CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

The two adjacent regions namely Travancore and Tinnevelly have stood at different times in different relations to each other. Generally however, those relations seem to have been peaceable. During the early Pandiya and Chola period the Southern Tamil speaking region of Travancore, called Nanchiltndu, together with Purattayanadu, the region in which Cape Comorin is included, appear to have belonged to the Pandiya kingdom. At a later period, during the disappearance of the Pandiyas, this state of things was reversed and the southern portion of Tinnevelly seems to have been included with the kingdom of Travancore. Even in the 15\textsuperscript{th} and 16\textsuperscript{th} Centuries Travancore possessed a number of villages in Tinnevelly. They were Cheranmahadevi, Tirukurunkudi, Kalakkad, Mannarkovil, Thrikaloor, Tenkasi, Valliyur and other possessions in the east. But from the commencement of the 18\textsuperscript{th} Century, the Travancore annals became really historical. Marthanda Varma, the Maker of Modern Travancore, Rama Varma and others fought valiantly even with the rulers of Carnatic Nawabs and never allowed them to occupy the
regions that belonged to Travancore. Their diplomatic relations with the East India Company and the Dutch during this period are worth to be studied in detail.

**Scheme of Study**

Research on any topic in history or social science is based on a functional basis. This is called the scheme of study. It consists of the importance of the topic, purpose, area, period, scope and limitations of the study, hypothesis, sources and chapterisation.

**Importance of the Study**

The present study on the topic “*History of Political and Diplomatic Relations between Travancore and Tinnevelly (1740-1851)*”, is a study of the political and diplomatic relations with the erstwhile State of Travancore and Tinnevelly. A study of this kind is of special interest to historians as well as to the students of political history and other scholars. Further, a study of this kind is of greater use and value in elucidating certain political affairs between these two regions.
Purpose of the Study

1. To study and investigate the relationship between the rulers of Travancore and the Nayaks of Madurai who invaded and occupied the regions of Tinnevelly and brought them under their regime.

2. To study how the rulers of Travancore fought against Nawabs and their diplomatic relations among themselves.

3. To study in detail about the invasion of Chanda Sahib and Bada Sahib when Maharaja Marthanda Varma was engaged in fights against Kayamkulam in the year 1740.

4. To study in detail about the circumstances that led to the battle of Kalakkad in 1755 and how Marthanda Varma pressed his claims over some regions in Tinnevelly and won back Kalakkad.

5. To describe in detail the role played by Colonel Cullen, the Resident of Travancore, regarding the new delimitation of the boundary disputes between Travancore and Tinnevelly in 1851.

Area of the study

Certain major wars took place between the rulers of Travancore and their enemies in and around Tinnevelly and the Eastern Frontier of Travancore. Accordingly, the area of the study is confined not only Travancore but Tinnevelly also. The suggestions given by Colonel Cullen, the Resident of Travancore, helped to put an end to the series
of disputes between Travancore and Tinnevelly and led to the general socio-economic prosperity of both the regions.

**Period of the study**

The period of the study (1740-1851) is significant in the history of the Travancore and Tinnevelly regions because of fixing of Kalakkad as the boundary between those two regions, for which there was always quarrel and conflicts among the rulers of Travancore and Tinnevelly. The study ends with the year 1851 in which, according the suggestion of the Travancore Resident Colonel Cullen, a new delimitation of the Eastern Frontier was effected.

**Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study is not restricted to one or a few aspects of political and diplomatic relations between Travancore and Tinnevelly. It is an elaborate study which covers all aspects such as the relation among the rulers of Vijayanagar, the Nayaks, the Nawabs and the kings of Travancore. Further, the study gives a graphic account of how the Travancore army defeated Maphuz Khan in the battle of Kalakkad in 1755. Above all, the study explains in detail the anxiety of the Maharajas of Travancore to keep up friendly relations
with the English East India Company and the Dutch now and then to protect Travancore from the invaders from the north.

**Limitation of the Study**

The study has certain minor limitations from the view of the sources. One limitation is the lack of literature on the political and diplomatic history of the regions of Travancore and Tinnevelly. Yet, an attempt has been made to set right the limitation by collecting data available in the archives of Kerala and Madras for the preparation of this thesis.

**Methodology**

The methodology employed for the study is descriptive and analytical. The writing procedure adopted here in based on “A Manual of Thesis Writing” by Arthur Cole and Karl W. Bigelow. All efforts have been made to make the procedure uniform and consistent.

**Hypothesis**

The thesis is an attempt to bring out the anatomy of the political and diplomatic relation of Travancore and Tinnevelly which necessarily invites the attention of the modern historians for its importance. The struggle between the rulers of these two regions
awakened a political consciousness among the people of the these two regions from the middle of the 18th Century. Their struggle underwent different overtones as a result of varied political developments. The well organized and intensified struggle of the Travancore rulers during 1740-1851, is an event of major political and diplomatic significance. This forms the hypothesis of the present thesis.

**Review of Literature**

This thesis is mainly based on primary as well as secondary sources. The primary sources are classified into archival sources, archaeological materials and published Government documents. Published Government documents include Census Reports, Administrative Reports, Departmental Annual Reports, Manuals, Digests, Annual Statistical Abstracts, Acts and Proclamations, Regulations and Proclamations, Departmental Publications and Periodicals published by the Government.

The records of the Madras Government form the most important of the sources for this period. The Military, Public and Revenue Consultations contain the correspondence exchanged between the local powers and the Government as well as the
intercepted letters of enemies. The dispatches which passed between the Madras Government and the Board of Directors in England provide valuable reviews of the situation from time to time. The reports of the Collectors, Commissions and Committees appointed by the Government then and there deal elaborately with the problems that confronted the people and the Government. The papers relating to disputes on successions in the native states or disputes of native powers with the British Government contain several records in support of their respective claims.

Starting from 1657 the records of the Factories at Fort St. George, Fort St. David and Anjengo business - like events were recorded as they were witnessed or heard. Since these records were quite contemporary they are thoroughly reliable. For the period under study the Madras Government records help us a good deal; and these records have to corroborate or modify information gathered from elsewhere.

Photostat copies of 950 letters exchanged between the Jesuit Fathers who were serving in India, and the Procurator General for the South at Rome, and also the friends of the Jesuits in Europe are
available at Shenbaganur (Kodaikkkanal). Some of these letters were translated by Fr. J. Betrand of the Society of Jesus, and embodied in *La Mission Du Madure*, published in 1847-54. Besides these volumes there are Leon Besse’s *La Mission Du Madure* (1914) and Lockman’s *Travels of the Jesuits* (1762), several Jesuit letters are incorporated in these volumes. There are still several documents that are not published and their copies are available at the Jesuit Archives, Shenbeganur. Most of the letters pertaining to the period under study are in French. Records on Marudhus of Sivaganga and the Rajas of Ramnad available here effectively fill the gaps.

Though the main theme of these writings is religious, they incidentally give full insight into the contemporary history of the country. Many of these Christian Fathers had access to the Marava court and the Madura court and were able to get first-hand information. They give a full picture of the state of affairs of the Tinnevelly region in the 16th, 17th and 18th Centuries. Besides narrating their own activities of preaching and conversion, these Fathers have noticed the social, political and economic conditions of the land which influenced their activities. Therefore, these letters constitute one of the primary sources for the construction of the
history of the Tamil country, especially the early history of Tinnevelly.

The records available with the local powers like Ramnad, Sivaganga and Pudukottai provide first hand information and help to reconstruct the history of the respective principalities as well as Tinnevelly and Travancore. The Revenue Accounts called the olugu olai available in the Ramnad Samasthanam Office and Sivaganga Palace furnish details about the revenue history of the respective States and their relation to the Nawab in that respect. The Copper Plates issued by these powers give information about the people’s role in their fight for independence.

The Pudukottai Samasthanam Records depict the growing desire of the British to interfere in the affairs of the native powers in general and the Nawabs in particular. They throw much light on the political and diplomatic affairs in and around the regions of Tinnevelly.

The official historians, mostly on palm - leaves kept in all Palayams, deal with the history of the Palayams right from their origin to the modern period. The correspondence exchanged between
the *Palayagars* (Poligars) throw fresh light on the subject. The private records of the Medai Dalawai Mudaliyar family, Tinnevelly, form another source of information. They are a class in themselves and are of remarkable value for the political, administrative and social history of the time.

Secondary sources are used substantially to corroborate the date supplied by primary sources. They include contemporary and semi-contemporary writings in the form of books, published theses, newspaper reports and periodicals both contemporary and back volumes. The veracity of the sources is tested through cross-examination. The sources have been analysed both intensively and exhaustively so as to eliminate the charges of bias.

The sources mentioned above relating to Tinnevelly are preserved in the Tamilnadu Archives, and Madras University Manuscript Library. Apart from these, the data found in various other libraries and information collected through eminent scholars who did research on this particular field, form a good deal of useful sources.

The records and published works relating to Travancore are preserved in the State Archives, Nalanda, Trivandram, the Kerala
State Public Library, Trivandrum and Kerala University Library, Trivandrum. They furnish a lot of information about the political, history of the rulers of Travancore, particularly their fight with the foreign invaders and their administration in general.

**Chapterisation**

This thesis is organised in seven chapters including Introduction and Conclusion. The first chapter, ‘Introduction’ of the thesis deals with the selection and importance of the history of political and diplomatic relations between Travancore and Tinnevelly from 1740 A.D to 1851 A.D. The primary and secondary sources available for this study are also mentioned.

In the second chapter, the researcher traces the physical features of Travancore and Tinnevelly. The chapter gives an account of natural divisions, mountains, hills and passes of these two regions in detail.

The third chapter explains in detail the early Travancore kings and their relation with Tinnevelly. The chapter describes in detail about the history of the ancient kings such as the Ays, the Pandiyas,
the Cholas, the rulers of Vijayanagar, the Nayaks, the Nawabs, the kings of Travancore and their relation among themselves.

The fourth chapter is about the invasion of the Carnatic Nawabs and their invasion in Travancore and Tinnevelly. In 1732 Chanda Sahib and Bada Sahib, two relations of the Nawab of Arcot entered the rich plains of Nanchilnad with a predatory force through Aramboly Pass and plundered the lands between Suchindram and Kottar including the famous temple of Thanumurthi. Marthanda Varma, the Maharaja of Travancore, sent his Dalawai Ramayyan to fight with them, but the Dalawai most wisely turned them out by giving them some money and hastened to fight the more important wars.

A vivid description is given in the fifth chapter captioned, “The Battle of Kalakkad and the Settlement with Travancore”. Kalakkad and Valliyur were two villages in the district of Tinnevelly, which originally belonged to Travancore. In days when they were reflected, the Nawab of Arcot seized them and made them of his own. Marthanda Varma wished to have them back. When the Nawab’s power had declined, Mudimiah, the Governor of his Southern
Provinces, was an avaracious man who could be attracted by the glitter of gold. So Marthanda Varma pressed his claims over the lost district and won back.

Soon, however, there was a change in the affairs of Tinnevelly. Mohammad Ali, the Nawab of Arcot, sent his brother Maphuz Khan to replace Mudimiah who was growing more and more independent. Maphuz Khan, with the help of English troops, drove out Mudimiah and even took the fort of Kalakkad. Mudimiah escaped to Travancore and made common cause with Maharaja Marthanda Varma. In the battle of Kalakkad, the Travancore army defeated Maphuz Khan and put him to flight in 1755. Kalakkad once again became a part of Travancore.

Mohammad Ali, the Nawab of the Carnatic again claimed Kalakkad as his territory, and as he was a friend of the English East India Company, the Maharaja was persuaded to withdraw his troops from there. But the Nawab was not able to keep order in Kalakkad when the British soldiers were, withdrawn for service in Madras against Hyder Ali. Shenkottai was already in open revolt against the Nawab and Travancore had several villages there. When the Maharaja
found that the eastern borders of Travancore presented a horrible scene of anarchy, he decided to restore order there and so occupied both Kalakkad and Shenkottai. Having done so, he requested the English at Anjengo to negotiate with the Nawab and bring about a settlement of the problem. The English at Anjengo were given many concessions such as permission to erect a flag-staff at Vizhinjam and to build a factory at Verapoly near the Dutch Settlement of Cochin. It was also promised that all the pepper in the country would be given to them if a favourable settlement was made. However, Engineer Call who was sent by the Madras Government to arbitrate between the disputants, decided that Travancore should give up all claims over Kalakkad and take in return the village of Shenkottai and Cape Comorin from the Nawab. In 1768 a letter was sent to the Maharaja by the Nawab of the Carnatic, in which, he however claimed a peishkush or rent from the Maharaja every year for these places. It was not a very creditable bargain for Travancore, but the anxiety of the Maharaja to keep up friendly relations with the English Company seemed to have prevailed on him to accept the term.

The sixth chapter is about the “Fixing of the Tinnevelly - Travancore Boundary” in the year 1851. On the death of Swathi
Thirunal, his younger brother, Uthiram Thirunal was installed in the throne. He confirmed Krishna Rao as Dewan. He was Dewan for over a decade (1947-1857) and during all these years Resident Colonel Cullen, the Maharaja and the Dewan pulled together as a team. The result was that the administration went on smoothly.

In 1851 according to the suggestion of the Resident for securing on 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.

The conclusion of this study is the seventh chapter. In it, the observation, findings and how the series of disputes between Travancore and Tinnevelly helped in cementing the relationship between the rulers of Travancore and Tinnevelly are discussed in detail.