The summery of the UGC Sponsored Minor Research Project, “A SURVEY AND DOCUMENTATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAININGS OF FOLK CULTURE IN UDUPI TALUK.” Submitted by, Dr Jayaram Shettigar Associate Professor and H.O.D. Dept. of History Milagres College, Kallianpur – 576114

The present survey of the various divinities, worshipped in the Daivasthana, temples, forest, homes and shrines of Udupi region enable us to know and trace the features of religious development and understand the religious tendencies of the people of this region.

The tradition of anthill worship is widespread among the Hindus in Udupi region. Many naturally grown Anthill are found in Daivasthana in Udupi region. It is very difficult to fix the age of these anthills.

The survey conducted on the Daivasthana, will further be strengthened by a detailed study Daivasthana and its iconography of the Daivas. Devil-worship or Bhutaaraadhane has always been preponderant with the non-Brahmanical section of this region.

It is observed that some of the great divinities of the Hindu pantheon seem to receive adoration among the non-Brahmins in the form of Devils (Daivas). The original and ancient customs and the earlier forms of worship and ritual seems to have been pushed back to remote villages.

We find in both the areas of the tradition of worshipping historical and cultural heroes who attend the divinity after death like Kooti Cennaya, Kalkuda-Kallurti, Koraga Taniya etc.

Udupi has developed the tradition of worshiping totemistic spirits like the pig spirit, tiger spirit, bull spirit, serpents etc. It is very difficult to fix chronological sequence the Bhuta or Daivas. Sometimes they are chronologically mixed.

From sociological point of view also the present study helps us to understand typical social structure of the region. A person belonging to the lowest caste
namely untouchable class paly an important role in worship and conveys the divine message. The Daivaradhane was a part and parcel of the life of people of this region. It can be presumed that the spirit cult was originally followed by the original inhabitants of this region namely Holeyas, Koragas, Billavas and Mogaveeras.

Hundreds of Daivas or spirits are worshiped in Udupi region. While certain spirits are worshipped by certain families only, certain others are worshiped by the entire population of the region. Worship of certain other spirits is restricted to certain communities and castes only.

One can observe diverse architectural pattern in the construction of spirits. The environment factors had a great influence on the construction of the shrine of this region. The Ceiling or roofing over the monuments are slanting and no high towers were constructed on the monuments of this region. The roofing are slant or sloping due to natural reason.

There has been continuous increase in the number of the Bhutas worshipped in this region. As years passed on the number of the Daiva getting multiplied. Perhaps, that is the reason for the inclusion of such devils as Posa Bhuta. Most of these devils are offered animal sacrifice.

There are various socio economic factors which contributed the growing number of the Bhutas. The growing number of these Bhutas during historical time may be found in the immigration of the various groups of people from the above the Ghats into Tuluva at different times.

On the basis of the present study and also the survey of the earlier works, we can only infer that the cult of the Bhuta worship in its primitive form is really ancient, it is tribal in character and it was influenced by the external factors also.