CHAPTER I
CHAPTER I

LIFE HISTORY OF ACHARYA JANAKI VALLABH SHASTRI

1.1 FAMILY BACKGROUND

The ancestors of Janaki Vallabh Shastri were basically the inhabitants of Amrutgram of Hazarbag district in Bihar. When some kayash of Amarut Village came to settle in Maigra, they came with some priests for religious purpose. On the request of these kayahs one of the great-grand fore fathers of Janaki Vallabh Shastri, Sri Sidheswar Pathak came along and settled in Maigra in the eleventh generation of Sri Sidheswar Pathak’s family, Janaki vallabh Shastri was born.

Sri Sudarshan Pathak and Sri Bhagwan Pathak. Sri Shubhankar Pathak had three sons - Sri Guruharan Pathak, Sri Chulhan Pathak and Sri Harivansh Pathak. Sri Harivansh Pathak had two sons - Sri Vigan Pathak and Ramanugraha Sharma. Sri Janaki Vallabh Shastri was born to Sri Ramanugraha Sharma. Janaki Vallabh Shastri has only one daughter named Shaila. Sri Shastri is a shak-dweepi Brahmin by caste. Their original title is Pathak but his father, Sri Ramanugraha Sharma accepted the title of ‘Sharma’ in place of Pathak. The title ‘Sharma’ is an acceptable title in Brahmin caste.

1.2. FAMILY TREE

Drawing of the family tree (Page-11) is without any controversy and it is very much unanimous as it is agreed upon by all the biographers, critics and Shastri himself. Dr A. N. Sharma holds exactly the identical view when he makes a biographical study of Sri Janaki Vallabh Shastri. In his autobiographical work Raka (Part I and II), Sri Shastri endorses the drawing of the ancestral family tree in the above manner too. Dr A. N. Sharma goes further to bring details in the happenings of the past to substantiate this. He cites an incident in his book “Janaki Vallabh Shastri Ka Vyaktitva Aur Krititva” that Sri Rameswar Pathak (third generation from Sri Sidheshwar Pathak) was a learned man and a famous tantrik of his time. His fame had reached the border of Bengal and further, he had defeated Sri Rameshwar Bhatt of Bengal in Scriptural debate. Shri Bhatt was very much influenced by Sri Rameshwar Pathak’s greatness and even settled in Maigra. Still today successors of Sri Bhatt are in Maigra.
Family Tree of Acharya Janaki Vallabh Shastri
1.3 BIRTH AND FAMILY

Janaki Vallabh Shastri was born on 5th January 1916 at Maigra in the Gaya district of Bihar. According to Indian calendar the date was Magh Shukla Dutiya, Wednesday, Vikram Samvat 1973. His parents were Sri Ramanugraha Sharma and Smt Anupama Devi. Sri Janaki Vallabh Shastri has an elder sister named, Smt Manbrata Devi. She is a child-widow and living in Maigra still. Two of Shastri’s sisters and a brother died in their childhood. Shastri was the fifth child of his parents. To avert this premature death in the family, his parents even made a cut in the ear of Janaki Ballav as a blind belief. This proved dangerous because Janaki Vallabh became unconscious for that uncalled for operation though he got back his sense later to make all happy. Though Janaki Vallabh survived the process of child-death in the family, yet his youngest sister had to meet a premature death. She was the most affectionate child of the parents. She was married to a Jamindar family of Eary estate but after a few years she died in young age. Shastri’s mother Anupama Devi had died only six months after Sumitra’s birth. Out of affection Ramanugraha Sharma had nick named Sumitra as Suman. Her death was a traumatic shock to the father which made him weak both mentally and physically. Sumitra has a daughter named Indira who is settled today with comfort. This premature death in family, specially his younger sister’s, has affected Shastri’s mental make up. Love for his sister finds revelation in his poem ‘Sumitra Keesh Smriti’. The poignant and melancholic feeling there touches and stirs every reader. The personal but heightened emotion finds an artistic outlet in this work of Shastri.
Smt. Chhaya Devi, the second wife of
Sri Janaki Vallabh Shastri
1.4. PARENTS, WIFE AND CHILDREN

His father, Sri Ramanugraha Sharma was an established astrologer and a grammarian. He had a towering personality. Physically he was of average height and moderate complexion. He served as a teacher in Sharda Sanskrit Pathshala at Maigra. The paltry salary from that profession was not sufficient to meet the family demand. So he had to work as a Chaplain in different houses for some money. After death of his wife, Ramanugraha Sharma had to act both as father and mother for the two infant children Janaki Vallabh and Sumitra. Showing his gratitude Janaki Vallabh writes—

"वह मेरे पिता ही नहीं, माता और पिता, बच्चे और गुरु सब कुछ है। केवल 'माता' के स्थान पर मे 'गुरु' पद का प्रयोग करता हूँ-जैसे 'दुर्गा' भजता हूँ।" ¹

So the task of raising of these two children was completely done by Sri Ramanugraha Sharma after his wife’s death. To do that manfully panditji had to face many hardships including the monetary one. Shastri himself acknowledges this trying job

"मेरे पैदा होने के पहले एक दुख मुझे लगके और दो मातृभूमि लड़कियों को बह छाती मामले गाढ़ घुके थे।" ²

At times, young Janaki Vallabh had to face angry out-bursts of his father out of too much burden and irritation though these did not mean any ill-feeling. Because Sharmajee wanted that Janaki Vallabh should devote all time for the cause of study than wasting any time in youthful playfulness. So, whenever he saw Janaki Vallabh playing or merry-making he used to be angry. Janaki Vallabh had to part with a tooth for his father’s anger. Though Janaki Vallabh was occasionally caned for his mistakes, yet his
father was a very much particular in reminding his son about his duty. His father was very much concerned about Janaki Vallabh’s education because he wanted Janaki to complete his schooling quickly and became a Pandit. Sri Ramanugraha Sharma was a traditionalist and any sort of modernism or liberalism was not acceptable to him. His heart was pinched by two factors - modernity and monetary hardship. This financial constraints deprived Janaki Vallabh of even a good shirt or a pair of shoe. Janaki Vallabh had to go to the stage with a chadar on the occasion of inaugural ceremony of National Function because he had torn his only shirt in an accident on the way to that function. When Sharmajee found his son in that condition on the stage he was shocked and angry. But the bewitching and melodious voice of Shastri caught the audience spell-bound. Shastri writes about his poverty stricken childhood:

"वैसे तो बचपन के बहुते दिन खानी पैर ही पार हुए और पैरों की लम्बाई, चेहरे लम्बाई, आदि की वाचिक आलोचना ही सुननी पड़ी, किन्तु बर्ष में एकान्त बार ग्राम: चार छः से आठ दस आने तक के चमर-धेर जुले जहर खींट दिए जाते थे।"

After his retirement, Ramanugraha Sharma spent the remaining days of his life with Shastriat Muzaffarpur. Panditjee was a man of patience, knowledge and determination. He had much love for his children as a result he did not remarry after his wife’s death. He was the source of inspiration for Janaki Vallabh, though he was given to anger yet love for his children did not lesson. He died in 1965 at poet’s residence ‘Nirala Niketan’ Muzaffarpur. To concretise his gratitude and memory, the poet has erected a statue of his father exactly in front of his residential gate.
Shastri’s mother was a religious minded lady who was always busy with deeds of worship and prayer. Her aim was to help others and see others always better-placed. She was a soft-spoken lady. The poet portrays his mother

“मेरी माँ का नाम अनुपमा था। गैंगुर्यों रंग मधुला कट, चीड़ा मुंह, मुंह पर शीतला के दो
चार चिन्द, शरीर पर अति साधारण नस्त्र ओर अल्प-भूल के दो-एक आघूरण, प्रसन्न प्रकृति,
निश्चल बोल, यही मेरी माँ थी।”

Before his birth, his mother had promised many offerings to God for a son. Offering to Sun-God was an every day affair. Apart from this, she had promised offering to God Baidyanath and other religious places. After this Janaki Vallabh was born to her. Shastri testifies in his works that his mother’s promises could not be performed by her as she died a premature death.

The death of Anupama made young Janaki Vallabh lead the life of a mother-less child. This lady patience-personified, was never in argument with her angry husband. Before her death when she was only bed-ridden then her husband could come to know about her illness. Though all the efforts were made for her recovery yet she could not be saved from death. At the time of her death Janaki Vallabh was a child of 4 years and Sumitra was in cradle still (six month old). After his mother’s death Janaki Vallabh cried innocently closing the doors. This early loss of mother haunted young Janaki Vallabh for longer and he was lost in thought when his playmates rejoiced in any celebration. Janaki Vallabh wished for good food, mother’s affection but it could not be fulfilled. This loss has positively and permanently affected the nature psyche of Janaki Vallabh Shastri, the literateur. Many writers, of course, have the bitter experience of losing their mother in
their childhood but the condition of Shastri was different because when most of the fathers of these writers were financially affluent, the case of Shastri's father was definitely different. The widow of Sri Chattar Pathak tried to give young Janaki Vallabh the motherly affection as she did not have a child of her own. As Sri Shastri recollects he did not remember what good in her moulded his character but he picked up a bad habit of telling lies. Shastri himself tells

"मैंने उससे दो दोष ही सीखे थे, गुणों के समक्ष में कुछ भी बाद नहीं। प्रथम दोष था—झूठ बोलना।" 5

Regarding his childhood Shastriji remembers.

"मेरा बचपन फूलों से नहीं हुला उलटे कॉर्टों में घिसटा।" 6

Shastri married Smt. Chandra Kala Devi of village Pahara, Aurangabad in 1928 when he was only twelve years old. Chandra Kala Devi was older than Shastriji by three or four years. The writer termed it as a child-marriage. After five years he had to remarry her in accordance with the custom. She gave company to Shastriji in his days of struggle but could not see the days of his glory and fame. She died of pox in 1947 at Maigra. Chandra Kala was a simple, straightforward village girl. She was far away from the skin-deep fashions of time. As she was busy with the domestic works and had to do the manual work, she looked older than her age. She never complained for the hard work nor did something against civility and dignity. Chandra Kala gave birth to two children, a daughter Shail and a son who died after his birth.
Shastrijee married for the second time to Chhaya Devi on 14th June 1948. He termed it as ‘oldman’s marriage. But this marriage was a success. Smt Chhaya Devi is a good house-wife and sincere to her husband. She has managed time to give inspiration to the writer for his creative works after managing the household affair with managerial skill. She has brought a sense of security to Sri Shastri. The generous, tolerant and humble Chhaya Devi like her husband poured love on pet animals—cows, dogs and cats. In this way Chhaya Devi lives in Nirala Niketan spreading her lovely shadow on everything. Chhaya Devi is an educated and cultured lady. She has depth in Sanskrit literature. On her marriage, Mahapran Nirala came to Muzaffarpur to bless her. But Shastrijee did not have any child from the second marriage. It was also not a happy occasion for him.

Regarding the loss in death and the ensuing grief and agony, Shastrijee himself writes.

"खाने के सिवा मैंने सीखा ही क्या? जनम के पहले तीन भाई बहनों को खा चुका था,
जन्मते ही माँ को खा दाला, फिर एक-एक कर ताई को, चचे बाई को, जीजा को, भानजी
को, शैल की माँ को, खाते-खाते पीड़ियों से भरे-पूरे घर का सफ़ाया कर दिया। अब तो मैं
ही मैं हूँ- अपने कुल-खानदान का आखिरी आदमी।" ।

These words speak about the pain, agony, grief, and psychological makeup of the man who has seen death and only death very closely. Though he has a daughter alive who is married to Prabhat Ch. Mishra of Dighawada who works in the Secretariat of Bihar Govt. and has two daughters Dipti and Rashmi, yet he is not a happy man. His present way of unconventional living testifies that, now he nearly creates a death atmosphere in
'Nirala Niketan' - where Sri Janaki Vallabh Shastri lives with his family.
his house to relieve and recapture the lost past. It is not without reason that death is a recurring theme in his works.

1.5. PLACE OF LIVING

The detailed discussion of this biographical study and the social and natural setting is to uncover how these all affect Janaki Vallabh Shastri, the creator. As we have seen in the above discussion death in the family became a permanent theme in his works. So it is the case about his relationship with the outside world and the natural placing and setting of his village and other place he lived in.

Maigra is situated 45 miles south of Gaya. It is encircled by small hills. To the south of the village two seasonal rivers - Surhar and Bikuyi - flow. The meeting point of these two rivers is known as Kalidaha. Here is the place where Shastrijee came for boating and swimming. It is a developed village with minimum modern amenities. This cosmopolitan village housing people of all castes and sections. Though India is not yet free from consideration of caste and community yet the peaceful coexistence of different people speaks of the broadness of the village. The Virgin nature around the village and the big hearted acceptance of all living inside it bear an important impression on the young writer. He himself tells about the same.

"वें बंगल में जन्म लेने के कारण रंगांग फूलों और कंटैली झाड़ियों में नृत्य हुआ - मा पहाड़ देखा था। एक चट्टान से दूसरी पर 'सुन्दरकोंडी' छलों लगा कर भूरी-काली रंगों और कक्षों अग्रांग फलने पके-अधपके झड़वे लह-लुहान दंगिनियों में टोकटोककर खाएं थे और जार-जार झाले झाले का, ललाई लगे हुई हल्का कटा। पानी पिया था।"
This humility he learnt from the nature after seeing him against that undefinable and unfathomable variety and that finds reflection in his work. This truth about human life is learnt through Shastri’s direct communion with nature as revealed in the just cited quote. His creative personality is a direct product of this background. Though Shastri is living at present at the heart of town, Muzaffarpur near chaturbhujstan. Yet he has tried to remake Nature, though a sized one, in his residence. He is still leading a peculiar life living up to the literal meaning of “Nirala Niketan” and his ideal poet Nirala. Shastrijee by creating a natural mystique around his residence has made it a place of learning and creativity with touch wonder and awe after delinking it from madding activity of modern civilization.

1.6. EDUCATION

Shastrijee’s education started with the teaching of his mother. His father was rather over zealous for his study because he wanted to see his son become a ‘Pandit’ sooner. Regarding his early inspiration for study, Shastri himself says

“मैं समझता हूँ, माँ की मौजूदगी में मेरा अझटांशंभ हो गया था। कारण जल्दी- जल्दी पंडित बना देने की व्यक्तित्वता ने मिताजी को पांचवें वर्ष तक की प्रतिभा कटायी न कटाया दी होगी.”
From the above statement it is clear that Shastrije’s schooling started even when he was not five years old. He was, first of all, admitted to a primary school in his village. He was not that good student in the school. Referring to this Shastrije writes,

"मुझे अच्छी तरह याद है, स्कूल में सबसे बोलू विद्यार्थी समझा जाता था। मेरा नाम कड़ा में अंतिम रहता था और मास्टर साहब मुझे अत्यन्त उपेक्षा की दृष्टि से देखते थे। एक तो मेरी उस बहुत छोटी, तिस पर सात- आठ साल तक में बुरी तरह तुलना था।"\(^{10}\)

Anyway, Shastrije managed to pass Upper Primary Examination in the year 1922. After this he passed prathama (Sanskrit) from Sharda Sanskrit Vidyalaya in 1927 at the age of eleven and was placed in the first division. Even his father could not believe this unexpected result of his son. For this result Shastrije was awarded Govt. Scholarship. At the age of eleven he left Maigra and got himself admitted in Govind Sanskrit Vidyalaya, Dathpa, Gaya. From this school he passed Madhyama in 1929 with first division in both literature and grammar. Then in 1932 he stood first among first division students in “Shastri Examination” conducted by Bihar -Orissa Sanskrit Association. Here also he stood first again in the Sahityachary Examination in 1934 at the age of eighteen. As he stood first in the Examination covering both states of Bihar and Orissa, so he was awarded Gold Medal. After this he was admitted to Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi. In 1938 he topped the University list (first class first) in the Shatracharya Examination conducted by this University. During the period of his stay in Banaras Hindu University (B.H.U.) he also stood first class first in Sahitya Ratna Examination he broke all the previous records. In this Examination he broke all the previous records. For this he was falcitated with Gold Medal and a citation. The important aspect of this exam is that
Shastrijee answered the question in Bengali language. In 1941 he not only became first class first in Vedantacharya Examination held in Muzaffarpur but also topped the list in all papers among examinees of whole eastern zone. For this he was awarded two Gold Medals one for becoming first class first and second for topping the list in the zone. It is proved from the result that Shastrijee never stood second in any Examination. Shastriji had passed Matric Exam. in 1936 from B.H U. In his student career Shastrijee drew attention of all his teachers by his brilliance and meritoriousness scholarship.

Shastrijee was not only good in Sanskrit and Hindi literature but also he had deep study in English, Bengali, Urdu, Prakrit and Brajabhasha. Excepting Sanskrit and Hindi, in which he had formal education, he mastered the other literatures by himself. To be in touch with all these languages and to cultivate the same he had composed poems in seven languages. He had a collection ‘Sapta Parna’ comprising poems in all those languages but due to some reasons it could never be published.

1.7. PROFESSION

As he was always under the financial constraints during his student career he had to seek for a job very soon. In this connection he went to Lahore. He served as a lecturer in Oriental Sanskrit College, Lahore against leave vacancy in 1936. As the vacancy was for four months only, he had to return to Banaras after the stipulated period.

Sri Chakradhar Singh the then king of Raigrah, Madhya Pradesh was a man interested in art and literature. He was in search of a court poet who would be well-versed in Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali and English literatures. For this selection he had entrusted Sri Mukutdhar Pande, a renowned poet. In this connection, Sri Pande came to
Kashi and searched for the probable Court-Poet. During that time Shastrijee was the only one suitable for that job. So, on Sri Pande's request, Shastrijee had to go to Raigrah. Being introduced, the king was happy, then he recited poem in Urdu and asked Shastrijee to translate it into Sanskrit. And Shastrijee obliged the king with a just translation. The King was so overwhelmed that not only he presented Shastrijee Hundred Rupees as reward but also confirmed his appointment as the Court-Poet. According to Shastrijee for the first time he earned hundred rupees in his life. He purchased Ravindra Tagore's works spending all the money awarded to him. Shastrijee worked as the Court-Poet in Raigrah from 1937 to 1938. Though the climate was good there, yet it did not suit Shastrijee. So he left Raigrah without informing the King and never returned to the place again. In 1939 Shastrijee came back to Muzaffarpur. From 1940 to the middle of 1944 he worked as a private tutor of Jamindar Babu Umasankar Prasad's daughter, Chanda. From this he was earning Rupees fifty to hundred. From 1944 to 1952 Shastrijee worked as a lecturer in the Deptt. of Literature in Dharm Samaj Sanskrit College, Muzaffarpur. Shastrijee's new and fresh approach, his depth and brilliance in understanding of literature made other teachers jealous of him. For this he had to give up his job there. From 5th January, 1953 to March, 1978 he worked as the Head of Sanskrit Dept. in R.D.S. College, Muzaffarpur. During this period he was promoted to the post of Reader by the Bihar University and at the age of 62 he retired from his job. After his retirement he was deputed by the Bihar Govt. to serve as a visiting Professor in Patna University.

For Shastrijee, a man of independent mind and a little individualistic, any job became a bondage for him but he had to work only to meet financial necessities. Shastrijee speaks about his mind.
Acharya Janaki Vallabh Shastri in his 'Krishnayan' with his cows.

Acharya Janaki Vallabh Shastri with Sri Siddheshwar Prasad, the Governor of Tripura.
1.8. CROSS-CURRENTS OF RELATIONSHIP

Shastrijee was indebted to Nirala, Prasad and Pant in their personal relationship and their literary outputs. Prasad was very much impressed by Shastriji’s scholarship and creative possibility and was calling him ‘Acharya’. Nirala introduced Shastrijee to Prasad and later was very much impressed when they discussed in depth Sanskrit literature. Prasad, in his life time, was a usual visitor to Shastrijee. Shastrijee writes about his relationship with those three important Romantic personalities in Hindi literature.

“व्यक्तिगत जीवन में मुझे पंज, प्रसाद, निरला के कृपापात्र होने का सीमांत प्राप्त हुआ है। पंज ने मेरे पहली बार देखा था, धर प्रभाकर माजिबे के याद निरला मे पहली बार कहा था- ‘मैं उसने मिल चूका हूँ। प्रसाद ने मि लावा था और निरला मे भारति ने। मैं आज जो भी हूँ- निरला के काफी।’”

It is also a fact that Nirala moulded Shastrijee in many ways - he redirected Shastri’s creative interest from Sanskrit to Hindi literature. Shastrijee also had a good relationship with Shanti Priya Diwevdi, the noted critic, who used to inspire and guide in the writings of Shastri. In his student life he had once met the National poet, Sri Mathuli Sharan Gupt who had praised some of the poems composed by Shastri. The personalities very close to the poet were Nirala, Sri Nalin Bilochan Sharma and the legendary actor Sri Prithavi Raj Kapoor among many. Regarding these Shastrijee has written

“निरला, नैनल और पृथ्वीराज मे सबसे करीब अपने दर्शकों में रहे। निरला मुझे मन्यकृत से हिन्दी मे लाये। नैनल ने मेरे व्यक्तित्व और कृतित्व का मोल उठका। पृथ्वीराज ने मेरी वामिता को आदर दिया।”
Though Shastri knew Nirala from Journals and periodicals from his student life, yet he met him personally at Banaras when he was a student there. By that time Nirala was editing “Sudha”, Shastri had written a letter to the Magazine objecting the editorial views on ‘Kalidas’ work. In this connection Nirala and Nanda Dulare Bajpeyee reached the student hostel of Kashi University in search of the young student who objected with a just reason to the views of Nirala. Here Nirala and Shastri met each other and a relationship started herewith. They became so intimate that Nirala visited very often Muzaffarpur on any occasion related to Shastri and stayed with him during his stay. The correspondence between the two has been published in a book from named ‘Niralaki Patra’. Nirala was an objective appreciator of Sastri’s knowledge and talent, so a source of inspiration. As a mark of acknowledgement he dedicated his book ‘Bela’ to Shastriji.

They were very intimate and frank in exchanging views on their works as a result, perhaps Shastri is the best in understanding and evaluating works of Nirala. It is also the reason why Shastriji’s is better equipped to bring the best analytical study of his mentor.

Nalin Bilochan Sharma initiated a critical appraisal of Shastri’s works and also wrote ‘prefaces’ to his different books.

Prithivi Raj Kapoor was one of the closest friends of Shastriji. When Shastriji was working as a private tutor of Chanda, from that day correspondence of letters started with him. During that period Shastriji once went to Calcutta on the occasion of Annual function of literary society and Prithivi Raj Kapoor with his whole family and theatre troupe was present there. There both met personally each other for
the first time. He had dinner with Prithivi Raj and the relationship started blooming

Shastrijee has written

“में प्रायः पवित्र वर्ष पूज्य के निकट सम्पर्क में रहा, उनके जीवन और कला के
अनेक रुपों के साधारण में सोपान्य था।”

Prithivi Raj visited Shastrijee’s place many times and Shastrijee also unfailingly
stayed with Prithivi Raj during his Bombay trips. The book ‘Paswani’, which was
dedicated to Prithivi Raj Kapoor, was intended to be filmed by Prithivi Raj but could not
be so. Till today Shastrijee has an intimate relationship with the Kapoor family and young
Kapoors have respect and love for him.

When Shastrijee was a student of B H U he came in contact with Anil
Baran Roy and Ankul Chandra Chakraborty. This relationship made Shastri
grow interest in Classical music and he also perfected classical music. Here also once he
met Kabi Guru Rabindra Nath and he tried to emulate Rabindra Nath. From this it
becomes clear that Shastri’s field of cultivating human relationship was neither small
nor narrow. But he did not intend to have intimacy with politicians. His relationship was
centred around writers, musicians, critics and men interested in art and literature. It goes
to his credit that he tried to mould himself in an artistic atmosphere.

1.9. ACTOR AND SINGER IN HIM

Shastrijee was much interested in visiting cinema. During his student life he used
to visit cinema shows though he had the financial constraints. He tells,

"रेज़- दे - रेज़ फाका करके भी सिनेमा के लिए यौजस बचा लेता था।"
About his interest in music and acting he has said,

“मे एक ही साथ लिखता, पढ़ता, गाता-वजाता और स्टेज पर पार्ट खेलना रहा हूँ।”

It is clear that from his birth he had an irresistible urge for fine arts. Whenever he visited his village during vacation he was organising the staging of play in his village and acting there too. He had earned praise for his role ‘Dusymanta’ in a mythological play. During his University life also he acted in various roles. His good physique, long hair appealed the spectators when he was playing the role of protagonists in mythological plays. The whole auditorium was caught by his hypnotic personality. His photos only decorated the huge posters for advertisement whenever he was acting. People were coming to theatre though the price of ticket was raised from Rs 20/- to Rs 30/-. Shastrijee had the unique quality of making a song out of Sanskrit shlokas.

He was too gifted with a soft voice and sweet tone. He had to be a little cautious also to keep his voice intact and not going shrill. For this reason his tone is still sweet at this age. In his childhood he also won prizes for his recitation. Whenever there was any function he was also invited to recite “Mangala Charan”. Having been impressed by his voice once Sri Bachchan remarked,

“तुम्हारा गा काट लेने लायक है।”

On many occasions of ‘Nirala Jayanti’ he had to sing the poems of Nirala. Shastri had a thorough training of classical songs. According to the poet he developed and perfected the art of classical music through the help of Anil Baran Roy, Anukul Chandra Chakraborty and Nirala. Raag ‘Vallabh’ is still considered his gift to classical music. He has also the distinction of giving music to his verse plays.
1.10. FACT AND FICTIONS

When Janaki Vallabh was only two years old and was playing in the Courtyard, a Cobra came out and began to play with him. When his mother saw this, she became very nervous and took him away. The snake did him no harm. An another surprising thing is that Janaki Vallabh could write two different languages with his two hands at the same time. Regarding this he himself wrote -

"मैं पहले दोनों हाथों से एक ही समय दो भाषाएँ लिख लेता था। मुझे क्या अच्छा होता।" 18

Shastrijee has a great affection for his pet animals. They all move freely in ‘Nirala Niketan’ His cows are kept in Krishnayan with all comfort. As Shastrijee has been deceived many times for this his affection grew for the animals. Because he knew that the animals are honest and faithful. They never cheat. This view of Shastrijee reveals in his writing works. Once Padma (a pet cat) did not come to him after calling, at this he said - “Padma, you are going to be a man too”. Indeed it is a great irony on human beings.

It is said that Shastrijee had not good relations with the National Poet, Denkarjee of Bihar, but it is baseless because Shastrijee tells that he was in good relationship with him. Though some people tried to create some misunderstanding between them. It is also heard that Shastrijee used to sell his lyrics to Prithviraj Kapoor for money but this is not the fact because an ideal and self-respecting man like Shastrijee never tried to do such thing. Shastrijee believed in supernaturalism and said to have been ethereal beings in his own eyes. He tells,

"मेरे स्वयं कुछ प्रेतान्माओं से स्वाभी विवेकानन्द, विश्वकॉर श्रीनाथ जैसे महात्माओं से वार्तालाप किया है, इससे बढ़कर इन्हीं चर्म-चस्तुओं से तीन-तीन बार भुत-प्रेतों के दर्शानों का दुर्भाग्य प्राप्त हो चुका है मुझे।" 19
About this sight of apparition he has also written in “Aunta Darshan” Raka. All these happenings have a bearing on the mental make-up of the man.

1.11. HOINOUR AND REWARD

Shastrijee has been conferred many degrees and awards. At the age of 25 he was given the title of ‘Kaviratna’ by Saket Sanskritam, in 1932 he was conferred the honour of Kavyadhurin in Sanskritan. In 1940 he got the honour to Sarswat sarbhaum from Akhil Bharatiya Sanskrit Kavi Sanmilan. In 19087 he was given the title of Sahitya-Vachaspati in Hindi Sahitya Sanmelan, Prayag. In 1988, the Bihar Govt. felicitated him with Bihar Gaurav’ again in the same year he was given the title of ‘Vidyasagar by Bikram Shila Vidyapith. Apart from these honours he was also given many cash awards on many occasions. The UP Govt. has given a cash award of Rs. 5,000/- for his work ‘Pashani-tanasa -Nirala ke patra’. Bihar Govt. awarded him Rs. 5,000/- for Karmashhethre Maruskhetre’. For all those literary gains, Rashtra Bhasha Parisad. Bihar has honoured him with a cash reward of Rs. 1,000/-. At the public reception in Muzaffarpur he was given Rs. 25,000/-. In 1987 Hindi Sansthan, Lucknow gave him a cheque of Rs. 21,000/- and in 1988 Bihar Govt. awarded him Dr. Rajendra Shikhar award of Rs. 1,00,000/- for his valuable literary contributions.

1.12. HIS SOURCE OF INSPIRATION AND MOULDING OF HIS CREATIVE PERSONALITY

There is the saying that to flower and harness his genius Shastrijee’s father had consulted his teacher and with the help of a Shlok his creative energy triggered off. Whatever may be the result of the Shlok or not Shastrijee from the very early art of his
life was overwhelmed by the creative energy in him. Basically the source of writing was inside his melancholic acceptance of life. Melancholy was a part of his psyche and soul when he lost his mother very early in his life and ensuing deaths in his family. He has written,

"मेरे भाव अभाव की देन है। पर- बाहर जीने का कहीं कोई सहारा नहीं।" 20

His writings are product of his own life's experience. Sentiments reflected in his works are never imitative literary experience from the outside but of his personal life through self-analysis and the actual experiencing of it. He tells,

"मायूषीन श्रीश्री, संहृत ऋषि ओर सत्त संयखा शित तारण के आत्मस्मारण से उपलब्ध मेरी यह अनुभूति वाचविभूति मात्र नहीं, आत्म-प्रत्यय ही है।" 21

Apart from this, Shastrijee was also indebted to his teacher Mahadev Shastri though the latter did not influence his style of writing. But Shastrijee has still the Sense of respect for his teacher. As we have stated above, his switching over to writing in Hindi from Sanskrit and the obvious success was initiated, as admitted by the poet, by Nirala. The fact is that Shastrijee is what he is today for his sincerity, honesty and dedication to art and to his own experiences of life.

Shastrijee is very humble to state that, he is neither a superman nor also a great artist, but the fact is that he is a great artist in modern Hindi literature. When we analyse his personality we see it as the natural product of great Indian tradition. This has been also artistically moulded by his own personal experiences. As he is a traditionalist, so he is a little thesographically religious in his treatment of themes. Many critics making a biographical references to his works, find him leaning a little to the leftist view for his economic
condition, though this sort of views are more out of assumptions than through study of his works. We may analyse one of statements

"मेरे सत्ता के वृत्त में गोल- गोल घूमा, न आँखों पर लाया- शूप की पट्टी बौधी और
न धिकार की बूर्ण सफलता के लिये आत्मा को अंधेरा का बसें र त बनाया।" 22

This statement speaks more about his loneliness in context of philosophical view of life than about economic condition. This sincere artist writes again,

"मेरे साथ अबसर ऐसी घटनाएं घटती है, में कभी समझीता नहीं करता। जो सत्ता और
लिखितियों के आगे सर छुका दे, वह कैसा कलाकार होगा?" 23

He never compromised with principles of life nor with presentation of his art. As he was the artist first and artist last, so he wrote.

"मन मेरी जितनी तो महज एक बीन है जो सुर में बजे या बेठुरी, यह बजाने वाले पर
निर्भर करता है।" 24

He was an artist who took life in its simplicity and straightness and put his art in that way. He tells,

"जाने कबों शाम मुझे बहुत अच्छी नहीं लगती। सबेरा मुझे में तेजी और ताजगी भरता
है, शाम एक और बस्ताद दिन की धकान और उदासी दे आती है।" 25

In short, he is romantic poet emotionally expecting good from both Nature and human nature. He found a lively response from Nature and related, a natural link to his life. He finds the similarity

"जाने कबों शाम मुझे बहुत अच्छी नहीं लगती। सबेरा मुझे में तेजी और ताजगी भरता
है, शाम एक और बस्ताद दिन की धकान और उदासी दे आती है।" 26

Shatrijee is a multifaceted talent, a loner, a singer and most intellectual poet of Bihra.
Shastrijee is an apolitical personality who simply hoped for welfare of the masses. Romantically, he blamed the rulers for corruption in all spheres of life. He is a saintly personality valuing simplicities of life and he is accepted today as a saint writer. The study of his literary works is a study of his multi-faceted personality. It is simple, clear, straight and readable but not easy to master.

In this chapter we have described the life history of Acharya Janaki Vallabh Shastri with special reference to his creative development and the social factors that have influenced and moulded his literary self. In chapter II, we shall consider the literary principles and literary theories of Acharya Janaki Vallabh Shastri. The discussion will be around his critical works.
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3. Janaki Vallabh Shastri, Raka Part II Muzaffarpur, Nirala Niketan, Page 38
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
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<td>1968</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
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<td>1950</td>
<td>39</td>
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<td>1971</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Kalaniketan</td>
<td>Patna</td>
<td>Kh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1968</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
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<td>1974</td>
<td>389</td>
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<tr>
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<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>111</td>
</tr>
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</table>

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Page 312