CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The researcher has been working in the Banaras Hindu University library for the last more than ten years. His training in political science has been of much value in compiling bibliographies and other research materials and writings required for political science, library science and allied disciplines. When, in consultation with his guide and other scholars, the researcher decided to take up his doctoral research in political science, the subject of Acharya Kripalani came up readily to his mind. Although Acharya Kripalani, as a towering leader of India, belonged to the whole country,

1. We should note here that Banaras is the anglicised name of the ancient city of Varanasi. As in case of a number of other cities whose names underwent anglicisation during the British regime, Varanasi became Banaras. But here again, the spelling is not uniform. Different writings have spelt the city as Banaras, Benares and Benares. Since the word Banaras appears as part of the name of the university, this has been spelt consistently as Banaras. In the post-independence years, as part of the overall trend of de-anglicisation of the names, Banaras has been Varanasi and this is how it is mostly referred to today.

2. Acharya means a preceptor. There are a number of Indian words like Ashram, Sanyasi, Guru, Swarajya etc. which have been used in this thesis. Several such words are so common now that they have been listed in the Oxford dictionary. Instead of italicising these words, or putting them into the inverted commas, it has been thought convenient to distinguish them by making their first letter capital. This is the general practice followed in this thesis.
including the erstwhile parts which are now in Pakistan and Bangladesh etc., he had a particular interest in the Uttar Pradesh and Banaras in particular. Both he and his wife, Mrs. Sucheta Kripalani, were professors in the Banaras Hindu University. Mrs. Kripalani in her later years was the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh. Mrs. Kripalani was a Congress leader all along except for a brief period while Mr. Kripalani was a leader of the non-Congress parties, specially in the post-1950 years. Despite this party position, Kripalani used to visit and stay in Uttar Pradesh as a leader in his own right. Earlier he had come to Banaras as a private secretary to the great Congress leader, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, who was the founder of the Banaras Hindu University. There have been books by Acharya Kripalani and on Acharya Kripalani in the Banaras Hindu University library. Students who had been taught by him have become eminent citizens and leaders in their later years. Materials and oral information about Kripalani were available in other cities and towns of Uttar Pradesh. In Banaras proper a good deal of information was available not only in the Banaras Hindu University but also the Kashi Vidyapeeth located in Banaras where Kripalani had worked in the early years and which he had developed as an institution of nationalist aspirations. It was therefore decided that sufficient material would be available in and around Banaras for a fairly comprehensive study of Acharya Kripalani and his various ideas and contributions.
The researcher has sought to collect materials for his study from the Banaras Hindu University library, Varanasi; Kashi Vidyapeeth, Varanasi, University of Allahabad library, Allahabad; Uttar Pradesh Institute of Gandhian Studies library, Rajghat, Varanasi; Gandhi Ashram library, Lucknow. Outside Uttar Pradesh, some material was obtained from the library of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. From Dharward, where the researcher obtained his M.A. in political science, resources of three libraries were used. These were the Karnatak University library, Dharward; Gandhi Bhavan library, Karnatak University campus, Dharward; and library of the Karnatak University Department and College of Education, Dharward.

After a preliminary study of the various materials available in the libraries, the researcher sought to consult the back files of the newspapers and journals in which Kripalani had written from time to time. The researcher corresponded with the journals like the Visal of Calcutta and Janata of Bombay. The editors of these journals were quite helpful and encouraging but they said that the writings or articles could not be parted with. Xerography would not only be costly but also otherwise impractical. Therefore, they said, the best thing for the researcher would be to go to their offices personally and make notes from the writings. Further they advised the researcher as to the libraries
where the back files and other literature would be available for consultation.

For a time the researcher thought of approaching the various leaders and intellectuals who were the associates of Acharya Kripalani throughout the freedom struggle and the post-independence years, for the purpose of the study. However this looked impossible in view of the fact that such eminent associates were numerous and scattered throughout the country and the resources of the researcher were limited. So, instead, it was decided to establish contact with some Uttar Pradesh leaders and associates who could be approached for information and views on Kripalani. Correspondence was taken up in order to obtain a preliminary list of the leaders whom the researcher could contact. Mr. Siddharaj Thakur from Jaipur, Rajasthan, explained his views in brief on the subject and advised the researcher to get in touch with Mr. Krishna Swamy who was the personal secretary to Kripalani. Krishna Swamy was then ailing and was taking treatment in Madras. From Madras he wrote to say that he was the chief executor of Acharya Kripalani's will and that all the personal effects of Kripalani including his books and papers were kept in New Delhi. After his treatment he would go to New Delhi and then it would be possible for him to help the researcher with books, articles and suggestions etc.
The researcher was fortunate enough to be granted interview by a number of other leaders and workers who had observed Kripalani from close quarters or who had worked with him in various capacities. The researcher met Shri Vichitra Narain Sharma, a former minister of Uttar Pradesh, who subsequently became chairman of the Gandhi Ashram at Lucknow. Mr. Sharma had been a student of Acharya Kripalani in the olden days. He provided detailed information and reminiscences of the various projects and activities in which he was involved under the leadership of Kripalani. The researcher was able to meet another senior leader, Mr. R.N. Tandon. (He is not to be mistaken for the senior Congress leader and Acharya Kripalani's rival, of the same surname and initials.) As an active and experienced journalist, Mr. Tandon had been familiar with Acharya Kripalani's life and activities. This interview took place at the residence of Mr. Tandon at Allahabad. Mr. Tandon described Acharya Kripalani as a political saint of great standing who never compromised with his principles. An interview was arranged with Shri Hari Bhai who was the head of the Gandhi Ashram at Varanasi. Hari Bhai had worked in the Gandhi Ashram for the previous fifty years and had also worked with Acharya Kripalani for a long time. He gave the researcher the benefit of his views and comments on the various ideas and
contributions of acharya Kripalani. Shri Krishna Tuti Bhatt of Varanasi had also worked with Acharya Kripalani. The researcher met Mr. Bhatt a number of times not only for the information and advice but also for discussion and clarification of doubts.

He gave the researcher an important book of Kripalani, Faithful Year. Shri Ram Bachan Singh was an old worker of the Gandhi Ashram at Lucknow and he was very helpful in making a list of leaders and workers who could be interviewed for the present research. Shri Singh gave the researcher Politics of Charkha written by Kripalani. Outside Uttar Pradesh, Shri Luresh Ram Bhai who resided at Uttrakhand, New Delhi, was helpful in giving information about the various leaders and workers who could be of assistance in obtaining literature and views on Kripalani.

The researcher did not carry any schedule or list of questions for the purpose of the interviews. These were unstructured interviews. Questions or topics came to be raised depending on the inclination and readiness of the respondents. Sometimes interviews had to be terminated and taken up again because the respondents were busy otherwise. Usually notes or these interviews were made at home after the interviews were over. The respondents in general were most cooperative and helpful and encouraging. This is partly attributable to the fact that all of them belong to the Gandhian tradition of
altruism and constructive action. The factor was that they were elderly persons and they were keen on helping the researcher, a young fellow from the university.

The researcher sought to make a kind of content analysis of the various books and articles written by Acharya Kripalani. One of the publishers who was approached for the books of Kripalani published by him replied that the books of Kripalani were out of print. This happened to be the case probably because he published Kripalani's books in the 1940s and 1950s and there had been no reprints of the books. Some correspondence was conducted to seek additional information on Kripalani's life and activities. The researcher could not get the exact birth date of Kripalani. He wrote to the Fergusson College, Poona (which was affiliated in the olden days to the University of Bombay, Bombay) for some of these details. The college authorities were good enough to send a copy of the extract from the college register. The copy contained other information but the birth date was not available.

The principal methods of research employed in this work have been (1) the documentary method; (2) the content analysis method; (3) the observation method; (4) the interview method; and (5) the case study method.
After putting together the data from these various sources, in consultation with the guide and other scholars, a tentative scheme of chapters, as indicated below, was drawn up.

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The tentative scheme of chapters underwent some change later when the first draft was ready and when the structure and contents of the draft were discussed. The whole thesis has been designed to present the principal political ideas and contributions of Kripalani to the cause of nationalism in India. The second chapter entitled "Kripalani's Early Life and the Evolution of His Thought" is devoted to the family background of Kripalani. The circumstances of his early life, his primary and secondary education and his college and university education have been discussed. The early tendencies displayed by Kripalani, the various influences that were at work have been touched upon. References have been made to Kripalani's revolutionary bent of mind and his tendency to resort to violent activities on the lines of the revolutionaries of Bengal. The influence of Lokmanya Tilak on Kripalani was decisive. This continued until Kripalani met Mahatma Gandhi and fell under his influence. This was in the context of the agitation conducted by Mahatma Gandhi in Champaran, in Bihar. Kripalani then was a professor of history at Mazaffarpur, in Bihar, and he became a leader in the agitation although, to start with, it was not clear as to what role he would play in the agitation. As a result, Kripalani lost his job as professor and then Kripalani was completely free to participate in the freedom
struggle and the wider national movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. However, as a result of his contact with Mahatma Gandhi now he became a non-violent worker, a believer in truth and Satyagraha or civil disobedience. Kripalani turned out to be the most eminent member of his family. If he had followed in his father's footsteps, perhaps he would have been a government administrator and retired and lived as a pensioner, like his father. His association with Mahatma Gandhi which began in 1917 was to continue for the next 30 years or so until the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi in 1948.

The third chapter entitled "His Role in the Freedom Struggle" presents the main phases of the work of Kripalani done in the context of the freedom struggle. Brief analysis of nationalism in general and Indian nationalism in particular is provided. The growth of Indian nationalism following the British rule in India and the introduction of English education in the various parts of the country have been reviewed in brief. This is followed by a brief account of the work of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the establishment of the Indian National Congress, the main instrument of the freedom struggle. The role of Kripalani as a trusted associate of Mahatma Gandhi in Bihar and elsewhere is delineated. His role as a shaper of the institutions of
nationalist education at Banaras and Ahmedabad is analysed in brief. Kripalani did a good deal of work in the context of Mahatma Gandhi's constructive programme of Khadi and village industries. This is touched upon. Kripalani took a leading part as a prominent worker in the spread of the Swadeshi movement and related activities under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The civil disobedience movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi in 1930 and the Dandi March drew into the agitational programme a number of leaders and workers from all over the country. These, together with Kripalani's participation in the 1942 Quit India movement, have been explained. Kripalani's activities continued in the post-independence years and these have been analysed in terms of his various elections and his work as a party leader and opposition leader.

The fourth chapter "His Contribution to Party Building" examines Kripalani's career as a party builder. Kripalani was an active Congressman for a long time. In this chapter however the emphasis is on his capacity as secretary of the Congress party and later as president of the party. In both these capacities Kripalani distinguished himself as an active, decisive and vigorous office bearer. He kept up steady correspondence with party leaders and workers and he toured
extensively in order to keep in touch with the provincial units throughout the country. He did not allow any disputes or crises to break out. He saw to it that such situations were sorted out in time. When he took office as secretary, he started various departments in the party like those of Information, Publicity, Labour, Publications, Election Campaigns and so on. He appointed able individuals to handle these departments. He saw to it that the Seva Dal or voluntary corps developed properly. In spite of the usual atmosphere of police search and raids, the party headquarters functioned efficiently. Incidentally when Kripalani took over the party office, he saw to it that it had a stable location at the Swarajya Bhavan at Allahabad. In 1946 Kripalani was elected as president of the party at the Meerut session of the Congress. The big bosses were not happy that he was contesting. But Mahatma Gandhi fully supported him. Both as a secretary and president Kripalani was assertive as regards his relations with the Congress party leaders and specially with those who were in the government. He had a tussle with the prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru and another minister, Sardar Patel. Kripalani believed that the major decisions of the government should be considered first at the party forums and that the party organisations should be kept fully informed about the policies and major steps taken by
the government. Kripalani's connection with the Congress came to an end by 1950 and thereafter the country has known him generally as an opposition leader. In the last years of his life he became virtually a non-party man, an independent. But before he reached this stage, he tried to develop a sound opposition to the Congress party government. This he did by trying to establish and develop the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party or KMP and the Praja Socialist Party or the PJP.

The fifth chapter entitled "His Ideas of Education" considers Kripalani's role as a developer of educational policies and builder of educational institutions. Early in his career Kripalani developed the Kashi Vidyapeeth as an institution of nationalism orientation. His experiment of running a school and then proceeding to establish the Kashi Vidyapeeth forms the subject matter of a small case study included at the end of the fifth chapter. After completing this task under the direction of Mahatma Gandhi, at the instance of Mahatma Gandhi again, he went over to Ahmedabad to develop the Gujarat Vidyapeeth on similar lines. His contribution to the Wardha scheme of education was vital. He worked in collaboration with other educationists and leaders like Dr. Zakir Hussain, Prof. F.T. Shah, Acharya Vinoba Bhave and Kaka Kalekar. The basic education system was confined to the primary stage and it was
essentially craft oriented. Kripalani worked hard to develop the curriculum and the other steps of implementing the basic education scheme. Apart from this, he rendered a valuable service by defending the basic education scheme and showing how this scheme was definitely better and more suited to a country like India than the prevalent system of western education. Kripalani advocated the cause of basic education in the 1930s and 1940s before the ministers of education, Vice-Chancellors and other educationists. He felt that basic education was not only scientific but was also best suited for the all-round development of children in India. He held that the basic education system inculcated democratic temper and values among the students and in it the school became an experimental and training place for democratic leadership and the citizenship. As regards the post-independence reforms in education, Kripalani regrets that the reforms have not been sound and extensive enough.

The sixth chapter entitled "Kripalani's Idea of Economic Reconstruction and Modernisation" concentrates on Kripalani's thinking and activities in the field of India's economic reconstruction and modernisation. These ideas and programmes were designed under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Kripalani believed that indiscriminate and large-scale western-style
industrialisation was not at all desirable from India's point of view. He pleaded that labour-intensive decentralised industries such as small-scale industries or cottage industries were most desirable for India. He considered that some kind of mixed economy was ideal for the country. Such economy could provide adequate scope for the functioning of the public sector and the private sector. The main idea behind small-scale or cottage industries was that, with them everyone in the country would have employment, fair wages, self-reliance and self-respect.

Kripalani believed that science and technology and machines were to be employed in the service of mankind and they were not the ends in themselves. The programme of economic reconstruction was part of the overall programme of modernisation and it was fully consistent with the political and moral dimensions of India's life and people.

The seventh chapter entitled "Kripalani's Views on Democratic Philosophy and Institutions" discusses Kripalani's role as a democrat and defender of democratic values. His opposition to communism is discussed first. Kripalani rejects the economic interpretation of history and the theory of class war. He believes that the Russian revolution was not a strictly communist revolution. He argues that the communists drive a
wedge between peaceful and brotherly communities by playing up their differences which they are otherwise prepared to overlook. He says that the Russian methods of dealing with those who differed from the official line were like the methods of the medieval church which tortured its opponents. Kripalani was against allowing the communists to work inside the Congress organization. He argued that the Congress was a representative of the diverse sections of Indian people and it was most desirable that it remained so. The chapter explains Kripalani's fight for the fundamental rights of people. He fought hard inside and outside the parliament for the liberties and rights of people.

The amendments moved to reduce the scope of the right of private property drew forth Kripalani's fierce opposition. Kripalani maintained that everybody had a right to be guided by his conscience. He thought that a man had a duty to offer civil disobedience against those policies and laws with which he did not agree. This was the way to defend one's rights and enrich the laws of the state.

The eighth chapter is devoted to "Kripalani on International Politics and Foreign Policy." Even as a leader and office bearer of the Congress party Kripalani gave expression to India's policy and views. When the French sought to reimpose their control on Vietnam, in 1947, Kripalani criticised the French attitude as
outdated and unrealistic. Inside the parliament as well as outside, he put forward his views and ideas on the various issues of international politics and India's role in it. He criticized Britain as well as South Africa for their part in the promotion of the racial policies. He did believe in neutrality and non-alignment but he was sorry that the other countries like China were not practising the policy of non-alignment. He warned the government of India again and again against the danger from Communist China from across the border. He was firm in his view that China was treacherous in committing aggression on the northern borders of India. He believed that India was wrong in surrendering Tibet to the care of China as this removed the buffer between India and China and made China's aggressive activities easier to carry on. Kripalani wanted India to be self-sufficient in all fields and not to depend on foreign aid. He thought that taking aid appeared attractive but repaying the loans might compromise India's freedom of action and choice in domestic as well as international affairs. Kripalani did not appreciate the American stand on Kashmir. At the same time he felt that the Russians were not such reliable allies; their diplomacy was even more devious. Kripalani was all for friendly relations with all countries but the friendship had to be conducted and developed with honour and independence of action and decision-making in domestic as well as international politics.
The last chapter, i.e., the ninth chapter, relates to conclusions. A brief summary of the previous chapters and discussions has been given in the chapter. In addition a number of critical observations and evaluations have been attempted bearing on the ideas and activities of Asharya Kripalani.