in one forum. It continues, to operate as a district association.

The Waddars of Kolar district followed the Waddars of Chitradurga by establishing the Kolar District Waddara Sangha in 1942. The Kolar and Chitradurga Waddara Associations jointly organized the first ever conference of the Waddar community in 1942 at Mudu Madugu, situated in Srinivasapura taluk of Kolar district. They invited not only the Waddars of Karnataka but also those of Andra Pradesh and Tamilnadu. The main purpose of the conference was to bring all the Waddars together so as to formulate plans for the upliftment of their community. The conference also felt that there was a need for changing the caste name. They organized another conference the biggest ever in the history of Waddar in 1944 at Davanagere, changing the caste name was one of the major issues discussed at his conference. The Waddars were aware of many instances of castes changing their name; for instance, the Adi-Karnataka, Adi-Dravida and Cheluvadi had changed their names. The Goldsmiths changed their caste name to VIswakarmas and Lambanis to Banjaras. They felt that the word Waddar had become such a degrading usage that the non-Waddars were using it as an abusive term. Some Waddars (the Uppu Waddar sub-caste) had taken to sweeping and hence they were also considered to be untouchables. As a result they found it difficult to rent houses in towns and cities.

The conference also offered them an opportunity for establishing closer ties between the various sub-castes. The two caste associations organized further meetings - at Haveri in 1945 and at Shahabad in 1954. The main purpose of these meetings was to plan the various measures to be taken for the amelioration of their conditions.

The Waddars of Bhakshi Garden in Bangalore started a separate association exclusively for the Uppu Waddars in 1946 and called it the 'Bangalore City Raja Boyila Sangha'. Later in the same year they renamed it as the 'Akhila Mysore Raja Boyila Sangha' for the purpose of including all the 'Raja Boyis' of Karnataka. The uppu Waddars wanted to be known by this name. But this Sangha had no connection with the Waddar Associations of Kolar and Chitradurga. Their traditional panchayat, the Dharma Sabha, was asked to conduct deliberations under the auspices of the Sangha.

In 1959, they changed the name of the association again to 'Akhila Mysore Boyila Sangha', omitting the word 'Raja'. But all these associations remained local in nature and the Waddars had no single and effective caste association at the state level for a long time. It was only in 1956 that the 'Vishala Mysore Waddara (Bhovi) Sangha' was established in Hubli. Its twin purposes were to undertake social reform among the Waddars, irrespective of their sub-castes, and to safeguard the interest of the community.

Conclusion

The Waddars have tried to raise their ritual status in the hierarchy of castes through reforms in their rituals and ritual interactions. In these ritual interactions the higher castes - such as, the Vokkaligas, Lingayats and Brahmins - are taken as the positive reference group. These castes may be regarded as the normative reference group too, since they provided the Waddars with norms or standards of behaviour as a frame of reference. On the other hand, the castes of Koracha, Korama, Lambani, Jadamali and Madiga constitute the negative reference group in the course of the Waddars upward mobility.

On the ritual plane, the Waddars compared themselves with members of these castes while claiming a higher ritual rank than the latter. But the Waddars faced certain opposition from members of the caste of washermen and barbers. Though the latter agreed to serve the former, they consider the Waddars to be inferior to them in status. Therefore, members of the washerman and barber castes do not accept any cooked food from the Waddars. They are paid either in cash or in kind (grains, coconuts and fruits) for the ritual services they perform for the Waddars.

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