CHAPTER - VII

CONCLUSION

The two adjacent regions of Tinnevelly and Travancore, must necessarily have stood at different times in different relations to each other. During the early Ay, Pandiya and Chola period the southern Tamil speaking areas of Travancore, belonged to the Pandiya Kingdom. But after the discomfiture of the Pandiyas, this state of things was changed and the southern portion of Tinnevelly was included with the Kingdom of Travancore. It was then generally called *Kuda-nadu*, in Tinnevelly a synonym for Malayalam in general.

The rulers of Travanore especially the Ay kings like Ay Andiran, Titiyan, Titiyan II and Nanchil Porunan marked the beginning of regular contacts. The domain of Ay Andiran was the area around the Pothiyil Hills which is the southernmost part of the Western Ghats. He was the most powerful sovereign among the Ay Kings. He patronised Tamil poets especially Mudamosiyar, Kuttavan Kiranar and Odaikilar who had sung songs of praises. The Sangam literature finds reference to one Titiyan who is referred to as
‘Podiyirselvan’ by the poet king Bhutha Pandiyan. Titiyan was succeeded by one Atiyan who ruled between 25 A.D and 75 A.D. During the period of Atiyan, the Ays struggled hard to become independent of the Pandiyas. Titiyan II probably had succeeded Atiyan to the throne. He was succeeded by Nanchil Porunan who is described by the Sangam poets as ‘Nanchil Valluvan’. The date of Nanchil Porunan is fixed as the second half of the 3rd Century A.D.

After the decline and fall of the Ays, certain portions of South Travancore remained under Pandiya rule for several centuries. The Pandiya King Sendan (645-670 A.D) invaded South Travancore. His son Arikesari Maravarman (670-710 A.D) achieved victories at Kottar and captured it. He completed the annexation of Nanchilnad to the Pandiya Kingdom. Kochadayan (710-740 A.D) who had succeeded Arikesari defeated Ay Vel, who held sway over the Western Ghats region in the battle of Marudur. During the reign of Maran Chadayan (765-815 A.D), he marched against the Ay king, Karunadan, probably the successor of Ay Vel. The result of the battle is not known; but it is unlikely that the Ay ruler was completely subdued by the Pandiya ruler. In this encounter Karunadan was assisted by the Cheras and the Pandiya army was driven back as far as
Aramboly. During 900 A.D., Rajasimha succeeded Via Narayana, and he continued to be in possession of South Travancore. It is attested by his inscriptions which are found in large numbers in the region. But during 900 A.D., the Pandiya ruler was defeated by Parantaka Chola I. Thus, South Travancore continued to be under Pandiya domination for nearly five decades.

In the beginning of the tenth Century A.D., the eastern part of South Travancore was annexed to the Chola Empire by Parantaka I (907-944). The inscriptions of Parantaka I at Suchindram Temple support this presumption. But, the organised Chola invasion against South Travancore took place only during the reign of Raja Raja. The earliest inscription of Raja Raja discovered at Darsanamkoplau relates to his $8^{th}$ year of reign. This was followed by the discovery of the inscriptions in the Suchindram Temple which relate to his $10^{th}$ and $14^{th}$ regal years. The fact to be noted is that in the inscriptions of the $10^{th}$ regal year, Suchindram is mentioned as “Nanchinattu Tiruchivindram” whereas in the inscriptions of the $14^{th}$ regal year, it has been mentioned as “Raja Raja Valanattu Tiruchivindram”. Taking note of this, K.K. Pillay said that South Travancore was brought under the Chola supremacy gradually between the $10^{th}$ and $14^{th}$ years.
of Raja Raja. Rajendra Chola, the worthy son of Raja Raja, strengthened the Chola authority in South Travancore. A Siva temple at Cholapuram, 5 kms west of Suchindram built by one of the officials of Rajendra was christened as “Rajendra Choleswaram”. The renaming of Vizhinjam as “Rajendra Chola Pattinam” bears testimony that his supremacy was acknowledged even beyond South Travancore.

Kulottunga Chola (1070-1118) is also said to have occupied South Travancore and even marched up to Vizhinjam and Kanthalur Salai and captured the same. Depending on the Kanyakumari inscription of Parantaka Pandiya one cannot, but take for granted that the Pandiya king was successful in his campaign against Nanchilnad and even against Kupaka, the Venad ruler. The loss of Nanchilnadu in the South further weakened the Chola power which was soon dislodged by the Venad rulers. It is evident from inscriptions and other sources that Venad established its supremacy over certain portions of South Travancore in the first quarter of the 12th Century A.D.
The first Venad ruler who conquered South Travancore was Veera Kerala and he ruled over Venad till 1140 A.D. He was succeeded by Koda Keralavarma (1140-1155 A.D). An inscription of this ruler relating to the first year of his reign found in Suchindram indicates that his sway extended over South Travancore. He was one among the earliest patrons of the Suchindram Temple and he bestowed extensive lands on the temple. He was succeeded by Sri Vira Ravivarma (1155-1164 A.D). His authority was extended up to the eastern part of Nanchilnadu, as is seen from the inscription of 336 M.E. (1161 A.D) which speaks of his gifts of land in Thalakudy to the Puravaseri Temple. It also mentions the administration of Nanchilnadu by royal officers. The village organisation speaks of the rights of the people of Thalakudy, to execute and ratify the royal grants and also to look after the local administration.

The medieval history of South Travancore may be said to have commenced with the reign of Ravi Varma Kulasekara. He was a great conqueror. He was called ‘Sangramithra’ which means ‘sternness in battle’. He raised the status of Venad as a powerful military state by his conquests. He was succeeded by Vira Udaya Marthanda Varma and Ravi Varma respectively. The period between 1350 and 1384
A.D., was an epoch of radiant glory in the history of the Venad royal house. It was the period of the sway of the two illustrious brothers, Ravi Varman and Aditya Varman. It was during their rule; South Travancore witnessed frequent Muslim invasions. The rulers organised a strong and well-equipped army in South Travancore to combat the invasion of the Muslims. Ravi Varma’s inscription found in the Thiruvithankodu Temple registers the fact that he gifted a land for feeding twelve Brahmins in the temple during the Visakam annual festival. After the demise of Ravi Varma, his brother Aditya Varma became the sole ruler of Venad in 1376 A.D. It has been mentioned in an inscription at Krishnan Koil, which suggests that the ‘Krishnan Koil’ was built by the king. He is also described as one who was capable of handling 36 kinds of weapons.

The rule of Chera Udaya Marthanda Varma from 1383 to 1444 A.D was the longest in Travancore history. He was associated with the Suchindram Temple, and it was he who designed the sabha mandapa of the temple. Aditya Varma, the younger brother of Chera Udaya Marthanda Varma became his successor and Rama Varma served as a co-partner in the latter half of the 15th Century. During the last quarter of the 15th Century, Sakalakala Marthandavarma figured
in the history of South Travancore. He ruled it in 1495 A.D. He constructed a temple dedicated to Lord Ganesa at Marungur, a village near Suchindram. His approach towards the settlement of social disputes was much the same as that of his predecessors and he went a step forward and promulgated certain rules regulating the conduct of the “Right and Left Hand Castes” towards each other.

Inscriptional evidences are there to show that the next Venad sovereign who played a prominent role in South Travancore was Buthala Sri Vira Udaya Marthanda. He made large conquests and advanced in the north-east as far as Tinnevelly. He patronised the temples in South Travancore. He gifted some lands in Thalakudy to the Suchindram Temple. Jayantiswara Temple at Thalakudy and Krishnaswamy Temple at Thovalai also received his patronage. He was considerate to the Parava Christians of Kumari Muttam, by releasing them from the stronghold of the local Hindus and relieving them from the burden of the offensive taxes levied on them.

The possessions of certain places in Tinnevelly by the rulers of Travancore in the 15th, 16th and 17th Centuries can be proved by inscriptions. An inscription found on the inner stone wall of the
Cheranmahadevi Temple dated 1439 A.D., makes mention of a grant made by the Travancore king Chera Udaya Marthanda Varma to the temple at that place when the king was residing in the Cheran-Maha-Devi Palace. Another inscription dated 1469 A.D., inscribed on the large bell at Tirukurunkudi, denoting that the bell was presented by the Travancore king Aditya Varma. Yet another inscription dated 1513 mentions that a king of Travancore granted some lands to the temple at Mannarkovil and also making provisions for lighting a lamp in the palace where the king’s uncle died.

The Mannarkovil, mentioned in the inscription, is a village in the Ambasamudram Taluk. Shermadevey is properly Cheran-Maha-Devi. It is stated by the Travancore historians that the kings of Chera occassionally resided there. Further they state that in Cheran-Maha-Devi, Tenkasi, Kalakkad, Tirukurunkudi and Valliyur, the Travancore Rajas resided upto the 17th Century, a fact clearly proved by documents and inscriptions.

From the beginning of the 18th Century the annals of Travancore became historical. In 1726 A.D., the Maharaja of Travancore entered into a treaty with the Madura Government and
secured its support by offering to renew the lapsed attachment to that crown, and to bind himself to pay a certain sum annually. At the same time, a suitable force was supplied for to punish and bring to their senses the Madempimar and other refractory chiefs. After some discussion and preliminary enquiry, the sovereign was successful in obtaining a force consisting of one thousand cavalry, under the command of M. Venkadapathy Nayakan, and two thousand Carnatic sepoys, headed by Thirupathy Nayakan and others, in-charge of fifty sirdars, including Raghava Iyer and Subba Iyer. On the arrival of this force in Travancore, all the Madempimar and other refractory chiefs and insurgents fled, and consequently there was no work for the army, which was however retained for the purpose of over-awing the insurgents.

Immediately they proceeded to the Nayak capital of Tiruchirapalli and entered into an agreement with the Nayaks, by which the Maharaja promised to pay an annual tribute of about 3,000 rupees and obtained from the Governor a force of 1,000 horses and 2000 foot, for the purpose of overpowering the turbulent chiefs and nobles.
The Governor ordered one of his agents Alagappa Mudaliyar to proceed with a sufficient number of men and horses to Travancore and institute enquires into the claims of Papu Thamby, giving him authority to enforce the same if found valid.

The Mudaliyar set out from Tiruchirapalli, and arrived at Udayagri, where he commenced to institute the enquiry into the claims of the Thamby. The Maharaja, on learning this, deputed the State Secretary Ramayyan and his assistant Narayana Iyer to the Mudaliyar, and they were furnished with documents to prove the absurdity and fictitious character of Papu Thamby’s claims.

When Papu Thamby was utterly unable to produce any documentary evidence in support of his pretended rights, Rama Iyer fully proved the claims of the Maha Raja to his uncle’s throne. The Mudaliyar was very indignant with Papu Thamby, and his false complaints was at once rejected. He was told that he should be loyal and obedient to his king in accordance with the customs of the country.

The Maharaja informed the Mudaliyar of the renewed outbreak of a rebellious spirit among his chiefs, and asked him to place one
half of his force at His Highness’ disposal. The Mudaliyar complied with this request and returned to Tiruchirapalli loaded with presents.

In 1734 A.D., the Maharaja of Travancore annexed Elayadathu Swarupam, embracing Shenkottai, Kalakkad, Karkudi, Valliyur, on the Tinnevelly side, and Kottarakaray, and Pathanapuram, on the northern limits of Travancore. The Raja Veera Kerala Varma, who was in-charge of those territories, was a relative of Travancore and died leaving a princess as his successor. The administration of the State was conducted by a Sarvadhikariakar, a very unscrupulous person, and anarchy began to prevail in the province. The Maharaja called the minister to Travancore and pointed out to him various instances of mal-administration and banished him from the country in disgrace. A proper and fit man was appointed to the responsible post of Sarvadhikariakar to the State, and the Maharaja took the government of the principality into his own hands, advising the Rani to come and reside at Trivandram, or to remain at Kottarakarai in her own palace as she pleased. The Rani preferred the latter course.

About this time, a strong party of marauders, headed by Chanda Sahib and Bada Sahib, relatives of Dost Ali Khan, the Nawab
of Arcot, who were permitted to wander about for the purpose of securing a principality for the Nawab’s son, and also to plunder for themselves in the dominions of the native princes, entered the territories of Travancore by the Aramboly gate. They took possession of Nagercoil, Suchindram, burnt the temple car, mutilated many of the images of the temple and perpetrated many other deeds of atrocity and devastation, the favourite process generally adopted by the Muslim rulers.

On knowing this, the Maharaja of Travancore ordered his Dalawai Ramayyan to march an army and drive the marauders out of Travancore, but on meeting them he found them powerful in horse, and his own force was no match for the Muslims. However, the Dalawai challenged them and commenced a battle, but his efforts did not yield his usual success. But the Dalawai had reason to know that the object of the party was principally to secure pecuniary gain, and consequently they were made to retreat without offering resistance to his army.

During the continuance of war in North Travancore, several changes took place in the government of the Pandiyan provinces,
including Madurai, and Tiruchirapalli, and the sovereignty finally fell into the hands of the Nawab of the Carnatic. The Maharaja’s attention having been directed, for a long time past, to the management of the internal affairs of his kingdom and the suppression of the rebellion in the north, he had neglected adopting measures for the protection and maintenance of his eastern possessions, including Valliyur and Kalakkad. The Nawab’s Governor at Tiruchirapalli took advantage of this opportunity and annexed those tracts to the Madurai province, and thus the Maharaja was deprived of those places for a long time.

In 1752 A.D., Mudimiah, the Nawab’s Viceroy at Tiruchirapalli, established himself as an independent chief, and being a very covetous man, disposed of villages and territories on receiving sufficient consideration for them. The Maharaja, understanding this disposition of Mudimiah, deputed Ramayyan Dalawai to Tinnevelly, when Mudimiah had arrived on a visit. The Dalawai represented the Maharaja’s ancient claims to the territories in the east. Possession of the country lying between Kanyakumari and Kalakkad, to the extent of about 30 miles, including Valliyur, was obtained for a sufficiently large consideration. Ramayyan Dalawai returned to Trivandrum after stationing about 2,000 of the Travancore Maharaja’s force at
Kalakkad, for the protection of the districts thus purchased by Travancore.

In 1755, A.D., Mohammad Ali, the Nawab of Carnatic, wished to suppress Mudimiah, who had proved refractory and had proclaimed the sole ruler of the PANDIYAN Empire. Therefore, the Nawab appointed his General Maphuz Khan and sent him a small force requesting the Nawab’s allies, the English at Madras, to send an army to support Maphuz Khan, not only in assuming his office, but also in bringing the inhabitants into subjection. Colonel Heron, with 500 Europeans and 2000 Natives, was ordered to Tiruchirapalli under the pretext of assisting Maphuz Khan, but probably the English too had an eye on the beautiful and highly productive Pandiyan Empire, comprising the rich countries of Madurai, Tiruchirapalli and Tinnevelly.

The allied forces arrived at Tinnevelly on March 1755 A.D., after having reduced Madruai on their way. When this news reached Kalakkad, the Travancore army, consisting of 2,000 sepoys stationed in that fort, finding that they were no match for the combined forces of the Nawab and the English, the Travancore Commander
abandoned the fort of Kalakkad and withdrew the army to Thovalai. In April 1755, Maphuz Khan, took charge of the fort and established his authority there. He then went to Tinnevelly and Colonel Heron returned with the English force to Tiruchirapalli.

Mudimiah, who ran away from Tinnevelly, found an asylum under the protection of Puli Thevar, a Poligar of Nelcatansevval. On the departure of the English troops from Tinnevelly to Tiruchirapalli, Mudimiah applied to the Maharaja of Travancore for assistance and urged on him to take back the lost territory of Kalakkad. Puli Thevar also offered his resistance, as that Poligar for a long time was a dependant of Travancore. A strong force, consisting of 2,000 infantry and an equal number of cavalry, was dispatched from Travancore, accompanied by the Prince and Mudimiah, and without much resistance, Kalakkad was taken.

However, the Maharaja of Travancore, thinking that such a proceeding would offend the English Government, ordered the withdrawal of his troops for sometime, and postponed all operations till he made himself sure that the retaking of his usurped territories would not offend the English. The Maharaja subsequently ordered
back a sufficient force, under the command of Captain D’Lanoy assisted by Puli Thevar, the Poligar. Maphuz Khan’s troops were defeated, the Kalakkad fort captured, and the 500 infantry and 200 cavalry, who defended it, were taken prisoners. Thus, the Maharaja of Travancore extended his domain from Periar in the north and Kalakkad in the south.

When days went on, Maphuz Khan, who was stationed at Tiruchirapalli, rebelled against his master and so he was seriously displeased with Maphuz Khan. On account of his disobedient and refractory conduct, the Nawab contemplated to appoint a new Governor in the place of Maphuz Khan. A very able man named Yusuf Khan was appointed and sent as successor to the rebellious Maphuz Khan.

On coming to Tiruchirapalli, Yusuf Khan found it difficult to subdue the refractory Governor and sought the help of the Maharaja of Travancore. The Carnatic Nawab and the English East India Company at Madras requested His Highness at the same time to co-operate with Yusuf Khan in the subjection of the refractory Khan and the Maharaja gladly agreed to their wishes. He then immediately
ordered to join Yusuf Khan, 5000 men under the Commander of Thambi Kumaran Chempakaraman, who was stationed at Thovalai. Moreover, 10,000 men from Quilon were sent through Ariyankavu Pass to Shenkottai. Yusuf Khan was now the head of a powerful army consisting of 20,000 men, which enabled him to drive away the Poligar of Vadagarai. Subsequently, Maphuz Khan also fled from there. Yusuf Khan then established his power.

In order to acknowledge the readiness with which the Maharaja lent his support, Yusuf Khan restored all His Highness eastern possessions, and Kalakkad once again became a part of Travancore. But the Maharaja, did not retain possession of Kalakkad, because he lost this portion of his territories under very peculiar circumstances.

As days went on, Yusuf Khan, the Nawab’s Governor, became disobedient to his master and began to shake off the Nawab’s authority and establish himself as an independent chief. To accomplish this object, Yusuf Khan secured aid from the French in India. He had also already applied to the Maharaja of Travancore for assistance, offering all the territories west of the town of Tinnevelly, including Palayamkottai, which had once belonged to Travancore.
But the wise Maharaja declared that whatever may be the prospect of gain before him by aiding Yusuf Khan, His Highness would not go against his old ally, the Nawab, and would not take arms against the English.

The Maharaja sent a strong force to Tiruchirapalli to co-operate with the combined force against Yusuf Khan. Knowing fully well that it was difficult for him to fight with the combined forces, he was thoroughly disappointed and ran away. But later on he was hanged by the order of the Nawab in 1762 A.D.

When the successor of Yusuf Khan came to power, he thought that it was proper on his part to assume possession of all the countries lying on the eastern side of the ghats, as belonging to the Pandiyan Empire, and accordingly not only Kalakkad, but also Shenkottai and all the other eastern possessions of Travancore were annexed to the Nawab’s dominions.

Soon after the deceSSION of the successor of Yusuf Khan, the Maharaja of Travancore despatched a special messenger called Manik Lalla to Madras and represented the injustice of the Nawab’s Officers in unlawfully annexing territories belonging to Travancore. But, the
Muslims potentate would not listen to the representation of the Maharaja’s agent. Therefore, His Highness was under the necessity of seeking the mediation of the Governor of Madras. Though he once confirmed the claims of the Maharaja to get the districts of Kalakkad and other possessions, he wavered in his opinion then. After a good deal of discussion, the Nawab agreed to give some of the Travancore territories including Shenkottai and Cape Comorin.

The Mohammadan chief was not satisfied with the unlawful annexation of Kalakkad District which was the legitimate possession of Travancore from time immemorial, and was recently required by purchase from Mudimiah. That purchase was confirmed by two of his successors, the Nawab himself, and by the Honourable East India Company. Therefore, the Nawab now pressed a demand for the few previous year’s revenue on the Kalakkad District.

During this critical period, Hyder Ali of Mysore invaded South India. The war was continued by the East India Company and the Maharaja of Travancore assisted them to the extent that lay in his power. Travancore regiments of infantry and cavalry placed at the disposal of divisional Commanders of the Company were taken to
distant places, such as Calicut, Palghat and Tinnevelly. They behaved remarkably well.

After strongly fortifying the northern and eastern frontiers of Travancore, the Maharaja sent a portion of his army under the able Officers to the north, to co-operate with the Bombay army, under Major Abington at Calicut. The troops of his His Highness were engaged in the war and were successful in their united actions. Another portion of the Travancore Army was despatched to co-operate with the British army in Tinnevelly against Hyder Ali, who was stationed at that town for a period of two years.

In 1784 A.D., His Highness the Maharaja in order to perform a religious pilgrimage to Rameswaram and to satisfy his curiosity to see some other parts of the country in the east and south of Travancore. He also proposed to see districts of Tinnevelly and Madurai on his way to and from that renowned Hindu pilgrims. His Highness took great care to inspect and examine all the important irrigation works, roads and bridges, satrams or choultries built for the comfort and convenience of the public in Tinnevelly and Madurai. This was the chief object of his tour.
On his tour to Rameswaram, the Maharaja of Travancore, with the useful prudence and faithful attachment to his allies the English, resolved to see the messenger of the Sultan or receive any communication from him, except in the presence of a British Officer. His Highness wrote to the Governor of Madras Sir Archibald Campbell, to depute an Officer of integrity and ability to the Maharaja’s Court, with whom His Highness might consult on some important points connected with the Sultan’s mission. The Governor was quite delighted with the Maharaja’s prudence and wisdom and ordered Major Bannerman, then stationed at Palayamkottai, to proceed to the Maha Raja’s Court with a small detachment under his command.

Further, according to their agreement, two regiments commanded by Captain Knox were stationed near Aycottah in the northern frontier of Travancore in the year 1788 A.D. At the same time, as a medium for communicating between the Maharaja and the Madras Government, Mr. George Powney, a Civil Officer under the English East India Company, was also stationed in Travancore. He may be reckoned as the first Political Resident and British
representative in the Maharaja’s Court. Mr. Powney was the Collector of Tinnevelly from 1794. The celebrated Colonel Macaulay was the Resident of Travancore from 1800.

On the cession of Tinnevelly to the British Government by the Nawab of the Carnatic in 1801, it was found that the Nawab claimed the district of Shenkottai, a portion of Travancore situated to the east of the ghats, as one of the Zamindaries. It was also asserted that this claim was admitted by the Raja of Travancore, who had regularly paid *peishcush* to the Zamindar of Shenkottai and to the Nawabs. But the Travancore authorities did not admit that Shenkottai was ever a Zamindary under the Nawab and the cession of Shenkottai with Travancore continued for a long time.

In 1811, the Travancore Raja was succeeded by Rani Lakshmi Bai. She assumed charge of the Government till 1814, during which time the British Resident, Colonel Munro, acted also as Minister, and by his judiciary measures completely relieved the condition of the country. Rani Lakshmi Bai was succeeded by her eldest son, and the country was, during his minority, successfully managed by her sister as Regent, under the counsels of the British Resident.
From 1840 to 1860, for a period of twenty years, the administration of Travancore was controlled by General Cullen. In 1851, according to the suggestion of the Resident for securing the Shenkottai side, a compact district completely protecting all the passes into Travancore, a new delimitation of the eastern frontier was effected. In return for the additional tracts thus secured in Shenkottai, lands south of Panakudy on the other side of the ghats were given over to the Company. Thus ended the conflict between Tinnevelly and Travancore regarding the delimitation of Kalakkad and Shenkottai.