CHAPTER-SEVENTH

Concluding Observations:-

The Seventh Chapter discusses the concluding observations. In the first chapter I have introduced the Research theme. In the second chapter I have discussed in details the description of the Social aspect of Tamilnadu and Bengal. The study of research on the social aspect of Tamilnadu is as follows; Tamil land was occupied and inhabited by various micro groups of tribal people well before the migration of major forces, the Hindus, the Jains, the Christians etc. All the groups were living in an isolated manner and often came into conflict with each other on issues like encroachment of one other’s domain of activities. Those small units could not stand united as a society and as such became vulnerable to any foreign aggressions. Lack of knowledge, illiteracy and ignorance were hurdles for those tribal groups to like together in the form of a society. They were unaware of the benefits of a society formed by people having mutual understanding and respect for each other’s cultural values and traditions.

Tamil society as a cohesive unit literally started to function only after assimilation and integration of different cultures and entities following cultural invasions of various groups and communities from 16th century onwards. The ancient Tamil society had experienced the ills of casteism. The rigid caste system in Tamil society unleashed many oppressive measures on the lower segments of the society. This caste system had put the society into shame. The transformation of Tamil society in phases reduced the intensity of casteist approach. But Tamil society even in its present state is not free from the clutches of caste system.

Discriminations of people on economic conditions were very glaring in Tamil society in ancient times. Inequalities in incomes and status in the society gave rise to divisions in Tamil society in early ages. The social discriminations of human being brought together the learned and erudite sections of the society to raise their voice against injustices to the vulnerable sections of the society. Their mission against oppressions and ill-treatment of the upper sections of the society towards the lower sections were aimed at saving the Tamil society from disintegration.
On the other hand in Bengal we find that the present Bengali society basks in its glory of the past. The cosmopolitan culture with which the present Bengali society is accustomed to has been cultivated over many centuries by the sages and social and religious reformers. The Bengali society had its origin over thousands of years ago. The society had to pass many difficult situations before being stabilized to follow certain values and ideas suited for Bengali speaking people. The evolutions of Bengali society were not accidental. Although, common language brought people together in early periods, the difference in cultural practice and religious stood in the way of forming a unitary Bengali society. The social priorities, individual aspirations and threats from alien cultures necessitated the emergence of a unified Bengali society.

The present day pan-Bengali society has been evolved from the urge of survival of the ethnic identity in the face of inclusions of different cross-cultural societies. The Bengali society had experienced many ups and downs in the past due to attempts made by foreign invaders, with different cultural affinity and religious leanings to win over Hindu Bengalis through bribes and other lucrative offers with a view to assert their supremacy over the Bengali Hindu society.

The positive aspect of the Bengali society since time immemorial was that it had accepted all hues of people with warm gestures. The Bengali societies in rural and urban areas were accommodating and forebearing in their dealings with other ethnic societies that made Bengal their homes.

The research on festivals of Tamil land we find that festivals in the early ages has discovered the fact that at the time of formation of Tamil society, there had been no structural existence of any social or religious festivals. As however the early Tamilians lived in difficult terrains and sustained their livelihood on the bounties of nature, they used to share their joys during good times when monsoon brought good agricultural products and vegetables.

The pattern of festivals celebrated in Tamilnadu over many centuries has come to the view that most of the festivals of Tamilnadu are religion-based. The research helped in understanding the fact that although there has been a change in the attitude of the people of Tamilnadu over many centuries due to progression of the society, the basic purpose to celebrate the religious festivals remained the same.
On the other hand the festivals of Bengal have revealed that Hindu religious activities in ancient times were performed in domestic places in Bengali society. Performance of religious activities was completely in-house matter and as such did not acquire the character of festivals in the past. However, in course of time the performance of religious festivals in Bengali society has gone into dimensional changes. The religious sentiments of devout notwithstanding, the occasions of religious performances acquired the color of festivity from the latter part of the nineteenth century. In olden times, the religious festivals were performed in a quiet manner without outward glitz and glamour. People were happy to participate in the festivals with full of devotions and nothing else.

The novel feature of Bengal’s festival noticed during the course of the investigative study is the emergence of cultural festivals since 19th century. The cultural festivals of Bengal comprise of dance, drama, films, music etc. A tremendous fan following has put Bengal’s cultural festivals on high pedestals in the society. In fact, a parallel and permanent festival started to run alongside Bengal’s religious festivals. However, both types of the festivals have been maintaining their distinct identities and credentials.

It has been observed during the study, that too much reliance placed on the glitz and glamour of the religious festivals to make them outwardly more attractive has no doubt taken the sheen off, even though in a small measure, the religious values inherited by the people from their ancestors for over centuries. The present day shine and color of the religious festivals has distracted the religious beliefs of the people to some extent.

In the third chapter I have discussed the Artistic heritage of Tamilnadu has revealed the fact that in ancient period the inhabitants of Tamil land harnessed their natural talent to express their ideas and thoughts on various natural elements including the living creatures through different modes of performing arts. Their close proximity to the natural surroundings and their struggle with the wild beasts for their survival made a huge impact on their minds. They expressed those experiences and sentiments through rock-paintings and cave-paintings. Those works of paintings reflected their feelings about the natural surroundings and their behavioral patterns. Although those works were performed in a crude form and lacked imagination, nevertheless, they reflected the epitome of creative ideas of the ancient people. In pre-historic times, Tamil people had no scope for any formal education. In spite of that, they could express their thoughts and ideas in such mediums like rock paintings and cave paintings.
It is also discovered that from 19th century A.D. onwards, there has been a great revolution in the creation of different forms of artistic heritage and their preservation in Tamilnadu. The influence of education, training and cultural interactions with domestic and foreign creative personalities have enriched the potentials of creative genius in the minds of pursuers of different performing arts in Tamilnadu. Tamil arts and culture have been freed from religious shackles to represent people’s aspirations and their attitudes to the social systems. A new artistic heritage has been evolved to reflect universal approach to different social orders of the world. In this regard, a synergy has been developed with different systems that exist in different societies in the world to create new artistic dispensations in modern times. Tamil artists in different fields have adopted the technological innovations to meet the demand of the contemporary artistic creations.

On the other hand in Bengal we find that Bengal’s artistic heritage since the early days founded on its artists’ sense of eternal creation. The followers of different artistic presentations have infused their skills, knowledge, perception, understanding etc. since the early ages they based on their interpretations of the surroundings to make their creations immortals. People’s feelings, aspiration, emotions, joys, sorrows and relationships have been adequately demonstrated through the artistic representations in different field of arts. During the early periods, Bengal’s artistic heritage was mainly confined to manifestation of religious thoughts and beliefs. Mythological stories and narratives of the Puranas encouraged the artists and lovers of arts in Bengal to display their creative genius either through paintings or clay-modellings. Those works of arts mainly confined to create images of figures of the characters depicted in mythological stories. It has also been found that although the artists reflected their beliefs in gods and goddesses through their artistic presentations, they never compromised their skills to create artistic beauty in such works of arts. Their sense of artistic beauty made their creations more attractive to the general public. People used to be so moved by such creations of beauties, that they could easily identify their gods and goddesses in those presentations. Here lied the ultimate test of the creations of artists in ancient times.

It is also observed that Bengal had flourished in the field of fine arts like paintings, music, drama, artifacts, potteries, clay-modelling etc. since ancient times. The followers and pursuers of arts in Bengal in olden times displayed their proficiency in creating objects of fine arts. The sequencing of artistic heritage since ancient times would suggest that the
artists of Bengal have been more comfortable in expressing their thoughts and ideas through the medium of fine arts than their brethren of Tamil Nadu.

As regards education in Bengal it may be noted that in ancient times, education did not establish itself in Bengal in a big way due to lack of awareness of the common people about the importance of education. Education system in general started in Bengal in the 17th century due to pioneering efforts made by local Brahmin and other high-caste people. The native centers of education in villages and in towns imparted knowledge on civil life, anecdotes from the great epics of India etc. to the attending students. The nature of education was more informal. The basic task of the native schools in ancient times was to confine the students in a room to prevent them from wandering whole day on fields. More than conveying intricacies of languages and arithmetic the teachers of those native schools used to narrate stories from great epics like The Ramayana and The Mahabharatha' and tried to impress upon the students the importance of being good-natured and pious persons in the society like the principal characters of the stories. The main issue of such native schools in the early days was to inculcate a sense of discipline in life among the students to follow some unwritten ethics of the society. The ‘Ashramik’ culture of education where the pupils used to stay with their mentors away from their homes used to disseminate information about the role of leading a value-based life in the society. The old system of education notwithstanding its many drawbacks was aimed at creating and building the moral characters of the students. Considering the troubled times through which the people of Bengal passed due to many foreign invasions, the system of education prevailed at that time had its justification.

The real formal education in Bengal had taken off during English rule. The conservatives of the society opposed to English system of education in Bengal as they feared that the system would destroy the moral characters of the people of Bengal. However, the new system of education adopted by the rulers in Bengal proved their fear unfounded. In fact, during the English rule, the system of education in Bengal flourished leaps and bounds. It can not be denied that Bengal’s education system would have been in wilderness, but for the bold steps taken by the foreign rulers in adopting policies for development and spread of education in Bengal. It is further observed that learned and noble persons of Bengal realized the importance of good education for the development of a society. Those learned sections of the society helped the administration to further the cause of education standard
of Bengal. Although people of Bengal in general were against the British administration, they had acknowledged the support from the administrators for promoting the cause of education in Bengal with gratitude. A good education system in Bengal earned for it the distinction of being the 'Knowledge Capital' of India.

In the fourth chapter I have focused on Religious Aspects of the Tamil and the Bengalie. The research has found out that even during the dark ages, the people of Tamil origin used to worship Tothem and do others unnatural activities to express their faith in bizzare and unearthly events. The ancient people of Tamilnadu consciously believed that some evil spirits were behind the natural catastrophe and disasters. Accordingly with a view to pleasing the evil spirit the people of ancient days introduced various unscientific activities with this belief that those could save them from the wrath and anger of the spirit. This belief and faith metamorphosed into religious beliefs at a later date. The descendents of Tamil people inherited faith in religion and in the religious activities genetically from their forefathers for generations after generations. It has been found in the course of research that religious over-bearings in the minds of Tamils and their manifestation were not accidental. The Tamils are historically religious-oriented.

It has also been found out that religion has given rise to caste discrimination in Tamilnadu in its worst form. The high caste Brähmins in Tamil society projected themselves as the beholders and purveyors of religious rites from early days. The people of lower castes had no right to perform religious activities in early Tamil society. Tamil Brähmins used to claim that by birth they were superiors to other castes. Even they went on to claim their relations with Almighty. This feeling of supremacy of the caste enabled them to rule the religious aspects in Tamil society.

On the other hand in Bengal we find that the research on religious aspects in Bengal has found out that although people have been traditionally following certain religious activities those were not strictly in compliance with the Vedic principles. In fact, Bengalis follow the rules of religion prescribed by the high caste Brähmin priests in different texts on religious activities. The religious practices incorporated in different texts by the Pundits have nothing to do with the Vedic principles on religion, contributed by the sages over many centuries. In fact, basic fabric of Hindu religion has been totally distorted by the priests and Brähmins of ancient era by introducing certain formalities for compliance with. Those high-caste Brähmins had misrepresented the original Hindu religion by way of imposing
certain practices to sub serve their own interests. They made people to believe that the religion could be followed in true spirit only through the performance of certain activities and worshipping of deities.

It is also discovered that in Bengal the religious activities are confined to performing certain rites following births, marriages, deaths etc, and in worshipping deities at periodical intervals according to the norms prescribed by Brāhmīps of the society. The present day culture of performing pujas and worshipping idols is to mark the occasions with grandeur and lavish expenses on entertainment. The devotional aspect in the performance of religious activities has been relegated to secondary level. Thus the religious activity now witnessed in Bengal is independent of the basic tenets of the religion.

In the fifth chapter I have discussed briefly the Indian Culture In East-and South-East Asia. The research on Indian culture in foreign countries reveals that the British rule in India was very supportive of the cause of promoting unblemished cultural heritage of India. The British Government in India helped people to pursue higher education through policy implementation. However they never made an attempt to infuse British or for that matter European culture for adoption by people of India under duress. Rather, they encouraged people of India to follow their traditional culture which was the culmination of hard efforts and value based thinking of wise and learned people of the country for many centuries. As Indian culture was founded on rational thinking and perceptions about relationship among different races and communities it received recognition and respect all over the world. The aesthetic value of Indian culture in its any form of expression has made it vibrant and perpetual. In 20th century, the Indian culture made inroads to many countries in the world. Many countries in the world in modern times have realized that the happiness of life can be achieved by following Indian tradition of renunciation and sacrifice, the two main pillars of Indian culture.

The sixth chapter discusses the special features of Indian Culture. It is observed from the research work that since primitive days foreign races like the ‘Sakas’ the ‘Hoons’ the ‘Pathans’ the ‘Moghuls’ the ‘Portugese’ the ‘French’ and the ‘English’,etc. attacked India from outside to destroy the Indian cultural foundation built over centuries by learned and wise men. However, the inhabitants of the country were united to stand the test of foreign aggressors’ role of destroying the cultural heritage of India. People’s resistances had
protected the foundation of Indian cultural tradition and practice from being ruined in the hands of these foreign races.

Indian topography has all the natural elements which contributed to all round growth of the nation. The Vindhyas in the north to the high seas in the south, the desert in the west, rain forests in the north-east and plains in the east have provided nature’s bounty and protection to the people of India. It is quite natural that these natural elements have had great influence in fine-tuning India’s cultural progress. The cultural performances of different regions in India are closely connected with nature’s cyclic behaviour. Thus nature plays the role of ‘prima dona’ in the creation of different traits of Indian culture. Right from the dresses to food habits to cultural activities, the nature occupies the centre-stage in the life of Indian people.

The difference in culture and social involvement of the people of the two societies in few areas has cropped up due to ideological differences. While people of Bengal and North Indian societies established relationship among themselves through marriage ties, there is hardly any such ties and relationship between people of Bengal and Tamilnadu. Besides, both the societies are very conscious about their respective value system. In the backdrop of their educational and cultural background each of these societies do not like to come close in many matters.

The impediments standing in the way of mutual acceptance and adaptation of many cultural and social activities between Tamil and Bengali societies can be dispensed with by frequent exchanges of cultural values. Constant interactions of the people of both the societies on different aspects of life, culture, education etc., may develop bonding between the two societies. Both Government and non-government agencies can come forward to strengthen the ties between these two societies through organization of seminars, discussions, exhibitions and inter-active sessions among the people of both Tamilnadu and Bengal. When this is achieved the national integration will complete its full circle. These are the main ideas what the researcher wants to establish for certain.