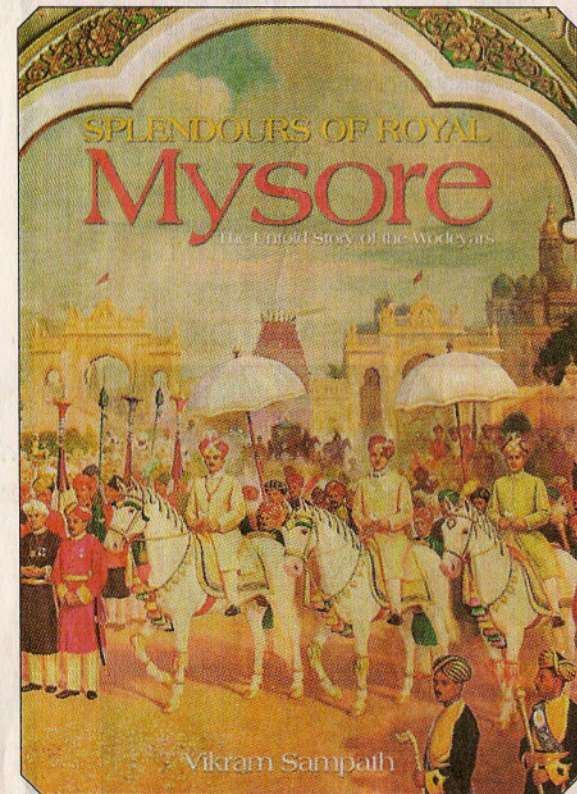


Royal title

THIS BOOK EXPLORES THE MYTHS AND TRUTHS BEHIND THE WODEYAR LEGACY



Splendours of Royal Mysore: The Untold Story of the Wodeyars, authored by Vikram Sampath, is an appealing read to the common book lover and historian alike.

The making of this book after almost fifteen years of self-funded research by a non-historian (engineer and management graduate actually), the influence that decided the presentation style, the organisation of material, the strong need to foster in people a clear self-identity in this fast-paced IT world of which he is an integral part - these alone make for a riveting story.

It was the TV serial, The Sword of Tipu Sultan that portrayed the Wodeyars in very poor light and the consequent rash of protests in Bengaluru that triggered the curiosity of twelve-year-old Vikram to find for himself the truth about the Wodeyars, the longest reigning house in India.

The contradictory accounts of the British, Muslim and Wodeyar court historians compelled him to apply his mind and objectively work out the history of the Wodeyars which is the history of Mysore spanning 600-odd years. This quest for truth

throughout punctures the mythological balloons with carefully constructed logic or boldly tackles controversial questions about the rulers, painting them as human beings with their own strengths and failings, even tracing some of our present day negatives like corruption to our ancestral roots. This book though seemingly voluminous with 726 pages may not be so when one realises that this only ascribes 1.21 pages for every one of the 600 odd years of the event-filled history of the Wodeyars. The choice of personalities for three forewords, the eminent historian, Suryanath U Kamath, the current descendant of the Wodeyar family, Meenakshi Devi Avaru and the former Chief Minister of Karnataka, HD Kumaraswamy gives it a holistic feel marked by authenticity, royal appreciation and political goodwill. This book is to be launched in Chennai by Dr Vjayanthimala Bali, a Kannadiga from the lineage of Mysore court dancers and musicians today at 6pm at the Skills Theatre, No 1, Elliots Beach Road, Besant Nagar.

All of this galvanised him into shaping his research into an extraordinary book. One that would enlighten people about their own past and bring to light the fact that the cultural ethos of the princely state of Mysore made possible the rise of modern Bangalore. He seems to have succeeded in his mission going by reader response - his book already features in his publisher, Rupa & Co's bestseller list.

The distinct feature of this book is the Looking Back chapter that rounds off every section in the book. This chapter

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