Chapter 3
Tipu Sultan: Tyrant versus Martyr

The very discourse of history has now begun to show signs of self-reflexivity, if not rupture or dissipation. History of some national, regional heroes is constantly rebuilt through legend-making and selective arbitrary iconization or idealisation of the secular (as against the sacred) past. Here, literature becomes an enabling medium to critically redefine these nationalist icons, liberating us from intimidating epic expectations. Contemporary literary writings defy any simplistic formulations bringing in a re-interpretation and reformation by looking into the varied and complex narratives. It can reach parts of our understandings that history and hagiography alone cannot. Tipu Sultan, the legendary warrior from the nationalist historical past is also seen as a construction of two sources of Indian past – the historical ones as received in printed narratives and the hagiographical ones as in oral folklore. Before Tipu Sultan’s literary reconstructions are critically assessed in terms of their negotiation of the historical and the hagiographical narratives, it is pertinent to have a detailed view of such narratives.

Tipu in Hagiographical Imagination

The people of Mysore hailed Tipu Sultan as a martyr who upheld the freedom and honour of his people and the land of his birth. As the ruler of his kingdom, Tipu had two passions in life, one, the mission to liberate his land and his people from the foreign rule and the other was his vision to make his state progressive and prosperous. His reforming zeal touched almost every department of life including banking, finance, calendar, revenue, judiciary, army, social customs and cultural affairs. To mention in words of Sheikh Ali:

Italy had Renaissance, Germany had Reformation and France had Revolution, but India had Tipu who combined all those three concepts. (qtd in Ray 45)
A lot has come down to us since generations regarding the meaning and origin of Tipu’s name. Attempts were made by scholars to identify Tipu with one of his favourite symbol, the tiger. They held that Tipu in Kannada meant tiger or more vaguely in conjunction with the word ‘Sultan’ it meant ‘monarch of the woods’- tiger again. However to this Bowring points out that the Kannada word for tiger is in fact ‘huli’ and not Tipu. Then Wilks trying to settle the question on the meaning of Tipu’s name emphasised that the saint himself assumed the royal designation of ‘Sultan’ or ‘Shah’ and that Tipu Sultan was taken in one piece. To add to all this comes up another belief bearing hagiographical connotations and is supported by several historians and scholars of his times as well as the present ones. They held that ‘Tipu Sultan’ was given this name even before his birth. He is said to have been named ‘Tipu Sultan’ after a great Sufi Saint Tipu Mastan Auliya, whose tomb in Arcot was visited by the prospective parents – Hyder Ali Khan and Fakrun-nissa to pray for the birth of a son.

The legend goes that when Fakrun-nissa wished that her sons should not die in the battlefield, the prophesier agreed to it by taking a promise for her first son (later brought up as Tipu Sultan) who should be consecrated in God’s service; ‘Let him serve god and none else!’ (Strandberg 30). Now the parents knew the destiny of their son who is to be brought up in the service of god and that he will be a Sultan not in temporal or earthly sense but in matters of spirit. To fulfill their solemn promise of preparing Tipu to go into the priestly order and pass his life in prayer and meditation, they arranged for imparting religious education to Tipu. Time and again in Gidwani’s novel The Sword of Tipu Sultan Tipu’s mother evinces her constant awareness of her son being promised to god and to live a life of saint as the parents are seen discussing, “how do we prepare our son for his appointed destiny?” When Tipu begins learning military arts, Fakhrun-nissa reminds Hyder: “a holy man does not need to learn military arts!’ and adding to it she says, ‘he is to be a soldier of god and none else, or have you forgotten it?” (72). And yet again Hyder speaks to his wife;

Well, Tipu can be yours for God’s service; make a priest of him, if you will. Karim will be mine and, God willing, he shall be the greatest warrior on earth, a conqueror, a emperor, who knows! (77)
So the parents had planned a saintly future for Tipu, though it was only in the later years when his brother Karim was declared medically unfit and retarded (unsuitable to rule the kingdom) that Tipu had to venture into the military order and assist his father Hyder. Deemed as a gift from god, his position was held to be divinely ordained. And even as Shahanshah or king of kings he was taken as the highest manifestation of sovereignty by the people of his kingdom. Tipu who was to be in the service of God later became a valiant warrior, worthy leader of his men. He is said to have practised what he preached – piety, tolerance, brotherhood and his religious policy emphatically pronouncing genuine secularism.

Seringapatnam ballads composed and narrated by the people, who the Sultan loved and served, vividly narrate the self-denying deeds of Tipu and many other brave men in his service. They extol the sacrifices made by Tipu Sultan on the war against the imperial forces. Bernard Wycliffe published The Musalman’s Lament over the Body of Tipu Sultan written (on the spot where he fell) in August 1823. An extract from the same is quoted here:

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thou hast to thy warrior bed
Sunk like that burning sun,
Whose brightest, fiercest rays are shed
When his race is nearest done,
Where death Fires flashed and sabres rang,
And quickest sped the parting breath,
Thou from a life of empire sprang
To meet a soldier’s death. (qtd. in Dhar 328)
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The poet is able to speak well for Tipu’s determination to resist and fight for his people selflessly and bravely. For the sake of his empire, justice and truth he stood up to tyranny and attained a soldier’s death fearlessly. By drawing a comparison between Tipu and the burning sun, the poetic lines intend to reveal the great warrior’s display of energy and hope until his last moments. Yet another stirring refrain from the same ballad is worth noticing:

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Allah! ’tis better thus to die
With war clouds hanging redly over us
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Than to live a life of infamy
With years of grief and shame before us. (330)

Undoubtedly, British had never confronted more formidable an enemy, one who preferred death to dishonour. The lines reveal Tipu’s willingness and readiness to sacrifice himself and be a martyr than a coward to give up freedom and happiness. He considered death rather as a kind of awakening. Tipu was recognisably himself, a brave man who had never fallen short of his aspirations, courage and dreams of a united, independent and prosperous state. “If I die, I shall die only in my body, while my spirit shall remain alive, vibrating with hope” (343, Gidwani). He was firmly hopeful that the day will dawn and the spirit of India will awake to free itself from the bondages of all kinds. Though, to the British he was a tyrant, an Islamic bigot, but for his own people he was considered a ‘shahid’ who had fallen while resisting the infidels. And later this thought became mingled with nationalism as Tipu took on the mantle of a martyr dying for the cause of the nation.

Another folk ballad titled *The Dirge of Tippoo Sultaun, from the Canara* (qtd. in Dhar 331) brings out his aura of universal kingship. Describing ‘How quickly fled our Sultan’s state!’, it reveals the gloominess and darkness that surrounded his kingdom and its people after ‘Their martial pride has passed away’. To further image up the chaos and mourning that followed Tipu’s death here is the eye-witness account of his funeral procession that was carried out by the British in a grand manner:

The streets through which the procession passed, were lined with inhabitants; many of whom prostrated themselves before the body, and expressed their grief with loud lamentations. (Brittlebank 9)

The day following Tipu’s death in the fortress offered a frightening sight with death, destruction, suffering and smouldering fires over loot. With the end of their Sultan’s life the people too experienced a recession and hollowness within. Both when he was living and even after he attained martyrdom, his subjects, commanders and administrators depicted a deep sense of respect, faith and devotion for their Sultan. To quote from an elegiac verse composed by Musalmans on the great hero:

His heart was ever bent on religious warfare, and at length he obtained
the crown of martyrdom, even as he desired
Ah! at the destruction of this prince and of his kingdom.
Let the world shed tears of blood.
For him, the sun and the moon shares equally in grief.
The heavens were turned upside down and the earth darkened....
For the light of the religion of Islam has departed from this world! (Fernandes 196)

The words of the poet were not merely poetical fancy. Almost immediately after Tipu was buried, the solemnity of the ceremony was enhanced by terrific claps of thunder which burst over the island of Seringapatnam. Thunder, lighting and rain continued their violence for several hours and several lives were lost. The skies darkened and the very heavens wept. The fall of Seringapatnam and the death of their Sultan along with complete breakdown of law and order and the collapse of administration struck fear and terror in the minds of the people.

The poems and ballads written on Tipu’s heroic deeds after he attained ‘shadadat’ (martyrdom) reflect the aspirations and the suppressed anger of the people against the inimical forces who came from across the sea. Such poems bring out the shattering of people’s beliefs and hopes for freedom and a peaceful living. Tipu’s admirers call him the light of their faith and held that the ‘flame is quenched’ with the ‘martyr’s glorious wreath’ (qtd. in Dhar 328). Tittles associated frequently to Tipu such as ‘Padshah’, ‘Sultan’, ‘Khudadad Sirkar’, emphasise the emperor’s superiority with due reverence to his sovereignty. Another such royal title popularly related to Tipu by his people was ‘zill-i-ilahi’ meaning shadow of God. They had great faith in his kingship and knew that a man with lesser courage and pride would have willingly compromised perhaps salvaged his kingdom under the British umbrella as so many other native princes has done. When the British for diplomatic purposes offered Tipu to join forces with them and attack the other provinces, Tipu categorically refused to accept the role of a vassal of the company. Infact he left no stone unturned to warn the other Indian rulers that unless they reverse their short-sighted policy of aligning themselves with the English, nemesis would overtake them sooner or later. According to Dodwell what really brought about his downfall were Tipu’s own personal qualities – his bold spirit, persistent and unwavering
hostility towards the British. He further says, “a less resolute and adventurous ruler might well have saved his throne and dynasty” (219).

The Sultan’s legend and stories about his feats started circulating increasingly in his military carrier where he was always seen as a great warrior. Tipu’s human treatment of his enemies was taken as a source of consolation by the captured ones. As related by some writers, while assisting his father in the campaign at Balam, Tipu discovered where the poligar’s ladies and children lay concealed and captured them. Later after defeating the enemy, when asked by Hyder to demand for his prize, he wished for the release of the incarcerated people. Seeing Tipu’s generosity, the Balam king said to Tipu, “For your father I bowed out of fear, for you Tipu I bow out of respect” (Strandberg 38).

At another instance having conquered a fort after fierce battle, Tipu instantly released all the prisoners in honour of his patron saint whose birthday fell on the day of capture. This incident gets acknowledged by Colonel Humberstone who too was aware of Tipu’s benevolent nature. He recalls many instances in which Tipu though sworn enemy he was of British, had filled British pockets and warmed British hearts with magnificent gifts¹. Circulation of such stories enabled the legend of Tipu Sultan to occupy firm roots in the shaping of his hagiography. Tipu’s treatment of the prisoners of war was fair enough and was widely acknowledged. The British commanders too heard of Tipu’s chivalry, his courage in the battle, his patriotism and his gentleness towards the prisoners and the wounded. Purnaiya mentions:

None, he knew, would believe that his sovereign would kill a war prisoner to whom he had promised safe conduct. Such was his code of conduct; even his worst enemies knew of it and relied on it. (Gidwani 180)

Tipu’s legend was fast growing when he kept warring against the cause of the nation. His idea of kingship seems not to be of a tyrant, fanatic ruler rather one who is human and know how to forgive. Fernandes informs on how Tipu aimed to be a real ruler following the theory of kingship of ancient India, according to which the purpose of the government was to establish order. The king as the head of the government was its first servant and ultimately dependent on the suffrage of his subjects. It was his distinction and in the end his tragedy that he almost alone of all Indian rulers never lent himself to any such system
of masked government and never entered into any form of alliance which could possibly compel the independence of Mysore.

All his life Tipu yearned for peaceful existence. Gidwani depicts him to be a ‘soul in torment’ who dreamt and hoped of eternal joy and bliss. He experienced an unresolvable conflict regarding his nature of actions as he mentions, “My mind is in turmoil”. “I must silence the doubts that assail my heart.” (Gidwani 161). Questions regarding his duties and responsibilities kept hovering upon his mind and caused great discontent to his soul.

Why? Why? Why do I have to fight? Why do I have to go to wars? he kept on asking himself. Why am I a prisoner of destiny unknown? (Gidwani 108)

Is the call to arms mightier than the call to prayer? Is the battlefield more important than the shrine of a saint? (Gidwani 156)

Tipu Sultan on one hand desired to pursue his spiritual destiny through renunciation, and on the other hand his patriotic fervour was asking him to fight the rapacious alien enemy who was out to disrobe and dishonour the nation. It was only after unburdening his troubled soul to one of his religious tutor, that his mind began to resolve and he utters to himself: “For the sake of an ideal, for justice and truth, for the freedom and happiness of his people, he must stand up to tyranny and face pain and death” (Gidwani 165). Finally, identifying himself with the emerging hopes and aspirations of several Indians, Tipu was ready to fight and endure. It seemed that the breath of nationalism had entered into his soul. And in the decades that followed, there were others too who appeared on Indian national scene with magnificent feats of heroism and valour, but Tipu was the first to identify himself with the Indian souls. He asked his subjects to instil a similar sense of patriotism and nationalism. At the siege of Seringapatnam in 1799, he knew that his death/defeat was certain. Thought flashed his mind; if he should turn back and save himself escaping through the gates that were still open, but he finally decided to struggle and fight due to his belief that ‘Nation is greater than the greatest of us all’ (Gidwani 338). As Kirmani puts it:

To be concise, when the storming party firing furiously as they advanced, arrived near the Sultan, he, courageously as a lion, attacked them with the greatest bravery, and although the place where he stood was very narrow and confined, he
still with his matchlock and his sword killed two or three of the enemy, but at length having received several mortal wounds in the face, he drank the cup of martyrdom. (127-8)

Such was the spirit of this great man. Definitely, the English had never been confronted in India a more resolute and fierce contender than Tipu Sultan, whose life-passion was to remove the British from India. And this passion was so much an obsession with him that even his dreams, which he recorded, were nothing but his bloody encounters with the English. Tipu realised that a country without freedom was conceivable only as country bereft of soul. He preferred to die while fighting for one’s nation rather than salvaging it to the imperialist powers. Tipu considered the sacrifice of his life insignificant if it could help in the process of restoration of this nation. Appreciating Tipu’s efforts B. Sheikh Ali states:

Tipu was a martyr to the cause of Indian independence. He laid down his life defending his country against the ambitious and unscrupulous foreigners. He was the only Indian prince who so consistently opposed the British. His unity of purpose, independence of thought and consistency of action had annoyed the company. (322)

Further in Gidwani’s work, his administrator Purnaiya points out looking at the greatness of his Sultan and his intention to serve the nation’s cause:

The world will remember that there lived a King like Tipu Sultan in the shameful period of India’s history who alone and unaided challenged the might of the English. This will be the immortal memory that Tipu Sultan will have imprinted on the ages to come. (297)

Tipu’s kingly behaviour seems to emanate from his religious education. Qualities of tolerance, prayer, devotion, doctrine of salvation were instilled in the young pupil. Consequently the breath of nationalism, intellectual vision, sense of justice and fair play which Tipu displayed later in his life was due to his religious mentors. His religious inclination is also evinced when in Gidwani’s work Ghazi Khan, his military instructor is seen bothered by Tipu’s saintly inclination and tells Hyder about it:

When he wins a race, politely he waits for the opponent to reach the goal... When he loses, he smiles and congratulates the adversary... winning or losing a game
seems nothing to him...the Sultan declined to shoot at birds saying that he would not shoot at a living target. (93)

Another incident illustrative of Tipu’s interest in religion and concern for his subjects was a visit made to Tipu by a learned Maulvi from Muscat. The Maulvi after receiving donation for building a mosque and also 1000 pagodas as personal gift, tries to impress upon Tipu not to support his Hindu subjects. But Tipu explains him that all the people of his kingdom were equal before him and that power was not a higher goal than unity. He further explained his conduct in light of Quran and then they parted². Tipu Sultan had a deep regard for both his Hindu and Muslim subjects and treated them at par. Mahatma Gandhi too describes him to be ‘an embodiment of Hindu-Muslim Unity’ (qtd. in Moeinuddin 1).

Furthermore, Brittlebank’s analysis reveals how eighteen century religious beliefs were predominantly synergetic and influenced by both Sufism and goddess worship of the region. The society in which Tipu moved was within Islamic martial tradition and was also once a part of great Hindu empire of Vijayanagara and its Nayaka successors. Tipu’s adoption of tiger image and sun with radiating rays has religious connotations as well. Image of sun on his flags seemed radiating some form of divine power by the ruler. The tiger image is also taken as a sign of power that becomes synonymous with the power of the gods. The Sultan was in a habit of consulting both Hindu and Muslim astrologers which were further governed by auspicious/inauspicious days³. An account of Tipu’s correspondence with the Jagadguru Math is worth noticing. The incident reveals the respect he held for Hindu religion and his instant protection of its interest. Tipu being remembered in the daily puja of Yoganarasimha Swamy temple, Melkote with the words ‘Tipu Sultan ka Salam’ depicts their gesture of gratitude towards him.

It was not only that Tipu received everyone with open arms irrespective of their religion; his people too displayed equal reverence and love for him. In an incident when Tipu’s effigy was being burnt by the British, Muslims urged that it was their prophet of Islam being burnt while the Hindu’s identified the effigy with their own god. And to note, a British responded to this incident by saying to his son, ‘I fear my son, they are trying to burn Jesus Christ’ (Gidwani 170). Tipu being compared to gods of all the religions highlights upon the Sultan’s floating saintly image⁴.
Tipu’s image as the ‘Tiger of Mysore’ is seen largely hagiographical formation. Certainly the most resplendent of Tipu’s tiger object was his great throne made of wood, covered with gold and incised all over with tiger stripes. Another was the mechanical toy brought by Tipu for his son though it was later captured by the British after Tipu’s death. The mechanical toy represented a royal and roaring tiger in the act of devouring a defenceless groaning British soldier lying prone on the ground. The attributes of a tiger as brave, courageous, bold, enterprising, daring has been frequently allotted to Tipu Sultan by his own people and the British as well. And in years that followed his death, this image featured predominantly with the poets, chroniclers and even the historians. On his weapons was inscribed ‘the loin of God’ which was marked as a sign to honour Ali who was titled ‘loin of God’ signifying valour by Prophet Mohammad, an interpretation that comes from H.D. Sharma. A legendary Huma bird seen on Tipu’s canopy was another device that added to the legendary image of Tipu.

Fighting the freedom struggle and dying for the spirit of independence, Tipu Sultan became a martyr and later Colonel Wellesley makes a conscious remark to his friend on Tipu’s martyrdom: “I fear, my friend, that Tipu’s memory will live long after the world has ceased to remember you and me” (Gidwani 323). When during the last Anglo-Mysore war, Raja Khan insists the warrior Tipu to reveal his identity to the British and save his life from death, Tipu refused to submit himself to imperialism. Although the motive to malign him continued, however attempts were made by scholars like Surendranath Sen and Dodwell to make a rational consideration of the Sultan’s carrier that show him not to be a bigoted tyrant but an active, enterprising man who confronted and moved in a world in which new forces had recently let loose. He was without doubt one of the most able and energetic rulers of 18th century India. They believe that Tipu’s failure was the outcome of the forces beyond his control and also due to his personal traits. He lacked the shrewdness and tactness of the British. Though he was dynamic and courageous with bold designs but was not well executed and planned. However his downfall does not lessen the importance of his policies. He was always zealous and devoted to the cause of freedom for which he tried his utmost mustering up all resources, seeking foreign help and negotiating alliances. The engravings on Tipu’s tombstone depict the helplessness and shattered hopes of many who revered him as a divine soul:
The light of Islam and the Faith left this world.
Tippu became a martyr for the faith of Mohamed.
The sword was lost.
The offspring of Hyder was a great martyr. (qtd. in Fernandes 196)

In words of B. Sheikh Ali,

Tipu dead became more immortal than Tipu alive, for he left the message that to live like a tiger for a day was far better than to live like a jackal for a hundred years. (328-9)

II

Tipu in Historical Imagination

Much material evidence about the real history of Tipu Sultan and patriots of his ilk slipped into the limbo of oblivion. The conflicting views of British, French and native authorities on Tipu Sultan makes it difficult to form an absolutely correct historical estimate of his life and career. During his lifetime Tipu was a topic of unfading interest to his contemporaries which compelled the historians to undertake more painstaking research into the history of 18th century Mysore. The exposition of the events and the material on which the historians had to lean were so loaded with preconceptions and prejudices that the rule of Tipu still remains a matter of interest to the historians.

G.N.Dhar in his memoirs maintains that Tipu Sultan displayed his heroism at the age of eighteen while assisting his father, Haider Ali and had bold, selfless solitude for freedom from foreign yoke and love for his people. But despite his indomitable courage and spirit of self immolation for the cause of the freedom, he received with rampart misrepresentation at the hands of some chroniclers. However, contrary to this formulation, Ravi Varma observes that there is a concerted attempt to distort and falsify recorded Indian history to project the fanatic Tipu as a liberal and magnanimous Muslim king. For H.D. Sharma, he is neither an important Indian ruler who fought the British nor a nationalist by any stretch of imagination, rather he believes that it was only because Tipu gave the English their first shock that he became notorious and passed into a legend. He describes that the loot and plunder which followed the fall of Seringapatnam resulted
Thus, it is difficult to form an accurate estimate of the character of Tipu Sultan because the divergent views of contemporary writers, whether English or Muhammadan, seems irreconcilable. While Sharma believes that the role of Tipu (who was fighting only for himself and not for the nation) has been vastly exaggerated though for different reasons, both by the English and some Indian writers; Habib on the contrary holds him a martyr whom the English historians employed to hide British inequity and intrigue. Furthermore he adds that the accounts of Wilks and Bowring on the history of Mysore have done incalculable harm to the carrier and personality of Tipu Sultan, one of the great Indian warriors. But we find similar feelings of misrepresenting the narratives expressed by writers of contradicting view. Bowring mentions of Tipu’s overweening confidence over his generalship and knowledge of tactics that brought his downfall and defeat. He accuses Tipu of duplicity, being a bigot and of ferocious character. He says that “Tipu deemed women of little account with the sole exception of his mother whose influence over him was great” (217).

In the final siege Tipu was unable to halt the advances of the English and amidst the imminent peril he took recourse to prayers and incantations and consulted the astrologers both Muslim and Hindu to avert the impending doom. Wilks make fun of the fact that before Tipu made his last stand at Seringapatnam “moola and the bramin were equally bribed! to interpose their prayers for his deliverance” (qtd in Habib xxvi). Habib finding his remark to be unfair reacts:

What Wilks cannot see is that for Tipu there was no contradiction in his belief in the efficacy of both Muslim and Hindu prayers, as just as there was no logical conflict for him in his making a divinely-conferred government (sarkar-i-khudadad) support brahmans and shastris. (xxvi)

There seems to be a difference of opinion on Tipu’s religious policy. Some try to render him as a secular ruler while there are others equally vehement asserting that he was a cruel Islamic zealot who converted the Hindus and the Christians to Islam. The truth behind these assertions is hard to reach because the evidences produced by both the beliefs are equally convincing and deemed factual.
Kirmani portrays Tipu as one who had developed great aversion to the Brahmins, the Hindus and other tribes, and considered only the people of Islam to be his friends with his chief aim being only to promote and provide for them. H.D. Sharma asserts that Tipu employed Hindu officials in his service only out of necessity as the Hindus were better educated and orderly than his Muslim counterpart. Further mentioning two dreams that were recorded by Tipu, he interprets that the Sultan was never able to forget his duty towards his religion and the holy war and that his disposition was evidently cruel. However Habib does not consider this view as rightly interpreted and reports that Tipu’s dreams reveals of his desire to expel the British infidels out of the country. The charge against Tipu of being cruel to his Hindu subjects does not cease, as Sharma further documents a letter dated 14th December, 1788 which is said to be written by Tipu to his army commander in Calicut:

I am sending two of my followers with Mir Hussein Ali. Along with them you should capture and kill all Hindus. Those below 20 years may be kept in prison and 5000 from the rest should be killed by hanging from tree tops. These are my orders. (Ill)

Even Bowring does not make any favourable remark on Tipu in this context. He states that “he signalised his zeal for the faith of Islam by driving out of the coast region no fewer than 30,000 of its Christian inhabitants, who were forcibly deported into Mysore” (125). Here George M. Moraes, a contributor to Habib’s account comes to Tipu’s rescue, pointing out that the Mysore rulers had confirmed the Christians of his dominion in the enjoyment of all time honoured privileges. But taking advantage of Haider Ali’s death, the English landed in Kanara under General Matthews and borrowed rupees 33,000 from Karnese Christians. This provoked the wrath of Tipu and he accused them of being principally responsible for the ease with which the English conquered this part of his kingdom – acting as guides and facilitating communication. Habib and Moeinuddin denied the accusations made on Tipu, believed him to be a defender of Hindu dharma, one who considered his Hindu-Muslim subjects with equal faith and sympathy and took great care to preserve them”. They substantiate the argument detailing upon the numerous gifts and aids that he afforded to several Hindu temples. And further discuss on his genuine concern for the prosperity of one of the most celebrated religious centre in India,
Sringeri Math. The letters of correspondence between the Sultan and the Jagadguru of Sringeri Math delineate Tipu to be a genuine sovereign and secular leader who took prompt measures to resuscitate the Sharda idol which was eclipsed by political calamity.

Though Bowring, Wilks and the writers of the anthology published by Voice of India, admit to this correspondence taking place between the two, they argue that the conduct was inspired by the impending doom and his desperate attempt to avert it. For them, it is an act of superstition and no religious reverence. But countering this, Moienuddin and Sheikh Ali also consider that these letters of correspondence shed light on Tipu’s generosity who requested the Jagadguru to pray for the welfare and prosperity of his kingdom and the destruction of his foes. Variety of conflicting accounts enables us to receive an authentic and lucid picture of Tipu’s historical past. Kate Brittlebank’s analysis also runs contrary to the remarks made by Wilks and Kirkpatrick in their attempt to defame Tipu. Brittlebank mentions that Islam and Hinduism in eighteenth century India rather being religions in conflict survived in harmony with each other. The religious environment was syncretic in nature, with common perceptions of sacred power held by Hindus and Muslims alike.

Tipu’s action of punishing rebels in Coorg and Malabar by forced conversions became the basis for interesting allegations against him. Wilks accuses him of having wantonly destroyed the Hindu temples and that Tipu oppressed and insulted his Hindu subjects. Rao’s account too conveys that Tipu employed all means of truth or falsehood, fraud or force to effect their universal conversion. And some Hindu fundamentalists described it as ‘nightmarish’ which had completely shaken their sense of security. H.D.Sharma quotes Bartolomaco’s account depicting Tipu’s atrocities in Malabar:

That barbarian Tipu Sultan tied the naked Christians and Hindus to the legs of elephants and made the elephants to move around till the bodies of the helpless victims were torn to pieces. Temples and churches were ordered to be burnt down, desecrated and destroyed. (118)

But again offering a different portrayal, and making Tipu’s past complex, several other writers dwell upon reasons to justify Tipu’s invasion in Malabar and Coorg. They refuse to accept the accounts of these writers calling it an exaggeration of their estimation of the Sultan’s actions. Gholam Mohammad reveals how the Nairs and Coorgis had rebelled
against the Sultan by refusing to pay the revenue due to Mysore government. Another
point of defence is stated by Sheikh Ali that the Nairs were constantly seeking the
support of the English against him and therefore peace in the area was frequently
disturbed by Tipu's anxiety to consolidate his hold over his possessions. Furthermore,
Tipu issued a proclamation, prohibiting the custom of free love, polyandry and half
nakedness of women prevalent in Malabar region, and threatened the defaulters and the
rebels with compulsory conversion to Islam. At this the Nairs with their rebellious spirit
refused to submit calling it Sultan's fanaticism. Trying to reform the pestilential customs
of the province, he lectured the Coorgis on the inequity of their custom of polyandry and
instructed them to desist it. It seems that Tipu was much misunderstood for his intention
to bring out a civilized and more cultured society when we read the words of another
historian K.N. Panikkar:

> It was not religious bigotry that made Tipu issue this amazing proclamation. He
> was firmly convinced that in asking the Nairs to give up what he called their
> obscene habits, he was undertaking a mission of civilisation. It is the narrow
> reformer's mind anxious for moral and material welfare of the people and not the
> fanaticism of the begot desirous of converting the Kafir, that speaks in his
> proclamation. (qtd in Fernandes 114)

Ostensible ground for another war was found by British when Tipu attacked
Travancore Lines, partly on the basis that the ruler of Travancore has purchased two forts
(which were part of Tipu's territory) from the Dutch without his consent. Even Lord
Cornwallis, the then Governor-General wrote to the ruler of Travancore, though an ally
to them, strongly disapproving of his conduct. Bowring states that Tipu desecrated and
despoiled the temples, burned towns and villages, inflicting severe cruelties upon the
inhabitants. But contrary to this, Irfan Habib considers that the activities of the ruler of
Travancore were provocative. He gave free passage to English troops through
Travancore to attack the French port of Mahe (which was under Tipu's protection) and
offended him by helping the English during the second Anglo-Mysore. He further
afforded protection to the rebellious chieftains of Malabar. The memoirs of Dhar account
for a long debate that took place in the house of the commons and one of its argument
stated:
In defence of Tippoo’s conduct it might likewise be fairly argued, that it was impossible for him, as Sultan of Mysore, to behold with indifference the transfer of these forts to the Raja. (27)

Sheikh Ali and Irfan Habib consider that in the third Anglo-Mysore war the toils were being closely woven around the tiger who despite offering resistance had to at last make repeated overtures for reconciliation. Payment of three million rupees as war indemnity to the British compelled Tipu to impose three times the tax on his subjects. Bowring comments that this imposition was disastrous in the extreme and greatly impoverished the country. Habib on the contrary points that this extraction did not annoy his subjects. Rather the oppression that naturally resulted from the harsh terms of the treaty became another excuse for the demonising of Tipu by the very same British who forced him to this extremity.

After the humiliating treaty Tipu was brooding over the heavy losses as his resources were crippled and treasury emptied, troops dispersed and artillery wrecked. Local and foreign trade collapsed and people were reduced to poverty. The years 1792-99 were then spent in repairing the ravages of war. With his anxiety to introduce modern technology and a desire for innovation, he attempted at certain administrative reforms and also at improving the military, navy, commerce and trade through foreign aid. Tipu went on changing the names of places, weights, measures, calendar, issuing new coinage and also trying to alter the outworn customs of society like prohibiting sale of liquor. We are told by Fernandes that after Tipu’s death his progressive ideas were adopted by the British in their future governance of India, thereby paying tribute to the great reformer though unintentionally.

Bowring accounts that Tipu’s administration fell into the hands of his subordinates because of his frequent wars and his absence from his capital which arose the want of proper supervision and lead to numerous exactions and consequent discontent. For Sharma Tipu pretended to have made sweeping changes in the departments of revenue and trade. Looking at the accounts of Moienuddin, Fernandes, Habib and Sheikh Ali we find a different story altogether. They held him as an enlightened and modern ruler, who having the wisdom to adopt all that was good from the west such as industrial technology, was eager to learn by experiment. In the words of
Dodwell, “He was the first Indian sovereign to seek to apply Western methods to his administration” (216). He realised that agriculture is the backbone of the nation and issued a number of proclamations for its progress. Removal of intermediaries and replacing the ‘sowcars’ with paid revenue officials and also the zamidari system with ryotwari system were some of the highly appreciable measures adopted by him. His genius was acknowledged also by Major Dhrom, a scholar who travelled in Tipu’s kingdom:

...his country was found everywhere full of inhabitants and apparently cultivated to the utmost extent of which the soil was capable....His government though strict and arbitrary, was the despotism of a politic and able sovereign, who nourishes, not oppresses the subjects... (qtd. in Moeinuddin xi)

The release of prisoners was yet another sore point between the two powers and is debated upon till date by the historians. Though the English after the treaty of Mangalore claimed that all the prisoners were not released, the Sultan asserted that he had none with him. There had been a lot of controversy regarding the treatment of prisoners by Tipu Sultan. According to Bowring, the indignation against the Sultan is enhanced by the miserable state of the prisoners who fell in his hands and the punishment received by them were nearly dreadful. He writes that in the second Mysore war, Baille, Braithwaite and Matthews were taken prisoners and fettered to Seringapatnam, where “Matthews was constrained by starvation to eat poisoned food, of which he died” (123). Bowring’s view is also supported by G.N.Dhar in his memoirs. However the authenticity of the so called “Authentic Memoirs of Tippoo Sultan” is doubted and comes under scrutiny when we also look at the versions provided by others such as Samuel Standberg, Sheikh Ali and Rao. Standberg points that, “Contrary to the blackening that Tipu was subjected to, there are several accounts that indicate that Tipu, for his time, had a very humane attitude to prisoners of war” (27). He adds that “the fact that they survived a long period of captivity is an indication that they were not treated too badly” (26).

Tipu had been criticised for his conduct at the campaign of Bednur by Bowring, Sharma and Wilks who consider his infraction of the terms of capitulation and imprisonment of Colonel Matthews to be inhuman. But Sheikh Ali believes that the embezzlement of the treasure found in Bednur and the wanton behaviour of the troops
who stormed some places of his country provoked Tipu to this demeanour. This account is also maintained by Rao and Gholam Mohammad. It is asserted that Tipu was also urged for this action owing to a detachment of Matthews’ force which had cruelly put the inhabitants of Anantpur to death. G.N. Dhar’s memoirs too accuse Matthews for this massacre, where cruelties, slaughter, rapine and avarice were inflicted upon the innocent, and furthermore D.N. Forrest produces an eye witness account for the same. But again, Wilks with his own means of assertion declares these allegations to be entirely devoid of truth and this account for him is only a dressed up romantic tale.

From the moment of Tipu’s accession to the throne until his death he never ceased to mediate on means of subverting British power in India, and to do this in a pragmatic way he sought French help. He considered French assistance to be a necessary prerequisite for the successful banishment of the English, but his attempts to bring an effective and useful alliance with them had hitherto proved abortive. Mohibbul Hassan states “that the role of French in the Second Anglo-Mysore war had neither been consistent with their promises nor with their pretensions” (45, Habib). However we find several other accounts criticizing Tipu’s French relations. Reading what Gholam Mohammad has to say, we find that he held Tipu in duplicity as he himself did not like the French but intended for an alliance with them. Tipu’s correspondence with France in 1797-98, following the issue of the Malartic proclamation was a source of great dissention and dispute among the British and the Sultan. Wilks, Sharma and Bowring assert that Wellesley entered into a friendly correspondence with Tipu and suggested to depute Major Doveton to express his views and establish a cordial relation for the future. But Tipu did not reply to this. However revealing a different story, Sheikh Ali mentions Tipu replying to this communication immediately and was desirous of peaceful negotiations with them. Supporting Ali’s version, Habib considers that the British used unfair means because the invasion of Mysore in 1799 took place just when Tipu was expecting to receive the British envoy Major Doveton, the English had already collected its force at Vellore under the command of General Harris. He adds that the reasons held for the British invasion and their act of aggression could not stand any legal test, as there was no bar imposed on Tipu Sultan by the treaty of 1792 on maintaining good relations
with foreign powers. Moreover Tipu’s correspondence was deliberately misunderstood as his intention of war.

There is a significant measure of variation in the accounts holding the reasons and manner of the Sultan’s death in 1799 at the fourth Anglo-Mysore war. The one coming from Wilks, Bowring, and some Hindu fundamentalists takes Tipu to be no martyr but an escapist who died while trying to run away in the night and was hit in crossfire. Gholam Mohammad and Bowring state that the Sultan finding himself surrounded from all sides and at the verge of being defeated proposed to return. He was endeavouring to enter the town, but on reaching the gate which was crowded by the fugitives he was unable to pass. As a consequence he was shot by the soldiers. After a short interval when a European soldier attempted to take away his sword belt, the wounded Prince who had still held the sword in his hand, made a cut at the soldier wounding him at his knee. At this the enraged soldier fired his musket and shot him through his temple, causing Tipu’s immediate death. Kirmani here, adding to the narrative of the incident reveals that the city walls were battered and breached and that the gate was closed at the orders of Mir Sadiq (whom the historian calls ‘a villain’), Tipu’s dewan, who had secret understandings with the British. Rao also holds that

there is no doubt that the memory of Mir Sadiq is still held in execration and his name has become a byword of treachery and scorn among the masses of the country. (Vol. II 2666)

Attributing much of Tipu’s defeat to his traitors Sheikh Ali also documents that:

the odds were too heavy against him.... His trusted men were deserting him. Mir Sadiq and his group had entered into a conspiracy with the enemies... It was in consultation with them that May 4 midday, had been fixed for the assault. Mir Sadiq was to withdraw the troops stationed at the breach under the pretext of disbursing their pay. (321)

He considers Tipu’s death an act of martyrdom, who despite all odds, never attempted to escape rather decided to fight to death to defend his country against the ambitious and unscrupulous foreigners. N.K.Sinha writes: “The gloom of final defeat is only relieved by the gleam of personal heroism, and the disaster that eventually befell him [Tipu] was not blackened by disgrace” (qtd. in Habib xvii). However, after a close reading of all the
above accounts the fact still remains clouded regarding his attempt to run away by mixing with the fugitives or dying fighting like a martyr. Therefore it becomes really hard to retrieve the truth among such conflicting views of Tipu’s past, and it seems he would keep vacillating between the image of being an innocent or guilty for his actions.

III
Tipu in Contemporary Theatrical Imagination

Historical events exalting India’s past has always inspired the imagination of artists. Contemporary theatrical imagination offers a site for contestation, negotiation and intervention that seeks to release us from an ‘authentic’ past as offered by the proponents of history. Considering the ambivalent nature of our past, the performative dimension of dramatic form makes it more flexible and allows room for the people of periphery to return and restage the historical/mythical identities along with awareness about its fluctuating and mutable nature. Tipu Sultan, a well known historical persona has provided the subject for many nationalist dramas and other forms of literary works. This distinguished historical figure has captured the imagination of several artists as Gidwani, Karnad and Shivaprakash. Girish Karnad, a well known Kannad playwright mentions, “Tipu Sultan is the greatest son of Karnataka”. He seems to remind us through his play *Dreams of Tipu Sultan* that regardless of religious, ethnic, political preferences the culture of our country is a common heritage to all Indians. His play is seen as an aggressive blend of history, interpretation and colonial divide, and based on the secret records of Tipu Sultan’s dreams as kept by Tipu himself, it examines the inner life of this warrior, rocketry pioneer and a visionary.

Karnad seems to have written his play keeping western audience in mind as well. He is the rewriter of history in hallowed secular tradition. Though Karnad by referring to his dreams in an interpretive mode emphasises more on developing upon Tipu’s psychology and his mind process, Shivaprakash in his play *Tipu Sultan* is more interested in the legendary and folk image of his hero. However both the playwrights pick up history for their backdrop. Karnad’s play casts the psycho-drama of east versus west where it is seen as a see-saw between Hussain Ali Kirmani, the appointed court historian
and Colin Mackenzie the oriental scholar; trying to reconstruct Tipu’s life focussing on how he lived, what he aspired for, and his recorded dreams along with his interpretation of those dreams. Karnad’s technique brings dreams and reality into play, without really defining the boundaries between the two. The real glides into the dream world and back so seamlessly that in the closing scene, we almost believe that Tipu had won the fourth Mysore war, until the scene shifts back to Kirmani saying that it was Tipu’s last dream. Girish Karnad too like Shivaprakash confronts the theme of British colonialism and depicted anti-colonial resistance of his hero Tipu Sultan who died fighting the British while his men betrayed him.

Both these plays remind us that the socio-political tensions and the debates on Tipu’s real intentions and patriotic fervour are still evidently carried on in contemporary India and equally debated upon. An example of such a heated controversy that took place was when a serial directed by Sanjay Khan, based on Gidwani’s novel *The Sword of Tipu Sultan* was telecasted by Doordarshan. The tele-serial projected Tipu as a national hero who helped in the freedom struggle long ago. The Hindu fundamentalists however question the very image and filed a case against Doorsharshan, a nationally owned medium for misleading the people on Tipu’s life and carrier.

Another incident took place in Bangalore recently when a heated discussion was held between the proponents of Tipu considering him the greatest Kannada hero and the opponents of the same Tipu who considered him to be nothing more than a fanatic and bigot. Girish Karnad, who has written a play on this historical figure was a prominent participant of the same and made every effort to protect the nationalist, and warrior image of Tipu Sultan. While Suresh Menon in his article “Whose Culture Is It Anyway?” appraise Karnad’s efforts in defending Tipu as a proto-nationalist for his wars with the British, we find others like S.L.Bhyrappa critiquing him for distorting facts and for misrepresentation. When Karnad talks of art which has to be beyond all isms, he is accused by them for misusing art to serve his ideology. But in defence Karnad says that there is nothing called originality as we have lost the art of improvisation and moreover theatre is not about carbon copies. What makes it real drama is in fact a combination of fictionally bred elements indeed. But again there is a big debate whether history lies mainly in facts or on the interpretation of those facts.
H.S Shivaprakash too in his play *Tipu Sultan* effectively pulls Tipu out of history and hagiography and places him in the spotlight of dramatic experience as drama can provide the precision and emotional power so absent from history and hagiography. By daring to fill some of the gaps in our historical knowledge and ignoring some of the packaging of tradition, Shivaprakash is able to present a less unambiguous portrayal of Tipu. The dramatic relationship between the martyr and the king allows us to witness the constant tensions between spiritual and worldly power. The title of the play itself indicates its connection with the historical past that recalls the history of British colonialism and the struggle of the eighteenth century Mysore ruler to fight the colonial oppression. In foregrounding this context H.S.Shivaprakash, a modern Indian playwright in his play restages the martyrdom of Tipu who persistently aimed at removing the 'markee' foreigner out of his land. The play is dramatised taking incidents from the eighteenth century Indian scenario in which Tipu is seen to be a heroic warrior fighting the anti-colonial struggle against the British. The play at another level is meant to symbolise the historical- hagiographical cords that exist within contemporary India, and no greater stimulus could be supplied to excite the passions of mankind than that supplied by means of drama.

The image of this legendary warrior around whom many tales and folklore have taken shape, is re-invented by Shivaprakash, through his imaginative powers. His creative resurrection of the already received image of Tipu seems to demystify the persona of this historical, nationalist figure, thereby revealing a different Tipu who is vacillating between the image of a military hero and a martyr. By choosing this dialectical way of presenting his acknowledged image of Tipu, the dramatist goes beyond historical realism and the already received versions within narratives and culture. There exists a plethora of writings which is often inconsistent, some inflamed by passions and emotions while other being propagandist and poisoned with bitterness. So whether Tipu was a martyr, honourable, enlightened nationalist ruler as folklore depicts him or a historical figure who possessed no charismatic or exceptional qualities or does the legend of Tipu emerges out of the combination of the two? Shivaprakash herein attempts to recreate Tipu's world by bringing in a simultaneous play of both these elements and we find him using a lot from
real historical situations and events while moving towards the legend of Tipu who is finally martyred as a brave warrior.

By dramatising the story of Tipu’s life and career, that made decisive influence on Kannada as well as national history and culture, Shivaprakash attempts to bring about a social change by bringing into the play the dialectic between the historical and the hagiographical, contributing well to already existing corpus of interpretations. Along with providing an outline of Tipu’s historical past, Shivaprakash simultaneously brings in situations, events and characters too who allots Tipu the image of a martyr and heroic warrior and as one who was never detached to religion, faith and hope. The play is seen not as a plane history but a real drama, an artistic reworking of the complex historical jigsaw so that the existing pieces at least seem to fit and the missing pieces are coloured in to match. While we may query the authenticity of some of these bright new pieces, the dramatist is clear enough.

Shivaprakash gives his literary material the form of a ‘Sannata15 theatre. He has used the Indian technique and avoided following western models as Girish Karnad does in the writing of his play on the same subject. Unlike Karnad he is not so much interested in Tipu’s psychology as with his figure’s legendary image. When asked about his view on Tipu being projected as a villain by some writers and historians Shivaprakash says that ‘for me the popular mind and belief is more important than what the historians say or the writers would hold. If Tipu had been a villain then how come popular mind had folkloric and legendary image of Tipu?’ (Personal Interview). The playwright, by reinventing traditional modes and methods to suit the requirements of the play uses a different form and structure. He has applied to his historical tale innumerable mythopoetic references. This has provided the play with a richness of texture and a powerful legendary dimension. He further makes much use of some poetic lines that are so deeply rooted in Indian psyche as an effective structural device and even for thematic exposition. In the preface to the play, Shivaprakash furthermore admits of the influence of a Nigerian playwright, Wole Soyinka that he had on his plays as he invokes an authentic tradition and cultural recollection along with the desire to return to cultural roots and seek self-determination.
This three act play along with a prologue and an epilogue comprises of eight scenes that helps the playwright to introduce us to important historical events and characters playing a crucial role in Tipu’s life and career. He further sets the stage for the intended ‘shadadat’ of Tipu by depicting the evil intentions of Mr Sadiq and his conspiracies even with the devils and the ‘shaitans’ to heighten the demonising effect of the villain in the play. Besides this, the death of Tipu’s wife while helping the wounded soldiers in the battlefield, and the farewell of his two sons sent as hostages to the British creates a sense of love and pity for his hero. Some important historical characters as Poornaiah and Gafar Khan are also brought in to serve the plot of the play. The second act of the play, though a short one comprising of barely two short scenes carries a lot of substance for making grounds for Tipu’s martyrdom. Mir Sadiq along with Reepa (Shivaparakah’s fictional character) is seen conspiring with Queen Laskhmi Amman and Wellesley to bring the downfall and end of the Sultan and his rule. Due to Sadiq’s ill intentions towards his master, we feel all the more sympathetic towards Tipu and hate the traitor. Act three bringing the drama to a close depicts the great sacrifice that Tipu makes in the name of god and his people. Within two long scenes the entire act depicts beautifully the Sultan fighting against all odds. Poornaiah his nearest officer leaves him. Gafar gets killed by Sadiq and Sadiq’s villainy gets finally revealed to Tipu. And Tipu besides being aware of Sadiq’s treachery gets ready to sacrifice himself like Imam Hussein\(^\text{16}\), a religious leader. The epilogue further enables the playwright to complete the martyrdom of Tipu through the symbolic and poetic lines taken from Rumi’s Masnav\(^\text{17}\).

Literature or literary dramatic representation offers a site to mediate, therefore, when the playwrights such as Shivaprakash or for that matter Girish Karnad choose to stage Tipu, they haggle with the existing versions of Tipu’s past, one in hagiographies, oral culture and folklore while the other in standard histories. As we read the play, Shivaprakash is seen struggling to negotiate between the two divergent images of this historical figure. We need to examine the text closely in order to define its uniqueness and understand the reasons for its popularity which have created for it a special canonical niche in modern Indian drama. At one level the play is a straightforward attempt to recreate history. Wherever possible, Shivaprakash has verified every episode, every remark. Though the core story may be based on facts but the folk imagination forms a
major influence that works through their beliefs, customs, rites, religious notions, symbols, superstitions and fears. It should be evident that in all times some people have historical knowledge and some other have non-factual beliefs. The question is not whether folk tradition can include historical knowledge, the issue is rather of determining how much historical knowledge is present and how long a time span it covers. He admits that the characters and situations have been selected and omitted with the desire for retaining something and also for changing something of the past to set the frame for the ruler king Tipu Sultan. The basic plot – the Anglo-Mysore wars and Tipu’s efforts to remove the firangi’s forever from his land are based on real events fully documented by Mysore history. Many details have been derived from inscriptive evidence and the work of historians as well as from the stories circulating within the tradition and folklore. As the identity depends importantly on what we remember and what we forget; and our historical past provides some meaning and purpose to our lives, consequently, Shivaprakash too makes a conscious selection, omission and presentation of the available past. But there again raises the question as to what does Shivaprakash choose from history and what does he get from hagiography, and also of the elements that he deliberately omits?

An interesting example of deliberate omission is provided by the playwright’s diminutive consideration of the accounts that held Tipu to be a tormentor and Muslim fanatic bigot. The atrocities he committed in the regions of Coorg and Malabar finds no mention in the play; though a number of historians such as R.D. Sharma, L.B. Bowring, Wilks, and Hayavadana Rao have reported this aspect of Tipu’s past. The playwright’s omission of this element points out that this might not be his primary concern, though he allows some of the characters in the play like Wellesley and Lakshami Ammani to make a reference to Tipu as a fanatic but Shivaprakash avoids developing much on the issue. Keeping in view the ideological beliefs of some historians of Tipu, Shivaprakash has effected important changes in the old story. By modifying the real he wants to represent it with hindsight thereby disclosing patterns of cause and purpose of which the participants in the original event could not have been fully aware of. What is interesting here is the segregation of folk tradition into secular and sacred which corresponds to our own way of separating the legend from history. All societies including our own have trouble
distinguishing between history and hagiography for some events and because the usual kinds of myths, sentiments, etc well up from within, these undercurrents and cross currents demand a review and re-assessment of the established notions. Through his play Shivaparakash too attempts to demystify the historical-mythical core bringing in real event and situation to picture a hero out of a historical figure.

The action takes place in 18th century Mysore in the city of Seringapatnam where Tipu Sultan, then ruler of Mysore is the protagonist around whom the entire play is constructed. Most of the characters in the play are based on real people whose names and actions have been preserved well by history and tradition. For example the members of the royal family – Hyder Ali khan, his father; Fakrun-Nissa, Tipu’s mother and Rukkaya Banu, his wife are all well known. Plotting of conspiracies by Mir Sadiq with the British as well as with Queen Lakshmi Ammani are historical facts well accounted by Sheikh Ali, Kirmani and D.M.Forrest too. The role of Mir Sadiq’s character was so important to his play that Shivaparakash introduces him in the very first scene as the villain who conspired and to a great extent was responsible for the downfall of his hero. Sadiq is allotted satanic/devilish attributes who very much like Satan invokes the shagirds of Shaitan to dishonour and defame the Sultan and “Spread rumours like a typhoon!” (69). The conversation in the prologue between the villain Mir Sadiq and the devils highlights the interesting fictional element brought in to satanize and demonise the role of Sadiq:

Mir Sadiq. No !No! O omnipotent Allah, I don’t have time for prayers. O deceitful Shaitan, I am your shagird. O come! Come, all you, qafir, criminals, villains, magicians of the world…come, O come!

Enter three devils, shagirds of Shaitan, dancing weirdly. They take their positions around Mir Sadiq.

... Sadiq. I welcome you, O commanders of Shaitan’s will. I am called Mir Muhammad Sadiq, I was born to only one man, Mir Ali Nabi. My task is to dig the grave of Tippoo’s Khudadad Sirkar.

Devils (together). What will be our oblation?

Sadiq. Blood!

Devils (together). Blood?
Sadiq. Yes, the blood of Mysore. Not just that, the Sultan’s blood.

Devils (together). The Sultans blood! Let your task be accomplished. From now on whispers and gossip shall be your language; cunning and craft your religion!

(67-68)

The dialogue at the outset reveals the conspiracies and the efforts made by Sadiq to despoil Tipu. Such plotting against him continues persistently in the play by the treacherous Sadiq. Mir Sadiq as a real historical figure has acquired a lot of hatred till date for his betrayal towards Tipu especially from the Kannadigas for whom Tipu’s memory is immortal. Sadiq in the play brought Tipu’s failure in the third and the fourth Anglo-Mysore wars; once by spreading false rumours of a peace treaty being followed and ordering the turrets to be lowered and later again by acting as a British spy. He through Reepa and Queen Laskhmi Ammani manages to create enough evidence for Lord Wellesley to declare war on Tipu and also assisting the British to enter the fort walls through the breach. This mistrust on part of Mir Sadiq is noted by Kamad too in his play who considers him responsible for Tipu’s adversity but his villainy is dramatised more by Shivaprakash in order to portray and emphasize his demonic deeds. Shivaprakash’s Sadiq admits that “the Sultan is turned mad by Sadiq himself” (100) and is “betrayed by misleading instructions” (77). In the final scene, Sadiq himself when caught by Tipu confess of the ill he did to him:

I, Mir Sadiq, have already killed you outside the battlefield and without trial. I have misused the powers you entrusted me with and in the name of doing you good, I have got those sixteen palegaras hanged. You are already a ghost Tippoo. I, Mir Sadiq am the author of your tragedy. (102)

Shivaprakash compares his villainy to ‘Shakuni’. The mythical trope only allegorises the historical. Sadiq’s devilish attributes helps the dramatist in pointing to the hagiographical propensities of Tipu Sultan. The martyrdom of Tipu that is seen at the end of the play might not have been so acceptable without the feeling of sympathy that we develop for him looking at all the conspiracies hatched against him throughout. Moreover the religious inclinations that are accorded to the manner in which Tipu go for the final war is worth noticing. Shivaprakash compares him to Imam Hussein, a religious leader who sacrificed his life and attained the boon of shadadat. Tipu while getting ready for his final
act says, “Give me the sacred headgear of pigamber, give me the sacred sword of Ali” (104). By asking for the prophet’s headgear and his sword, Tipu depicts this war to be a solely religious one as was intended by earlier religious leaders as well. He recalls the last hours of Iman Hussein and reiterates his words:

- Ya parvardigar, my time has come
- I have to die for my principles
- I thank you for the boon of shadadat
- The inevitable is taking its course
- I have no regrets
- I have no regrets. (104)

This comparison brought in by Shivaprakash intends to dramatise Tipu’s act of sacrificing his life for the love of his people and his land along with his awareness of certain death. Even though Mir Sadiq’s betrayal and his help to British against him gets revealed to Tipu in the final act and also Raza khan tells him what the astrologers say; “All the stars and planets are unfavourable, today. The Sultan shall not go to fight” (103), Tipu went to the battlefield for his last fight and was well aware of the impending death. By bringing in the reference to Iman Hussein, the saint-martyr and comparing Hussein’s martyrdom to that of his hero’s, Shivaprakash depicts his belief in some of the hagiographical, legendary tales and narratives. Despite Raza Khan warns him of the inauspicious day and impending doom, Tipu decides to fight rather than give up the task of removing the firangi plague forever; a duty allotted to him in the world drama by ‘Allah’ himself. Shivaprakash also alludes to the historical fact on Tipu’s fated destiny of dying in the battlefield and to be sacrificed in the service of God which was prophesied by a saint Tipu Mastan Auliya whom Tipu’s mother visited before his birth.

The playwright seems to project that the story of Tipu is not the drama of an acting man but that of a suffering spirit. His hero is symbolically captured; an embodiment of the suffering spirit of man, very enduring and along with a desire to attain martyrdom. He depicts Tipu as a spiritual hero and sidelines his human side. At a point of time in the play Shivaprakash is seen more concerned with the depiction of his hero’s *charita* and *swabhava* (character and nature) than *itihas* (history). He constructs the play subjectively in a manner that in the end Tipu’s *charita* emerges keeping *itihas* in the
background. For him ‘*charita* is another way of telling story that has Indian cultural roots, unlike west’ (*Personal Interview*). Tipu in the play admits that man is smaller than his fate and further that the cosmos has an underlying frame of order. He uncomplainingly resigns himself to destiny which becomes evident by reading the lines spoken by Tipu himself in the epilogue:

Ya Parvardigar!
What are we but pawns on your chessboard,
What are we but flutes
For your breath to blow through;
The lions emblazoned on the flags;
Your invisible wind blows us through the world. (106)

Taken from Rumi’s *Masnavi*, these meaningful and symbolic lines are noted twice in the play both by Tipu himself. Once in the Epilogue, and another time when he talks to Poornaiah to emphasise on his belief that, “the significance of jihad\(^\text{18}\) consists not in the outcome but in the purity of our efforts.” (92)

*Tipu Sultan* is a drama in which the values of conflicting beliefs and revolutionary spirit are brought in. Paradox of destruction and creativeness, union between stasis of tragedy and dynamism of rebellious spirit is seen. Shivaprakash recognises this paradox existing within the persona’s historical-hagiographical accounts and tries to reconcile the conflicting spirit of Tipu. His attitude to the tragedy and fate of Tipu is ambivalent as he does not call it a tragedy intact. The play ends in a mood that for Shivaprakash is the mood of mysteries. Drama for him is a passion of a different kind, released into quietist wisdom, a ritual exorcism of demonic energies. There is no elation, no purgation, no redemption but only a weary world with a profound sorrowness, chanting god’s recessional. The historical-hagiographical has well captured the development of the play. The hero may be seen from three different angles, first as a figure of historical past who ruled the eighteen century Mysore and effected important events that makes his history interesting. Second as a martyr and nationalist who simply aimed at freedom for his people and land from the foreign yoke and died fighting like a tiger and brave warrior. Third angle in taken over by the literary artists in postmodernist phase who by understanding the dynamics of language and the obvious role of ideology give a free play
to their imagination by incorporating both the existing angles without attesting their own creativity as authentic.

As the playwright or any writer for that matter does not write in a state of tabula rasa, he needs to take into account the audience and reader expectations in order to contend with them. Here too the playwright uses anticolonial heroic subject to comment on the profound history-hagiography conflict. Intertextuality becomes evident as history, legend making and dramatic fiction undeniably share a strong sense of imagination. He highlights the historical process of colonial intervention and the specificities of regional or national struggles thereby attempting to recuperate history to scrutinise and destabilise the colonial myths of the past. His return to history is marked by the need to comment on the profound divisions in postcolonial India that challenge the heroic and nationalist image of Tipu Sultan. The play brings in the juxtaposition of the more traditional history with memory, myth and fantasy, of the real and the invented, of the actual and the verisimilar, of the conscious and the unconscious. And the basic polarity on which the structure of the play rests is between history and hagiographical forms of beliefs.

H.S.Shivaprakash by commenting upon British colonialism, pictures one attribute consistent about Tipu’s character and that is his anti-British sentiment emphasising on his resistance to the imperialist powers. Reepa, the fictional character in the play reveals through her dialogue with Sadiq about Tipu getting emotional over his desire to free his country from the British. British too in the play are shown well aware of Tipu’s staunch patriotic feelings. For their rule to prosper Tipu’s defeat and death was indeed a prerequisite for them. With this view in mind Lord Wellesley speaks to Harris: “Keep this much in mind: we have no future in India unless we turn that garden of paradise into a graveyard” (89). The playwright’s hero is sketched not without the spirit of nationalism. As located within his historical and even more hagiographical past, the playwright portrays Tipu’s sheer love and hope for freedom from the foreign oppression. And we observe similar feelings of nationalism and love for sovereignty in the hearts of his soldiers and people too. The wounded soldiers lying in the battlefield tells a boy who comes there looking for his abbajan and finding him dead tries to stab himself; “if you want to die, die fighting the firangis” (70). The soldiers show their anger and hatred towards the British who they believe are “Sons of pigs! Those firangis have no sense of
propriety” (70). The citizens interestingly refer the British as ‘firangi Maree’ during the anniversary of Tippoo’s accession to the throne and performed processions and other rituals for the destruction of these evil forces. While discussing upon the enforcement of the treaty of Seringapatnam, Gafar khan too believing that there can be no friendship with the British shows his disapproval for the treaty, thus arguing: “better friendship with foxes than treaty with the British” (73). Moreover Gafar draws attention towards the historical event when the British were accused of violating the terms of the treaty of Mangalore by misappropriating the treasury funds. To recall in his words: “they had looted the fort completely. Carried the coins by hiding them even in their underclothes!” (74). The British are considered to be deceitful and untrustworthy. Gafar was able to apprehend this when he urges Tipu not to go for peace treaty as he speaks, “If you consent to the treaty, they may lay down unacceptable conditions” (75) by considering us weak. He believed that “They can never change!” (74). Tipu too postulates that a favourable understanding can never be reached with the British and it will rather destroy the freedom of the country forever. When Poornaiah insists Tipu to conclude a peace treaty with the British before the fourth Anglo-Mysore war, Tipu tells Poornaiah:

The moment such an understanding is reached, our sultanate will be reduced to a prison-house with hundreds of dark cells. Even air and water will flee from here. We, who are supposed to be reigning on the tiger throne, will then become a fake Sultan and our subjects will turn into prisoners. The Nizam of Hyderabad has concluded a similar treaty with the British. What kind of respect does he command, poornaiahvare? (94)

Shivaprakash’s Tipu shows his distrust towards the British imperialist powers who not only aimed at ruling India but the world around as he is further seen commenting in the play that the British “want to enslave the whole of the Asian continent for their own commercial gains” (75). Wellesley himself admit of their colonialist intentions when he remarks, “Today Tippoo, tomorrow Napoleon. Today India, tomorrow the whole world” (106). Therefore Tipu’s hatred and anger towards the colonial, imperial powers is judged to be quite genuine when we are exposed to the clever and fallacious British intentions.
Tipu of Shivaprakash’s play is wise, enlightened ruler who repeatedly evinces his awareness about the colonial designs of the British traders making every possible effort to avert them. He utters time and again:

We are quite accustomed to their strategies. (78)
They have an unquenchable thirst for wealth. They came for trade, but now challenge us to war. In the name of Isa they are poisoning our very air and water. (74)
If we have to weaken their might in their own land, we have to seek help from their neighbours, like the French. (75)

The play also accounts for the great influence that the French had on Tipu. We find Reepa telling Sadiq about how she managed fooling the Sultan using French words; “Tell him anything in French and he seems to believe it” (87). While addressing to his citizens at the time of his accession to the throne Tipu speaks:

The lesson we learnt from the French Revolution is that any empire or government will be blown to the winds it is built on the foundation of destitution….as soon as the news of the Revolution reached us, we too had it promulgated through the streets of Seringapatnam: ‘Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. Or Death!’ (83)

Also when Rukhaya Bano is hit by a bullet while trying to help the wounded soldiers, Farkrun-Nissa immediately calls for a French doctor. Their belief in French techniques and technology was high. However in the play, as also revealed in historical accounts Tipu hoped to receive French help several times but was unable to receive it substantially and his ambassadors returned home without promises. Girish Karnad too in his play acknowledges Tipu’s great efforts to seek French help and his love for French techniques as he kept introducing several new machines and inventions from France in his kingdom.

The long speech made by ‘Tippoo’ to the people of his kingdom during his accession to the throne, reveals his intense faith in god. He speaks to his people on the occasion, “devoting our life in the same goal to which Prophet Mohammad, the Khaliphas, Imam Hussein and all the saints and martyrs of the world devoted theirs” (82). He names his government ‘khudadad Sirkar’ and considers himself the servant of the Sirkar. The Sultan further revealing of the irreparable damage that has been caused to the
Sultanate by the firangi army; destroying temples and masjids and defiling their ancient conventions declares that a “war against such demonic forces thus became inevitable” (82). He informs his people of how our kingdom is severely bruised, our treasury empty, our lives disturbed, we want to realise the great dream of Khudadad Sirkar. For this we need your support and cooperation. (83)

The lines delineate the existence of a bond of love and trust existing between the king and his subjects. When Tipu demands help from his people, they readily agree to participate in the Sultan’s true efforts to bring about the welfare of the state. He is respected and adored by his people who promise to render help and support to the Sultan by building up the fallen estate and repair the heavy war damages. The voices in the play utter:

Once again we will build the fallen state. With hard work, we will turn earth into gold. For the sake of those who have gone away. So that they may return. So that who have returned will not go away again. (81)

In our reading of the play, Tipu is seen sensitive to all the problems of his kingdom and hoping to turn his kingdom into a garden of paradise he endeavours to restructure the ownership of land in Malabar by discouraging decadent customs and traditions, and effecting a new law. A similar explanation also comes to us from, the historians like K.N. Panikkar and Irfan Habib. Responding to the complaints received from his people, he speaks:

We have received complaint that there is a cruel system condemning artisans to free labour in Malabar, and that the amaldars of other provinces are also enforcing such practices. We do not want to rule the sultanate on the unwilling hands of the poor. Therefore such systems shall stand cancelled forthwith. Because the middlemen has been usurping a larger share of the farmer’s produce, we bring to effect the new law according to which we shall buy the farmer’s produce directly. (83)

Reading the above lines we gather traits on Tipu’s generosity and benevolent nature. He is projected as an ideal king who makes every effort to keep his people happy and trouble free. Shivaprakash considers Tipu to be the last glory of feudalism. General Harris too in
the play admits to the improvements and progress that have been made effective by Tipu’s efforts. He tells Wellesley,

But I have seen Mysore myself, my lord, and I was surprised. Tippoo has transformed his war ravaged kingdom into a garden of paradise. (88)

Another incident that reveals him true towards his duty as a king was when Rukkhya Bano, his wife dies attending the wounded soldiers. Tipu instead of attending to his wife or mourning over the sad demise realises his duty and prefers attending the wounded soldiers at dharmashala so that they might be saved. However in regard to Rukkhya’s death, Karnad has a different version to hold as he considers illness to be the cause of her death. And in historical accounts the manner of her death finds little mention and probably that is the reason which led the playwrights to give free way to their respective imaginations. In the times of crises when the British were inflicting all sought of cruelties upon the people, they called for their saviour and almighty, the Sultan. Voices in the final act repeatedly say, “O Sultan! Protect us! O Sultan! Save us!” (90-91). At this again, the Sultan is further shown conscious of his responsibilities towards them. He believes that he as the “captain of a storm-tossed ship must steer it to safety” (92), and embracing them all, ordered for the arrangements to be made instantly to accommodate all these refugees in dharamshalas, temples, masjids and mantaps inside the fort. His words mark him a utopian as he utters:

We are going to stake our lives for anyone who comes asking for shelter in the forts of Khudadad Sirkar. (92).

Tipu’s generosity was another trait of his personality well marked in his hagiographies and acknowledged by the playwright too. In the play Tipu orders for the wounded British soldiers to be taken to the ‘hakim’ immediately. Documented by some of his historians and storytellers, Tipu displays mercy at British prisoners of war as he orders in the play, “Release the British officers from our prisons” (76). Within the backdrop of a historical Tipu, Shivaprapakash also receives him to be a figure who walks larger than life through the cultures of all times, a brave warrior, ready to sacrifice himself for his kingdom by fighting the anticolonial struggle, aiming “not at immediate victory but at removing the firangi-plague forever from the map of the whole world” (75). Tipu at last attains ‘Shadadat’, thereby becoming a symbolic expression of ideal kingship. According to the
treaty when Tipu sends two of his sons to the British as hostages, there is an ambiance of sorrow all around. As the voices in the play are seen talking to each other, their conversation intensifies the horror and the trauma that the Sultan and others might have experienced while bidding farewell to the two young princes.


... 

Voice 3. But this case is not like any of those. Never has such a thing happened in the past!

...

Voice 2. We have sent our fathers for the sake of our Sultan and our Sultunate. The Sultan is sending his children for the sake of the sultanate and for our own.”

Voice 3. The sultan used to be calm even amidst severe trauma. Why does he look so downcast today?

Voice 4. Yes, he is downcast like “Dasharatha who sent Rama to forest. His palace is now empty. His gardens are now deserted. (79-80)

The trauma is dramatised when voices in the play pronounce that like the citizens themselves even the inanimate objects like the ‘stones of Seringapatnam’, ‘flowers in Lalbagh’, ‘towers and minars’ are telling each other that the Sultan should not send his children away. The tropes are more literary than historical. However by comparing him to Dasharatha, and glorifying him as an apostle of patriotism and secularism, playwright’s intention is not to call him a saint rather attempts to answer to the naming of Tipu as a fanatic. Here he is also seen as a product of the political and moral culture of his time. Girish Karnad too in his play develops extensively upon this farewell scene where the Sultan readies himself to part with his children and sends them as hostages exemplifying his love and concern for the welfare of his people.

Tipu became a legendary figure inspiring stories that he could wrestle down tigers with bare hands. Shivaprakash too, in his play, constantly allots Tipu the ‘tiger’ image. At times in his own commentaries as he mentions at the anniversary of Tipu’s accession to the throne, “Tippoo takes up the role of ‘tiger’ ”, and at other times through the actors in the play such as Sadiq, the citizens and also through Tipu himself. The dramatist brings
Instances in the play also throw light on Tipu’s religious tolerance. Like the Muslims, his Hindu subjects were equally permitted to follow their religious practices and worship their own goddesses. General Harris, a British commandant in the play mentions, “Hindus and Muslims live harmoniously in his kingdom” (88) and therefore their usual kind of tricks of creating religious differences and then ruling them was not an easy task in Tipu’s kingdom.

Utterances in the play depict how the playwright acknowledges the sentiments of those who took him a hero: “As long as there is breath in us, we are going to fight the British” (94). But considering the outlook of the ones who takes him to be a Muslim fanatic Shivaprakash allows Queen Lakshmi Ammani and Wellesley to hold beliefs similar to those who considered him a villain, when they complainingly say: Tipu had “dethroned and debased” (84) the Hindu’s and “That despotic Sultan must go” (87). Britishers are depicted quite aware and bothered of Tipu’s heroic-warrior persona as they considered his defeat essential for their rule to flourish in India. Thus the playwright while picking up historical-factual information to paint the backdrop of his play, also refers to his character’s hagiographical inclinations to portray his own acknowledged version of Tipu’s past.

Through literary imagination as synonymous to creative thought process, Shivaprakash recasts the persona of Tipu through a complementary study of the historical and the hagiographical, as the employment of this binary between these two versions of past lends an element of textuality in the presentation. There are several other historically verified events and characters figuring prominently in Shivaprakash’s play. The character of Poornaiah, Tipu’s dewan who has contributed much to Tipu’s life and carrier, has been given great deal of attention by the playwright. Corresponding well to factual details, he is presented as a wise administrator, one who was close to Tipu and took care of his Sultan’s matters. But contradicting some historians Poornaiah in the play leaves Tipu before the final war.

Besides the existence of conflicting accounts, ideological conflicts also exist in Tipu’s history. Some such are noted by the playwright as one between Tipu and Poornaiah and also between Tipu and Mir Sadiq in the play. Shivaprakash brings forth the
difference of opinion between Tipu Sultan and his father Hyder Ali Khan which is also pointed out by some historians such as Gulam Mohammad and Bowring. In the play though Hyder tells Tipu the logic of battlefield and that the road to success is accomplished by embracing and then strangling the enemy; still for Tipu the logic is different. He tells his father; “You have killed faith with the spear of logic. But I have slain logic with the spear of faith” (98). Further, when Tipu sits for namaz Hyder Ali speaks to his son in his hallucination warning him of his logic of battlefield which will lead to nothing but ‘darkness, storms, explosions, wails’. Hyder was aware that the freedom of the country is a long and arduous journey that will require a lot of sacrifice and bloodshed. He tries cautioning his son saying:

You don’t know beta. For the roses to bloom red, you cannot imagine how much blood this earth should drink, how much manure of the dead this earth will need.

That’s why, you see, the lovely rose has thorns all over. (97)

He further tells him that, “All the rose gardens will fade away. All the lamps of desire will be blown out” (97). Before his final act, Tipu hear the words of his dead wife Rukhya Bano presaging the Sultan of the destruction and chaos that emerges out of this war for freedom. “The Sultan’s fort has become the world of the dead….the world of the dead”, says Rukhya. But despite being made aware of all this Tipu was hopeful saying:

No, I’ll not let that happen. Our fort, and our Sultanate, should become a garden of roses…a garden of roses... (97)

Tipu’s determined hopes for a free and independent Hindustan is well captured by Shivaprakash’s creative drama when yet again Tipu tells Poornaiah,

we still have faith. The firangi bullet may blight every bud in every garden of Seringapatnam, but tomorrow, in the numerous gardens of the world, countless buds shall blossom into countless flowers. (95)

However Poornaiah urges Tipu to stop the war and go for a peace treaty with the British so that the ongoing destruction could be halted. But receiving Tipu’s refusal in reply he reveals the last message that Hyder Ali has left for Tipu:

My son hates the British more than he loves the Sultanate. Would you atleast tell him that the good of the Sultanate is greater than his hatred of the British. (93)
The lines draw forth the difference in opinion between the father and the son. For Tipu removing the foreigners from his land was the most important task he employed himself for. Inspite of much internal strife and many external attacks, Tipu always kept in mind the true purpose of his reign which was to drive the firangis out of his country. Tipu talks to Poornaiah of his hatred towards the imperialist British which he carries from long:

When we saw for the first time how the firangis tormented the innocent people of Bidanuru, how they looted the treasury throwing the pact to winds, we declared jihad against them. According to us the responsibility of protecting this world means wiping out the East India Company that considers the whole world its market’ (94)

Tipu as a devoted warrior considering himself “a sincere servant of the Sultanate” (79), became an important part of Indian identity and gradually slipped from his previous status into the realm of a legend and folklore. As nationalist sentiment becomes a potent self definer for the existence of hagiographies, the myth of this heroic warrior too was engrained in Indian traditional hagiographies to be eradicated easily. In the post-nationalist spirit, Shivaprakash while acknowledging the multiplicity of truth that runs to give shape and substance to Tipu’s past includes the historical/hagiographical elements thereby depicting the problematized image of the received hero of our nations past. Tipu’s character in the play as well as in history is seen as a combination of variety of attributes associated to him by the people around him. He is admired by his patriots, loved by the people he served, hated by the British for his revolutionary spirit, and conspired against by traitor as Mir Sadiq and Laskhmi Ammani. While his ideas are approved by some and rejected by others, Tipu is depicted to be an inflexible and determined ruler whose mind and soul was deeply in conflict with imperialism.
End Notes:

1. Col. Humberstone is seen right in his view when we read Fernandes’ account of Tipu being extremely kind in releasing a lieutenant, a prisoner of war after receiving a letter from the his wife inquiring about her missing husband. Tipu not only released him but also sent gifts for his wife and son. To acknowledge Tipu’s generosity the lieutenant’s wife requested Tipu to send his portrait so that “it could adorn our humble home, always to remind me and my son of the debt we owe you” (Gidwani 8).

2. It is believed that the Maulvi donated the 1000 pagodas gifted to him by Tipu to the temple of Sri Rangatha of Seringapatnam before he left for Muscat. Such was the influence of Tipu’s principles of secularism and equality.

3. It is said, in 1799 during his final hours, astrologers’ warned Tipu that the day was inauspicious and especially the afternoon hours of the day. Moeinuddin’s account detail upon Tipu making generous grants to several Hindu temples across his kingdom.

4. It may be noted in this context that Susan Bayly also in Saints, Goddesses and Kings, points out, ‘Indians have long perceived the power of divine beings as particularly awesome form of the power which was claimed and exercised by kings and would-be rulers’ (qtd. in Sakti and Barakat 265).

5. This toy when later exhibited in a British museum was called ‘Man-Tiger-Organ’. Several poems such as Tipu’s Tiger by Anne Born and The Caps and Bells by John Keats refer to this remarkable musical toy that builds up Tipu’s tiger image.

6. The legend associated to Huma bird was that whomsoever its shadow falls on will be a king.

7. Irfan Habib to emphasise upon Tipu’s impartial dealing of his Hindu-Muslim subjects relates to one of the recorded dreams of Tipu in which he saw a big damaged temple. Inside it were many idols whose eyes moved. One of the two female idols told him that they all had been praying to God. Tipu commended the deities and ordered his men to repair the building.

8. Brittlebank in this context examines how the use of motifs of tiger and sun as royal insignia on the flags by a Muslim ruler is seen as a measure to synthesise the
Islamic and Indic traditions and cultural concepts. The tiger symbolises the Vahana of Chamundeshwari Devi and is also linked to the warrior pir which is often loin mounted. Through the tiger image, the power or ‘sakti’ of the south Indian goddesses were received in ways similar to the power or ‘barakat’ of the warrior pir. By use of such images Tipu was trying to confirm an idea of kingship within which his actions could be deemed as rational and understandable to his Hindu-Muslim subjects alike.

9. Fernandes too admits of his reforming zeal and progressive conduct as he mention, “he attempted at the task of creating a modern state for his ‘khudadad Sirkar’ whose basic principles were to recapitulate, a strong central government, a well-integrated provincial administration, an efficient civil service, a standard system of laws and the elimination of the middleman. These are principles familiar to us today but they were revolutionary in the 18th century and this fantastic experiment is an indicator of the vision, the imagination and the genius of Tippu Sultan” (222).

10. The anthology *Tippu Sultan: Villain or Hero*, informs that in administrative matters bias was blatantly evident especially in matter of taxation policy according to which the Muslims were exempted from all taxes, and in case of employment Hindus were eliminated to the maximum. The only Hindu in service of Tipu occupying important official position was Purnaiya.

11. In this context Habib points out to the famous modern dam built by Tipu on the Kaveri to create the great lake of Krishna Raj Sagara.

12. Sheikh Ali mentions in his account of Tipu releasing all the 4261 of the prisoners he had and that he was not so cruel as to retain just a few after liberating so many.

13. Hayavadana Rao in his account of Mysore history, Volume II refers to an incident when Lord Macartney called upon Colonel Braithwaite, immediately after his release, for any information he might possess on the subject of the alleged murder of General Matthews. The Colonel was of the opinion that, for certain reasons no due means had been resorted to in the case of General Matthews (Vol. II 2572).

14. The proclamation revealed Tipu’s intention of seeking French troops. Taking it as clear proof of bad faith, Colonel Wellesley, the governor general remarked that
Tipu's proceedings were of a doubtful character, and being dissatisfied with his conduct the British declared the fourth and the final war on Tipu which brought his downfall.

15. Shivaprakash uses samnata form of Karnataka theatre (Yakshagana). The dance drama Yakshagana is broadly divided into two: Moodalapaya and Paduvalapaya. The Moodalapaya is further divided into Doddata and Samnata which are crude forms of Yakshagana i.e., purely folkform. Samnata that means little plays involves no divine characters and is rather purely folk form that draws a lot from world as it is and does not adopt ancient epic or puranic themes. The present Samnata form, mainly the Sangyabalya was orally developed in 1860 A.D. and was later brought to a script form in 1920 A.D. The play Sangyabalya is based on a real life story. The language is simple, music is catchy and the conversations are witty.

16. Imam Husain, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad and the second child of Ali and Fatimah, was born in the year 4 A.H. and after the martyrdom of his brother, Imam Hasan Mujtaba, he became Imam through divine command and his brother's will. Hussein lived under the most difficult conditions of suppression and persecution but was prepared to be martyred rather than surrender the principles for which he stood. He was the Imam who considered calamity as magnanimity and nobility and martyrdom as bliss and blessedness. The day of Ashura (the tenth day of Muharram of the year 61/680) brings with it the memory of the sacrifice of Imam Hussein and his noble family and friends. People considered him pure and chaste revolutionary who spent 57 years of his prolific life for the sake of God's love and God's search.

17. Jalaluddin Rumi (1207-1273) was one of the great spiritual masters, poetical geniuses of mankind and was the founder of the Mawlawi Sufi order, a leading mystical brotherhood of Islam. He is the author of six volume didactic epic work, the Masnavi, called as the 'Koran in Persian' by Jami. Masnavi is a massive poem of some 25,000 rhyming couplets, and ranks among the world's greatest masterpieces of religious literature. The material which makes up the Masnavi is divisible into two different categories: theoretical discussion of the principal
themes of Sufi mystical life and doctrine, and stories of fables intended to illustrate those themes as they arise. If there is any general idea underlying Rumi's poetry, it is the absolute love of God. He is considered literature's greatest mystical poet who understood very well the uncontrollable and idiosyncratic impact of poetry. His influence on thought, literature and all forms of aesthetic expression in the world of Islam is tremendous.

18. Jihad according to Shivaprakash has esoteric meaning. He “believes that the idea of jihad came from Sufi religion and this was later taken up by Islamic accounts into a military way” (Personal Interview).