CHAPTER III

The Nature of Culture in Relation to Personality

I Introduction

Culture is a distinctively unique achievement of human society, which distinguishes it from an animal society. Human beings occupy a unique position in the world of living beings, simply because of their capacity to create and sustain a culture. Every society, however primitive it may be, has its own distinctive culture which differentiates the behaviour of its members from that of the members of other societies. The history of mankind suggests that there is a universal distribution of cultural achievements. Walde Rutzal says, "The use of fire, of drilling, of cutting, work in a stone belong to early stage and have been the heritage of which each people built up its own type of culture." There is also clear evidence of cultural dissemination from tribe to tribe, from people to people and from continent to continent. Cultural forces act as the important determinants of personality. Hence it is essential to understand the nature of culture and its impact on the life of the individual.

II Different Uses of the Word 'Culture'

The term 'culture' holds a variety of meanings and it has been attributed various different qualities. Mathew Arnold in his

'Culture and Anarchy;' refers to the individual and the perfection at which he should aim. Men of letters and morality consider the self-cultivation of the individual moral, spiritual and intellectual attainment of the individual or a class as the essence of culture. We are prone to think in terms of refinement of manners and make distinction between rural and civilized ways of behavior. In popular usage culture refers to higher or more desirable ways of life and makes distinction between cultured and uncultured individuals according to their behavior. But for a social scientist there are no uncultured societies or individuals. Every society and every human being is cultured in the sense of participating in some culture or the other.

The sanskrit term for the culture is "Sanskriti" "Sanskrita" and "Asanskrita" (Cultured and uncultured) are the derivatives from the term "Sanskara" which means a ritual, a ceremonial performance. Every Hindu, right from the day of his birth, has to go through various rituals prescribed by the scriptures so that he may become fit to achieve the status and play the role of a student and a grihastha. "Sanskriti" means the state of collective life which can be attained only after going through the various sanskara.2

"Sanskrit" here means the socialised and "Prakrta" means an asocial being.

The anthropologists have used the term 'culture' quite differently. The eminent anthropologist E.B. Tylor, who is credited with providing the first formal definition of culture almost a century ago, says in 'primitive culture' that he understands by culture 'that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, laws, morals, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.' What is emphasised in this definition is that culture is a social heritage; it is the gift of society to an individual. The social heritage may be said to consist of a material part and a non-material, intangible, imponderable part. In other words, culture is a total way of life and the instruments, mental, social and material of which this way is constituted. Thus, we have a social culture and a material culture. Birdseye takes a similar view and defines culture as the product of agrofacts (products of cultivation), artiacts (products of industry), sociofacts (social organization) and mentifacts (language, religion, art and so on). Such a view regards culture as a substantive reality, a thing which exists. Marrett defined culture as communicable intelligence. Redfield amplifies this viewpoint when he defines culture as the sumtotal of conventional meanings embodied in artifacts, social structure and symbols. Malinowski and Radcliffe Brown take the instrumental, humanistic view of culture. To Malinowski culture stands for a sumtotal of integrated, learned behaviour patterns.

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which secure for an individual the satisfaction of the biopsychic needs and the fulfillment of other wants and cravings. Radcliffe Brown regards culture as cultivation, the process of handing down and acquiring traditions, as a result of which society is perpetuated. Kluckhohn and Kroeber take their stand on the plane of subjective nature of human understanding. Kluckhohn describes culture as a way of thinking, feeling and action. Gillian makes the viewpoint even more clear by maintaining that culture is not activity but its patterning. A more contemporary view of culture is represented by Ralph Linton's definition which places stress on integration. He defines culture as "... the configuration of learned behaviour and results of behaviour whose component elements are shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society." The viewpoint of Ruth Benedict is formatistic, aesthetic, according to which culture is not so much to be conceived in terms of the content of social life as in terms of its formal ordering and organization.

Thus there is no unanimity among the anthropologists as to what culture really is. Each viewpoint is important and none is superior to the other. But this would be of little use to the student of personality. The main question, "what is the nature of culture?" still remains unanswered. In order to have a clear conception of

4 Ralph Linton — Cultural Background of Personality p. 32.
culture we may raise a few questions: what is the essence of culture? Is culture something distinctive of human species or is there anything like animal culture? We must reiterate our point that the concept of culture must be such as is practical and can be subjected to research. The concept must help us in understanding the individual in society.'

III Social Life and Culture:

Man is a social animal. Sociality is ingrained in human nature. But this is not the special prerogative of men. Animals too have a sort of social life which finds expression in varied forms of behaviour. Alverdes F. observes, "Many phenomena of material culture and social relations are common to men and animals." Parallals of some of the social habits of men are also to be found in the animal world. The evidence, available, suggest that even the primary achievements of men are not exclusively confined to the human world. Animals are also capable of learning, inventions and discoveries and show a rudimentary speech. Köhler's experiments have brought to light many of the potentialities of the animals. But society and culture, social processes and cultural processes are not the same. Animals do have a social life, but not a culture. We speak of the 'modes of life or habits of animal, but never of culture. It is the culture and not the society which is the unique and distinctive human characteristic. A.L. Kroeber says, "culture is the special and exclusively pro?duct of man, and is their distinctive quality in the cosmos."5

IV  Essence of Culture

The human capacity for creating and sustaining culture rests in man's plastic nervous system and the structure of brain. Culture is a product of learning and invention. It is a way of behaviour, that was not predetermined in the genetic organization of human species. The capacity to learn is a function of the physiological system, especially the nerves and their organization. "The more elaborate the nervous system, the greater the learning capacity." 7

"The smaller-brained animals have less learning capacity than the large ones. And it seems very probable that growth in learning ability from ape to man has roughly paralleled the growth of brain in size." 8 Man's greater capacity for learning and power of thinking and reasoning connected with the use of language are at the basis of the culture. Animals are devoid of these powers and hence their behaviour is more or less stereotyped. The animals are thus debarred from the culture. It is the culture which gives a unique and distinct place to man in the cosmos. Man is also capable of evaluating his actions from ethical and aesthetic points of view.

V  Culture is Organic

One of the important aspects of culture is its continuity over time. The culture existed before the birth of an individual and

8. Ibid, p. 31.
would continue to exist even after his death. This fact has led to the belief that what is real and continuous is culture and that cultural patterns are independent of the individuals. Although culture rests upon and emerges from the psychic-organic mechanism of man, it is not in the organic structure of man. Consequently, culture is treated as something supra-individual. Hence, Herbert Spencer and Kroeber were led to call it superorganic, "With the transmission of behavior by learning, and especially by established learning through the group a really new order of phenomena begins. It is called the superorganic."

This belief that culture is superorganic seems erroneous. It is true that culture is distinctively human. But that does not make any gap or break in the continuity of life between human and infrahuman. Biological science has sufficiently proved this fact. Whatever gap we find between these two stages of life is only apparent. The extreme plasticity and modifiability of human responses as against the stereotyped responses of animals leads us to such an erroneous belief. An individual is largely moulded by the cultural pattern. Similarly, an individual exerts great influence on the progress of culture. Moreover, there is enough scope for individual variations and expression of individual differences within a given culture. Culture, thus, cannot be regarded as superorganic.

VI. Definition of Culture

While defining the concept of culture in relation to personality study we should keep a few important points in mind. Firstly, culture sets the chief framework within which the individual learns to function with his fellows. It is a way of life of any society. The culture as a whole provides the members of any society with an indispensable guide in all the affairs of life. Secondly, culture is not immutable. It is not something static and given for ever. Culture and cultural patterns are liable to change. The cultural patterns are not so rigid as to expect stereotyped behaviour from all the members. Always there is a scope for variation in individual's behaviour. Lastly, culture is an integrated whole of various traits. Cultural traits are interrelated and meaningfully organised into a pattern. Hence, culture is "a meaningful sumtotal of behaviour traits which are manifested and shared by the members of the society." ¹⁰

While distinguishing between the various meanings of the term "culture," in the foregoing pages, it was made clear that there is no unanimity among the anthropologists over the definition of culture. A few definitions representing divergent viewpoints have been cited there. However, for our present purpose, the definition given by Linton seems to be useful. "Culture," he says,

"is a configuration of learned behaviour and results of behaviour whose component elements are shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society." Thus, culture is a configuration, a sumtotal. Configuration implies that the various traits of behaviour and results of behaviour which compose a culture are organized into a patterned whole. The important characteristic is that the behaviours are learned. But this does not mean that the importance of innate factors as a source of motivation is underestimated or minimised. Although the behaviour is always motivated by the needs, the patterns of behaviour for satisfying these needs are always determined by culture. For example, eating is a response to hunger and need for nourishment; but what to eat, how to eat and when to eat, depend upon the learned acts of the individual. The needs are a biological fact, the satisfaction of needs is a cultural fact. The concept of culture is thus limited to the learned or acquired modes of responses. But acquired behaviour and natural behaviour are not contradictory.

At a descriptive level culture is sometimes divided into ideological, behavioural and material culture. The ideological features include beliefs, attitudes and value systems which the individual has come to incorporate as a result of his interaction

11. Ralph Linton - Cultural Background of Personality, p. 21.
with the society. The ideological and behavioural aspects refer to the non-material, psychological aspect of the culture. The material part refers to the totality of all other vehicles, the material and biophysical things, through which the ideological culture is manifested.

The ideological patterns are very important because they determine the individual's approach towards the situations and objects. For example, in polygynous society the senior most wife is believed to be the mother of all children, including those born by other wives, and children respect the senior mother as their real mother. Similarly, in polyandrous society like the Marquesan, the biological and sociological father can be different. Yet the chief husband of the mother is considered the real father. Here the interpersonal relations can be understood only by analysing the beliefs underlying them.

The material culture refers to physical objects such as houses, vehicles, tools, implements, machines and all the material paraphernalia associated with living in society. These are the product of man's efforts to adjust to and modify the physical environment. The physiological and spiritual needs of the man are satisfied indirectly by means of artifacts. But this division of culture into material and non-material features is not entirely satisfactory, for it implies that physical objects may have meaning
and usefulness apart from the thought and action pattern. The material products become meaningful only when they become ceremonial. Moreover, the material equipments of culture are not a force by themselves. It is necessary that the individual should have the knowledge of the production, management and use of these articles. They are useful for the satisfaction of the individual's needs. Secondly, these material equipments are essentially connected with the mental and moral discipline. For example, human being is equipped with a body, hands, legs etc., but the adjustment of these organs, i.e., how he shall use them is a cultural fact. As Kimball Young says, "The essence of culture is, of course, psychological; its persistence and functioning depend on human thought and action and not on the mere existence of tool, machine or material gadget." 13

Material, behavioural and ideological aspects of culture are called the overt and the covert aspects of culture. Culture, then, can be treated with regard to the overt behaviours that people display as well as the internal experiences which constitute part of their psychological field. The overt patterns are tangible and subject to direct observation. Conclusions about the covert patterns can be drawn from an analysis of the overt patterns.

VII Culture is a Structure of Patterns

Culture is not a mere aggregate or sumtotal of various traits.

The culture is an integrated whole. It is a series of integrated patterns of behaviour. Ruth Benedict said that the integration in a culture is brought about by its content being arranged into a permanent or semi-permanent design or style. Such a design, she called, pattern. The pattern is a cultural habit, a form of behaviour commonly accepted by all. It is a relatively fixed mode of activity, thought or feeling. "Culture traits are ordinarily encountered in connection with other traits, forming a dynamic relationship. The individual trait acquires meaning only in its relationship to other traits and to the combination of related traits as a whole." This group of functionally related traits is known as culture pattern. The pattern may thus be viewed as a number of culture traits grouped about a central interest and deriving their meaning in terms of this central theme." According to Herskovits' culture pattern is a "a recurrent action, thought or feeling state socially guided or regulated and marked by a delimitable range of variation." Any form of behaviour becomes a pattern when it is shared by many individuals in a given society. This 'sharing' of behaviour means that the members of a social group think, feel and behave alike. Pattern thus means a standardised form of behaviour. It also denotes regularity in behaviour. "The culture

14. F.E. Merrill and H. Wentworth: Culture and Society.
pattern implies regularity in behaviour that would be impossible if every person acted in random and individual fashion. Members of the society are expected to adhere to these patterns of behaviour. Individual whims and peculiarities constitute a violation of the prevalent standards and hence, are socially frowned upon and discouraged. These patterns of behaviour are usually supported by positive and negative sanctions. The positive sanctions take the form of reward and prestige and are meant to encourage the individuals to conform to the social standards. Scorn, ridicule, ostracism, social boycott, deprivation etc. are the forms of negative sanctions and they are meant to act as deterrent for the deviant behaviour.

Culture patterns take on a compulsive and normative aspects. They become the norms of the society. They are the 'ought' for the individuals. Patterns of behaviour gradually become the patterns for behaviour. This, however, does not mean that there is no scope at all for individual initiation and invention. The innovations which are limited to one person or a small group of persons can be classed as an item of culture as soon as it comes to be shared and supported by all the individuals. Whether a particular item deserves to be included in the cultural configuration should be determined with reference to the social cultural continuum and not with reference to the culture as it exists at a particular point in time. Thus, a piece of behaviour, though confined to a few, for example, medicine, deserves attention as a cultural item.

VIII Universal and Special Patterns

Culture varies not only from one society to another but also within a given society. All the individuals in a society do not behave in uniform ways in all matters. "Culture is not a single massive die that cuts all the members of the group to precisely the same specifications." All patterns of behaviour do not apply to all the members of the society. Some are common and universal; while some are variable. These common patterns are called the universals. They are the aspects of culture to which all the members of the society are subject. In a homogeneous culture, the universals might include language, certain elements of technology, the incest taboo, ridicule for wrong-doing etc. Culture exerts uniform influences through these universals. Deviations from them is not permitted.

In addition to the universals, there are what Linton calls "specialities" and "alternatives." The latter are the choices open to a member of society from among a variety of approved ways of behaving, e.g., in speech, dress, recreation etc.

Since the business of society is continuous and important and cannot safely be left to chance, societies assign certain roles to their members. In all societies roles are ascribed on the basis of age and sex. Linton holds that the age-sex classification is perhaps the most important single basis for determining the participation of the individual in the culture. There are certain

19. R. Linton: Cultural Background of Personality, p. 64.
forms of behaviour which are typical to such groups only. For example, groups based on age, sex, occupation etc. have their own special codes of behaviour observed only by the members of these groups. There are, for instance, distinct behaviour patterns for male and female, married and unmarried. These norms are known as specialities.

IX Culture is continuous

Continuity is one of the outstanding features of the culture. Culture comes out of the past, exists in the present and continues in the future. Culture is capable of being transmitted from one human being to another and from one generation to the next. In the process of transmission, the patterns of culture acquire a quasi-independent existence, in that they are not dependent upon any one individual or group. The continuity of culture is maintained by imparting the prescribed ways of behaviour to the new born child. The individual is trained to play the role expected of him by the cultural standards of his society. The process by which the individual is trained in the accepted norms of the society is called the process of enculturation or indoctrination. The individual is thus saved from experimenting anew for the evolution of the successful methods of adjustment. Culture provides him readymade techniques for such adjustment. As Ralph Linton says, "culture patterns come to the individual like suits of ready made cloth." The individual has simply to adopt the patterns formulated by his predecessors.

20 R. Linton - Cultural Background of Personality.
The standards of behaviour in any culture are the norms and the members are expected to adhere to these norms. But in practical life we always find a wide gap between the standards of behaviour and the actual behaviour of the individuals. Individuals may exhibit highest respect, pledge their support for the standards in their speech, but their deeds might be quite in contradiction to these very standards. For example, in Trobrianders class incest is believed to be supernaturally punished. They showed horror at the idea of violating the rules of exogamy. Yet to commit class incest is usual. In upper class Hindu society endogamous (sagotra) marriage is a taboo. Similarly cross-cousin marriage is a taboo in this upper class society. But lately these taboos are not observed in some cases. Although people do not like the violation of the cultural norms, but they do not frown at it. The reasons for this disharmony between thought and action, between the norm and the real conduct may be sought in the conflict between cultural standards and individual's impulses. The society's codes of behaviour are not always in conformity with the biological needs of the man. But we could not have social life without restraint and repression of certain natural impulses. Not all individuals are equally capable of such restraint, and hence the violation of the cultural standards. When the tendency towards the violation of the norms and diversion from the defined ways of behaviour is found consistently, there arise customary norms for violating the cultural norms.
**Selection in Behaviour Patterns**

Human beings are capable of a number of varied behaviours. No society can ever include all these varied forms of behaviour in its cultural pattern. One and the same act can be accomplished in different ways. In fact, we do find such differences in the ways of achieving the same goal between different societies. Moreover, there are many behaviour patterns which are mutually contradictory and inherently incompatible. For example, people cannot enjoy free sexual license and at the same time observe complete celibacy.

This position is very well summed up by Ruth Benedict when she says that 'the culture pattern of any civilization makes use of certain segment of the great arc of potential human purposes and motivations ... The great arc along which all possible are distributed is far too immense and too full of contradictions. For any one culture, to utilise even any considerable portion of it, selection is the first requirement.' Thus, every society has to make selection of the forms of behaviour for inclusion as items of culture.

**Integration of Culture**

Selection of patterns of behaviour is not made at random or arbitrarily. It is made in light of some purpose and belief. There are, in every society, some deeply rooted assumptions or postulates about the nature of the external world and the nature of man.

21. Ruth Benedict — Patterns of Culture — p.21,22,43.
These postulates may be existential or normative. They colour the people's views about things and give them their orientation towards the world around them and towards each other. The selection of patterns of behaviour is made with reference to these assumptions or postulates.

Culture is not a mere aggregate or sumtotal of customs and behaviour patterns. "A culture, like an individual, is a more or less consistent pattern of thought and action. . . . Cultures, likewise, are more than the sum of their traits."22 The cultural patterns are interrelated and integrated into a definite whole. The cultural norms stand in definite relations to each other. These norms, in their relations to each other, may be either integrated, unintegrated or contradictory. They are integrated when two or more interacting phenomena stand in a logical relation and show consistency. When they are logically unrelated, they are said to be unintegrated. Lastly, they are said to be contradictory when they are logically inconsistent and opposed. A culture is said to be integrated when overt and covert patterns of behaviour are logically related among themselves and also with each other. In other words, the deeds of the individuals should be logically consistent with their thoughts or attitudes. "The culture," says Sorokin, "is doubly integrated when there is consistency between preaching and doing, norms or belief and its practice. The culture of the group is triply integrated

22. Ruth Benedict – Patterns of Culture.
when the integrated ideology of the group is adequately realised in behaviour and vehicles of the group. The culture is thus a harmonious whole. "The whole determines its parts, not only their relation but their very nature."24 The parts of a particular culture show a marked tendency to form a consistent and coordinated pattern. In Summer's words, 'there is a strain toward consistency' among the various constituent parts of a culture, which tends to bring these parts together into a more or less completely integrated whole.25

XIII Diversity of Cultures

Societies and social groups differ from each other in respect of culture and as such people are different according to the diversity of culture. As Kretch and Crutchfield aptly put, "There is not one single human nature, but as many as there are cultures, societies and social groups. The varieties of human nature rest in diversity of culture."26

This diversity in cultural patterns may be due to various reasons, one of which is the diversity in the traits of behaviour, mass habits. The difference can be both in the overt and covert patterns of cultures. Thus we find differences between different societies in the child-rearing practices, attitudes towards sex, ideals of marriage and family life, place of Shamanism or medicine man, folklores, religious beliefs etc. The codes of behaviour prescribed

24. Ruth Benedict - Patterns of Culture.
25. F.E. Merrill and H. Wantworth: Culture & Society.
for the members of the group and the expectations from the members of various status also vary from society to society. For example, the Arapesh, the Mundugomer and the Tachambali tribes studied by Margaret Mead differ entirely from each other in the treatment of male and female child. Murphy G. has compared the Indian and American ways of bringing up children and has said that the American pattern of child training is quite in contrast to that of Indian. Similarly B. Malinowsky, in his book 'sex and repression in savage society,' has adduced evidence to show that with the difference in social structure the psychological complexes also differ. In a matrilineal society like that of Trobrianders suppressed sex attraction is more apt to exist between brother and sister than between mother and son.

Societies also differ in the material achievements and the emphasis they put on material objects. For example, for the seafaring Polynesians 'canoe' is the centre of ceremonies and festivals. In the agricultural tribes, occasions for ploughing the soil, sowing and harvesting the crops form the axis around which their festivities are centred. In the tribes, living in the condition of semi-starvation articles of food form the nucleus of all their ceremonies.

One of the reasons for the diversity in the behaviour patterns lies in the plasticity of the human mind and the nervous system. Though the stages and progress of human life and the make up of human

27. Margaret Mead: Sex and Temperament in three primitive tribes.
mind are the same everywhere, the society is free to elaborate or reject possible aspects of existence. "The diversity of culture results," say Benedict, "not only from the ease with which societies elaborate or reject possible aspects of existence. It is due even more to a complex interweaving of cultural traits." Society is free to evolve its own social organization, traditions and customs, assimilating different traits in its own unique ways. For example, hunger and sex are biological needs but each society defines the objects and methods of satisfying these needs in its own way.

Historical development of the social organization may also bring about differences in the cultural patterns. Development of social institutions and technical inventions does not take place in the same way. There is no reason to believe that there is any organic connection between them. Consequently, the nature of a trait will be quite different in different areas according to the elements with which it is combined. The totality of common trait operate in different ways and produce different patterns of behaviour. Hence different configurations of cultural patterns would arise. As Ruth Benedict says, "The final form of any traditional institution, as we have just said, goes far beyond the original human impulse. In great measure, this final form depends upon the way in which the trait has merged with other traits from different fields of experience." 29

30. Ibid.
Marriage can be looked upon as a religious phenomenon or as an economic phenomenon. Marriage in each case should therefore be understood in relation to other traits and not by the same set of ideas. The traits may be composed of different elements, and these elements should be given due consideration. These elements may be the same and yet they may be assimilated differently in the traits in different societies, as a result of which the total forms of cultures of the societies will be quite different. Shapiro H. observes, "It is theretically possible for two societies to possess identical inventories of culture elements and yet so to arrange the relationships of these elements to each other, that the complexes within the two cultures and total form of two cultures will be quite unlike."

XIV Cultural Change

As a general rule, cultures tend to have continuity despite the fact that adaptation and change within a society are possible. The forces which sustain culture have considerable potency in terms of the desiraability of the familiar and congenial way of life to which individuals become accustomed. There are certain compelling individual forces which act to sustain the continuity of the culture. However, culture is not a fixed, static and a perfect whole. Perfect consistency and complete integration cannot be expected of the culture. Inconsistencies and disharmony often arise and persist. Two reasons

31. Shapiro H. (ed), Man, Culture and Society, p. 177
can be attributed for this: firstly, culture is not consciously planned, it grows as a result of interaction of the members; and secondly, no culture is ever static. Culture is ever changing, ever evolving, new traits are acquired and a few are left out.

Changes in cultural patterns may be introduced from two sources - from within as well as from without. The sources that initiate changes from within are the inventions and discoveries made by the members of the society. Changes from without are mainly due to borrowing. All the inventions and discoveries made by the people are not accepted and assimilated in cultural patterns. Only those that fit well into the framework of culture are absorbed. Borrowing is accepting the ready-made forms of a particular feature from the contact with other cultures. The effects of cultural contact and technical innovation are illustrated dramatically by Margaret Mead's account of her return after 25 years to the Island people of Manus near New Guinea. They had replaced their stone age culture with modern practices, a leap of literally thousands of years, largely because their territory was the site of a World War II base through which many Americans passed. The sources and methods of borrowing is diverse. Again, the process of borrowing is selective. Not all traits of the alien culture are borrowed. Only those traits which fit into the framework of social organization are borrowed. Moreover,
no trait is borrowed in its entire form and content. The borrowed traits are recast and given new meanings. For example, the sun Dance of the American Plains Indians has been recast in tribe after tribe and given entirely new meaning. Similarly, we find that the tribes in India have been greatly influenced by the Hindu culture. Slowly and gradually changes are being introduced in their social organization, customs, religion, folklores etc.

Contacts between people of different modes of life does not necessarily lead to any change in any group. An element of culture is sometimes taken up from the other culture simply because it appears desirable or is looked upon as a symbol of prestige. The process of adopting a new trait is not sometimes smooth and easy, and creates confusion and conflict in the minds of the people. Such a state of affairs arises in case of large scale migration, war, and other such calamities.

In short, culture is not static but dynamic. "Culture, then," says Edwin P. Hollander, "is an organic thing which changes and grows. We who live by its dictates are influenced by it, very often in ways we only barely fathom. But we can also influence it and leave our mark on it by the introduction of innovations and the alteration of tradition."

Every society is cultured in the sense of participating in some culture or the other. Culture is a distinctive achievement of human beings. Culture is a configuration of the learned patterns of behaviour, of thought, feeling and behaving whose component elements are shared and transmitted by the members of the society. There is a diversity of cultures, as social groups differ from each other in their patterns of thought, feeling and behaviour. The cultural patterns of a group are not fixed and static but they are dynamic.

The psychologists are now increasingly becoming aware of the impact of culture patterns on the life and personality of an individual. They have found it necessary to take into account the cultural and ethnological phenomena for the correct understanding of human personality. An individual is born and brought up in a society having a specific pattern of culture. His personality is moulded by the social and cultural forces around him.

In this thesis, an attempt is made to understand the personality of the Kharwas of Saurashtra — the only sea-faring tribe — in light of their cultural patterns. Here the term 'culture' is taken in a wider sense. It includes not only the material and psychological patterns but also the physical environment. The material culture refers to objects, equipments, and instruments used by the people. The patterns of inter-personal relationships,
religious behaviour, phantasy, customs, traditions, attitudes, beliefs etc. can be grouped under psychological culture. The geography, climate, etc., affect the mode of life and contribute to the development of certain attitudes in the people. Hence the physical environment also constitutes an aspect of culture.