

An essay on the origin of the south indian temple

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Before reading The Bhagavad Gita, I knew very little about Hinduism, and I had many misconceptions about this major world religion. Now that I have read this epic poem and visited a Hindu temple, the information I have stored about Hinduism has greatly increased. I now know concepts from how temples are built to what happens in the afterlife of a Hindu. My experience at the Hindu Temple gave me a significantly better understanding of Indian architecture, yoga, dress of gurus, and consciousness.

From the temple, I highly appreciated the detailed architecture associated with each deity in the Hindu temple. Specifically, I was interested the differences between the Garbha Girahs around each of the deities. The representations of Ram-Parivar and Radha-Krishna are surrounded by North Indian architecture, while the architecture of Ayyuppa is originated from South India. Each of these Garbha Girahs have intricate details relating to their sacredness. I was captivated by the patterns and symbols around each of the deities in the temple. The main deity in the temple is Lord Ganesha, and the other deities, located in the Sanctum Sanctorum, include Sri Venkateswara, Padmavathi, Lord Shiva, Parvathi, Subramanya, Navagraha, Swami Ayyappa, Ram Parivar, Amba Matha, and Radha Krishna.

Also, I enjoyed learning about the origins of yoga and how it is connected to Hinduism. Yoga is used for Hindus to escape reincarnation and achieve moksha. Hindu people mainly practice four types of “yoga, meant for the four main types of human temperaments”. The four most common practices of yoga are Karma, Bhakti, Raja, and Jnana. Karma yoga has a focus on conditioning the mind to do good, Bhakti yoga is devoting the self to God, Raja yoga helps one examine the mind, and Jnana yoga is the act of seeing <https://assignbuster.com/an-essay-on-the-origin-of-the-south-indian-temple/>

the image of God in the worldly reality. The religious purpose of yoga is to obtain “ a higher state of consciousness and thereby find supreme knowledge, achieve spiritual autonomy, and realize oneness”. It is interesting how exploring the mind is connected to the afterlife through yoga. Although there are four main types of yoga, many more connected to Hinduism exist and are practiced. For example, “ Ashtanga yoga represents an embodiment of a religio-spiritual practice, which for the dedicated practitioner is an encompassing disciplining of both body and mind”. This illustrates that in Hinduism, achieving one’s dharma looks different for every person, and each person can adapt Hindu practices to align with how they choose to fulfill their dharma.

Something I found interesting was the symbolism in the way the guru dressed. For example, he discussed how his orange robes represented renunciation of all things worldly. This reminded me of in The Bhagavad Gita when Krishna is telling Arjuna that he needs to become independent from earthly things. Also, he had markings on his forehead that had religious meaning. The yellow circle symbolizes the third eye, and his red dot is for the creation and movement.

Importantly, a concept that the guru mentioned several times was how the consciousness is related to everything. Hindu people believe that the Atman is the self in all. In other words, everything in the world is one united by the creator. This is related to how Hindus see God as a generator, creator of all, organizer, maintainer of all, and destroyer, removing of all. These two concepts relate to each other because Krishna is the generator, organizer,

and destroyer of everything, and Atman states that everything is one. Also, the guru emphasized the relationship between dharma and moksha.

Following one's dharma is to act with good morals, making one's soul lighter and able to rise up the caste. By fulfilling this dharma, one can achieve moksha, eternal life and enlightenment.