



Tipu's Modernity in Girish Karnad's *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan*

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Abstract

Tipu is a representative of modernity and his modern outlook throws light on contemporarily. Tipu is above of the value of education. When Tipu is about to send a delegation to France for commercial and philosophical purpose his son wishes to join it. At that time, Tipu advises him that he should concentrate on his studies in order to get new and latest knowledge of the world and asks his son to concentrate on his studies instead going on France tour. Tipu is a far-sighted ruler and father who took his children in the important decision-making process. The Dreams of Tipu Sultan is relevant to contemporary India where internal dissensions in almost all national issues and the presence of terrorists are disturbing nation harmony and peace. Hence, the paper unfolds the sense of modernity employed by Karnad to portray Tipu.

Keywords: Modernity, Tipu, Girish Karnad, *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan*.

Tipu has modern sensibility. He knows that to develop on other nation for goods in nothing but slowly. In fact, he wants to become his state as rely-sufficient state. When he was sending a delegation to France, he orders them to bring everything including new techniques, inventions, machines etc. This shows that he wants to develop his children mind with progressive and enlightened thought with the experience of practical things. He wants them to be a strong knowledgeable, experienced and powerful ruler for future is on of new scientific and imitative ideas. He really accepts the novel ideas for the public welfare are his goals and ideals are high. He combines every sort of work like industry, agriculture, trade and commerce for the said object, which gave Mysore state the glory, sound economy, prosperity and respectable place in Indian history. He tries to make his state modern to the basic of European mode. Things display that Tipu had a commercial view like Britishers.

It was not Tipu's dreams but his predications that came true. The deceit of his own nobles which led to the fall of his fort and Tipu's subsequent death certainly add demise of tragedy that surrounds the Legend of Tipu Sultan. If the tragedy of an Indian hers though he was conscious about the encroachment of the colonist. The tragedy take place not due to the English people only but the treachery committed by the Indian is responsible for the fall of Tipu Sultan.

After the success of *Tughalq* as a famous historical play in 1964, Girish Karnad wove a new historical play. *The Dreams Of Tipu Sultan* (1997) which are based on the story of monarch Tipu Sultan of Mysore (India), who reigned from (1782-1799). This play brings the facts to the dreams which were seen by Tipu Sultan and had been great inspiration for him as they inspired him to endeavor against wrongs, evils, hypocrites and obviously the British and



also persuaded him to raise wars against them. This is why he hailed as 'Freedom Fighter' who got inspired by his real dreams.

Tipu Sultan was a great warrior who spent more than half of his life on horseback. He had perfidious hatred for British and fought many wars against them but at the same time he also admired their uprising technologies and administrative methods. He never justified divide and rule policy amongst different religious and caste. These positive aspects of Tipu sultan fascinated Karnad and led him to write on his life when BBC commissioned him to write a play to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Indian Independence in 1996. He favored writing on Tipu Sultan and in order to support his work, he said that Tipu Sultan has been misrepresented in history books and he is called a fanatic. But these words were actually promoted by the British who had a bitter treachery against him

No doubt, Karnad takes a separate theme in the modern and globalised world. He even justifies his decision of writing on the history of Tipu Sultan and provides ample proofs for this. Since we are analyzing the treatment of history of the Mysore and the ruler in Girish Karnad's *The Dreams Of Tipu Sultan*, a comparative account of the monarch Tipu Sultan and fictional Tipu Sultan are undertaken and in order to avoid the confusion between these two characters, we will represent the former as Tipu Sultan and later as Tipu a head for the convenience in the study.

When we talk about the analysis, then we first focus our attention on the dreams which were seen by Tipu Sultan because the whole play is centered on his dreams. These dreams were inspiration for Tipu Sultan. They motivated him to peer through the rights and wrongs and to justify the right one. These dreams are the sources which inspired Tipu Sultan to fight against bravely and those who attacked his nation.

Karnad uses some of the dreams seen by Tipu Sultan and applies them to his play. He tries to show that these dreams are the predictions which take shape of reality but antithetically in Tipu's life, these are only narrated through Kirmani in the play. In the very first scene, Karnad talks about his dreams which were recorded by Tipu in a letter and were handed over to his loyal employee Kirmani before his death. But, after his death, Kirmani betrayed him and reveals about his dreams to Colonel Mackenzie.

There are many dreams recorded in the real history which were seen by Tipu Sultan and they explored meaning through them. In fact, he introduced a book as the dreams I have had and am having once he dreams of an animal which looked like a cow but striped like a tiger and did not possess hind legs. This dream symbolizes that Britishers are cows, but roar like tigers however due to the absence of hind legs; they can't get victory against Tipu Sultan. Thus, they would be defeated. In another dream, he dreamt of the Idols came to life and sought for salvation. He then got a derelict temple repaired for their salvation. In another dream, the tower of a temple collapses during a festival. He then rushes there and enquires about the safety of the people. He also dreamt of the divine spirits which assist him in winning over the British with the help of the Marathas and the French.

Karnad applies some of these dreams in the play. For instance, he takes his dreams of idols to create a proper scene. Tipu visits a temple with Pooraniya, the finance minister and



find some idols in moving and find some idols in moving states. In another dream, he sees the Marathas as a young woman dressed in male attire. This dream has significance to Tipu Sultan, when he wakes up the morning and realizes that the Marathas have actually tricked him.

In a dream, Tipu dreams of defeating the British with the assistance of his employees like Mis-sadiq, Poornaiya, Nadeem Khan and Qammaruddin who in reality deceived him. Karnad beautifully portrays this dream in the background of the music each person in a cheerful mood. Tipu is willing to celebrate the defeat of the British with the help of his employees and says to all.

Apart from these inspiring dreams, Karnad introduces one more dream in scene - 13, where Tipu feels lonely and depressed. His father Hyder Ali appears in his dreams and blames Tipu for bartering his sons to the British because he could not dare to hit the right nail on their head. Karnad through the Dreams of Tipu shows his potentiality and keen interest to drive out the British from his nation. He shows Tipu, the fictional character that these make beliefs are contrary to the realities around him. Karnad here briefs the real history of Tipu Sultan through these dreams.

If we talk about his success and his failures together, we discover that Tipu Sultan was a great warrior and he never got scared to fight against wrong. For instance he from his youth was fully engaged into the continuous wars until he failed in the fourth Mysore war. The purpose of those wars was to eliminate the British from the nation and to establish a prosperous, flowering and tranquil state.

Girish Karnad's historical plays depict the life of the eponymous hero namely Tipu Sultan in relation to the subject of his kingdom. He appears to be an intelligent person whose way of thinking is not understood by the average people and they are taken to be foolish and impulsive kingdom.

In *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan*, Karnad is preoccupied to a large extent with the visualization of historical incidents through the theatrical medium. An important point to remember is that Tipu himself years to be regarded as a 'modern' king who is capable of resisting onslaught of a new religion and culture.

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