

AKKA BAKKA

The institution of akka bakka is about thirty-nine and above main villages of the Badagas, and essentially a patri local cult - seat. akka bakka structure consist of three components viz. hebbAyilu, karukambu and ajjugUDu. The hebbAyilu consists of two upright stone pillars with a connecting beam on top. In olden days this structure was erected with wooden posts. HebbAyilu means big or main entrance and it is entrance for not only akkabakka but to a particular village as well. Once as a rule village houses were built behind this structure. karukambu is an upright wooden post measuring about three feet and it represents Badagas earlier occupations. The third one is ajju gudu, sometimes it is called ajjigUDu, a dwelling place about three feet high constructed with stone slabs

akka bakka is basically head quarter of a clan and it is governed by rules of exogamy. At present it acts as a ritual place or ceremonial yard. Only a village having akka bakka is the head or main village of Badagas and called as uur(village). Besides this devvamane (ancestral house) is also important feature of Ur. Each such main village has ten or fifteen (even more) hamlets called haTTys. At the same time in exception cases even a single village may have the status of Ur and has akka bakka. The annual harvest festival, devvahabba celebration starts at this place. During other occasions such as he the festival too akka bakka gets special attention. Badagas are dependent upon agriculture. Men and women are nearly equal participants in agricultural pursuits. Hence agriculture gets the central place in the economic activity of the Badagas and their festivals are centering around this. From the beginning economy of Badagas has been found to be mixed one and their stage does not provide for any specialization of function. They followed variety of occupations to eke out of their subsistence. Honey gathering, hunting, rearing of buffaloes, shifting cultivation are the prominent. However agricultural and pastoral activities surpassed all.

The term akka is a corrupt form of Tamil akkam, which means grain and bakka means wide open place or esplanade. Hence the compound word akka bakka expresses the meaning of a place where grains pooled after harvest. Once Badagas were barley and millet cultivators and mostly they had done on a common venture. During that part of time akka bakka got special attention. At present they abandoned millet cultivation all together. However, to mark their tradition few ears of barley are placed during harvest festival. However, akka bakka became relic and worshiped.
