



शिवाजी विद्यापीठ मराठी शिक्षक संघाचे विद्वत्प्रमाणित त्रैमासिक

# शिविम संशोधन पत्रिका

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(विद्यापीठ अनुदान आयोग नवी दिल्ली मान्यता अ. क्र. ६४१७५)

वर्ष चौदावे : अंक त्रेचाळीसावा व चव्वेचाळीसावा

जुलै-ऑगस्ट-सप्टेंबर, ऑक्टोबर-नोव्हेंबर-डिसेंबर २०२५ (जोडअंक)

## तंजावर विशेषांक



तंजावरचे सरफोजीराजे (दुसरे)



शिवाजी विद्यापीठ मराठी शिक्षक संघाचे विद्वत्प्रमाणित

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● संपादक ●

नंदकुमार मोरे

● अतिथी संपादक ●

जयवंत दळवी

डॉ. तानाजी हवलदार

● प्रकाशक ●

भरत जाधव

अध्यक्ष, शिवाजी विद्यापीठ मराठी शिक्षक संघ, कोल्हापूर

द्वारा : द्वारकाधिश, साईनगरी, नागठाणे

ता. जि. सातारा - ४१५५१९

● मुखपृष्ठ ●

सचिन भोसले

● मुद्रक ●

भारती मुद्रणालय

८३२, ई वॉर्ड, शाहूपुरी ४थी गल्ली, कोल्हापूर.

फोन नं.: ०२३१-२६५४३२९

ही संशोधन पत्रिका प्रकाशक डॉ. भरत जाधव, यांनी शिवाजी विद्यापीठ मराठी शिक्षक संघ, कोल्हापूर यासाठी भारती मुद्रणालय, कोल्हापूर येथे छापून द्वारकाधिश, साईनगरी, नागठाणे, ता.जि. सातारा - ४१५५१९ येथे प्रकाशित केली. या पत्रिकेत प्रकट झालेल्या मतांशी संपादक, प्रकाशक व मुद्रक सहमत असतीलच असे नाही.

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# A STUDY ON CULTURAL HERITAGE OF MARATHI CULTURE IN THANJAVUR : A HISTORICAL APPROACH

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## Introduction- historical background :

The glorious Maratha empire at Thanjavur existed between 1675-1855 which was one of the excellent and rich empires in India. Thanjavur district, lying in the delta region of the famous river Cauvery, is once part of the erstwhile Thanjavur district in Tamil Nadu. It is known as the granary of the south, with the Cauvery brims with flowing water and the enchanting green fields.

After the defeat of Vijaynagar Empire the Nayaka kings in the south were struggling with each other for their political dominance. The Madurai's Nayaka king ended the monarchy rule by attacking on the Thanjavur around 1673 and enthroned his brother Alagiri. The heirs of the earlier royal family were seeking military assistance from the Adilshah ruler of Bijapur in about 1675. Venkoji Raja the younger brother of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was the founder of Maratha rule in Thanjavur. He came to Thanjavur as per the directions of Sultan of Bijapur to settle the dispute among the Thanjavur Nayaka King and Tiruchirapallai Nayaka King. As the quarrels among Thanjavur Nayaka were continued, the nobles of Tanjore requested the Venkoji Raja who was at the time Tirumalaipati near Thanjavur to take over the rule of Thanjavur from nayaka kings. Venkojiraja fought with Thanjavur nayaka kings and captured Thanjavur. Thus, in 1675 the Maratha Bhosale rule established their rule in Thanjavur. Venkoji Raja ruled the state until his death in 1687. He was succeeded by the following Maratha king namely Tukoji Raja (1728-1735), Ekoji Raja alias Babashahib Raja (1735- 1736), Prathapa Singh Raja (1740-1763), Tulajaji Raja (1764-1787), Amar Singh Raja (1787-1798), Sarfoji II Raja (1798-1832), Shivaji-II Raja (1835-1855). Shivaji-II Raja was the last Maratha Raja in Thanjavur. As he was not having male heir, the East India Company in exercise of sovereign power took the

position of the state. The queen of Shivaji Raja-II adapted her review and adoption took place after the death of Maharaja in 1855. The successors of the last Maratha Raja of Tanjore are still living in both Maratha palace and outside. Thus, the Maratha rule prevailed in Tanjore province for about 180 years.

## Administrative Heritage:

Maratha rulers in Thanjavur divided the state into several divisions and talus for easier administration. *Subadars, Pakathar, Ammaldar, Tasildar, Havildars, Kotvals* were assisted by the king for the ruling of the state. These main points are collected in sarawathi mahal library in Tanjore. The main revenue of the state was derived from agricultural products namely paddy and tax revenue were collected from Mirasdars. Tolls were collected on the products of its weight, taxes were collected on cotton and silk cloth weaving, cultivating gingili and sugarcane and on production of salt. The government administration records were recorded in the official *modi* scripts.

## Social Life And Religious Legacy:

Though the Maratha rulers are from western part of India. Migrated for some specific purpose to south India. Their culture, way of life and pattern of lifestyle differed from local habit but the Maratha rulers mixed with the local traditions and culture and ruled the state for a long period of about 180 years. Local residents were engaged in various types of works in the palace. Thanjavur Maratha rulers were basically Shaivaites. But during Maratha rule many Shiva temples of Vishnu temples were built and many temples were renovated.

## Art, Architecture And Cultural Heritage:

Maratha king encouraged music, dance and literatures. God and goddess images were painted on the walls and roofs of the palace building and in many Hindu temples. During Maharaja Tukoji

Raja rule, music and dances were encouraged. New compositions in dance and music were made. This is a unique contribution of Maratha ruler in dance and music (classical). Serfoji Raja was a patron of traditional Indian arts like dance and music. He authored famous works like 'Kumarasambhava Champu', 'Mudrarakshaschaya' and 'Devendra Kuruvanji' and introduced Western musical instruments like clarinet and violin in the Carnatic music. Serfoji Raja is also credited with inaugurating and popularising if not inventing the unique the Thanjavur Style Of Painting.

The Thanjavur Maratha rulers were basically Shaivaites believing that after death, one would attain Shivapadam (the feet of Shiva). These temples were erected at the very spot where the members of the Maratha royal family were cremated. If the temple was raised in memory of a male member of the family, it housed a Shivalingam; if the shrine was built in memory of a female member, it housed the image of a goddess. The inscriptions on these temples provide interesting details of the Maratha dynasty including the name and titles of the kings and queens and their dates. The special *Pujas* are performed by these people by learned Shivacharyas. The most prominent shrines within this campus are those dedicated to Tuljaji Raja, Pratap Singh Raja, Sarfoji I Raja (the most well-known king of the dynasty) and Shivaji I Raja (the last ruler of the dynasty) and some of their queens. Totally, there are four big temples and sixteen smaller temples surviving in the campus now. This is one of the rarest instances of a group of memorial shrines of an important Hindu dynasty in the whole of India; it is definitely the only surviving group of such monuments in Tamil Nadu. Architecturally, these temples display a fusion of Dravidian styles and the native Maratha and Mughal style masasolaums. These temples are built by bricks, terracotta and lime plaster on a strong granite or laterite base. Some of the temples display sculptural ornamentation. The above temple possesses immense, archaeological, historical, architectural and epigraphically importance. This temple's unique

Group Of Heritage Buildings Is Now Almost In Ruins, Requiring Urgent Restoration For Survival.

### **Serfoji Raja's Contributions:**

Serfoji Raja was basically religious and believed in following the traditional paths of Bhakti. Like his brothers he was granted the *agrarhar* lands to many villagers. The Saraswathi Mahal Library was founded as a palace library by the Nayak kings of Thanjavur (1535–1675), it was however Serfoji Raja who enriched it with priceless works, maps, dictionaries, coins and artwork. The bibliophile that he was, he purchased around 4000 books from different parts of the world and enriched his library with his enormous book collection. Medical treatises in the library collection contained his remarks alongside, in English. His library included treatises on Vedanta, grammar, music, dance and drama, architecture, astronomy, medicine, training of elephants and horses, etc. Serfoji Raja set up the first Devanagari printing press in South India, using stone letters. He sent many Pundits far and wide and collected a huge number of books and rare manuscripts for this library. All the books in the library carry his personal autograph in English. The library contains a record of the day-to-day proceedings of the Maratha court known as the Modi documents, French-Maratha correspondence of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Serfoji Raja while renovating the Brihadeshwar temple documented the history of the Bhosale genealogy in the form of carving inscriptions on the temple. Interestingly, this inscription is known as world's largest inscription

### **Educational Legacy:**

Serfoji Raja founded a school called *Navavidhya Kalanidhishala* where languages, literature, the sciences and arts and crafts were taught in addition to the Vedas and shastras. Serfoji Raja maintained close ties with the Danes at Tarangambadi and visited their schools quite often and appreciated their way of functioning. Serfoji II Raja created charities for educating the peoples. schools were built by attaching with the hostels. Free education with food was provided for the students. Chattrams built under this charity provided shelter and food for the pilgrims.

## Medicinal Heritage :

Serfoji Raja established the Dhanavantari Mahal, a research institution that produced herbal (indigenous medicine) medicine for humans and animals. The institution also treated sick people and maintained case-sheets which have become famous of late. Here, physicians of modern medicine, Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha schools have performed research upon drugs and herbs for medical cure and had produced eighteen volumes of research material. Serfoji Raja also had the important herbs studied and catalogued in the form of exquisite hand paintings.

## Costumes, Jewellery And Food Culture Of The Marathas

Generally, Men wear dhoti and pheta in olden days, while Women wear choli and sadi or lugade. Women wear traditional jewelleryes used *nath*, *thushi*, *kolhapuri saaj*, *putli haar*, *ambada veni phool*, *tode*. Marathas famous food *Pitla*, *Vangyacha rasa*, *Kesari mass*, *Zunka bhakri*, *Pooran poli*, *Sabudana khichdi*, *Mutton kola*.

## Conclusion:

Thanjavur's cultural heritage highlights India's history of cultural synthesis and artistic innovation. The city's tangible and intangible heritage continues to attract tourists and scholars, solidifying its role as the "cultural capital of Tamil Nadu". Contemporary efforts focus on preserving these traditions and artefacts through institutions like the Thanjavur Art Gallery and the various academic programs at Tamil University. While summing up the key aspects of the Maratha's cultural heritage and contribution that includes - The Maratha court actively supported Carnatic music and Sadir (the precursor to Bharatanatyam), ensuring the systematic codification and preservation of these classical forms of art. They fought with the neighbouring rulers namely nayakars, palayakars, mughal rulers and British, French and Dutch people. During the Maratha rule, encouraging art, culture, music, dance and medicine created many charities in and around Thanjavur. The distinctive style of Thanjavur painting, known for its opulent use of gold foil, vibrant colours, and semi-precious stones, flourished under Maratha patronage. King Serfoji II (Serfoji Raja Bhosle) established and enriched

the Saraswathi Mahal Library, which houses a vast and rare collection of manuscripts in various languages, including Tamil, Sanskrit, and Marathi, serving as a primary and vital resource for historical research.

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