CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Literature and art in the past flourished mainly because of the patronage of princes and kings. But for this patronage, literature and art would not have developed. The princes had a twofold purpose in encouraging writers and artists. They would be considered magnanimous and patrons of art while alive. Even after death as long as artists and poets were remembered, their names also would survive.

Queen Elizabeth is known as a patron of Shakespeare, King Bhoja of Kalidasa and Louis - XII of Leonardo, da-Vinci.

In India from ancient times onwards, art and literature were patronised by the court. Emperors and kings, both Hindu and Muslim, boasted themselves as patrons of poets, scholars, singers and painters. They even considered that it was their duty
as rulers to help such great men. They had a high place in the
court and they were not even barred in the harem.

The Marātha princes were also lavish in patronage. The
first Marātha king Chathrapati Śivaji encouraged poets and
scholars and devotional singers. Samarth Ramdas and
Tukkaram used to be worshiped Śivaji.

The Marātha house of Tanjore, though not very powerful
militarily, was not lacking in magnanimity. Though the princes
were not very wealthy, they encouraged poets and scholars so
much that it was their palace that scholars resorted to, for
succour.

Venkoji (Ekoji), Sahaji, Sarabhoji and Tukkoji all these
are famed for encouragement to scholars, poets and artists.
Sahaji, the patron of Nārāyaṇa Dīksīta went one step further. He
established a settlement for poets and scholars in
Śahajirājapuram. This perhaps is the forerunner of the Kālagram
in Madras and the journalist colony in Delhi.
The theme of the play is not entirely new. The theme of this play can more or less be seen in the following plays as well. Malavika is being hidden by Dhārini in Malavikagnimitra. In Adbhutapāṇjara also Līlāvatī is kept away by Devi Uma from the sight of her husband. In Malavikāgnimitra, Viduṣaka plays a helpful part. Here in Adbhutapāṇjara the responsibility is of the minister Medhāvin. In Ratnāvali, Yaugandharāyaṇa takes a key role like wise here in AP Medhavi does it.

The history of India as well as of Sanskrit literature is shrouded in mystery and obscurity. But from literary references and earlier Śilālkhitas we know that the land was divided into a large number of kingdoms. Among such South Indian kingdoms, Thanjavūr is an important one. Thanjavūr is one of the oldest cities in the country having more than 2000 years' historical background. It is situated amidst the vast deltaic tract of the Cauvery river and is known as the granery of South India. Thanjavūr is famed as the cradle of Sanskrit learning in South India.
The history of Thanjavur reveals the fact that Sanskrit learning in Thanjavur had an uninterrupted existence over a period of more than 2000 years under the patronage of different dynasties. Sanskrit learning and culture have flourished under the patronage extended by the Maratha rulers. The golden age of Sanskrit learning of Thanjavur is the period of Maratha rulers.\(^1\)

The most noteworthy achievement of Thanjavur Maratha Court is the renaissance of literature and fine arts. This period has made a good output in Marathi, Telugu, and Tamil, and in the fine arts like music, dance, drama and so on. A number of books have been produced in Sanskrit. A complete survey of the literary development in this period cannot be listed here. In short, the period of Maratha rulers has made a remarkable contribution in quality and quantity to Sanskrit literature.\(^2\)

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\(^1\) K.R. Subrahmanian: The Maratha Rajas of Thanjavur, 1928, p.No. 29 - 34.

\(^2\) (a) T.S Kuppuswami Sastrī: Introduction to Patanjalicarita, Ramabhādra Dikṣita, Kavyamala edition 1894. (b) Southern poets of his times. Indian Antiquity XXXIII 1904, pp.126-142, 176-196.
A glance at the Sanskrit works produced during this period shows that the favourite subjects were Poetry, Drama, Grammar, Advaita Vedānta, Bhakti, Music, Dance, Nyāya, Dharma śāstra etc. Nilakantha Dīksita and Ramabhadra Dīksita have made remarkable contributions in the field of poetry. A good number of “Patanjalies” being known at this time have contributed considerably to the grammatical field of Śaktism. Advaitasiddhānta was revived under the leadership of Sadāśivabrahmendra. Scholars like Bodhendra, Śridhara Veṅkatesā have contributed much in spreading the devotional cult of Nāmasiddhānta and Bhajanapaddhati. The other fields of Sanskrit literature like music, dance etc have made a noteworthy advance during the Maratha rule.

The contribution to Sanskrit learning and literature reached its peak during the rule of the noteworthy gifted

3 (a) Kuppuswami Sastri: Introductions to the Sṛṅgaratilakabhana of Ramabhadra Dīksita, Kavyamala 44, 19-10.
(b) Sivalilamava of Nilakantha Dīksita, Vanivilas press 19-11
Maratha ruler Sahaji Raja of Thanjavur. He loved all form of literature and fine arts. Not only has he patronished literature and fine arts but also contributed a lot with originality and creativity. His life is in totality an example of an all-round culture, high sense of duty, liberal patronage of arts and science. Sahaji Raja of Thanjavur has rightly been called the Bhoja of Thanjavur.5

According to history, King Sahaji ruled the country from 1684 to 1711 A.D. He is the son of King Venkoji alias Ekoji and Dipamba.7

According to a Marathi inscription, King Venkoji had three sons8. All the three sons ruled the country jointly. Sahaji passed away heirless in Saka year 1633 at the age of 40. The most noteworthy achievement of King Sahaji is the renaissance

5 Dr. S. Gopalan: Preface to Sahendravilasa of Sreedhara Venkatesa.

6(b) Sahendravilasakavya of Ayyaval of Tiruvilanallur p.No.7,Saravaraja vilasa of Balakrishna Jagannatha,S.M.L.T,P.No.iii,Sivatratwaratnakalika by Krishnandasasaraswati,TMSSMLS,No.178,Kantimatiparinaya of Cockanatha, P.No. vii - xvii

7 Adbutapanjara Natakakath-Sloka No. 5-9

8 N. Krishnamachariar: HCSL, P.No.240
of literary and artistic activity. He was very keen to discover and encourage the talents in persons of creativity. He himself was a man of letters. He patronised a good number of poets and philosophers in Sanskrit as well as in other vernacular languages. His gesture of presenting Saharajapuran, the modern Tiruvishanallur, to a band of learned scholars is an indication of his love for scholars. The main works of his creativity are Candrasekharavilasa, Sabdaratnasamanvaya, Sabdarthasamgraha, and so on. He was awarded the title of Abhinavabhoja.

COURT POETS OF KING SAHAJI.

A good number of scholars had decorated the court of king Sahaji. Among them forty-five scholars were recipients of the portions of the gift village Tiruvishanallur. A thumb nail picture of the court poets of king Sahaji is depicted below. Of these forty-five eminent scholars, seven were masters of four sāstras Vyākaraṇa, Nyāya, Vedānta and Sāhitya. They are Vāsudeva Dīkṣita, Bhāskara Dīkṣita, Tippā Dīkṣita, Iswara -

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9 Sabdaratnasamanvayakosa of king Sahaji, preface P.No.xxvii
10 Kuppuswami Sastri: Sanskrit Introduction to Patanjalicarita.
Sastrin, Prativasanthavaidyanatha Dikshita, Ramabhadra Dikshita and Trivedi Bhattacharya. The three well known poets of remarkable creativity were Periyappakavi, Vedakavisvara and Mahadevakavi.

VASUDEVA DIKSITA.

 Vasudeva Dikshita is a great scholar in all disciplines of Sanskrit learning. He seems to have belonged to Pallakaceri village. Information about his age, life and works are shrouded in mystery.

BHASKARA DIKSITA.

 Bhaskara Dikshita is the author of the commentary Ratnatulika on the Sridantaasiddhanjana of Krishnanandasarasvati. In the prologue the name of his teacher is

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12 Govt. Oriental Manuscript Library R-2279.
given as Vijayarāghavaśāstri. His parents were Veṅkatapatiyajvan and Naccaṁma. He belonged to the gotra Harita and his native place was Pallakacheri or Kuravarṣeri. He is famous as Sarvatomukhāyajvin.

TIPPĀ ĐIKṢITA.

Tippā Đikṣita is the father of Cokkanātha, the author of the famous play Kāntimatipariṇaya. He is from a Telugu family.

KUPPĀ PANDITA.

Kuppāpanḍita is the son of the great scholar Tippā Đikṣita.

ĪŚVARA SĀSTRIN.

Īśvarasāstrin is the ancestor of the Virarāghava, the commentator Śrīdharaśvēkaraśa's Ākhyāsaṭṭi. The four creative
works of Īśvarasāstrin's available to us are two hymns on Śiva and Pārvati and two plays.

VAIDYANĀTHA DĪKSITA

Vaidyanātha Dīksita is titled with 'Prativasantha'. He is a regular performer of sacrifices. Nothing more is known about him.

KACCHAPESVARA DĪKSITA

Kacchapesvara Dīksita was a great scholar among the court poets of King Śāhaji. Though he gets a good place in folklore and legends, nothing is known of him.

VĪRARĀGHAVA DĪKSITA

Vīrarāghava Dīksita is another court poet of King Śāhaji. Some of the writers have identified Vīrarāghava Dīksita as Vīrarāghava Sāstrīar of Tiruvissanallur. Vīrarāghava Sāstrīar of
Tiruvissanallur who wrote a glossary on the Akhyasasti of Sridhara Venkatesa. He is a writer of the 17th century.\textsuperscript{13}

**AYYAVARU DİKSİTA**

Ayyāvaru Dikṣita is seems to be hailed from a Karnataka family to Tanjore. He is related\textsuperscript{14} to Vanchesvara Yajvan. No more details are known to him.

**VEDAKAVISVARA**

Vedakavisvara is one of the celebrated poets of the time. He is the author of the two allegorical plays Jivananda and Vidyaparinaya. The gifted poet Periyappakavi mentions much on Vedakavisvara in the prologue to his Srngaramanjari-Sahajija.

\textsuperscript{13} Akhyasasti with commentry : Kamakotigranthavali
Kuppuswami sastri - Introduction to Sukasandesa of Ayyavaru Dikṣita P.No.20

\textsuperscript{14}
MAHĀDEVA KAVI:

Mahādeva kavi is a celebrated playwright. Many works are attributed to him. Adbhutadarpana is the only one work which can be established of his creativity by internal and external evidences. He is belonging to Kaundinya Gotra.

KONDĀVADHĀNIN

Nothing is known of this scholar. Rāmabhadra Dīkṣita another a scholar poet mentions, Kondajyautiṣika in the prologue to his work Jānakipariṇayya. Some scholars identify Kondāvadhānin with Kondojistika.

TRIVEDIBHATTĀCHARYA

Nothing is known of him also. Only a mention of his presence as a scholar in the court of King Sāhaji is there.

15 Kavyamala -55
PERIYAPPAKAVI

Periyappakavi is one of the celebrated poets of the Tanjore contribution. His mother was Lakshmi and father Annavásstrin renowned as Patañjalisāstrin. His father’s brother was Vainateya famed as Tārksya Nārāyaṇa, who commented on the last portion of Nyāya work Tatvācintāmaniprakasa of Rucidatta. His eldest brother was Visvanātha Dikṣita the best exponent Siddhāntasiddhānja of Krishnānandasarasvati. Kavitārkkikasārvabhauma Krishnānandasarasvati, the favourite of King Sāhaji, is one of his teachers. Periyappasāstri wrote Śaddarsanasiddhāntasamgraha for the instruction of King Sāhaji.

16 Tanjore catalogue 6227
17 Ibid-7631
Madhurāmasāstri all decorated the court of King Sāhaji. Nothing is known in detail of these court poets.

APPA DĪKṢITA

Kuppuswami Sāstri identify this scholar with Appādvarin of Mayavaram. Dr. V. Ragavan does not agree with this view. He is of the opinion that Appādikṣita is one among the Annāsāstrins the authors of certain vāda tracts in Nyāya.¹⁸

PANCARATNAM OF ANANTANARAYANA SĀSTRIN

He was the son of Mṛtyunjaya and Brhadambha, and grandson of Krishna Dīkṣita. He is the author of many works. The important works of his are Ānānthavallīstotra¹⁹, Gītā Sākara²⁰, Ragavacaritakavya²¹, Sarabhojicarita²².

¹⁸ Ibid - 5860, Sabdaratnavali of Appā Sūri
¹⁹ Ibid - 1946
²⁰ Ibid - 10951
²² Eganell’s Tanjore Catalogue P.162 - B and so on.
MAHĀDEVAVĀJAPEYAYAJVAN

Mahadevavajapeyayajvan is a priest who officiated Tryambharaya’s sacrifice at Svāmimalai. His father Vasudeva Dikṣita is more widely known. He is the author of Balamanorama on the Siddhāntakaumudi, Adhvaramimamsa on the Kutūhalavṛtti, Mahagnisarvasva. The Bodhāyana Darsāpūrṇamāsa Prayogaratna and some works in Śrauta. Mahadeva wrote Subodhini Bodhāyana śrautasūtravyakhyā. He belongs to Srivatsagotra and was son of Visvesvaradhvarin. He had a younger brother Narayana. His wife was Annapūrṇa.

VENKATAKRŚNA DĪKSITA.

He is the author of Natesāvijaya, Uttara campu, Rāmaçandrodaya, Kusālavijayanātaka and

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23 Lid -2064
24 Lid - 2620
25 Lid- 2060
26 Madras D. 115350 printed at Vanivilas press
Sābdabhedanirūpana. His Natesāvijaya shows he was previously at Chidambaram, under the patronage of a Maratha governor of Sivaji. He was the third son of Veṅkatādri Mahopādhyāya of Vādhula gotra and Maṅgambika.

He studied the śastras under Palakacēri Vāsudevādharvarin and Vedānta under the revered Paramāśivendra Sarasvati. After enjoying the patronage of several courts, Seringapatam, Tiruchirapalli and Cenji, he was received by Sāhaji and settled at Sāhajirājapuram where he composed Uttaraçampu and Kusālavijayanataka. No more details are available about him.

VISVAPATI SASTRIN.

Visvapati Sāstrin is a well-known Sanskrit scholar during Sāhaji’s period. He was the first son of Mahādeva Vājapeyayajvin. No work of his is available to us. Moreover, no

27 Madras D. 12222- 3, R.4029(c) 4147
28 Reference in Kusālavijayanataka
29 Ind Ant. 1904 P 181
30 Tanjore Catalogue 5302,5325
work is attributed by any scholar to him also. But his grandson Bāla Dīkṣita is a celebrated commentator on Śrauta. Bodhāyanasrutasutravyakhya\textsuperscript{31} Kārikāsandhikṛtabodha\textsuperscript{32} and Prayogavivrti are his main contribution to Sanskrit literature.

NARASIMHA DĪKṢITA.

Narasimha Dīkṣita is a wellknown scholar of rhetoric. He is the author of famous Aālaṅkāra work Guṇaratnākara,\textsuperscript{33} a good work in praise of Serfoji of Tānjore.

VENKATESVARAMA KAVI.

Venkatesvara Kavi the son of Dakṣiṇāmūrti is one of the dearest pupils of the celebrated poet Rāmabhadra Dīkṣita. He has commented on the Patanjalicarita of his teacher.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid -2063,2067
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid -2635
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid - 5207,5210
Rāmabhadra Dīkṣita\textsuperscript{34}. The other contribution of his is the work Unāḍinīghaṇṭu\textsuperscript{35}. He wrote another work a Prahasana\textsuperscript{36}.

**LAKSMANA SĀSTRIN.**

Laksmana Sastrin is another scholar among the court poets of King Sāhaji. The most important contribution of his is the work Sāharājasabhāsaroṇvarṇī\textsuperscript{37}. No other details are known about him.

**SĀMAVEDI VENKATESVARA SĀSTRI.**

Venkatesvara Sastrī was the son of Śrīnivāsa alias Appā - Sāstrī who later became Pūrṇānandayatī and who in civil life wrote the Prāyaścitadipika and the Upagranthabhāṣya\textsuperscript{38} The author belongs to Kausīka gotra in the village Kandaramānīkkam. He is a prolific writer on the Sāmaveda.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
\textsuperscript{34} & ibid-3827 \\
\textsuperscript{35} & Ibid- 4732 \\
\textsuperscript{36} & Ibid-4633, Madras R. 821 \\
\textsuperscript{37} & Ibid-4235 \\
\textsuperscript{38} & Indian Antiquary 1904, P 191 \\
\end{tabular}
\end{footnotesize}
Rāmabhadrā Dīksita

Rāmabhadrā Dīksita is the most noteworthy scholar poet among the court poets of King Sāhājī. He was born in the family of Caturvedi-ajvins in the village of Kandaramānikyam near Kumbhakoṇam. His father Yajñarāma Dīksita was a great Grammarian. The brother of Rāmabhadrā Dīksita, Ramachandra was a gifted poet on humour. Rāmabhadrā Dīksita studied literature and philosophy from the famous Bālakrishṇa. Moreover he married the daughter of his own teacher. Later he came to the court of King Sāhājī. His devotion to Rāma was remarkable. He was much loved by his pupils. His contemporaries and pupils paid him the most glorious tributes, Bhagavanṭarāya called him in his play Rāghavabhhyudaya, ‘Pratyagṛa-Patanjali and Dvitiya-Prācetasa’.

The main creation of Rāmabhadrā Dīksita is Patanjali-charita, Sṛṅgaratilakabhāṣa and Jānakiparinaya. His other works39 are

39 For an account of Rāmabhadrā Dīksita’s life, see V.S. Ramasvamisastrī Sāhendravilāsakāvyam xxii-130 and I.A xxxii-126
I. Rāmakarṇarasāyanastava

ii. Varṇamālāstava.

iii. Rāmāstaprasastava

iv. Visvagarbhasāta

v. Rāmacitrastava

vi. Rāmaçāpastava

vii. Rāmabhāṇastava

viii. Ācāryastavarajabhūṣaṇa

ix. Rāmāyānasamgraha stotra

x. Rāmatūnirastava
xi. Paribhāṣāvxṛttivyākhyāna.

xii. Uṇādimaṇidipika

xiii. Saddarsana Siddhānta Samgraha

xiv. Šabdabhedanirūpāna

His life was a good example for teacher-student relationship. One of his famous students is Nārāyaṇa Dīkṣita. Nārāyaṇa Dīkṣita is the author of Adbhuta-pāñjara. Adbhuta-pāñjara is a beautiful dramatic piece. A critical study of Adbhuta-pāñjara has been enunciated in the coming chapters.
KING SĀHAIJ AS DESCRIBED BY THE CONTEMPORARY POETS:-

SĀHENDRAVILĀSA OF SRIĐHARAVENKATESA-

The saintly author of Sāhaji’s biography deserves as much notice as the great king whose life he has immortalised by his poetic genius. Śrīdharā Vēṅkatesa, known as Ayyāval is celebrated in South India for his piety and devotion. Besides his religious lyrics Dayāśātaka, Matṛbhūtaśātaka, Tārāvalīśātaka and Ārthārāstotra. He wrote Sāhendravilāsa a poem in eight cantos describing the exploits of his patron, King Sāhaji and of great historical interest in the annals of Hindu dominion in Tāniyore.

KĀNTIMATĪPARĪNAṆAYA.

Cokkanātha’s Kāntimati-parīṇaya, a drama described the marriage of King Sāhaji and Kāntimati. He was the son of Tippādhvariṇi and Narasāmba of Bharadwaja Gotra. He had five brothers of whom one was Yagnesvara. He was the teacher of
Rāmabhadra and a friend of Nilakantha. He lived in Tanjore under the patron of King Śāhaji. He travelled to south Canara to the court of King Bāsava. His Sevantikāparinaya, a drama described the marriage of Bhāsavarāja and Sevantika, the daughter of Mitrāvarman, a prince of Malabar, when the latter having fought with Godavarman of Cochin and was defeated, was imprisoned in the temple of Mukāmba, north of Udupi.

SRNGĀRAMANJARISĀHAJĪYA OF APPĀ DĪKSITA

Appā Dīksita or Appāsāstrin or Periappa Sāstrin was the son of Cidambara Dīksita alias Annan Sāthi and brother of Visvanātha of Srivaśa Gotra. He was a favourite of King Śāhaji of Tanjore. His Srngāramanjarisāhaṇīya is a drama describing the life and history of King Śāhaji and staged at the chaitra festival at Tiruvaiyar (Tiruvadi). His other words are Madanabhūṣaṇa and Gaurimāyūračampu.

\[^{40}\text{M.Krisnacar HCSL P. 243}\]
KOSALA - BHOSALIYAM OF SESĀCALAPATI

In Kosala- Bhosaliyam Sesācalapati describes in 6 cantos the reign of King Sāhaji along with the story of Rāmayana in double entendre. He was the son of Venkatapatyamātya and renowned as Andhrāvakpanini and the recipient of a palanquin and shower of gold from Sāhaji. The author may be the same as the Sesācalapati who wrote the Sāhārajavīlāsamu in Telugu.

DHARMARĀJAVIJAYAÇAMPÚ OF BHŪMINĀTHA

Bhuminātha called Nalla Diṅsita son of Bālaçandra of Kauśikagotra was pupil of Rāmabhadra Diṅsita and wrote Dharmarājajayajacampu on the life of king Sāhaji of Tanjore, who is described here as Abhinava Chōja.
THE BHOSALAVAMSĀVALI OF GANGADHARA

The name Bhosalavamsāvali and the pre-occupation with Śāhaji with whom it stops have been noted and remarked upon, but it has not so far been correctly identified. Its author Gangādhara is one other than the well-known Gangadharādhyavāraṇī, friend of Bhaskaraṇā and author of the Rasikaranjani on Appayya Dīkṣita's Kuvalayananda, and other works. As already pointed out, the post-script in Gangadhara Vajapeyin's Avidikadarsanasangraha in the Tanjore ms. 8244, reveals the contact between Śāhaji and this author; it was at this king's instance that Gangadharādhyavāraṇī summarised the tenets of the five heterodox systems of philosophy in this work similarly, the Rasikaranjani at the same author was also undertaken at the suggestion of Śāhaji as can be seen clearly from its Tanjore Ms. 5205.

44 Tanjore Ms 4232
Sāharajīya of Lākṣmāṇa Kavi

Sāharajīya an Alāṅkāra work with illustration for Alāṅkāras in the form of eulogies on Sāhajī⁴⁵.

Saharajasabhasarovarnini of Laksmana

Saharajasabhasarovarnini, a panegyric by Laksmana, son of Visvesvara Sastrin⁴⁶.

Sumatindrajayaghoṣana panegyric in the form of the Kṣudraprabandhas called Jayaghoṣana, Birudāvali, Gatha, Anantaraprasanga and caṭuṣlokas, in five sections, by Sumatindra⁴⁷.

⁴⁵ Tanjore Ms 5304,5305
⁴⁶ Ibid 4235
⁴⁷ Ibid 4237,4238
SĀḤAVILĀṢAGĪTA OF DHUNDHĪRĀJĀ VYĀSA

Sāḥāvilāṣagīta, a musical composition, by Dhundhirājā-Vyāsa. The king's regular habit of listening to the recital and exposition of the epics and Purāṇas is also attested by the fact that one of the well-known court-poets and scholiasts of the time, Dhundhirājayajvan was the king's Pañčānika, as he subscribes himself in his Sāḥāvilāṣagīta.

SĀḤARĀJĀŚṬAPADI, a similar musical composition, by Sṛṇivāsa.

SĀḤARĀJĀŚṬAPADI

Sāharājāstapadi another musical composition with Śahaji as the hero, in the manner of the Gītagovinda. (Ananymous Tan. Ms. 10959)

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48 Ibid 10957-58
49 Ibid 10957
50 Ibid 4234
51 In Telugu, there are nearly 6 such works glorifying Śahaji