



International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews

Journal homepage: www.ijrpr.com ISSN 2582-7421

Divine Rituals of Uppara Community

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ABSTRACT

In India Upparas are known by different names in different states as like Beldar, Lonari, Luniya/Lunia, Nuniya/Nunia, Od, Sagara etc. At present in Karnataka State this community is in Backward Classes Schedule No. 53, Uppara, Beldar, Chunar, Gavadi, Goundi, Kallu Kutiga Uppara, Lonari, Melu Sakkara, Melu Sakkara, Namada Uppara, Padit/Padti, Paditi, Padi, Sagara, Sunngara, Sunna Uppara, Uppaliga, Uppaligashetti, Uppalian, Uppera, Yakalara and Ekkali words are recorded. The Government of India's backward class reservation list for Karnataka lists Lonari at 115, Padit at 126, Uppara caste at 146 with its sub-castes Uppar, Lingayat Uppara/Sunnagara, Gavandi, Govandi, Sagar, Kerebandiyavaru and Yekalar, Yaklar, Egilika at 149. Subspecies are included. Thus identified by different names, this community has got its unique place in the cultural of Karnataka through various rituals.

Key Words: Uppara, Divine rituals, Erala celebration, Worship of Karilakshmi, Worship of Bharamappa.

Objectives

- Searching for Bases of worship of Upparas.
- Searching for transitions seen in Upparas Devine rituals.

Methodology

I have used 'Case study method, literary sources study method' to collect information that is suitable for building the philosophy of the present article. In that too, I have prepared this article by reviewing the literature that has been created about these communities and using descriptive method.

Scope of the Research

For the preparation of the present article, I have taken the existing literature on the Uppara community within the scope of the study, especially on the basis of the rituals being worshiped in Yadgiri, Vijayapura, Bagalkote district.

What are a Devine practices?

Rituals are unique events that have stuck with the growth and ideological evolution of communities. It has been practice of worshipping of wild nature and the animals that are the basis of their life as Gods. This cult emerges as the cultural strength of that community. Devine rituals are embodied with many kinds of rules and restrictions.

Why Practice of Devine Ritual?

This is has already been most debated topic by folks. currently there are two ways as fallows. One of them is keeping people in fear and making profit out of it and the other is to make them forget their happiness and sorrows and to remember the forces that symbolize the existence of their lives and those who are responsible for their protection. This second way is very popular. There in lies the essence. There fore, Why Devine Practice? If people are asked that, the answer they give is 'to remember the one who protect us'.

There are two types of Devine worship

1. Devine worship as a form of religious theater art: Since the time of primitive man, it has been associated with expressing their joys and sorrows through songs and dances. Songs and dances must have been resorted to satisfy the invisible and mentally haunting forces. At a later stage it may continue to assume color and disguise. This is evidenced by the worship of ghosts in coastal areas, Bayalata (Sreedevi Mahatma) in North Karnataka.
2. Devine worship as a form of folk ritual: Communities have held a festival as a matter of necessity or as a matter of course. They are repeated daily, yearly. Such rituals include elements such as folk dress, food and drink of that environment.

The gods of the Upparas recorded in the literature composed during the rule of British India

- “Though they follow Shaiva and Vaishnava sects, they practically worship the village deities – Sunkalamma, Thimmappa and Jambulammaetc”(Jayaprakash Banjagere (ed):2019:215).
- "The 1891 census report mentions the worship of Sunkalamma, Jambalamma and Thimmappa" (Jayaprakash Banjagere (ed):2019:226).
- "Upparas worship to Yellamma, Maruti, Tuljabhavani, Venkataramana " (Venkata Rango Katti:1893:150).
- “The special deities of their worship are Yellamma, Hulideva, Hanumanta, Venkatarama, and Virabbadra”(The Ethnographical Survey of Bombay, Monograph 30, Uppar, 1906:1-2).
- “The favourite deities of the Maratha Gavandis are Balaji and Bhavanai of Tuljapur”(Syed Siraj Ul Hassan: 1920:623).
- “Upparas belong to the Hindu religion. The special deities of their worship are Yallamma, Hulideva, Hanuman, Venkataramana and Virbhadra, The *Shami (Prosopis spicigera)* the *Bel (Aegle marmelos)* the *Pipal*, the sweet basil plant and the cow are worshipped”(Enthoven, R E:III:1922:395).
- “They worship all the village Gods, Goddesses, and the others such as, Durgamma, Yallamma, Māramma and Sunkalamma”(Nanjundayya H V:4:1931:651).
- “They worship all village goddesses, such as *Yellamma, Durgamma, Sunnakallamma, Maramma*”(Aiyar V R Thyagaraja:1912:175).

Presently the Upparas living in Karnataka Worship many Clan Gods and House gods. The are as follows,

Antaragattamma, Arakalamma, Aretallamma, Alagattadamma, Aluvemangamma, Aladamma, Adihonnamma, Indilakkavva, Indimaramma, Erasiddamma, Uchangemma, Udisalamma, Utnalli Mari, Udagatti Uddamma, Urakattamma, Uarakatamma, Uramma, Eralakkamma, Erasiddamma, Aiguli Mastiyamma, Odiyamma, Olakallu Rakasamma, Kariyamma, Kanive Maramma, Kaniveyamma, Kannamma, Kappagere Kariyamma, Kabbalamma, Karisiri Choudamma, Bhagimaradamma, Masiyamma, Kereyagalamma, Kodyamma, Gangamallamma, Gaddemma, Chandra guttemma, Gullamma, Chinchali Mayamma, Chunamma, Jadiyahamma, Tugari lakkavva, Tuppadamma, Huligemmma, Yallamma, Holiyamma, Rakasamma Etc...

Ankappa, Dareppa, Ayatti Basavanna, Alasiddesha, Idagal Padeppa, Eranna, Uchcharaya, Urukundi Eranna, Mallayya, Kanakaraya, Hanumappa, Karashundi siddoba, Kariyappa, Kallolli Anjaneya, Kamadevaru, Kyatappa, Kuppiraya, Gonibasappa, Kencharaya, Bhutappa, Khandoba, Chomadevaru, Jatingaraya, Durgappa, Bhogapuresha, Nayakanatti Thippeswami, Parappa, Paramanda, Panjurli, Pathalingesh, Bannappa, Bande Ranganatha, Bendagara Ravala, Beteraya, Timmappa, Bhirappa, Marulasidda, Malemadeswara, Madappa, Manteswami, Siddappaji, Malappa, Malingaraya, Mugappa, Ravala, Halladaraya, Hulikutswara, Haiguli, Honakeri Mallaya etc...

Apart from the above deities, Upparas who worship many more family deities and clan deities perform special divine ceremonies in some parts of Karnataka. Some of those rituals are briefly written as follows,

Erala celebration :

This ritual is held in most of the villages of Yadgiri district. The word 'Eerala' may have originated from the word 'Hiriya'. that will be evident while doing this ritual. Erala ritual is not done whenever it is needed, especially this ritual is done 3 days or 5 days before the marriage of sons in the house. During the celebration they perform 'Byati' (sacrificial ritual) and remember their ancestors and pray for their peace. This ritual is usually performed on Mahanavami and Diwali as well. But in these festivals only bati (sacrificial ritual) is not performed.

The ancestors are worshiped in the form of hand axe, stone, pottery, copper, bronze and silver in various idol forms. Both male and female images are seen as Ratis. In the houses of the Upparas living in Yadgiri city, there is an idea of Rathis, idols made of silver and bronze metal are seen. There are differences in the shape of the rati, and a different idea of the idol can be seen. The idea of some Ratis in that there are both male and female figure in the shape of a 'Bille' (coin) and the ancestors are put in the Bille (coin figure) with a male image in it if they are male, and the Bille (coin image) with a female image in the house and worship them in the house. Also there are Kalash-like figures, and in these figures with slightly taller and thicker Kalash-like figures are male, while the Kalash-like figures slightly shorter than the male form and thinner than the male have a female idol. This is also a custom of worshiping the elders. Moreover, there is still a different concept of ancestor worship in the Uppara community. Small pot (kelu) figures are placed one on top of the other. Even today this ritual is in practice. Apart from this, the idea of keeping two kelu (pots) and putting men's clothing (towel, pancha, shirt, etc.) in one, and women's clothing (sari, jacket cloth, etc.) in the other is present in Upparas.



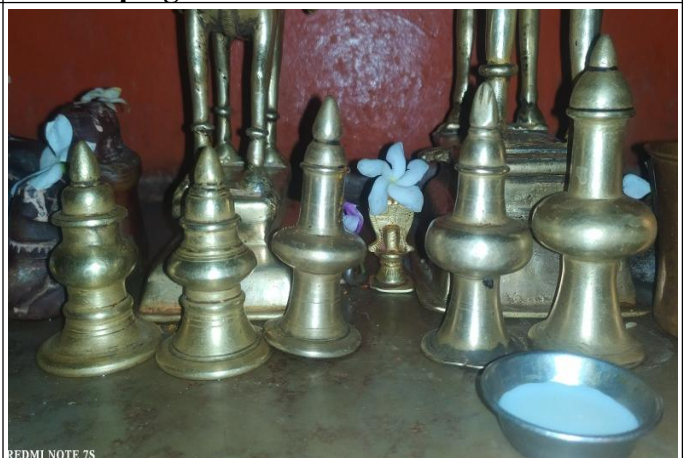
An early form of ancestor worship



Worshipping elders in the form of Kalasa



Worship of elders in bronze form



A cult transformed into bronze form



Worshipping elders in the form of ancestors' faces



Worship advanced by facial form

Worship of Karilakshmi

The Uppara community living in Sunnagara Galli of Vijayapur perform Karilakshmi or Manelakshmi ritual every three years and before the marrying the sons of the family. In this ritual, 8-legged (pregnant) sheep are sacrificed to Karilakshmi. During its celebration, no one but only family members participate. Daughters who married from home and went to their husband's house were not allowed to come. This ritual started at midnight and ended before dawn. During this ritual, in front of the Jagali (God's house), a log was removed and the head and legs of the sacrificed carrying sheep were covered in that log. But in recent times there are changes in these practices. Namely, there is a change in the timing of the celebration, people other than the family are also participating, Muslims are participating in the sacrifice.



Karilakshmi is the mother Gods worshiped by Upparas



Karilakshmi's sacrifice place



God's Karilakshmi's Jagali

Worship Bharamappa

Bharamappa is worshiped by the Upparas of Bagalkote area. They celebrate Bharamappa in 5 ways.

BettaleBharamappa: The head of the house is naked on the day of the festival, after all the members of the house go out of the house, he performs puja and offer prasadam and then he eats that food. Later other members of the family eat.

HoligeBharamappa: In this ritual, the head of the family will not be worshiped naked but worshiped in the presence of everyone and eats Holige.

Seru Bharamappa: It is a ritual of eating Holi in the 'Seru' where grains are measured.

Morada Bharamappa: This is the ritual of eating in the equipment used to clean grain after worshipping.

Kambali Bharamappa: This is a ritual in which the person who worships Ede Holige at night eats Ede without being seen by others, he covering himself with a blanket.



Lord Bharamappa's Jagali

List of informants

Sl.No.	Name	Place	Age	Job
01	Tanaji Laxman Chorge	Vijayapura Sunnagara Galli,	43	Laborer
02	Akasha Tanaji Chorge	Vijayapura Sunnagara Galli,	18	Student
03	Neelabai Laxman Chorge	Vijayapura Sunnagara Galli,	70	Lime Business
04	Huligemma	Bagalkote District Mahalingapura	52	Laborers
05	Bannappa Hulibetta	Yadgiri District Saurashtachalli	46	Social Service

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