

MEMORIAL STONES IN UPPARTHI VILLAGE, RAMANAGARA

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The village upparthi is belongs to Ramanagara district and it is 11 k.m away from Magadi taluk central. Here there are many important historical facts are available for study. In this village there are 69 houses and in that there are 350 peoples are living. They depended on rain harvest and dairy farming for living. The village named as upparthi because of its unusual ritual which was in vogue. They used to do a ritualistic, that whoever comes back to the village, waving of a lamp round that person's face. The actual meaning of upparthi is, take away the effects of evil looks by mixture of salt, vermilion powder (kumkum) mixed with water, waving round a person's face. In this village a flag-pole, which is belongs to megalithic times has been discovered. There is a lakshmi temple in center of the village and four divisions of evidences like monuments, temples of heroes and unpublished inscriptions were found outside of the village.

The political history of this region mainly includes Gangas, Hoysalas, Vijayanagara rulers, Yelahanka emperors, Mysore wodeyars as rulers. Especially Nelamagala taluk Manneyenthu was capital in Gangas period and Magadi Yelahanka was under Nadaprabhu's ruling as their capital. As we all know, that monuments are always been an important part of historical decoration of a region. The Indian society has a custom that always felicitate whoever sacrifices themselves for mankind or social welfare. So this custom or practice was in vogue. In Karnataka this tradition can be traced back to 5th century A.D and the same continues up to the end of 19th century A.D. those individuals who displayed great courage and laid down their life in service of their masters or in defense of the community and also one who underwent the ritual of sati. All these kind of sacrifices used consider as a unwritten rule of society. So this is the reason, that this kind of volunteer death were used consider as a sacrifice not a suicide. And more over people thought these individuals as a deity or divine. In order to remember and honor these sacrifices people erected stone slabs in their memory. These stone slabs were called "Memorial Stones".

There are many types of memorial stones erected according to reason of sacrifice. The memorial stones can be categorized as Virakallu, Mastikallu, Keelugunte, Sidithale and Dharmika. Most of the time

the reason for sacrifices will be a social cause, like war, defending village, defending border, defending cattle, in coercion or rape, hunting wild animals etc... so these memorial commemoration become distinct sign and image of our culture.

Some of the archaeologist and historians especially like M.Chidanandamurthy, S.Settar, R.Sesha sastri, M.M.Kalburghi, H.Kajins, O.S.Shete, Parashiva murthy, Vasundhara piliyoja had spill the light on these memorial stones in their studies. The available important memorial commemorations of Upparthi is unaltered and unpublished and it's really requires a complete study. So this article tries to analyze and spill the light on these memorial commemorations.

Cluster – 1

In upparthi four memorial stones were found back side of the recently constructed temple of Muneeshwara, near west side of Hunase marada gudde. In that two were Viramasthikallu, one is Viragallu and another one is memorial stone. The memorial stone is completely covered from anthill. Here recently started a system of worshipping these stones while worshipping god Muneeshwara.

Hero-sati stone (Veeramasthi kallu) – 1: This granite stone is 1meter height, and 75 cm wide and it includes two panels. In lower panel there are sculptures of hero who holding a sword in his right hand and in left hand he holds the hand of his wife. The top panel depicts a devotee of lord Shiva, is worshipping Shivalinga and Nandi picture is in right side. The depiction of sun and moon can be seen on the top.

Hero stone – 2: This granite stone is 1meter height, and 75 cm wide and it includes two panels. In the middle of lower panel hero is fighting with an enemy with sword and shield. Left side of the hero a calf and a woman picture can be seen. On top depiction of a cow, in that a woman is in half nude state and to protect woman and cow, hero fought to death can be seen. This type of conflict memorial stones called Pennbhuyul or Pendirudeyarchu hero stones.

Hero-sati stone (Veeramasthi kallu) – 1: This granite stone is 1meter height, and 75 cm wide and it includes two panels. In lower panel hero holding a sword in his lifted right hand. Hero is wearing his garment in kacche (lungi type) and also he wears military wear, throne, kundalas or earrings, waist band and shoes can be seen. Woman is shown with her right arm raised and holding something, may be its lemon or

lotus. In her left hand she's holding a basket. Top panel depicts the Shivalinga and nandi and worship of a devotee can be seen.

Cluster – 2

Two memorial stones were found in west side of the village. Due to lack of maintenance these two memorial stones fall from its place. These memorial stones were erected for different reasons.

Hero-sati stone (Veeramasthi kallu) – 1: This granite stone is 0.8 meter height, and ½ cm wide and it includes two panels. In lower panel hero is in standing posture, it depicts a self scarifies by be-heading his head by a weapon Top panel depicts the Shivalinga and nandi. This called as self-sacrifice and no particular reason were shown in here. Mainly social and religious reasons were behind this kind of death. For the welfare of the King, for family, for his clan and for the sake of his 'Moksha', freedom from the cycle of birth and death, a religious way to attain death. The painful and self torturing kinds of sacrifices were in vogue in Jainism and in follower of the cult of lord shiva.

Hero-sati stone (Veeramasthi kallu) – 1: This granite stone is 2 meter height, and 1 cm wide and it includes two panels. In lower panel the crown wearing hero is standing with join palms and lifts them in salutation. And he depicts a small sword in his waist and also he wears a kind of anklet around his leg. His left side a woman wearing sari with folds is looking at hero saying something, its looks like commanding or giving some order. She state a posture like, her right arm is little raised and her left hand is on her waist. Between that woman and hero there is something its looks like weapon or snake, it's unclear to identify. The depiction of Nandi and Shivalinga are in the top panel.

Cluster – 3

Some of the memorial stones were found north side of the village near Kiruvana gudde. Here five Hero-Sati stones and two shrine of Hero can be seen. These shrines look like megalithic Dolmans. Here Hero stones situated outside of the shrine and there is no sculpture or inscriptions of Heroes inside the shrine.

The five memorial stones are made out of thin white granite. This measures 1meter height and 50 cm wide and it includes single panel. In every stone depicts hero standing right side and holding sword in his

raised right hand. In his left side a sculpture can be seen. Her posture in some she is shown her right arm raised, in some she shown her with folded hands like bowing.

Cluster – 4

Some of other memorial stones were also found near Kiruvana gудde, facing east side. Here four Hero-stones and one Hero shrine can be seen. The Hero shrine is 12 feet long, 5 feet wide and made out of stone slabs. There is no sculpture or inscriptions of Heroes inside the shrine. In front of the shrine, in right side there are four Hero-Sati stones with single panel type can be seen. These stones measures 1meter height and 50 cm wide.

Hero-Sati stone – 1: Here a Hero holding sword in his right hand and shield in his left hand with tied hair and in a standing posture. In his left side a woman shown with her right arm raised and her left arm on her waist can be seen. In her raised right arm she's holding a lemon is also can be seen.

Hero-Sati stone – 2: Here Hero holding a bow and arrow rather than sword and shield. In his left side a woman with her raised right hand. She shown wearing a lower garment with folds and a kind of bracelet in her hand. Her hair is tied can be seen.

Hero-Sati stone – 3: A crowned Hero is holding a sword in his right hand and left side a woman is standing with her raised right arm.

Hero-Sati stone – 4: Here Hero is holding sword and shield and fighting. In his left side woman shown with her right hand raised can be seen.

The objective of this study was to carry out reasons that in some region people worship these memorial stones like a god to get relive from their troubles. But in upparthi due to lack of historical information about these memorial stones people have made their own distinct opinion about these stones. Here some of the families believe that the Hero stones of the cluster one is the responsible for their sufferings. Not only that, they also believe if anybody touch that stones troubles will arises in their life. That's why these stones have not preserved and maintained. Some also believe that there is a treasure

beneath these stones and covered anthill is protecting the falling Hero stones it seems. Recently they started worshipping these stones, establishing in front of the Muneeshwara temple to warding off their troubles.

In second cluster the memorial stones are unmaintained. But for 3 and 4 cluster Hero stones and Hero shrines get worshiped annually, this tradition is in vogue. So all these reason makes memorial stones which is a socio-cultural phenomenon of past societies is in impassable state.

The study shows these memorial commemorations are most likely resemblance Vijayanagara rulers period of description. Like using ruff white granite, the single panel depicted Hero holding sword and his left side his wife shown with her right arm raised, in some stones Hero and his wife bowing with folded hands. The top panel usually depicts Sun, Moon, Shivailinga and Nandi, a woman tied her plaited hair and wears a lower garment of long skirt with folds. All these characteristics show resemblance of Vijayanagara ruler's period.

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