Psychology in Cultures and Contexts

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Beyond and Within a Universal Psychology

Edited by

R.C. Tripathi and Janak Pandey

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PREFACE

This book is based on lectures delivered by many distinguished psychology scholars from within and outside India in the memory of late Professor Durganand Sinha, a legendary Indian Psychologist who passed away in 1998. The chapters in this book argue in different ways in support of a Psychology, which seeks to understand human behaviour that varies within and across cultural contexts. This book was to be released two years back when the Alumni Association of the Department of Psychology, University of Allahabad, the National Academy of Psychology (India), and Professor Durganand Sinha Trust for Social Sciences celebrated Professor Durganand Sinha's birth centenary on September 22, 2022. The Department of Psychology at the University of Allahabad progressed under his leadership in the first three decades, employing a new and refreshing perspective on Psychology. He was against carbon copying the dominant Euro-American Psychology model that was adopted by most Universities in India and the Third World in teaching and research. It was based on their stance that Psychology as a science needed to be more universalist and less relativist. They thought that studying human behaviour in their cultural contexts biases the research enquiry and limits openness in understanding the universal nature of humankind, which is the goal of all sciences. Professor Sinha did not accept this and stood against the blind acceptance of the alien psychological concepts and theories.

An example of this was evident in a study that he carried out in 1950 on the spread of rumours during the landslides that took place in Darjeeling, in India. He conceptualised the problem in the socio-cultural context of North–East India, and a paper based on it was published in the British Journal of Psychology'. Instead of replicating what was being done in the West, he rooted his research in the cultural context of India. His view that human behaviour needed to be studied within its context was reflected in his 1966 address to the Psychology section of the Indian Science Congress, in which he called upon the psychologists of India to engage in research for socio-economic development and change, which was a dire need of India at that time. The faculty at the Department of Psychology, which he had founded at Allahabad, soon received national and international recognition. The Department of Psychology was recognised as a Centre of Advanced Study in Psychology for Social

Change and National Development by the University Grants Commission (UGC, India) in 1984. In 2002, many achievements of the Department of Psychology led the UGC to establish a 'Centre of Excellence for Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences' at the University of Allahabad, the first such potential for excellence centre in India.

Professor Sinha, along with Harry Triandis, Gustav Jahoda, John Berry, Cigdem Kagitcibasi, Ype Poortinga and some other eminent Psychologists from India, namely R. Rath, U. Pareek, A. K. Singh, J. B. P. Sinha, and Ashis Nandy led the efforts for the formation of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology (IACCP) in 1972. He was at the forefront of Psychology in India and abroad for nearly five decades, from the early 1950s till his death in 1998. In 1999, Prof Sinha's family, students, and colleagues, under the Chairmanship of his wife, Smt. Radha Devi established "*Professor Durganand Sinha Trust for Social Sciences*" to perpetuate his academic legacy. Since 1999, the Trust has been organising *Professor Durganand Sinha Memorial Lecture* each year, which is delivered by a distinguished scholar. The chapters included in this book, based on lectures delivered as part of this series, may be seen as an attempt to take forward Professor Sinha's vision of Psychology. Besides refining our indigenous insights, these chapters enhance our understanding of how cultures and contexts modify psychological processes and associated behavioural outcomes. Acceptance of the significance of the culture and context approach makes cross-cultural comparisons more meaningful. The interface between psychology and culture also translates psychological knowledge for meaningful applications in various life domains to promote human welfare.

This book would not have been possible without the active cooperation of the distinguished Psychologists whose chapters appear in this book. We extend our sincere thanks and gratitude to all of them. We apologize to those scholars whose memorial lectures were delivered in this series but have not been included. This happened because they were either unavailable or they were not in the form that was needed for inclusion. Two Chairpersons of Professor Durganand Sinha Trust for Social Sciences, (Late) Mrs. Radha Devi Sinha, Professor Sinha's wife, and Mr. Premanand Sinha, the current President and Professor Sinha's son, deserve special thanks for meeting the expenses needed for the organization of these lectures. We would also like to thank the Department of Psychology, University of Allahabad, under whose aegis these lectures were organized in the initial years by the Trust, and the National Academy of Psychology (NAoP), under whose auspices these lectures are organized now during its annual Congress. We would like to extend our thanks to Dr

Anamika Pandey of Galgotia University, who helped us with the editing of some of these chapters.As may be noted, the chapters included in this book that were published earlier use the APA style of citation which is not as per the 7th publication manual. Lastly, our sincere thanks are due to Professor Komilla Thapa, who when this book was conceptualised was the Head, Department of Psychology, University of Allahabad, for waiving the Department's copyright for certain papers that had appeared in the journal *Psychology and Developing Societies*, and now are included in this volume. We are also thankful to the *International Journal of Psychology* for allowing us to include Professor Kao's paper in this volume.

R.C.Tripathi
Janak Pandey

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

John W. Berry is a Professor Emeritus of Psychology at Queen's University, Kingston, Canada. He obtained his PhD from the University of Edinburgh and has received honorary doctorates from the University of Athens and Université de Genève. He has received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Academy of Intercultural Research and, from the International Union of Psychological Sciences. His main research interests are in the areas of acculturation and intercultural relations.

DPS Bhawuk currently works at the Department of Management and Industrial Relations, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. He does research in Applied Psychology, Behavioural Science, and Community Psychology. He has worked on indigenous constructs (lajjA, lokasaMgraha, adhyAtma, zraddhA, manas, buddhi, Indian concept of self, spirituality-based theory of creativity), and has developed multiple methods that are employed for research in Indian Psychology. He has held several assignments as a Visiting Professor in India and in many other countries.

Nick Hopkins is a Professor of Social Psychology at the University of Dundee in Scotland and has been an Editor of the *British Journal of Social Psychology*. He received his M.Phil from the University of Cambridge and Ph.D. from the University of Exeter. His main interests have been group behaviour and the construction of group identities. He, along with Steve Reicher of the University of St. Andrews, has collaborated on an ESRC-funded project with social psychologists at the University of Allahabad on Magh Mela.

Sudhir Kakar, who recently passed away**,** was a highly recognised Indian Psychoanalyst and Cultural Psychologist. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Vienna and was trained in psychoanalysis at Sigmund Freud Institute at the University of Frankfurt. He was a Professor at the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, and the Centre of Developing Societies, Delhi. He taught at several Universities in the USA and Europe including Harvard University, University of Chicago, and Hawaii, INSEAD, France and University of Vienna. His non-fiction work has focused on studying behaviour within the Indian cultural context.

H.S.R. Kao is currently serving as the Archbishop Lokuang Chair Professor of Psychology at Fu Jen Catholic University, Taipei. Before that he was a Research Professor with the Sun-Yat Sen University at Guangzhou, China. For a long time, he was Chair Professor of Psychology at the University of Hong Kong, where he continues to be an Emeritus Professor. He has held high positions in academic organizations, including the presidentship of the section of Psychology and National Development of the IUPSY. He has been a visiting Professor at several Universities in Taiwan, China, England, and the US. He has been both an academic and a professional psychologist and has worked in the areas of Organizational Behaviour, Chinese Calligraphy, and Asian Psychology.

Pradip Khandwala is the former Director of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, and a L&T chair professor of organizational behaviour. Prior to that, he was a Professor at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. He has published extensively in several areas related to organizational design and functioning. He has contributed to our understanding of indigenous management and enhancing creativity at the individual, group, organizational, and societal levels.

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Janak Pandey is a former Vice Chancellor of the Central University of Bihar and a former Professor and Chair of Psychology at the University of Allahabad. He has also served as the Director of the GB Pant Social Science Institute at Allahabad. He received his doctoral degree in Psychology from Kansas State University and then taught at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur. He has been the President of International Association for Cross-cultural Psychology. His research contributions have been in the areas of Social Influence, Cross-cultural Psychology, and Applied Social Psychology.

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Udai Pareek was a preeminent Indian psychologist and distinguished visiting professor at the Indian Institute of Health Management, and Chairman of the National Academy of Human Resource Development. Earlier, he was a Professor at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. He was for a long time the Editor of '*Indian Psychological Abstracts*' and '*Indian Behavioural Science Abstracts'* for the Indian Council for Social Research. His most significant research contributions have been to the areas of organizational behaviour and social change and national development.

Ype H. Poortinga is an Emeritus Professor of Cross-cultural Psychology at Tilburg University and the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium. He obtained his doctorate from Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam. He has been a President of the International Association of Cross-Cultural Psychology. His research interests have been in developing methods for cross-cultural research and applying them to study a variety of topics in cross-cultural research, including emotions and social psychology.

Jai B.P. Sinha is a distinguished Indian social psychologist and a former professor at A.N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies in Patna, India. He obtained his doctoral degree in Psychology from Ohio State University. He has been a visiting professor at Hunter College of the City University of New York, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem (USA), McGill University, Montreal(Canada), and Copenhagen Business School (Denmark). His recent research interests have been in understanding the Indian mindset that governs the functioning of self and organizations.

Rama Charan Tripathi is a former Professor and Chair of Psychology at the University of Allahabad and a former Director of the G.B. Pant Social Science Institute of Allahabad. He received his Ph.D. degree from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He has been a Visiting Professor at Tilburg University in the Netherlands, Wake Forest University in the USA, and Jawahar Lal Nehru University in India. Asiatic Society of Kolkata has awarded him Professor Suhrit Chandra Mitra Memorial Plaque for his outstanding contributions in the field of Psychology. Till recently, he was the Chief Editor of *'Psychology and Developing Societies'*. His main research interests have been in the areas of intergroup relations, culture and psychology, and organizational behaviour.

Jaan Valsiner is a Professor of developmental and cultural psychology at Aalborg University, Denmark. He was previously a Professor of Psychology at Clark University. He is the winner of the Hans-Killian Award and the Alexander von Humboldt Prize. He edits two journals, '*Culture and Psychology*' and 'Integrative Psychology and Behavioural Science'. His main areas of interest are cultural psychology and the history of psychology.

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Berry, J. W. (2006). "Noble Thoughts Come from All Directions": An Appreciation of the Scholarship of Professor Durganand Sinha. *Psychology and Developing Societies, 18*(1), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1177/097133360501800101

Poortinga. Y.H. (2016). Integration of Basic Controversies in Cross-Cultural Psychology. *Psychology and Developing Societies,* 28(20, 161-182.

Valsiner, J. (2021). Striving for Synthesis in General Psychology: Lessons from India. *Psychology and Developing Societies*, 175-189. https://doi.org/10.1177/09713336211038813.

Paranjpe, A. (2011). Indian Psychology and the International Context. *Psychology and Developing Societies.* 23(1), 1-26. https://doi.org/10.1177/097133361002300101

Hopkins, N. (2022). Identity matters: A Social Psychology of Everyday Citizenship. *Psychology and Developing Societies.* 34(2), 159-174. https://doi.org/10.1177/09713336221115531.

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Kao, H.S. R. (2006). Shufa: Chinese calligraphic handwriting (CCH) for health and behavioural therapy. *International Journal of Psychology*. 41(4), 282-286. https://doi.org/:10.1080/00207590544000059

INTRODUCTION

PSYCHOLOGY IN CULTURES AND CONTEXTS

R.C. TRIPATHI AND JANAK PANDEY

Like many other sciences, psychology has also seen many paradigmatic shifts. The advancement in physical and biological sciences in the second half of the nineteenth century was a pivotal moment that greatly influenced the scholars of mind and mental processes. The paradigmatic shift from philosophy to science was a monumental leap for psychology as it sought to develop the universal laws of human behaviour. In pursuing psychology as a science, a few select universities in Europe and the United States had established laboratories by the late nineteenth century. Consequent to it, psychologists joined the bandwagon of modern science to develop the science of psychology, although, some believe that it still is a 'soft' science (Zagaria et al., 2020). In doing so, they ignored the subjective nature of the mind and mental processes, which are determined by the ecological and socio-cultural context in which an individual is born, raised, socialised, acculturated, and makes sense of psychological phenomena. His/her beliefs and subjectivities were out of bounds for these laboratory-based psychologists. The objective, measurable observation was considered the key to scientific inquiry. This ignored the true nature of mental processes that lie behind objective, observable behaviour that was sought to be quantified. This new trend rejected the study of consciousness and mind on the grounds of objectivity. The enthusiasm for establishing a new experimental science of human nature was such that it made the founders ignore the rich knowledge systems of various cultural traditions. Undoubtedly, experimental psychology has made phenomenal progress in its first hundred plus years. Still, the claim of most Euro-American scholars that their theories and explanations of the psychological phenomenon are universally true has come to be questioned quite often (Brock, 2016).

Some of the founders of experimental psychology, like Wilhem Wundt, who was credited for establishing the first psychology laboratory

at Leipzig in 1879, were acutely aware of the limitations of experimental psychology in investigating internal mental processes like consciousness and language. Wundt's pioneering role in advocating for a more holistic approach to psychology, one that considered the influence of culture on cognitive processes, was a significant contribution to the field. He suggested that experiments focus more on understanding the outcomes of processes and less on the processes themselves (Wong, 2009). He argued for the necessity of using methods to investigate internal processes. In his view, psychology needed methods to explore inner mental processes like language and consciousness. Wundt's book on 'Volkerpsychologie' ('Folk Psychology') sought to support this view. For Wundt, the mind is the collective, suggesting the salience of culture in mental processes that experiments do not capture. He elaborated on how experimental psychology emphasized outer outcomes, ignoring inner mental phenomena. In brief, Wundt argued for a new type of psychology that cared for culture, including religions, languages, and mythologies. Though Wundt brought up the importance of culture in psychological processes, the then overwhelmingly experimental approach and studying behaviour as the primary objective overshadowed the concern about culture and context in psychological processes. Psychology, following him, adopted a mechanical path of objectivity to examine what was observable, measurable, and repeatable, as required by the natural sciences. There were psychologists like William Stern who steered clear of the path of universalism (Allport, 1937). They believed that individuals are not alike. They differ in critical ways. Both these views, however, were at the cost of exploring the true nature of man and his mind, which is shaped by the unique culture in which he lives. It is asserted that psychology is a human science contextualised in the larger society. It is the socio-cultural context that shapes individuals and impacts their life experiences. The unique dynamic nature of the reciprocal relationship between individuals and society implicates culture and context as critically important in developing psychological processes and their direction.

By the 1960s, dissenting voices to the experimental paradigm that believed in universalism emerged from many Euro-American and developing countries. One of the critical problems that some psychologists in these countries saw as limiting the interpretive power of psychology was that the overwhelming majority of psychology researchers were from the WEIRD countries (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, Democratic) who had used WEIRD samples (95%) for their studies and their contexts (Arnett, 2008). Most of these samples, particularly in US studies, consisted of college students, which was less than ideal. It is beyond

doubt that human beings are not alike and that culture shapes human experiences. No one group or context represents "normative" human functioning, least of all groups consisting of students. Non-WEIRD cultural contexts, in particular, are vastly different and have mostly remained underrepresented in developing psychological theories, which limits their interpretive power. We know less about the non-WEIRD people's psychological processes and behaviour than of the WEIRD people's.

It was due to the efforts of Professor Sinha and many others from both WEIRD and non-WEIRD cultural backgrounds that helped gain insight into psychological phenomena in non-WEIRD contexts and use suitable methodological strategies. The task was arduous and challenging. They developed theoretical frameworks, psychological tests, and methods to generate knowledge related to processes on non-WEIRD people, given that there was an absence of research on them. First, these researchers carried out studies that facilitated the understanding of psychological processes across cultural contexts. These studies helped in understanding how such processes are similar or different from the existing knowledge claimed as universal that had come out based on samples from the WEIRD cultures. In the initial years, the theoretical and methodological approaches used by these psychologists were a mix of the scientific method, which drew from logical positivism and methods of observation used by cultural anthropologists, which were found wanting in various ways in studying complex human behaviour across cultures. To obviate this, an independent field called 'cross-cultural psychology' emerged in the mid-sixties and early seventies. The main interest of cross-cultural psychologists lay in enquiring about what was similar and different across cultures. One of its criticisms was that in its approach and belief, cross-cultural psychology was not any different from general psychology, which believes in the 'psychic unity of humankind'. Such a focus changed in the 90s with the emergence of 'Cultural Psychology', which sought to understand how cultures influence psychological processes which shape individuals, and they, in turn, shape these cultures (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Valsiner & Tamm, 2024). Studies based on this approach have shown how culture shapes certain behaviours which have been considered invariant across species (Heine, 2020).

The question that cross-cultural psychologists address is whether behaviours obtained within cultures are invariable or whether there are conditions under which individual behaviour may change. The fact that human behaviour is variable was asserted by Kurt Lewin (1936) when he defined an individual's behaviour as a function of the person he was, as

represented by his personality, his motivations, and what he called 'field'. 'Field' was characterised by an individual's historical experiences and the physical and social environment he faced while responding to various stimuli. This fact of the environment influencing human behaviour was also conceded by the behaviourists and the evolutionary psychologists of the time, who accepted that the external environment played a major role in an individual's behavioural development, resulting in the variability observed in human behaviour. Cognitive psychologists, too, accepted that various cognitive processes, such as memory, learning, decision-making, etc, were influenced by the interaction between the stimulus event and the physical and social environment in which it occurred. The studies that were carried out using these three approaches showed that a Universalist approach to studying human behaviour was inadequate, if not flawed. Individuals, as part of a social system, try to respond based on the sense they make of social events and are likely to differ with respect to how they make sense of these events. Not all individuals have been found to make sense of a social event similarly. This, though, maybe a little less in organized settings where individuals have well-defined roles and job expectations because of which they are required to make sense of various stimulus situations in similar manners (Weick, 2000). Such variability in the behaviour of individuals is observed when the context in which they are placed is uncertain and less predictable. This happens because in uncertain situations individuals engage in sense-making based on their personal histories or of their groups. They use different personal epistemologies while making sense of situations (Hofer & Pintrich, 2001). In developing societies, psychology was considered a discipline that their colonial masters brought to veer away from the native ways of understanding minds and relationships. This led psychologists based in different cultural societies to view Psychology differently. Some psychologists and those who studied the mind, such as psychiatrists of the developing societies, were of the view that such findings supported their view that the mainstream psychology they were exposed to was essentially colonialist. Fanon (1952) was one of them. They believed that the third world needed a Psychology, which was a decolonised Psychology. Sinha (1984) was among the earliest Psychologists who argued for a psychology for the third world. This view soon came to be recognised by many Western psychologists. In 2010, the *Journal of Social Issues* brought out a special thematic issue on the third world. While introducing the theme, its editors debated whether the issue should be called Psychology 'in', 'of'' or 'for' the third world, as all three were equally relevant. They ultimately titled it as 'Psychology *for* the third world'. However, the other two

prepositions of 'in' and 'of' were not sidelined or considered of low value. This has appeared in some journals that devote special sections to discussing the 'de-colonization of psychological science'. Adams et al. (2015), in their introduction to this Issue of the '*Journal of Social and Political Psychology'*, discuss the need to see decolonization from the perspectives of cultural and liberation psychology and point out that reactions to coloniality in psychological sciences have led to the emergence of three approaches which focus on indigenization, accompaniment, and denaturalization of psychological sciences. The first two approaches that have grown over the years and focus on 'Psychology *in* the Third World' and 'Psychology of the Third World' relate to indigenization and accompaniment and are recognized as 'Indigenous Psychology' and 'Cultural Psychology' and have grown together (Kim & Berry, 1993; Kim, Yang & Hwang, 2006). The third approach, which focuses on the 'denaturalization of psychological science', appears more on the side of 'Decolonial Psychology' (Comas- Diaz et al., 2024). The three approaches are not opposed to each other and are complementary in many ways. They suggest that psychological science does not need to overly emphasize 'objectivity' as the mind is essentially constructed by subjectivities formed within cultures. Human behaviour at different levels is influenced largely by the contexts within which it takes place. It can, therefore, be understood and explained better by using multi-level approaches. It is based on such understanding that one can construct societies that matter, which happens to be the ultimate aim of behavioural and social sciences. This has been shown by several psychologists, including, Pettigrew (2021) and others who have written extensively in support of 'contextual psychology.

A question that may be asked in the context of what has been discussed above is whether psychological science needs to veer away from a universalist approach, far from it. Studying behaviour in contexts and cultures that also focus on subjectivities is suggested to make studying human behaviour more encompassing and less restrictive. Our view is that human and social processes evolve. It stands to reason to think that universalist human behaviour, too, will evolve and will be influenced by cultures and contexts. Psychological research is replete with ecological approaches that seek to understand psychological and social behaviour (Bronfrenbenner, 1977). Berry, with his colleagues, has been directing studies that have focused on investigating how contacts between cultures result in acculturation, which has implications not only for cognitive processes and overall human development but also for various facets of social development (Sam & Berry, 2016). The problem with such models

is that they are all governed by the binary dialectics typical of Western cultures, which believe in discovering single truths. This contradicts the holistic dialectics of Asian societies, which believe in multiple truths in understanding various psychological phenomena (Tripathi, 2024). The challenge that contemporary Psychology faces lies in investigating how much of the variance of human behaviour can be accounted for by factors that cut across cultures compared to the variance that can be accounted for in terms of culture and context.

About this volume

The chapters included in this book are based on lectures by various eminent psychologists who take forward Professor Durganand Sinha's vision of making psychological science relevant for the welfare of people everywhere. According to him, this was possible only by understanding the behaviour of individuals in cultural contexts and how they interacted and related to others in their cultures. The chapters in this book relate to various paradigmatic shifts that Professor Sinha was not only a witness to but was actively involved in their creation through his writings. Berry's chapter in the book discusses many of Professor Sinha's contributions. He points to his approach of using an eco-cultural framework to understand human behaviour, which served as the basis of several of his studies. He also draws attention to Sinha's opposition to 'imposed etic'.

Part I of the book is devoted to discussing the approaches that have been most prominent in studying human behaviour in cultures and contexts, which had received Professor Sinha's unequal attention. Ype Poortinga's chapter focuses on how the problems that Indigenous and Cultural Psychology faces can be obviated and the two approaches integrated within applied cross-cultural psychology. He argues for setting aside the seemingly irreconcilable controversy about relativism and universalism in the context of understanding human behaviour, individualism, and collectivism. Valsiner's chapter argues persuasively for a new General Psychology based on the unity of the opposites within the same whole based on 'Indian intellectual history'. His view is based on a paper by Sinha and Tripathi (1994), which argues for the co-existence of opposites in contrast to what contemporary Occidental Psychologists believe. Valsiner considers this a breakthrough in 20th-century Psychology. Paranjpe's chapter in this part argues in support of Indian Psychology, presenting a counterpoint to what he calls the 'mystery-mastery complex of modern Psychology'. He is of the view that it can be developed as an

alternative to modern Psychology. He refuses to accept Indian Psychology as Indigenous Psychology as it is already adapted to local culture. It is the other kinds of psychology that are not rooted in the local culture that need to be indigenized. He feels that John Berry's attempt to develop a Universal Psychology based on the interweaving of cultures is unworkable as the approach has other problems.

Part II of the book includes chapters from authors who have underscored the significance of cultures in understanding human behaviour at different levels. It starts with Pareek's chapter, which discusses Indian culture from psychological and socio-historic perspectives and points to its strengths and weaknesses. Since culture is seen to relate to behaviour, it suggests an agenda for the regeneration of Indian culture to reshape the behaviour of Indians, which will allow it to become a global leader again. The chapter in this part by Nick Hopkins points to a very significant aspect of culture which has often gone neglected. As he says, culture is usually seen as fixed and not dynamic. He sees it as a 'site of dispute', evident in the different kinds of contestations that individuals enter into to define their identities. According to him, there is a need to understand the process behind cultural differences in constructing identities that give individuals a voice or marginalize them. Tripathi's chapter focuses on the processes involved in constructing the 'other' in contrast to the 'self'. He discusses ways of othering within and across cultures and how individuals and groups can possibly attempt to move away from othering to seek enfoldment. Kakar's chapter entitled 'Cultural imagination in psycho-analytical theory and practice' examines the issue of culture in the non-western context, especially in the Hindu context. He feels that with time, psychoanalytical theory has transcended the Western culture, which has primarily focused on 'race' and 'class'. Bhawuk's chapter, which follows Kakar's, draws heavily from the Indian cultural texts to understand 'creativity' from the perspective of an indigenous psychologist, which is vastly different from the way creativity is understood in contemporary psychology. He looks at creativity that is based on spirituality. It requires individuals to undertake an internal journey that seeks to control the external senses and become self-less. This is achieved through meditation which facilitates introspection and concentration, both critical for creativity. The last chapter in this section is by Kao, who discusses how the Chinese art of calligraphic handwriting (Shufa) has been used to treat certain behavioural and clinical disorders. He reviews studies showing how such handwriting is associated with various physiological measures and cognitive processes.

Based on the view that human behaviour emerges from the interaction between essential human nature and attributes of eco-cultural contexts, interventions sought to be made at different social levels need to consider both of these. Chapters included in Part III seek to do that. J.B.P. Sinha, while discussing his approach to human development, focuses on how individuals placed in different eco-cultural contexts in India give meaning to their existential situations, such as, poverty, relative deprivation, and inequality, and what psychological consequences accompany them. He discusses Indian cultural values that can be used to develop a kind of human development that focuses on building cooperative relationships besides developing agentic capabilities. Janak Pandey's chapter discusses the problems related to India's societal and national development and reviews the studies done in India. It also discusses approaches the Indian government and other global agencies have used in this connection. Based on his review, he underscores the need to use multi-pronged indigenous approaches at different social levels to achieve societal and national development. This is because Indian society is socially diverse and complex. There are different ways in which human development has come to be conceptualized, not only within Psychology but across disciplines. For example, Amartya Sen (2001) sees it in terms of capability development. In his chapter, Mohanty elaborates on this concept and sees it as an antidote to poverty. He supports this view based on three studies. The first study that he discusses showed how the relief provided by the governmental agencies to the victims of a cyclone resulted in their developing feelings of loss of capability and helplessness and not in the enhancement of capability in any area. The other two studies discuss how specific interventions developed feelings of competence and self-efficacy, enabling the villagers to come out of what Mohanty calls a 'weaning syndrome'.

The theme relating to feelings of injustice in various contexts is addressed by Lilavati Krishnan in her chapter when she looks at what she terms 'justice sensitivity'. She focuses on the different forms of justice, namely, distributive, procedural, interactional, retributive, and restorative justice. The explicit purpose of doing so appears to raise their levels. According to the studies that she reviews, all these forms of justice sensitivity appear somewhat subdued, restorative justice, in particular. This may be a little surprising for a society that takes a lot of pride in its morality. Eco-cultural contexts have implications for the development of psychological processes at the micro-level, as shown by the studies that R.C. Mishra discusses in his chapter, which follows Krishnan's chapter. He uses an eco-cultural model to show how cultural context influences

cognitive functioning in an entirely different way than it doesin Western cultures. He believes that the same variables act out in different ways across cultures. The last chapter in this part is by Khandwala, who discusses the significance of raising levels of creativity in India, which he sees as a significant human resource for development. He believes that many of the problems India faces today can be solved if creativity is nurtured at the institutional level. Based on case studies, he discusses how different forms of creativities can be harnessed to transform individuals, organizations, governments, and societies.

The book, as a whole, is devoted to understanding the interface of psychology with different cultures and contexts and how they modify psychological and social processes that influence human behaviour at different levels.

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CHAPTER 1

NOBLE THOUGHTS COME FROM ALL DIRECTIONS: AN APPRECIATION OF THE SCHOLARSHIP OF PROFESSOR DURGANAND SINHA

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It is indeed a great honour to be invited to deliver the first Durganand Sinha Memorial Lecture. For me, it is a double honour, because he was both a close friend and a great scholar with whom I had the privilege to collaborate. He was a warm-hearted, engaging and supportive colleague, who inspired all those who came in contact with him: in fact I have often said that I learned something new every time he spoke!

This presentation is a personal one; I propose to situate his work in the field of cross-cultural psychology, a perspective on the discipline that we both shared. As this field covers wide ranging interests (incorporating perception, cognition, personality, emotions, and social behaviour, etc.) researchers and practitioners should also be broad ranging. I know of no other cross-cultural scholar in psychology who encompassed so many of these topics in his life's work. In fact, Sinha was "the complete psychologist", concerned with both research and application in many fields. His vast intellect and social concern call forth the quotation from the Rig Veda that provides the title for this lecture. He truly encompassed profound ideas from the world over, while remaining firmly rooted in the culture of India.

Most people know this already! What I will do is to situate his ideas and his research in some academic frames of reference that are currently used in cross-cultural psychology.

Eco-cultural Approach

The primary goal of cross-cultural psychology is to describe and account for similarities and differences in human behaviour in terms of the cultural background in which it developed. One approach to achieving this goal is to employ a framework that views human behaviour as adaptive to cultural and ecological contexts. A version of this approach has been advocated by me for a number of years (Berry, 1966). It has evolved through a series of research studies devoted to understanding similarities and differences in cognition and social behaviour (Berry, 1976; Berry et al., 1986; Mishra, Sinha, & Berry, 1996) into a broad approach to understanding human diversity. The core ideas have a long history (Jahoda, 1995), and have been assembled into conceptual frameworks (Berry, 1975; 1995) used in empirical research, and in coordinating textbooks in cross-cultural psychology (Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 2002; Segall, Dasen, Berry, & Poortinga, 1999).

The ecocultural perspective is rooted in two basic assumptions, both deriving from Darwinian thought. The first (the "universalist" assumption) is that all human societies exhibit commonalities ("cultural universals") and that basic psychological *processes* are shared, species-common characteristics of all human beings ("psychological universals") on which culture plays infinite variations during the course of development and daily activity. The second (the "adaptation" assumption) is that *behaviour* is differentially developed and expressed as adaptive responses to ecological and cultural contexts. This view allows for comparisons across cultures (on the basis of the common underlying cultural and psychological processes), but makes comparison worthwhile (using the surface variation as basic evidence).

My view of "culture" is a double one. First, culture is conceived as a relatively stable set of customs, artefacts and institutions that provide individuals with a context for their psychological growth. Second, it subscribes to more recent conceptual changes in anthropology about the nature of culture, away from a "museum" orientation (collecting and organising static artefacts) to one that emphasises cultures as constantly changing, and being concerned with creation, metamorphosis, and recreation. Such changes in culture are partly in response to changing features of the ecosystem as well as to exposure to outside cultural influences.

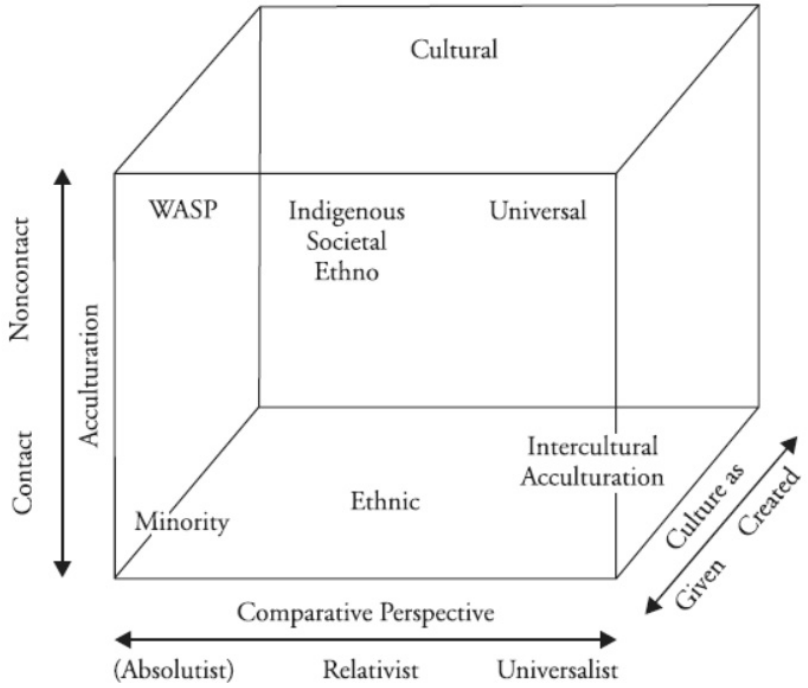
Over the years ecological thinking has influenced not only anthropology, but also psychology. The fields of ecological and environmental psychology have become fully elaborated, with substantial theoretical and

empirical foundations. In essence, individual human behaviour has come to be seen in its natural setting or habitat, both in terms of its development and its contemporary display. The parallel development of cross-cultural psychology (see Berry et al., 1997) has also "naturalized" the study of human behaviour and its development. In this field, individual behaviour is accounted for to a large extent by considering the role of cultural influences on it. In my own approach, ecological as well as cultural influences are considered as operating in tandem, hence the term "*ecocultural* approach".

The current version of the ecocultural framework (see Figure 1) proposes to account for human psychological diversity (both individual and group similarities and differences) by taking into account two fundamental sources of influence (ecological and sociopolitical), and two features of human populations that are adapted to them: cultural and biological characteristics. These population variables are transmitted to individuals by various "transmission variables", such as enculturation, socialisation, genetics, and acculturation. The essence of all these components (culture, biology, and their transmission processes) are their fundamental similarity in all human beings (at a deeper level), combined with variation in the expression of these shared attributes (at the surface level). Work on the process and outcomes of acculturation also shows fundamental similarities across cultures that are in contact with each other. This domain of cross-cultural psychology has been advancing, necessitated by the dramatic increase in intercultural contact and change.

To summarise, the ecocultural framework perceives human diversity (both cultural and psychological) to be set of collective and individual adaptations to the context. Within this general perspective, cultures are viewed as evolving adaptations to ecological and external sociopolitical influences; and individual psychological characteristics in a population are seen as adaptive to their cultural context, as well as to these broader ecological and sociopolitical influences.

Figure 1.1: Common Space for Understanding Relationships between Culture and Behaviour



Two further features of the ecocultural approach need to be mentioned. First, it considers that (group) culture and (individual) behaviour are distinct phenomena, each existing at its own level; hence, they need to be examined independently. Second, the ecocultural approach offers a "value neutral" framework for describing and interpreting similarities and differences in human behaviour across cultures (Berry, 1995). As adaptive to the context, psychological phenomena can be understood "in their own terms" (as Malinowski insisted), and external evaluations can usually be avoided. This is a critical point as it allows for the conceptualisation, assessment and interpretation of culture and behaviour in non-ethnocentric ways. It explicitly rejects the idea that some cultures or behaviours are more advanced or more developed than others (Berry, Dasen, & Witkin, 1983). Any argument about cultural or behavioural differences being ordered hierarchically requires the adoption of some