CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION
1. INTRODUCTION

The word 'Bharatavarsha' means land engrossed in light, indeed it was the light to world in aspects of spirituality, science and culture, that later got clouded amidst invasions and exploitations. In the 21st century, India is gearing up to emerge as a Developed nation in the world making breakthroughs in various fields. But on the other side, Indian society is being weakened by multitude of crises that are impeding progress of our nation. Since dawn of civilization, Indian society has undergone many transformations from Stone Age to Space Age, basically due to commendable advancements in the field of science and technology. But all these shall get arrested if man loses socio-cultural equilibrium and peace in society. From the beginning of human civilization, society and culture has either influenced or imbibed from other contemporary civilizations, that is how the societies have grown influencing and admitting the changes. India has always welcomed healthy trends in other cultures, retaining its basic universally applicable characteristics inherited from the primitive past. India has been constantly engaged "in principle of a rich give and take culture with other societies". We have been always "interpreting one civilization to the other" and trying to find out what is common between them.
But the present trend seems to have lost discriminative powers to choose what right and discard wrong.

India is a land of great diversity; it is multi-religious, multi-cultural multi state with 28 states, 7 union territories Multi linguistic with 1652 mother tongues, and 18 officially recognized languages in 11 scripts. Indian society being more heterogeneous than any other societies in the World has embraced all these pluralities in it. India represents the characteristic of 'Unity in Diversity' but at present juncture, crises seem to defy the very essence of it. Indian society and culture are facing several challenges today; our society is being shaken up by series of crises.

Mother-India has lost millions of its children in its freedom struggle; our martyrs have sacrificed their lives for their dream of a free, democratic, socialistic and secular India, but today we have attained only political freedom and remained subservient to number of social and political evils. It seems that we are betraying ideals for which our martyrs and freedom fighters shed their blood and gave up their lives with a smile.

Today the poison of religious fundamentalism, communal-hatred, caste-system, injustice, inequality, materialism and
corruption are ravaging Indian society. Unrest and uncertainty is prevailing in our society at an alarming rate. The nation, which was the cradle of spirituality, enlightenment and enormous wealth, is now being turned into cemetery, of ideals and innocent lives by anti-national anti-social and anti-human elements.

Today most of the Indians view themselves with the false perspective created by western mind. Francois Gautier rightly remarks about Indians that" We are constantly looking at things and events through a prism that has been fashioned by centuries of western thinking, "and further exhorts "as long as we do not get rid of that tainted glass we will not understand rightly the world in general and India in particular” 2 The present endeavour is taken to correct the perspective of Indians and World citizens towards India. It aims to present undistorted history with a view to bind Indians in to one single bond, irrespective of caste, class, colour and other social inequalities. It tends to give a jolt to common man, heading in wrong direction. The present work aims at invoking the untapped latent power of Indians, to reconstruct India, to turn centuries old dream into a vision and vision into reality.
1.1 The need, scope and importance of the study

In the ancient, India was called as the 'Golden Bird', which metaphorically depicts the prosperity of our nation in diverse spheres. Since antiquity India was known World around, for its natural and intellectual wealth. But now India is in a crippled stage entangled in the coils of crises. It becomes essential to inquire into past to known what conditions led to degeneration of this great country. Society and culture forms the bedrock of the society, upon which other factors rest and hence the proposed thesis targeting socio-cultural aspects of our nation. The scope of the work is somewhat border than what the title may suggest. The scope of the research work ranges from the beginning of human society to contemporary corrupt society. The proposed thesis is an attempt to explore and realize the rich Socio-cultural heritage of our nation, to rekindle the Spirit of nationalism to realize the value of sacrifice of our martyrs, to inspire confidence in the minds of the Indians so that they may draw inspiration to reconstruct India and transform it as the most developed Socio-cultural and secular nation in the world. It aims at tracking the causes and consequences of the past and present crises; it is based on a new way of looking at the connections between the past and the present, to evolve pragmatic solutions to the
prevailing crises with the aim of ushering peace and prosperity in India and the world.

1.2 The methodology

The term 'method' is a derivative of the Greek word 'methodos', which means 'road to', thus etymologically the word 'method' refers to the way of doing something. It is the way of procedure from the known to the unknown, from a given starting point to find proposition in a determined field of knowledge.3

There is distinction between method and methodology. Method is a technique used to collect data and information; it is a way of doing some thing. Where as methodology is a study of methods. Methodology indicates the philosophical basis, on which the research is founded; it deals with the science dealing with the various methods of investigation.

According to the Advanced learner’s Dictionary the meaning of Research is “a careful investigation or enquiry specially through research for new facts in any branch of knowledge."4 According to Redman and Morey research is a “Systematic effort to gain new knowledge” 5 and according to Chaya Rai “Research comprises of defining and redefining problems, formulating hypothesis or suggested solution;
collecting, organizing and evaluation data; making deduction and reaching conclusions; and carefully testing the conclusions to determine whether they fit the formulating hypothesis.\textsuperscript{6} Research methodology is means to scientific investigation in solving the research problem systematically.

A Sculpture will be in a better position to depict a masterpiece with right tools, in the same way to obtain objective truth; researcher has to equip himself with right methods, failing which he may end up in bizarre results. A researcher must know both research methods and research methodology. By methods we mean the techniques used in solving the research problem scientifically whereas methodology shows how research is done systematically & scientifically along with the logic behind them. Thus when we talk of Research methodology it includes both methods as well as the logic behind them, explaining why we choose particular methods and not others, so that the results are potent of being evaluated by the researcher himself or by others.

The significance of research is well presented in the Hudson's maxim "All progress is born of enquiry. Doubt is better than over confidence, for it leads to enquiry and enquiry leads to invention". Research is an original contribution to the society for its emancipation and advancement. The main aim of research is
to find out truth, which is hidden, obscure or which was not yet been discovered.

I have used the following methods in this Research study:

**a) Empirical Method:**

According to empiricist, Locke, Berkeley and Hume all essential truths about the World were discoverable only by empirical experience. Empirical method implies distinction between subject and object. It is a data based objective research, which is capable of being verified by observation and experiment. It provides scope to work with hypothesis and to get enough data to prove or disprove the hypothesis, through thesis, antithesis and synthesis, so as to bring forth objectivity.

**(b) Rational Method:**

This is also called as the a priori method. Rational method emphasizes on the rational or intellectual capacity of man. The data collected by Empirical method may some times be illusive. Rational method clogs the shortcomings of Empirical method and aids to bring forth nothing but fact. It brings coherence between sense and reason. It was greatly emphasized by Western Philosopher Rene Descartes.
(c) Historical Method

Historical method is indispensable method to any social sciences, which provides ample scope to dig into the past unique events, to understand the background, cause or consequences of an aspect, with the help of documents and antiques. In my thesis I have liberally made use of this method in almost all chapters, to explore the causal relationships between past and present, so as to avoid the one, which lead to degeneration, destruction & disintegration of our nation.

(d) Comparative Method

Comparative method is one of the potent method in research field, it allows the researcher to compare and contrast two or more distinct or similar aspects (data) to arrive at right conclusions. I have used this method to compare the past with present, east with the west, and between the developed and under developed countries & their Socio-cultural systems; with a view to evolve a formulation to create synergy between materialism of west and spiritualistic ecstasy of east. I have also used this method to explore why some countries are developed and India, under developed.
(e) Descriptive Method

Descriptive method is the one of the best methods to present & describe the actual state of affairs, avoiding manipulations of variables. It gives ample scope for fact-finding enquires, surveys etc. I have used this method to describe the state of affairs of colonial India and ventured to describe the actual state of affairs in the present Indian society.
End Notes

2) Francois Gautier, Rewriting Indian History (Vikas Publishing House Pvt.Ltd.NewDelhi-1996) P.4
3) George Panthanmackel “From Dichotomy to Perichoresis an overview of western Philosophical methods”. Philosophical Methods (Asian trading corporation, Bangalore-2004) P.53
5) L.V.Redman and A.V.H.Mory “ The Romance of Research "(1923) P.10