

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

---

- 1.1. Introductory
  - 1.2. Importance of Psychology
  - 1.3. Indian Psychology
  - 1.4. Present-day need in a nutshell
  - 1.5. Some useful references
  - 1.6. Choice of the subject
  - 1.7. Title of the present investigation
  - 1.8. The aims and objects of the study
  - 1.9. Methodology adopted
  - 1.10. A glance at the chapters
  - 1.11. Nature of this research
  - 1.12. Summary
- 

#### 1.1. INTRODUCTORY

' In ancient India, China and Japan he would have found huge masses of psychology embedded in the ancient systems of wisdom but **not** yet distilled into a form with which the research minded occident would easily cope.'<sup>1</sup>

The origin of this thesis lies in the present investigator's interest in the studies of the neglected field of Indian psychology. Though a little work is being done in this field yet only a few attempts are made to distil psychological material in a manner pointed out by Prof. Gardner Murphy. The psychological material from ancient oriental texts to be used today should be presented

---

<sup>1</sup> Gardner Murphy. Historical Introduction to Modern Psychology. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., Revised Edition, 1956), p. 213.

in terms of modern psychology in order to make it comprehensible to modern readers. Here, such an attempt has been made to extract psychological material and present it in a systematic form congenial to modern trends.

### 1.2. IMPORTANCE OF PSYCHOLOGY

The difficulties of the present-day life has its share in inspiring man to look more and more to the science of psychology. In order to balance and counteract the evil effects of the present-day inventions, it has become necessary to look into the mind of man and to discover the laws of its working as far as possible. This would enable him to guide his behaviour in such a way as not to make the discoveries and inventions of science a curse but to turn them into real blessings. Man does not know much of his own psychology in spite of scientific advances in psychology. His interest to know himself seems to be on the increase and he is more prone to study the subject of psychology. Spearman rightly puts it : ' Never before, it would seem, have all sorts and conditions of men taken themselves with such ardour to 'Psychology.'<sup>2</sup> This is a good sign and it shows that man's interest in himself is fast increasing. Psychology too cannot solve all his problems and sometimes it makes him more confused even though he has benefitted by it in certain spheres of life. What he still lacks is 'something' which he himself does not know; With its superb scientific attitude and analytical methodology, modern psychology lacks unity, harmony and synthesis. Spearman again rightly points this out: ' But what really may startle and even disturb us is that these very psychologists who profess-

---

<sup>2</sup>C.Spearman. Psychology Down the Ages, Vol.I. (New York: Macmillan & Company Ltd., 1957), p.3.

and everywhere admit - to bring such a vast accession of knowledge and power, stand nevertheless in extreme discord and conflict with one another.'<sup>3</sup>

This state of affairs in modern psychology makes it quite imperative to look back into the past and see whether some light can be shed on the present position so that a new course can be taken and bigger forward leap be made. It is here that one is guided to delve deep into the ancient Indian scriptures. They offer rich and fertile ground for excavation of useful material at the present juncture.

### 1.3. INDIAN PSYCHOLOGY

The relation of psychology to human behaviour is being emphasized in the recent works in psychology. This is a healthy reaction to the works of some of the analytical psychologists of the nineteenth century and early decades of the twentieth century. Psychology has to be studied in the whole setting of life as such. It is useful to find that such an approach is to be found in the psychological concepts of the early Indian thinkers. This is one of the salient features of Indian psychology. The phrase ' Indian psychology ' should not be misunderstood. In the field of human knowledge or science there is nothing like the Eastern or Western psychology. The phrase indicates only the historical and geographical sources.

It is not enough to say that Indian psychological concepts and theories can be useful in the complex situation in which modern psychology is striving to find its way to an integral approach and theorization. Such a

---

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. p.5.

need is also being felt in certain circles of modern psychologists. G.W.Allport says, ' Whether the occult element in Hindu psychology stems from its relative lack of acquaintance with what we in the West call 'scientific method,' or whether this western 'scientific method' is nothing but a narrow cult that blinds itself to uncongenial phenomena, I am not at this moment prepared to say, perhaps concessions are needed on both sides.'<sup>4</sup> This is a fair deal to both psychologies - the modern western and the ancient eastern; both have to learn from each other and benefit from each other's characteristic approach to psychology. Modern scientific method is a great achievement and has been fruitful as it has enhanced scientific knowledge in every walk of life and in every field of investigation. But too much of specialization by scientific methods has created trends of reductionism and that is the cause of lack of coherence in the vast and immense material of knowledge and the result is conflict and discord as Spearman has described. Here it is that the ancient Indian psychological theories may be useful to a certain extent to shed light on the current conflicts in psychological theories in one way or the other. This does not mean that there is nothing to add to the ancient psychological theories. There is to be a mutual benefit by exchange of healthy influence in any field of knowledge. Swami Akhilananda rightly points this out when he says: ' Our suggestion to Eastern scholars is that they be prepared to share their knowledge with Western thinkers and readers. They should contribute unhesitatingly and

---

<sup>4</sup>Allport quoted by Swami Akhilananda. Hindu Psychology-Its Meaning to the West. (George Routledge & Sons., Ltd., p.X.

unsparingly what they can give to the West in the field of religion, psychology and philosophy. On the other hand, they should be prepared to receive what the west can contribute in the field of science and other fields of academic discipline. Our request to Western readers and thinkers is that they use the achievements of India in the field of psychology.'<sup>5</sup> Swamiji has made a good case for Indian psychology before the Western world. He states with full confidence that Indian psychology is in a position to contribute something to the modern psychological theorization. This ring of confidence is not without any sound basis, otherwise to urge Western scholars to listen to the voice of ancient Indian psychologists, would be sheer impudence. Swamiji has said in full faith that ancient Indian psychologists were scientific in their own way and their scientific approach is described in the third chapter. Swamiji again states, 'Nevertheless it can never be said that Hindu psychology is not empirical, for it is based on the study of the experience of the mind. Brentano and a number of others of his school did not ascribe much value to modern experimental psychology, although empirical psychology was considered by them to be extremely valuable because they were interested in the nature of the mind.'<sup>6</sup>

#### 1.4. PRESENT NEED IN A NUTSHELL

The modern methods have unparalleled means of investigation is undebatable. Still however, the ancient Indian psychology or Hindu psychology as called by Swami

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p.xiv.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p.14.

Akhilananda, has something of its own to contribute to modern psychology. And this is the need of the modern times: the science of psychology can look back and then look forward to take a big leap for further rapid progress. That 'Something' has to be found out before reaching the end of this thesis. To put the whole argument, it can be said that :

- (1) there is chaos and conflict in the mind of modern man and society.
- (2) This is reflected even in the science of psychology.
- (3) Ancient Indian psychology can be useful to resolve this conflict to a certain extent.
- (4) There can be mutual benefit in the exchange between the modern and ancient Indian psychology.
- (5) This is the present need.

#### 1.5. SOME USEFUL REFERENCES

This felt need was recognised by some Eastern and Western thinkers and some of them have attempted to break new ground through the studies of ancient Indian psychology.

It should be referred here to Swami Akhilananda's two works on Hindu psychology. These are - ' Hindu Psychology ' and 'Mental Health and Hindu Psychology.' Swamiji's two books were well received, not only by general readers, but by a number of authorities in the field of psychology like Allport and others. Jadunath Sinha

has published two volumes on Indian Psychology, on cognition and emotion and has exhaustively dealt with psychological matter on these topics. Mrs. David Rhys' book 'The Birth of Indian Psychology and Its Development in Buddhism' is a wellknown book. Sorokin's contribution is no less important when he published 'Forms and Techniques of Altruistic and Spiritual Growth.' Pathak P.V. has dealt with 'The Heya Paksha of Yoga.' Swami Kuvalayanand at Kaivalyadham in Bombay and Lonavala has carried on researches and published series of useful material in 'Yoga Mimansa' magazine. Rele V.G. has tried to treat Kundalini in the light of modern psychology and nervous system in his book 'Mysterious Kundalini.' Mohanlal Mehta has written a thesis on 'Jain Psychology.' Dr. Mishra in America has written a book on comparative study on Yoga psychology and therein he has tried to compare ancient concepts with modern psychological concepts as far as possible.

This list of books on ancient Indian psychology is by no means exhaustive but it is only referential. These attempts have given fillip to such research with a new approach as suggested by Dr. Murphy. He has suggested that ancient psychological theories should be distilled in such a way that modern psychologists can cope up with them. This line of approach is accepted by several Indian psychologists and we have some scattered articles in Indian journals on this theme.

#### 1.6. CHOICE OF THE SUBJECT

In the process of study of the ancient books, it is found that the field of ancient Indian medicine is almost

unexplored from the view-point of psychological research. Moreover, there are interesting psychological theories in ancient Indian medicine with its application to medicinal requirements. So their theorization would be significant from many aspects and many view-points.

Psychology has much bearing on psychopathology and psychotherapy. 'At this time' writes Prof. Eugene, 'one of the most important if not the most important, of all paths to a knowledge of human soul, is by way of psychopathology.'<sup>7</sup> This statement seems to be indisputable on factual grounds. It aptly applies more to ancient Indian medicine of Charaka and Sushruta as they have treated the subject brining in the concepts of soul and mind.

Moreover, the subject of ancient Indian medicine can definitely contribute to modern psychotherapy as the concept of psychosomatic medicine was quite natural to them. Swami Akhilananda properly emphasized this point: ' So we feel that understanding between Western psychotherapy of various types and the Indian system of mental training can become a great strength for the solution of mental problems and psychosomatic diseases.'<sup>8</sup> Though the theory of psychosomatic medicine is gaining ground recently, the problem for psychiatry and the incidence of abnormalities are also on the increase. As man is now standing at a critical juncture, he is also in a critical stage psychologically. One cannot be impudent enough to suggest that the knowledge gained from scripts of Indian

<sup>7</sup> Prof. Eugene quoted by W. McDougall in Outline of Abnormal Psychology. (London: Metheun & Co.), p. vii

<sup>8</sup> Swami Akhilananda. Mental Health and Hindu Psychology. (G. Routledge & Sons Ltd.,) p. XVI.



our own psycho-physical disposition, as the basic condition of our employment of all agencies and energies, has not been studied as the central instrumentally.<sup>10</sup>

In contrast to this, there is a good deal of material for developing conscious self-control of man over himself in ancient Indian medicine. It is alluring to find the ways and means suggested therein and see how far they are useful to man in the present situation. This is one of the main reasons for the choice of the present subject. In short, the reasons which led me to choose the present subject are these:

- (1) There is ample psychological material in ancient Indian medicine.
- (2) The virgin field covers more than one aspects of psychology.
- (3) It can show such remedies for conscious self control of man over himself. This can satisfy the present-day need to some extent.

#### 1.7. TITLE OF THE PRESENT INVESTIGATION

Once the choice of the subject is made, it becomes obligatory to define clearly the subject and demarcate its extent and limitations. As my purpose is to find out possible aspects of psychological concepts in Ayurveda, it would be quite natural that psychological theories

<sup>10</sup> F. Mathias Alexander. Constructive Control of the Individual, 8th Edition. (Chesterson Ltd., 1946), p. XXVII.

must be studied in toto.

These are, then, the main aspects of my study of psychology in Ayurveda - psychological theories, psychosomatic theories and physio-psychological concepts. But these three aspects in turn would include the study of sex, the normal and abnormal, diagnosis and therapy as related to psychology and parapsychic contents in Ayurveda. Demarcating in this wise the contents of the material and the main aspects of the subject, it is incumbent to delimit the boundaries of the subject, as Ayurveda is a very vast science and the material therein is enormous. One can get authentic and full treatment of psychological material to a great extent only in Charaka and to a certain extent in Sushruta. These two are the main pillars of Ayurveda, and more so for our purpose. So I chose to delimit the subject to these two authentic works. The nomenclature of my subject runs like this: A CRITICAL STUDY OF PSYCHOSOMATIC THEORIES IN EARLY ANCIENT INDIAN MEDICINE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHARAKA AND SUSHRUTA. Here the term 'Psychosomatic' is used in its wide connotation and not in its narrow meaning of psychosomatic disease and therapy and so it covers all important aspects of psychology pertaining to mind and body. Psychosomatics is only one aspect of this subject.

#### 1.8. THE AIMS AND OBJECTS OF THE STUDY

Research work in ancient Indian scriptures is gaining importance from different view-points and a keen desire is being felt among the researchers in the field of psychological science today. This growing need requires

to be satisfied and therefore the first and foremost aim of this thesis is to fulfil this felt need to a certain extent.

This aim leads to the second one of distilling the psychological material in the field methodically. Such distillation requires sharp discrimination so that one may not be dragged into metaphysical diversions.

But distillation and rediscovery require proper evaluation of the psychological material sifted from the scripts.

This evaluation would naturally throw light on the question how far the psychological and other similar theories can be useful at the present juncture in the field of psychological research. So the aim of utilization or the utility purpose is also no less important than other aims.

And the last but not the least, the aim to formulate and present the psychological data in these two texts in the form of a theory so that it can be readily comprehensible to modern and western students and researchers in the field of psychology.

In short the aims and objects of this research study are:

- (1) Satisfaction of the growing present need,
- (2) Methodical distillation of psychological material in ancient Ayurvedic texts,
- (3) Rediscovery and revival of psychological material that may be useful today,

- (4) Historical evaluation of the psychological material,
- (5) Presentation of the psychological material in the form of a coherent theory, as far as possible.

#### 1.9. METHODOLOGY ADOPTED

It is quite in fitness of things to apply proper and suitable methodology for the fulfilment of these aims and objectives of this research study.

The first process in this methodology is the sifting of the psychological material in such a manner and with such methods that the material thus sifted would not be mutilated out of context and its coherence is fully sustained and preserved. The sifted material, then should be analysed and classified and properly presented so that its entity can completely be recognised and its meaning unmarred. After such careful sifting and analysis, the data thus collected should be formulated and stated in a form of theory so that the data would take shape of a perfect whole concept. Fortunately, the psychological concepts in ancient scripts are very well formulated and they require to be sifted, analysed and treated as theories in comparison and contrast with the modern psychological concepts.

Here, it must be borne in mind that the terminology used in ancient scripts is quite different from that used

in modern psychology. So the work of comparison and contrast with modern psychological concepts becomes somewhat difficult. Still however, the older psychological concepts can be translated into modern psychological terms to a good extent and where this is not possible such terms can be explained in necessary and useful modern terms and they can be presented and explained fully and cohesively. In so doing, distinguishing features and characteristics of ancient psychological concepts can be marked, noted and pointed out with due emphasis so that they can be presented with their proper utility in the present context. And lastly, the limitations found in the ancient psychological theories and concepts too should be stated showing the causes and reasons behind them. This would make a complete and useful methodology for our purpose. The method in short consists of the following:

- (1) Sifting the psychological material.
- (2) Classifying the data subjectwise.
- (3) Proper interpretation and presentation of psychological concepts.
- (4) These concepts to be compared and contrasted with modern concepts as far as possible.
- (5) These concepts to be explained in modern psychological terminology as far as possible.
- (6) Presentation of psychological concepts in Ayurveda in an integrated form at the end.

#### 1.10. A GLANCE AT THE CHAPTERS

Adopting this methodology, it is pertinent now to glance at the synopsis and the topics of the chapters

of the thesis.

The ancient Indian seers as with all ancient thinkers thought and formulated psychological ideas as part of their philosophical expositions. It becomes quite necessary, and useful to understand their approach. But to grasp the approach of the ancient Indians, one should have first of all, a fair idea of their times. Therefore, a study of the times of Charaka and Sushruta is taken up first. This would be followed by a study of the approach of the ancient Indians.

The approach of the ancients thus understood, would naturally lead one to the concept of mind itself in Charaka and Sushruta. No sooner this is done, the well-known and well-defined psycho-somatic concept of these ancient authors is to be described and treated in the next chapter. Such description would naturally lead one to the physiological psychology depicted in these texts.

From psycho-physiological aspects, it is but useful to switch on to the problem of sex. Thereafter, it is thought proper to take up the subject of normalcy and abnormalities.

From these varied psychological material pertaining to different aspects of psychology treated in all these chapters, follows the subject of diagnosis and therapy

and it also should be discussed from psychological view point.

In the last chapter, it becomes necessary to put forth all the psychological concepts in the form of a theory with an objective evaluation of the contribution of the ancient scripts in the field of psychology and at the same time to point out the limitations and lacunae therein, in the light of modern psychological knowledge.

This is in nutshell the bird's eye-view of the chapters that follow. It gives a glimpse of the whole subject matter at a glance.

#### 1.11. NATURE OF THIS RESEARCH :

These introductory remarks show that the nature of this research is peculiar. Though there are a few books already on Indian psychology as referred to before, there are really a few attempts to distil psychological material in the fashion described above. Such attempts are now made in the form of articles too. But as far as the field of ancient Indian medicine is concerned, it is almost virgin and this field draws peculiar attention as it covers many aspects of psychology at a time. Looking from these view-points, this research study is an humble venture in the right direction.

The virginity of the subject, the antiquity of the scripts and paucity of critical material on the subject

would be considered by some as insurmountable obstacles in the way, but these very apparent hindrances can be turned into favourable conveniences, once the significance of this subject is grasped. It is like an attempt to cross the ocean of ancient medical material. The plunge is already made in the right direction keeping in view the guiding star of true and comprehensive spirit of research. It is worthwhile to remember here the description of such scientific spirit by Francis Bacon, 'For myself, I found that I was fitted for nothing so well as for my study of Truth; as having a mind nimble and versatile enough to catch the resemblance of things (which is the chief point) and at the same time steady enough to fix and distinguish their subtle differences; as being gifted by nature with desire to seek, patience to doubt, fondness to meditate, slowness to assert, readiness to reconcile, carefulness to dispose and set in order; and as being man that neither affects what is new nor admires what is old and hates every kind of imposture, So I thought my nature had a kind of familiarity and relationship with Truth.'<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Francis Bacon quoted by B. Kuppaswamy. Elementary Experimental Psychology. (Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 9.



This is the true spirit of scientific investigation and research. Let this guiding star show the way in the completion of this research work.

#### 1.12. SUMMARY

Western psychologists like Murphy emphasize the importance of distilling the psychological material from the ancient scripts of the east. Even the present-day needs inspire thoughtful men to look back and find out something worthwhile to find a way out of the present confused situation. Modern science, with all its discoveries and inventions falls short of coping up with present chaotic condition of man. Modern psychology also cannot do better to save humanity from the present alround turmoil. The wisdom of the past can be useful to a certain extent at this juncture if properly understood and utilized. This idea led me to investigate the ancient Indian scripts. There is some work done in the field of ancient Indian psychology at present but it is meagre. It is worthwhile to investigate the field of ancient Indian medicine in order to find coherent psychological concepts which would be useful at this stage in human life. So with this object in mind, an attempt has been made in this thesis to try to formulate a psychological theory by adopting a comparative method. The method consists of shifting the

psychological material, classifying it and of presenting it in modern psychological terminology as far as possible.

