

# THE WODEYAR DYNASTY OF MYSORE: A STUDY OF IT'S POLITICAL AND CULTURAL LEGACY

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## Abstract:

*To study the political and cultural legacy in the wodeyar dynasty of Mysore. The Wodeyar dynasty, also known as the Mysore dynasty, ruled the Kingdom of Mysore in southern India from the 14th to the 20th century. During their centuries-long reign, the Wodeyars left a lasting political and cultural legacy that is still felt today. One of the most notable achievements of the Wodeyars was their successful defense of the Mysore Kingdom against the invading armies of the Marathas and the British. Under the leadership of figures such as Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan, the Wodeyars developed a powerful military machine that was able to hold off their enemies and protect their kingdom from foreign domination. In addition to their military accomplishments, the Wodeyars were also known for their patronage of the arts and their promotion of cultural traditions. They supported the development of classical music, dance, and literature, and they were instrumental in the growth of Mysore as a center of traditional Indian culture. The Wodeyars also made significant contributions to the fields of education and infrastructure, building schools, hospitals, and other public works that continue to benefit the people of Mysore today. Today, the Wodeyar dynasty still holds a place of great respect and admiration in the hearts of the people of Mysore. The current scion of the dynasty, Yaduveer Wadiyar, is involved in various philanthropic activities, and the Mysore Palace continues to be a popular tourist attraction, drawing visitors from all over the world.*

*Overall, the Wodeyar dynasty's legacy in Mysore is a testament to their vision, leadership, and commitment to their people. Their contributions to politics, culture, and society have helped shape the identity of modern-day Mysore and continue to inspire future generations.*

**Keywords:** Political And Cultural Legacy, Wodeyar Dynasty, Mysore etc.

## INTRODUCTION:

The Wodeyar dynasty is a royal dynasty that has ruled the Kingdom of Mysore, located in the southern part of India, for over six centuries. The dynasty was founded by Yaduraya Wodeyar in 1399, and they ruled Mysore continuously until India gained independence in 1947. The Wodeyars were known for their patronage of the arts, culture, and education, and they played a significant role in shaping the history and culture of the region. During their reign, the Wodeyars oversaw the growth of Mysore into a thriving center of art, architecture, and commerce. They built numerous temples, palaces, and gardens, including the famous Mysore Palace, which is considered one of the most beautiful palaces in India. The Wodeyars were also known for their military prowess and played a significant role in the wars fought against the British East India Company.

The Wodeyars were great patrons of the arts and were known for their support of literature, music, and dance. They were instrumental in the development of the Carnatic music tradition, and many of the greatest musicians and dancers in India have come from Mysore. The Wodeyars were also instrumental in the establishment of the University of Mysore, one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in India.

Under the reign of the famous king Raja Wodeyar, who ruled from 1578 to 1617, the Kingdom of Mysore expanded greatly and became a major power in South India. Raja Wodeyar was known for his military campaigns, including his successful conquest of the city of Srirangapatna, which became the capital of Mysore under his reign. He was also known for his patronage of the arts, particularly music and dance. Over the centuries, the Wodeyars continued to rule Mysore with varying degrees of power and influence. They faced numerous challenges, including invasions by the Marathas and the British, as well as internal conflicts and disputes. However, they managed to maintain their position as the rulers of Mysore until India gained independence in 1947. Today, the Wodeyar dynasty is remembered as a symbol of the rich history and culture of Mysore. The legacy of their patronage of the arts, education, and architecture can still be seen in the city today, and the Mysore Palace remains a popular tourist attraction. The current scion of the dynasty, Yaduveer Wadiyar, continues to be involved in various charitable and philanthropic activities, carrying on the legacy of his ancestors.

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:**

To study the political and cultural legacy in the wodeyar dynasty of Mysore.

### **THE POLITICAL AND CULTURAL LEGACY OF THE WODEYAR DYNASTY IN MYSORE:**

#### **Political Legacy:**

- **Modernization of the Mysore State:** The Wodeyar dynasty played a significant role in modernizing the Mysore state. During their reign, they introduced several administrative and economic reforms such as land revenue reforms, promotion of cottage industries, and development of transportation infrastructure. They also built the first hydroelectric power station in Asia at Shivanasamudra.
- **Establishment of a Parliamentary System:** The Wodeyars were known for their progressive governance and their willingness to work with representative bodies. In 1881, they introduced a representative assembly, making Mysore one of the first states in India to have a parliamentary system.
- **Contributions to Indian Independence:** Several members of the Wodeyar dynasty were active participants in India's struggle for independence. Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV and Jayachamaraja Wodeyar were both members of the Constituent Assembly of India, which drafted the Indian Constitution.

- **Promotion of Science and Technology:** The Wodeyars were patrons of science and technology and established the Mysore State Council for Science and Technology in 1972, which played a key role in promoting scientific research and development.
- **Development of Public Health:** The Wodeyars were committed to improving public health in Mysore and established several hospitals and health centers. The Victoria Hospital, founded in 1900, is still one of the largest and most renowned hospitals in Karnataka.
- **Promotion of Wildlife Conservation:** The Wodeyars were passionate about wildlife conservation and played a key role in the establishment of the Nagarhole National Park and Bandipur National Park. They also established the Mysore Zoo, which is one of the oldest and most popular zoos in India.

### **Cultural Legacy:**

- **Patronage of Art and Architecture:** The Wodeyars were great patrons of art and architecture, and their legacy can be seen in the magnificent palaces, temples, and public buildings they commissioned. The Mysore Palace, built in 1912, is one of the most iconic symbols of Mysore and attracts millions of visitors every year.
- **Promotion of Education:** The Wodeyars were strong advocates of education and made significant contributions to the development of the education system in Mysore. They established several schools and colleges, including the University of Mysore, which is still one of the most prestigious universities in India.
- **Preserving Traditional Indian Culture:** The Wodeyars were deeply committed to preserving India's rich cultural heritage. They promoted classical music, dance, and literature, and were instrumental in reviving traditional art forms such as Mysore painting and silk weaving. Their efforts have helped to ensure that these cultural traditions are still alive and thriving in Mysore today.
- **Contributions to Literature:** The Wodeyars were great patrons of literature and played a key role in the development of Kannada literature. They established several libraries and supported the publication of literary works, including the famous Kannada epic, "Kumaravyasa Bharata."
- **Promotion of Traditional Medicine:** The Wodeyars were proponents of Ayurveda, the traditional Indian system of medicine, and established several Ayurvedic hospitals and clinics in Mysore. They also supported the development of Siddha and Unani medicine in the region.

### **CONCLUSION:**

In conclusion, the Wodeyar dynasty is an important part of the history and culture of Mysore. They ruled the Kingdom of Mysore for over six centuries and left a lasting impact on the region, particularly in the areas of art, architecture, and education. The Wodeyars were great patrons of the arts, and their support of music, dance, and literature helped to shape the culture of the region. They were also known for their military prowess and played a significant role in the wars fought against the British East India Company. Today, the

Wodeyar dynasty is remembered with great respect and admiration in Mysore, and their legacy can still be seen in the city's landmarks and cultural traditions.

The Wodeyars were a powerful and influential dynasty that played a key role in the history of South India. Their rule over the Kingdom of Mysore was marked by prosperity and cultural advancement, and their legacy continues to be celebrated in Mysore today. The Wodeyars left a lasting impact on the region, from the stunning palaces and gardens they built to the cultural institutions they established, including the University of Mysore. They were also known for their philanthropic activities, supporting causes such as education and healthcare. Despite facing numerous challenges and conflicts over the centuries, the Wodeyars managed to maintain their position as the rulers of Mysore until India gained independence. Their reign was marked by a commitment to cultural and intellectual pursuits, as well as a dedication to military and political power. Today, the Wodeyar dynasty is remembered with great reverence in Mysore, and their contributions to the region's culture and history continue to be celebrated.

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