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What is the relation between Marathas and Varanasi?

In the 18th century, India witnessed a political revival of the Indian society with regional dynasties – largely the Marathas making it big in the subcontinent



With the rise of the Marathas, Varanasi witnessed a massive surge in the new construction of Temples and Ghats on the banks of Ganga and the redevelopment of the old ones.

Marathas carried out rebuilding on a grand scale in the eighteenth century and Varanasi once again

regained its Hindu look

The Maratha connection to Varanasi goes back to at least 1590, when Narayan Bhatt a Marathi Brahmin assisted Todarmal in rebuilding the Kashi Vishwanath temple (which had been destroyed by Sikander Lodhi and which was in turn destroyed by Aur@ngzeb).

He was the grandfather of Gagabhatt, who presided over Chhatrapati Shivaji's coronation ceremony in 1674.

Chhatrapati Shivaji is himself known to have halted in disguise at Benares after successfully escaping from Agra, on his way to the

south.

Although not one to base any decision solely on emotional reactions, the destruction of temples in Kashi and Mathura played an important role in Shivaji Raje's decision to open hostilities against the Mughals in 1670.

Following the death of Aurangzeb, Peshwa Balaji

Harishchandra Ghat - renovated in 1740 by Narayana Diksit.

Raja Ghat - built by Maratha chief Bajirao Balaji in 1720. It was slowly rebuilt with stone slabs between 1780 and 1807. The ghat today is still part of the Amritrao Peshwa Annapurna Trust.

Munsi Ghat - built by Sridhar

Narayan Munsi, a finance minister of Nagpur in 1912

Sitala Ghat - renovated by Narayana Diksit in 1740.

Dashashwamedh Ghat - the southern part of the ghat was renovated in 1740 by Balaji Bajirao Peshwa, with further modifications occurring in 1774 by Ahilyabai Holkar of Indore

Scindia Ghat - constructed by Ahilabai Holker of Indore in 1780. It has been subjected to a number of repairs and remodelling over the centuries, in 1829 by queen Baijabai, and in 1937 by Daulatarao Scindia.

Sankata Ghat - built by the Maratha king of Baroda in the late

18th century.

Ganga Mahal Ghat (2) - built in 1865 by queen Tarabai Raje Shinde, a Scindia ruler from Gwalior.

Bhonsale Ghat - built by the Maratha rulers of Nagpur in the late 18th century.

Naya Ghat - built by the Peshwa Amrit Roa, who dedicated this ghat to Ganesh.

Ganesh Ghat - renovated between 1761 and 1772 by Madhavrao Peshwa

Jatara Ghat - built by Madhavrao Peshwa in 1766 as part of the overall renovating of the ghats along this stretch of the great Ganga.

Raja Gwalior Ghat - built by Madhavrao Peshwa in 1766.

Mangala Gauri (Bala or Lakshmanbala) Ghat - built by Bajirao Peshwa in 1735, the ghat was later renovated by Lakmana Bala of Gwalior in 1807.

Panchaganga Ghat - renovated by Bajirao Peshwa in 1735, and Sripatirao Peshwa in 1775

Durga Ghat - Narayana Diksit, purchased land from local resident fishermen and built two ghats: Durga and the succeeding one, Brahma Ghat. Renovations occurred prior to 1800 by Nana fadanavis,

who built a mansion overlooking the ghat known as Phadanavisa Wada.

Gai Ghat - renovated by Balabai Shitole of Gwalior in the early 19th century.

Badri Narayan Ghat - this ghat was formerly known as Mahatha/Matha ghat, Balabai of Gwalior renovated it in the early 19th century