

Heroic Stone and Mahasati Stone with reference to Madigas

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ABSTRACT

The valour, adventure and patriotism and sacrifice are the mark of soldiers who hold their lives for the welfare of the coutry. Similarly the memorable moments of such valours and their immortal deeds are stored in the form of inscriptions and the stomes that tell and foretell such heritage are called heroic stones and about which the present paper deals with.

1. Introduction

Legendary Stone, Mahasati Stones and Inscriptions are the vital sources which provide information for the restoration of the past History. Moreover these sources are more helpful for Cultural research. It is understood that there are not much of information about the Madiga community. Though donations, construction of temples, regional enlightenment, glory, awards and other Socio-cultural activities were just reserved to set of upper caste communities the contributions of Madiga community cannot be neglected. To endorse this there are some inscriptions mentioning about the contributions of Madiga community. The monuments and inscriptions installed by Madiga community evince the sacrifices and contributions of men and women of Madiga community to the society. Even today it is observed that these Madiga personalities are praised and worshiped by various sects of the society. An attempt has been made to retrieve the historical aspects from these legendary stones and monuments.

2. Objective

- To know the importance of heroic stone in history
- To understand the role of heroic stones

3. Scope:

The present paper deals with heoirc stones of history

4. Method

Historical approach has been used for the preparation of this paper.

Vedas are the primary source which throws light on the Indian social and cultural structure. *Rigveda* though mentions about the caste system it demonstrates the profession based caste categorization. The community indulged in profession related to leather works was termed as Chammaras (Coblers). It is later believed that these profession based caste categorization gave birth to the evolution of caste system in the Indian society.

According Hunnavalli inscription dated 997 AD, when the thieves entered the Hunnavalli village and caught hold of the cattle, Arivarma the resident of Hunnavalli fought ferociously

with the thieves to save the cattle. But in the fight Arivarma lost his life. Then the Kannayya lays a Heroic stone in the commemoration of the Hero Arivarma. These facts substantiate that Madigas were occupied in the job of grazing cattle. Further the facts also endorses that Madigas have donated the cattle to Brahamins.

R.Sheshashastri in his literature (Andhra Pradesh) have recorded a instance wherein the people of Golla community who are considered as superior to Madiga community being worshipping the Madiga heroes. The story recorded in the literature is explained in brief in the following passage. Channayya Baladu (King) seeks the help of Madiga community in the war. Madigas extend their helping hand to the king in the war and makes him victorious in the war. The King Channayya gets impressed by the war skills of Madigas. As a token of thanks and victory, King Channayya invite the Madigas to have meals with him.

Once the meals was cooked and was ready to serve, King asks his Minister to call the Madigas. As the Minister was not interested to have the meals with the lower community, without even informing to Madigas, the Minister complains to the king that despite of inviting the Madigas have not yet arrived for the meals. King reserving the Madigas part of meals have meals with his soldiers. Soon after King and soldier had meals, Madigas arrives to the King to have meals. When the Madigas comes to know that the King already had meals before their arrival, they felt that King had purposely invited us for the meals with the mere intention of insulting their community. Further the Madigas decides to participate in the war without having food. King opposes the Madiga community without having food to participate in the war. Being worried the Madigas go to Katamaraja the elder brother of King Channayya Baladu. Even Katamaraja being unhappy of them doesn't even talk to them. The Madigas feels that they are utterly insulted and being disheartened for not being the part of the war the Madigas commits suicide. In commemoration of these Madiga Heroes the Legendary or heroic stones are laid and these heroic stones were started worshipped and are continued to be worshipped even today.

Another such incidence is found in Karnataka State. In Kolar there is a observance wherein people of Madiga community on the eve Bhartha Hunnime (Full moon day) place a new pitcher filled with water, a new thread and a needle before the Gagamma temple. The people of this community believe that their Heroes lost in the Mahabharata battle would return on this day. They spare whole night by singing songs. Likewise it is observed that unlike in Andhra Pradesh state even in Karnatak state the Madigas are worshipped.

It is evident from the poems and inscriptions of Vijayanagara empire that Madigas were heads and soldiers of the Vijayanagara army. As a matter of dynasty security people belonging to every caste and creed in the society were given prominence and included in the army since from the period of Sangama. These facts are endorsed by the statements of Barbos and other tourists visiting the Vijayangara empire. These statements demonstrates that Vijayanagara army comprised of people from every caste and creed since from the predecessor of Sangama. It is assumed that even the people of Madiga community belonging to lower caste played a vital role in the building of Vijayangara army by being included in the army. These aspects are confirmed in the literary works of the poet Nanjunda. The poet describing the Kodava army have

mentioned that Viajayangara Army not only comprised the soldiers from various regions but also named the soldiers like Holeyara Halla and Madigara Hampa. The mention of the name Madigara Hampa may likely portray him as a brave soldier. Even today it is noticed that a Hill near Kammatadurga is called as "Madigara Hampayyana Gudda". It is either assumed that Madigara Hampayya lived in this hill or this hill is named after him as a token of respect towards his heroics or it may also be assumed as the place of death of Madigara Hampayya. Likewise one hand in the inscriptions, legendary stones, bravery stones, Mahasati stone we find the mention of Madigas as the soldiers. On the other hand in the Ramanatha Charite authored by the poet Nanjunda there is description of Mathangi army. The prose describes that Mathangi becoming the chief of the army defeats Kumara Rama. Such aspects endorses that people of Madiga community served as chief of the army and soldiers in the army troop.

These inscriptions, monuments and other evidences confirms that Madigas had served as kings, heads, chief of army, legendaries and sacrificial humans. In this background, though there are not much of records about the Madigas in the History, one cannot rule out the contributions and achievements of Madiga Community.

Endnotes

1. M. Chidanandamurthy, "Madhyakaleena Kannada Sahitya mattu Asprushyate" Pg.4, 1985
2. Ibid, Pg. 6
3. "Kannada Sahityadalli Asprushyate Parikalpan", Pg. 27, 1993.
4. R. Sheshashastri, "Karnatakada Veeragallugalu" Pp. 50-51.
5. Ibid, Pg. 52
6. Srikantayya, "Kannada Kavyagalalli Samarchitragalu", Pg. 4, 1983.
7. Ibid, Pg.4.
8. Dr. Mailuvalli Revanna, "Chiradurga Jilleya Madara Janangada Janapada Kavyagalu", Pg. 42, 1996.
9. Ibid, Pg. 55