



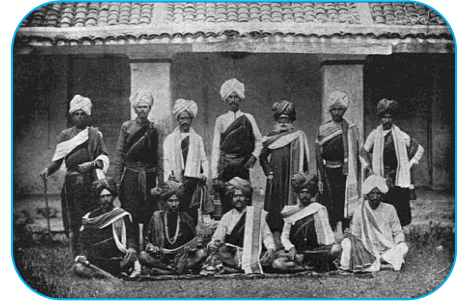
## A STUDY OF ENDOGAMOUS AND EXOGAMOUS GROUPS OF MORASU VOKKALIGAS

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### ABSTRACT

*In Hindu society Exogamy and Endogamy are the two important features of every caste. The gothra system in Hinduism has its origin in Vedic classification of lineages initiated by seven sages who are believed to have their origin from the creator lord Bramha. Later, gothra system was adapted by Kshatriyas, Shudras, and Vaisyas also. However, the gothra system among Shudras is typically different from that of the other three classes. It contains many Exogamous divisions, each being called after an animal, plant or other object, with a usual prohibition against the members of the divisions cutting or in some cases, even touching, the thing representing their division, or Bedagu or gotra. Members of same gotra are prohibited from marrying within the gotra.*



**KEYWORDS:** Exogamy, Vedic, Gothra, Prohibition, Divisions.

### INTRODUCTION

In Hindu society Exogamy and Endogamy are the two important features of every caste which can also be seen among Vokkaliga caste. The Endogamous groups have the practice of marrying within a specific social group or sub-caste or ethnic group. Exogamous clans of a caste are known as Bedagus or Gothras or totem. The gothra system in Hinduism has its origin in Vedic classification of lineages initiated by seven sages who are believed to have their origin from the creator lord Bramha and all their descendants are addressed as Brahmins. Later, gothra system was adapted by Kshatriyas, Shudras, and Vaisyas also. However, the gothra system among Shudras is typically different from that of the other three classes. It contains many Exogamous divisions, each being called after an animal, plant or other object, with a usual prohibition against the members of the divisions cutting or in some cases, even touching, the thing representing their division, or Bedagu or gotra. Members of same gotra are prohibited from marrying within the gotra. It refers to marrying outside or marriage of non-blood related beings. Members of same gotra come together or join during rituals of customary practices<sup>1</sup>.

Gangadikar Vokkaligas are concentrating in Southern and Western part of Bangalore district, Mandya district, Mysore district, Hassan district and Southern part of Tumkur district. Gangadikars have around 90 gotras (Exogamous groups), named after material objects, with the usual prohibition against cutting, using and sometimes touching such objects. Among Gangadikar Vokkaligas there are two Endogamous groups, namely, Pettigeyavaru and Bujjanigeyavaru. The former derives their name from the custom of carrying marriage articles in a bamboo box, and the latter from the custom of carrying them in a covered basket. Gangadikar are also known as Mullu Vokkaligas in Hassan district.

They have two more groups on the basis of worship of Shiva and Vishnu: Mullu jana who are Shivas and Dasa jana followers of Vishnu<sup>2</sup>.

The Kunchatiga Vokkaligas are living in huge number in Tumkur, Chitradurga district and partly in Mysore and Bangalore town. They had Appa, Ayya, Anna to their names in the earlier days. They have 16 Endogamous groups and are set to have 48 Exogamous groups. They have numbers of family gods and goddesses. The tutelary goddess is Abbajamma of Sira. Among them some worship Shiva and some Vishnu. Those who worship Vishnu apply nama on the forehead and others vibhuti or gandha<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Ananthakrishna Iyer, L. K, The Mysore Tribes and Cates, Vol-4, p.231

<sup>2</sup> Mandya District Gazetteer, p.211; Hassan district Gazetteer, p.124

<sup>3</sup> Mysore District Gazetteer, 1969, p.98

Namadari Vokkaligas are concentrated in parts of Shimoga, Chikkamagalore, South Canara district, Hassan district, Mysore district and Kodagu district in Karnataka and partly in Wynad of Kerala state. They have two groups based on religion: Vaishnava and Shaiva. Vaishnava group is more in number in Malnad area and Shaiva group is majority in other parts of South Karnataka region. Male members of this groups have title to their names Gowda, Nayaka, Heggade, Ayya, Appa, Anna and female names are added with Amma<sup>4</sup>.

Endogamous groups of Morasu Vokkaligas are: Musuku, Reddi, Palyadasime and Morasu popularly so called, the last being sub divided into three salus named Kanu salu, Nerlegattada salu and Kutera salu. Till recent times practice of marrying within a specific social group was strictly followed. Of late, however, inter marriages between the groups started. Musuku means a veil and the division is so called because during marriages, the bride covers herself all over with a veil earlier day. But now a white cloth is attached to sari at the back of bride. This is the group to which several palegar chiefs of the caste belong. Reddi's are the Telugu speaking section of the caste. Palyadasime men also speak Telugu. The name is applied to the section of the Telugu Morusu's living in the Bangalore district, especially round about Bangalore. They are immigrants into these parts from the country of Gummanayana Palya in the Bagepalli taluk<sup>5</sup>.

### **Morasu Vokkaligas have around 86 gothras (Exogamous groups) and are as follows:**

1. Achyuta: People of this division do not cultivate saffron
2. Alada
3. Anegar (Anandrayaru) - They should not till on Mondays and they have Lagumi dyavara

<sup>4</sup> Kadidal Ramappagowda, S. Malenadu Sri Vaishnava Namadhari Gowda Samskriti, p.3-7

<sup>5</sup> Ananthakrishna Iyer, L. K, The Mysore Tribes and Cates, Vol-4, p.230

4. Ardharane
5. Bachi: A kind of tree which should not be cut
6. Badalu: A kind of grass
7. Bale: Plantain
8. Bangi: Ganja should not be consumed
9. Belada: Would apple tree
10. Belli: Silver should not be used
11. Billandla: A kind of tree
12. Bollikodi: A bird, found in hedges of black color with white face should not be killed
13. Busi
14. Chalindala: A cistern for water erected in the road for the use of travelers

15. Chanchali: A kitchen hub which should not be used
16. Dalimbe: Pomegranate should not be eaten
17. Devaganneru: A kind of flower bearing tree
18. Gejje: Small bells
19. Gendara: A kind of fish should not be consumed by people of this gotra
20. Ginnu: People of this gotra should not consume Ginnu. Milk of a buffalo or a cow which has lately calved
21. Gokerla
22. Gongadi: A blanket turned in to a cloak should not be used by this gotra
23. Gokula
24. Goranti: Barlaria or mehanti plant
25. Guliganji: The wild liquorice
26. Halu: A herb
27. Heggana: A bandicoot
28. Hippe: A tree Basia Latifolia
29. Honge: People of this gotra should not grow this plant
30. Hutta: Ant hill
31. Ichalu: Date tree
32. Iresedlu: A wooden spoon
33. Kabbadi
34. Bende: Ladies finger
35. Kadaba: A species of Dear
36. Kaggali: A tree
37. Kalindala: They do not cut milk hedge plant
38. Kalivi: A kind of tree
39. Kanne: Kitchen herb. People should not consume these leaves
40. Kanaga: Pongemia glabra
41. Kappu: Flesh of animals
42. Karegaru: A thorny jungle plant. Please of this should not eat Kare hannu. People of this gotra should not grow this plant
43. Kattigaru:
44. Khachora: A kind of shrub bearing sweet, scented fruit used with sandal paste
45. Kode: Umbrella
46. Kolaga: An Indian measure
47. Komme: A herb
48. Kondada
49. Kunchi: A hooded cloak
50. Kurandara
51. Kuratege: A milky thorny plant
52. Kurige: A seed drill
53. Mallige: A jasmine flower
54. Mandika
55. Munendra
56. Mandalige: They do not use mats
57. Masi
58. Mavu: Mango
59. Mekala: Goat
60. Mudre: A seal
61. Muddarani: Kitchen herb
62. Mingili: Mangoose
63. Muttaga: Bastard teak

64. Nakkalu: Jackal
65. Nelli: The emblic myobajam
66. Nerale: Jambalana
67. Nili: Indigo-They do not keep black bullocks and their women do not wear black bangles or black sarees
68. Nittuva: They do not use stone posts for houses
69. Nuggi: Horse radish
70. Nunabadagi: A vegetable drug
71. Ottu: They do not eat on plates of dry leaves
72. Pachchakodi
73. Punagu: Civet
74. Samantige: Chrusanthimum
75. Sampige: Champaka tree
76. Sankha: Konchshell
77. Sasuve: Mustard
78. Sonthi: Ginger
79. Tatarlu
80. Tengina: Coconut
81. Tyabali: Tortoise
82. Tummala: A kind of tree
83. Turubu: They do not tie their hair in a knot
84. Udarlu: Seeds of weed a kind of grass largely grown in paddy fields.
85. Udumu: Big lizard
86. Uttareni: A common weed<sup>6</sup>

Endogamous and Exogamous features are common among all Vokkaliga communities, Endogamous rules are gradually losing its importance. It is almost vanished and rarely seen in the modern days. Morasu Vokkaligas are strictly following gothra (Exogamous groups) system. Gotra represents male progeny. They have about 86 gotras. And they are named after plant, animal, or thing. Marriage is totally prohibited among the same gotra.

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<sup>6</sup> ibid, p.271-278

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