CHAPTER - I

THE PROBLEM EXPLAINED

I INTRODUCTION

The problem of personality occupies a central place in the study of human beings. The interest in the mysteries, intricacies and complexities of one's own behaviour as well as that of others is as old as the inception of human life on earth. Man is sometimes perplexed at his own behaviour. "Why does he behave in a particular way? Why does he lose control over himself and behave in a manner apparently contrary to his nature? How could he commit such an act?" Such baffling questions often arise in his mind. Rational as he is, he tries to find answers to these questions. Ever since his inception on earth, man has been striving and striving hard to fathom the mysteries of human behaviour. At each and every stage in the advancement of human knowledge man has tried to explore the possibilities of satisfactory answers to these questions.

Psychology, as a natural science, studies the individual and his responses to the outer world. There are other sciences also which study the individual as a physical and social being. The physical and biological sciences like Biology, Physiology, Zoology, Genetics etc. study the individual
as a physical and biological being. On the other hand,
social sciences like Economics, Sociology, Anthropology,
Politics etc., study the different aspects of the behaviour
of an individual as a social being. Psychology is the only
science which studies the individual as an individual. But
the mental processes of an individual cannot be separated
from their social aspects. Any attempt at such a separation
would give us only a superficial study. In the same way, the
social behaviour of an individual cannot be understood in
isolation from his underlying mental processes. A properly
developed science of Psychology is therefore indispensable
to the development of social sciences.

Thus, both the physical sciences and the social
sciences study, in their own way, the individual. It is in
psychology that both these disciplines are brought together.
But within the discipline of Psychology a concept is needed
under which these two sides can be brought together. According
to Eysenck¹ - "This central role falls to the concept of
personality, which thus acquires its unique importance in
psychology by bringing together two sets of workers otherwise
isolated from each other: It does this, not by emphasising
the special field of study but rather by imparting a certain
point of view to groups of studies which otherwise might have
remained quite unrelated."

¹ Eysenck H. J., Sense and Nonsense in Psychology,
The problem of personality thus occupies a central position in psychology. But no theory of personality can afford to ignore the biological and social aspects of personality. Personality is not a pre-fabricated house, something ready at birth. An individual is formed and grows into a being as a result of his or her participation in the society and its culture. The culture of a society in which an individual is born and brought up exerts an immense influence on the growing personality of the individual. It is only through the social and cultural influences that an individual acquires a unique, well defined and balanced personality.

The problem of relation of culture to personality has in recent years been an important subject for intensive investigations both by the anthropologists and psychologists. As Ogburn and Nimkoff\(^2\) aptly puts, "Lately the anthropologists have discovered personality and the psychologists the culture\(^2\)\footnote{Ogburn & Nimkoff, Handbook of Sociology, p. 192.}". It is now generally agreed both by the anthropologists and the psychologists that the culture of a society exerts an important influence on the personality of its members. This thesis is purporated to make a psychological analysis of the cultural patterns of Kharwa Community of Saurashtra in order to bring out the relationship between culture and personality of Kharwas. It is a practice, generally adopted by the anthropologists and the psychologists to illustrate the relation.
between culture and personality, in general, through an analysis of the culture of a particular tribe or society. This thesis is likewise a study of the impact of culture on personality in general through an analysis of the culture of Kharwas. It is a study purposed to illustrate that the roots of personality traits of an individual can be traced in the elements of the culture of his society and as such the psychology of the people and their culture have a very close relationship.

There are many castes, communities and social groups with their own distinctive characteristics. These characteristics distinguish one group from another as a unique cultural group. The Kharwa community is one of such groups, which stands out as a culturally distinct group from among the co-existing groups. The reasons for selecting Kharwas as an organised cultural group for this study are:

1. Firstly, the Kharwas are still in a preliterate or semi-literate condition. They are still socially and economically backward, leading their life in their own primitive way. Although their population is scattered over many coastal towns, their mode of life, their ways of thinking and behaving are more or less homogeneous. Although they live in the midst of other castes and groups, they have preserved the elements of their culture
in tact. As compared to our ways of life, their ways of life are simple and hence it is easier to specify the relationship between culture and personality.

(2) Secondly, the Kharwas constitute the only sea faring tribe in Saurashtra. Hence, they are somewhat peculiar and typical i.e., different from us, the advanced people. The folktales and folktales eulogising the thrilling adventures of the Kharwas in combating the forces of nature can be found in abundance in the Lok Sahitya (folk-literature) of Saurashtra. They have contributed a great deal to the development of trade and industry in the country by undertaking trade expeditions to different countries of the world in their country crafts before the dawn of modern civilization. It is, therefore, interesting to study and identify those aspects of their culture which are responsible for the development of these traits - adventurousness, fearlessness, honesty of purpose etc., in their personality.

(3) Thirdly, the Kharwas are still backward in the ways of thought and action, in spite of the fact that they are living in the midst of other communities and are constantly interacting with them. Again, they
are Hindus by religion. The comparison of Kharwas with the Hindu society therefore becomes an interesting study.

Lastly, the Government has undertaken the implementation of various development programmes for the upliftment of the nation as a whole and the socially and economically backward communities in particular. The successful implementation of any development programme presupposes an insight into the social psychology of the people concerned. Any kind of reforms which contravene the habits and dispositions of the people are bound to invite the resistance by the people. The result would be, a hierarchy of conflicts, maladjustments and other social problems. Studies like this have great practical value, in that they reveal the psychology of the people concerned and serve as the guide post indicating where and how these programmes should be implemented.

II APPROACH TO THE STUDY

The problem of the study of individual in his cultural context is an old one, but it has acquired a new significance, in that, it has attracted the attention of various social scientists. Otto Klieneberge writes, "In recent years the students of culture and personality have increasingly directed their attention and their
techniques to the understanding of contemporary cultural and national groups. The problem is an old one and interest in it has been continuous throughout the ages, but the approach has altered considerably in its character and in its intensity. In the past it was largely the concern of historians on the one hand, and of journalists and travellers on the other. Now almost all the social sciences have begun to make their contributions to the understanding of national characteristics, not only history but also sociology, anthropology, psychology, psychiatry, psychoanalysis, political science, comparative law, the study of public opinion and many other related disciplines. The social scientists have now realised that a proper understanding of an individual can be had only if the impact of the social and cultural forces has been taken into account. An individual exists in the midst of physical, geographical, social and cultural forces which mould his personality. The elemental and analytical approach to the study of personality without taking into account the impact of these forces is superficial and artificial. "For many years anthropologists concerned themselves much with the formal organisation of different cultures, little with the way culture influences personality. Psychologists, meantime largely confined themselves to the study of behaviour in standardized laboratory, shutting out the highly significant environmental influences. Lately, the anthropologists have discovered personality, and the psychologists

culture, and the two disciplines have begun to collaborate profitably on the problem of the inter-relationship of these two factors. The approach adopted in this study of the Kharwas of Saurashtra is therefore, termed "The Psycho-cultural approach to personality." It suggests that the finding about personality, in this thesis is the result of the correlation between the two disciplines of psychology and anthropology.

III. SOCIOLOGICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF PERSONALITY

(a) Sociological Approach

The problem of personality is of indirect concern to sociology and anthropology. Sociology is preoccupied with the problems of society and social organisations. The society is ultimately composed of individuals. As such, the study of individuals becomes part of the study of society. Thus the study of individual is of secondary importance to the sociologist. Personality, to them, is a product of social interaction or socialisation. They attempt to derive some of the characteristics of human beings from their membership of the group without the intervention of psychology. As Parsons T. puts it, "behaviour and personality are functions of the system of social relationships in which they are formed ...." 5 William F. Ogburn and Mayer F. Nimkoff

say, "The point made above is a special case of a more general principle, namely, that personality is a function of social situations." According to these theories man's actions are not the expression of his motives but rather the social situations in which he is placed. To them, personality is the totality of actions. "Since personality is developed in social situations and is expressed in interaction with other people, it has an important social aspect. Viewed from this social aspect, one's personality is the totality of impressions one makes on others." To the sociologist man's biological and psychological forces are not as important as the social situations. They try to explain the individual's development in terms of group membership and role expectations. As Sapir says, "the sociological concept creates personality as a gradually cumulative entity." He further says, "personality defined by the sociologist is the totality of those aspects of behaviour which give meaning to an individual in society and differentiate him from other members of the community, each of whom embodies countless cultural patterns in a unique configuration."

7. Ibid. p. 159.
Anyone believing in psychical determinism would turn down such theories as obscure and paradoxical. How can a totality have those qualities which are not in its parts? A group cannot have the characteristics that are not derived from the individual members composing the group. The sociologists' concept of group mind is fallacious and has been rejected by the psychologists.

It was once a fashion among the sociologists to describe society only in terms of its structure. But attempts have now been made to reconcile sociology and psychology—the theory of social structure and theory of motives by K. Horney and Eric Fromm. As Alex Inkeles says "The central thesis of this paper is that adequate sociological analysis of many problems is either impossible or severely limited unless we made explicit use of psychological theory and data in conjunction with sociological theory and data. Indeed, I would assert that very little sociological analysis is ever done without using at least an implicit psychological theory. It seems evident that in making this theory explicit and bringing psychological data to bear systematically on sociological problems we cannot fail but improve the scope and adequacy of sociological analysis." He further writes, "..... my main purpose is to stress that use of the theory and data of personality systems is essential to an understanding of the stable functioning or the change of
social systems. In particular, I wish to stress the importance of sociological analysis of (1) a general theory of personality, for example, the Freudian theory and (2) knowledge about the particular personality components in the population or group acting in any social system or subsystem. Thus sociology cannot afford to cut off itself from psychology.

(b) Anthropological Approach

Anthropology is the study of man, the homosapiens. Social and cultural anthropology is concerned with the structure and evolution of the culture and its impact on human life. Earlier theories of social anthropology propagated cultural determinism. They emphasised the role of transmitted beliefs and customs in the formation of personality. The later theories tried to explain the central traits of personality in terms of cultural influences or cultural conditioning. The attempt of the anthropologists was directed to the exploration of the 'varieties of human nature.' They tried to indicate that no people are either superior to or inferior to other people; that no race is God's blessed child.

Anthropologists regard the individual as a creature of the circumstances. Even his motives, aspirations, beliefs, morals, self-evaluations and purposive actions are not regarded

as his own. They believe that the individual acquires all these contents of his personality in the course of his socialisation. People of a group have a common behaviour patterns which we characterise as 'culture'. Ellsworth Faris was led to define personality as the "Subjective side of culture."\textsuperscript{11} An individual is nothing more than the creature of his circumstances, of his culture. He is being continuously moulded by the cultural atmosphere around him. Abram Kardiner, culturally oriented psychoanalyst, contends that every society has a typical set of child-rearing practices which express the modal culture. As a result of these practices, a particular personality structure is formed, and people in the society thus become oriented in the ways dictated by the culture. He defines this "basic personality structure" as "the effective, adaptive tools of the individual which are common to every individual in the society".\textsuperscript{12} Such definitions and views of personality look upon the individual as a mere passive and mechanical carrier of the impressions of cultural beliefs and customs. They disregard the individual differences in the basic drives, abilities and capacity for assimilating personal social conditioning, and also disregard highly important differences in cultural conditioning. Again these theories merely describe and not explain the personality. They can be regarded as simply a set of pre-suppositions about human nature.

\textsuperscript{12} Kardinar A. The Individual and his society. p.237.
However, anthropological studies have made a valuable contribution towards the understanding of human nature and human personality. They have unearthed the scientific evidence for the differences in personality structure of the individuals reared in different societies and cultures.

**CRITICISM**

The anthropological viewpoint about personality has been highly deterministic and has been criticized on several lines. The concept of basic personality tends to underestimate individual differences and to overemphasize a presumed commonality of experience. As Kimball Young puts, "Personality always represents a particular configuration of cultural patterns and its own unique characteristics." In their attempts to analyze differences in cultural patterns the anthropologists have ignored the carriers of culture. An individual is an active (and not a passive) carrier of culture. Parsons T. has taken issue with the schemes of emphasizing personality types in a society on two grounds. First, because cultures are not fully integrated in a homogenous way, and second, because a personality represents an individual system of relationships which is not the same as those stable inter-individual relationships which characterize a social system.

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A personality has an integrity which is not identical to a society's organisation.

It is true that culture shapes the personality to a considerable extent. But it is also a fact that the initiative of the individuals brings about changes in the features of culture and thereby a change in the cultural patterns. People in the same society or even in the same family are not entirely alike. Individual is not a passive lump of clay that can be completely moulded into a common pattern by the cultural patterns. As Hallowel A.I. says, "culture is not a die which stamps out succeeding generations of individuals indistinguishable in all their habits and beliefs. It defines ends for which individuals strive and at the same time provides correlative means for accomplishing them, for gratifying human desires within gradational limits."¹⁵

To understand the individual differences within a society we must turn to psychology. Parsons T. says, "It must be kept in mind that a personality is a distinctive action system with its own focus of organisation in the living organism and its own functional imperatives. Given the diversity of genetic constitution, plus the diversity of situational influences, including the combination of role-interactions it would be strictly impossible for socialisation, even in a relatively uniform milieu, in terms of

major differentiations of social structure, to produce a strictly uniform product. The diversity of personality structures of those occupying the same status in the social structure is thus not fortuitous but is fundamentally grounded in the nature of the relations between personality and the social system.16

In short, to arrive at a correct understanding of the structure and development of personality, the two disciplines — anthropology and psychology should cooperate with each other. Seligman C.G. states that he has become convinced that the most fruitful development, perhaps, indeed the only process that can bring social anthropology to its rightful status as a branch of science and at the same time give it full weight in human affairs to which it is entitled, is increased elucidation in the field and integration into anthropology of psychological knowledge.17

IV INDIVIDUAL, SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Ralph Linton says, "although any particular individual is rarely of great importance to the survival and functioning of the society to which he belongs or the culture in which he participates, the individual, his needs and potentialities, lie at the foundation of all social and cultural phenomena."18 An individual behaves in

18. Ralph Linton — Cultural Background of Personality.
accordance with an established culture pattern in order to satisfy his needs. His physique is the source of all organic and physical needs and processes. These needs are satisfied with constant reference to the experiences which he has in the social and cultural milieu.

The society is a functional operative unit which works as a whole. Every society has a kind of organisation in which the activities necessary for the survival of the whole are divided and distributed among the members. This formal division of activities among the individual members on the basis of class and status gives the society structure, organisation and cohesion. Culture is a form of nonbiological, social heritage that flows from the past, generation by generation. As Mumford says, "Every human group, every human being, lives within a cultural matrix that is both immediate and remote, visible and invisible, and one of the most important statements one can make about man's present is how much of the past or future it contains." Culture is a way of life prescribed by the society and provides clues to the individuals as to how to satisfy the organic and psychic needs; culture provides people with a number of ready made answers for crucial problems. It dictates the routine relationships and social arrangements which help to handle survival needs, the protection and education of the young and many other social functions.

Han depends upon his culture for the development of his human qualities. As Ruth Benedict puts, "No individual can arrive even at the threshold of his potentialities without a culture in which he is participating. Conversely, no civilization has in it any element which in the last analysis is not the contribution of an individual."  

The culture, thus, is an indispensable guide in all the affairs of life. Hence, in spite of differences in the individual's abilities and capacities, the members of the same society usually respond to a certain situation in typically the same way. Since the individuals in a given society behave in a definite way in a definite situation as prescribed by the society, it is possible to predict the behaviour of a people. An individual can lead a smooth and comfortable life simply because his culture has provided him certain patterns of behaviour. When an individual finds himself in a foreign land having a different culture pattern than his own, he becomes restless and uncomfortable. He feels like a fish out of water until he assimilates the local habits of living. This shows that in any society things are organised in terms of local cultural patterns and departures from them are very few.

Culture is a human product. The individual is a producer as well as the carrier of culture. The individual learns the cultural patterns from the contacts with the elders.

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and other members of the society. These cultural patterns are transmitted from generation to generation. Individuals thus help the perpetuation of the cultural patterns and with them the social system as a whole. Human potentialities can be actualised only in human society and human culture.

V. CULTURE AND INDIVIDUALITY

The central problems of culture and personality are two: how to account for the characteristic differences in personality as between societies; and how to account for the variations in personality within a given society. Ogburn and Nimkoff say, "the cultural factor alone accounts for differences in personality when the comparison is between different societies, but how shall we account for variations in personality traits within a given society? The answer lies in differences in (1) constitutional characteristics, (2) emotional relationships with members of the family and other groups, and (3) socialisation in distinctive sub-culture."21 The individual differences found in the personality within a given society can be attributed to the initial diversity of genetic factors and the diversity in the situational factors. No matter how successfully an individual is conditioned to the social stimuli, he is in the ultimate analysis a distinct organism with his own needs and capacities for independent thought, feeling and action. Each individual carries

the cultural pattern in the light of his own needs and capacities. "His responses", writes McIver, "are not devoid of understanding of personal purpose. He is more than a mere member of the group. He is the centre of activity and his response is expressive of that his own."22

No two individuals are entirely alike even in a compact group or society. Their behaviour may be similar but not identical. Every individual, by reason of nature and nurture has a unique standpoint from which he feels the impact of the world. The individual accepts his position or status in the group, and also suggests changes therein. In fact, every society provides for some degree of variation in behaviour. If all men thought, felt and acted alike, if all had the same interests and standards, if all accepted the same customs blindly and had nothing to suggest, civilization would never have advanced and culture would have remained rudimentary.

Thus, it is evident that a purely psychological, a purely sociological and a purely anthropological approach to the study of personality gives a one-sided and prejudicial view. The psychological treatment is important but looks artificial. The anthropological approach, though important, is superficial. Psychology and anthropology, individual and culture are not opposed but complimentary. As Ruth Benedict says, "In reality,

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society and the individual are not antagonistic. His culture provides the raw material of which the individual makes his life. If it is meagre, the individual suffers; if it is rich, the individual has the chance to rise to his opportunity. Every private interest of every man and woman is served by the enrichment of the traditional stores of his civilization. "23 We must therefore, in the study of personality, find a correlation between the two—psychology and anthropology.

VI CULTURE AND PERSONALITY APPROACH I
ANTHROPOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY.

Culture is a way of life of a society or a group. It is an aspect of society. Every society participates in, perpetuates and modifies its culture. But, in the ultimate analysis, a society is a group of individuals. The society is constituted by the individuals who are bound together by various factors viz., geographical, economic, environmental etc. Whatever be the factors that bring people together in the form of a group or society, it is ultimately the human bonds—the will to live together and the necessity for mutual contacts which bind them together. The roots of the human institutions created by society as well as the codes of interpersonal and personal-cultural relations lie in the psychic needs of the individual. Stressing

the importance of psychological approach along with the anthropological, Ralph Linton says, "These individuals constitute the unsolved 'X' in every cultural equation and 'X' which cannot be solved by purely anthropological technique".24

The structure of society is itself a part of the culture. Some of the features of society become intelligible only in relation to the organisation of culture as a whole. Hence the study of anthropology is more primary and important than that of sociology. In a way anthropology includes sociology.

The foregoing discussion makes it quite evident that in order to arrive at a correct understanding of the human personality the psychologist must cooperate with the anthropologist. Clyde Kluckhohn says, "Psychology is indispensably relevant to the understanding both of universal culture and of distinctive culture .... Nothing could be more evident than that psychology must help explicate these categories both in their generality and in their multitudinous culturally patterned modifications. It is equally certain that anthropologist can help psychologists understand the cultural dimensions of motivation, learning, perception, cognitions and the rest."25

24. Ralph Linton : Cultural Background of Personality, P. XII.
Thorne L.P. writes, "while the psychological processes are recognised as constituting dominant factors in personality, it is the culture which, by its manipulation of these processes, determines the direction of personality development." A personality, torn apart from social influences become an unreality. An individual cannot thrive apart from his environment. But many psychologists concerned with the individual differences and personality have neglected the implications to be drawn from the rich data accumulated by ethnologists and sociologists. Similarly many ethnologists and sociologists have failed to keep abreast of the developments made and the concepts arrived at by the psychologists. The result is that the psychological and the anthropological approaches to the problems of personality, have become divergent instead of becoming supplementary.

Thus, both these disciplines, psychology and anthropology should join hands in the study of personality. The researches conducted in this field so far, point to a conclusion that the development of personality is influenced by a multitude of forces, and that each of the areas in which the individual functions is interrelated with each of the other areas. As such, the sociologist and the anthropologist are as much concerned with personality as is the psychologist. Hence the standpoint adopted in this thesis is psycho-cultural (or socio-psychological) in character. Such an approach to personality study may be termed psycho-cultural (or socio-psychological) approach to personality.