



Coorg Art And Architecture: Temple Architecture Different Styles

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As temples form the backbone of Indian medieval architectural heritage, it would be appropriate to discuss their basic architectural features before we move on to different styles of Indian architecture. Despite the vastness of the land, Indian temple architecture is remarkably uniform. It is, however, often distinguished into two chief styles, each having numerous sub-styles. The Northern or Indo-Aryan style is marked by a tower with rounded top and curvilinear outline while the Southern or Dravidian style has the tower usually in the shape of a rectangular truncated pyramid.

The standard type of the Hindu temple has remained fundamentally same from the 6th century AD to the present day. The construction of temples – whether in the north in the south – essentially followed a similar pattern. There is the sanctuary or the vimana of which the upper and outer pyramidal and tapering portion is called the shikhara, or pinnacle. The vimana is a rather dark place that houses the divine deity. This small area is called garbha griha, literally meaning 'womb house'. The entrance is through a doorway, normally from the eastern side. The doorway is reached through a mandapa or pillared hall, where devotees congregate for prayers. However, earlier temples may have had the mandapa at a little distance from the main temple (the Shore Temple in Mamallapuram near Chennai, circa 700 A.D.), although this practise was done away with in later constructions.

Later it became necessary to unite both buildings, making way for the antarala or intermediate vestibule. A porch or a smaller room called ardha mandapa leads up to a hall (mandapa), which in turn goes into a maha mandapa. A tower generally surmounted the shrine-room while smaller towers rose from other parts of the building. The whole conception was set in a rectangular courtyard, which sometimes contained lesser shrines and was often placed on a raised platform. The most perfect examples of temples on this structure are the Khajuraho temples. Here, each chamber has its own separate pyramidal roof rising in gradual steps so that the final sanctum's roof towers up, surrounded by smaller spires, finally forming a graceful, rising stepped pyramid. In some parts of India, the ascending pyramid roof format was not followed. The roof in such temples was still pyramidal, but was formed of layers that gradually became narrower as they rose. A courtyard was built around the temple, and sometimes a wall would be constructed to ensure seclusion. The outer walls were treated by carving in an orderly group of repetitive

miniatures. The shikhara or tapering roof was specifically based on this design, which may have originated from the domed huts of central and eastern India.

Nalknad Palace :

After the death of the Kodagu king, Lingaraja I in 1780 AD, Hyder Ali took control of Kodagu under the pretext of being a guardian to Lingaraja's three sons, Dodda Veerarajendra, Linga Rajendra and Appanna, who were of tender age.^[3] The princes were sent to reside in a fort at Gorur in Hassan district, and a garrison was stationed at Mercara (capital of Kodagu). A minister, Amaldar Subbarasaya, who was formerly a Karnika (treasurer) of the Kodagu Raja, was appointed to look after the administration of Kodagu. The people and nobles of Kodagu were greatly alarmed at the takeover of Kodagu by Hyder Ali. They suspected that Hyder Ali had evil intentions with regard to the young princes and the royal family, and that he would treat them the same way as he was treating the Wodeyar royal family of neighbouring Mysore, which also had been taken over in the same way by Hyder Ali, as guardian of an underage prince. Rebellion therefore began to brew against Hyder Ali among the Kodava nobility, and the opportunity came two years later, in 1782. At that time, Hyder Ali was busy fighting against the British, and the Kodava nobility managed to throw the garrison out of Kodagu and proclaim their independence.^[3] However, the underage princes could not be rescued from the custody of Hyder Ali and continued to reside under his "protection" in Gorur fort.

In December 1782, within a few months of the Kodava rebellion, Hyder Ali died and was succeeded by his son, Tipu Sultan. Tipu moved the Kodagu princes from Gorur to Periyapatna and placed them under explicit arrest, closely monitoring them.^[3] Yet, Prince Dodda Veerarajendra managed to escape in 1786 (after six years' "protection") and returned to Kodagu.^[4] He was welcomed by the nobles and promptly had himself proclaimed king. The capital of his kingdom, Madikere (Mercara) was under the occupation of Tipu's Army, but large swathes of his former kingdom, controlled by loyal nobles, paid allegiance to him. He started to wage battles against Tipu Sultan's army, which forced Tipu to send a large force to Kodagu to subdue the king. Tipu Sultan's army was able to capture some forts but suffered heavy losses as well.

Palace and Kalyana Mantapa: Dodda Veerarajendra managed to recapture most of his forts, except Mercara, the capital. Instead, he made his base in a thickly forested area called Nalknad and launched his operations from there. Here at Nalknad, Dodda Virarajendra built himself the Nalknad Palace, ^[4] a two-storeyed structure constructed in the style typical to its region. In 1793, he travelled to Cannanore to meet Sir Robert Abercromby and conclude a treaty with the British. After this agreement, Vira Rajendra became a steadfast ally of the British, in opposition to Tipu Sultan. Dodda Veerarajendra had two queens, and his second marriage, to Mahadevammaji, was celebrated in Nalknad Palace in 1796. His queens gave him four surviving daughters but no sons, to his great regret. Meanwhile, his two younger brothers had secured their release from Tipu's clutches and made their way to their brother's base in Nalknad. They were the heirs to the kingdom if Dodda Virarajendra failed to produce a son. Dodda Virarajendra's second wife Mahadevamma died in 1807, and this seems to have had a profound effect on him. When Dodda Veerarajendra died in 1809, his ten-year-old daughter Devammaji was declared as the "queen of Kodagu". However, in 1811, Linga Rajendra, the younger brother of the deceased king, proclaimed himself as the king of Kodagu and ruled the region till his death in 1820. Chikka Veerarajendra, the son of Linga Rajendra, became the king of Kodagu. In 1832, differences began to rise between the king and the British, forcing the king to start a war against the British. The British attacked Kodagu with full force and began to make inroads. Chikka Veerarajendra moved to Nalknad Palace which became his last refuge. In order to prevent major losses, the king had to surrender and the British deposed him to Benares. With

this, Kodagu came under the direct rule of the British and Chikka Veerarajendra the last king of Kodagu was sent into exile.

Nalknad Palace or Nalkunadu : Nalkunadu aremane, called *Naalnaad Aremane* in the local Kodava language is a palace located in the Kodagu district of the Indian state of Karnataka. It is located near a village named Yavakapadi and was built between the years 1792 and 1794 AD. This palace was the last refuge of the last of the Haleri kings of Kodagu, Chikk Veerarajendra before he was deposed by the British. The Kannada film Shanti, which has only a single actor, was shot in the surroundings of the palace.

Nalknad Aramane: We were in Madikeri when we first heard this story of the Haleri dynasty that ruled Coorg for more than 200 years from the 17th to 19th centuries. A king was on a hunting expedition when he suddenly saw his wild dogs chased by a hare on a small hillock. He immediately felt that a powerful energy vibrated in the village which turned a meek hare into a courageous beast. The king decided to build a fort there and set up a mud wall garrison and the hamlet, which eventually became the capital of the dynasty was named after the king. The king was Mudduraja, the dynasty was Haleri and the capital was called Muddu Raja Keri or Muddurakayray, what we today call Madikeri.

The origin of the Haleri dynasty is traced to Veeraraja, a nephew of Sadashiva Nayaka of the Ikkeri dynasty. As the Vijaynagar empire crumbled, Veeraraja, who dreamt of establishing his own dynasty was looking to exploit the weakness of local kingdoms. His ambition took him to Kodagu which was then ruled by various Nayaks disguised as a “jangama “ or a priest with healing power, he established a small group of followers in Haleri. He slowly overthrew the local Nayaks, including the chieftains of Bhagamandala and Talacauvery and went on to become the lord of Kodugu with Haleri as capital. His grandson, Mudduraja later changed the capital to Madikeri. Nalknad Aramane was the final refuge of the last Haleri king, Chikkaveerarajendra before he was deposed by the British

Our trail took us to a little palace where Haleri dyansty came to an end. We reached a small hamlet called Yavakapadi in Kakkabe where Nalknad Aramane built by Dodda Veerarajendra in the 18th century awaited us.

There were coffee plantations all around. A small mud road appeared out of nowhere. A beautiful two-storey structure painted in red with a tiled roof, old wall paintings and pillars gazed at us as we opened the portals of the palace. A small mandapa in white was located close by. A drizzle started as we heard a sound behind us. A caretaker had silently moved in and was opening the main door for us. We were the only visitors. As we soaked in the moment, we were given a capsule of history.

During one of the wars with Tipu Sultan, Dodda Veerarajendra, one of the Haleri kings had to retreat and he came to this dense forest. He converted it as an operation base and built a palace and even got married here. This palace was the final refuge of the last king, Chikkaveerarajendra before he was deposed by the British and it symbolised the end of the Haleri dynasty. The caretaker showed us around as we climbed a small ladder, saw the hidden chamber in the roof, the torture room, the royal bedrooms and the main durbar. And yet, as you look at this exquisite humble dwelling in the woods, you wonder if it could have been a battlefield.

Iguthuppa temple: It was misty as we climbed a small hilltop to the Padi Iguthuppa temple in Kakkabe. A group of Kodava women entered and spoke with the priest Kush Bhat who welcomed us and insisted that we stay over for lunch. “No one comes to the Iguthuppa temple and goes away without eating lunch”, he said. He explained that Iguthuppa means giver of food and the deity is a form of Subramanya or Muruga, son of Shiva. Iguthuppa means giver of food and the deity is a form of Subramanya or Muruga, son of Shiva.

“Close your eyes and ask Iguthuppa whatever you want. If you have faith, you will get the same”, said Kush Bhatt adding that centuries ago, Shiva and Subramanya came here and loved the hills so much that they decided to settle down here. The temple is known to feed anyone who comes here and all pilgrims offered food, not just money to the deity. “Iguthuppa told the people of Coorg that you will never go hungry as long as I am here and if you accept me as your God”, explained Kush Bhatt. Some called him a saint; some said he is one of the four brothers who settled in the hills around the area. But despite the legends, every festival of the Kodavas starts with an invocation to Iguthuppa.

I heard about the story of four brothers and a sister who suddenly split after a fight. The sister pleaded with the brothers and one of them reassured her, that he would be around close by although she cannot see or meet him. He then found her a home inside a forest to stay by shooting an arrow into the hills. “The sister’s name is Panagalammai and the brother is none other than Iguthuppa. Even today, you can find the arrow’s mark near her temple”, said a local; as we entered her temple in a forest – a small house houses the deity, surrounded by dense greenery.

The story however doesn’t end here. “Every April, when Panagalammai goes to the river Kakkabe for her ritualistic bath, you will find the hills of Iguthuppa covered in mist. The locals believe that this is Iguthuppa’s way of ensuring his sister doesn’t see him”. During the festival, an umbrella comes from Iguthuppa’s temple to take his sister to the river”. I have seen the umbrella being carried away by such a force that we believe it is possessed. As the deity is placed and taken to the river, the possessed umbrella moves away in such great speed, despite our attempts to catch it. There is then a lot of tribal festivities, but throughout the day, the mist never wears away”, added a local as he went into raptures but I was lost in the forest, dreaming of the myths and legends.

Omkareshwara Temple:

A visit to Madikeri is never complete without a visit to the 19th century Omkareshwar temple built by Lingarajendra II dedicated to Shiva. Built in the Indo-Sarcenic style, it has elements of Gothic and Islamic architecture as well and it is said that there could have been a secret passage below that led to the palace of the king.

The Omkareshwara temple built by Lingarajendra has both Islamic and Gothic styles of architecture. I am always in a fix when I visit Coorg in Karnataka. While my mind wishes to linger in the verdant greenery around me, my feet get all itchy and demand that I explore the heritage, the spiritual and the mystical fabric of this coffee country. If you would like to follow suit, here are three offbeat sites that I would suggest.

According to local legend, the Shivlingam worshipped in the Omkareshwar temple was brought from Varanasi

But I heard that the temple resonated with a tale of a king haunted by a ghost. Our story starts one summer morning when a poor Brahmin comes to Madikeri with the intention of giving his daughter

away to the Raja's harem, as he was unable to take care of her. He, however, changed his mind and left Madikeri after listening to stories about the king from Subarasaiah, another Brahmin who lived in the town. When the king heard about the incident, he mercilessly beheaded Subarasaiah's sons besides slaughtering the Brahmin as well. Lingarajendra went to sleep that night only to be woken up by Subarasaiah staring at him. The visits continued as the king became distraught as the spirit hovered around him. The dead Brahmin had become a demon or a Brahma Rakshasa. Tantriks finally advised the king to build a Shiva temple and bring a linga from Varanasi to appease the demon. The king, however, did not recover fully and died within a year.

A light they say perpetually glows from the sanctum. Even today, I hear, the spirit of the demon roams freely in the sacred grove within the temple premises where the Brahma Rakshasa resides.

Madikeri Fort: Madikeri Fort was first founded by Mudduraja in the second half of the 17th century. He also built a palace inside the fort. It was eventually rebuilt in granite by Tipu Sultan who named the site as Jaffarabad. In 1790, Doddavira Rajendra took control of the fort. The British who added to the fort in 1834. The palace was renovated by Lingarajendra Wodeyar II in 1812-1814. In the north-east corner at the entrance are two life size masonry elephants and a church is present in the south-east corner. Madikeri Deputy Commissioner's Office is located inside the Madikeri Fort premises. The church building houses a museum, which contains several items related to history - mainly the British rule era, and also has a huge portrait of Kodagu's eminent personality Field Marshal K. M. Cariappa. St. Mark's Church is located within the Fort and was raised in 1859, by the officers and men of the East India Company. The building was funded by the Government of Madras and placed under the Church of England in India, Diocese of Madras. The Church was closed after Indian independence, and taken over by the Government of Karnataka in 1971. The building now houses the Madikeri Fort Museum, managed by the Karnataka State Archaeological Department.

Raja's Seat: (Seat of the King) is a seasonal garden of flowers and artificial fountains. It is one of the most important tourist spots in madikeri of Coorg District. It is 270 km away from Bangalore, the capital of Karnataka. A pleasant spectacle of refreshing layers of greenery, chain of high and low-rise-mountains attired with mist, the Raja Garden is one-time-favorites of Kings of Kodagu who used to watch the setting sun, and spend time with their queens here. The structure is small square in brick and mortar of four pillars bridged by arches, enhanced by beautiful surroundings. This lovely spot was a favorite place of recreation for the Rajas and hence was permanently associated with them. It is built on a high level ground with a commanding view of the cliffs and valleys to the west. Early in the morning as the sun is just rising in the east, the mist shrouded valley below offers a rare sight. The golden light of the setting sun is a splendor to watch. There is also an attraction of the Toy Train for children.

Islamic architecture: encompasses a wide range of both secular and religious styles from the foundation of Islam to the present day. What today is known as Islamic architecture owes its origin to similar structures already existing in Roman, Byzantine and Persian lands which the Muslims conquered in the 7th and 8th centuries. Further east, it was also influenced by Chinese and Indian architecture as Islam spread to Southeast Asia. The principal Islamic architectural types are: the Mosque, the Tomb, the Palace and the Fort. From these four types, the vocabulary of Islamic architecture is derived and used for other buildings such as public baths, fountains and domestic architecture.

Many of the buildings which are mentioned in this article are listed as World Heritage Sites. Some of them, like the Citadel of Aleppo, have suffered significant damage in the ongoing Syrian Civil War.

Shiva: Shiva, meaning "The Auspicious One", also known as *Mahadeva* ("Great God"), is one of the three major deities of Hinduism. Shiva is in the form of Vishnu and Brahma yet one with them. He is *Anant*, one who is neither found born nor found dead. He is the Parabrahman within Shaivism, one of the three most influential denominations in contemporary Hinduism. He is one of the five primary forms of God in the Smarta Tradition, and "the Transformer". At the highest level, Shiva is regarded as limitless, transcendent, unchanging and formless. Shiva also has many benevolent and fearsome forms. In benevolent aspects, he is depicted as an omniscient Yogi who lives an ascetic life on Mount Kailash, as well as a householder with wife Parvati and his two children, Ganesha and Kartikeya, and in fierce aspects, he is often depicted slaying demons. Shiva is also regarded as the patron god of yoga and arts.

The main iconographical attributes of Shiva are the third eye on his forehead, the snake Vasuki around his neck, the adorning crescent moon, the holy river Ganga flowing from his matted hair, the trishula as his weapon and the damaru as his musical instrument. Shiva is usually worshiped in the aniconic form of Lingam. The worship of Shiva is a pan-Hindu tradition, practiced widely across all of India, Nepal and Sri Lanka

"Linga" and "Shivling" redirect here. For the mountain, see Shivling (Garhwal Himalaya). For the 2015 film, see Shivalinga (film). For other uses, see Linga (disambiguation) **SHIVAlingam** also *linga, ling, Shiva linga, Shiv ling*, meaning *sign, symbol* or *phallus* is an abstract or aniconic representation of the Hindu deity, Shiva, used for worship in temples, smaller shrines, or as self-manifested natural objects. In traditional Indian society, the linga is rather seen as a symbol of the energy and potential of God, Shiva himself. The lingam is often represented alongside the yoni (Sanskrit word, literally "origin" or "source" or "womb"), a symbol of the goddess or of Shakti, female creative energy. The union of lingam and yoni represents the "indivisible two-in-oneness of male and female, the passive space and active time from which all life originates".

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the capital to Madikeri. Madikeri Fort is today one of the few remnant symbols of this powerful dynasty. It was eventually rebuilt in granite by Tipu Sultan who named the site Jaffarabad. It was recaptured by the Haleri ruler Doddaveer Rajendra in the 18th century and it later fell into the hands of the British who renamed it as Mercara. Today the fort houses a palace, a temple, a chapel, a prison and a museum where you can see hero stones or virakkals among other artifacts. We embarked on the trail of this dynasty.

Further away from the city is Gaddige or the Raja's samadhis, which are the tombs of the kings Doddaveerarajendra and Lingarajendra. A solemn air hung around the deserted tombs. The tombs of the diwans and army commanders were also placed here. We passed a few boys who were playing cricket as we took in the domes and minarets touching the evening sky. So when I revisited the coffee country last time, I decided to soak in a bit of history. We started with Madikeri and ended in Kakkabe where we heard stories that traced the beginning and the end of the Haleri dynasty that ruled Coorg for more than 200 years from the 17th to 19th centuries. We were in Madikeri when we first heard this story. A Haleri king was on a hunting expedition when he suddenly saw his wild dogs chased by a hare in a small hillock. He felt that a powerful energy must vibrate in the village which could turn a meek hare into a courageous beast. The king built a fort there and set up a mud wall garrison. The hamlet, which became the capital of the dynasty, was named after the king, Mudduraja. His dynasty was Haleri and the capital was called Muddu Raja Keri or Muddurakayray. Today, we know it as Madikeri.

A visit to Madikeri is never complete without a visit to the 19th century Omkareshwar temple built by Lingarajendra II. Dedicated to Shiva and built in the Indo-Saracenic style, it has elements of Gothic and Islamic architecture as well. It is said there could have been a secret passage below that led to the palace of the king. I heard that the temple resonated with the tale of a king haunted by a ghost. Our story starts one summer morning when a poor Brahmin comes to Madikeri with the intention of giving his daughter away to the Raja's harem as he was unable to take care of her. He, however, changed his mind and left Madikeri after listening to stories about the king from Subarasaiah, another Brahmin who lived in the town. When the king heard about the incident, he mercilessly beheaded Subarasaiah's sons, besides slaughtering the Brahmin as well. Lingarajendra went to sleep that night only to be woken up by Subarasaiah staring at him. The visits continued. The king became distraught as the spirit hovered around him. The dead Brahmin had become a demon or a Brahma Rakshasa. Tantriks advised the king to build a Shiva temple and bring a linga from Varanasi to appease the demon.

The king, however, did not recover fully and died within a year. A light, it is said, perpetually glows from the sanctum. Even today, I hear, the spirit of the demon roams freely in the sacred grove within the temple premises where the Brahma Rakshasa resides. Our next stop was Virajpet – one of the key towns and erstwhile capital named after Virarajendra, the Haleri king. It is said that Dodda Veerarajendra established the town in the 18th century to commemorate his meeting with the British General Abercrombie during their joint war against Tipu Sultan. We then went in search of a small palace where the Haleri Dyansty came to an end. Our trail ended in a small hamlet called Yavakapadi in Kakkabe where Nalknad Aramane, built by Dodda Veerarajendra in the 18th century, awaited us. There were coffee plantations all around. A small mud road appeared out of nowhere. A beautiful two-storey structure painted in red with a tiled roof, old wall paintings and pillars gazed at us as we opened the portals of the palace. A small mandapa in white was located close by. A drizzle started as we heard a sound behind us. A caretaker had silently moved in and was opening the main door for us. We were the only visitors. As we soaked in the moment, we were given a capsule of history. During one of the wars with Tipu Sultan, Dodda Veerarajendra had to retreat and he came to this dense forest. He converted it

into an operations base and built a palace and even got married here. This palace was the final refuge of the last king, Chikkaveerarajendra before he was deposed by the British and it symbolised the end of the Haleri dynasty.

The caretaker showed us around as we climbed a small ladder, saw the hidden chamber in the roof, the torture room, the royal bedrooms, and the main.durbar. It was ironic that the Haleri kings, who had befriended the British to fight Tipu Sultan, were finally deposed by the Europeans. As we walked back, we saw a few tourists who had just returned from their trek to Thadiyandamol, the highest peak in Coorg. The sun had set as we walked back to our homestay, wondering how this silent monument would have once been a scene of battles fought and won. The beautiful hill station of Coorg has lots to offer in terms of natural beauty as well as historical interests. If you desire equal dosages of both, then this wonderful hill station is your call. Gaddige or more popularly Raja's Tomb is positioned atop a hillock that allows an amazing bird's-eye view of the entire town. The structural-complex is a series of royal tombs belonging to the Kodava dynasty and have depictions of Lord Shiva which separate these Hindu-tombs from the likes of their Muslim counterparts. The monument is typical of the Indo-Saracenic architectural style with domes at the centre and turrets at the corners. Figures of Nandi are carved atop the corners. The central tomb houses the mortal remains of king Doddaveerarajendra and his queen, Mahadeviamma. To the right, lies the tomb of Lingarajendra, built by Chikkaveerarajendra and the left bears Rudrappa's (royal priest) tomb, Close-by these tombs is the burial place of two brave royal officials, Biddanda Bopu and his son Biddanda Somaiah. The bars of the dome-windows are made of brass and embellished with beautiful engravings.

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