CHAPTER VII
CONCLUSION

Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan particularly Tipu Sultan is one prince who has attracted the attention of scholars of multiple interest. For a few, he is a ‘tiger of Mysore’, patriot of the land, creative thinker, model of the people, eliminator of the enemy etc. While for a few others, he was a religious bigot, shortsighted economic reformist and an Orthodox Muslim Sultan. Probably no other character of his contemporary times has evoked so much of response from any set of scholarly world like him. However, debatable a character he is, there is no doubt that he was a hero of his ages and has done a lot of constructive work also.

According to Jawaharlal Nehru, Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan were formidable adversaries who inflicted a severe defeat on the British and came near to breaking the power of the East India Company….Haider Ali was remarkable man and one of the notables figures in Indian History. He had some kind of a national ideal and possessed the qualities of a leader with vision….He realized, long before others did so, the importance of sea power and the growing menace of the British based on naval strength. He tried to organize a joint effort to drive them out…. His son Tipu continued to strengthen his navy. Tipu also sent messages to Napoleon and to the Sultan in Constantinople.1

N.K.Sinha quotes that “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.”2

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Another renowned scholar Tara Chand, writes that “The Sultans of Mysore, Hyder Ali and Tipu proved much harder nuts to crack. They defied the British and their allies. They fought four valiant wars…In the fourth was British gold effected what British guns had so far failed to accomplish. The ministers betrayed the master. Tipu refused to surrender and died bravely fighting in defence of his fort.”

These quotations remind us that in the conception of our past, as held in our nationalist historiography, Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan have occupied an honourable place. But the colonials have condemned Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan outright, and the modern critics have found in it perceptible modern thought germinating in a wonderful way, but not yielding good results owing to some structural defects in competency of the bureaucrats and short duration of his regime.

The views of colonial writers present Tipu in the darkest of the colours and tries to picturise him as the enemy of the mankind simply because he was enemy of the British and did not want, the English to rule country. Infact as long as Tipu was alive, the Leaden Hall Street in London did not even think of sleeping in peace.

Naturally, the characterisation of Tipu by all the colonial writers like Wilks, Bowring, Buchanan, Dirom and others are partial and biased.

While, scholars like Mohibul Hasan Khan, Praxy Fernandez, Sheik Ali and others have detected in him that brilliance about a revolutionary change in the state. On the other hand scholars like Ashok Sen, Ashin Das Gupta,

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Aniruddha Roy, Nikilesh Guha, Buren De and others think that as a “modernizer he had limited potential” and even Irfan Habib and Moinuddin formulate him as a statesman of great forethought and efficiency.

Having separately considered the most significant aspects of religious, secular, military, murals, miniature paintings, coins and weapons, it is important to evaluate the overall character of these buildings and works of art. The stylistic multiplicity may be signed out as characteristic of Deccani art. Architectural and pictorial styles follow political careers, underscoring the interdependency of art and patronage in this era.

Another, no less representative trait that runs through the description of Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan architecture and painting is the influence of Deccani architectural traditions.

Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan promoted a courtly, religious buildings and paintings. The tendency towards dynastic limitations of style is less well articulated when it comes to military architecture, probably because of the universal demands of war and its practice.

Paintings commissioned by Tipu Sultan are executed in easily distinguishable modes, thereby justifying the classification of miniatures and murals. The artistic importance is sustained in the second-half of the eighteenth century, especially at Srirangapatna, the capital of Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan.

Mughal-style art, which had come to a virtual standstill at Delhi and Lahore by about the middle of the eighteenth century, enjoyed a new lease of

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4 Barune De, Tipu Sultan’s Significance in Contemporary Indian History Tipu Sultan, a Great Martyr, Bangalore, 1993, P.49.
life under the Asaf Jahis, successors to the Golconda-Hyderabad State. In the last phase of Deccani art (surviving until the middle of the nineteenth century), architecture and the fine arts followed radically different paths in the southern region.

7.1 Remarks and observations:

In the absence of a dynastic lineage, the proclamation of the title of Sultan was a bold step on the part of Tipu. Haider Ali was aware of the consequences of such a step, had always portrayed himself subservient to the Woodeyars of Mysore, as it was on the question of legitimacy that his opportunist neighbours and the British kept perpetuating war on him. That Tipu had to constantly work to legitimize his authority is also reflected in his architectural patronage. It is important to note that paintings of the eastern wall of the Darya Daulat Palace, some Ottoman ambassadors are shown in a palatial set-up. It may be suggested that they were represented to reinforce the message that Tipu had a legal right to rule as an independent ruler by Sultan Salim of Turkey.

Kirmani writes, “…The Sultan, therefore in his infancy being like all children, fond of play, and as in that space boys of the Kinhiri and Brahmin castes assembled to amuse themselves, was accustomed to quit the house to see them play, or play with them. It happened one day during this period, that a Fakir (a religious mendicant) a man of saint-like mind passed that way, and seeing the Sultan gave him a life bestowing benediction, saying to him, ‘Fortunate child, at a future time thou wilt be the king of this country” . The traditions wherein the saints prophesized the fortune of an ordinary child as a
sultan. Therefore, this was used as one of the devices by Tipu’s biographer to legitimize his patron’s rule.

7.2 An Evaluation

The dome of Masjid-e Ala at Srirangapatna is topped by a metal finial. It is composed of kalasa resting on a base and crowned by a coconut fruit placed above a cluster of leaves. The Kalasha and coconut placed over mango leaves is an auspicious motif still used in South Indian rituals and festivals as it is fertility symbol. It reflects the harmonious coexistence of the Hindus and Muslim traditions.

The popularity of the British artist’s paintings reflects contemporary British agenda to glorify their victory over Tipu Sultan. The paintings of Henry Singleton, John Burnet portrays that the British vanquished Tipu with great ease. In reality, however, the victory over Tipu was a difficult task for the British and had been the last hurdle in establishing their superiority in South India. These works may probably be seen as attempt to wipe out the memory of the huge losses suffered by the British, as also as an agenda of glorification.

In contrasts to the British, the natives considered Tipu’s death as Shahid(martyrdom). Kirmani was particular in portraying Tipu as a religious rather than political war. The epitaph on the tomb of Tipu Sultan also declares him a martyr. The claims of the natives to portray Tipu as a martyr and a religious leader can also not be accepted. In fact, he was an ambitious and shrewd politician.
7.3 Summary of the study

The present study of development of art and architecture under Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan is mainly concentrated on Islamic background of art and architecture. However, it is also true Haider and Tipu both patronaged the contemporary art and architecture present around them in the form of temples, matths and other Hindu elements of art. Some of the desecrated temples were renovated at Srirangapatna, Chamaranagar, Sringeri and the likewise very liberally contributed for the temple jewellery making of crest, linga and even promoted paintings. But since the study is forced mainly on Islamic background as it is not been purported earlier in a specialized way by any scholar much focus is laid only on Indo-Islamic art and architecture. The entire study focused on the concept of art and architecture dealt as Islamic religious architecture concentrates on Mosques. Masjid-e-Ala is two storied building which was continuation of the Deccani Islamic tradition of mosque building. Hyder Ali constructed Idga at Kolar, Arohalli, and Devenehalli. The Jumma Masjid at Srirangapatna is as lofty as the Sultan who built it. Two towering minarets reach majestically to the blue skies. Adorned with cornices and floral bands the minarets have metallic ‘kalasas’ at the top. The high pillared part of Ranganath Swamy temple known as Patalankana was constructed by Hyder Ali. The mausoleum at Sriangapatna has floral Scroll, Tracery, Turrets, parapet around the dome and metal finials hanging from the chajja.

The Palaces, Zananas, Hava Mahal and other monuments of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan possess the features of Indo-Islamic architecture. They were inspired by the Mughal style of architecture. Dariya Daulat was the summer palace of the Sultan. It resembles the Mughal style of architecture especially the Akbar’s Darbar at Agra. It has got the features of Indo-Islamic art. Tipu
Sultan’s palace at Bangalore consisting of two Jharokhas opening in different audience halls, Darbar hall, Chajja(eaves) resting on elephant brackets, solar motifs.

During the reign of Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan most important and magnificent big and small forts cleverly, strategically and strongly built. The study of these forts reveal not only contemporary military tactics but also the defense tactics that could with stand the onslaught from within and outside the country. Manjarabad fort is located just outside of Sakleshpur on National Highway 48. The fort is reputed to have been constructed by Tipu Sultan, the ruler of Mysore as a strategic defensive location as it commands the approach to the plateau beyond Sakleshpur from the coast. There are signs of Islamic architecture on the entrance façade. Inside the fort one finds a huge desolate tank which was storing the natural rain water. The tank is built with stairs from all four sides which is a unique formation probably to accommodate soldiers. There are 6 watch towers spread across the fort for viewing the enemy movement. The scenery from the fort and watch tower is beautiful. It gives a panoramic view of the landscape. There are two small bunkers which may have been used to store gun powder for firing the cannons. The Dungeons at Srirangapatna mark the development of military architecture. Likewise forts, kinds of forts, passages and fortifications etc.

Paintings, Coinage, Arms, Calligraphy and Jewellery also discussed them elaborately. From Anne Bundlle’s The Tiger and the Thistle: Tipu Sultan and the Scots in India(1760-1800)is also noteworthy in this context. The paintings commissioned by the wife of General Sir David Wikie in 1834. It was entitled as Genera portrait by Sir David Baird Discovering the Body of Sultan Tippoo Sahib after having captured Seringapatam on the 4th May
1799. The painting became an icon and was hung in the Royal Academy, London. The swords Nimach and Sanva used by Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan respectively were not mere weapons but they carried a lot of historical and artistic prominence. Sultan’s manufactories called Tara Mandal, were established in four places: Srirangapatna, Bangalore, Chitradurg, Nagara. The Royal Dress, jewellery, decoration styles were known for their craft work. The ornaments donated to the temples by them have special artistic value and worth mentioning.

On the whole it can be summarized to say that the Art and architecture under Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan is unique in its own way. They were constantly involved in battles and hardships yet they showed immense interest in the development of art and architecture. They have contributed a lot for the development of structures, forts and fortifications, mosques, temples, palaces and art.

Hence, the study has been viewed from art and architectural angle and it became, the centre of the study as far as the state of Mysore was concerned under Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan.

The study is not a complete one itself. But it has opened a few questions as far as the nature of the Mysore state is concerned. And studying it from the art and architectural angle is one. There is lot work to be done under the heading. It may arouse curiosity among some scholars, who may take up this type of study and reveal a few more angles of approach to it. However, my attempt to analyze the same state of Mysore in “architectural approach” is only one aspect of the study of the administration among many.