

Acknowledgements

The seed of this research was sowed in January 2016, when I was a final semester postgraduate student at Vidyasagar University. At that time, I was trying hard to grapple with Michel Foucault's *Madness and Civilisation* (as suggested by one of my teachers, who also said that without the study of this book "your life will be in vain"). But I could hardly make any progress. So, one day, during the recess I desperately entered into the chamber of Professor Sibaji Pratim Basu, who had joined the department a few months ago. I told him about my almost 'existential' academic crisis and asked a dozen of questions about Foucault and the book.

The Professor calmly listened to all my (rather 'childish') queries; answered some of them briefly and gave me a long list books which one must study before beginning Foucault. Then he suddenly said that my quest for theoretical knowledge was good but "can you see your theories *walking down* the streets?" He also added that the "objects of social science inquiries are plenty and they are around us, you only need to 'see' them". I had never heard such things before. At that time, I noticed a book, *Politics in Hunger Regime: Essays on the Right to Food in West Bengal* jointly edited by Professor Basu on his table. I asked whether I could borrow it for a few days, to which he kindly agreed. I began to read it at night and when I finished, I decided that given a chance to work in future, I would like to pursue my research on something like this.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge with heartfelt thanks and deepest gratitude the contributions of Professor Basu: his kind guidance, constant encouragement and patience to listen to my 'immature' talks and also for meticulously going through the drafts of the thesis.

My deep regards also go to Professor Ranjan Chakrabarti, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Vidyasagar University for constantly encouraging young researchers like me to work hard to achieve our goals and also for making the university library very rich with new resources.

I am deeply indebted to Professor Ranabir Samaddar for his very valuable suggestions during my research and also for allowing me to attend a weeklong Workshop at Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group (CRG), which had given me chance to interact with scholars of global standards.

My thanks and gratitude know no bounds to my teachers of the department of Political Science of Vidyasagar University: to begin with, I acknowledge my deep respect to the late Professor Tarun Kumar Banerjee for showering his blessings upon me and always encouraging me; my heartfelt thanks to Professor Ambarish Mukhopadhyay for his enriching classes of research methodology; special thanks to Professor Raj Kumar Kothari for being ever attentive about the progression of my research work; my gratitude is also due to Dr. Sujay Ghosh for referring me valuable books and research articles. Dr. Suratha Kumar Malik also deserves great thanks for supporting me since my Masters; my thanks are also due to Dr. Eyasin Khan, unknowingly he led me to the path of research. Last but never the least, I have learned from Dr. Swatilekha Bhattacharya, who has always been so kind of me. I take this opportunity to acknowledge my special thanks to her.

My sincere thanks are due to the librarians Vidyasagar University and National Library, Kolkata for providing me with important books and archival materials.

Special acknowledgements are also due to my senior Kalyanasis Bhattachayaa (Kalyan da) from whom I have learned a lot; to my friends: Khoka Mali, Debendra

Das, Souvik Patra (my senior), to my junior – Prasenjit Chuayan; and also, to my younger-brother-like Manjish Ray for immensely helping me in archival work at National Library, Kolkata. Deep thanks are also due to Anuradha Talwar, Manisha Banerjee, Maulana Nazrul Haq, Sunil Sabbar, Biki da, Shubbasis da for helping me during the field study. I would also like to thank my colleagues at the Directorate of Distance Education, Vidyasagar University.

I must also acknowledge my gratitude to Poet Anindita Basu Sanyal (Kakima) and Madhurilata Basu (Didi) for their loving support and encouragement. A special thank goes to ‘Didi’ for her theoretical inputs. My ‘Pishi’ (aunt) had provided with me an affectionate shelter during the field study in North Bengal. Special thanks are due to her.

In the end, I like to offer gratitude and love to my parents for supporting me to pursue higher studies from the bottom of my heart.