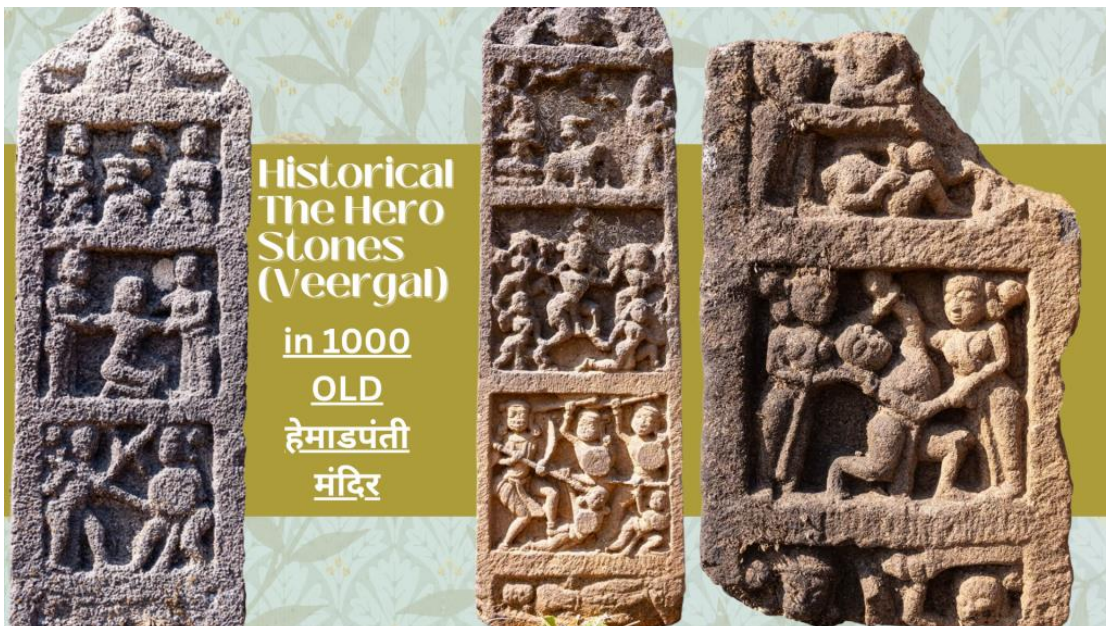


The Hero Stones (Veergal) - Historic 1000 Year old हेमाडपंती मंदिर

A Hero Stone (Veergal in Marathi, Veeragallu in Kannada or Naṭukal in Tamil) is essentially a memorial commemorating the honorable death of a hero, usually in battle.

The nature of the hero's death sometimes necessitates the need for an additional lower panel to add further clarity to the story of his demise. So a battle scene may be followed by a scene showing the hero lying dead next to cattle, indicating that he was protecting his herd. In the case of the hero stones at Umbardi, it would appear that here they all died in arm to arm combat, and the subtle variations in the narrative are absent.



A hero stone was usually divided into three panels, although this was no fixed rule and depending on the event four or five panels can also occur. The carvings appear on one side of the upright stone, in the case of the more typical and simplistic three panel layout, the narrative is as follows :

Most of these stones were erected between the 3rd century BCE and the 18th century CE, and can be found all over India, although the higher concentration of them appears to occur in south India. It is thought that Karnataka alone has over 2,500 examples of these memorial stones with their origins dating back to the Iron Age.

