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THE FLOWERING OF MIND : MY ACADEMIC WORLD

Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe.

H, G, Wells, *The Outline of History* Ch. 15

I. At C. M. College, Darbhanga

I was admitted in 1954 to the first year of the Intermediate Arts class at Chandradhari Mithila College at Darbhanga. I was lucky to experience and witness what was the best in the academic world of Bihar at that time. The College's sprawling campus had a huge circular single storied building originally built for commercial ventures. The inner campus had a wide space for assembly, and the meadows skirting the building were rich with green foliage and flowers. Mr. A.K. Datta was the Principal whilst I was a student of the Intermediate class. He had done his Tripos from Cambridge, and was a strict disciplinarian. He was succeeded by Dr. L. K. Mishra who had done some fundamental research in science in the United Kingdom. His writ ran with ease as none thought it good to do anything unbecoming of a student because the Principal had himself set a model of impeccable integrity. The College had an excellent Library. As those days we did not have photocopiers, we carefully read the books and journals in the library, and summarized in our notebooks only the points of relevance. Now things have changed. Needed or not needed, volumes of papers are mechanically copied much of which remain unread. This easy copying, often done mechanically, can deprive one of the critical sense which helps one to select and summarize.

The Visit of Mrs. Indira Gandhi

While I was an undergraduate student at C.M. College, Darbhanga, Mrs. Indira Gandhi visited the College in 1958. For a few months before that great day, the whole college was astir with excitement. A grand meeting was organized in the College campus where she addressed the teachers and students. Before this formal function began, she gave a round in the College, and was quite impressed by that institution. We were thrilled by the beauty and poise of the lady about whom we had already heard a lot.

Maharajadhiraja Dr. Sir Kameshwar Singh was presiding over the said function. Pandit Nageshwar Mishra, a leading Advocate, welcomed the distin-

guished guests. He was the Secretary of the College and had leanings towards the Rastriya Swayamsevak Sangh. Pandit Mishra, in his flowing introductory speech, pointed out the difficulties of the students, and the people of Mithila; and observed (with an obvious irony) that the authorities, living in the “Silken City” of New Delhi, were totally impervious and indifferent to their plight. He added some barbs to his expressions. He displayed his forensic skill, perhaps at a wrong place. Mrs. Gandhi was stung by his comments. She sprang up breaking all conventions to make a vitriolic reply to Nageshwar Babu. She was furious. She used certain harsh words. She used even the language of gesture to convey her extreme displeasure. She snubbed the organizers by telling them that it was improper to do at the stage what should have been done in the green-room. For a while everyone was struck dumb. Maharajadhiraja Kameshwar Singh left the dais, and went out. This unseemly situation was saved and managed by Professor Jagganath Prasad Mishra. He was the Head of the Department of Hindi, and also a member of the Bihar Legislative Council. He was an eminent writer. He assuaged her ruffled feelings, and calmed the situation. His extraordinarily pleasing style cast a spell on the listeners, and also softened Mrs. Gandhi. She smiled, and the proceedings of the meeting were resumed. The Maharajadhiraja too came back on the stage.

This was my first impression of Mrs. Gandhi: sweet and lovely but egotistical and full of vanity. My assessment of her personality underwent changes as I advanced through years, and as I saw more and more of our polity at work. There was a time when I held her responsible for imposing the infamous Emergency. But greater study and maturer reflections in subsequent years led me to revise my opinion, and to consider her our “the last patriot”. In one of my Public Interest Writ Petitions before the Supreme Court of India I called her our “last patriot”. I would come to her again and again in this Memoir in various contexts.

My Teachers

While at C.M. College, I studied History, Civics and Hindi for my Intermediate Examination. For my graduation, I studied History and Political Science, and had Honours in English literature. In 1958, I could stand second at the Honours Degree examination, and obtained distinction in History and Political Science. My first love was History, but I could not do Honours in that subject as that course had not been yet organized at that College. By and large, most of the teachers of the English Department at C.M. College were following the literary approaches of certain eminent teachers at L.S. College at Muzaffarpur, and Patna College at Patna. Our teachers were greatly influenced by the literary approaches of Dr. I.A. Richards and Dr. F.R. Leavis. T.S. Eliot was widely read, both as a great poet and as a great critic.

Prof. Srikrishna Mishra brought in a fresh breeze of thought for us. He taught us History of English Literature. He was widely read, and had a rich sense of measured style. Those days he was writing his thesis which later earned him a D. Litt. Degree from Patna University. His work came out in 1979 entitled *Coleridge and Abhinavagupta: A Comparative Study of the Philosophy of Poetry in the East and the West*. Commenting on this work, Dr. Satkari Mookerjee observed “Dr. Mishra’s discovery of the fundamental affinity between Coleridge and

Abhinavagupta is bound to prove a landmark in critical thinking on poetics as well as philosophy of poetry. The West will find Coleridge re-discovered and hail Abhinavagupta as a kindred spirit.” Dr. Mishra was the first scholar who made a detailed and comprehensive comparison of the two critics acknowledged as the greatest in their respective countries. His work became a high water-mark in literary cosmopolitanism. He showed that Abhinavagupta, the great philosopher, critic and saint of Kashmir, combined the merits of the various approaches which we get in Aristotle, Plato, Croce, Coleridge, Richards, Eliot, Empson and many others. Dr. Mishra explored the possibilities of universal poetics by examining the fundamentals drawn from the East and the West. Dr. Mishra, after a scholarly exposition, held that the depth and insight, which Bharat, Anandavardhana and Abhinavagupta had shown in ancient India in the study of poetry, was never acquired in the western literature. I was greatly impressed by Dr. Mishra’s interpretation of Coleridge’s Primary Imagination, and by his interpretation of Katharsis, *Guna, Rasa* and the Tragic Spirit. Dr. Mishra deepened my understanding of Sanskrit Literature which helped me in understanding the Principles of Hindu Jurisprudence.

Professor Sacchinath Mishra taught us Political Science. Prof. Mishra had special liking for Harold J. Laski whose pluralist view of Sovereignty and socialist ideas had greatly influenced my thought. At his suggestion I read Laski’s *Introduction to Politics* and the *Grammar of Politics*. It was Laski’s ideas, as expounded by Prof. Mishra, which helped me to interpret and evaluate the concept of ‘sovereign power’ in my Public Interest Writ Petition before the Delhi High Court, and the Supreme Court of India. Prof. Mishra’s exposition of the grammar of revolution was extremely thought-provoking. After analyzing the factors which led to the American War of Independence, the French Revolution, and the Russian Revolution, he taught us that all the great revolutions disclosed certain revolutionary grammar at work. I would revisit this point in Chapter 22 of this Memoir.

I commenced the study of the Indian Constitution in the year 1950, and I am still its close student. Prof. Shankar Kumar Jha had taught us the Indian Constitution. What has agonized me is that over the decades we have substantially defaced and defiled this most solemn charter. I remember how emphatically he asked us never to forget that Democracy survives only when the citizens are assertive and vigilant. He often quoted John Stuart Mill who said in his *Representative Government*:

“Political institutions are the work of men; owe their origin and their whole existence to human will. Men did not wake on a summer morning and find them sprung up. Neither do they resemble trees, which once planted, ‘are growing,’ while men ‘are sleeping.”

Prof Krishna Kant Mishra taught us the history of India. I would tell you about an interesting discussion we had when he was delivering his lecture on the establishment of the East India Company’s power in Bengal. With reference to the exposition made in V. A. Smith’s *Early History of India* and P.E. Roberts’s *History of British India*, he discussed the ‘judicial murder’ of Maharaja Nandakumar who had been the ‘deewan’ of the Nawab Mir Jafar. Nandkumar fell in the disfavour of the East India Company because he had invited the wrath of Warren Hastings,

Governor-General (1774-1785) of the Fort William in Bengal. Hastings had personal animus against him as Nandakumar had disclosed how the Governor-General received hefty bribes from Munni Begum, the charming woman with plenty of wealth. Hastings conspired against him. He was accused of forgery, and was hanged. Elijah Impey, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in Calcutta, established under the Regulating Act, was unjust and unfair. P.E. Roberts rightly called the punishment to Nandakumar a 'judicial murder'. Nandakumar was a tax officer of great distinction. Chief Justice Sir Elijah Impey had defiled the seat of justice. Whenever these days I read about judicial corruption, I am not surprised. The problem, which Prof. Mishra highlighted in 1954 while discussing the 'judicial murder' of Nandkumar, is still the problem defying solutions.

The Darbhanga Raj

In the Darbhanga Raj area, there was a huge campus earmarked where the Maharaja's stable existed for keeping horses. In the stable there were numerous chambers each fitted with a ceiling fan for providing cool air to the stallions each having its specific name. The most impressive amongst them was the Mussolini (virtually *Primus inter pares*, meaning 'the first among equals'). I got a lot of pleasure in observing the horses marking the excellence of their mien and their shapely body which thrilled me. Often I went to that campus to loiter around, and to listen to the musical clock in the majestic tower. The gong of that imported massive bell was sharp but sweet with prolonged resonance. Both in sound and shape the four clocks on the four sides recalled to mind the Big Ben at the Westminster in London. Now all these have gone. The structure of the tower stands with the clocks gone. It appears now as a terrifying monster whose eyes have been gouged out. You might even feel that you saw something like *Guernica* by Pablo Picasso. In this campus I met Bhikku Aryadeva who was residing in the corner room of one of the blocks of buildings. The room was just a black hole. The Bhikku was a tall, sturdy and imposing person. I came to know from him that he was a Frenchman, and had been one of the Generals who fought in the Second World War. The mass destruction caused by the War, and the Nuclear holocaust committed in Japan, brought about a change of heart in him. He became a Buddhist and devoted his life to the study of *Dhamma (Dharma)*. When I met him sometime in 1955 in his room, I was received with a lot of warmth and affection. All the shelves, from ceiling to floor, were full with books. A sweet bond was established between us. I kept on going to him off and on. He gave me elementary lessons in French. He told me that, while in the thick of the warfare during the Second World War, he had the *Bhagvad- Gita* with him always. Like J. Robert Oppenheimer, the Bhikku learnt Sanskrit to study the *Gita*. Oppenheimer amazed the world by telling them that on seeing the atomic blast he recalled certain verses of the *Gita*, and was guided by Krishna's *karmayoga*. The Bhikku too quoted the *Gita* in course of his conversation. His reflection on life led him to become a Buddhist. After 1958, when I left for Muzaffarpur to do my Post Graduate studies, I lost contact with Bhikku.

Darbhanga was famous for being the seat of the Raj Darbhanga. The Raj Darbhanga was India's biggest Zamindari before the abolition of *zamindari* system. The Maharajadhiraja Kameshwar Singh was its last holder. As per genealogy drawn up by Shri Kirtinath Jha Panjiyar of Koilakh, Mahmamopadhaya

Mahesh Thakur, who got the grant of the Darbhanga Raj from Emperor Akbar, was the son of Rudra Jha's daughter who figured in my genealogy. The family, to which the Maharajadhiraja belonged, was the family of the Sortriya Brahmins. This family achieved in Mithila highest distinction for promoting and protecting the cultural values of the region. The Maharajadhiraja's ancestors were great scholars. Akbar had granted a high distinction to Mahesh Thakur on being impressed by his learning and purity of the style of living. I had opportunity to visit the palaces of many of the Rajas and Maharajas of this country but what appeared to me unique was Maharajadhiraja Kameshwar Singh's love for books, and his readiness to provide patronage to the scholars. The shining Burma teak almirahs in his living room contained rare books in the loveliest bindings. I was lucky to have access to the library of the Raj Darbhanga which had a large collection of most precious books on diverse subjects. The library had a lot of rare books which Danby, the Secretary to Maharaja Darbhanga, had purchased from several sources in India and England. The collection of the books included a lot of books got from Disraeli's collection. I could consult the first edition of the great *Oxford English Dictionary* (1928). When, in 1964, Mr. C. C. Ganpathy, the Commissioner of Income Tax and Director of the IRS (Staff) College, Nagpur, came to know that I belonged to Darbhanga, he told me that the two persons, who had contributed most to the development of the fundamental principles of the Income Tax Law, were Maharajadhiraja Kameshwar Singh of Darbhanga and Raja Bahadur Kamakhya Narayan Singh of Ramagarh. The administration of Raj Darbhanga was effective and well organised. For several years I held jurisdiction over the Darbhanga Raj in terms of the Income-tax Act, 1961, I was amazed how this assessee managed his complex economic and financial affairs so well. The Raj was not ever subjected to any penalty for the breach of the provisions of the tax law. It was not even rumoured that the Raj tried to sully the administration of justice by any foul means. It carried legal disputes to the highest courts, the Privy Council in the U.K. and then to the Supreme Court of India. I saw how some of our greatest legal minds, like Muhammad Ali Jinnah and N.A. Palkhivala, honed points and issues in the Raj's tax cases. I suggested several times that their records deserved to be preserved so that some researcher could get good materials for doing research on the history of income-tax administration in our country.

Maharajadhiraja Kameshwar Singh's father, Maharajadhiraja Ramaeshwar Singh, was a great, *Tantric*. I heard from knowledgeable persons that Goddess Kali had manifested Herself to him. On his *samadhi* stands now an imposing temple. Nowhere in India have I seen such an impressive full-size image of the Goddess with Her one foot accidentally put on Lord Shiva's chest making Her terribly embarrassed. She protrudes her lips in utter shock. The artist who made the image blended in Her image the excellence of extreme ferocity and the qualities of absolute affability. She is called the 'Ramaeshwari Shyama' after the name of Maharaja Ramaeshwar Singh. Most evenings I spent in the temple. Also near that temple is the temple of Goddess Tara, called Rudreshwari Tara, installed to mark the place where Maharaja Rudra Singh was cremated. As She is my Deity, She comes before my mind's eye every morning when I get up.

The main residential campus of the Maharaja had been protected by a huge fort-like wall. When I was studying at school, a part of it was under construction.

I had studied in my Geography books that the plate, on which our Mithila region exists, was slowly creeping underneath the plate in the Trans-Himalayan regions. This movement made the whole belt an unstable seismic zone. I was wondering at the prudence of the Maharaja's advisors who had advised him to construct that fort at a place where the earth-crust was unstable. My apprehension came true. Some decades later, under the impact of some severe earthquake, the fort developed several cracks, certain portions even collapsed. The Maharaja died issueless in 1962. Towards the end of his life he was despondent. Under his Will he donated many of his palaces for public and charitable causes. The Mithila University occupies one of his campuses gifted by him. After his death the Darbhanga Raj declined fast: now it is just history. Much of the fabulous wealth was allowed to get lost, perhaps for petty gains!. Campuses lost grandeur. Buildings lost their sheen. Many of the valuable books are now stolen. The imposing structures are now dilapidated. The Indra Bhawan, wherein once Jaddan Bai sang, stands utterly neglected. Only the campus of the temples is always abuzz with activities. Where ordinary people had no access then, everyone can get access now. The campus is now under the supervision of the Bihar Religious Trust Board. People throng there not only for *darshan* but also for performing some sacred ceremonies like *mundan* and marriage. The Shyma Mandir complex presents a very glittering show. But the rest of the Raj area has lost the glamour which it had once upon a time.

The Centenary Celebration of the First War of Independence

In 1957, the centenary of the 1857 was celebrated in this country. A grand function had been organized at C.M. College. One of the highlights was the reading of papers on the great event which constituted a great divide in the history of Modern India. The Board of Evaluators consisted of Dr. Sheetal Prasad Sinha, FRCP, Pandit Nageshwar Mishra, a Senior Advocate, and Prof. Sachinath Mishra, Head of the Department of History and Political Science. I made an extensive study to know what had happened in 1857. I studied several standard books, like Forrest's *History of Indian Mutiny*, Sir George MacMunn's *Indian Mutiny in Perspective*, Dr.S.N. Sen's, *Eighteen Fifty Seven*, P.E. Roberts's *History of British India*. But what appealed to me most was Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's *The History of the First War of Indian Independence*. In this extraordinary book this great Freedom Fighter interpreted the events of 1857 to discover the forces which had made it happen. He discovered the forces of *Swadharm* (love for own *dharma*) and *Swarajya* (love for independence) at work. My article received a resounding appreciation from the listeners. Shri Nageshwar Mishra considered my paper excellent and rated it the best. Dr. Sheetal Prasad Sinha was not only a distinguished physician but also a widely read person. He felt that Savarkar's approach was coloured by his assumed point of view, and was not scholarly enough. By a majority of two to one, my paper was adjudged the best, and I received Dr. Bhatnagar's *Encyclopaedia of Knowledge* as the First Prize.

Darbhanga & Laheriasarai

Those days the intellectual ethos at Darbhanga was of the highest order. The Mithila Sanskrit Research Institute, and the Kameshwar Singh Sanskrit Univer-

sity were the two great centres for the advanced study in Sanskrit and Philosophy, and had on their faculties very distinguished teachers. I came in contact with some of the scholars but was greatly impressed by Pandit Trilok Nath Mishra, a distinguished Pandit of the old school, and by Dr. Bagchi, who was the Director of Mithila Sanskrit Research Institute. I had the fortune of learning a little of Sanskrit from Pandit Mishra whose sense of humour made his exposition extremely lively. I interacted with Dr. Bagchi in connection with my study of certain aspects of Aesthetics. He was vastly learned in the literature of the East and the West, and had an original insight into the issues ranging from Poetry to Physics. When I knocked at the door of his residence at Kabraghat at Darbhanga, he was busy cooking his food. He used to cook his simple food himself. He came near me, and asked me to sit comfortably for some time. And he went inside to complete his work. He returned after a few minutes wearing *dhoti*, and had a short scarf across his shoulders. It was a remarkable meeting. It was in his association that I developed some interest in Navvya Naya. He told me about Gangesh Upadhaya whose contribution to 'Navvya Naya' is great. The interest that he helped me develop in this subject never diminished. In 1995, when I was the Director General of Income-tax Exemptions, I had to consider a petition for granting exemption from tax on the grant of award of money to Prof. N.S Ramanuja Tatachariya who had been selected for Ramakrishna Dalmia Shreevani Alankaran for 1994. The contemporary relevance of the work of Gangesh Upadhaya became clear to me on reading Prof. Tattacharya's '*Pratyaksha-Tattva-Chintamani-Vimarsha*' in which he made a critical study of Gangesh Upadhaya's *Tattva-Chintamani*.

But now the story of this place is the story of decay and deterioration. The fifty years of India's Independence have improved nothing. Trade and industry have registered no development. Good educational institutions have deteriorated fast. Poverty has impeded the economic growth, and has bred a frame of mind which is not conducive even for the preservation of cultural heritage. Both the adjoining towns (Laheriasarai and Darbhanga) appear sleepy. Electricity hardly comes. Mosquitoes abound. Rain water turns vast areas into cesspool. The system of drainage seldom functions. Civic amenities are virtually zero. If the society is surviving, it is doing so despite the activities of the Government. The people's representatives suffer under crash ignorance of their public duties. They seem to be busy feathering their own nests unmindful of their obligations and duties to people. My heart really bleeds when I think of the place, and the sufferings of the people. Their present plight brings to my mind the Painter's reply to the Poet in Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*:

"Poet.....how goes the world?
Painter: It wears Sir, as it grows."

II. At L. S. College, Muzaffarpur

I went to L.S College at Muzaffarpur to do my Postgraduate study. I got a room in the New Hostel of which the distinguished Prof. Amarnath Thakur was the Superintendent. Though I had not lived in a hostel before, I got used to its lifestyle mainly because of the warmth shown by my friends, and the paternal affection of Prof. Thakur. My batch was destined to be the last batch of the old

Bihar University which held jurisdiction over the whole of Bihar, except Patna. Now it is called B R Ambedkar Bihar University.

The Department of English

The College had several blocks of massive buildings which were earmarked for different faculties: Arts, Science, and Commerce. Post-graduate courses, run by the Bihar University, were held at the College. The Post-graduate Department of English had on its one side the P.G. Department of Philosophy, and on the other there was a huge room meant for the offices of the English teachers. The teachers' sitting hall was beautifully skirted with ornate wooden structures with cupboards for some important reference books to which even the students had an easy access.

At the L.S College, the Department of English had, in those days, high distinction. Principal F. Rahman, had expired before I joined the Post-graduate Department, but he had become a legend in his own time. And he had his living presence in the style of English teaching at the College. He stressed on the need for developing critical sense and sensibility in his short introduction to the *Intermediate Poetry Selections* which we had studied as students of the Intermediate Class. Prof. Mahendra Pratap was the Head of University Department of the English. He was a Cambridge Tripos. English became an independent subject of study at Cambridge only in the post-First World War period. The first examination for English Tripos was held in 1919. But it was in 1926 that a separation of literary from linguistic studies was made for obtaining an English Tripos. Stephen Heath¹ tells us that at the Tripos course, Part I, comprised of papers in English literature, life and thought from Chaucer onwards, *plus* passages for critical discussion and some books of literary criticism; and Part II comprised of papers on tragedy, history and theory of criticism, English moralists, special periods and topics in English literature, practical criticism, and foreign language and literature. This protocol at Cambridge provided the basic framework for the study of English in the Universities of Bihar for about forty or more years (mainly 1940s onwards till 1970s).

The Cambridge English

In fact what we studied at that time was not English *simpliciter* but it was the 'Cambridge English'. We heard this expression from our teachers but could not understand this expression then. I felt that English was just English. Many years after, I could grasp what it meant when I read Stephen Heath's essay on "I.A. Richards, F.R. Leavis and Cambridge English", published in the *Cambridge Minds*.

To understand 'Cambridge English', it is appropriate to consider the work of two men, I.A. Richards and F.R. Leavis. It is from them that 'Cambridge English' derived its definition, and prime characteristics. Dr. I.A. Richards published some remarkable books in the 1920s which led to the emergence of a new point of view in the study of literature. The books were: *The Foundations of Aesthetics* (with C.K. Ogden and James Wood, 1922), *The Meaning of Meaning* (with Ogden, 1923), *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924), *Science and Poetry* (1926), and *Practical Criticism* (1929). *The Meaning of Meaning* had a profound impact on me. The art of exploring 'meaning' has been my prime concern not only in the study of

Literature but also in the study of law and Jurisprudence. I was delighted that R.W.M Dias, who had studied at Cambridge for his LLB examination, dedicated his celebrated work on *Jurisprudence* to the authors of *The Meaning of Meaning*. I am greatly indebted to Prof. Amarnath Thakur who trained me in the art of Practical Criticism. Periods, in which we were taught practical criticism, were really fun-packed. Prof. Thakur distributed short poems for written comments after critical evaluation. This is what precisely Richards and Empson had done in the classes they had conducted. Our responses were closely examined to see whether we caught their meaning without the taints of stock responses, doctrinal inhibitions, and other preconceptions. The art of practical criticism helped us in developing trained literary sensibilities. F.R. Leavis (1895-1978) too had a wide impact on us. Leavis was much concerned with the hazards of this materialistic civilisation and the perilous state of our culture. His *Culture and Environment*, *Revaluation*, *New Bearings in English Poetry* and *The Great Tradition* were widely read. "Cambridge English" says Heath, "developed an identity as such from the work of Richards and Leavis, from the former's analytic procedures and from the latter's development of an evaluative literary-critical practice wedded to a powerfully adduced literary history." I developed a great liking for Cambridge, and wished to study sometime there. I read, as much as I could, the writings of some of the distinguished Cambridge minds: viz. John Milton, William Wordsworth, Charles Darwin, J.M. Keynes (the economist), G.M Trevelyan (the historian), Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein (the philosophers). Prof. Pratap told me that even the bricks, and stones, and the trees at Cambridge speak if one can develop competence to hear their voice. All arrangements were made for me to join the course at Cambridge, but my destiny had something else in its store. My mother fell seriously ill. Being the only son, I couldn't have left her ailing at Darbhanga. Besides, I got an appointment as a Post Graduate Lecturer in English at the Magadh University at Gaya in 1962.

My Teachers

Prof. Mahendra Pratap, who was the Head of University Department of English, delivered a series of lectures on John Milton. Prof. Pratap was an avid student of Milton. His magisterial tone in the exposition of Milton's art and ideas had tremendous impact on us. I can even now hear him speaking before my mind's eye. He first presented the conventional view as to Good and Evil that Milton presented. The universe presented a spectacle of the warring forces of Good and Evil in which the ultimate triumph is secured by the forces of Good. He put his own original gloss on the problems of good and evil by suggesting the Indian philosophical view that the Supreme transcends Good and Evil both. He proved his point in measured and cadenced style. He was a close friend of Dr. Harivansh Rai Bachchan; and they had many shared ideas. It was at his residence that I had met Dr. Bachchan who had done his doctoral research on the occult in W.B. Yeats. He said that neither the Christian nor the Hebrew tradition answered the questions pertaining to the problems of Good and Evil so well as the Hindu tradition had done. He quoted the *Ramacharitmanasa* by Tulsidas to explain his point. He developed it more comprehensively whilst delivering his lectures on the Book of Job, one of the books in the *Old Testament of the Holy Bible*. I would develop some of his ideas later when I would refer to my lectures on the Book of

Job which I delivered in 1961 in the Post Graduate Department of English at L. S. College at Muzaffarpur.

Prof. Kamta Charan Shrivastava, well known by his acronym KCS, delivered lectures on D.H. Lawrence and Joseph Conrad. I felt that while delivering his lectures he meditated and ruminated over the subject matter of his lectures. Often we felt he had gone into a trance. He stood for long without any movement except of his lips. He was like the flame in darkness without a slightest twinkle. He seemed to be reflecting over the various aspects of the diamonds of his thoughts, trying to catch the glimpse of each ray being refracted and reflected by them. He focused more on the culture of mind than on the details of facts. He made alive subtle trends of thoughts and emotions, also their undertones. Listening to him was pleasure though it put a heavy demand on the listener's imagination and critical sense.

While at L.S. College I read a good deal of the great writers of the past. I accepted Shri. Aurobindo's view in *The Future Poetry* that the great lights of the past could be put in three rows :

First row: Homer, Shakespeare, Valmiki.

Second row: Dante, Kalidasa, Aeschylus, Virgil, Milton.

Third row: Goethe.

I tried to familiarize myself with these great minds, though I was not intellectually well equipped to grasp them well. Shri Aurobindo's comments, supporting his aforesaid classification, seemed to me apt, and I enjoyed reading them. One such a comment was the following:

“...the first three have at once supreme imaginative originality, supreme poetic gift, widest scope and supreme creative genius. Each is a sort of poetic demiurge who has created a world of his own...”

In the Postgraduate Department at L. S. College, there were many other distinguished teachers. I hold myself under an eternal debt to them all (though, I know, I have not given good account of myself which would have delighted them).

My indiscretion: Under the threat to “lay me by the heels”

In December 1958 the Bihar University organized a convocation for conferring degrees to the Graduates. It was held in the campus of Veterinary College at Patna. Dr. C.D. Deshmukh delivered the Convocation Address. I sat in the remote corner under the huge Shamiana. I succumbed to friendly persuasions, and sneaked out of the function to see a movie 'Madhumati.' Prof. Mahendra Pratap, who was sitting on dais, saw our conduct. He didn't say anything then. A few days later, he came to deliver his lecture explaining the invocation to light in the third Book of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. But before he began his lecture, he cast a pointed and piercing glance at me. That unnerved me. He told us about the Original Sin, and also how and why it had been committed, and with what outcome. His sharp gaze made me conscious of the sin I committed by leaving the Convocation for viewing the film. A line of a famous Urdu poet came to my mind: *Lamoho ne khata ki thi, Sadiyon ne saza payi*. Prof. Pratap was a master of the art of understatement. Once the period of his lecture was over, we went to him to apologize for our misconduct at Patna. My indiscretion agonized me for years.

Acharya Janaki Vallabh Shastri was one of the most distinguished Hindi poets. He was widely known for his learning and his exquisite genial temper. I

wished to call on him. On some Sunday I proceeded to call on him. I was accompanied by a few of my friends who knew him well, and who often visited his house at Chaturbhujsthan. This area was referred in hush-hush tone despite the fact that there existed a wonderfully ornate sprawling temple. Many of my friends had counselled me not to visit that area as it had gained a notoriety of being a red-light area where many courtesans and whores lived. But I had a desire to have the great poet's *darshan*. Much before we reached the grand temple of Chaturbhuj Bhagwan, we had the sight of young inviting voluptuous women, almost displaying themselves as wares, on the verandas by the roadside. A matron recognized one of our friends because in his marriage she had gone to his village to perform her music to entertain the *baraati* (a bridegroom's wedding procession) at his wedding. She invited us to stay a while to listen to some select *thumris*. He yielded to her persuasion; and we had no choice but to follow him inside her house. She sang with exquisite grace: but she sang *abhajan* rather than something prurient pandering to one's lascivious tastes. She sang a song by Vidyapati: *Kahan Harab More Dukh He Mahadeva* (when will you, Mahadeva, rid me of my sorrows). We devoted some time in the temple. We knew that the embellished ladies, with roses tucked in their hair coils, had gone to worship the Lord before they could take to their trade. We had an enjoyable interface with the poet, and we were inspired by some of his poems. We returned to our college hostel but by that time it was late at night.

Somehow the story about this visit reached my father's ears. A few days later I got from him a cryptic letter where, almost out of context, he had written:

“Virgo (*Kannya*) to Libra (*Tula*). The Sun on its path in the heavens moves through the twelve stations. After sojourning in the zone of Virgo (*Kannya*), it moves to the zone of Libra (*Tula*) to demonstrate to the Universe that it committed no indiscretion whilst in the zone of feminine seduction.”

Soon I realized that he was suggesting to me to recall a famous story which I had heard long back. A son of a noble man went to Varanasi to study the Vedas. Once he was seen by someone in the notorious red-light area. Somehow the tale was carried to his father residing in a village. He composed a verse for his son's instruction, and he sent that to him. In that poem he told his son the pattern of the Sun's journey through the zodiac signs. Once the Sun sojourned in the zone of Virgo he demonstrated his blamelessness by putting himself on the scales (Libra): proving that he committed no indiscretion. I could easily understand what my father had in his mind. Justice 'should not only be done, but should manifestly and undoubtedly seen to be done.'

III

THE SADHU AND THE VAISHYA (A WHORE)

A story came to my mind on seeing the damsels of delight displaying themselves near about the great temple. I had read it somewhere in Acharya Rajaneesh's oeuvre. Once it so happened that a Sannyasi and a prostitute lived in the same locality. They died at the same point of time, and were brought before the Lord of Death for His judgment. The Lord of Death sent the prostitute to Heaven, and the Sannyasi to Hell. Naturally the Sannyasi was furious at the

perversity of divine justice. He entered an instant caveat, and called for the Lord's explanation for the abuse of power. The Lord of Death said: "Divine dispensation is always fair. When she sold herself to her customers she acted with a sense of helplessness on account of her constraints from which it was impossible for her to get out. But even when the Sannyasi worshipped the Lord, his mind remained lost in the breeze of fragrance coming from roses tucked in the prostitute's coils. The story is wonderfully suggestive.

My mind goes to another story which too I read somewhere in Acharya Rajneesh. He wrote about a Sannyasi and a Vaishya (a whore). The Sannyasi was Swami Vivekananda. He refused to participate in a function organized in his honour by the zamindar of a particular area. He did so because he came to know that a Vaishya was to perform her art there. But she sang in the gathering, quite close to the Sannyasi's tent. He could hear her. She sang *abhajan* by Narsi Mehta. It said that it is the same iron which is seen in a temple and also in the butcher's shop, but the *paras* does not discriminate between the two. Both get transformed into gold by the sheer touch of *paras*. And then she sang with intense feeling प्रभुजी, मेरे अवगुण चित्त न धरो. Vivekananda ran to the place where she was singing. He realized that he had gone wrong. He was in tears. It was evident that on seeing her, he had no feelings unbecoming of a *sannyasi*.

The Ways of God: The Book of Job

I remember to have annoyed the Bishop of Muzaffarpur while discussing with him the role of God as revealed in the *Book of Job*. I had studied the Old Testament of *Holy Bible*, and had gone through the *Peake's Commentary on the Bible*. The Old Testament is a masterpiece of literature. The *Book of Job* is the finest specimen of literary flourish and dramatic art in the Old Testament. I had studied it as a Postgraduate student at L.S. College Muzaffarpur. Later on, as a Lecturer in the Department of English, I delivered a set of Lectures on this. I told the Bishop that the *Book of Job* showed God's failure to answer the fundamental questions which Job had posed. The majesty of God was not to be proved by His fascist command to Job to accept his sufferings in the mood of total self-surrender to God. Job was a good man. He had to suffer because God wanted to prove to Satan that His devotee would not swerve from path of obedience to Him even if he is racked under boundless sufferings on the wheel of fire. A question keeps on recurring in our mind: Why should Job be made a pawn in the cosmic conflict between the forces of Good and Evil? In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Arjuna was at liberty to ask all sorts of questions, and Krishna explained every aspect of the matter comprehensively. Towards the end, Arjuna himself realised what was right for him. There was no ring of assertion in Krishna's tone who, in the end of his exposition, granted Arjuna liberty to do whatever he thought appropriate. Why should a blameless man suffer? Why should God allow Satan to subject Job to an ordeal when He was sure of Job's innocence? How could Satan question even God's judgment about Job? Is not God Himself responsible for Job's tragedy? Why should He allow Satan to subject a good soul to such horrendous acid test? One often feels God had Himself failed. There was a point when German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche found Him dead. I considered my comment fair exercise of my critical sense but the Bishop was furious at me. He felt that the prevailing modernist thinking had

perverted my perspective, and distorted my understanding of God's role in the *Book of Job*. I felt I was correct in expressing the following about 'Man' in the *Magadh University Journal* 1962 issue; to quote—

“In the Greek thought MAN was a dynamic creature with brilliant creative faculty. Gods ruled the universe: and Destiny often exercised its arbitrariness but MAN was exclusively preoccupied with the working out of the riddles of existence. Man was a great sufferer: he was also a powerful cognitive instrument. In the Middle Ages MAN became a frail creature standing in the mood of self-surrender before the massive CROSS. The Renaissance witnessed the revival of the Hellenic view of man modified by the medieval view of man [-a creature of passion who needs constant restraint of Reason (Christ himself is Reason)]. In the Age of Enlightenment MAN became one dimensional creature, a mere cog in the world-machine. The MAN in the Romantic period had greater knowledge of the melodrama of existence than of its equilibrium. The Victorian culture was itself superficial and had a wrong sense of values. MAN in our century is “a helpless and fragile beach-ball²”. In the melodrama of existence we are all pathetic characters. With no amount of glittering achievements our civilization can camouflage its wounds. Modern man is

“Like a patient etherized upon a table”.³

Even if he regains his consciousness he is bound to collapse again for in the present state of affairs his disease has no cure.”⁴

My Four Years of Lectureship (1960-1964)

The day the last paper of my Post Graduate Examination was over, I was asked by Prof. Mahendra Pratap to meet Shri Collector Singh Keshri, Principal of Samastipur College. Keshariji was himself a great Hindi poet. He wanted to appoint me as a Lecturer in the Department of English. I worked in that College for about a year. I enjoyed working there. When I was leaving Laheriasarai for joining the post of a Lecturer, my father advised me in the same style as Polonius had advised Laertes in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (I. iii.59). He told me that while I would be observing my students with two eyes only, I would be observed by them with two hundred or more eyes. My lapses could not escape being noticed by my students. And it is the worst misfortune for a teacher to be judged by his students, and found wanting. In a year's time, I was appointed a lecturer in the Department of English at L.S. College where I had studied for my Postgraduate degree only a year back, and to which I was infinitely indebted.

In 1962, when I joined the University Department of English at Gaya as a Postgraduate Lecturer, the Post Graduate classes were being held in the Jamuar building in the main market area. The University's Administrative Block was in a rented building belonging to the Tekari Estate. The University building was under construction at Bodh Gaya. Gaya is an ancient town famous for its Vishnupad Temple. The footprint of Lord Vishnu is worshipped there. The temple is on the bank of the Falgu river. It is customary to perform *Sradha* (the last rites) of the deceased ancestors on the bank of the Falgu river. It is said that Lord Sri Rama had performed *Sradha* of his father Dashrath on the bank of this river. I too performed in 1996 the *Sradha* (a sacred pooja) of my parents on the bank of

this river sitting underneath the Akshya Butt (a sacred ancient tree). The town is ancient and highly congested, with narrow lanes and sub-lanes. While going to the University Department from my rented house at Tekari Road, I often suffered the shower of the domestic refuse hurled down callously from above. Bodh Gaya is an adjoining town, famous for its Buddha Temple. I visited the temple several times. The Buddha is worshipped by all sections of the society. The Hindus consider Him an incarnation of Vishnu. The poet Jayadeva sang: केशव धृतबुद्धशरीर जय जगदीश हरे.

The Magadh University at that time had Dr. Kalikinkar Datta as its Vice-Chancellor. I had studied his *An Advanced History of India* which he had written in collaboration with R.C. Majumdar and H.C Raychaudhuri. His assortment of quotations led me to criticize him as a specialist in 'scissors and paste method'. But later, I realized I was wrong. His *History of Freedom Movement in Bihar* is a monumental work of scholarship. When I came in close contact with him at Gaya, I developed great admiration for him. He was not only a man of profound scholarship, he was also an extremely loveable person. He lived a structured lifestyle, and meticulously maintained his schedule of work. I had to leave for Mussoorie to join the Indian Revenue Service. I called on Dr. Datta to receive his blessings. He blessed me and told me a few lines by the great Rabindranath Tagore which meant: 'If none responds to you call, march even alone.' These words have inspired me and have saved me whenever I found myself teetering on the edge.

The Chinese Aggression: India's dismal response

1954, the year I passed my Secondary School Examination, was the high water mark in our relationship with China. Chinese Premier Chou En-Lai had visited India that year. Even in a place like Darbhanga, processions were taken out shouting 'Hindi-Chini Bhai-Bhai'. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was acclaimed as the architect of the new era of intimate and cordial co-operation between two emerging giants of Asia. But with the best intentions, he incurred the worst. On September 8th 1962, the Chinese forces invaded Thag La Ridge and defeated the Indian troops. On October 20, 1962, the Chinese troops invaded Ladakh and the North Eastern Frontier Agency. For years the Chinese had constructed roads, and set up their military infrastructure in the strategic region. The Indian forces were defeated. Soon Bomdi La fell. Assam was at the point of being captured. Humiliation of India was complete. The vacuity of the slogans - 'Hindi Chini Bhai-Bhai' - stood demonstrated. The Bandung declaration on promotion of world peace and cooperation came to naught. After inflicting a terrible aggression and capturing a lot of Indian territory, the Chinese declared a unilateral cease-fire. At that time I was a lecturer at L.S. College. The news of the Chinese aggression was shocking, reminding us of Shakespeare's expression: 'You too Brutus'. Initially the Government of India was slow and sluggish in its response to the challenge posed by the aggressor. A week later, the Chinese troops invaded the eastern sector in NEFA (now Arunachal Pradesh). The whole country shuddered with fright and forebodings when the Commander in the NEFA abdicated his resistance. For a few days, nobody was clear about the design of the Chinese. Did they intend to overrun the major part of North India? Chinese planes were sighted even above Muzaffarpur. Whenever we heard the sound of

aircrafts, we had reasons to be apprehensive. The news of the collapse of Indian Army in the Western sector, especially in the Galwan valley, was shattering to the morale of most Indians. For some days our faith in defending our country stood greatly undermined. Prime Minister Nehru sought assistance from President Kennedy by writing to him that the situation which his Government was facing was desperate. He solicited the help of United States of America. He approached the British Government also for help in the critical hour. But in the crisis management our Government was a failure. Zhou Enlai (Chou Enlai) of China declared a unilateral ceasefire on 20 November 1962.

But the people of the country displayed remarkable solidarity and unity of purpose. During the period of the Chinese aggression, I witnessed a groundswell of sympathy and support of the people for the Government. Wherever I moved, I found people astir with excitement, and working to help our Government to mobilize the nation's resources against the invaders. Even beggars contributed out of their begging bowls. My mother donated part of her gold ornaments for the national cause. We heard that Maharaja Kameshwar Singh of Darbhanga made heavy donation in terms of cash and gold. Besides, he invested several maunds of gold in the Gold bonds floated by the Government. Almost every household was contributing to the national cause. Ladies were knitting woollen garments for soldiers fighting in the extreme cold regions of the Himalayas. Garments were being prepared and transmitted to the appropriate places through voluntary agencies. Poets sang patriotic songs, and people showed remarkable solidarity never witnessed in the history of India. In dealing with the Chinese aggression, our Government showed incompetence, but our people displayed intense patriotism and solidarity. There was a mass upsurge in support of the Government. Our armed forces, deployed in the eastern and the western sectors, were highly motivated but not well equipped. Those days, I was going to Muzaffarpur from Darbhanga almost daily by train. So I could see the massive response of the ordinary people to help our fighting forces. Voluntary organisations had sprung up to collect things which could be used by our armed forces: things like woollen clothes and food which could last. Songs with nationalistic fervour were being sung to pep up the morale of the forces being transported by trains from east to west. The aircrafts of the Darbhanga Aviation (belonging to the Darbhanga Raj) were acquired by the Government to meet the challenges on the borders.

Within 24 hours of Nehru's SOS to the US President, China declared unilateral ceasefire, and withdrew. In the graphic words of Bipin Chandra, 'the Chinese dragon disappeared from sight, leaving behind a heart-broken friend and a confused and disoriented people'.⁵ But this happened after inflicting a terrible aggression, and after capturing a lot of Indian territory. Nehru was broken and could not survive long. He died in May 1964. When I joined as a probationer at the National Academy of Administration at Massourie, on June 29, 1964, I found the gloom, after Nehru's death, intense and pervading.

Pandit Nehru had studied history widely. His books on the history of India and of the World are acknowledged masterpieces. It amazed me how such a learned man failed to learn the lessons of humility from history. During the India-China crisis, Lord Bertrand Russell wrote a letter both to Chou En-Lai and Jawaharlal Nehru. The letters which the two Prime Ministers wrote in reply to Lord Russell are available in Lord Russell's *Autobiography* (see pp.648-650). The tone and temper of two letters are markedly different. Chou En-Lai's letter is

polite and suave, and was prompt. He presented his case well in his reply to Lord Russell despite the fact that the Lord had no governmental standing. He was just an eminent person widely known for knowledge, and was renowned for his deep involvement in public causes. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's letter was sent after receipt of a reminder. It was written in the highbrow tone with an evident imperiousness in his logic. It showed that Nehru had ceased to be the master of the situation. He pleaded on certain points which should not have been mentioned in a letter being written to a person of the calibre of Bertrand Russell. A comparative study of these two letters highlights Nehru's *shubris*, his tragic trait, and his fatal flaw. Nehru was, in the end, a tragic hero: one with great potentialities but destined to fail on account of his tragic trait.

I have referred above to Pandit Nehru's letter to Bertrand Russell. I noticed two points which deserve to be mentioned to be remembered: one pertains to the nature of our people's response that put our government's endeavour at pathetic contrast; and the other, the Chinese attitudes towards nuclear weapons. Both the points are important even from sociological point of view, and also in the matter of our nation's preparedness for a war in times to come.

- (i) Nehru rightly noted in his said letter: "But there are limits in a democratic society to which a Government can do. There is such a strong feeling in India over the invasion by China that no Government can stand if it does not pay some heed to it." The upsurge of the patriotic feelings throughout India was so great that China must have inferred that the people of India could not be caged under any servitude; and every effort would surely turn futile. Before America initiated the calamitous process culminating in the use of nuclear power against Japan during World War II, it studied the psyche of people of Japan, "By 1944, it was felt important in the military hierarchy in America to commission a study to study the Japanese in order fully to understand what the nation was —and was not — capable of, how it might react and behave in certain circumstances."⁶ China could easily read that. Though the Indian government gave no good account of itself, the people made it clear that no power could subdue the resurgent India because of the commitments of the Indian people to freedom and democratic polity. We must not do anything to undermine our people's patriotic commitments to our nation.
- (ii) Our country must remain prepared for its defence against the foreign power that turns foolish, tyrannical, or short-sighted. Chinese position was rightly noted by Nehru in his reply to Lord Russell⁷ :

"The present day China, as you know, is the only country which is not afraid even of a nuclear war. Mao Tse-tung has said repeatedly that he does not mind losing a few million people as still several hundred millions will survive in China."

It would be prudent for our Government to keep the Chinese strategy and ideas in view while responding to the Chinese challenges, if they are posed again.

IV

THE PLIGHT OF EDUCATION

My association with the academic world never ceased. Even whilst a member of the Indian Revenue Service, I addressed various academic fora, and was a member of the Council of the Higher Legal Studies of Nagpur University. I was

a setter of questions and an examiner for the LL.M Examinations of the universities at Patna, Kolkata, and Nagpur. On 18th September 2010, I had good interactions with the students and teachers at National Law University, Jodhpur, where I had gone to deliver a lecture on the 'Abuse of Treaty-making Power'. There I had good interactions with the students. Besides, I have had good friends in the academic world. My father, and one of my uncles, never ceased to be academicians. These I write just to establish my credentials to make short comments in the next paragraph.

I would not write about the great improvements brought about in the academic world over these years, and the vast technological facilities provided to the teachers, students and the researchers, though these have been great and good. It is normal not to think of one's health till it is not struck with some ailment. But in this phase of Economic Globalization, some worrisome features have become manifest. The constraints of the Memoir do not permit me to go into details, but a few points are just touched for my readers to reflect on the plight of our education:

- (i) It is seen that no concern is shown for the development of aesthetic sensibility and spiritual values; and the stress has shifted to acquire proficiency needed merely to run the market-driven consumerist society emerging so aggressively these days.
- (ii) In the market-driven economy the only criterion for evaluating the importance of a subject for study is dependent on to what extent it is market-friendly. In accordance with the Darwinian cynicism, it is said that all subjects, which do not promote market, must be ignored to die out soon. There is a growing indifference towards the values to equip people to develop the qualities of good citizenship, good householder, good creative artists, in short, good human beings. John Maynard Keynes expressed his great apprehensions in connection with economics too. He said: "the 'economic' problem is not —if we look into the future —the permanent problem of the human race."⁸
- (iii) This dominant passion that education is to run the market only, has produced a branch of study that is attracting most of our good students. As market is run on the greedy self-interests, this passion has produced such subjects as the MBA. Allan Bloom, the author of *The Closing of the American Mind*, has a point when he says: the MBA is 'a great disaster' because the students' lives were 'never radically changed by it, as they should be in a proper education.'⁹
- (iv) It is clear that the Vishkanya of the capitalist society is 'MONEY power' as by abusing it the governments can be purchased, public opinion can be silenced, intellectuals can be hired.
- (v) Great imbalance is being created in our society by giving wrong and distorted values on academic and cultural pursuits. Conditions have been created for our brilliant boys to discover that they can get better remuneration by selling wine or toothpaste than by such pursuits which had once produced a Shakespeare, a Russell, or an Einstein. If spreading falsehood becomes socially prestigious and economically more rewarding, then our entire value system becomes confused, even rotten. I wholly endorse the

concern expressed by my learned friend Professor Arun Kumar of Jawaharlal Nehru University¹⁰ (see at 'Note & Reference' 10)

- (vi) The corporations, under this or that format, are striving with, no holds barred, to establish what they call 'long-term Strategic Alliances with top rank colleges and universities' as that would help them to 'access to the most talented and motivated students', give them 'access to research that addresses corporate needs'. In short, after turning the State into the 'Sponsored State', and the government into the protector and facilitator of the corporate world, they want to turn the universities into sponsored institutions to bring about a sort of the genetic engineering on our young boys and girls by alluring them towards their corporate culture. Thomas Hobbes, in his *Leviathan*, considered the king wielding the absolute power of the State (*civitas*). In his " *The Law of Free Monarchies*", James I was all for the ideas so aggressively set forth in *Leviathan*. Hobbes argued that the Universities deserved to be disciplined. Hobbes said: "I despair of any lasting peace among ourselves, till the Universities here shall bend and direct their studies to the ... the teaching of absolute obedience to the laws of the King."¹¹ The neoliberal thinkers and strategists want the universities to become market-friendly by developing corporate culture to produce ideas and workforce to work for promoting the neoliberal paradigm at all costs.
- (vii) It would be unwise to let the corporations shape our boys and girls for their commercial purposes alone, starving our body politic, and our national and cultural pursuits of their much needed good talents. We cannot afford to export our best talents to serve the foreign countries leaving our country high and dry.
- (viii) What sort of education be provided in a democratic society is a political decision to be taken by the constitutional organs in accordance with the objectives set under our constitution. The universities cannot be allowed to become the surrogates, or back offices, or extension centres of the MNCs.
- (ix) It is our misfortune that all equitable norms in the matter of the payment of wages and remuneration are violated in order to hire talents for the specific corporate purposes. There must be a ceiling on payments otherwise economic injustice would be seriously wrought. By paying unreasonably high remuneration to some, not only pressure of high inflation is caused, even our perception of values gets distorted, and our young boys and girls get improper measuring rod to evaluate the ways of our world.
- (x) I have experienced two very pronounced aspects in the pro-corporation strategy: these are—
 - (a) High pressure persuasion through analogical reasoning asserting that this thing, or that thing, is also happening elsewhere, so India has no option but to swim with the global currents.. This point is made by overlooking the 'fallacy of similitude', by forgetting that India cannot emulate the countries like the USA or UK, which are the real beneficiaries of the market-driven systems;
 - (b) Threats are frequently advanced by telling us that we shall have to pay a heavy price if we do not help promote the neoliberal agenda of the IMF or the WTO. They say that if we do not follow their lines, the foreign investment would dry up, the hot money would vanish, and

we would expose ourselves to the consequences for the breaches of obligations under a number of agreements to which we have become a party.

In my view, these threats are given to promote the neoliberal agenda by adopting a new brand of colonialism being established in this phase of the Economic Globalisation. I would record my reflections on these aspects in the Book III of this Memoir, especially in Chapter 24 ('Our Worldview and the Trends of Our Times').

My quest for the Government Service

I was happy in my academic pursuits. But it was fashionable those days in Bihar, at least for good students, to appear at the competitive examinations. I got into the rut, and I appeared at the competitive examinations for Central Services. My knowledge of the Government service was almost zero. None in my family had ever been a cog in the machine that we call government. I was selected for the Indian Revenue Services (Income Tax Service). I was in two minds whether to join this service as a lot of persons had made adverse comments, and insinuated against the tax gatherers. I too had read in literature that a tax-gatherers never had good image. Marinus, a Flemish painter of the 16th century brought out the grotesqueness of the tax-gatherers in his famous painting "Two Tax Gatherers"¹² I was in two minds whether to join this service. But I was persuaded by Dr. K.K. Dutta, the eminent historian, to see the World as it is through my own experience rather than in the light of what others say. I would come to my days in the government service in the Book II of my Memoir in which I would portray my years in the Civil Service.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *Cambridge Minds* edited by Richard Mason [Stephen Heath, "I.A. Richards, F.R. Leavis and Cambridge English"]
2. The expression is borrowed from Donald D. Glad: "Mind as an Organismic Integration" in *Theories of the Mind* ed. by Jordan M. Scher (New York 1962), p. 529.
3. T.S. Eliot: "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock".
4. *The Magadh University Journal* (1961) pp. 115-116
5. Bipin Chandra, *India After Independence* (Viking 1999) Page 165
6. Peter Watson, *A Terrible Beauty*. P. 402
7. Russell, *Autobiography* p.650
8. Keynes, *Essays in Persuasion* p. 360 quoted by J. K. Galbraith, *A History of Economics* p. 283
9. Peter Watson, *A Terrible Beauty* p. 723
10. "Today labour is devalued while speculation and greed have been raised to a new high pedestal. A mere 1 per cent of the population linked to the corporate sector earns more than what 60 per cent, dependent on agriculture do. Disparities have risen more sharply in the last six years than in the earlier 54 years. The young are encouraged to sell soap but not to contribute to nation-building through teaching and research. Sacrifice appears to be stupidity, undermining the entire effort of the freedom fighters. Those of them who still survive ruefully ask: is this what they fought for?" Prof Arun Kumar, 'After 'Tryst with destiny': Unending wait for new dawn' in *The Tribune* August 29, 2007 Chandigarh.
11. Quoted by Noam Chomsky, *Failed States* p. 241
12. See *Our World Today* published New Caxton Library Service, London 1973.