CHAPTER - III

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Lives of great men are fashioned in an uncommon way. Their beliefs, ideals and the causes they fight and die for is what set them apart from others. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was one such person. His place in the Indian national movement was, undoubtedly, a unique one. Liberation of his country from the colonial clutches was the one and only aim of Netaji’s life. He lived, fought and ultimately died (assumed) for this one cause. In the preface of his work Tatsuo Hayashida rightly observed: “While commenting on Subhas, some add he was a seditious revolutionary or an idealist dictator, who disdained to compromise. Others say he was often guided by his own passion to the point of arrogance. But none of these comments hits the nail on the head in representing his real nature. What Subhas Chandra Bose was really after, was the emancipation of his father land, that is, the independence of India.”¹ The unyielding conviction with which he fought for the cause of India’s Independence bordered on his urge for independence. His whole life was dedicated to the cause of the nation. Though as a leader and national hero he ranked with Mahatma Gandhi and Jawahar Lal Nehru yet he has not been given much importance by the parties in power. V.P. Saini finds: “that some prominent leaders of those days had definite information about the whereabouts of Netaji and even the documental evidence is lying in
the Indian offices and the British, American and Russian Archives. If the Government makes efforts to seek and trace that information there is no reason that the required information should not be available.”

Subhas Chandra Bose’s efforts constitute a revolutionary struggle for Indian independence- one that not only paralleled the non-violent movement but even threatened to overwhelm it.

Subhas Chandra Bose was born on 23 January 1897 at a small village Kodalia situated in the province of Orissa. In 1897 it was an obscure and remote corner of the Bengal Presidency and was without any real amenities or even rail connection. History often offers coincidences, ironic and otherwise. For example, eighteen hundred ninety seven, was the diamond jubilee year of Queen Victoria’s reign. In the same year Subhas Chandra Bose was born, writes Sisir K. Bose: “who was to challenge the might of the British Empire almost single-handed forty-five years later.”

The year 1897 also saw the return of Swami Vivekananda from his triumph at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago (1893) and the subsequent “grand-tour” he made to America and Europe. Who knew that this little boy born at that auspicious time would one day be so influenced by Vivekananda and his teachings that he would leave his house for the fulfilment of his spiritual urge. Though Subhas had the advantage of being born in an affluent family which would provide him with the necessary wherewithals for the proper development and
normal growth but it is wrong to say that any man in those particular circumstances would rise to that high pedestal. Rather, it is the innate qualities of a man together with several other factors which help him to reach the pinnacle of glory.

Subhas was the sixth son and ninth child in the family, five brothers and three sisters preceded him. In the large and growing family, Subhas was lost, as it were, in the peculiarity of his position. The elders claimed more attention of their parents by virtue of their age and the youngers by their helplessness. As observed by Subhas: “The presence of so many elder brothers and sisters seemed to relegate me to utter insignificance. That was perhaps, all to the good, for I started life with a sense of diffidence - with a feeling that I should live upto the level already attained by those, who had preceded me.” His mother Prabhavati and his father Janaki Nath had raised a fairly large family of fourteen children eight sons and six daughters. Besides the younger ones, his mother had to look after a large number of other relations and dependents in the house, together with a regular stream of guests. Owing to this, his mother could not give attention to Subhas for which he longed. His sensitive nature gave him an idea of insignificance which he nurtured in his heart in silence. He yearned for the lap of his mother for a much longer time which he had almost unwillingly to vacate. And later this attachment to his mother affected his attitude towards the fair sex. He thought of “giving every woman the place of mother and often giving them a place of equality.” In Subhas’s own words: “it was very easy to maintain physical purity
(alas, for the common man), but it required great sadhana to raise oneself to the state where one loses the sense of the difference between the sexes. The only way to attain such a stage was to look upon every woman, irrespective of her age, as the representation of the mother.\textsuperscript{88} It may be because of his intimacy with his mother which led him to treat every woman as 'mother' and he lost all sense of enchantment of female charms. Even during his stay abroad at Cambridge, he never talked about girls a favourite topic among youngmen - much less mixed with them. Gandhi also turned to life of sexual restraint in the later years though previously he was given to sexual life owing to his early marriage. But later he tried hard to conquer it whereas Subhas from the very beginning worship the fair sex as incarnation of mother. Gandhi, too, was fond of his mother and felt a vacuum in his life after her death.

Subhas's father, Janaki Nath Bose was a learned man. Janaki Nath devoted all his time and energies to his profession. He was elected as the first non-official Chairman of the Cuttack Municipality in 1901. He was appointed government Pleader and Public Prosecutor in 1905 and worked in this capacity till 1917. He was nominated to the Bengal Legislative Council in 1912 for his thorough knowledge of the Orissa tenancy Laws. In the same year, he was made Raja Bahadur in recognition of his services to the society.\textsuperscript{9} He was a man of iron determination and independence. When he developed difference with the District Magistrate, he severed his connection with the government in 1917 and ceased to represent it in...
both the Civil and Criminal Courts. Reserved but upright by disposition, Janaki Nath Bose was a strict disciplinarian. He was conferred the title of “Rai Bahadur”, which he renounced in 1930 in protest against the repression of the Indians by the British government and became simple Janaki Nath.

Apart from being a man of independence and determination, Janaki Nath was a charitable person and had a rare sympathy for the poor. As a self-made man he appreciated and helped the efforts of indigent village boys. During the puja, he would invariably visit his native village- Kodiala, stay there for three-four days and associate himself with all classes of people. His interest in his native village shows his attachment to his roots. The people of the village would relate their tales of misery; he would hear them attentively and meet their wants. Of all his sons, it was young Subhas who evinced keen interest in his father's charitable activities. He would usually sit by his father's side speechless and Janaki Nath would place in his hands the articles to be distributed amongst the poor. In other words, Subhas imbibed disposition for charity from his father as also a genuine love for the welfare of the villagers. This also helped him to know closely the kind of deprivation the poor suffered during the British Raj. Subhas felt that his father was strictly impartial as regards children whereas his mother was bias. He himself writes, “Though my mother was more humane and it was not impossible at times to detect her bias, she was also held in awe by most of her children. She ruled the roost and, where family affairs were
concerned, hers was usually the last word." So Subhas learnt discipline and adjustment in a large family under a mother with strong will and a keen sense of reality. Subhas was, however, more profoundly influenced by Prabhabati Devi- his mother, to whom he often unburdened his heart, which he never did to his father. Of deep religious disposition, she kindled in young Subhas an abiding respect for the wisdom of the ancient Indian seers, which enabled him to always think that he was an Indian first and last.

Later during his school days, Subhas with his group of classmates and friends used to visit nearby villages to render such social service as they could. In a way, it was certainly something unnatural for him to try to serve personally the poor and the diseased, born as he was in a family that was termed as 'aristocratic' in the loose sense of the word. Nevertheless, Subhas at the beginning would visit the houses of the poor without the knowledge of his parents and brothers but soon it became known to the family. Later during the Indian National Army days, too, the way he looked after the welfare of his soldiers is reminiscent of his childhood days. No body in the Legion was a stranger to him and no red-tapism obstructed direct approach to him. To sum up, Subhas inherited the two most outstanding qualities from his parents, viz., the love for the poor and the needy, and righteousness. Leonard records: “Both the orthodoxy of Prabhabati and the more eclectic Hindu beliefs of Janaki Nath had an impact on their sons.”
Bengal was partitioned in 1905. The real motive behind the partition of Bengal was to weaken the rising influence of Bengali nationalism and to create a communal wedge between the Hindus and Muslims. However, the Bengalis, in particular, those belonging to the West Bengal refused to accept the partition of Bengal as a settled fact. As is well known there was a long agitation against partition followed by swadeshi and boycott of foreign goods and even of British institutions like government schools, courts etc. A stormy agitation against the partition was set in motion in Bengal and this was accompanied by a powerful movement all over the country, in the course of which attempts were made to boycott British institution like government schools, courts etc. The government tried to suppress the movement with a heavy hand, which resulted in the emergence of terrorist and revolutionary activities in Bengal and other parts of the country. In all this, press too played significant role. The influence of press was so significant that the whole of Bengal was carried off its feet by the new enthusiasm created by Bengali press and literature. The agitation also brought into focus the great value of passive resistance as a more effective weapon than petition making, hitherto the only method of political agitation applied by the Moderate leaders of the Indian National Congress which had its birth in 1885. M. K. Gandhi, then comparatively unknown wrote in 1908 that: “the real awakening (of India) took place after the partition of Bengal.” He was also shrewed enough to prophecy that “the day the partition of Bengal took place may be considered to be the day of the partition of British
Empire.” He further added: “The spirit generated in Bengal has spread in the north to Punjab and in the South to Cape Comorin.”

In a nutshell, it may be stated that this was the atmosphere of Bengal when Subhas was a young lad of eight years. Bengal of partition days dreamt of revolt, her poets sang songs of freedom. Bande Mataram had became a cry and a rallying point of all. Neither the outrage of Barisal nor the government order forbidding the singing of Bande Mataram could check the rise of militant nationalism and the spread of revolutionary activities. It is difficult to say what impact the partition, the Swadeshi and the boycott agitation followed by widespread terrorist and revolutionary activities left on impressionable minds. Yet psychologists and some scholars tend to believe that such an atmosphere usually leaves an undeliable mark on young minds, and they receive all in an immature manner instead of sieving the right from the wrong. Thus, even when there is no direct corroboratory evidence it cannot be denied that the Bengal of the partition days must have left a mark on the mind of Subhas as well. In this context Huge Toye says: “These were the songs of Bose’s boyhood. He must have heard them, for half the revolutionaries belonged to the rich and educated kayastha caste from which he was sprung.”

In the later speeches and statements of Subhas Chandra Bose, it may be pointed out that when the agitation for the boycott of Simon Commission was afoot, Subhas not only talked of political boycott but also of economic blockade, which in a way can be considered reminiscent of the period of 1905-08. While speaking at
Boycott Meeting on 24 February 1928 he pointed out that: “There are only two ways open to us to enforce our claim and fulfil it. The one is armed revolt and other economic blockade. The former is impossible for us, as we are a disarmed nation. So the second and the stronger of the two is left to us ....Now, the greater portion of the five crores of people in England, has to depend upon trade and commerce with India for its livelihood. And if we can use this formidable weapon of boycott against them, there will be civil Revolution in England and the authorities will be compelled to ask for truce. According to modern science of warfare, this tactics has been declared to be the best and the most effective.”

Leonard reports: “In agreement with the great majority of the western educated middle class Bengalis of the late 19th century, Janaki Nath believed that British rule was benevolent. He felt a sense of gratitude to the British for their gifts to India: law and order; reforms such as the creation of legislative councils with Indian members; and, of course, their language, literature and science.”

Whereas his revolutionary thinking and ideas appears to have been influenced by the socio-political milieu of the Bengal of partition days, it was the atmosphere and the racial discrimination practised in the missionary schools generated the feeling of being from the subject race.

Subhas, before he was five was sent to the Baptist Missionary School which his brothers attended. Though Subhas had
cordial relations with his brothers, sisters, uncles and cousins but still his sensitive nature gave him an idea of insignificance which he nurtured in his heart in silence. At school, like home he grew up amongst those who had been doing well with their studies. So the parents and teachers had high expectations from Subhas. He not only came up to their expectations but did much better than what his brothers had done before him. This school populated by European childrens and some Indians was an English-medium school in which Indian languages were not taught to the children in this school, the family of Janaki Nath Bose could not be of the highest status because such ranks were reserved for Europeans.

He remained at this school for seven years. However, the point at issue is- what influence these seven years left on his mind. Firstly, he realised that the Indian students could perform better than many of the Anglo-Indian children. Secondly, he noted that the authorities were indulging in racial discrimination and arrogance. Because of it he felt constantly insulted. He himself writes: “I have a vague feeling of unhappiness, of maladaptation to my environment and a strong desire to join an Indian school where, so I thought, I would feel more at home. In An Indian Pilgrim he brings out the atmosphere of Baptist Missionary School:”Because we were Indians, we could not sit for Scholarship examinations though in our annual exams many of us were topping the class. Anglo-Indian boys could join the volunteer corps and shoulder a rifle, but we could not. Small incidents like these began to open our eyes to the fact that as Indian we were a class apart,
though we belonged to the same institution."

In this context Hiren Mukerjee says: “The iron must have begun to enter his soul when he discovered in that Christian institution, that Anglo-Indian student, but not Indians, could join the volunteer corps and that the former alone could sit for certain scholarship examinations where Indians, inspite of being often more talented, were just debarred.”

Infact it is a common human trait that when a person is deprived of anything or is forcibly stopped from undertaking an activity, he becomes inclined to undertake such an activity when an opportunity opens up. Similar was the case with Subhas. He was not allowed to join the volunteer corps in the school so it became an obsession with him. Later he raised an army of liberation outside India. It is further revealed from the Selected works of Subhash Chander Bose that the racial arrogance of his school mates, and even of some teachers created a feeling of hatred towards them and their country of origin. He became more and more aware of his nationality and nationalism. Later He did not like being enlisted only with Bengal. In Young India he categorically disowned any parochial imputations. He said: “Why do you call me a Bengal Leader? I am not provincial.”

He was an Indian patriot first and Indian patriot last. It was in this context he resented being called as a leader from Bengal.

When Subhas had to leave this missionary school, he did it without regret. In fact, he was rather glad to leave an institution where he felt maladjusted, and where his feeling of insignificance grew more acute. The system of education persued in such institutions also
created a kind of cultural blockade. He later wrote: “The highest duty of the student is to be a real man. To have more education is very essential and in that context studies can be accepted as a kind of ‘Tapasaya’. But without attainment of health, character-building, social service and nationa work during student life, you can not have a complete and clean human being.”

Subhas next joined the Ravenshaw Collegiate School in Bhubneshwar in 1909, in Orissa. His better command of English put him high in the estimation of his class-mates but his knowledge of his mother-tongue was poor for which he felt humiliated. In a way, it was not the fault of Subhas rather the English medium schools usually neglected the vernaculars and hence the students knew the foreign language properly but lacked in their mother-tongue. The curriculum was such that Indians knew more about British History and less about their cultural heritage. But luckily in Subhas’s case this deficiency could be made good because of his intimate contact with the headmaster of the school Beni Madhav Das. He had the highest regard for his teacher and was really moved to see him. Beni Madhav Das initiated him into love for nature and it was in him Subhas found a great spiritual companion. Girija K. Mookerjee writes: “In spite, however, of his father’s constant hammering into his mind that English education was the only real education, the influence of his mother and later that of his teacher at Ravenshaw College, Mr. Beni Madhav Das made him aware more and more of the heritage which was his own, namely the great cultural heritage of India.” All this not
only added to the existing stock of his moral qualities but also created in young Subhas two different kinds of pulls right from his early childhood. “Young Subhas, therefore, from his early childhood felt within himself two different kinds of pulls- One Indian and the other western, one derived from his remarkable mother and the other from the school he frequented and the teachers and students he came to know in this environment.” Subhas cherished the highest regards for his teacher and he was visibly moved whenever through chance the ‘guru’ and the disciple had occasions to meet. He could open his heart to his teacher and listened with great interest to what Beni Madhav Das wanted to tell him.

How these pulls shaped his thinking and ideas later is difficult to say precisely. May be the Western thought and his concern for the poor brought him close to socialist and revolutionary ideals, whereas Indian culture and his spiritual bent of mind made him an advocate of self-suffering and sacrifice. From his speeches and writings, it is revealed that after passing through two different kinds of pulls, he seems to have succeeded in making almost within himself, a kind of synthesis of the two different cultures and after resolving within himself the problem of cultural conflicts, he had reached the conclusion that he could never allow himself to be uprooted from the tradition of his forefathers. He became an advocate of self-suffering and sacrifice declaring: “It is evident that nobody can lose through suffering and sacrifice. If he does lose anything of the earth earthy, he will gain much more in return, by becoming the heir to a life
immortal. This is the technique of soul. The individual must die so that India may live and win freedom and glory.” Later writing: “In fact, no real undertaking whether religious or political, is possible in this world without party organization and party discipline.”

In inculcating in himself such ideas and ideals he seemed to have been greatly influenced by Swami Vivekananda and Ramakrishna Parmahansa in particular the former. In his school days itself he read whatever was available on these two great sons of India. Vivekananda taught him salvation through service, service to humanity and particularly to mother India. In his contact with Vivekananda he fully realized that social service is an essential part of social development. Gradually his philosophic studies and spiritual urge intensified his inner struggle and Subhas began to take less and less interest in his studies. At one stage Subhas even ran away with a friend from his house in search of a spiritual guru. But the spiritual vacuum persisted. Curiously, he even did not evince much interest in politics as well. It was partly to the fact that Orissa was a political backwater and partly to lack of example in family and partly also to his spiritual vacuum. In a letter to his mother: “I am most anxious to know what you would like your son to be. Merciful God has given us this life, a sound body, intelligence and strength, which are all so precious, but why? He has given us so much, of course, for His worship and His work, but Mother do we do His work?”
Subhas's hunger for recognition was fulfilled to some extent because, on the one hand, the social standing of his father counted, and on the other hand, there were Indian boys among whom his better command of English put him in good position. This school did not lay much stress on sports and to this Subhas suited well because he was an intellectual sort of boy. But this lack of sports he regretted later and tried to make good by recourse to physical training necessary for a disarmed nation like ours. From his early years Subhas displayed a nurturing side to his personality. He took a great interest in raising plants and working in the garden when other boys were at play. As he entered his teens, he began to find situations in which he had to nurse others, often poor people who were generally neglected in their distress. Leonard writes: "He wanted to be his mother's son and fill any special role or calling she set for him, and he also developed a mothering, nurturing part of himself." Subhas nurtured his dreams of freedom like a gardener takes care of his sapling. He watered the plant with the blood so that it can become a huge tree whom no worse weathers could oust.

Nothing swerved him from his deep faith which he acquired at an early age, as a result of conflict which was generated in his mind when two different strands of acculturation seem to fight within him for supremacy from his student days. Being particularly sensitive, he had more than his share of agonies and perplexities of adolescence, seeking, like many other Indian lad, sublimation of his instincts,
visualising for himself a life of celibacy and of service to humanity. He wanted freedom through self-sacrifice and suffering.

All this shows that the inner conflict was not completely resolved rather it continued to add to Subhas's eccentricity and waywardness. In 1913 his parents sent him to Calcutta. After his matriculation, he joined the Presidency College Calcutta. Subhas came to have a nostalgic attachment to Calcutta city he always cherished. As a student, he liked to roam about its broad boulevards, its gardens and visit its many museums over and over again. Even later in life, Calcutta was the scene of many of his activities.

Immediately on his arrival in Calcutta, three months before the reopening of Colleges, Subhas joined a group of youngsters who utilized their holidays for visiting religious places like Hardwar to satisfy their spiritual year wings, or places of historical interest like Murshedabad, the capital of pre-British Bengal to gain insights into history or educational institutions like Shantiniketan. The group did not favour terrorist activities and was committed to social service, which did not find favour with other students attracted to revolutionary activities.

When Subhas was sent to Calcutta, his parents had hoped that in the new city with new responsibilities, his life would take a different turn. But that was not to be. Subhas was a little more than 16 years old when he went to Calcutta to join the Presidency College, an elitist institution which admitted only students of merit, not even
those highly connected or highly placed families. Though a Government institution, the College had students who were engaged in revolutionary activities. Participating in its activities, Subhas realized that social service not only meant bringing succour to the poor and the handicapped but also implied national reconstruction. On entering the College, Subhas actively participated in its curricular and extra curricular activities. He regretted his lagging behind in sports and games but enjoyed extra-curricular activities like debating competitions, collection of funds for victims of floods and famines, the making of representations to the college authorities on behalf of fellow students and the organising of outings. Its main hostel was considered a rendezvous of revolutionaries and was frequently subjected to police searches. Subhas when will study at England, would compare the difference in his own mind. Because here every student was suspected as having relations with revolutionaries and they could not breathe fresh air. Subhas felt suffocated and in order to give vent to his feeling he started a debating club. Probably he also knew that this club could help in nation building as “the country will need great debaters, parliamentarians- when we are free.” See his farsightedness. He wanted to promote quick thinking and self-reliance, for “we Indians are too dependents on others- for action, views, initiative everything.” He had already become a leader, in the loose sense of the term, among the students, playing a full part in college life.
Another thing which irritated Subhas in the Presidency College was that here too the atmosphere was not free from racial arrogance. As already noted Subhas was very sensitive to the issue of racial discrimination and arrogance and was not prepared to tolerate any kind of superiority humbug. This brought him into clash with E.F. Oaten a professor of history who always talked about the superiority of his race and exhibited contempt for Indians. He treated the Indian students in a very insolent manner. All this has made him students’ staunch enemy. As a result of his arrogance and behaviour he was slapped and beaten up on the college premises. Even though Subhas did not participate in the beating but being a leader he too was found guilty. Consequently, he was expelled from the University for a period of two years in 1916 when he was in the third year of his degree. This incident is popularly known as Oaten affair. What impact did it leave on Subhas’s personality can be visualised from his speech and commentary on the incident in his book. The speech was delivered on 1 December 1929 presiding over a student’s conference Subhas stated: “I have my doubts as to whether I am really competent to preside over a conference of Students- for judged from the point of view a “good conduct”, my University career is not without a stain. I still remember very clearly the day when my Principal summoned me to his presence and announced his order of suspension and his words still ring in my ears- “You are the most troublesome man in the college.” That was indeed a turning point in my life’s career. It was the first occasion in my life when “I had a taste of the joy derived
from suffering for a cause— a joy, in comparison which write, the other joys of life pale and fade into insignificance. It was also the first occasion in my life when my theoretical morality and theoretical patriotism were put to a test and a very severe test and when I came out of the ordeal unscathed, my future career had been chalked out once for all.  

Who knew this tiny leader of the Presidency College, Calcutta who was expelled on the charge of leading the students to maintain their self respect and dignity, would one day emerge as a great leader of his countrymen and would be thrown behind the bars and in dungeon cells of Andaman on the charge of leading his countrymen towards self-determination and independence. What a irony even professor E.F. Oaten becomes his fan and composes the following poem highlighting his qualities as a fiery leader and patriot:

“Did I once suffer, Subhas at your hand?  
Your patriot heart is stilled! I would forget!  
Let me recall but this, that while as yet,  
The Raj that you once challenged in your land  
Was mighty, Icarus-like your courage planned  
To meet the skies, and storm in battle set,  
The ramparts of high heaven to claim the debt of freedom owed, on plain and rude demand.  
High Heaven yielded, but in dignity,  
Like Icarus you sped towards the see,  
Your wings were melted from you by the sun,  
The genial patriot fire that brightly glowed  
In India’s mighty heart and flamed and flowed  
Forth from her Army’s thousand victories won!”

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He commented on the incident twice. Once while presiding over a students’ conference on 1 December 1929, and second commentary on the incident becomes available to us from his book - *An Indian Pilgrim*. Here he says: “My Principal had expelled me but he had made my future career. I had established a precedent for myself from which I could not easily depart in future. I had stood up with courage and composure in a crisis and fulfilled my duty. I had developed self-confidence as well as initiative, which was to stand me in a good stead in future. I had a foretaste of leadership- though in a very restricted sphere- and of the martyrdom that it involves. In short, I had acquired character and could face the future with equanimity.”

Soon after resuming studies, in July 1917 at Scottish Church College in the third year class again, Subhas joined the University Training Corps. It was rather unusual for one from Janaki Nath’s family to join an organisation in which arduous life was the most important factor, specially so when it was known that none among Subhas’s brothers had taken part in hardy games. But Subhas was different, in the innermost corner of his mind a hankering for a complete military training had been lurking in silence. The psychology which had prompted some young students of the Presidency College, Calcutta to assault a teacher of their own, also prompted Subhas to join the University Training Corps. The following passage unfolds a part of the inner working of Subhas’s mind: “Macaulay wrote a scathing denunciation of the Bengalis and
called them a race of cowards .... Government took the step of excluding the Bengalis from the Army on the ground that they were not sufficiently warlike or brave." Even later in England, Indian students were not allowed to enlist in the Officer’s Training Corps despite protests to the highest authorities. It was in order to meet insults from the Britishers by ‘physical force’ as also to remove the stigma heaped on the Bengali character by Macaulay and to foil the policy of the Government of excluding the Bengalis from the Army that Subhas tried to acquire military training. He felt that he must remove the disparity and if possible must prove superior to the average Britisher. He completed his training in 1918. Their Commanding Officer was satisfied with their turn-out. “He felt proud when the Military Secretary to the Governor, on the day we furnished the god of honour to His Excellency at the Calcutta University Convocation, complemented us on our parade. His satisfaction was even greater when we did well at the proclamation parade on New Year’s Day.” Subhas later wrote himself: “This training gave me something which I needed, or which I lacked. The feeling of strength and of self confidence grew still further.” During the course of his training he had not only learnt the martial arts well but also developed a rare organising skill which he used while leading the Indian National Army in difficult circumstances. After his career in the University Training Corps, the future shadow of the “Netaji” was visible.

As soon as Subhas completed his graduation, his father became worried about him. In fact from the early childhood when Subhas was
admitted in the Baptist Missionary School, his father had a desire to make him a high official of the British Government. His father, watching the explosive political scene in the India of 1919, wished to bundle him off to England before the ardent young man, still apparently unsure of what exactly he wanted to make of his life, was swept into the storm that was brewing in India. The first world war and the consequent upsurge of nationalism in considerable measure. For this purpose, his going to England and appearing in the Indian Civil Services Examination was considered sine-qua-non. From his autobiography, it, however, is revealed that he did not want to join Indian Civil Service- which in nationalist circles, even of moderate variety, was described as 'neither Indian, nor civil, nor a service. He wanted to be a teacher and had a desire to visit foreign countries to qualify himself fully for the teaching profession. But his parents would not allow him to be a teacher and insisted that he should prepare for Indian Civil Service. Accepting his father's proposal, he sailed for England on 15 September, 1919. It is a coincidence, or may be taken as an irony of fate that both Subhas and Gandhi had to go against their inclination in choosing a career. Gandhi wanted to study medicine but opted for law, Subhas wanted to become a teacher but opted for qualifying for ICS.

Subhas reaching London was obsessed with the idea of coming from a nation that had a glorious past and destined to play a still more glorious part in future. Those who saw him in England would testify that he very soon was able to imprint his personality on all around
him, and was soon recognised as a leader not only among the Bengalee boys living in England but also of the English boys, who began to treat him with respect. Girija K. Mookerjee writes: “At any rate, the great world outside India as well as the free world of England made the deepest impression on Subhas, and it was good that he was able to see how people lived in free countries and how they differed from the people of India, under many centuries of subjection.” On the one hand he saw people enjoying civil liberties, breathing free air, young men sketching their future liberally, children getting free military and academic training, while on the other hand in the colonies there were poverty-stricken children struggling for their existence from the very childhood; civil liberties, civilisation, culture and education entirely at the mercy of the foreign race; young men flocking to Government offices for jobs. He was awakened to imagine the terrible state of his country. Therefore, during his stay at London, has wanted carefully the working of British imperialism and their methods of exploitation. His habits there were frugal and industrious, contrary to the ways of some of the wealthy Indians who go for studies to Europe. On the other hand, he always warned his friends against “the two formidable temptations of this so-called European Civilization - Wive and women”. He himself was very shy and stiff with women although they “ached to come near him not only because he was virile and handsome to a degree but also because he was as good as unapproachable.” Dilip Kumar Roy felt that: “Subhas liked such longing on their part though never for the cheap thrill of tantalising
them rather what titillated him most was not their vital desire but its transformation into admiration plus despair which one so often feels for something unattainable or beyond one’s reach.”\textsuperscript{38}

Subhas like Gandhi had the experience of friendly relations with Britishers in his student days abroad. Gandhi retained a faith in the final solution offered by a hierarchical social structure, based on a sense of sacrifice. Subhas too believed in sacrifice but sacrifice of life to achieve higher aims. Surjit Man Singh writes: “The East-West synthesis Bose visualised was of the heroic, activist, disciplined and war prone element in the two civilizations. This was in contrast to the Gandhian synthesis of the non-violent, contemplative, individual-based elements found in Eastern and Western religions.”\textsuperscript{39} Like in his childhood Subhas had two pulls, similarly in his adulthood he is faced by two different cultures. His patriotism grew deeper and deeper. He made up his mind about his future career. He underwent a gradual transformation and from a spiritual idealist he became a social and political realist. He did not appreciate the mingling of political and ethical issues, and it was one of the reasons why he criticised the political philosophy of Gandhism where politics was never discussed on its own plan.

After barely eight months in Cambridge where he was studying for the Mental and Moral Science Tripos, Subhas passed brilliantly the civil service open competitive examination, getting the fourth place among the successful candidates. He then faced the dilemma which
was made acute by parental pressure and by the persuasion of his brother- Sarat Chandra Bose who was nearest to him in spirit, that he could conceivably do good work for the country as a civil servant. But Subhas remained adamant and could not be convinced; he could not shut his eyes and ears to the deplorable condition of Indians. He resigned from the much coveted service. Nearly as much as Bose’s family, The British bureaucracy was upset. Nobody had dared to resign before. He was sought to be cajoled and threatened but he refused to yield to pressure. This was the beginning of the making of ‘Netaji’- a title which was later held by him.

From the aforesaid discussion on the formative years of Subhas Chandra Bose, it may safely be concluded that because of the lack of attention and emotional deprivation Subhas turned out to be essentially a loner from his childhood. It appears that he was a very precocious child who right from his school days was faced with a number of dilemmas and divergent pulls, yet he was able to carve out his own path or line of action which usually went at a tangent vis-a-vis the family traditions and way of thinking. This, however, does not mean that he did not imbibe any thing from his family. In fact, it was from his father that he got the initial lessons in social service or the service of the poor. Though it might appear a bit eccentric, his love for the mother developed in him a special kind of attitude and regard for the women-as a class. What impact his mother’s religious bent of mind left on subhas is difficult to say. Yet it can be said with certitude that as a result of his study of Vivekananda
and RamaKrishana Paramhansa and his interaction and close contact with his teacher Beni Madhav Das, he turned towards spiritualism. His spiritual phase was linked with his inner conflict and struggle and lasted for a limited period. What became predominant with Subhas were the lessons he learnt during the course of partition of Bengal, swadeshi and boycott agitation, the treatment meted out to Indian students in the educational institutions, the racial discrimination and arrogance of the foreigners and the humiliation and deprivation the Indians had to face under the British rule. All this generated in him love for self-suffering and sacrifice, an irresistible urge to do something unique so as to prove both the Bengali and Indian mettle and competence. And during his formative years itself he did show signs of great promise as a leader, as a disciplined cadet, as a fearless student, as an organizer and also excelled in brilliant performance in the Indian Civil Service. He did learn from the West but such a learning never allowed him to belittle Indian culture, heritage and love for the motherland. It were these values which stood him in good stead during his political career as would be discussed in the subsequent chapters.
References


4. In the eighties of the last century two prominent religious personalities appeared on the Indian scene who were destined to have a great influence on the future course of the new awakening among the new generations of youths. They were Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the saint and his disciple Swami Vivekananda. Ramakrishna preached the gospel of the unity of all religions and urged the cessation of inter-religious strife. He emphasised the necessity of renunciation, celibacy and asceticism in order to live a truly spiritual life. Swami Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna Mission, an order of monks, to live and preach the Hindu religions in its purest form in India and abroad, especially in America and he took an active part in inspiring every form of healthy national activity. Subhas Chandra Bose writing in his autobiography stated that
"Though the Swami never gave any political message, everyone who came into contact with him or his writings developed a spirit of patriotism and a political mentality." See Subhas Chandra Bose, *The Indian Struggle 1920-42*, (Calcutta, Asia Publishing House, 1967), p. 21.


10. *An Indian Pilgrim*, p. 2.

12. In the history of the struggle for Indian Independence, Bengal occupies a unique position in the province of India. It not only played a very prominent role in strengthening the foundations of the Indian national Congress, but also has always made a valuable contribution towards the fight for the emancipation of the country. The people of this province can rightly be called the inspirers of the national movement in India. In 1757 Bengal was the first province which passed into the hands of the British and it is the same province which gave the Indian National Congress such great leaders as W.C. Bonnerjee, Surendranath Banerji, Bipin Chandra Paul, Arbindo Ghosh, Deshbandhu C.R. Das, J.M. Sen Gupta and lastly Subhas Chandra Bose. Bengalis were sensitive patriots who in the first decade of the twentieth century with the slightest of provocation would resort to bombs and revolvers. Subhas Chandra Bose writes: “A stormy agitation against the partition was set in motion in Bengal and this was accompanied by a powerful movement all over the country, in the course of which attempts were made to boycott British goods as a retaliatory measure against the government.” Subhas Chandra Bose, op.cit., p. 14.


17. Subhas Chandra Bose, *An Indian Pilgrim*, p. 24


24. Jagat S. Bright (ed.) *Important Speeches and Writings of Subhas Chandra Bose*, (Being a Collection of most Significant Speeches
and Writing of Subhas Chandra Bose), (Lahore, The Indian Printing Works, 1946), on the front page.


34. Madan Gopal, *The Life and Times of Subhas Chandra Bose as told in his own words.*, (Delhi, Vikas Publishing House,1978.), p.70


