



Archaeological Investigations in Upper Vedavathi Basin of Karnataka, With Special Reference to Kadur Taluk

Vinay Kumar D and P. D. Sabale

Deccan College PGRI, Deemed University, Pune, India.

Email: vinaykumard31@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: *The aim of any archaeological exploration is to acquire maximum retrievable information from the field within the given content of a well-designed program of research. In which, our primary objectives is the study of cultural materials, includes artifacts, antiquities and features. Any river environments have played a major role in our understanding of the human past. It has preserved long records of humans and other hominids have a long record of using the resources associated with river environments. In the present context, to understand the basin characters geological formations with reference to the availability of raw material, its exploitation in the upper Vedavathi basin, in parts of Chikmagalur district of Karnataka, the detailed field survey was carried out and large number of sites is reported.*

KEYWORDS: *Archaeology, Megalithic culture, Habitation site, Black ware, Red ware, Kadur taluk.*

INTRODUCTION

The Vedavathi rises from the Western Ghats and flows through district of Chikmagalur, Chitradurga, and Bellary in Karnataka, Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh, before joining the Tungabhadra. The Vedavathi is also called the *Hagari* in parts of Andhra Pradesh. Two rivers, the *Veda* and *Ahuthi*, arise in the eastern part of the Sahyadri Hill range, flow east, and join concert near Pura to form the Vedavathi. The river valley has a great physiographic division. *South Malnad* stretches over the part of Chikmagalur (forest area). Covering a total catchment area of 23,498 sq. km South Maidan studied with granite boulders and dry deciduous forest which covers, parts of Chikmagalur district Chitradurga. It has a total length of 391km. Out of which, 293 km length is in Karnataka state and 26 km forms the common boundary between Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The northern Maidan is apt as the landscape with black soil (Mysore state gazetteer 1981), [4]. The geological formation of these regions where Chikmagalure covered Dharwar schists and Hosadurga covered Bellary Closepet granite (Rama Rao 1962), around the Vedavathi basin. [24]. The study region covers in the north it shares the boundary with Shimoga district and in north-east Davanagere east- Tumkuru south Hasan south-west a Dakshina Kannada west- Udupi respectively. It is bounded the North-south and the East-west between to 76°09'00``E, 76°15'00``E longitude and 13°36'00``N, 13°39'00``N latitude plotted on the Toposheet number of 57C2, 57C3, 57C5, and 57C6. Present recent survey is filling the gap within the archaeological investigation of Upper Vedavathi basin south Karnataka.

STUDY AREA

A detailed study of the megalithic culture of upper Vedavathi basin has been taken up which would help further in explaining and elucidating the dynamic characters involved within the megalithic people. After meticulous study through the exploration and excavation at the site of Brahmagiri and Chandravalli, showed the existence of a mix-culture, where Iron Age culture is overlapping the Neolithic culture, previously it was reported by Krishna. Later Brahmagiri and Chandravalli excavation in 1947 was carried out by Wheeler (1948) [32] which provided a lucid picture of stratigraphy and chronology. It has given a clear idea about the chronological cultural phases. That had also enhanced further excavation and exploration of megalithic and early historic settlements in these regions. The recent exploration reported number of megalithic burial sites and habitation sites which suggested that Devanga, and Gholas communities practiced Megalithic in the proposed study area.

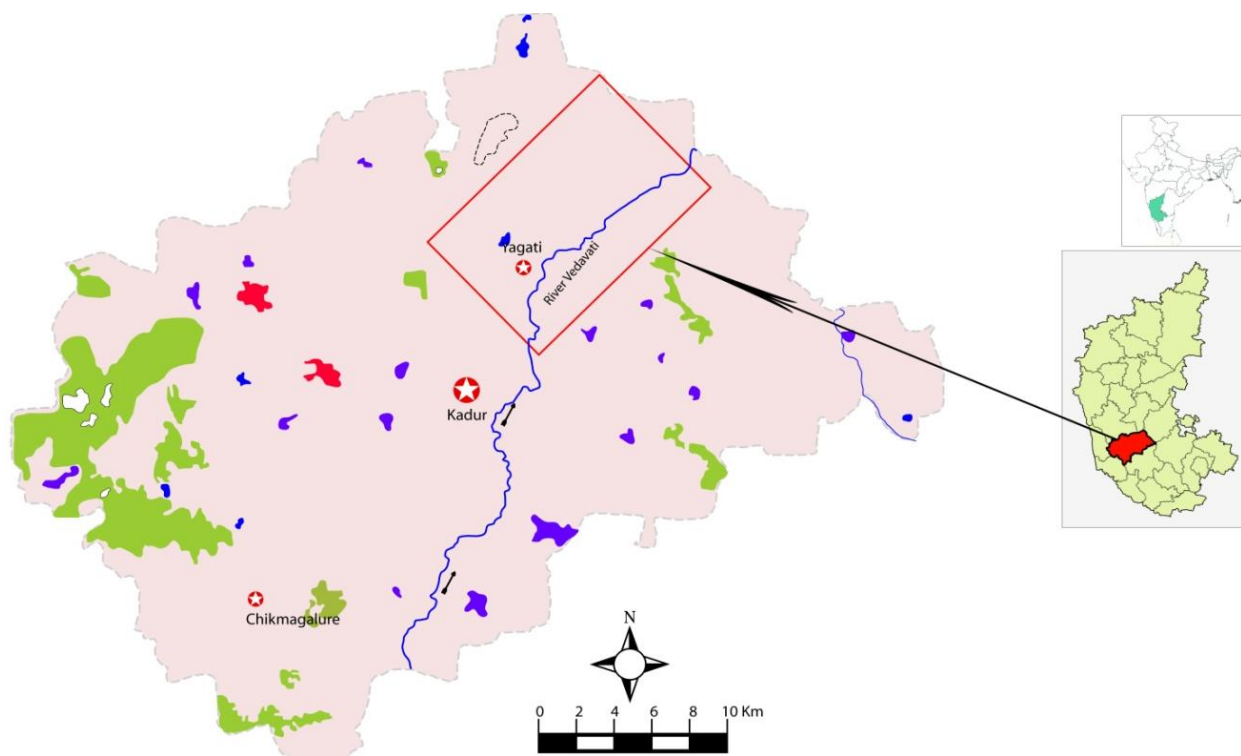


Figure 1: Study area map of Upper Vedavathi basin, Karnataka

NEWLY DISCOVERED HABITATION SITES

Detailed information of each site, such as site name, type, geo-coordinates, nature of site, cultural material recovered, function, present condition, etc. has been reported systematically in the field book during the excursion. This will give an over view of site formation and functional capability of each site. In addition to this, the site diffraction and topography of the area based on the site character incorporated with geological characters are also discussed. Megaliths of Vedavathi river basin habitation sites are located approximately 1.2 km to 1.5 km in radius; with horizontal distribution pattern throughout the river basin

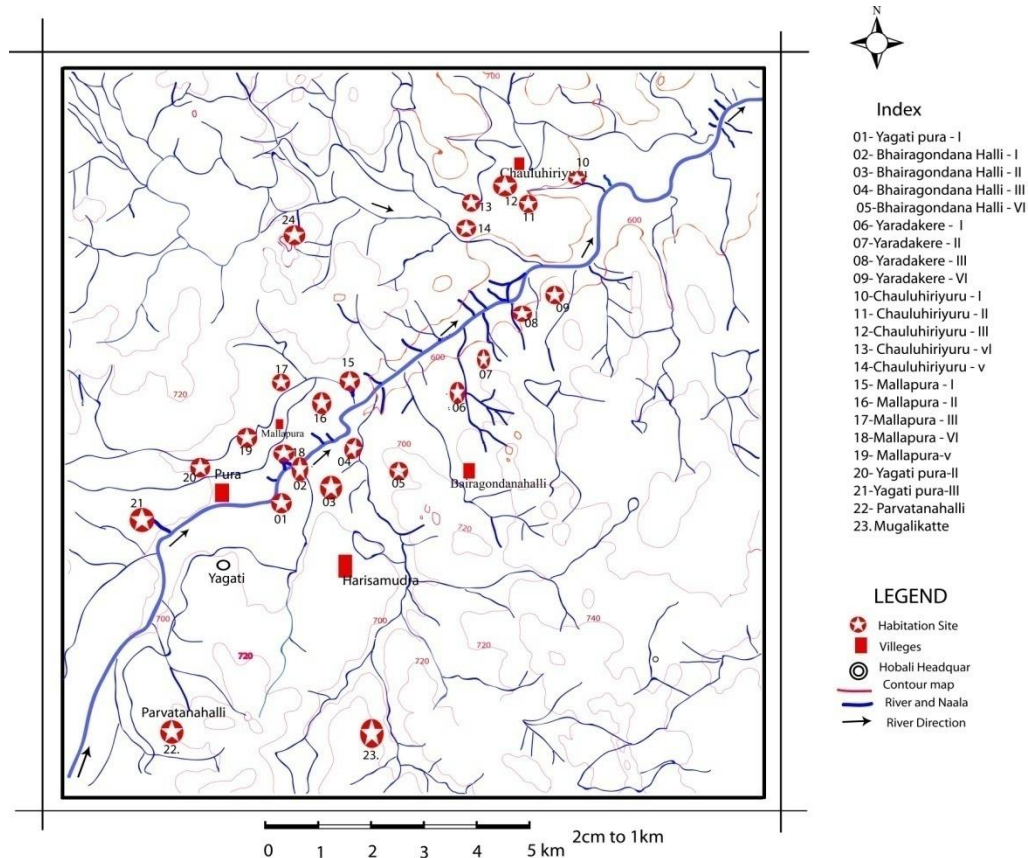


Figure 2: Distribution of newly discovered Habitation sites in Upper Vedavathi basin

Parvatanahalli-1 (13°35'29.22"N;76°08'02.06"E)

This site is located on the right bank of Vedavathi River and it flows perpendicular with Yagati to Kadur via Karikalholle on road, Kadur Taluk, Chikkamagalure district. Parvatanahalli located 1km from Vedavathi river basin. This site having course sized sand mixed soil with ashy mixed habitation soil. Soil contains of angular shaped sharp edged grain particle. The ancient site is located on a private land, this site situated in the north-east direction and 14km away from Kadur taluk. This site is located upon the paddy field with ashy colour soils associated with angulated stone, surface observations shows that the pottery is dispersed all over the site. Site is almost flat due to the cultivation, BRW, black ware and iron slags were found on the surface level. This site is now almost covered in 3 acres with 1-1/2 acres mound still standing. Habitation area of the site has a radius of 100 metres. This place is ideally suitable for cultivation, due to its proximity to Vedavathi river channel. A fine variety of Black and Red ware pottery sherds were recovered from the site. Six sherds of red ware showing medium oxidization by burning effect which also seen in the section. Black ware is most dominated variety on this site.

Mugalikatte Locality-1 (13°34'28.65"N; 76°10'22.51"E)

This site is located on the right bank of river, along Yagati to Kadur via Annigere on road. Kadur Taluk situated in Chikkamagalure district. The site located 3km away from the river basin. This

site is situated 18.5 km in the north-east of Kadur taluk. This site is located on a paddy field with ashy colour soils associated with angular shaped sediments. Surface observation shows that the pottery is distributed all over the site. The site is almost flat due to cultivation, on the surface BRW, black ware and iron slags were found. The mound is now almost 3 acres elevated with 2, 1/2 acre. The site has a habitation mound with an extent of 200 m E-W 300 m N-S. Also, the place is ideally suitable for cultivation due to a constant supply of water from the Vedavathi Perennial River. This site consists of a fine variety of black and red ware pottery. But in case of six samples of red ware, a medium oxidation effect is shown in cross section, black ware is the most dominated variety on this site. In this site, Megalithic culture has remained as predominant cultures with few medieval pot sherds also noticed. This shows a cultural gap between megalithic culture periods. This site is spread over 100 meters, in which a majority of the site is destroyed by bringing the land under village.



Figure 3: General view of Habitation site at Paravatanahalli Locality-1



Figure 4: General view of Habitation site at Mugalikatte Locality-1

Bhairagondanahalli Locality-2 (13°37'47.52"N; 76° 9'58.73"E)

This site is located in north-east direction, around 19.18km away from Kadur taluk. Site spreads 300m N-S to 450m E-W. During the exploration, a habitation site has been reported which having black on red ware, red ware, black ware on surface level. This site is observed 380m away from river and having ashy soil with fine texture. In this site, black on red ware most dominated than red ware pottery.



Figure 5: General view of Habitation site at Bhairagondanahalli Locality-2

Bhairagondanahalli Locality-3 (13°37'41.75"N; 76° 9'47.77"E)

This site is located in north-eastern part and 18.83km away from Kadur taluk. This site is located about 400 meters away from the river. During the detailed observation in the exploration, megalithic cultured site has been documented. It is having black on red ware, red ware and black ware pottery has been documented. As compare to the other documented sites, this is having more black on red ware especially, rim sherds. This shows strong cultural activity has been done in this region. The typical megalithic black on red ware dominated on the site while few number of red ware also has been documented. Most of the red ware body sherds were identified but only few rim sherds were documented. Black ware, which is another variety, is also observed in less quantity. Most of the black wares are less oxidized and can be observable in cross section.



Figure 6: General view of Habitation site at Bhairagondanahalli Locality-3

Malla Pura Locality-1 (13°38'17.40"N; 76° 9'39.90"E)

This site is located 19.15km on north-eastern direction of Kadur taluk and it situated 1km away from the river basin. In this opposite side of river meandering, the site spread 450m N-S to 500m E-W. The systemic exploration reveals the megalithic culture has been identified, soil mixed includes scattered with black and red ware, red ware rim sherd. Soil consists of fine sand with grey coloured smooth texture has been noticed. On the basis of exploration data, red ware body sherd are well baked with fast wheel made and most of these ware body sherds shows micro granular particle in the cross section. Black and red ware pottery are with fine texture metallic sound, hard surfaced black ware very less in number but most of the black wares are fine textured from outside to inside. Site has less vegetation with phosphate rich soil in this site.



Figure 7: General view of Habitation site at P Malla Pura Locality-1



Figure 8: General view of Habitation site at Chauluhiriyuru Locality-1

Chauluhiriyuru Locality-1 (13°40'29.92"N ;76°11'35.44"E)

This site located is north-east of 24.25km away from Kadur taluk. During the exploration habitation site has been documented at Chauluhiriyuru locality-1, which is approximately 250m

away from the river channels, on the left bank. This site is having megalithic pottery, such as black and red ware, red ware and black ware, which has been reported during field work. As per as the field work data is concerned, the red ware pottery is more dominated than black and red ware and black ware. Site having sandy textured ashy coloured soil with small bushes covered on this site, while some part of the site is under agricultural practices.

Chauluhiriyuru Localty-3 (13°40'48.70"N; 76°12'1.30"E)

This site located in the 25.21km north-east away from Kadur taluk. During the exploration megalithic site has been reported, this site covers around 500m N-S to 600m in E-W. This site located 1 km away from the river channel, opposite to river meandering feature. Chauluhiriyuru-2 site is having typical megalithic pottery such as black on red ware, red ware and black ware. Another important factor is black on red ware is having polished surface with metallic sound which shows us fine oxidizing from the section. Soil is mostly ashy in colour and shows fine to semi course in texture.



Figure 9: General view of Habitation site at Chauluhiriyuru Localty-3



Figure 10: General view of Habitation site at Yagati Pura Localty-2.

Yagati Pura Locality-2 (13°37'47.08"N; 76° 8'43.67"E)

This site is located 17.30km in the north-eastern direction of Kadur taluk. The site is spread across almost 200m N-S to 400m E-W. This is a single cultural mound rich only megalithic period. The site has fine sandy, grey soil with fine texture. For the sake of agricultural activities, the mound was scrapped by the villagers. Surface of the mound consists of non-oriented ashy patch with pottery; such as red ware, which is most dominated ware having thick neck with angulated sand particle and is visible from the cross section of the pottery. Black ware having thin section from the rim sherd shows good oxidization from the cross section and has smooth surface on the outside and also inside the pot. Black and red ware which having small quartz particle in between the pot, which shows fully baked layer can be visible from the cross section.

Yaradakere.G Locality-1 (13°39'55.91"N 76°12'31.54"E)

This site is situated in north-eastern direction, approximately 25.12km away from Kadur taluk, and it spreads 450m NS to 400m EW. This is megalithic habitation site is observed. It is rich in ashy soil with fine grained in texture. This is 300 meters away from the river channel. It is rich in black and red ware and red ware. Most part of the site under the agricultural practices, as well as some part is covered with small bushes. In case of this site, red wares are more dominated by black on red ware. Most of red ware is overlapped with black on red ware pottery.



Figure 11: General view of Habitation site at Yaradakere.G Locality-1

Yaradakere.G Locality-3 (13°39'14.34"N; 76°12'14.45"E)

This site is located in north-east, which is 24.04km away from Kadur taluk. It spreads around 350m N-S to 480m E-W. This site is present 1km away from the Vedavathi river channel. In the systematic exploration, megalithic cultured habitation deposit has been identified. The site also been mixed with megalithic pottery. From this site, black on red ware and red ware has been reported. The soil is having ashy colour with fine texture. Most part of the site has been destroyed by farmers. As compare to other habitation sites, this is located as individual site, but black on red ware more dominated rather than red ware were the other habitations are more dominated with red ware variety.



Figure 12: General view of Habitation site at Yaradakere.G Locality-3

CONCLUSION

Overall result of the research has been conducted on this particular basin by analyzing pottery and site distribution pattern. The sites which explore through this research detail village to village survey are sites are located on the both bank of old river terraces of Vedavathi river. Field work reported large amount of megalithic ceramic which included red ware, black and red ware, black on red ware pottery. Secondary settlements are the supportive settlement around the primary settlement in this area of occupation little amount of rim shared has been recovered and it showed difference in the rim shared. Finding out any specific contact between the sites is more challenging because it needs more exploration and excavation data. Though, the ceramic distribution of this basin has given some indication about the functional aspect of the site on this basin. Presently, the area which encompasses by the river basin has undergone through several changes because of the modern anthropogenic activity and coconut plantation by the localized inhabitants. Concern with megalithic culture black and red ware, black on red ware and red ware are the most important pottery varieties in this basin and large amount of Black slipped ware rim sherds has been reported from this river basin. Preservation and conservation of the site is most importantly needed in this area. All the majority of sites are being destroyed and modified by the modern interaction of local people in this case proper documentation and surface material collection is most important to record from the upper part of this basin. So, there is need of protection and conservation of such cultural heritages in Upper Vedavathi basin.

Acknowledgement

I sincerely thanks to Dr. Arjun Rao and Dr. Shashi Kumar for their guidance and help during the field study.

REFERENCES

- [1] Ansari, Z, D. and M.S. Nagaraja Rao. Excavations at Sanganakallu 1964-65. Poona: Deccan College. 1969.
- [2] Buradekatte Manjappa. Burudekatte Parisarada Gavichitragalu Pragitihasada Kuruhugalu, Itihasa Dharshana. 2008. Vol. 23. Pp. 1-2.

- [3] Buradekatte Manjappa. Chaluvanahalliya Gavimata Pragitihasa Nale. Itihasa Dharshana. 1994 Vol. 9. Pp. 6-9.
- [4] Chikmagaluru District, Karnataka State Gazetteer Government of Karnataka, Government Press Bangalore. 1981.
- [5] Deo, S.B. Problem of South Indian Megaliths. Dharwar: Kannada Research Institute, Karnataka University. 1973.
- [6] Deo, S.B. The Megaliths: their Culture, Ecology, Economy and Technology, In Recent Advances in Indian Archaeology (S.B. Deo and K Paddayya Eds.), Pune: Deccan College. 1985. Pp. 89-99.
- [7] Dhavalikar, M. K. A Plough Coulter from Brahmagiri-India, Antiquity (1968). 42, Pp137-8.
- [8] Dhavalikar, M. K. A Plough Coulter from Brahmagiri-India, Antiquity. 1968. 42, 137-8.
- [9] Gururaja Rao, B. K. Megalithic Culture in South India. Mysore: University of Mysore. 1972.
- [10] Hanumantha Rao, M. and S. Nagaraju. Excavations at Hemmige. Mysore: Directorate of Archaeology and Museums. 1974.
- [11] Hunumanayaka, Arasikere taluku Chaluvanahalli Bruhathshilayugada nele, Itihasa Dharshana. 2005. Vol 20 Pp1-4.
- [12] Krishna, M. H. Excavation at Chandravalli. Mysore: Directorate of Archaeology and museum. 1931.
- [13] Krishna, M. H. Annual Report of the Mysore Archaeological Department for the Year. 1940: 63-74.
- [14] Krishna, M.H.Chitaldurga District the Brahmagiri Site. Annual Report of the Mysore Archaeological Department for the Year 1940: 63-74.
- [15] Krishnaswami, V.D, Megalithic types of south India, ancient India. 1949. 5:35-45.
- [16] Krishnamoorti, C., 'Recent discoveries in south Karnataka' Archaeology of Karnataka. 1978. Pp. 80-89.
- [17] Leshnik, L.S, South Indian megalithic Burials the Pandukal complex, Wiesbaden: Franz steiner verlag GmbH. 1974.
- [18] Leshnik, L.S.. The Brahmagiri Megalithic Coulter, Man. 1971 6: Pp 489-90.
- [19] Moorti, U. S. Megalithic Culture of South India: Socio-Economic Perspectives. Varanasi: Ganga Kaveri Publishing House. 1994.
- [20] Moorti, U.S. Megalithic Karnataka-A Locational Analysis, In Archaeology in Karnataka. 1990.
- [21] Poonacha, K.P. Archaeology of The Malnad Region, Thesis submitted to The Karnataka university of Dharwad. 1990.
- [22] Praveen Belthangdi, Arasikere Talukina Pragitihasa Nalegalu, ItihasaDharshana Vol. 2014, 29 Pp. 4-6.
- [23] Praveen Belthangdi, Arasikere Tallukina Pragitihasa Nelegalu, Itihasa Dharshana. 2012. Vol. 27 Pp. 12-14.
- [24] Ram Rao, an Introduction to the Geology of Mysure. Mysure Geological Department popular studies 1939. No. 1. Government Press.
- [25] Seshadri, M. Report on the Jadigenahalli Megalithic Excavations and Benagalure. Bangalore: Government of Mysore. 1960.
- [26] Sheshadri, M. Report 011 the Jadigenahalli Megalithic Excavations for the Year 1957. Mysore: Directorate of Archaeology, Government of Mysore. 1960.
- [27] Subbarao, B. Archaeological Explorations in Bellary, Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute 1947. 8: 209-24.
- [28] Sundara, A. The early chamber tombs of south India, Delhi university publication. 1975.
- [29] Suresh, B. Burudakatte Gramada Prachyavasheshagalu, Itihasa Dharshana 2008. Vol 23. Pp. 24-26.
- [30] Venkateshamu, R. Arasikere Parisarada Bruhath Shilayugada Nilegalu: ondu Shada, Itihasa Dharshana. 1996. Vol 11. Pp 37-38.
- [31] Vinay Kumar D, Archaeological investigation in upper Vedavathi basin of Karnataka, with special reference to megalithic culture. An unpublished, MPhil dissertation. Pune: Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute. 2019.
- [32] Wheeler, R.E.M. Brahmagiri and Chandravalli Excavations, Ancient India 1948. 4: 181-310.

Vinay Kumar D and P. D. Sabale, IJMIR

[33] Yogesh Mallinathpur Early Iron Age and Early Historic Cultures of Hagari basin, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka, An unpublished, PhD dissertation. Pune: Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute, 2016.