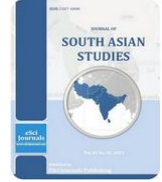




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INDO-FRENCH DIPLOMATIC PROJECTS: FIVE LETTERS OF CHEVALIER TO MADEC AND THATTA BAKAR PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

Indo-French diplomatic projects during the second half of the eighteenth century are a fascinating theme although not fully researched by historians due to the unavailability of translated sources. This article tries to fill this lacuna by analyzing the understudied facets of diplomatic projects captured by five letters exchanged between the French adventurers Jean-Baptiste Chevalier and Rene Madec. It attempts to clear the ambiguities attached to such diplomatic projects as the Thatta Project, conceived by French adventurers and the Mughal state in order to counter the growing British colonial expansion. Despite the failure of these projects due to numerous reasons, they provide significant information about the politico-diplomatic efforts of the Mughal and French authorities, wherein the French adventurers played a crucial role.

Keywords: Indo-French diplomatic projects, French adventurers, Chevalier–Madec correspondence, Thatta Project.

INTRODUCTION

The theme of joint diplomatic projects of the French state (represented by French adventurers in north India) and the Mughal emperor Shah Alam during the 1770s has been perhaps the most under-researched area due to the unavailability of translated sources. Further, there have been ambiguities about who initiated these missions: some believe that the French adventurers made efforts to establish French dominance in India during the period of growing colonial expansion of the English East India company, while others opine that it was the Mughal emperor who was much interested in these projects in order to safeguard his crumbling empire (Modave, 1971). In this respect, the letters exchanged between the French adventurers Jean-Baptiste Chevalier and Rene Madec form an invaluable source for understanding the nature and scope of the diplomatic projects conceived by Shah Alam and the French authorities from 1771 to 1775. Chevalier motivated the French adventurers present in India to negotiate with the Mughal emperor, as other Indian princes, and form a military alliance aimed at launching

a joint expedition against the English and regaining Bengal. The objective of this essay is to bring to the light five such letters along with their replies that convey the aim to form an Indo-French alliance for curbing the rise of the English power and to explore the possibility of Thatta Bakar Project (1775-1778). The methodology of this research paper would be to analyze the one by one five invaluable letters of communication between two French adventurers regarding their diplomatic project with Mughals against English. Further to and fro details of these letters will be highlighted to ascertain the problems, suggestions, recommendations, motivations, personal benefit and other significant diplomatically valuable information exchanged between two adventurers.

These letters were significant in that they depict the active role of Chevalier in instructing and encouraging Madec to gather support for the French cause in India and promising him material gains and official promotions for such a 'patriotic' act. At the same time, these letters also show the lethargic response of the French state to the Chevalier letters with regard to these diplomatic projects. The primary sources of this study are the letters exchanged between Chevalier, Madec and the Mughal emperor (microfilms of which are available

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in Bibliothequenationale de France and their memoirs edited by Emile Barbe (Barbe, 1894) and Jean Deloche (Deloche, 1983). Besides, the memoirs of other contemporary French adventurers such as Comte de Modave (Modave, 1971) and Jean-Baptiste Gentil (Gentil, 1822) have been used to understand their efforts in relation to the possible Indo-French diplomatic projects. With regard to the feasibility of these projects, S. P. Sen has criticized Jean-Baptiste Chevalier, who was the governor of Chandernagore, for having "facile imaginativeness and ... a blind patriotism which on occasions brought on him ridicule even from his compatriots" (Sen, 1971). Chevalier tried to keep himself in constant touch not only with the princes of north India, but also with the French military adventurers scattered all over India, in the hope of forming an alliance with some Indian princes in order to drive the English out of Bengal. His project of attacking Bengal to dispel the English was seen by Sen as "just an alluring mirage" (Sen, 1971) as most of his frantic letters written to the government in Paris with an appeal to send immediate and large-scale military assistance to these shadowy allies remained unanswered. On the other hand, many French adventurers indeed attempted to motivate the Indian princes to form an alliance with the French against the English. Madec's project was essentially the same as that of Chevalier, namely the strengthening of the Mughal emperor's authority with French military assistance, with the ultimate object of attacking the English in Bengal (Sen, 1971). Their plan was, however, faced objections from Law de Lauriston at Pondicherry and the Minister of Marine and Colonies, de Boynes, in Paris. Nevertheless, it was the sluggish response of the French government that eventually led to the failure of these diplomatic projects (Modave, 1971).

Colonel Gentil, in his account, wrote that he was certain that "Shuja-udDaulah [the nawab of Bengal], towards the end of his life, strongly worked to become independent, and even wanted to take measures to destroy the English power in India. The French officers, who were useful in his army, were maintained carefully and they fanned up his hatred against the English government in India. They even assured him that an alliance with France would procure him the means to free his country from the English yoke and to carry out the conquest which he contemplated. The [nawab's] vazir listened to all these remarks with enthusiasm and also prepared

them to open negotiations. But his spirit prevented him from envisaging the difficulties which he would have owed. It was stipulated, by police chiefs made at Awadh, that a body of French troops would approach the coast of Cambay and would cross the higher portion of the peninsula, to enter the western borders of Awadh. If the vazir had made an attempt to carry out this project, he would have seen the impossibility [of doing so], and would have been convinced that the proposals of these French adventurers were only vain dreams. It is as to suppose as the French ministry would rejected this project, and realizing the impossibility to lead an European army to cross a vast country inhabited by some warlike tribes, very powerful, generally jealous of Europeans" (Gentil, 1822). Yet, Shah Alam did take the initiative after 1775 to form an alliance with the French against the English. He offered the land of Thatta in Sindh region to the French in order to get their military support. This was called the Thatta or Tatta project (Modave, 1971). According to Gentil, the negotiations were started by Chevalier, the French commander of Chandernagore (Gentil, 1822) while others believed that they were started by the Mughal emperor or other French adventurers (Madec or Modave).

BACKGROUND OF DIPLOMATIC PROJECTS OF CHEVALIER AND MADEC

Initially, during the period from 1769 to 1772, Chevalier conceived a vague policy of a joint attack of the French and north Indian princes on the English in Bengal. He believed that the rapid expansion of the English had antagonized the north Indian princes, who would readily join forces to attack the English stronghold in Bengal, provided they were assured of French military and naval assistance (Sen, 1971). Chevalier even sent ten dispatches to the Ministry of Colonies at Versailles, but unable to receive any positive response. He lost all hopes of support from the French Ministry and turned to garnering support from within India. He approached the French adventurers who had got high positions and possessed influence at various Indian princely courts. While Chevalier's agents such as Gentil, Vissage and du Jarday intrigued with Shuja-udDaulah, Marathas and the Mughal emperor to forge alliances, Chevalier himself, on the other hand, maintained the intelligences and tried to showcase the ambitious plans of France to the princes of India (Barbe, 1894).

Between 1772 and 1774, Chevalier made repeated

representations to the French government to send 5,000 troops immediately for the assistance of Mughal emperor. This assistance, he hoped, will secure the trading rights for the French in north India and also enable the Mughals to successfully combat the English. But this plan, too, remained unfulfilled, as the French government did not want to re-open hostilities on the Indian issue with the English (Sen, 1971). Modave mentioned some reservations of "Shah Alam against this project. Initially the emperor considered it beneath his dignity to seek the friendship of a foreign prince at the cost of parting with a considerable part of his empire. However, as he noticed that the 'city of Tatta Bakar is the capital of the province which belonged partly to the Sikhs and partly to the Timur Shah who had usurped it ... he seemed more eager to give these regions of Hindustan to the French than to leave them to their actual owners ... He assured that if French took the possession of the city of Tatta Bakar by force, he would have no reason to object" (Modave, 1971). Modave revealed that the Mughal *padcha* (*padshah*, i.e., emperor) wrote a letter to the French king and Abdoula Khan, the Minister of Marine, expressing his general desire to enter into a relation of interest and correspondence with the king, to "recommend Madec to him with its abridged plan and to declare that King and his minister that [he had] given responsibility to Madec to proposal his plans which could appear to form a close connection between the two monarchs" (Modave, 1971). Thus, finally, in 1775 the Mughal emperor took an initiative to form an Indo-French alliance' against the English which came to be known as the Thatta project (Sen, 1971). But before this project came into being, five crucial letters had been exchanged between Chevalier and Madec from 1771 to 1775, which depict the efforts taken by both these adventurers to form the joint Indo-French diplomatic alliance against the English in India.

CHEVALIER'S FIRST LETTER (APRIL 2, 1771)

The first letter of Chevalier dated April 2nd 1771ⁱⁱ was sent to Madec by one of his man of confidence, Doctor Visage.ⁱⁱⁱ He told Madec that he could rely on Visage regarding communications between them. In this letter, he praised the Madec for the credit that he had acquired in his country, and persuaded him so that "he could give some service to the French as you have the love for the fatherland which could be advantageous and utilized" (Deloche, 1983) He demanded from "Madec to work together for the betterment of their country. He

(Chevalier) said, you had the richness and consideration, and in the betterment of French you should establish a name". He stated that "Madec was in a position to procure friendship and alliance of all the princes of whom he governs the confidence" (Deloche, 1983). In return this commander of Chandernagor guaranteed Madec some favors from French ministry and assuring an official post for him, he said "I would make a pleasure to demand it and I dared to believe that I would not be refused" (Deloche, 1983) by the French authorities.

Further Chevalier demanded for the service of the motherland from Madec stating that Madec's expenses would be payed by him. He said that "you could send me your letter for exchange through the hands of Jagat Seth or some other rich sarrafs of Bengal. Then I would forward it to France...either through royal treasury or by my prosecutors, as per your indication" (Deloche, 1983). "He asked Madec to inform him about the historical details of the policies of the country where the latter lived, the interesting events of the past years and also let him know about the more powerful princes and their thoughts and intentions on Bengal. [He asked Madec that] whether these princes have any disposition to join the French when favorable time arises" (Deloche, 1983). Chevalier said to Madec "I do not doubt that you could inspire them and bring them in our interest by making use of your intelligence and credit" (Deloche, 1983; Besson, 1932).

Madec's Response to Chevalier's First Letter

(September 28, 1771): Madec was surprised to receive this unexpected letter from Chevalier (Barbe, 1894). Though he ignored Chevalier's letter earlier, on 28 September 1771, Madec obligingly replied, "I would be obliged to be useful on my part in a country [India] ... where I lived. I have nothing to desire beyond the fortune which I earned but that I have an intention to pass it to Europe and enjoy the fruit of my work peacefully and that I would pray to him [Chevalier] to send me the necessary passport on this subject" (Deloche, 1983).

CHEVALIER'S SECOND LETTER (JANUARY 20, 1772)

Madec was in Agra when he received Chevalier's response in his second letter dated 20 January 1772, in which the latter gave a detailed description of his plans. Chevalier emphasized that by a judicious use of his forces, Madec could render immense service to the nation. He requested Madec to not to quit the country where he was, especially at a time when he could be

useful to France. He also assured him rewards from the French state for his services. He wrote, “[Y]ou can become so useful to your nation and render all the services that are expected of you and I am justified to believe that you have great inclination ... [Y]our feelings of attachment towards the fatherland and love for the king, with which all French are born ... Your bravery and good behavior have attracted all the credit and esteem which you enjoy among the people with whom you live, that you ought to follow the noble ambition to acquire the same consideration among your compatriots by attaching yourself firmly to the interest of the nation, by serving the nation in all your capacity and by employing the credit and the confidence which you enjoy among the [Indian] princes” (Deloche, 1983).

Chevalier cited the example, to Madec, of Gentil who was placed under Shuja-ud-Daulah and who had attained a great place and promotion to become a captain and of Cross of Saint Louis. He further wrote to Madec, “[Y]ou are in a better position to serve the French nation in comparison to him, by taking the Indian prince in your confidence ... [Y]ou have large, disciplined troops under your command, and you are brave and in a position to lead them, the Indian prince of Hindustan are searching for you, to whom you can give your service ... [Chevalier encouraged] him to give his service to the nation which has given birth to him” (Deloche, 1983). Chevalier added, “[Y]ou can be of great use to bring about the expansion of French territories in India by a capable revolution ... as it has been so low after the loss of Pondicherry” (Deloche, 1983). Thus, in such effusive words Chevalier expressed his full confidence in Madec’s resourcefulness to find appropriate means and opportunity to bring about French dominance in India.

Explaining his plan of Indo-French alliance against the English, Chevalier wrote, “[O]ur natural allies are the Marathas, who hold sway over the [Mughal] emperor today. The right policy of the French in east[India] is to launch, in liaison with them and the Mughal court, an attack on the English in Bengal” (Barbe, 1894). He encouraged Madec to join the service of the Great Mughal. He also said that Madec would be joined by other forces and considerable troops which the French maintain in *Ile-de-France* [present-day Mauritius] composed of best and more ancient regiment of France consisted of 10000 men besides 2 or 3000 Kaffirs [troops]” (Barbe, 1894). Advising Madec on the course of action, Chevalier further wrote, “These troops have

arrived there on the outbreak of war which is about to arrive between Spain and England and one conserves them there to lend in all events. “I know that the [Mughal] emperor wishes to have two or three thousand French around him. You can offer them to him in return for their pay and maintenance and also some advance for necessary expenses” (Deloche, 1983). Chevalier then asked Madec about where he was staying and whether the Indian princes whom he served were interested in an alliance with the French against the English. If they were, Chevalier hoped, Madec could make use of them in serving the interests of France and consequently mould his political plans. He wrote, “I look upon you as French, in the country where you are and that is why I do not hesitate to write to you with confidence. I believe that you feel the same for me and there is no doubt that we will make an excellent work if you lend yourself to contribute to my plans and intentions. You know that it is not the question of the company, King who is the master of the establishment in the Indies. It is thus his Majesty that you serve today directly and it is a circumstance which owed you to intimate yet more further to follow the way that I asked you” (Deloche, 1983). Chevalier reiterated that he would recommend Madec’s name to the French ministry for reward for his service.

Chevalier wrote that in the current situation of the nation, “one needs the money for the fortification of Pondicherry, so you can by your credit procure some three or four lakhs of rupees as loan, and send me the same by letter of exchange through some good sarrafs which I will [then] transfer to Mr. Law de Lauriston . . . [Y]ou can recover these loans from the royal treasury of France, as this is an easy way to transfer your funds to France” (Deloche, 1983).

Chevalier knew about Madec’s reservations about joining his service, as he feared reprisal from the English in India for quitting their service before coming to India. Trying to allay his apprehension, Chevalier wrote, “[Y]ou appeared to me worried from the English side. You have left their service without notice to join Maures [Muslim] and it is evident from your determination to obtain parole in writing from the Council of Calcutta and to Mr Middleton, that you would not be investigated on this subject (by English)”. Chevalier also promised Madec his protection from the English. He finally reiterated his request to Madec “to join the service of either the emperor or other [Indian] princes who, he believe[d],

ha[d] the will to join the French.” In return, Chevalier further assured, “I will send you a passport in the name of His Majesty which will protect you from all risks” (Deloche, 1983).

Further, Chevalier said he did not know about Mr Bourgeois who wrote in English in Madec’s favor to Mr Middleton and Mr Roussel. Chevalier doubted whether he was a French and consequently advised Madec not to trust him (Deloche, 1983) to hide his intentions and plant from him, and to stay away from him. Chevalier asked Madec to elicit Sombre’s^{iv} help, if need be: “[I]f he [Sombre] can be useful to you in the execution of that I propose you can meet and engage him in your group” (Deloche, 1983).

Madec’s Response To Chevalier’s Second Letter (June 16 And July 8, 1772): In his reply to Chevalier in two letters dated 16 June and 8 July 1772, Madec wrote, “I will assist [you in realizing] your plans to the best of my capacity and am ready to sacrifice the hope which dominated me to return to France for the spirit that I always have for the King. I promised him to go to Bengal and along with 10,000 men at his expense for the service of his fatherland [France] and hope to get rewards and compensation.” Detailing the situation of Mughal emperor Shah Alam II, he wrote, “The emperor, who had been wandering since he was constrained to abandon his capital city, is successively seeking some support from the princes and his subjects” (Deloche, 1983). He further wrote, “Shah Alam II was a pensioner of nawab Shuja-ud-Daula during the battle of Buxar and was obliged to follow this nawab . . . upto Benaras, and not planning to go further away, he begged the English for their assistance [in extricating him from this situation]. They allowed him to stay in Allahabad with the honor he deserved, granted him a pension of twenty four lakh per annum of Bengal and gave him a province which had been conquered by Shuja-ud-Daula. This emperor led a miserable life [as a pensioner of the English East India Company] till the end of 1771. English governed in his name and made him pay some contributions, etc. [But] [t]he monarch got fed up with this lethargy in which he lived. When the Marathas won the battle against the Jats, they asked the emperor to adorn the throne of Delhi ... The emperor accepted the proposal and arrived in his capital towards the end of December 1771” (Barbe, 1894; Deloche, 1983).

Further, Madec wrote, “[T]he English and nawab Shuja-

ud-Daula tried all means to change the resolution of the emperor. They presented to him the impossibility of strengthening his position on his throne ... [U]nable to change his mind, they accompanied him, with their armies, upto Faizabad. [The] nawab gave him an amount of twenty lakhs rupees and five guns and the English gave him two battalions, before withdrawing from there” (Barbe, 1894; Deloche, 1983).

CHEVALIER’S THIRD LETTER (JULY 24, 1772)^v

Madec received the third letter from Chevalier on 24 July 1772, in which he was asked to continue his service until further order. Chevalier stated that soon a war between the French and the English was to be declared; he wrote, “France has impatiently suffered much due to the English domination [in India]. [But] [t]he English do not cease to burden on its subject in India. If his repeated representations do not bring any relief to them, undoubtedly one has to take some efficient measures by force to bring justice. It should not be forgotten that, it a have in the *Ile de France* a formidable body of troops composed of 10,000 men of first regiment of kingdom not comprised of a numerous body of Caffres who, as you know it have benefited to them” (Deloche, 1983). He further remarked some Indian princes would be getting impatient for war against their and France’s common enemy, i.e., the English; he advised Madec to ask them to wait for the appropriate time to encounter the English and free themselves from their yoke. In Chevalier’s words, “[T]he Indian princes could be persuaded to welcome the French troops as liberators ... [who would] restore to them the country to which they alone have a legitimate right. In particular, the emperor should be acknowledged by all regions, or provinces which deviated from them either by some motive of interest, or by necessity” (Barbe, 1894: 74; Deloche, 1983). Thus, according to Deloche, Chevalier asked “Madec to assist the Indian emperor and assure him that he will find all the facilities that he desires from Chevalier” (1983). Chevalier further wrote that “he has a strong contingent but there is shortage of money. If he provides the money, Chevalier can procure for him the European troops that he requires on the account of payment for services, and he also advances some necessary funds to should be sent to them. This body of troops could help him to make master of his country and could give power to make laws and also subjugate those who refuse to obey him” (Chevalier, 1983). Chevalier sent du Jarday to the emperor who was to reveal the details of his diplomatic

project to Madec (Barbe, 1894). M. du Jarday was also sent to other Indian princes to seek alliance with them and was instructed to work intelligently with Madec. Chevalier also had full confidence in the Bengal nawab Qasim Ali Khan or Mir Qasim: “[I]t is ... on him that I depend a lot for the success of all these negotiations.”

Detailing his plan of seizing Bengal from the English with minimal violence, Chevalier wrote, “[T]here is a certain means to conquer Bengal, without a direct combat [with the English]. For this, it is necessary to raise a body of well-commanded cavalry which, by a destructive way but avoiding encounter with the enemy, will prevent the manufacture of commodities and the cultivation of lands. This can lead to a famine in Bengal, wipe out all trade and destroy the finances [of the English]. The English thus will be reduced to such an extremity that they cannot pay to their soldiers [and] then these corps can change sides [i.e., come over to the French side] if they feel it to be advantageous. The Company, seeing its trade interrupted and not receiving more of goods usually, would be the first to desire the payment and purchase even at the expense of all its possessions rather than lose its trade” (Barbe, 1894; Deloche, 1983). Think well on this plan, which is safe to execute and see, then if you could not link the *parti* with the emperor, while interesting there Qasim Ali Khan. He would carry these voluntarily, as it is the only resource for him to return to his state, which has been unjustly confiscated and Chevalier said M. Sombre should not distance himself from this plan, to take revenge on the English who had put a price on his head and threatened to hang him if caught by them. “If you can lead and carry out these plans as proposed by me, I will give you some fortune and also provide some excellent officers of infantry and cavalry for your assistance” (Deloche, 1983).

Further, Chevalier wrote, “[M]ark my words, the emperor probably will take the *parti* [force or troops] to go to Deccan with the Marathas; ... he should only think of conquering Bengal, strengthening his authority in this province which being rich and fertile, will procure him a big resource and secondly, it is a significant port, [and thus] it would enable the transportation of his troops to Deccan and other states conveniently” (Deloche, 1983). Thirdly, this way, “he will come closer to us, within a reach so that we can provide him all the help that he demands” (Deloche, 1983). These letters were full of high-sounding political ambitions. Chevalier continued advising “Madec to hear from Visage and du Jarday the

details of their plan. He assured him that “he [Chevalier] will demand for him the title of Brevet de Captain from the Minister, to be followed by honor of Croix of Saint Louis” (Barbe, 1894). Chevalier sent two letters to “Madec, one from Mr Visage who is in Nagpur, in case he did not leave for Delhi, and the other for Mr. Du Jarday, whose place of his stay you know but I am unaware of, as I have not received any news from him since his departure from Patna” (Deloche, 1983). Chevalier motivated Madec to show his fidelity to France (Deloche, 1983). He wrote that the “Marathas are today the most formidable power of India, it is interesting in all the cases that they look after us [French]: ... at least that will serve to prevent them from going through us” (Deloche, 1983). He advised Madec “to be calm of your fear with regard to the English” and assured him, “In proper time, I will be able to procure you all the means and safety that you desire without being worried about them and without having any risk from them.” He further suggested that Madec engage Sombre in his service and recognize his service if he entered in an alliance. Regarding Sombre’s safety from the English, Chevalier also assured Madec that as he (Sombre) was born French, he would surely receive the protection from the nation. Chevalier sent another representative, Monsieur St. Frais, to India, but according to Deloche, “this gentleman has not written to Madec; Chevalier thought perhaps he did not receive Madec’s letters. So he will personally speak to him and engage him there to respond you” (Deloche, 1983). He warned Madec not to discuss political affairs with anyone when he wrote a letter except with du Jarday and Visage, to whom he was free to safely communicate everything.

Madec’s Reply To Chevalier’s Third Letter: Madec, in reply to this letter, expressed that his concern for the cause of French dominance in India was “much more pressing than all the others, as I am convinced of the sad state of the French in Bengal and I am determined to sacrifice all to find a way to form an alliance, by procuring some capable allies against the English, and to engage them in a ruinous war in Bengal, till a war is declared in Europe. I did not think of any better opportunity to join the service of the emperor” (Barbe, 1894; Deloche, 1983:). However, Madec admitted, “[I]t is useless to think of getting any financial help from the indigenous powers of this country on simple speculations, based on [an illusory hope for] some vague advantages [from them] ... [T]he main object is to arrive

in Bengal and defeat the English, and the rest would follow from its ... [I]t is neither necessary to flatter nor inspire a noble competition to the princes of Hindustan who operate only when they are constrained there by the force to do so" (Deloche, 1983). Madec concluded by stating, "[A]s for my personal concern, Mr Chevalier would have shortly some proofs of my zeal and eagerness to assist his intention" (Barbe, 1894; Deloche, 1983). "Returning from Mevatte [Mewat] to Dig [Deeg, Rajasthan], [Jats] immediately with a *parti* of army, to go to the other side of Jamuna to collect some contributions ... for this campaign, Madec took control of two forts of lesser importance which, easily submissive the country, and then returned to Dig. He attended some big festivals there and received an honor from the eldest Raja, the Regent, who got married. But his stay was not for a long duration as the Regent had imprisoned the guard of two cities, who, betraying his confidence, had become rebels. He also tried to regain the lost fortresses. The expedition for taking over the fortress was harder than in comparison to the last expedition. Thereafter, Madec repaired the fortifications and stationed garrisons at the captured two forts, then he came to Mutrah, where the regent was staying and he expressed satisfaction at his work and gave him, along with his principal officers, some presents" (Barbe, 1894; Deloche, 1983).

Madec wanted to spend the winter in Agra. But due to repeated Marathas attacks, it was necessary for him to be in Barpour in the rainy season to monitor their activities. As the winter set in, he had to restore the troops and to prepare the ammunition of artillery (Barbe, 1894). Madec wrote, "M. du Jarday who was sent by M. Chevalier to different princes, to forge alliances with them. He was ordered to work intelligently with me, and to conform to the instructions that my long experience had put me in a position to give him. Basically, his motive was to endeavor to engage me to take up the service of the princes, who could be useful to the nation [French] for their re-establishment in the Indies. The main motive was to convince me to contribute, with all my forces, to the strengthening of the emperor's position. But the time was not appropriate for this mission. This monarch raised an army, and had, apparently, the Maratha support for him. But he needed money to pay his troops which was possible by defeating his subjects, who set up independence by rebellion with Maratha assistance; he defeated the Rohillas and forced them to compromise. After this victory, the emperor

returned to Delhi, with the approaching of rains and made some considerable recruitment of cavalry. In return of the beautiful season, he sent his troops to make some wars in the country of the Jats and put oneself in a duty to subjugate the *parti*" (Barbe, 1894). From his letter, it seems that Madec was in an awkward situation this time due to the march of the imperial army against the Jats, as he thought that if he fought against the emperor, he would upset the diplomatic project and if he deserted the Jats and went over to the emperor he would lose his arrears of salary amounting to two lakhs of rupees (Sen, 1971). In this state of perplexity, he received the fourth letter from Chevalier.

CHEVALIER'S FOURTH LETTER (AUGUST 16, 1772)

Madec received the fourth letter from Chevalier on August 16, 1772, who again urged Madec to enter in the imperial service [Mughals], earn the confidence of the Emperor and press upon him the utility of a corps of French troops. Chevalier said "inform me of the actual position of the city of Delhi and also where is the King, along with the Marathas. It is probably that as soon as the rains cease, he will no more postpone making the appearance of his forces on the borders of Bengal; I would wish him wholeheartedly for the relief from the tyranny under which all the country groans. But my concern is to know if the troops of this prince are strong enough to confront the English forces, which consists of approximately 2,000 Europeans and 20,000 *cipayes*[Indian soldiers], and who will be supported by ShoujaudDaulah's troops. If there is any dissatisfaction from the prince, [emperor] will not hesitate to declare himself in their favor" (Deloche, 1983). Moreover, "I doubt, which is, I would desire that the king and the Marathas would follow my advice.. It is to delay their attack against the English until they were joined by the auxiliary troops [of which Madec had already spoken]... and also that I offer from Ile de France, provided that one provide me or to M. Law de Lauriston necessary funds for the expenses which cannot be less of a 20 Lakh. He assured him that next the necessary help will come from France" (Deloche, 1983; Barbe, 1894). He said "[B]y accepting this proposal, it is easy to get 4,000 to 5,000 better troops from France. With similar troops, the [Mughal] Emperor was assured to get back the possession of Bengal, and to drive out the English, but also to subjugate all the governors of his provinces who refuse to recognize his authority and pay revenues" (Deloche, 1983). This is when, he would have nothing to

fear and would affirm his total power, more firmly than his predecessors. Chevalier tells Madec “if you enter in the service of the king, recommend the main point to him and from which he should not deviate at any cost, it is not to be an armed encounter but rather a kind of destructive activity of which I have already appraised to you in my last letter” (Barbe, 1894). Thus he urged Madec to join the service of the king in order to acquire his confidence and gradually make him aware of the project that could be beneficial for the French. Chevalier was sure that the emperor could never attain to recover his lost authority over all his provinces without hiring skillful European troops which would help him to create a fear amongst those who were planning to revolt against him. “Once again, French troops will not deceive him, when [Emperor] demands them, and that he will want to advance the necessary expenditure for their transportation to Delhi and also their maintenance in Delhi” (Deloche, 1983). Chevalier suggested to Madec that “Qasim Ali Khan...can serve you much in this intrigue, his particular interest the invincibly entry to attach to ours [French], as he can succeed to get back possession of his country which is due to him but from where he had been wrongfully driven out. Thus, there is no doubt that he will work effectively for the implementation of these projects, and I think that you would know better to make use of his service” (Deloche, 1983; Barbe, 1894). In the remaining part of the letter Chevalier tried to give allusions to Madec to be awarded in India if he succeeds in this project. In order to make this project successful Chevalier even sent one of his family members named Chevalier de la Saussaye to help Madec. He was a meritorious and an excellent officer of cavalry in France...he would render useful service if he would be attached to the Mughal emperor as a commandant of a cavalry force and would train the Mughal forces in European manner. This would be consequently very useful in the service of the prince... [Chevalier] demanded a salary of rupees 2,000 per month for him” (Deloche, 1983). Further the letter stated “that if the king needs, one could hand him over some troops constituting of excellent infantry and artillery [who would be paid from emperor exchequer. However Chevalier did not demand high salary for them except for his family member] ... rupees 400 to 500 rupees would be sufficient for captains, rupees 300 for lieutenant and rupees 200 for sub-lieutenant” (Deloche, 1983). It is to be noted that Chevalier send five such

letters to Madec and repeated his promises to him in exchange of executing his plans of allying with the emperor for driving out the English.

Madec’s Reply To Chevalier’s Fourth Letter: Madec had to leave the service of Jats to join Mughal emperor. Due to the nonpayment of the arrears of his salary which amounted to be 2 lakh rupees (Deloche, 1983) and enter into negotiations with the Mughal emperor through his friends at the Mughal court. Emile Barbe said that Madec surrendered a credit of rupees 5 lakh livres that he could on the contrary hope to recovery later, if he remained in the service of Jats. He suspected that the Jats would not allow him to leave their service and would apply force for the same. Thus he realized finally that it would better be debtors the Jats than the Mughals (Barbe, 1894). He made a great sacrifice of his money for his nation by joining the service of Mughals as desired by the Chevalier. Later the prince offered him some propositions flattering propositions. In the meanwhile the Prince regent, signaled to march against the emperor. Madec led his troops composed of three thousand men and eight *parti*, supported, by a native chief, having two thousand men under his command. Soon, Madec confronted the imperial army, who gave up without combat the Jat territory (Barbe, 1894). After that Madec actively retook his negotiations with the emperor and it was during this time that he received time fifth letter from Chevalier.

CHEVALIER’S FIFTH LETTER (DECEMBER 4, 1772)

The fifth letter of Chevalier dated December 4 1772, emphasized that Mughal Marathas alliance would become a formidable power to reckon with the power of Governors and Nawabs who refuse to recognize his authority could be suppressed in India. In the last letter, he advised to Madec to “leave the service of the (Jat) Raja as quickly as you can and join the Emperor. Once he is convinced that your troops are needed for his safety. He will supply you the necessary funds” (Deloche, 1983). Madec along with M. du Jarray would thus revive the glory and splendor of the nation and raise its status from its present unfortunate state. He also assured Madec to write a letter to Mughal emperor to earn his confidence. “You must begin the preparations for it, and I count much on you for your praiseworthy and glorious success in attaining your goal” (Barbe, 1894).

Madec Reply to Chevalier’s Fifth Letter: Madec was flattered that the government trust him, as a capable

man who could change the fate of his nation in the Indies. But he suspected the unwillingness and the coldness in the execution of the plans by French government. He said, "by combating the troops of the emperor, I ruined him totally and put in a state of impotence to make to substitute an army capable to execute the project of which M. Chevalier made me part". Madec would become the man of his nation, while passing to his service and given the first dignity by the emperor. He felt that he would be paid insufficiently but also felt that he was in a position to conquer some provinces of which some regions would be conceded to him. The annual revenue of these regions would compensate the defect of salary, which the Prince would give him in the beginning with many difficulties (Deloche, 1983; Barbe, 1894). Madec "concluded he would join the emperor Shah Alam on the following conditions, he accorded would pay me by 40,000 rupees per month [100,000 francs], I should be allowed to raise my troops as I would find right for this purpose. He would make made me a nawab and confer upon me the dignity attached to the past and should procure me trading licenses" (Deloche, 1983; Barbe, 1894). It was promised to him that he would be made nabab and mansabdar of 6000 horses and *bakhshi* (Barbe, 1894; Bail, 1930; Lafont, 2010). The regent of Jat tried to prevent Madec from leaving his service by pressurizing him by diplomacy and force (Deloche, 1983; Barbe, 1894). But Madec left his service and joined the service of the Mughals in November 1772 (Bail, 1930).

Towards the end of November 1772, Madec arrived in the Mughal capital. It was a moment of glory of his life (Deloche, 1983). After three days Emperor Shah Alam II gave a reception in his honour at Red Fort. He also assigned him a jagir comprising of areas of Bari, Bayana, Sepau and Sirhind (Modave, 1971). Madec letter reveals that the Marathas defeated the Jats, who agreed to pay war indemnity to Marathas on condition that the victors would compel Mughal emperor to restore to the Jats the country which he had taken from them (Deloche, 1983). Later Ruhelas also made a same convention with Marathas. Thus Marathas wrote to the Mughal Emperor requesting him to evacuate his recent conquests in Jat and Ruhelas territories. To this letter Mughal emperor replied "he knew his rights, that he was Sovereign and that the Jats and Ruhelaswererebels who have usurped territories under his obedience" (Bail, 1930). Mughal emperor wanted to build his force that could be useful to

throw off the Maratha dominance. The Marathas were worried about the renewed Imperial Mughal power, marched towards Delhi in December 1772 to lead a Battle of Delhi or Purana Qila (Deloche, 1983).

Madec tells that the rapid charge of Maratha cavalry forced the Mughal cavalry to flee immediately and did not give time to Madec to form his battalion into a square (Deloche, 1983). Madec lost his own camp and belongings; he was also wounded by a bullet that hit his thigh (Deloche, 1983: 168; Bail, 1930).^{vi} The Mughal Emperor surrendered to Marathas on 2nd January 1773 (Deloche, 1983). The Marathas had emptied the coffers of the Emperor as tribute of war and Madec wondered how he would pay his troops. Madec remained under the Mughals for three months and suffered the loss of his entire camp during the Maratha attack on Delhi. He later got a lucrative employment under Maratha chief (Sen, 1971) which was accepted by him with eagerness.

The attitude of the French government towards the ambitious plans of Chevalier was quite discouraging. But this negative approach could not discourage him who made an alliance with Maratha Chief MahadajiSindhia in 1773. Thus he tried to form a tripartite alliance between Marathas, Mughal emperor and French against the English, which would grant the French the freedom to trade in Hindustan and establish their dominant influence over Bengal. But this project did not meet with success as it was some Marathas chiefs rejected the proposal and returned to their Capital Poona by leaving the Emperor alone. The refusal of the Marathas as well as the financial distress of the emperor was the two reasons for the failure of the project of Chevalier (Sen, 1971).

Later Madec got disgusted and disillusioned with service of Marathas. Madec resolved to retire to his native land. He wrote to the Chevalier expressed his desire to return to France and demanded a passport from him. In the meanwhile when Madec was in the army of Sindhia, he received another letter dated 12 February 1773 from Chevalier, tried to prevent Madec's return and advised him to be attached with Mahadji Sindhia, who was very powerful in Hindustan and also suggested that Maratha power could be useful for French's interest in India at an appropriate time. (Deloche, 1983)

Madec confided his plan to Sindhia and suggested Du Jarray as his successor^{vii}, which was eventually accepted (Bail, 1930). But his return route was blocked that forced him to return to Sindhia. He went again to Gohad

and ultimately to Awadh to serve nawab Shuja-ud-Daulah in 1774. Madec had been driven out of the service of Shuja-ud-Daulah, second time in May 1774, by the pressure of the English authorities of Calcutta. However Shuja-ud-Daulah was kind enough to recommend him to his kinsman Mirza Najaf Khan, who was then the Bakshi-ul-Mamalik or chief commander of the Emperor of Delhi (Deloche, 1983; Bail, 1930). Madec returned to Delhi in July 1774 to serve the Mughal Emperor with his remainder troops. Emperor received him and at the instance of Najaf Khan, granted him a jagir around Bari. He maintained a good administration of the financial matters which helped him to enhance the revenue, which in turn helped him to enlarge his contingent (Barbe, 1894). Later Chevalier tried to achieve his mission by collecting the French military adventurers scattered all over India around the Mughal emperor. Although he succeeded in attaching Madec to the service of the Emperor with his whole contingent others refused to join this uncertain project.

THE THATTA PROJECT [1775-1778]

Repeated failures could not dissuade Chevalier and dampen his spirit from 1775 to 1778; he again continued his efforts to form solid alliance with the Emperor which would eventually lead to the cession of the province of Tatta or Sind to the French. This place, he thought could be developed into a military base of the French which would have large garrison and from where French could lend a small corps of troops to the Emperor. This could help them to provide military help to Delhi and then to Bengal (Sen, 1971). The proposal of Thattawas that "the [Mughal] Emperor would cede the province of Thatta to France in exchange for a small body of French troops to be permanently employed under the Mughal service....This would enable the Emperor to expect French military help on a large scale in case of a war with the English. Thatta was far away from the English possessions in India, and English susceptibilities were not likely to be roused by France sending a large body of troops for the occupation of that far-off province. Indeed it was only through the possession of Thatta that France could render any considerable military help to the Emperor in times of necessity" (Sen, 1971). According to S.P. Sen, this plan in fact was conceived not by Chevalier but by Madec whom he had persuaded a few years back to give up the service of the Jats and join the Emperor. But once the Madec had forwarded the plan, Chevalier took it up with great enthusiasm and sent urgent

representations to the French Government to accept the terms of alliance proposed through Madec by the Emperor himself" (Sen, 1971).

Albert le Bail differ from S.P. Sen's opinion, according to him "first the Mughal emperor called Madec, and told him that the English have strengthened themselves in Coromandal, Orissa on the side of Bombay, where as in Awadh after Shuja-ud-Daulah's death, his son has become the toy in the hands of English so he needs an alliance... [Further, he said], only, in India anarchy, divided between rival factions, he cannot do anything. With the help of the France, he can do something. Madec, while answering the Emperor, made him understand that one would need a powerful interest to justify a re-entry of France in the Indian politics"^{viii} (Bail, 1930). In their conversation, Madec did not need any interpreter to express his thoughts, establish mutual frankness was noticed. The Nawab suggested to Shah Alam to cede to France the fertile area of Thatta of which broke loose from emperors' authority. This will give them the a chance to intervene in the affairs of the Mughal empire, and firmly installed, it will be possible for them to threaten Awadh and Bengal from there. (Bail, 1930) This will help the Emperor to counterbalance the English dominance in India through French presence in the north west of India. Though Madec received lots of promises from Chevalier but none were fulfilled by Chevalier in regard to the concerned projects (Bail, 1930). The letter which Modave wrote in 1775, stated that some time after his joining the imperial service the emperor himself made him the proposal of cession of Thatta whereas Madec claim that the proposal was made to him by the Emperor (Barbe, 1894). Other Europeans including Sombre were also been contacted for the success of the French projects against English in India, Modave said Sombre "several times assured me that if the war starts between France and England, he would heartily employ his forces, means, resources and even his life ensure French success in case the French attacks British possession of Bengal. He happily believed that only the desire for revenge against the English urged him to embrace the interests of his nation, which would enable the French to succeed" (Modave, 1971).

Although Madec tried to write to Chevalier about the project, representative of France in Indies and offered to address him the license of Great Mogol and yielding the territory of Indus to France. Mughal emperor suggested him to address the King of France directly

but Versailles ignored him. He wrote thus to several big lords of the court and to the ministry, with the recommendation of Comte du Modave who was known to them (Bail, 1930). Madec took Chevalier and Modave into his confidence and in possible realization of this great project, he also wrote to Law de Lauriston, governor of Pondicherry, demanding to serve him as guarantee the Court. He submitted his first report to France containing important details of the project, possible alliances, situation and resources of the various sovereigns with all other useful information. The second report aimed to study the region offered by the Mughal Emperor to France which according to him was commercially and politically a significant area as which could boost up not only the French trade and industry but also their import and exports (Bail, 1930). He also gave the details of the tribes living in that area, their spirits and forces. In the third report he studied the possibilities of an attack on Calcutta because the treasures of Bengal lured the spirit of all the conquerors of the world (Bail, 1930). He tried to send these letters with great secrecy to hide them from English spies, "the documents were hidden, in a bundle of Kashmiri shawls, rose water and other objects of the country that Madec offered to M. de Satines (secretary of the state of Navy), thus concealing the reasons for sending them" (Bail, 1930). He reported that it was the only project which possibly could revive the empire of France in the Indies. He warned the French authorities that if France did not intervene at this time than the English would secure an uncontested supremacy in India. He estimated that 3,000 men which would be sufficient for the execution of this project and the expenses would be quickly recovered by the local resources (Bail, 1930). Establishing dominance over an area which was not fortified properly invite disastrous threats to French establishments for example Madras for Pondicherry and Calcutta for Chandernagar. Lastly, in the possible attack against England, the French can depend upon the assistance of the Marathas in Bombay, and of the Great Mughals in Bengal (Bail, 1930). After the death of Louis XV in 1774, the Mughal emperor under whom Modave was working desired to write to the king of France asking for his friendship. He represented that the connection could be established between Mughal emperor and French king if the Mughal give the rights of the empire on the provinces of Sindh and the city of Tatta Bakar (Modave, 1971). Modave said besides the

city of Thatta, the Mughal emperor didn't have other place to offer in the places like Surat, Malabar Coast, Coromandal Coast or Bengal, further this adventurer said that by giving the rights of Thatta by Mughal Emperor might lure the French King to form a direct alliance with him (Modave, 1971). Shah Alam had two reservations regarding this project. Initially it seemed below his dignity to seek friendship of a foreign prince at the price of the dismemberment of a so considerable part of his empire. Then, he noticed that the city of TattaBakar appeared partly belong to the Sikhs and Timurcha [King of Kandhar or Afghan] who usurped the said regions quietly. He however added that it would see more readily these voluntaries of Hindoustan between the hands of French than to leave them at their current owners, but that he could not dispatch the paravanas without compromising with Timur-cha that he had obliged to spare. It ensured that if the French took in the possession of weapons in the city of TattaBakar, he would have then no reason to refuse the paravanas and that he could execute this task in 20 days by sending Harkarah (messenger) to the general officer who the incharge of this expedition" (Modave, 1971). Madec gave some proposals which lead to the forming of a close connection between the two monarchs and which explained the all provisions of this project to Ministry of France. Madec was recognized by the Mughal emperor as being his representative to lead diplomatic deal with the French government. Modave drafted and translated these letters into Persian for the King and also drafted letters that Madec was to send to the Ministry of Marine in support of the letter of the Mughal emperor. But as his boat submerged in Ganga, the letters of *Pacha* [Mughal Emperor] to the King [French] got spoiled and Modave could not carry them with him^{ix} (Modave, 1971). Colonel Gentil in his memoir said that Chevalier remained without hope till 1777 about the French response to Tatta project and he wrote to the Duc de Choiseul that "all that I write remain unanswered, which proves a very mortifying indifference towards me and a lack of confidence in my talents and capacity" (Gentil, 1822). Later, once again Madec reorganized his army. Letters of Emperor Shah Alam's proposal of placing TattaBakar at the disposal of Louis XVI were sent to France. This project was to commence with one such letter written by the Emperor Shah Alam II to Louis XVI which failed to reach Chandernagar. Madec and Modave immediately sent copies and accompanying reports to the Governor

of the Ile de France. There was tussle between Madec and Modave. When Madec found himself in financial straits and Modave fomented a mutiny in his party and they quarreled bitterly. Power was not fully under the control of Shah Alam, Madec situation worsened during these ambiguous situations. There was no news from Chevalier and he began to doubt his seriousness and question the extent of French interest in his efforts.

Madec had built up a large personal fortune of about 600,000 rupees but waited for the news from France, Pondicherry or Chandernagor, which he ultimately got from the letter of Chevalier, dated 1772. The latter was appointed as the Commander of Chandernagor in 1767. According to Jean Marie Lafont Chevalier was a bizarre person with confused ideas, pretending to have connection in Versailles and he hoped to establish French influence in north India as Bussy had done in the South India (Lafont, 2010). Madec and Modave gained the trust of Emperor Shah Alam and suggested Louis XVI a territory called TattaBakar in the Sind, where French armies could settle and together with the Emperor's troops to fight the English. Chevalier had written a letter to Madec exhorting him to work as an agent of France and not merely as a chief of private army offering him a commission of captain in French army (Sen, 1971). Jean-Baptiste Chevalier indeed had ambitious intentions on Hindustan. He did not doubt a moment that it was possible to drive out the English from India. He initially started by intrigues at all the darbars to win the cooperation of the Indian princes: but soon he was convinced that the only effective policy to achieve his target was to put pressure on the emperor, to reinforce his authority by putting at his service the French adventurers especially Madec dispersed in the North of India (Deloche, 1983). In each of his letters to Madec, Chevalier reminded Madec of the duty of French to support a project which could start just after the approval of French authorities is required. Chevalier asked Madec and Sombre to send him money for rebuilding the ramparts of Pondicherry and he offered his help to transfer their fortune to France using his network. TattaBakar had a strategic and economic importance. According to Modave if this project could be executed France would procure a considerable foothold in this part of the mogul empire^x (Modave, 1971).

As regarding its geographical details he stated that this was at extreme west of Hindustan and closed to the desert which separated it from Persia, it was located

near a large and splendid river which was Indus, 20 or 25 miles of its way towards the sea. Its latitude was such that it was less rough and had less extreme climate than the majority of the European possessions in the Indies and it could become the important warehouse of trade (Modave, 1971). Chevalier's plan, which he presented as the French plan, was to assemble the various French *partisof* north India, mainly Madec and Sombre, under the authority of the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II (Bail, 1930). This policy aimed to restore the authority and prestige of the Mughals in Hindustan, so that they could conquer back Bengal with the help of the French and thus had a dual purpose of driving out the English and reviving French power.

His plan was approved by Shah Alam, but he insisted for reasons of secrecy and security, that Madec as he was the master of Urdu be the sole mediator between him and the king of France (Vincent, 1990). Madec also continued to work as a mercenary fighting the Jats under the command of Najaf Khan. Chevalier succeeded in convincing Madec, but, unable to receive any positive response from Paris, he was going to give up its project, when, towards the end of the year 1775, the business of Tatta revived his hopes. Realistic observers like Law de Lauriston and Bellecombe, who had experience of the Indian businesses, were critical of the success of the project (Deloche, 1983). The role of Madec in the diplomatic great project of France was thus quite significant. But all the administrative correspondence between India and Paris was full with the details of his exploits, and on his return, our hero was rewarded in France. At the end it may be said that Madec would have remain in obscurity like the other adventurers, but he mainly depended mostly on Chevalier. As Madec realized that there was no response of this project from the French government and hoped less to receive it in future, he decided to leave for Pondicherry in May 1777. He reached there in February 1778 before leaving for France in January 1779 (Deloche, 1983).

Before his return Madec reminded Chevalier of the TattaBakar Project, "[A]s you have not replied to me immediately in subject of TattaBakar, this affair is to begin again as the more beautiful...I judge by your silence that you had not evaluated my project which forced me to abandon it... I will however sacrifice the time necessary to know so I could end the affair that you appear to desire so intensely. I am to leave definitely from 18 to 20 of this month. Is being persuaded, as I

always said to him that one will never make anything in Hindustan without to have their some forces to make to respect and to fear and that none of the prince of this country will ignore us, at least they only saw us as the balancing force against the English" (Deloche, 1983). In 1776, French government showed same interest towards the diplomatic and military project of India. It is said that Mughals made proposal to French by two intermediaries namely Chevalier and Madec (Barbe, 1894) but after that for a long spell there was no response from French government which made both these intermediaries disappointed about the feasibility of this project. Chevalier sent an agent named Montvert with letters for both Madec and the Emperor, but due to his agent negligence Madec did not receive any news from Chevalier till April 1777 (Sen, 1971). Thus, Madec had made up his mind to leave north India and no amount of persuasion from Chevalier could dissuade him. In 1778, the French government sent Col. Montigny to India to give the final report on the Tatta project and the feasibility of this project but it lacked important elements to execute this plan. By this time Chandernagore had fallen into the hands of the English and Chevalier was arrested, lastly, departure of Madec due to lack of response to his proposal created an unfavorable situation for the success of this project (Sen, 1971).

CONCLUSION

Although the endeavor to formulate Indo-French diplomatic projects in order to counter the British growing supremacy in India was a failure, yet the number of letters written by Chevalier to Madec and vice-a-versa highlighted the efforts for a joint venture against British. These diplomatic projects gave intriguing facets of the political, military and economical happenings of northern India during the second half of eighteenth century. The above mentioned five letters of conversations remained historically obscure till now as they were not used objectively and accurately by the historians in order to comprehend the efforts made by French officers to search for suitable powers in India in order to compete with their rivals. Chevalier used a sycophancy language to lure Madec to take initiative to form alliance with Mughal and other Indian powers to jointly lead an alliance against English, while on the other hand Madec in order to gain material and official

gains was lured to Chevalier's appeal. Although both had personal motives behind their motivations but it can be ascertain that they had a patriotic zeal which made them work towards their nation. The exhaustive study of these letters, showcased the efforts made by French from 1771 to 1775, where French officers, mainly as Chevalier tried to persuade Madec to convince the Mughal emperor to come into an agreement to lead a combined project against British. Both Chevalier and Madec had personal motives for launching these projects such as that of patriotism, personal recognition and materialistic benefit. Despite the fact that several such diplomatic projects including that of Thatta between Chevalier, Shah Alam and French emperor could not materialize. They brought to the limelight the growing anxiety among these people against expanding of British dominance in India. An attempt is not made to evaluate the reasons for the failure of Thatta project but to demonstrate the narratives with different facets written in their conversation through the letters and memoirs noted by Emile Barbe, Deloche, Albert le Bail and S.P. Sen's historical writings.

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ⁱ "Tatta was situated far away from the English possession in India, the English were not likely to oppose the landing of the French troops there with the some vehemence with which they would oppose the sending of 5,000 French troops direct to Delhi."

ⁱⁱ S.P. Sen has made an error in writing the date of first Chevalier's letter to Madec, as on 20th January 1772.

ⁱⁱⁱ Mr Visage was a surgeon by profession and later he entered the service of Shuja-ud-Daulah. Another French agent was important in the diplomatic relations named Du Jarday, formerly an employee of the French East India Company at Pondicherry, was sent to Delhi in the guise of a Muslim.

^{iv} Walter Reinhardt Sombre was a French adventurer and mercenary who stayed in India in the 1760s.

^v Deloche erroneously stated the date of the third letter to be 24 July 1771, but, according to Barbe, it was probably written on 24 July 1772. Deloche made similar mistakes about the dates of the letters. S. P. Sen also made an error in describing this letter of 24 July 1772 as the second letter of Chevalier to Madec.

^{vi} Madec lost five elephants, all horses, camels, tents, carriages and quantity of effects and reduced him to extremities.

^{vii} 'Du Jarday was installed at the head of Madec troops, and handed over the with full proprietorship his artillery, arms, munitions, carriages, oxens, tents and all in general which formed part of his camp, on the condition that Du Jarday would serve the Prince who would agree with him for the benefit of the French nation'. Deloche, *Mémoire de ReneMadec*, p. 181.

^{viii} In the Memoir of Madec, it is mentioned that Madec was called by the Emperor to propose the project of TattaBakkar to the French king. Deloche, *Mémoire de ReneMadec*, p. 196.

^{ix} "It appeared me to believable that the Padcha offering to King his friendship and a special protection for his subjects in the Indies, these proposals would be received in France with a kind of eagerness, especially if Padcha united there as I pressed it the pure and simple transfer of the town of Tata Bakar and of his souba. The minister did not make at this regard no objection. I saw well the true cause of this liberality. Padcha does not have anything more to clear. Subjects rebels or foreigners were seized of ancient inheritance of the mogul emperors; it is thus indifferent at that this that such or such province changes of Master or remains in the same hands. He had even an interest to gratifier the François of a province which does not belong to him anymore. He sees the English extending daily on the two edges of Gange while going up this river and their possessions to become already bordering on the souba of Allahabad of which they ask the capital to the son of Sujahdaulat. Thus he is of the interest of Padcha to seek he to attract in some corner of Hindoustan a European, enemy or rival of English, to oppose it to the need to these untiring usurpers." Modave, *Voyage en Inde du Comte de Modave, 1773-1776*, p. 225.

^x The project was simple. Mogol offered to our government the province of Tatta in Sind (remote territory occupied by the Afghans) and, in counterpart, France was to provide him a quota of troops which would be in service. Subtle diplomacy which could improve his position without to cost him a rupee. Modave wrote the letter of the emperor to king de France and Madec wrote a memoir on the city and the territory of Tatta. In November 1775, Chevalier was informed of these proposals. He informs Paris, but it is only that in the middle of 1777 that he accepted a favorable answer of the minister. During this time, the situation had developed in Hindusthan. Madec, having undergone reverses, had decided to leave India and to turn over to France. His departure carried a fatal blow to the French diplomatic companies. One understands then why he carefully avoided evoking this project in the memoir intended for the minister. Before Paris was not informed by him, the government had decided to send colonel Montigny in India to carry out the negotiation; disappointed not to meet Madec, he wrote to the minister that it was the most fantastic project which was never subjected to the government. Deloche, *Mémoire de ReneMadec*, p. xii.