INTRODUCTION

Thoothukudi, a port city of Tamilnadu has a very ancient past. It is situated on the Eastern coast of Thoothukudi district in South India and previously it was in the Tirunelveli District which has very meager number of ports, when compared to the Western Coast of South India. The important ports of Eastern Coast of India are Kolkata, Paradeep, Visakhapatnam, Chennai and Thoothukudi. The Tamils had a long maritime contact with the West and East through their port cities. Some of them were Korkai, Kayal, Kaverioppampatnam and Thoothukudi. This port city, Thoothukudi, is now the Head quarters of Thoothukudi District.

It is situated 58 km from Tirunelveli. Some of the famous neighbouring villages located around Thoothukudi are of historical importance. They are Aditchanallur, Ettayapuram, Kayattar, Kayalpatnam, Panchalamkurichi, Maniyatchi and Ottapidaram.

Geographically Thoothukudi, is on the North West seashore of the gulf of Mannar, near Pamban passage and between the mouth of Tamiraparani and Vaippar and it is a terminus of the Southern Railway.

Thoothukudi belongs to the category of coastal land or neythal. It is one among the five divisions of land of the Tamils. Thoothukudi has a land area of 1,855 acres. It is at the latitude of 8°48’ and longitude of 78° 12’. It was a very
small place in the beginning and later it became one of the major port cities in South India.

Thoothukudi is located in the very down South Peninsular of India and it is at present one of the major ports of India. Thoothukudi is a municipal town and an important port. It is the headquarters of the Collector, a Superintendent of Police, a Port officer, Tahshildar and a Sub-Registrar. It also contains the offices of the Superintendent of Pearl and Chank fisheries, the court of sub-Judge and a District Munsif, the Head Office of the Tamil Nadu Mercantile Bank and the usual Post and Telegraph offices and so on.

It is well connected by land, sea, and rail routes. Most of the European powers came to India, occupied and controlled Thoothukudi.

In the decades of the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of a new and younger group within the Indian National Movement. The new group was called the extremist party led by Tilak. The efforts of Tilak paved the way for the development of the next stage of the national movement.

The followers of Tilak advocated the adoption of Swaraj as the goal of the Congress to be achieved by more self reliant and independent methods. The voice
of Tilak echoed in the remote corner of south India in Thoothukudi by V.O.Chidambaram Pillai.

Being an extremist V.O.Chidambaram Pillai like his leader, advocated the boycott of foreign goods and use of Swadeshi goods. The economic Boycott of British made goods and use of Swadeshi or homemade product encouraged Indian industries and at the same time it injured the British interest in India. As he wanted to challenge the British trade, he started the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company in order to help the native Indian in their sea trade.

SURVEY OF LITERATURE:

Company’s formation and Growth of Swadeshi Movement in Thoothukudi (1905-1911).

SCHEME OF THE STUDY:

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

IMPORTANCE OF THE TOPIC:

The present study of the topic, “Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company: Genesis And Growth of Swadeshi Movement in Thoothukudi (1905-1911)” is an important study with regards to freedom struggle in Tamilnadu. Thoothukudi became very important centre of Swadeshi movement in Tamilnadu. V.O.Chidambaram Pillai played a vital role to spread Swadeshi movement in Thoothukudi. He started Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company against British Steam Navigation Company. Being an extremist V.O.Chidambaram Pillai advocated the boycott of foreign goods and use of Swadeshi goods. The economic Boycott of British made goods and use of Swadeshi or native made product encouraged Indian industries and at the same time it injured the British interest in India. As he wanted to challenge the British trade, he started the Swadeshi Steam
Navigation Company against British Steam Navigation Company in order to help the native Indians in their sea trade. Hence this topic is selected for the systematic study of Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company: Genesis and Growth of Swadeshi Movement in Thoothukudi (1905-1911).

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

This study has the following objectives.

1. To trace out the historical background of Thoothukudi up to the establishment of British Administration.

2. To trace out the emergence of Europeans and Natives firms for their trade and commerce.

3. To study about the significance of Thoothukudi port during British period for International trade and commerce.

4. To trace out the development National Movement in India.

5. To trace out the life history of V.O.Chidambaram Pillai up to his lost breath.

6. To trace out how V.O.Chidambaram Pillai spread Swadeshi Movement in Thoothukudi.

7. To trace out the establishment of Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company in Thoothukudi.
8. To study about the working of Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company and its impacts in Thoothukudi.

**AREA OF STUDY:**

Thoothukudi is taken as the study area of this research. Thoothukudi, a port city of Tamilnadu has a very ancient past. It is situated on the Eastern coast of Thoothukudi district in South India and previously it was in the Tirunelveli District which has very meager number of ports, when compared to the Western Coast of South India. The important ports of Eastern Coast of India are Calcutta, Paradeep, Visakapatnam, Chennai and Thoothukudi. Geographically Thoothukudi is on the North West seashore of the gulf of Mannar, near Pamban passage and between the mouth of Tamiraparani and Vaippar and it is a terminus of the Southern Railway. Thoothukudi has a land area of 1,855 acres. It is at the latitude of 8°48’ and longitude of 78° 12’. It was a very small place in the beginning and later it became one of the major port cities in South India. It is well connected by land, sea, and rail routes. Most of the European powers came to India, occupied and controlled Thoothukudi.

In the early years of the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of a new and younger group within the Indian National Movement. The new group was called the extremist party led by Tilak. The efforts of Tilak paved the way for the development of the next stage of the national movement. The followers of Tilak
advocated the adoption of Swaraj as the goal of the Congress to be achieved by more self reliant and independent methods. The voice of Tilak echoed in the remote corner of south India in Thoothukudi by V.O.Chidambaram Pillai. Being an extremist V.O.Chidambaram Pillai like his leader, advocated the boycott of foreign goods and use of Swadeshi goods. The economic Boycott of British made goods and use of Swadeshi or homemade product encouraged Indian industries and at the same time it injured the British interest in India. As he wanted to challenge the British trade, he started the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company in order to help the native Indian in their sea trade and hence the study area of Thoothukudi is chosen.

PERIOD OF THE STUDY:

The British took over the administration of Thoothukudi from 1825. From that period onwards Thoothukudi port became very important port next to that of Chennai port. Almost all European countries had trade link with Thoothukudi port. The British Steam Navigation Company became very prosperous.

In the early years of the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of a new and younger group within the Indian National Movement. The new group was called the extremist party led by Tilak. The efforts of Tilak paved the way for the development of the next stage of the national movement. The followers of Tilak
advocated the adoption of Swaraj as the goal of the Congress to be achieved by more self reliant and independent methods. The voice of Tilak echoed in the remote corner of south India in Thoothukudi by V.O.Chidambaram Pillai. Being an extremist V.O.Chidambaram Pillai like his leader, advocated the boycott of foreign goods and use of Swadeshi goods. The economic Boycott of British made goods and use of Swadeshi or homemade product encouraged Indian industries and at the same time it injured the British interest in India. As he wanted to challenge the British trade, he started the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company in order to help the native Indian in their sea trade and hence the study of Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company: Genesis and Growth of Swadeshi Movement in Thoothukudi from 1905 to 1911 is taken as period of study.

**LIMITATION OF THE STUDY:**

This study has certain limitations, one limitation is, it focus the establishment of British rule in Thoothukudi. Secondly, the study traces out the establishment of European firm in Thoothukudi and their transactions. Thirdly, It trace out the Thoothukudi port and its impotance of the British trade. Fourthly, the study traces out the Swadeshi Movement in Tamilnadu. Fifthly, this study traces out the life history of V.O.Chidambaram Pillai. Finally, the study concentrates only on V.O.Chidambaram Pillai’s role in running the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company during the years 1906-1911.
**METHODOLOGY:**

The methodology for this thesis is descriptive and analytical. The footnotes (documentation) procedure adopted here is historical. All efforts have been made to make the procedure in uniform and consistent.

**SOURCES FOR THE STUDY:**

The sources of this thesis is consists of the Primary sources and Secondary sources.

The very important Primary sources consist of mainly Chennai Archives documents. They are:-

A) **Madras Native Newspapers Reports for the year 1905 to 1911:**

14 July 1906 *The Janalukulam*,


10 April 1908 11 July 1908 *The Madganni*,

28 March 1908 *The India*,

2 May 1908 *The Nadegannadi*,

8 March 1908 *The Kistnapatrika*,

3 April 1908 *The Bhavani*
B) Government orders:

G.O.No. 842-43 Judicial, 18 June 1908.

G.O.No. 913 Confidential Judicial, 2 July 1908,

G.O.No. 229 A, 1416 Confidential Judicial, 15 Oct. 1906

C) Gazetteer:


D) Seditious Committee Report:

Report 1918, Calcutta.

E) Souvenir:


F) News Papers:

The Hindu (micro film) for the year 1906 to 1911.


**CHAPTERIZATION:**

This thesis is structured into six chapters excluding introduction and conclusion.

In the introduction, the importance of the topic, objectives, methodology, area, period, scope, limitations and sources of information are described.

The first chapter deals with detailed historical background of Thoothukudi district up to the establishment of British rule.
The second chapter explains the establishment of European firms in Thoothukudi and their transactions.

The third chapter deals with Thoothukudi port and its importance of British sea-borne trade.

The fourth chapter explains about the Indian National Movement and its impacts on Tamilnadu.

The fifth chapter highlights the life history of V.O.Chidambaram Pillai.

The sixth chapter gives elaborate details about V.O.Chidambaram Pillai’s role of the formation and running the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company during the years of 1906-1911.

The concluding chapter summarizes the findings.