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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Christian Friedrich Schwartz and the Public Impact of His Missionary Service in South India and England (1750–1813)

Revd Prof Daniel Jeyaraj[1]

Abstract: Christian Friedrich Schwartz was a German Lutheran Pietist missionary who worked among the Tamil people in southern India from 1750 to 1798. He witnessed the English East India Company's unstoppable rise and transformation from a mercantile enterprise to a colonial governing power. He came to Tranquebar in 1750l twelve years later, at the invitation of the English military officers and soldiers, he joined the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, which had Anglican roots. His lifestyle radiating values and honesty persuaded the Hindu and Muslim rulers to seek his diplomatic services. The Company sent him as its emissary to Hyder Ali and other stakeholders. Amid his tireless public service, he remained a Lutheran missionary, establishing churches and schools, training catechists, ordaining Tamil pastors, and directing their work. After his death, the Company erected a marble monument in St. Mary's Church in Fort St. George (now in Chennai). King Serfoji, Schwartz's adopted son, likewise built two monuments, one in marble and the other in granite, and placed them in two churches in Thanjavur. This essay examines, for the first time, the content of these three monuments and places them within the larger context of Schwartz's public ministry. It draws on archival documents held in the famous Mission Archives of the Francke Foundations (AFSt/M) in Halle (Saale), Germany, and the India Office Records and Private Papers (IOR) at the British Library in London, England. My most recent biography of Schwartz (2025) sheds further light on all persons, places, processes and events mentioned in this essay.

Keywords: Christian Friedrich Schwartz, German Lutheran Pietist Missionary, Tranquebar Mission, Kingdom of Tanjore, Serfoji II, Eighteenth-century Southern India, Marble Funerary Monuments

[1] Revd. Daniel Jeyaraj, Dr. theol. habil., Dr. phil. D.D. (h.c.), SFHEA, Emeritus Professor of World Christianity at Liverpool Hope University and Academic Dean, Oxford Centre for Religion and Public Life.

An earlier version of this article, titled "Speaking Monuments for Christian Friedrich Schwartz and His Christianity in Public Places of Eighteenth-Century Southern India," appeared in *Indian Church History Review*, Vol. 58, No. 1, 2024, pp. 28–46. The present article retains the central arguments of the earlier version, adopts a new title and expands the discussion with additional evidence and analysis. Printed with the permission of the earlier publisher.

Introduction

The largest marble monument in St. Mary's Church, built in 1680 as Asia's first Anglican church, commemorates the public achievements of Christian Friedrich Schwartz (1726–1798), a renowned German Lutheran Pietist missionary who worked for the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK, 1698). He demonstrated the importance of his Christian convictions in the public spheres of his time through diplomacy, advocacy, and sacrificial service. This essay examines the marble monument's contents and situates them within Schwartz's ministry among South Indians, from his arrival in Cuddalore on 17 July 1750 to his death on 13 February 1798. It draws its insights primarily from the archival materials held in the famous Mission Archives of the Francke Foundations in Halle (Saale), Germany (AFSt/M), and the India Office Records of the British Library in London, England (IOR); it incorporates these insights into the published representations of Schwartz's life and ministry to provide a fuller picture of his lived religion in public spheres.

Schwartz's Missionary Calling

This monument states that Schwartz, as "a Protestant Missionary from the Government of Denmark, and in the same character by the Society in England for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge," continuously tried to "imitate the example of his blessed Master, Jesus Christ." This reference summarises Schwartz's primary function as a German Lutheran Pietist missionary. All his predecessors, beginning with Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg and Heinrich Plütschau, who reached the Danish colony of Tranquebar (1620–1845) on 9 July 1706, were the covenanted 'employees' of King Friedrich IV of Denmark,[2] not of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark.[3] They were answerable to him and the Mission College which he had constituted (1714). The

[2] Anders Nørgaard, a pioneer in the study of the Tranquebar Mission, sent the author of this essay an email on 30 December 2005 and pointed out the meaning of *rite vocatus* in the 14th Article of the Augsburg Confession: "no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called." Accordingly, the Danish Lutheran Church could ordain only qualified and competent candidates as pastors, whom the local congregations in Denmark selected and called. They had no mandate to ordain uninvited missionaries for a people outside of Denmark. To solve this ecclesiastical problem, King Friedrich IV turned to two sources: theologically, he followed Martin Luther's Small Catechism, which requires the head of the household to teach his household, in the simplest terms, Lutheran beliefs and practices. The king understood himself as the head of his country and overseas colonies. Politically, he followed the *cura religionis* principle of the Peace of Westphalia (1648), which allowed rulers and magistrates to ensure the state religion's beliefs and practices in their realms.

[3] The Danish Lutheran Church started its first missionary wing, the *Danish Missionary Society*, in 1821. They employed Carl Christoph Ernst Ochs (1812–1873), who had earlier worked as a missionary of the Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Church in and around Cuddalore. To establish a caste-less church, he separated his congregation and approached the *Danish Missionary Society* for help. As a result, this Society became an integral part of the contemporary Arcot Lutheran Church, headquartered in Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu.

king required the Danish bishops to examine and ordain the missionary candidates, most of whom were from Germany. Hence, Schwartz and his two companions, David Polzenhagen (1726–1756) and Georg Heinrich Conrad Hüttemann (1728–1781), were ordained on 6 September 1749 by Bishop Peder Hersleb (1689–1757) of the Danish Lutheran Church in Copenhagen. After visiting London, England, for a few days, they sailed from there to Cuddalore. On their arrival in Cuddalore on 17 July 1750, the veteran Swedish Lutheran missionary Johann Zacharias Kiernander (1711–1799) welcomed and accompanied them to Tranquebar, where they arrived on 31 July 1750.

Schwartz's Ministerial Contexts

Schwartz ministered for twelve years (1750–1762) in Tranquebar, and became acquainted with his predecessors' missionary methods, the people's two main languages (Tamil and Portuguese), their belief systems, temple rituals, customary practices and the (nominal) lifestyle of Tamil Lutherans and Catholics. He considered his time in Tranquebar a period of learning. At the invitation of the British army officers stationed in Tiruccirāppaḷḷi, the residence of the Nawab of Carnatic at that time[4], Schwartz ministered to the European Christian soldiers there. During his service from February to March 1762, he gained a new vision for ministry and intensified his work among the British soldiers (AFSt/M 1B52:14).

The military officers observed how passionately and empathetically Schwartz conducted his pastoral ministry among the soldiers, especially the wounded. They therefore asked their superiors to persuade Schwartz to remain indefinitely in Tiruccirāppaḷḷi and serve as their chaplain. Schwartz's confessional background, his ordination vow, and his dedication to serving in Tranquebar troubled his conscience. As soon as he realised the prospects of a small school for European orphan children with two salaried teachers and the possibility of establishing a permanent place for Lutheran worship, he made up his mind. Consequently, in 1767, the SPCK accepted him as their missionary. His service transcended the doctrinal differences between Lutherans and Anglicans, and he saw this change as God's will. By then, the Mission College in Copenhagen and Lutheran missionaries in Tranquebar and Madras agreed that Schwartz could move to Tiruccirāppaḷḷi (AFSt/M 1B57:15).

Meanwhile, Johann Wilhelm Berg, from Hamburg, Germany, served as a captain in the army of King Pratāpasimha of Tanjore (ruled 1739–1763). Berg continued his service to King Tulaji (ruled 1763-1784), the eldest son of King Pratāpasimha. Berg invited

[4] On 26 August 1752, the army of the East India Company defeated Chanda Sahib and the French in Tiruccirāppaḷḷi. Muhammad Ali Khan Wallajah (1717–1795) became the undisputed Nawab of Arcot and began to live in Tiruccirāppaḷḷi.

Schwartz to minister to German soldiers (1764–1769) in his army. Likewise, Major John Wood of the Company's army in Tiruccirāppaḷḷi also asked Schwartz to accompany him on his visits to King Tulaji (1768, 1771, etc.). He closely observed Schwartz's behaviour, honesty in translating conversations and the firmness of his decisions. Therefore, King Tulaji wanted Schwartz to settle in Tanjore as his trusted interpreter. Schwartz had another opportunity to meet the king at the wedding ceremony of Berg's daughter in the palace in 1772. Schwartz's solemnisation of the marriage and his conduct of the entire service impressed the king. Schwartz became Tulaji's confidant during his imprisonment (1773–1776) and his re-enthronement in 1776. Tulaji's diplomatic relationship with Schwartz persuaded him to relocate to Tanjore (1778). Tulaji trusted Schwartz so much that, just before his death in January 1787, he entrusted his adopted son, Serfoji II, to him, asking him to protect, educate and enthrone him as his successor. By then, Schwartz had become a trusted interpreter because, in addition to German, Latin, Hebrew, Greek and English, he also knew Tamil, Portuguese, Persian and Marathi. He used his linguistic skills to promote peace and justice.

Schwartz's Role in Promoting 'Temporal and Eternal Welfare'

The monument's opening lines summarised Schwartz's calling as a missionary and his institutional affiliations. The monument further states that he embraced "every opportunity of promoting both the temporal and eternal Welfare of others." He demonstrated his religious convictions "not with a gloomy Aspect or forbidding mien," and they manifested themselves "with a graceful Form and placid Dignity." His annual salary was small, but he invested it in establishing churches, schools, and seminaries in Tanjore (modern Thanjavur), Rāmanāthapuram, and Tirunelveli. The monument makes this unparalleled declaration:

> "Beloved and honoured by Europeans, he was, if possible, held in still deeper Reverence by the Natives of this country, of every degree and every sect; And their unbounded Confidence in his Integrity and Truth was, on many occasions rendered highly beneficial to the Public Service; the poor and the injured looked up to him as an unfailing friend and advocate; the great and powerful concurred in yielding him the highest homage ever paid in this Quarter of the Globe to European Virtue. The late Hyder Ally Cawn in the midst of a bloody and vindictive war with the Carnatic, sent orders to his Officers "to Permit the venerable Father Swartz to pass unmolested and shew him Respect and Kindness, for he is a Holy Man and means no harm to my Government.'"

Representative examples of Schwartz's public ministry would help us to better understand the text on this monument. European soldiers and their senior officers trusted Schwartz.

Beloved and Honoured by Europeans

Schwartz interacted with three types of Europeans associated with the English East India Company (henceforth written as Company): soldiers, military officers and civil servants. He taught English soldiers stationed in the forts at Tiruccirāppaḷḷi, Thanjavur and Vallam to read and write and conducted Bible studies and worship services. He provided them with much-needed counselling and emotional support. The tomb stones in the Christ Church in Tiruccirāppaḷḷi, the Christ Church, St. Peter's Church, and the St. Peter's Cemetery in Tanjore, and at the ruined church wall in the Fort Vallam indicate that most soldiers were under twenty-five years of age.[5] On 14 October 1784, Schwartz reported that Governor George McCartney refused to pay the soldiers the usual bonus, which they had not received for several months. Many of them rebelled and starved. Schwartz procured food for them and chided the colonial administration for its exploitative, oppressive injustice (AFSt M 1B75:23). As mercenaries, they wanted to earn quick money, become wealthy and support their poor parents and siblings in Britain. They saw Schwartz as their spiritual father; someone they could confide their anxieties to and from whom they could receive moral courage.

Schwartz's biographies illustrate his frequent interactions with military leaders such as Major Achilles Preston (1762–1764) and Major John Wood (1764–1768) in Tiruccirāppaḷḷi, Major William Stevens (1769) and Major Hector Munro (1799) in Thanjavur, General William Fullarton (1784) in Coimbatore, and Governor General Charles Cornwallis (1793) in Madras. Wood laid the foundation for Christ Church in Tiruccirāppaḷḷi (13 March 1765) and appointed him executor of his will (3 July 1774).[6] Munro laid the foundation for the Christ Church in Thanjavur (10 March 1779, AFSt/M 1B70:43) and introduced Schwartz to Governor Thomas Rumbold in Madras, who in turn sent him as his envoy to Hyder Ali. Fullarton was so thrilled to have met Schwartz and exclaimed that the "knowledge and integrity of this irreproachable Missionary have retrieved the character of Europeans from imputations of general depravity."[7]

[5] Cotton, Julian James: *List of Inscriptions on Tombs or Monuments in Madras Possessing Historical or Archaeological Interest*, rev. ed., Vol. 2, Madras: Government Press, 1946.

[6] Germann, Wilhelm: *Missionar Christian Friedrich Schwartz:* Sein Leben und Wirken aus Briefen des Halleschen Missionsarchivs, Erlangen: Deichert, 1870, pp. 156–158 & 234.

[7] Fullarton, William: *A View of the English Interests in India and an account of the military operations in the Southern Parts of the Peninsula during the Campaigns of 1782, 1783, and 1784* [...], London: T. Cadell, 1787, p. 183.

Schwartz assisted important Company's civil servants in Thanjavur: in August 1786, Resident John Hudleston and Paymaster John Coxe Hippisley invited Schwartz to become a full member of the Committee of Inspection (IOR/P/252/10, pp. 1580–91). They consulted with Schwartz on every occasion and took "no step of the least importance without his previous concurrence and approbation" (IOR/H/285A, p. 923). On 4 February 1794, Schwartz reported that he had voluntarily performed the duties of the Company's Resident in Tanjore for two years and had not received any salary for it. Normally, a resident earned 7,000 Star-Pagodas (= £3,000) as his annual salary (New Halle Report, Issue 47, 1795, p. 998).

Beloved and Honoured by Indians

Both Christian and non-Christian Indians trusted Schwartz because he was honest in his dealings with them. Most Christians, who had embraced Christianity, hailed from lower socioeconomic strata of Tamil society, who, as victims of millennia-old hierarchical, birth-based segregating systems of *varna* ('colour,' behavioural categories) and *jāti* ('blood-relatives'), endured misfortune and misery. As they joined Lutheran congregations, these new converts still clung to the social dignities *varna* and *jāti* conferred on them and maintained social interactions based on inequality and untouchability. Schwartz realised he could not abolish these age-old socio-religious systems of discrimination with a single stroke; instead, he encouraged his congregation members not to eat the meat of fallen animals and to keep themselves ritually pure, especially on Sundays before taking the Holy Communion. He quoted to them an ancient Tamil proverb to highlight the absurdity of observing *jāti* distinctions: "At the entrance to heaven, both the sweeper (*tōṭṭi*) and the ruler (*toṇṭaimāṉ*) are treated the same way" (Germann, 1870, p. 273). This other-worldly proverb did not help his congregation members to give up *varna* and *jāti*-distinctions in their social interaction.

Christian Pohle, one of Schwartz's younger missionary colleagues, opposed Schwartz's tolerance of varna and jāti distinctions and discrimination. Pohle claimed that his congregation members were different. He administered the Eucharist equally to all church members, regardless of their *jāti* identity. The Table of the Lord was not the place to promote their *jāti*-pride (AFSt/M 1B70:42).

In addition to these Christians, Schwartz selected and trained Indians as catechists, schoolmasters and co-workers, who struggled to live out their Christian identity in their socio-cultural contexts. He paid them from his own salary. By 17 December 1766, Schwartz supported three catechists: Dewanesen, Ignasimuttu and Södinaiken (AFSt/M 1B56:20). In Tiruchirappalli, he also supported other catechists, including

Vēdanāyagam ('Bible Master,' 1774–1864), who became a famous poet. His Tamil lyrics and other literary writings reflect Schwartz's teachings. For example, his work entitled *Ñāṉakummi* praises Schwartz as a noble teacher. He established schools for both Christian and non-Christian children in Thanjavur; some of the Christian children lived in the hostel he founded.

Among the non-Christians, the Kallar community in Thanjavur recognize him as their reforming father.[8] In 1776, he met a group of Kallar boys in Budalur, near Thanjavur, and advised them to give up their practice of professional stealing. He encouraged them to farm their land and earn their livelihood. Some Kallar community members heeded his advice; their example influenced others.[9]

When rulers, tax collectors and the Company's renters oppressed Thanjavur farmers with high taxes, Schwartz stepped in and began paving the way for a modern system of administering justice in Thanjavur. The *Regulating Act of India* (1773) and Pitt's India Act (1784) introduced seismic changes for the legal administration of justice in India: British judges began to apply British laws to Indians; gradually they learned to be mindful of the local customary practices (e.g., local rule by panchayats; personal laws according to the religious belonging of the person). After Ameer Singh became the King of Thanjavur on 7 April 1787, Governor Alexander Campbell and Schwartz contemplated the best ways to help Ameer Singh establish a court of justice distinct from the Tamil and Mughal law courts. At that time, Schwartz gave him the regulations that he had drafted earlier. On 10 April 1787, Campbell handed over these regulations to Ameer Singh and urged him to establish a court of justice (IOR/P/252/16, pp. 74–86). Accordingly, the new judges should be honest and impartial; they should not favour the rich and powerful and neglect the poor and weak.

Schwartz knew the harsh impact of wars that threatened the lives of common people. The wars left behind numerous widows, who needed work to earn their livelihood. On 20 February 1775, he announced that he had secured jobs for widows: they could thrash the paddy, separate the rice and provide it to a local hospital daily. He also arranged to have nine houses erected for the widows. Each house was nine feet long and nine feet wide (AFSt/ M 1B65:44). In February 1793, he tried to introduce silk production so the people of Thanjavur could earn a living (New Halle Reports, No. 44, 1795, p. 752). He enabled the widows of his congregations to weave clothes, trained

[8] In 1998, I, the author of this essay, met a senior Kallar-man in Thanjavur, whose ancestors encountered Schwartz. As a result, they abandoned their professional habit of stealing and became agriculturalists. This man called Schwartz "*eṅkaḷ appaṉ*" ('our father').

[9] For a detailed account of these Kallars, see *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Missionsblatt*, No. 16, 15th August 1853, pp. 233–239 and No. 17, 1st September 1853, pp. 249–250.

young women to knit and arranged buyers and sellers for these products (Germann, 1870, p. 361).

After Pitt's India Act of 1784, he allocated specific places to build hospitals in 1786 and appointed surgeons such as Nicol Mein in Tiruccirāppaḷḷi (IOR/P/252/9, pp. 942–948). In 1787, Mein inoculated "about twenty soldiers" against smallpox. These soldiers did not contract the disease. In January 1788, he inoculated more Europeans and their children.[10] Three years later, in 1791, some Christians whom Schwartz knew died of smallpox. He began convincing his followers to accept inoculation. He was successful after four years. On 7 March 1795, he reported that he had inoculated a few schoolchildren and that they did not get smallpox (*New Halle Reports*, No. 48, 1796, p. 1120). He wanted to apply modern medical discoveries to alleviate the suffering of common people.

Additionally, Schwartz was concerned about human deaths caused by snakebite and mad dogs. He himself miraculously escaped from poisonous snakes (Germann, 1870, p. 376). He began searching for antivenom and came across snake pills. He managed to get their ingredients (AFSt/M 2B1:7).[11] He passed them on to missionary Samuel Christopher John (1747–1813) in Tranquebar and requested him to contact his missionary colleague Johann Peter Rottler (1749–1836) in Madras and the famous botanist William Roxburgh (1751–1815). William Roxburgh received Rottler's *Instruction* and presented its English version, without naming Rottler, to the Company's Council in Madras on 16 September 1788 (IOR/P/252/27, pp. 2521–2524).

Meanwhile, in July 1778, Schwartz met Samuel, a Tamil Christian medical doctor said to have healed several people bitten by snakes. Schwartz told Strange, a Company surgeon near Tanjore, about Samuel and his snake pills. Thereafter, Schwartz and Strange asked Governor Archibald Campbell in Madras to arrange a discussion between Samuel and the medical doctors. At Schwartz's request, Samuel travelled to Madras, met the medical doctors, explained the components of his snake pills to them and arranged further testing (IOR/P/252/27, p. 2550). Samuel told them that he had taken his recipe from the "Chitter Rudum Shaster" (IOR/P/252/28, p. 3395), which the mendicants (*pandāram*) used. The English doctors took Samuel's opinion seriously; the presence of quicksilver alarmed them. Thanks to Schwartz's mediatory role,

[10] Brimnes, Niels: "Variolation, Vaccination and Popular Resistance in Early Colonial South India," *Medical History*, Vol. 24, 2004, pp. 199–228.

[11] The ingredients of the snake pill were the following: 1) *veḷḷai pāṣāṇam* ('white arsenic acid'), 2) *nir viṣam* (the plant *Curcuma Zedoaria*), 3) *nērvāḷam* (the plant *Croton tiglium*), 4) *racam* ('quicksilver'), 5) *miḷaku* (black 'pepper'), and 6) *veḷḷai erukkampāl* (the '*milk* of the [shrub white] *Calotropis gigantea*').

Samuel's snake pills attracted attention and paved the way for further research and improvements in antivenom.

Beyond snake pills, Schwartz sought a cure for rabies. His note to Samuel Christopher John (AFSt/ M 2B1:7) lists the ingredients Samuel might have given Schwartz. The chairperson of the Medical Board in Madras examined the ingredients and concluded that they were ineffective (IOR/P/252/28, pp. 3395–3096). Schwartz's willingness to participate in contemporary health-related discussions and activities merited attention and shows his commitment to improving the lives of ordinary human beings who have been subjected to various forms of suffering.

Schwartz's Diplomatic Efforts for Peace and Harmony

The monument in St. Mary's Church notes that the ruler of Mysuru, Hyder Ali, received and supported Schwartz as a peace ambassador and asked his army officers to protect him. Major Hector Munro of Thanjavur appointed him ambassador. Munro was so impressed by his character that, on his return to Madras, he persuaded Governor Thomas Rumbold (February 1778–April 1782) to appoint Schwartz as the Company's peace ambassador to Hyder Ali. Since 1766, Hyder Ali remained suspicious of Company officers, who promised to help him in emergencies and later broke their promises. Ali became furious when the Company took over his fort at *Mahé* on the Malabar Coast in southwestern India in March 1779; therefore, he planned to take revenge. Munro invited Schwartz to Madras and introduced him to Rumbold. Rumbold was known for his limitless greed and corruption. To satisfy Munro, he asked Schwartz to meet Ali in Seringapatam and find out his war intentions. Schwartz believed Munro's assurance and travelled from Tanjore to Seringapatam (5 June – 24 August 1799). Ali expressed his willingness to work with the Company if they honoured their promises to him (AFSt/ M 1B74: 31).

Schwartz told Ali that, as a priest, he accepted a political assignment to preserve and confirm peace. He was fully aware of the great "misery and horrors attendant on war." He wanted to help cement "a durable Friendship between the two Governments" and thus secure "the Blessings of Peace" to all. Hyder Ali responded "with great cordiality: Very well! Very well! I am of the same opinion as you, and I wish that the English may be as studious of Peace as you are. If they offer me the Hand of Peace and Concord, I shall not withdraw mine" (IOR ADD 57313 ff 37-42v).

Schwartz's personal interactions with Ali, who is otherwise portrayed as a ruthless tyrant, revealed the latter's humanity, professionalism and compassion towards the needy and orphans. At the same time, he punished those who betrayed his trust or

tried to cheat him. Schwartz's message of peace did not please Rumbold and his ally, the Nawab Wallajah, who were already determined to wage a war against Ali. Schwartz's message to Rumbold read as follows:

> "When I [Schwartz] came to Hyder, he desired me to sit down alongside him. The floor was covered with the most exquisite tapestry. He received me very politely, listened friendly and with seeming pleasure to all what I had to say. He spoke very openly and without reserve & said that the Europeans had broken their solemn engagements and promises, but that nevertheless he was willing to live in peace with them, provided ***. At last, he directed a letter to be wrote [sic], had it read unto me, and said: What I have spoken with you, that I have shortly mentioned in the letter. You will explain the whole more at length. (But the Nabob at Madras and others found means to frustrate all hopes of Peace.)" (IOR ADD 57313 ff 37-42v).

The three asterisks in the quote, not only in this English text but also in its German version, have puzzled scholars since Rumbold's time. They did not fully disclose what Hyder Ali had entrusted to him. Schwartz, as a pastor, communicated the message only to its intended recipient, Rumbold, and kept it from others.

Dissatisfied with Schwartz's emphasis on peace and friendliness, Rumbold sent George Grey as his envoy to Hyder Ali's court: he charged Grey with threatening Ali with war and compelling Ali to pay the Company large sums of money. Grey's *Journal of his Embassy to Hyder Ally in January 1780*[12] indicates how Ali refused to see him. Grey felt insulted and returned deeply disappointed. Ali knew of Rumbold's ulterior motives and attached Carnatic from 1780 to 1782. During this time, he ordered his army officers, as Schwartz's monument documented, to let Schwartz "pass unmolested." They should show him "Respect and Kindness" because he was "a Holy Man" and was not hostile towards his government.

This monument does not enumerate Schwartz's other mediatory efforts: for example, on 28 October 1782, he helped sign the *Rana Treaty* in Tanjore. The senior officers of the Wodeyar Dynasty of Mysore, whom Hyder Ali had deposed in 1766, met with the Company officers in Tanjore. The deposed Queen Lakshmi Ammani, widow of Krishnaraja Wodeyar II, sent her confidant, Tirumala Rao, to Governor Macartney of Madras. She promised to pay the Company. If the Company restored her to the Kingdom of Mysore, she agreed to pay large sums of money and entrust them with large parcels of land for revenue collection and administration. Tirumala Rao and

[12] IOR/H/250, pp. 1–19: this is Thomas Rumbold's copy of Gray's journal and bears the date 3 June 1782.

Macartney's council members drafted a treaty agreement. Macartney deputed John Sullivan, the Resident of Tanjore; J.C. Hippisley, the Assistant Resident in Tanjore; and C.F. Schwartz as the Company's representatives to meet with Tirumala Rao in Tanjore and reach a definitive conclusion. The reason for Schwartz's involvement in this committee is unknown. He served as the Company's official interpreter and an impartial witness for both parties. An unpublished handwritten copy of the introduction to these stipulations states that John Sullivan and J.C. Hippisley signed and affixed the Company's seal "in the presence of the Almighty God." Then comes the astonishing remark: "Signed and sealed in the presence of C.F. Swartz."[13] In other words, Schwartz's signature had an aura of sacredness.[14]

After this success, in November 1783, Macartney asked Schwartz to accompany his negotiators, whom he had sent to meet Tipu Sultan, the son of Hyder Ali, in Seringapatam. Tipu Sultan refused to allow Schwartz beyond *Satyamaṅkalam*; Schwartz returned to Tanjore on 27 January 1784 (Germann, 1870, p. 318). However, during this meeting Schwartz spent time with General William Fullarton and impressed him with his Christian witness and presence. In turn, he asked his soldiers to be mild toward their 'enemies'.[15] Schwartz's impact on Fullarton rippled through the soldiers.

Schwartz mediated between the king of Thanjavur and the farmers. Fearing heavy taxes, most farmers left their fields uncultivated; some emigrants settled in neighbouring places. On 17 July 1786, Schwartz explained (AFSt/M 1C27:5 and M 1C27:8, dated 2 October 1786) that King Tulāji and the Company's Committee of Inspection in Thanjavur wanted to avert a famine. Unable to convince the farmers to return to their fields and cultivate them, they asked Schwartz for help. Schwartz carefully guarded King Tulāji's dignity and promised to speak with the farmers on his behalf, not as a member of the Committee of Inspection. About 7,000 farmers trusted Schwartz, returned and cultivated their fields.

[13] Bodleian Library, India General Papers, Box 2: 1773–1779, p. 136 and the document bearing the number 8 with the date 28/10/1782.

[14] For a fuller version of the Rana Treaty, see Hayavadana Rao, Conjeeveram: *History of Mysore* 1399–1799, Vol. 3: 1766–1799, Bangalore: Government Press, 1946, pp. 11811187.

[15] Fullerton, 1787, p. 183: "On our second march we were visited by the Rev. Mr. Swartz, whom your Lordship and the Board [of the EIC in Fort St. George in Madras] requested to proceed to Seringapatam as a faithful interpreter between Tipoo and the Commissioners. The knowledge and integrity of this irreproachable Missionary have retrieved the character of Europeans from imputations of general depravity. A respectable escort attended him to the nearest encampment of the enemy; but he was stopped at Settimungulum [i.e., *Satyamaṅkalam*] and returned to Tanjore. I rejoice, however, that he undertook the business; for his journal which has been before the Board evinces, that the southern army acted towards our enemies with a mildness seldom experienced by friends in moments of pacification. From him also you learned that this conduct operated on the minds of inhabitants, who declared that we afforded them more secure protection than the commanders of their own troops."

On 20 December 1786 (AFSt/M 1C27:25), Schwartz expressed his abhorrence of the Company's bitter exploitation of the people of Tanjore. He stated that George Macartney's administration of Tanjore was evil and vicious because he and his subordinates threatened Tulāji and demanded large bribes. On receiving the bribe, they remained still for a while; yet other Company officers demanded larger bribes. Schwartz opined that the Governor-General of Bengal, Cornwallis, did not accept any bribes. Governor Campbell did not openly solicit bribes, but he was not free of avarice. He exploited Tulāji as much as he could.[16]

29 September 1787, Schwartz explained how he settled the migratory problems of the Tranquebar emigrants who faced three troubles: a severe storm battered Tranquebar from 17 to 21 May 1787. It destroyed the houses of several people (M 1C29b:29). Secondly, extreme poverty followed because most manual workers could not find adequate work. Some left Tranquebar and moved to the fertile areas of the Kingdom of Tanjore (AFSt/ M 1C28:72). Thirdly, some members of the "Salupper Caste" mistreated their domestic servants and agricultural labourers. These oppressed people moved into territories belonging to the Kingdom of Tanjore. Some members of the emigrant community regularly raided the agricultural fields within the domain of Tranquebar and vandalised the crops. Gradually, Governor Peter Hermann Abbestée (1779–1783, 1785–1788) and King Ameer Singh sought an agreement under which the emigrants would return to Tranquebar, and peace would prevail on all sides. All their efforts failed, and they requested Schwartz's intervention.[17] Schwartz spoke with leaders of various parties and persuaded them to return. To ensure a proper reception, he led large crowds through the gates of Tranquebar in January 1788 (AFSt/M 1C29a:3 and 5). All these diplomatic engagements demonstrate Schwartz's impact on the common people of Tanjore and Tranquebar and the trust they placed in him.

[16] Suresh Kumar, P.: *The Carnatic Wars and Tanjore Politics 1736–1764*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, 2012, p. 191: "For maintaining English soldiers for the protection of Tanjore, the rajah was required to pay two lakhs. As the demands on Tanjore increased, the king was obliged to borrow money from the rapacious renters. However, Sir Archbald Campbell, the Governor of Madras granted concessions to him allowing him to pay the subsidy of 4,60,000 rupees in nine monthly instalments as follows to face the same problem of demands. November 20,000 December 50,000 January 50,000 February 90,000 April 1,00,000 May 50,000 July 40,000 August 30,000 September 30,000."

[17] Strandberg, Elisabeth: "A Tanjore Marāṭhī letter in Moḍī script to Chr. F. Schwartz," *Acta Orientalis*, Vol. 41, 1980, pp. 17–25 and Strandberg, Elisabeth: *The Moḍī Documents from Tanjore in Danish Collections, Edited, Translated and Analysed*, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1983, p. 321.

Schwartz as Kingmaker

King Tulāji did not recover well from his imprisonment (16 September 1773 to 11 April 1776), ill-treatment and looting by Wallajah and his English creditors. By the end of 1786, his health deteriorated, and he was deeply concerned about his successor. He had no son to succeed him. He was aware of various claimants within the royal court. Following established religious principles of adoption, Tulāji adopted Serfoji on 22 January 1787, a ten-year-old distant cousin, as his son and successor to the throne. On 29 January 1787, Tulāji placed Serfoji's hand in Schwartz's hand, authorising him as guardian (IOR/P/252/15, pp. 232–35). Schwartz knew that Tulāji's adoption displeased many people in the palace. To prevent civil unrest and loss of life, Schwartz recommended the appointment of Ameer Singh (c. 1738–1802),[18] a half-brother of Tulāji, as the interim ruler (IOR/H/571, p. 183). Tulāji accepted Schwartz's practical suggestion and nominated Ameer Singh as his interim successor and died on 31 January 1787.

On 26 February 1787, Governor General Charles Cornwallis recommended that the Company's Council in Madras assess the opinions of Tanjore inhabitants and then appoint Tulāji's successor. He asked Governor Campbell of Madras to travel to Tanjore and ascertain the people's opinion on Serfoji. If they welcomed him as Tulāji's legitimate successor, Campbell should install him as the king. If the people did not welcome him, he should assess Ameer Singh's suitability to succeed Tulāji (IOR/H/571, p. 190). Campbell reached Tanjore on 2 April 1787 (IOR/H/571, p. 192); Ameer Singh and Serfoji received him. The following day, Campbell learned that leading European residents and Indian merchants, "who were intimately acquainted with the laws and religious principles of the Hindoos", supported Ameer Singh as Tulāji's successor (IOR/P/252/16, pp. 31–32). On 4 April 1787, Campbell and the Committee of Inspection met the twelve pundits, known for their expertise in Sanskrit religious law, particularly adoption (Germann, 1870, p. 356). These members did not know that Ameer Singh disliked Serfoji and had bribed the twelve *pundit*s to vote for him. Schwartz translated these pundits' assessments into English (IOR/P/252/16, pp. 35–40). At that time, no one remembered Tulāji's priests, who had approved Serfoji's adoption and conducted the relevant ceremonies.

[18] Ameer Singh was born in 1738 and died on 19.04.1802. His mother's name is unknown. She was a servant at Pratāpasimha's palace and became his concubine. A Company Chronicler tried in vain to find out reliable information about Ameer Singh's real father (IOR/H/285A, pp. 626–627) and suggested that his father was Vencana, a low-ranking servant, who resembled Pratāpasimha. When Pratāpasimha came to know of his concubine's pregnancy and subsequent birth of Ameer Singh, he wanted to kill Vencana; but Vencana fled. Dropada Bai Saheb, Pratāpasimha's legal wife and queen, interceded for the safety of Ameer Singh's mother, who was allowed to stay in the palace but was no longer allowed to meet either the king or the queen. The Company Chronicler further stated that during the 1780s, Ameer Singh lived in a small house within the palace.

Schwartz did not read or understand Sanskrit; he could not verify the accuracy of the Pandits' assessments of the children being adopted. He failed to compare these opinions with the understandings, approvals and adoption rituals performed by the Tulāji court priest. Wright affirmed that "Swartz has always been regarded as a careful, honest man of God but, while the evidence is lacking to prove him otherwise, this incident does raise a niggling doubt."[19] The questions to the twelve pundits were structured to elicit answers in favour of Ameer Singh; Campbell "set aside the adoption of Serfoji." He resolved, "in the name of the English East India Company", to place Ameer Singh "on the throne of his ancestors." Immediately, "Ameer Singh expressed his high sense of English Justice" and said that selfish courtiers had persuaded Tulāji, at the last hour of his life, to adopt "this Boy [Serfoji]" (IOR/P/252/16, pp. 41–42).

Ameer Singh ascended the throne on 7 April 1787; Governor Campbell announced his enthronement in English; Schwartz read out the details of this enthronement in Tamil and Marathi; his declaration contained this message: "Let all people know that today Ameer Singh sits on the throne of his ancestors and according to the rules of this country, he is the legitimate King of Tanjore. Today he publicly promised to rule this country and his subjects justly and righteously. Therefore, you are obliged to accept him as your king and obey him. God bless the King!" (NHR, No. 36, 1790, pp. 1390–1). Then, Ameer Singh promised to govern Tanjore justly and righteously and be like a father to all inhabitants of Tanjore. He praised the "Justice, Friendship and Protection of the English nation" (IOR/P/252/16, pp. 45–46).

Thus, Ameer Singh agreed to be a puppet of the Company in Madras. To satisfy their ever-increasing expectations, to pay off the huge tributes, and to meet the devastating cost of maintaining an English army, he imposed more taxes and oppressed his people.[20] They began to hate him. Meanwhile, Ameer Singh wanted to get rid of Serfoji and mistreated him. He also disregarded the welfare of Tulāji's widows. At their request and with the Company's agreement, Schwartz relocated Serfoji and his stepmothers to Madras. There, he arranged Serfoji's safety, education and regal training.

When Serfoji's time to return to Thanjavur came, Schwartz began working at various levels. He sent his opinion on Serfoji, Ameer Singh and other claimants to the throne of Thanjavur. On 30 January 1792, Oakeley, the new governor of Madras. forwarded

[19] Wright, Don: "Swartz of Thanjavur: A missionary in politics," *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1981, pp. 94–105:98.

[20] AFSt/ M 1C29b:7a: According to the Treaty of 1787, Ameer Singh "should pay 4,00,000 Pagodas to the EIC, 4,00,000 Rupees to Nawab, 52,00,000 Pagodas as pending war reparations to the same Nawab, and 5,00,000 Pagodas to the creditors. Then he must pay 7,00,000 Pagodas annually for twelve years."

Schwartz's considerations about "Tanjore Succession" to Cornwallis in Bengal (IOR/P/253/10, pp. 571–72) and awaited his response. On 11 February 1793, Cornwallis informed the Company's Council in Madras that Schwartz's opinions convinced him to declare Serfoji as the rightful heir to the throne of Tanjore. Since Ameer Singh's enthronement followed proper means, his impeachment was delicate. However, Cornwallis agreed to consult the pundits in Calcutta and Banaras anonymously about the legality of Serfoji's adoption. He urged the Company's Council in Madras "to endeavour to establish, in a clear and authentic manner, whether the opinion of any of the Tanjore Pundits was obtained by the means of bribery and corruption" (IOR/P/253/11, pp. 1186–88). Consequently, on 5 March 1793, W.C.

Jackson announced that Serfoji

> "The adopted son of the late Tulajee Maharaz, be declared presumptive Heir to His Excellency, the Present Raja, Ameer Singh, and he is hereby declared and proclaimed presumptive Heir accordingly. All Acts and Proceedings, therefore, relative to the Government and Interests of the said Province are henceforth to be made with due attention to the Rights of Serfoji as presumptive Heir aforesaid and used as shall in anywise tend to impair or encumber his Inheritance will be considered in no shape binding upon the said presumptive Heir or entitled to any countenance or respect whatever from the Honourable Company's Government. Given under the Seal of the said Company in Fort St. George the day of 8/93. By order of the Honourable President in Council. [Signed] W.C. Jackson" (IOR/P/253/11, pp. 1189–91).

Schwartz's Monuments in Thanjavur

On 11 March 1796, Serfoji returned to Tanjore; Company soldiers protected him from trouble from Ameer Singh and his loyalists. Meanwhile, Schwartz quietly prepared the way for his enthronement and died on 13 February 1798. Serfoji ascended the throne on 30 June 1798 and remained grateful to Schwartz for the rest of his life.

The monument in St. Mary's Church in Madras records Schwartz's death and his lasting impact on various groups: he spent twenty years "in the Education and religious Instruction of Children, particularly those of indigenous parents – whom he gratuitously maintained and instructed." This monument continues to state that Schwartz died "surrounded by his Infant Flock and in the presence of several of his disconsolate Brethren". Just before his death, he entreated them "to make Religion the first object of their care", and he implored "with his last breath the Divine Blessing

on their Labours." Finally, he "closed his truly Christian Career, in the 72nd year of his Age."

This monument closes with the most astonishing remark: the Company was "anxious to perpetuate the memory of such transcendent worth, and gratefully sensible of the Public Benefits which resulted from its Influence, caused this Monument to be erected, Ann[o] Dom[ini] 1807." It is not known whether the Company had erected any other magnificent monument in honour of a Christian missionary anywhere in the world.

In 1807, the Company's Court of Directors in London authorised Richard Kerr, their chaplain at Fort St. George in Madras, to erect their monument near the altar of St. Mary's Church. At the installation service, Kerr compared Schwartz's public ministry with that of the Lord Jesus Christ. Kerr stated that if the Lord Jesus Christ himself had lived in late eighteenth-century southern India, he would have

> "Publicly declared his abhorrence, as Mr. Swartz always did, of the base intrigues, the fraudulent loans, the cruel oppressions, which, during the early part of the good man's life, and for many years after, made a land of misery, desolation, and slavery, of one of the most fertile provinces of this part of India. Some of the Honourable Company's servants long since departed out of life, and others who are now virtuous and amiable members of the different communities in which they live, have blessed the day when they became acquainted with this venerable man."[21]

Serfoji too fondly remembered Schwartz's service for social peace and harmony. He erected two monuments in his honour: the monument in Christ Church in Tanjore begins with Schwartz's biographical details and describes his missionary vocation. Then it states that Schwartz "devoted from his early manhood to the office of missionary in the East, the similarity of his situation to that of the first preachers of the Gospel produced in him a peculiar resemblance to the simple sanctity of the Apostolic character." This is another testimony by a non-Christian who had benefited from Schwartz's guardianship and exemplary life of Christian faith and service in public spheres. This monument names the reasons for people's affection for him: Schwartz's "natural vivacity won the affection as his unspotted probity and purity of life alike commanded the reverence of" Christians, Muslims, and Hindus. Sovereign Hindu and Muslim princes "selected this humble Pastor as the medium of political negociation [sic! = negotiation] with the British Government". It ends by stating that Maharaja

[21] *The Life of C.F. Swartz: Missionary at Trichinopoly and Tanjore in India*, New York: American Tract Society, n.d. (1813?), p. 106.

Serfoji of Tanjore installed this marble monument as a token of his "liberal affection and esteem" for Schwartz.

Serfoji's second monument in St. Peter's Church in Thanjavur is even more intimate than the one in Christ Church. It refers to Schwartz's association with the SPCK and his death. Then it includes the following poem, the first English poem composed by an Indian prince in honour of a European. It records Serfoji's gratitude and affection to his father, namely Schwartz.

"Firm warst thou, humble and wise, Honest, pure, free from disguise: Father of orphans, the widow's support, Comfort in sorrow of every sort, To the benighted dispenser of light Doing and pointing to that which is right. Blessing to princes, to people, to me: May I, my father, be worthy of thee, Wishes and prayeth thy Sarabojee".

Conclusion

Schwartz did not keep his Lutheran Pietist convictions private; they were personal and public. His understanding that God controls the sacred and secular spheres of human life, in individuals and societies, enabled him to translate his theological convictions into ethical actions and habits among people of diverse religious and social persuasions and practices. He perceived himself and others as sinners before God, who is graciously ready to forgive humans based on the sin-atoning death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The stone monuments in St. Mary's Church in Fort St. George in Chennai, in the Christ Church and in St. Peter's Church in Thanjavur testify to his public life and service. Hugh Pearson (1776–1856), his first English biographer, expressed surprise at finding no written record that doubted Schwartz's integrity and honesty in public life.[22] The reviewers of this biography remarked that they came across nothing that fixed "the slightest or minutest blot upon his name. His virtue, so far as is recorded, was (if we may so apply the word) *without spot*, or *wrinkle*, *or any such thing*".[23] 216 years have passed since the stone monuments were erected; they silently bear witness to Schwartz, who lived a public life of Christian witness and

[22] Pearson, Hugh: *Memoirs of the Life and Correspondence of the Reverend Christian Frederick Swartz,* Vol. 2, London: Hatchard & Son, 1834, p. 434: "It is, however, undoubtedly true, that, whatever may have been the failings and infirmities of Swartz, they were known only to himself and to God. By his fellow-mortals they have not only never been proclaimed, but never even conjectured. He was like the patriarch of old, 'perfect and upright in his generation,' and, as far as the observation and scrutiny of man extended, exemplary and blameless. To whatever degree this peculiar excellence really belonged to him, he owed it, as he would gratefully have acknowledged, to the principles and motives of the gospel, and to that grace of God which had made him what he was, by which he ennobled the name of missionary, and displayed in these later days the virtues of the apostolic age."

[23] Smedley, Edward, James Shergold Bonne, John Henry Newman (eds.): *The British Critic and Quarterly Theological Review and Ecclesiastical Record,* Vol. 15, No. 30, April 1834, pp. 363–392:366.

service for forty-eight years and made these powerful statements on 13 February 1794: "If the Missionaries are sincere Christians, it is impossible that the inhabitants [of a country] should suffer any damage by them". He further affirmed, "before God and man, that if Christianity, in its plain and undisguised form, was properly promoted, the country would not suffer but be benefited by it." Additionally, he confirmed his joy of Christian service: "I am now at the brink of eternity; but to this moment I declare, that I do not repent of having spent forty-three years in the service of my Divine Master."[24] The speaking stones in Madras and Tanjore still bear witness to the power and public manifestation of Schwartz's Christianity for the benefit of all peoples.

[24] Schwartz, C.F.: *Defence of Missions in India by the late Venerable Mr. Swartz, published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, in their report for 1795*, London: H. Bryer, c. 1796, pp. 9, 13–14.

Abbreviations

AFSt/M	Mission Archives of the Francke Foundations in Halle (Saale), Germany
IOR	India Office Records of the British Library in London, England
Company	United Company of Merchants of England Trading to the East Indies (1708–1874), unofficially, but commonly known as the English/British East India Company, Company Raj (1757–1858), British India beginning with the Government of India Act of 1858, including the liquidation of the Company in 1784 and ending in 1947.
SPCK	Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, which began in 1698, exists to this day

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