

BAL GANGADHAR TILAK: THE CONCEPT OF NATIONALISM

**A
DISSERTATION**

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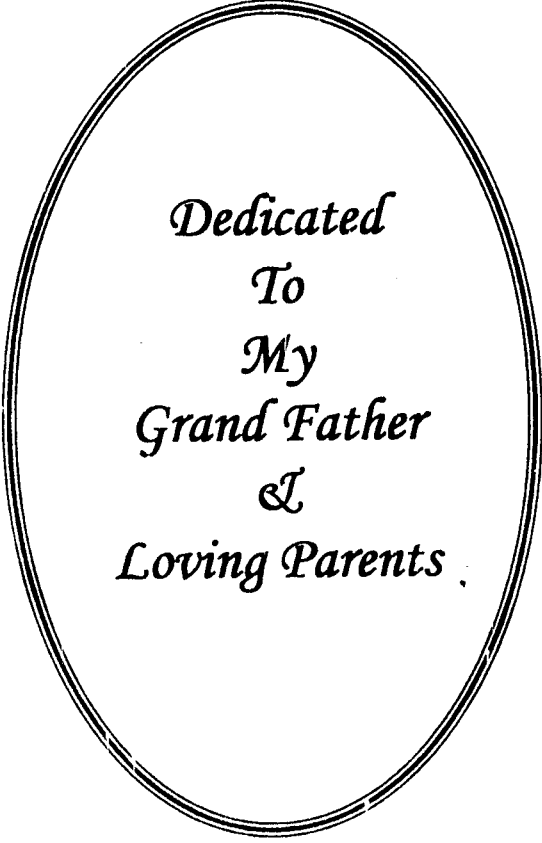
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*Dedicated
To
My
Grand Father
&
Loving Parents .*



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CERTIFICATE

This is certify that the dissertation entitled "**Bal Gangadhar Tilak: The Concept of Nationalism**" submitted by **Sanjay Kumar** has been carried out under my supervision and is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy in Political Science

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CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

Bal Gangadhar Tilak represented the forces of extreme nationalism during the freedom struggle of India. Through his dynamism, dedication and versatile genius, he could be the pathfinder of India's freedom. His impressive role as a restless nationalist, a crusader for political freedom, a fearless journalist and a committed educationalist made him a 'living force' for all times to come. His slogan *Swaraj* is my birth right and I will have it' still evokes the revolutionary thoughts and makes the struggle for freedom vibrant. His years of rigorous imprisonment, indomitable courage to declare war against the British rule, concern for the downtrodden and identification with the masses made him the first popular leader in India's political history. He became truly the 'darling of Indian people' and came to be adored as 'Lokamanya'. Jawaharlal Nehru rightly pointed out that "The real symbol of the new age was Bal Gangadhar Tilak"¹.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak, popularly known as Lokamanya was born at Ratna-giri in konkan district of Maharashtra on July 23, 1856, in a Chitpavan Brahmin Family. This family had produced leaders like Baji Rao Peshwa, Nana Fadnavis and Gopal Krishan Gokhale. Tilak was man of remarkable energy and new vision. He was a called the Hercules of Indian nationalism. He was among those thinkers and leaders of the early twentieth century who won acclamation from people on account of his simplicity and scholarship. He was a journalist and educator of a high order and the leader of the extremist sections of the Indian National Congress. As a mass leader he was the first to

¹ Dusmanta Kumar, Mohanty, *Indian Political Tradition: From Manu to Ambedkar*, New Delhi: Anmol Publication, 1997. P.192.

convert the Indian National Congress into a mass organisation².

The story of his life and work is also the history of the birth and growth of Indian Nationalism. Tilak was able to provide a new turn to the Indian Political thinking and forced the Indian National Congress to adopt a radical programme for fighting for the freedom of the country. His contribution to the national movement for freedom of the country was unique.

Tilak, as a young child, was highly impressed by extraordinary deeds of valour. His father Gangadhar Pant, was gifted with rare qualities of character and learning. He was a teacher, and though he could not rise beyond the post of deputy education inspector, he gave the best possible education to his children. Tilak was sent to school before he was eleven years old. As a student, Tilak proved to be remarkable in Mathematics and Sanskrit and did his matriculation in 1872. He cared more for knowledge than for word, more for thought than for expression. He was able to solve "the problems of Mathematics orally. Once his teacher asked him" where is your method?" Tilak replied. "It's here", pointing to his head.³

When Bal Gangadhar was not yet sixteen in 1872, his father died. A year earlier, before he had finished his secondary education, Bal Gangadhar was married. In 1873 he enrolled at Deccan College in Poona and soon advanced in Mathematics and Sanskrit. In 1876 he completed his graduation and in 1879 his Bachelor of Law, devoting special attention to Hindu Law and prepared himself for a legal career.

² H.H. Das. & P.S. N. Patro, *Indian Political Traditions*, Bangalore: Sterling Publishers, 1948. PP. 113-114.

³ Hari Hara Das, *Indian Political Thought*, New Delhi National Publishing, 2005, PP.153-154.

After the establishment of the Bombay University, in 1857, and of the Deccan collage at Poona, in the same year, the number of people with a higher education started to grow noticeably. The total school enrolment also increased. When Tilak first embarked on his political and educational career in 1879, the Bombay Presidency, which then included a large part of Maharashtra had 5,000 schools of various types with an aggregate length of some 300,000 pupils. Though Brahmans among them made up a large proposition-23 percent-they comprised, but a minority, 59 percent belonged to other castes and 18 percent came from the Muslim and other Indian communities⁴.

Before leaveing the college campus, both Tilak and his friend Agarkar had pledged to themselves not to enter government service and to dedicate their lives to the service of the people. However, after much thought they decided that they should work for education. Tilak said, "salvation of our motherland lay in the education and only in the education of the people"⁵. Tilak became the co-founder of new English school established on 1st January, 1880. The aim of this Institution was to devise an educational programme which would provide an intelligent popular basis for the rebirth of the Indian nation. The amazing success of the school, which in four years surpassed in matriculation result all other schools in Bombay Presidency was due chiefly to the ability and dedication of the founders of whom the Lokmanya was the ablest. In 1884 he alongwith his friends founded the Deccan Education Society. Fergusson College in Poona was established under the patronage of this society. This college combined the positive aspects of both Western and Indian education. Its objective became to create a

⁴ N.M. Goldberg & I.M. Reisner, *Tilak and Struggle for Indian Freedom*, New Delhi: People's publication, 1966, PP.16-17.

⁵ Mohanty Dasmanta Kumar, *Op. Cit*, P. 195.

new generation of nationalist leaders in India. But herein Tilak had differences with Gokhale which led to Tilak's resignation from the Deccan Education society in 1890. However, this stimulated Tilak to work more actively in the Indian Nationalist movement and to divert his attention to popularize Marathi language and arouse the masses to take pride in their Hindu traditions.

Tilak, Agarkar, and others also believed in making the public opinion alert and effective. Hence they established two leading newspapers i.e. the *Mahratta* and other *the Kesari*, one was published in Marathi and the other, *the Kesari*, in English. Especially the *Kesari* or "Lion" was designed to work as a mouthpiece of the peoples' problems, mass education and popular agitation. By 1882 the *Kesari* had become one of the leading newspapers in Western India. Tilak, after resigning from the Deccan Education society, took complete control over the newspaper. This gave a more challenging role to Tilak and dragged him to British court. Tilak's first daredevil role as an editor was to expose an alleged plot to deny the right of succession to the minor Maharaja of Kolhapur for which he had to be imprisoned for four months because the state's Diwan, M. Barve proved in the court that the news was based on forged documents. But Tilak's imprisonment enhanced his popular image for his disinterested selfless fight for the cause of helpless Maharaja, who later on died in a suspicious way.

Freedom struggle of India was led by leaders having different perceptions of their own. Some leaders like Ranade, Gokhale, had 'moderate' approach. Aurobindo Ghosh, M.N. Roy, Bhagat Singh, Khudiram, had 'terrorist' approach and some others like Lala Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal had extremist approach. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, though initially had moderate

moderate mind but subsequently changed his mind to that of an extremist because he lost faith in British administration.

Tilak joined the Indian National Congress in 1889. At that time Congress Leaders adopted the method of prayer and petitions and restored strong faith in the British sense of justice. During this phase he said that he did not desire to weaken the government but "to render it impregnable to all assaults whether Russians or any other Foes"⁶. In 1897 he said, "for the last twelve years Indians have been shouting hoarse about their grievances but have no more affected the government than the sound of a gnat."⁷ He strongly advocated that political liberation of Indians lay in direct action. "Political rights", he said "will have to be fought, for the moderates think they can be won by persuasion, we think that they can only be got by strong pressure."⁸

Tilak realised that the British Raj had caused much harm to the economy of India. The government remained indifferent to the people's cause during famine and plague. Tilak as the member of Bombay Legislative Council lambasted the Government for being indifferent to the mass suffering of the people during famine. Tilak's voice marked the voice of a fearless nationalist and a spirited extremist who was bent upon the mission of fighting against the British rule. Though he was re-elected to the legislature he resigned as he was jailed for sedition. In 1897 after the killing of Rand, the plague commissioner in Poona and his assisting Lt. Ayesst, the government blamed Tilak for airing sedition and violence through his article in the *Kesari* and the *Mahratta*. Three Indian Jurors held that he was not guilty but six European Jurors gave

⁶ Ibid., P, 197.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

different opinion. Tilak was asked to apologise. This, he refused, saying that his position among the people depended entirely upon his character and if he was cowed down by the prosecution then "living in Maharashtra is as good as living in Andamans."⁹ He was sentenced to eighteen months rigorous imprisonment. Tilak was the first leader of Indian National Congress to be imprisoned for sedition of after being released from jail on the ground of ill health, Tilak jumped into more vibrant political activism.

He wanted to regenerate the spirit of nationalism in the minds of people through religion. He organised the festival of *Ganapati*, the Hindu God, to unite the people under one banner. He also started Shivaji festival and converted it into a national force. He justified the killing of Afzal Khan by Shivaji, but he was never against the Muslims. Muslim leaders like Shaukat Ali openly admitted his faith in Tilak's leadership¹⁰.

Tilak was of different mind. He believed that by rallying the masses the Congress should be able to play not only a positive but also a leading role in the liberation struggle. And this belief permeated the *Mahratta's* articles on various congress sessions for a number of years. In the 1880s the *Mahratta* in its pages and Tilak himself, in his speeches, expounded a programme of petty bourgeois reforms orientated on the support of the masses, as well as the practical tasks of promoting the development of India's economy.

Thus, in an article on the approaching Madras Congress session in 1887, Tilak's, paper pointed out that the first and foremost question for India was that of education-"education in all its branches, primary, secondary and higher both liberal and

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid., P.198.

technical."¹¹ Tilak was also concerned about the problem of poverty in the country. Continuing the *Mahratta* he said:

Next to the question of education comes the question of the poverty of the country. Last year it was represented and it is still maintained in certain quarters that representative institutions are a panacea for this as well for other evils from which we are suffering. We think otherwise. Representative Institutions may alleviate, if they do anything, but they certainly cannot cure the malady. What we want really is a permanent settlement or something partaking to a great extent of that character against the state landlord. Indigenous industries, and development of internal trade.¹²

Tilak and his colleagues in the 1880s, paid great attention to other problems, namely those of India's industrial development and gradual economic emancipation. For example, on the question of famine prevention, while calling for more extensive irrigation and the spread of railway communication, the *Mahratta* stressed that the root of the whole evil was "the complete extinction of our old arts and trades"¹³ and that it could only be remedied by the government "encouraging the development of manufactures"¹⁴.

Tilak rejected the activism of the west adopted by his Brahman rival, Gokhale, who believed in gradual social reform as a precedent to *Swaraj* or Indian Independence. Lokamanya

¹¹ M.N. Goldberg, Op, Cit., P.45.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., P. 47.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Insisted on the ousting of the British and upon self-rule as pre-requisite to all else. He characterized western-type activism as devoted merely to improving worldly existence, whereas the *karma-Yoga* of the *Gita* was devoted to self-realization through service to mankind. The western energism was thus *Rajasa* or emotional while the Indian variety was *Sattvika* or intelligent¹⁵

His conclusion on the *Gita* may be summed up in the following statements: (1) "our religious treatises have clearly said that in the *Kaliyuga*, that is, after the date of the *Kauravas* and the *Pandavas*, the path of renunciation is prohibited."¹⁶ "It is clear that in any country whatsoever, the persons who wield the destinies of the country must be supporters of the path of action"¹⁷ (II700).

Among the traditionalist leaders of the Indian Nationalist movement, there are marked differences in the interpretation and the use of the *Gita* as regards social action. Dayananda Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj, refused to recognize the authority of the *Gita* and limited the scriptural sources of his movement to the *Vedas*. He thereby weakened the theoretical appeal of his dynamic reform programme. Vivekananda tended to support the view point of *Samskara*. Although, he repeatedly stressed the severe necessity of action for almost all Indians in this day and age, he held that for those rare few who might be qualified for *Moksa*, or liberation, action should be renounced. All others should engage in action since their proper goal is *Dharma* or duty.

¹⁵ Verinder Grover, *Political Thinkers of Modern India: Bal Gangadhar Tilak*, Vol.4. New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publication, PP. 8-9.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, P.9.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Aurobindo Ghose gave more scholarly attention to the *Gita* than any other contemporary leader with the exception of Tilak himself. Like Ramanuja, Aurobindo places devotion at the top of three paths of conduct, but insists that the *Gita* stands as a thorough synthesis of devotion with knowledge and action. He interprets devotion in an activistic way, e.g., performing action in a spirit of self-offering. Unlike *Samskara* he sees action as both a preparation and a final means of liberation. In contrast to Tilak, he says that "although the *Gita* prefers action to Inaction it does not rule out the renunciation of works, but accepts it as one of the ways to the Divine."¹⁸

Despite these differences, each of the above worked to restore in India an emphasis on social action. Of all the Nationalist leaders, Gandhi comes closest to accepting *Karma-Yoga* as the essence of the *Gita*, in Tilak's exclusive sense, action as *Yajna* (sacrifice) is necessary for all persons. In his opinion, *Moksa* must be achieved in our in our time by bodily activity for the service of mankind. Although Gandhi differed sharply with Tilak and others as to the *Gita's* attitude toward violence, the problem of violence versus non-violence is incidental to the main problem of action versus non-action. In this latter aspect Gandhi and Tilak approach agreement despite the fact that they see the *Gita* in different settings.

Tilak was correct in insisting that the doctrine of action is an ancient one in India and that European energism is not the only theoretical foundation available for leadership in the new India. None went so far and so consistently as Tilak in using the *Gita*, as the philosophical basis of universal action. His profound analysis of the *Gita* although doubtless not free from emotional bias (for Tilak himself was a man of passionate

¹⁸ Ibid., PP, 9-10.

convictions), served to underwrite and rationalize the vigour of the later Indian Nationalist movement and the Gandhian programme.

Tilak has interpreted the *Gita* in accordance with his views on religion and ethics, and his interpretation reveals his philosophy of life. He has chosen a significant title for book. *Shrimad Bhagavadgita Rahasya Athara Karmayogashastra* and rendered it, into English as the "Hindu philosophy of life. Ethics and Religion."¹⁹ In *Gitaarahasya* Tilak has not made inconsequential contribution. It is, on the contrary, a Herculean effort to stem the tide of opinion in the country in favour of *Nivrutti*, a tendency which was deep rooted and had prevailed for centuries. In Brown's opinion, "ages will roll by before his reputation as the father of Indian unrest will be matter of historical value. But as the years will pass he will be more and more recognised and honoured as the high-priest of disinterested *karma*. He will inspire the succeeding generations to duty and action. The whole life and political activity of Lokmanya Tilak is the magnificent flowering of his ethical and religious thought. It is its own reward and norm of judgment"²⁰.

Modern times are so strange that as Subandu has said, "we need a mirror to know the importance of four eyes. We have lost our kingdom, our wealth, our independence, and so we have begun to feel that our ancestors as well as ourselves were foolish and ignorant. Our ancestors did not know how to run the administration of government, how to expand the defense department, and how to keep in their hands the key to the lives of their subjects by giving them attractive promises.... When western education was first introduced in our land, some of our people were so dazzled by the scientific knowledge and

¹⁹ *ibid.*, P. 35.

²⁰ *ibid.*, P. 46.

method of the westerners, that they instantly rushed to western learning. These people did not think about what is our true religion what is the religion, between the soul and God. What is our literature on this subject, what are the views contained therein. etc"²¹.

Though Ranade and Gokhale cautioned against it for fear of stirring further communal conflict, Tilak and his followers sponsored a mass meeting in Poona to discuss the 1894 riots and memorialize government. Attended by about seven thousand, people, the meeting was, according to *Kesari*, the largest municipal gathering since the age-up- consent agitation. Before this meeting, Poona's Hindu population had been urged by its orthodox leaders to boycott the Muslim *Mohurram* festival, which until 1893 had been celebrated jointly by adherents of both religions. In Maharashtra in 1893 a separate Hindu festival was begun, designed to wean the Hindu lower classes away from the ritual in honour of a foreign deity, by providing them with an equally attractive alternative. Strengthening communal consciousness in this way served to bolster Hindu nationalist aspirations.

The first of the modern public *Ganapati* festivals began in Poona a week after the September meeting called to protest the Bombay riots. This gala ten day celebration commemorating the birth of the Deccan's most popular deity, the elephant headed *Ganesh* of *Ganpati* ("leader of the *Ganash*, that is attendants upon Shiva") had originally been held as a family festival by the Peshwas, and since their collapse had fallen into the comparative oblivion of individual worship by less exalted house holders. Now the public character of the festival was revived, primarily due to the initiative of Vinayak Ramchandra

²¹ Stanley A wolpert, *Tilak and Gokhale: Revolution and Reform in the Making of Modern India*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989 P. 64.

Patvardhan, alias Annasahib (1847-1917), whom Tilak regarded as his *Moksha Guru*²².

Shortly after the 1894 riot, Tilak accelerated his campaign against the prohibition of music in the neighborhood of mosques, by bringing the issue before the *Poona Sarvaganik Sabha* (P.S.S). He succeeded in getting that organization to submit a memorandum to government advocating that if certain classes object to street processions passing by their public places of worship with music while they are engaged in worship, this feeling should be respected not by forbidding all music at all times while passing those places, but by stopping all loud and noisy music, likely to disturb worship during the prescribed hours of worship.²³

Tilak on April 15, 1896, went to Raigarh to inaugurate the Shivaji festivities. The festival had all the trappings of all typical Hindu religious celebration with songs, dances, gymnastic events, readings from the scriptures, and distribution of sweets and bete, leaves. In addition, however, ballads exalting Shivajis heroic deeds, and lectures on the highlights of Marattha history were delivered. Symbolizing the joint political and religious character of the celebration, huge painted portraits of Shivaji and his Brahman guru Ramdas were carried side by side in procession up to the mountain fortress, while the chant of devotional hymns blended with shouts of "*Shivaji Maharaj-ki-Jai!*" ("Victory to Shivaji Maharaj!").

After reporting the torch-light procession to Shivaji's Samadhi, and the Jubilation of the marching devotees as they followed the images of their revered warrior and saint, Tilak reflected melancholically on the fate of the fortress itself, which was the goal of this sacred political pilgrimage. He said, "That

²² Ibid., PP. 66-67.

²³ Ibid., P.70.

the place of the coronation and of the tomb of that great man who gave the joy of independence to Maharashtra for two centuries should have been so utterly forgotten by the Marathas is indeed our misfortune."²⁴

Before the next festival began, Tilak insisted that "hero worship" was at the root of "nationality, social order, and religion". The Shivaji festival in reviving hero worship built the foundation on which those essential prerequisites for the common weal could be firmly established. "As soon as we lost *Swarajya* the memory of the political heroes who had worked body and soul for independence and who had thereby protected our religion became quite extinct",²⁵ said Tilak, he explained when there was *Swarajya* we always and constantly used to cogitate and reflect upon and worship the deeds and teachings of the political heroes of the nation. Under *Swarajya* heroes like Shivaji never went to a great distance from us, and when to our misfortune we commenced flying away from them, forgetting their memory, the time was ripe for overthrowing our rule.

The Nationalists (Lala Lajpat Rai, Vipin Chandra Pal) achieved great success at the Banaras session under the superb leadership of Tilak. The presidential address of Gokhale was a splendid performance. It pleased Tilak greatly because it echoed popular sentiments on almost every question. But Tilak soon found that Gokhale and his friends were not prepared to support him in his efforts to secure the passage of an impressive resolution supporting Bengal's programme of *Swadeshi* and Boycott as an answer to the challenge thrown by Lord Curzon. In order to preserve unity Tilak effected a compromise and the resolutions recommending *Swadeshi* and

²⁴ Ibid., P. 81.

²⁵ Ibid., P. 82.

Boycott were passed unanimously in a toned down form. The moderates wanted to pass a resolution welcoming the Prince of Wales to which the extremists were opposed. Here again Tilak and Lajpat Rai effected, compromise and the resolution was passed with the amendment that the prince be requested to inform his father, the king, that the administration of India was not being carried on in accordance with the Royal proclamation of 1858. According to Tahmankar the Banaras Congress, marks an important stage in the political career of Tilak, because with his declaration of the principle of passive resistance, he burnt his boats on the ghats of the sacred city of Banaras. Although it was in Bengal that the principle of passive resistance was first formally formulated and Boycott, *Swadeshi* and National Education were adopted as the means to *Swaraj* the fact remains that it was the vision and courage of Tilak which conceived the enormous possibilities of passive resistance as political weapon, perhaps the only weapon the people completely disarmed and demoralised by a long period of slavery could use against an alien government²⁶. In 1908, Tilak was put to trial by the Bombay High Court for writing an article considered to be seditious. He was sentenced to six years transportation to Mandalay Jail where he was confined to a solitary room.

After completing the term of imprisonment, Tilak returned to India and thought of organising people to demand Home Rule. The year 1916 was important in the career of Tilak for he gave to the Indians the mantra, "*Swaraj* is the birthright of Indians," at the Lucknow Congress. Tilak joined his old comrades at the Lucknow session of the Congress and formed Indian Home Rule League with the aim of attaining self-government for the Indian people by constitutional means. He

²⁶ Jyoti Prasad Suda, *Main Currents of Social and Political Thought in Modern India*, Educational Publisher, 1963. PP. 420-421.

undertook extensive tours of the country to build up opinion in favour of Home Rule. By 1917, the Extremists had taken total control of the Indian National Congress. Tilak proceeded to England in 1918 to represent the country demanding Home Rule and made a great impact on English public opinion by virtue of his writings and speeches. In a letter to an Englishman, he wrote: "It is necessary for me to dwell upon the imperative importance of solving the Indian question for the purpose of ensuring the future peace of the world and the progress of the people of India." The Home Rule Movement launched by Tilak was natural culmination of the nationalist movement. The call for *Swadeshi* and the movement for *Swaraj* had been gathering momentum since the partition of Bengal in 1905. The Home Rule Movement symbolised a phase in the struggle for independence. It presented before the Congress a concrete programme of action and the scheme of self-government. During 1916-17, Tilak was at the height of his political life and was acclaimed by the whole country for his sincerity and unbending patriotism. Tilak fought for his political ideal, with a religious zeal, and never compromised on principles.

The Congress Democratic Party was formed by the efforts of Tilak in April 1920. He hoped to introduce the techniques of regular electioneering in the Congress. The manifesto of the party was issued on April 20, 1920. The party was to put its own candidates to contest seats to the councils and the assembly. The manifesto of the party pledged its faith in the Congress and in democracy. Tilak wanted that a large number of nationalist members should be returned to the legislature through the Congress Democratic Party. But as the people were looking to him to become the president of the special Calcutta Congress in September, 1920, death snatched him away. After his death the mass movement in the political field

which Tilak had initiated worked a miracle in the hands of Gandhiji.²⁷

Review of Literature

A number of studies have been taken on Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Some of the works that have been consulted for the present dissertation are as follows.

*Life and Times of Lokmanya Tilak*²⁸ is the biography of Tilak which is written in Marathi by N.C. Kelker in 1923. Its English translation is done by D.V. Divakar who got it published work in 1928. This work is a fascinating account of the life and work of Tilak. Another highlight of the biography is how Tilak appeared on the political scene in India when the moderates were dominating Indian politics. The moderates had great faith in British sense of justice and all they desired was to appeal to the British conscience in order to gain social and political reforms. Tilak did not have this illusion about the British regime. He believed in direct methods. This work has taken into account Tilak's first imprisonment, his personal differences with Agarkar or his views on social reforms etc. Finally, in the chapter 'the Antiquity of the Vedas', the author has highlighted Tilak's literary pursuits.

Theodore L. Shay in his book, *The Legacy of the Lokamanya*²⁹ discussed the role played by Tilak in developing an Indian philosophy of politics during the early struggle for Indian self rule and the legacy he left to the freedom movement and of free India. The author has argued that of all Tilak's legacies to the freedom movement the greatest was the contribution to the political philosophy of that movement.

²⁷ Hari Har Das, Op. Cit, PP.169-170.

²⁸ N.C. Kelkar, *Life and Times of Lokmanya Tilak*, Madras: S. Ganesan, 1928.

²⁹ T.L. Shay, *The Legacy of the Lokamanya: The Political Philosophy of Bal Gangadhar Tilak*, London: Oxford University Press, 1956.

According to him, it was Tilak and the nationalists who first envisaged *Swaraj* in the classical Indian value system as India's birth right. The author examined Tilak's views on three crucial issues, pertaining to social reforms, the awakening of India and the beginning of political agitation. Shay also has compared Tilak's ideas with his contemporaries.

Stanley A. Wolpert in his book, *Tilak and Gokhale: Revolution and Reform in the Making of Modern India*³⁰, has undertaken a comparative analysis of lives and ideas of Tilak and Gokhale. Author's main concern has been the interaction and influence mutually exerted by their lives and ideas and by the parties and platforms within India's nationalist movement, which they came to represent. Because of their protected personal and public contact and the unique influence attained by each of them over the thought and actions of substantial segments of their countrymen, the author feels that every study focused exclusively on the life or ideas of Tilak or Gokhale alone has presented only a part of the picture of the motivation for the actions and thoughts of either and of their impact on Indian history. According to Wolpert, they were continually influenced by and reacting to each other's policies and pronouncements. In this book the author has compared views of Tilak and Gokhale on a number of different aspects and discussed the legacy left by each of them.

The book *Tilak and the struggle for Indian Freedom* edited by I.M. Reisner and H.M. Goldberg³¹ consists of collection of essays. This book discusses the main events in Tilak's life and surveys a number of problems related to his struggle for India's freedom from British rule. These essays show that the political ideas of Tilak were influenced by the

³⁰ Stanley A. Wolpert. Op. Cit.

³¹ N.M. Goldberg and I.M. Reisner, Op. Cit.

mass struggle against feudal exploitation and national oppression.

Dhananjay keer in his book, *Lokmanya Tilak and Father of Indian Freedom Struggle*³² has portrayed the evolution of Tilak's mind, the progress of his career and the impact of events and personalities on his mind. He has also dealt with the various contributions that Tilak made in different fields of politics. Journalism, philosophy and the national struggle for freedom. In short this biography depicts all the lights and shades which mingled in the grand composition that the Lokmanya was the author has also tried to make comparison between Gandhi and Tilak, this biography differs from the foregoing biographies in another vital aspect some of them have made passing references to Tilak's social views while others are silent upon this point. This book has dealt with this aspect of Tilak's like in detail.

N.G. Jog,³³ in his book *Lokamanya Tilak* has discussed the life and activities of Lokamanya Tilak. In his book he has highlighted Tilak's role as an educationist. He has also discussed his ideas on social and political reforms. Jog has examined the role played by Tilak in organizing *Ganapati* and *Shivaji* festivals and work done by him during the famine of 1896-97 and plague of 1897. N.G Jog has discussed Lokamanya's role in Indian National Congress and in Home Rule movement. He has highlighted Tilak's mission in Britain and has discussed his stay in Mandalay. An attempt has also been made to compare the ideas of Tilak with Gokhale and Gandhi.

³² Dhananjay keer, *Lokamanya, Tilak: Father of Indian Freedom Struggle*, Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1969.

³³ N.G. Jog, *Lokamanya Tilak*, New Delhi: Indian Government Publications Division 1970.

Richard I. Cashman, in his book *The Myth of the Lokmanya Tilak and Mass Politics in Mahabhrata*³⁴, has discussed mass movements started by Lokmanya Tilak between 1893-1908. He has examined Tilak's role in *Ganapati* and the Shivaji festivals. The author has also highlighted Tilak's role in famine relief campaign and in politicizing the urban proletariat of Bombay city. Chashman has analysed the political organisation set up by Tilak. He has argued that Lokmanya's experiments with mass politics, which involved groups outside the sphere of elite politics provided a blue print for Gandhis later campaigns.

The book *Political Thought and Leadership of Lokmanya Tilak* edited by N.R. Inamdar³⁵ consists of articles contributed by twenty nine eminent scholars. These scholars have discussed different aspects of Lokmanya Tilak's political thought and leadership. They also throw light on the questions related to his moral and religious philosophy and economic problems. These scholars have discussed Tilak's views on *Swaraj*, social reforms and his role in Indian national Congress. A considerable attention has been given to Tilak's role in mass mobilization and he is regarded as the harbinger of India's mass upsurge.

The book *political thinker of modern India* edited by verinder Grover³⁶, consists of articles contributed by various eminent scholars depicting various aspects of Tilak's life and ideas. These articles throw light on social political and economic philosophy of Lokamanya Tilak. The volume divided into three parts. Part only is related to the political philosophy

³⁴ Richard I. Cashman, *The Myth of the Lokmanya Tilak and Mass Politics in Mahabhart*, California: Berkeley University of Press, 1975.

³⁵ N.R. Inamdar, *Political Thought and Leadership of Lokmanya Tilak*, New Delhi People's Publishing Company, 1983.

³⁶ Verinder Grover, Op. Cit.

of Tilak, his social and political contribution and his role in the Indian National Congress. Part Two deals with the writings and speeches of Tilak. Part three consists of articles dealing with Tilak and his contemporaries. An attempt has been made to compare ideas of Tilak with Gandhi, Ram Mohan Roy, Ranade, Jayaprakash Narayan and Tagore. This part also includes Tilak's attitude towards Montague-Chemsford reforms, Tilak and the *Muslims* and Tilak as a Nation builder.

Suneera Kapoor in her book *Sri Aurobindo Ghosh and Bal Gangadhar Tilak*³⁷ has undertaken a comparative analysis of the ideas of Tilak and Aurobindo Ghosh. It is an indepth study in the political ideas of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh and Bal Gangadhar Tilak. It differs from the earlier studies as it takes a comparative perspective and enumerates the similarities and differences between the political ideas of Aurobindo Ghosh and Lokamanya Tilak. These have been highlighted by the author while trying she had tried to examine the development of the idea of freedom in the Western and Indian thought. This is followed by a discussion on the views of Aurobindo Ghosh and of Tilak on human nature society state, universe an ultimate reality. The purpose of this study is to bring to light the various aspects of the concept of freedom in the writings of Aurobindo Ghosh and Tilak.

³⁷ Suneera Kapoor, *Sri Aurobindo Ghosh and Bal Gangadhar Tilak: The Spirit of Freedom*, New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publications, 1991.

Methodology

The question of methodology largely revolves itself into the question of approach and that of the appropriate tools and techniques for data collection and analysis. The present dissertation has dealt with Tilak's concept of nationalism. In this context, first of all an attempt has been made to consult the works by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, subject to their availability in the library. Along with this, the work of academicians and researchers on his philosophy, have been consulted. As the pure textual analyses does not enable the researchers to understand possible hidden or oblique references so along with textual analysis contextual method has been followed in order to study and understand the context and the circumstances under which his political ideas developed.

Chapter one deals with the biography of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, influences upon him that moulded his personality, review of literature that has been consulted and the methodology. Chapter two deals with the concept of nationalism in general, its meaning and development as well as the emergence of Indian nationalism. Chapter three is concerned with the ideas of Tilak on nationalism. Chapter four highlights Tilak views on *Swaraj* through which his idea of nationalism reached its culmination. The final chapter deals with evaluation of this concept with reference to its critique, appreciation and the relevance in the present socio-political scenario.

Objectives of the Study

The present study is intended to study Tilak's concept of nationalism, with an emphasis on Tilak's contribution to national movement in India and its relevance in the present scenario. In the context of the research problem, following aspects have been taken up for study:

- 1) Biography of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and the social context under which he gave the concept of nationalism.
- 2) Meaning and the origin of the concept of nationalism in general.
- 3) The growth and development of the concept of nationalism in India.
- 4) The study of Tilak's concept of nationalism.
- 5) The study of techniques adopted and recommended by Tilak for the culmination of nationalism into national freedom.
- 6) An evaluation and relevance of Tilak's concept of nationalism with reference to the national movement as well as the contemporary socio-political scenario.

CHAPTER-II

THE CONCEPT OF NATIONALISM

Nationalism has been central to the modern political order and if there is one point on which there is agreement on the point it is that the term 'nationalism' is quite modern. Its earliest recorded use in anything like a recognizably social and political sense goes back to the German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder and the French counter revolutionary cleric, the Abbe Augustin de Barruel at the end of the eighteenth century. It was rarely used in the early nineteenth century. In English, its first use, in 1836, appears to be theological, the doctrine that certain nations are divinely elected. Thereafter, it tended to be equated with national egotism but usually other terms, such as 'nationality' and 'nationalizes', with the meanings of national fervor or national individuality were preferred.¹

One writer who has attempted to clarify the process of debate about culture and society by drawing attention to the history of the meanings of words is Raymond Williams. He elaborates the framework of ideas and the historical context of "nation."

Nation...has been in common use in English from the late 13th century, originally with primary sense of a racial group rather than a politically organized grouping. It is not easy to date the emergence of the predominant modern sense of political formation...clear political use were evident from the 16th century and were common from the late 17th century...There was from the early 17th century a use of the

¹ Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2001, P.5.

nation to mean the whole people of a country, often in contrast, as still in political argument, with some group within it. The adjective national (as now in national interest) was used in this persuasive unitary sense from the 17th century. The derived noun national, which is clearly political, is more recent...Nationality, which has been used in a broad sense from the late 17th century, acquired its modern political sense in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

Nationalist appeared in the early 18th century and nationalism in the early 19th century. Each became common from the mid-19th century. The persistent overlap between racial grouping and political formation has been important, since claims to be a nation and to have national right, often envisaged the formation of a nation in the political sense, even against the will of an existing political nation which included and claimed the loyalty of this grouping... In practice, given the extent of conquest and domination, nationalist movements have as often been based on an existing but subordinate political grouping as upon a group distinguished by a specific language or by a supposed racial community. Nationalism has been a political movement in subjected countries which include several races and language (as India) as well as in subjected countries or regions where the distinction is a specific language or religion or supposed racial origin...²

Benedict Anderson offers a helpful interpretation of the rise of nations and nationalism in his *Imagined Communities* (1983). A nation, suggests Anderson, can be thought of as an "imagined community", with limited boundaries, a sovereign state which is the nation's emblem, and a sense of fraternity.

² Gillian Whitlock and David Carter, *Images of Australia : An Introductory Reader in Australian Studies*, Australia: Published by University of Queensland , 1992, PP. 9-10.

The turning point of Anderson's concept of the nation is the nation of a community which is tied not by religion (as in Medieval Christendom) or by kin (as in tribal or some types of peasant society), but by its, "imagined" status because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the mind of each lives the image of their communion.³

It was really only during the 20th century that the term nationalism acquired the range of meaning that is associated with it. Today of these usages, the most important are:

1. A process of formation or growth of nations;
2. A sentiment or consciousness of belonging to the nation;
3. A language and symbolism of the nation;
4. A social and political movement on behalf of the nation;
5. A doctrine and/or ideology of the nation, both general and particular.⁴

Nationalism is a political creed that underlies the cohesion of modern societies and legitimizes their claim to authority. Nationalism centers the supreme loyalty of the overwhelming majority of the people upon the nation, state, either existing or desired.⁵

The nation-state is the almost undisputed foundation of world order, the main object of individual loyalties, the chief defender of a man's identity. It is far more significant for the individual and for world security than any previous types of

³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso, 1983, P.15.

⁴ Anthony D. Smith, *Op. Cit*, P.290.

⁵ David L. Sills., *International Encyclopedia of Social Science*, Vol. II, The Macmillan Company Press, 1968. P. 63.

political and social organizations. It permeates everybody's outlook so much that it hardly questions its legitimacy today. The nation-state has become an indispensable prop in one's thinking, and nations are regarded like skin-colour-as a 'natural' attribute of man.⁶ ✓

Nationalism as a modern phenomenon, originates from the assumption that nation is the primary and natural focus of allegiance. Until the 18th century the focus of such allegiance was more likely to be a smaller unit, such as the fiefdom, religious group, city, or immediate locality. In the religious context, for example, the focus of allegiance would be a supranational group, such as the Christian community as a whole, called Christendom. The nation was therefore one among many objects of allegiance. Only in the 18 century did the nation first begin to become the focal point of political activity. There were many reasons for this. The rise of large, centralized state ruled by absolute monarchs helped bring about the demise of feudal structures and other objects of local loyalty. The secularization of life and education fostered the vernacular languages and further weakened the ties of church and religious sects. Equally important, expanding commerce, capitalism and industrialization created a need for unified, centralized states whose rising middle classes could directly participate in the act of government.⁷ ✓

Unknown before the eighteenth century, when it originated in northwestern Europe and northern America, nationalism spread with ever growing rapidity over all the earth, and since the middle of the twentieth century it has become a

⁶ A.D. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, London : Gerald-Duckworth and Co., 1983, PP. 2-3.

⁷ Jacob. E. Safra & James. E. Goulka, *The New Encyclopadia Britannica*, Inc. Chicago: 1997. P.512.

universal idea-force of contemporary history. It expresses itself in the most varied and opposite ideologies in democracy, fascism and Communism-as well. The nineteenth century in Europe has been rightly called the age of nationalism. The twentieth century, in which history has shifted from a European to a global basis may become known as the age of pan-nationalism.

Although, certain traits are common to all forms of nationalism, each form is conditioned by the social structure, the intellectual traditions and cultural history, and the geographic location of the society in which nationalism asserts itself. Therefore, only a comparative historical study of the various forms of nationalism can do justice to any one of them, and only an interdisciplinary approach will be able to cover the many facets of a highly complex phenomenon. No major collective research effort has yet been undertaken in this field in spite of its vital importance for an understanding of the contemporary world.⁸

A common language and geographic contiguity are the two most important factors in determining whether people cohere in a nation. A common religion, race, political institutions and various historical factors also help influence the constitution of a nation.⁹ Thus, nationalism may take different forms. The most usual of them are common descent, language, territory, political entity, customs and tradition, and religion. Modern nationalities, however, are mixtures of different, and sometimes even very distant races. The great migratory movements of history and the mobility of modern life

⁸ David L. Sills, Op. Cit., PP. 63-64.

⁹ Jacob. E., Safra, James. E. Goulka, Op. Cit., P. 512.

have led everywhere to an intermingling, so that few if any nationalities can at present claim anything approaching common descent.

The importance of language for the formation and life of a nationality was stressed by Herder and Fichte. But there are many nationalities who have no languages, of their own like the Swiss, who speak four different language, or the Latin American nationalities, all of whom speak Spanish or Portuguese. The English speaking nations (also the Spanish speaking) are partly of similar descent; they speak the same language, had until quite recently same historical background, and also traditions and customs very much akin to each other, yet they represent different nationalities with frequently conflicting aspirations.

Customs and traditions were first stressed in their importance for nationality by Rousseau. Each nation undoubtedly has its customs, traditions, and institutions; but these often vary greatly from locality to locality, and, on the other hand, tend over times to become standardized all over the world or at least over large areas. Customs and manners nowadays often change with great rapidity. Religion was the great dominating force before the rise of nationalism in modern times. This is true in Western as well as Eastern Christianity, in Islam and in India. Therefore the rise of nationalities and of nationalism was accompanied by transformations in religious attitude of man, and in many ways the growth of nationalities has been helped or hindered by the influence of religion.

The most important outward factor in the formation of nationalities is a common territory, or rather, the state. Many new nationalities, like the Canadian, developed entirely because they formed a political and geographic entity. Although

some of these objective factors are of great importance for the formation of nationalities, the most essential element is a living and active corporate will.¹⁰

Thus, nationalism, as understood today, it is not older than the second half of the eighteenth century. Its first great manifestation was the French Revolution, which gave the new movement an increased dynamic force. Nationalism had become manifest, however, at the end of the 18th century almost simultaneously in a number of widely separated European countries. Although the French Revolution was one of the most powerful factors in its intensification and spread, this did not mark the date of its birth.

Like all historical movements, nationalism has its roots deep in the past. The condition which made its emergence at possible had matured for centuries before they conveyed its formation. These political, economic, and intellectual developments took a long time for their growth, and proceeded at a different pace in the various countries. It is impossible to grade them according to their importance or to make one dependent upon another. All are closely interconnected, each reacting upon the other; and although their growth can be traced separately, their effects and consequences can not be separated.

Nationalism is inconceivable without the ideas of popular sovereignty preceding without a complete revision of the position of ruler and ruled, of classes and castes. The aspect of the universe and of society had to be secularized with the help of a new natural science and natural law as understood by Grotious and Locke. The traditionalism of economic life had to

¹⁰ Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study Its Origins and Background*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946, PP. 14-15.

be broken by the rise of the third estate, which was to turn the attention away from the royal courts and their civilization to the life, language, and arts of the people. This new class found itself less bound by tradition than the nobility or clergy; it represented a new force striving for new things; it was ready to break with the past, flouting tradition in its opinion even more than it did in reality. Where the third estate became powerful in the eighteenth century—as in great Britain, in France, and in the United States, nationalism found its expression predominantly, but never exclusively, in political and economic changes. Where on the other hand, the third estate was still weak and only in a budding stage at the beginning of the nineteenth century, as Germany, Italy, and among the slavonic people, nationalism found its expression predominantly in the cultural field.

The growth of nationalism is the process of integration of the masses of the people into a common political form. Nationalism, therefore presupposes the existence, in fact as an ideal, of a centralized form of government over a large and distinct territory. This form was created by the absolute monarchs, who were the pacemakers of modern nationalism. The French Revolution inherited and continued the centralizing tendencies of the kings, but at the same time it filled the central organization with a new spirit and gave it a power of cohesion unknown before. Nationalism is unthinkable before the emergence of the modern state in the period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. Nationalism accepted this form, but changed it by animating it with a new feeling of life and with a new religious fervour. Nationalism used in its growth some of the oldest and most primitive feelings of man, found throughout history as important factors in the formation of social groups.

There is a "Natural tendency" in man and "Natural tendency" means a tendency which having been produced by social circumstances from time practically immemorial, appears to us as natural-to love his birthplace or the place of his childhood sojourn, its surroundings, its climate, the contours of hill and valleys, of rivers and trees. All human beings are subject to the immense power of habitude, and even if in a later stage of development they are attracted by the unknown and by change, they are delighted to come back and to be at rest in the reassuring right of the familiar.¹¹ These feelings have always existed. They do not form nationalism; they correspond to certain factors; territory language, common descent-which are also found in nationalism. But here they are entirely transformed, charged with new and different emotions, and embedded in a broader context. They are the natural elements out of which nationalism is formed; but nationalism is not a natural phenomenon, not a product of "eternal" or "natural" laws; it is product of the growth of social and intellectual factors at a certain stage of history. ¹²

Emergence and Growth of Indian Nationalism

Most of the Afro-Asian countries remained under colonial rule for a long time. The process of nationalism continued during the twentieth century when the awakened people of Asiatic and African continents such as the Indians, the Chinese, the Turks, the Arabs and the Egyptians organized movements to remove indigenous feudal or foreign imperialistic obstacles in the way of their full development as free nations. Emergence of nationalism in India was a part of the nationalism in third world countries. It came into being during the British

¹¹ Hans Kohn, Op. Cit. PP. 3-5.

¹² Ibid., P. 6.

period as a result of the action and interaction of numerous subjective and objective forces and factors which developed within the Indian society under the conditions of the British rule and the impact of world forces.¹³ The process of the growth of Indian nationalism has been very complex and many aided.¹⁴

Since the 16th century when modern science and technology began to be developed by the western nations, Asia was no longer a match for Europe. In the 16th and 17th centuries, there was the growth of European nationalism, extensive commodity production and world commerce. Asia, in this context, became a mere field of operation for European imperialism and colonialism. The rise of the industrial revolution intensified the process of augmentation of economic and political power by the western nations. In the eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth century the Asiatic countries presented a spectacle of thorough economic decline, political prostration, social stagnation and cultural decadence. Asia had become a subordinate category in world history.

The establishment of British rule in India in a systematic basis began with the Anglo French wars (1740-1763) in south India, the battles of Plassey (June 23, 1757) and Buxar (Oct 23, 1764) and the grant of the Dewani right by Shah Alam (Aug. 11, 1765). The East India Company, the introduction of the mighty force of British imperialism, harnessed with all the power of diplomacy, statecraft and an advanced military armament, appeared like a cataclysmic element in Indian politics and gradually the major portions of India came under the territorial possessions of the East India Company. Clive

¹³ A.R. Desai, *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*, Bombay: Popular Prakasham, 1976, P. 5.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Warren Hastings, Wellesley, Lord Hastings and Dalhousie were the leaders in the imperialistic conquest of India. The failure of the great patriotic struggle of 1857 led by Laxmibai, Nana Sahab, Tanya tope, Bahadur Shah, Mangal Pande, Kumar Singh, Azimulla Khan and other buttressed British imperialistic hold on the country.¹⁵

Pre-British Indian society had a social structure quite unique and perhaps without parallel in history. It sharply differed in its economic base from the precapitalist medieval societies of European countries. Further, India was a vast country inhabited by huge population, speaking many languages and professing different religions. Socially the Hindus, comprising two-third of the population were almost atomized in various castes and sub-castes. Again, Hinduism itself was not homogenous religion but a conglomeration of religious cults which divided the Hindu people into a number of sects. This extreme social and religions division of the Hindus in particular and the Indians in general presented a peculiar background to the growth of nationalism in India.

Nationalism in other countries did not rise amidst such peculiarly powerful traditions and institutions. India experienced one of the largest colonial rule in the world, lasting 190 years (1757-1947) she was also the largest and richest colony at the time of British conquest. The process of change from colony to free nation began with the emergence of nationalism in the last quarter of the 19th century. The British rulers, for their own purpose radically changed the economic structure of the Indian society, established a centralized state, introduced modern education, modern means of

¹⁵ V.P. Varma, *Modern Political Thought*, Agra: Lakshmi Narain Agarwal Education Publishers P. 3.

communications and other institutions. In the colonial world nationalism was the unintended product of colonial policy. For the colonial ruler, it was necessary, in order to be able to rule effectively over a servile country, that changes to be introduced in the pre-colonial traditional society and system of government.

The emergence of nationalism was one of the consequences of the changes thus introduced. For example, in many colonies, the colonial ruler established political unity and introduced a uniform system of administration and laws which in turn gave the colonial people a focal point for political identification and helped them in transcending a myriad of local loyalties and identities. Similarly western language and western educational system introduced in most colonies for administrative convenience, also gave these colonies their first lingua Franca and a medium of exchange of cultural and political ideas. This process was further facilitated by the introduction of printing press and newspapers. The processes of social change are generally described as westernization or modernization. In India the British began with modernization in the early years of the 1835. The emergence of cultural and political nationalism was one of the consequences of this change in their strategy. ¹⁶

Nationalism, as a feeling of belonging to nation, first appeared at the cultural level before it manifested itself at the political level. The emergence of cultural nationalism was the result of a number of processes of social change which fall under the process of social mobilization, chiefly, the introduction of western education in the 19th century, which exposed educated Indians to the ideas on western philosophy

¹⁶ R.S. Chauhan, *Nationalism in Asia*, New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1973, P. 45.

and culture highlighted by European ideologists (British, French and German) and later Indians.

Many of the young graduates soon learned to judge the Indian way of life through western eyes. Actually, many came to discard the older Indian value system and to accept the rationalistic, materialistic, utilitarian doctrines of nineteenth century Europe with enthusiasm. Uprooted from their own heritage these young men started remaking India in the image of the west by advocating social reforms. Some of the new social reformers wanted to reject the philosophy of life of the Indian culture in all its aspects while others saw that there were some values in the classical way of life and that it was better to remake the Indian culture by making concessions to western concepts than to destroy it for a totally western vision of the world.¹⁷

The nature of colonial rule and its policies also played a crucial role in the transformation of cultural nationalism into political nationalism. Exposure to western political ideas and institutions instilled a desire among western educated Indians to have a share in governance of their one country. But the policies of the colonial government ruled out such participation, and pointed to the need for political action for organizing political associations. Moreover, racialism subtly practised by the colonial rulers and openly by the non-official British community in India, hastened the process of emergence of political associations.

Since the initial process of social mobilization and the emergence of cultural nationalism took place in an unintegrated colonial society and in the absence of a nation building agent,

¹⁷ T.L. Shay, *The Legacy of the Lokamanya*, London : Oxford University Press, 1956, PP. 36-40.

the early cultural and political associations were not national in character but regional or religious. In India the early cultural and political associations were Hindu, Muslim or provincial associations like Indian association founded by S.N. Banerjee in Bengal, The *Sarvajnik Sabha* in Poona established by Chiplunkar etc., One of the important factors that led to the emergence of national political associations was the change in the scope of the policies of the British government. During its early stages, colonial rule in India, thus, was itself regional in its policies. The gradual consolidation of colonial rule and centralization of policy making generated national issues which pointed out to the Indians the need for a national political association, which led to the emergence of Indian national congress in 1885 on national basis. India's political movement thus assumed national character in 1885 through the establishment of India National Congress. Upto 1905, this organization governed by 'extremists' condemned the liberal policies of the 'moderate' section and initiated a new line of action. Prominent figures of militant nationalism were B.C. Pal, Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, etc.¹⁸

The moderates and the extremists were the two predominant groups in the Congress who were identified by their ideologies, approaches, use of symbols and the language used for the articulation of their thoughts. The renaissance and reformation of the nineteenth century India aroused a new awakening, which aimed at the purification of the society and the Hindu religion. There were two clear trends in the approaches of the people who wanted to emancipate India from one of the darkest periods of her history. While one group was cosmopolitan and eclectic and tried to assimilate the good

¹⁸ Anil Seal, *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism, Collaboration in the Late 19th Century* Cambridge: The University Press, 1968. P. 290.

aspects of other religions and cultures, the other group aimed at the revival of the great Indian culture, the introduction of socio-religious reforms and was intensely nationalistic and conservative in its approach. These two groups represented the philosophy and the ideology of the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj respectively and exercised great influence on the future political process of India. The moderate leaders of the Congress who followed a 'mendicant policy' also known as the policy of 'petitions and prayers' owed its origin to the ideology of the Brahmo Samaj.

The Extremist leaders on the other hand who advocated a radical policy, held the British responsible for India's socio-economic, cultural and religious decadence and despondency and wanted them to be ousted from the country drew heavily from the preachings of the Arya Samaj. From 1885 to 1891 for a period of seven years, the Congress was over enthusiastic in passing resolutions to prove that it was not a seditious organisation and that it was loyal to the British rule. It took all possible steps to convince the British Government that it would not cause it any harm. Due to this extremely docile and servile attitude, the Congress was practically ignored by the government. Surendranath Banerjee asked the congressmen to convince the masses that the British rule was not foreign and "asked them to look upon the British rulers and taking the place once held by the Kshatriyas and as being therefore part and parcel of the traditional administration"¹⁹ of the country. Congress Presidents like W.C. Banerjee, Manmohan Ghosh. Surenderanath Banerjee, Pherozechah Mehta and Dadabhai Naorji, were all known for their policy of political moderation and extreme softness towards the British Government. At the

¹⁹ Hari Hara Das, *Indian Political Thought*, New Delhi: National Publishing House, 2005, P. 26.

time of election of Dadabhai Naoroji to the British Parliament, Hume not only approved of his election but also expressed admiration for the loyalty of the moderate leaders towards the British Government. Hume thought that the election of such moderate leaders to the Parliament would provide additional strength to the Congress.

Pheroza Shah Mehta, a moderate leader was hastily elected as the President of the sixth Congress as no Englishman approached by Congress agreed to preside. Mehta solemnly proclaimed the principles of loyalty, moderation and constitutional methods. The Congress creed of extreme loyalty to the British Government was also reaffirmed by Lalmohan Ghosh by saying, 'our motto is reform, not revolution'.²⁰ Gopal Krishna Gokhale was another prominent moderate leader of the Congress who advocated the approach of petitions, prayers and constitutional methods. The influence of the Brahmo Samaj to a great extent determined the character of the early Congress, which was notorious for its professed loyalty. It has been rightly stated that if the Brahmo Samaj is the intellectual progenitor of the moderates, the Arya Samaj is the spiritual progenitor of the extremists. The leading extremists like Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurovindo Ghosh drew heavily from the philosophy of Arya Samaj. They refuted the Brahmo theory that there could have been no regeneration in India without the British rule, which alone released the Indians from their own bondage. The Arya Samaj had emerged as a militant organisation by unfastening the chains of intellectual, moral, religions and social bondage. The extremist leaders of the Congress imbibed the philosophy of the Arya Samaj.

²⁰ Ibid., P. 26.

However, it may be pointed out that all the western reformists did not recommend wholesale imitation of the west. The extremists were not less influenced by the British institutions, the English education and their concepts of liberty, equality and rights. The serious minded western reformists shared the same feeling with the revivalists or the extremists that India should look at western things with Indian eyes and should borrow only those things from the west which would be applicable to the Indian conditions. Though like the moderates, the extremists were also immensely influenced by western thought, literature and personalities, but where they differed from the moderates was that they did not want to be uprooted from their own traditions and culture. They insisted that the reconstruction of the Indian society should be done with reference to India's past religious and cultural heritage.

All the moderates without any exception believed in British fair play and justice and advocated that the interests of India and England were allied rather than antagonistic. This policy of appreciation and extreme softness towards British rule was bound to produce its reaction. This reaction came in the form of extremist challenge, which was basically revivalist, conservative and reactionary. Pride in India's past glory, Indian identity, intense patriotism, spiritual nationalism, preparedness to sacrifice for the cause of the country and an element of antipathy for the British rule constituted the hallmark of the political philosophy and programme of action of the extremists.

Partition of Bengal (1905, July 20) also helped in ascendancy of political extremism. Lord Curzon partitioned Bengal into two parts unmindful of the reactions of the people. Bengal was the most famous citadel of nationalist or extremist politics in the beginning of the twentieth century. In order to stem the tide of growing solidarity of Bengal nationalism, which

set the trend for the whole country, Curzon decided to partition Bengal. The British Government's arguments that it was done for cogent administrative reasons was far from the truth and was pure and simple bureaucratic eyewash. Referring to the object of the British Government in partitioning Bengal, A.L. Mazumdar has rightly observed that it "was not only to relieve the Bengal administration but to create a Mohammedan province where Islam could be predominant and its followers in ascendancy".²¹ The British policy of 'Divide and Rule' was at its best. Curzon wanted to play the nasty game of dividing the Hindus and Muslims of Bengal and to set the one against the other. The British greatly succeeded in this policy through their encouragement and active assistance to Muslims League, creation of separate electorate for the Muslims and by giving them priority and protection.

The political atmosphere in country was highly charged in 1905 and the British Government made it still worse by its unwise and whimsical actions. It failed to solve the economic problems of the people. Educational facilities were restricted. New taxes were imposed against the consent of the people. Unwise decisions of the government increased unemployment and poverty. Indians were already agitated due to the policy of the discrimination followed by the government and the deliberate violations of queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858 and the statutes. Lord Curzon further aggravated the situation by deliberately trying to insult the Indians by questioning their ability, capacity, and reliability in discharging public services.

Thus, the systematic oppression of the people, racial discrimination, economic exploitation, implementation of socio-religious reforms without taking the people into confidence,

²¹ Ibid., P. 28.

bureaucratic high-handedness and ruthless suppression democratic aspirations of the people by the British, all these factors created ill will and hatred in the minds of the people and led to the growth of national consciousness in India.

The twenty first session of the Congress in 1905 marked the beginning of the split in the Congress which became open in 1907 at the time of the Surat Session. The Extremists tried to canvas for wider support and vehemently opposed the retrograde policy of the Moderates. Tilak declared, "We are determined not to allow the Congress to retrograde. If they are not prepared to brave the dangers, let them quit, but they should not ask us to retrograde....The Congress is an organisation of all people and the voice of the people should predominate. The policy of the Moderates is destructive. I do not want you to follow it; we want to progress."²²

The Surat Congress met on December 27, 1907 and the whole atmosphere was surcharged with rumours of all kinds. The previous day of the session was the occasion for staging the high drama of confrontation between the Moderates and the Extremists on the issue of the draft copy of the Congress constitution prepared by Gokhale, which included retrograde steps. The Nationalist Conference met at Haripur, at the outskirts of Surat on December 23, 1907 to counteract against the Moderates' retrograde steps and passed resolutions on 'Total Boycott' and 'Complete Independence.' There was lot of Pandemonium and shouting of slogans and exhibition of rowdyism, which resulted in the dissolution of the Congress session at Surat. The Extremists were expelled from the Congress. The Moderates met on December 28, 1907 and held Tilak responsible for the Congress split: "Tilak had been

²² Ibid., PP.30-31

feeding the flames which have burnt the Congress to ashes. He is not a patriot but a traitor to the country, and he blackened himself. May God save us from such patriots."²³ The split in the Congress led to repressive measures against the extremists and most of them were sent behind the bars. For the time being political extremism was relegated to the background and the Moderates' Congress expressed its "most sincere and grateful thanks" to Morley and Minto for the reforms and reverted to its traditional role of 'Petitions and Prayers' and 'Constitutional Agitation'.

The First World War broke out in 1914 and the Congress expressed its most enthusiastic support to the British Government in its war efforts. Even Mahatma Gandhi appealed to the Indians to extend full cooperation to the British. Britain had promised many constitutional reforms after the war, in return for the Indian support. The wages, shortage of supplies and death of large number of Indians in the battlefield, the bitterness of War and its many-sided effects, economic misery and the frustration due to non-fulfillment of promises made during the War, hardened the Indian attitude against the British rule and the climate was against propitious for the growth political extremism. After the release of Tilak from the jail in 1914 and the death of Gokhale in 1915, there was ascendance of the extremists in the Congress. Other extremist leaders joined the Congress and vowed to fight for the emancipation of India. The Mountagu-Chelmsford Report of 1918 was totally unsatisfactory and as Mrs. Besant described, it was "Ungenerous for England to offer and unworthy for India to accept." The government also passed the infamous Rowlatt Act in 1918, which gave a fatal blow to the moderates and

²³ Ibid., PP. 31-32.

provoked the extremists to plan and execute more vigorous political action against the British. The extremists decided to reinvigorate the Congress and use it as powerful organization to fight against the government.²⁴

From 1894 to 1904, Tilak was unable to get the necessary opportunity to carry on a dynamic political agitation as he held a small following in the Congress. The anti-partition agitation provided him the much sought for opportunity of intensified political action. Eventually, Tilak emerged as an all-India leader of the new Nationalist Party which was committed to the philosophy of national freedom to be attained by *Swadeshi*, Boycott and National Education.²⁵

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, P. 167.

CHAPTER-III

TILAK'S IDEALS ON NATIONALISM

The idea of nationalism reached the Indian soil in 19th century. Exposed to the invigorating and modernizing ideologies of the west and eager to learn the secrets of western ascendancy, the educated Indians were too willing to receive the ideology of nationalism. Evidently, Tilak also shared the view that awareness of nationhood acts as a foundation necessary for progress in today's terminology—'Modernization'. Tilak, naturally, felt it necessary to investigate into the nature and character of 'nationalism' and to identify the essential components of a 'nation'.

Tilak did not look upon nationalism as some 'spiritual' phenomenon. It is true that Tilak himself was an ardent believer in the Advaita philosophy and was proud of Hindu philosophical so heritage.¹ Tilak had deep belief in the Advaita philosophy. The concept of the highest spiritual absolute, which is discussed in *Rigveda* and the Vedantic philosophy of the *Upanishads* and *Bhagavad Gita*, had appealed to him. He accepted the idea of a personal God. He said: "Religion in the true sense of word, means and includes the knowledge of the nature of God and soul and of the way and means by which the human soul can attain salvation."² He accepted the importance of religious symbols for the people with less developed consciousness. The *Upanishads* recognized these symbols and their efficacy. Tilak strongly believed in the incarnation of God

¹ Shanta Sathe, *Lokmanya Tilak, His Social and Political Thought*, Delhi: Ajanta Publication, 1994. P. 93.

² Hari Hara Das, *Indian Political Thought*, New Delhi: National Publication, 2005, P.157.

and accepted that Krishna was an incarnation of God. The striking feature is that he also accepted the need of devotion or *Bhakti* in religious life. He was not antagonistic to religious ceremonies. He said that the specific religious ceremonies could change and did change and they should be observed so long as they were not formally changed.

He took pride in being a Sanatanist Hindu.³ However, he did not furnish a spiritual-metaphysical explanation of nationalism. Nationalism, for Tilak did not represent any mystic force. To him, "nation" was therefore, not a manifestation of some world spirit. Accordingly, in Tilak, one does not come across with the 'deification' of 'nation'. Tilak looked upon 'nation' as one form of secular social organization among many other such organizations. He described these organizations as forming concentric circles, one bigger than the other, each relevant in its own sphere of influence. 'Nationalism' for him, was thus a stage between smaller social organizations and the ultimate goal of universal brotherhood.⁴ (Vishwa Bandhutra)

Tilak as a political thinker, expounded the theory of nationalism which was a synthesis of the teachings of both eastern and western thinkers. It would not be wrong to emphasize that Tilak did not adopt an idealistic or conceptual and speculative approach to politics but on the contrary his approach was realistic.⁵

Tilak is often criticized for having a communal approach in organizing the *Ganesh* and *Shivaji* festivals. But this charge is baseless. Tilak was a nationalist and the purpose of organizing these festivals was to arouse the national spirit. He

³ Ibid.,

⁴ Shanta Sathe, Cp. Cit. P.94.

⁵ Verinder Grover, *Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Political Thinkers of Modern India, Vol. IV*, New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publications, 1991.

made efforts to symbolise the eternal religious and historical traditions of the people. The *Ganapati* and the *Shivaji* festivals were, no doubt, the symbols of the growing nationalism in Maharashtra and subsequently, it could spread to other parts of India also. Tilak, according to nationalism was not a visible and concrete entity but a kind of sentiment, an idea, to generate the memories of the great figures who had played a significant part in the country's history. According to him, Shivaji had in mind the sentiment of good of the people and did not think in narrow terms of local subdivisions and social segments, and by virtue of his great achievements, he, could even be called an embodiment of the divine being. He had no malice against the Muslims. In fact, he believed that a combination of the Hindu intellect and Muslim valour would be irresistible and was bound to bring about the destruction of British bureaucracy. When the Khilafat agitation was launched by Muslim leaders, Tilak offered full support and attended the first Khilafat Conference at Delhi in 1920. He wanted Hindus and Muslims to work together for the common national interest. As a matter of fact, Maulana Shaukat Ali was one of the pallbearers when Tilak died during the Khilafat movement. As a leader,⁶ Tilak wanted to create solid nationalistic following in Maharashtra and for this purpose

Tilak's conception of Indian nationalism was an amalgam of diverse strands of thought: pride in the legacy of ancient India; appreciation of western learning and science; recognition of economic exploitation by foreign rulers; and the recognition of the need to form a national political movement of the people across the barriers of race, caste, religion and sex. Tilak thought of nationalism as operating at two levels-the regional

⁶ H.H. Das, P.S.N., Patro, *Indian Political Traditions*, Bangalore: Sterling Publishers, 1948, PP. 126-127.

and the national. He believed that a regional historical hero or a regional religious symbol could concretize the national sentiment in the people. As he matured as a national leader, the countrywide strand of his idea of Indian nationalism engulfed and assimilated the regional strand.

Tilak although, remained a devout Hindu and gave priority to the political, self-rule movement over social reform movement, the impact of western education on him was impressive. From it he derived his commitment to the liberal values of constitutional government, rule of law, individual freedom, freedom of the press, scientific progress, and freedom of political expression and organization. His advocacy of national freedom and self-rule within the British Empire was also the result of his western education. When the 1892 Indian councils Act was passed providing for the indirect election of representatives from local bodies and economic associations, Tilak praised it as a gain from British rule.⁷

He regarded the arousal of political consciousness among the people as the most important consequence of British rule. He foresaw that *Swaraj* would be the inevitable consequence of such a development. According to him the other gains from British rule were political and legal order, administrative stability, infrastructural facilities for agriculture, trade, commerce and mining and educational institutions. He placed very high value on the freedom of the press, which he used effectively to arouse the people's national sentiments. He recognized the difference between Maratha rule and British rule as the difference between a traditional legal system and modern, written, codified legal system. On the occasion of the death of Queen Victoria in 1901, Tilak noted that peace,

⁷ N.R. Inamdar, *Political Thought and Leadership of Lokmanya Tilak*, New Delhi: People's Publishing Company, 1983, P. 115.

impartial rule and progress were the beneficial aspects of her long rule. However, during the partition of Bengal (1903-08) he revived his assessment of the nature and consequences of foreign rule. He attacked British rule as unconstitutional and detrimental to the basic political rights of the Indians. Earlier in 1892, he had gone to the extent of admiring the generosity, farsightedness and wisdom of the British electorate in returning Dadabhai Naoroji to the House of Commons from central Finsbury.⁸

¶ The feeling of oneness among the people and pride in their country's heritage were the vital forces of nationalism for Tilak. He believed that nationalism can be developed by fostering among the people the feeling that they have common interests to be pursued and realized through united political action. This idealistic and romantic conception of nationalism did inspire and unite the de-spirited and divided people of India. Tilak referred to Akbar and Shivaji as illustrious rulers who lodged national unity across regional, religious and caste barriers.

The bases of nationalism Tilak knew, were both objective and subjective. Objective factors as common language, territory and religion in his opinion contributed to the psychological or subjective, bases of nationalism. He believed that psychological feelings are indeed of fundamental importance for nationalism. Tilak also believed that nationalism can be promoted and strengthened if the people's psychological bonds are given symbolic expressions of an objective, visible or concrete type, namely, flags, insignia and the celebration of social and religious festivals. Accordingly, Tilak revived the *Ganapati* festival and used it as a means to foster the unity of Brahmans and non-Brahmans, in addition to

⁸ Ibid., PP.115-116.

the political agitations as a means to foster the feeling of nationalism in the people for instance.⁹

Nationalism for Tilak was a psychological and spiritual means for attaining freedom in tribal form. Nationalism flourished with common language, decent, religion, habitation and territory and have led to the unity of the nation. These factors he recommended as objective. At the same time in his opinion subjective psychological factor is created by heritage of historical traditions. Tilak said; "nationalism is not visible and concrete entity but is a kind of symbolism, an idea and in generating this idea, the historic memories of the great figures of the country play a significant part."¹⁰ Tilak said "Festivals are symbolical adjuncts of nationalism. The festivals meant for unity of participators can be utilized by leaders for national purposes."¹¹ *Ganapati* and Shivaji festivals, started by Tilak, led to nationalism and unity. *Ganapati* festivals were celebrated from the past by the donations received from chiefs. Tilak gave it a public character and this helped to foster nationalism in the masses. Shivaji festivals were started through the initiative of English rulers in 1895. *Samadhi* of Shivaji was reconstructed at Rajgarh. Tilak called him '*Vibhuti*' of *Gita*. *Vibhuti* was said to have all creative powers of divine nature. After Tilak's release in 1900 a grand celebration was held at Rajgarh. This festival spread upto Bengal and Japan in the beginning of 20th century. Tilak was criticized for bringing up anti Muslim symbols. But that was not his intention. Just as Shivaji opposed the oppressive rule of Muslims, he called upon the people both Hindu and Muslims to oppose the oppressive rule of British bureaucracy. No doubt he had deep faith in Hindu religion and culture but he

⁹ Ibid., P. 116.

¹⁰ Urmila Sharma, S.K. Sharma, *Indian Political Thought*, Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 1998, P. 115.

¹¹ Ibid.

was not opposed to Muslim interests either as he extended support to the Khilafat movement. Even Jinnah, and M.A. Ansari praised the nationalistic and compromising attitude of Tilak for whose counsel and moderation Lucknow pact of 1916 could be achieved.¹² In *Kesari*, dated 8th April, 1901, Tilak spoke of Congress movement for getting some rights. Shivaji festival gave impetus in to the movement, in his opinion Indian nationalism should come from the heart of public and not by the western writers. So Tilak thought that the memories of Shivaji would foster the national sentiments among the public. Shivaji gave the symbol for resistance against the oppressors.

His philosophy of rationalism was a mixture of western and eastern thoughts. Tilak based his nationalism on western theories of national independence and self-determination. In his historical trial speech of 1905 he quoted J.S. Mill's view about nationalism. In 1919 he accepted Wilson's idea of self determination and applied it to India. He gave the word 'Swaraj' which was used by Shivaji in his Maratha Policy. It was because of his spiritual approach and outlook that Tilak regarded nationalism as right as well as *Dharma*. He gave *Swaraj* a moral as well as spiritual interpretation. According to him politically it meant home rule while morally it meant attainment of perfection of self-control which was required for the performance of *Swadharma* (one's duty). Spiritually *Swaraj* meant the attainment of inner freedom and delight. In his words "it is a life centered in self and dependent upon self. There is *Swaraj* in the world as well as in the world hereafter. The Rishis who laid down the law of duty took themselves to forests because the people were already enjoying *Swaraj* or people's dominion which was administered and defended in the first instance by Kshatriya kings. It is my conviction; it is my thesis

¹² Ibid.

that *Swaraj* in the life to come cannot be the reward of the people who have not enjoyed in this world".¹³

Tilak's nationalism had economic foundation too. He realized that British government was using India as its biggest market and destroying Indian industries. Hence he vociferously declared "*Swadeshi* and *Swadeshi* alone should be our battle cry."¹⁴ He called upon the people to boycott British goods. But Tilak's nationalism though based on religious, historical symbols never suffered from narrow aggressiveness. Tilak wrote in his "*Gita-Rahasya*" love of the country is only a step to cosmopolitanism"¹⁵ and believed in the Sanskrit Shloka "*Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam*" which meant that for the wise men of generous feelings the whole world is one big family.

He was for the Indian nation because he believed that India had a unique personality of her own which could be distinguished from others. He believed that the people inhabiting this part of the globe had certain common characteristics which other members of the human group did not share. These people could realize their identity only by becoming independent of the control of others. Nationalists often turn chauvinists. But for Tilak nationalism and peace went together. He was clear in his mind that India was self-contained, harboured no design against the integrity of other states and had no ambition outside its geographical boundaries. For him the two—namely nationalism and the Vedantic ideal of human unity were two sides of the same coin. The second included the first. He declared:

¹³ Dusmanta Kumar Mohanty, *Indian Political Tradition: From Manu to Ambedkar*, New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 1997, P.207.

¹⁴ Urmila Sharma, S.K. Sharma. Op. Cit, P.116.

¹⁵ Ibid., P. 207.

The two ideals are mutually consistent and both of them demand a kind of self-control..., a kind of higher altruistic feeling by which man is impelled to ignore self-consideration and to work persons and for objects which do not in the least favour any egotistic aim. The feeling is one of love for humanity, for the equality of men before God, and it is the spirit of that governs the two ideals, Vedantic and national. ¹⁶

Tilak who had started his political life as a Maratha protagonist evolved into a nationalist during the later part of his life after associating himself closely with Bengal nationalists following the partition of Bengal. When asked in Calcutta whether he envisioned a Maratha type of Government for free India, Tilak replied that the Maratha dominated government of the 16th and 17th century and that he wanted a genuine federal system for free India, where every religion and race would be equal partners. Only such form of government, he added would be able to safeguard Indian's freedom. Tilak was critic of Mahatma Gandhis strategy of non-violence and civil disobedience. Although, once considered as an extremist revolutionary, in his later years Tilak had considerably mellowed. He favored political dialogue and discussion as a more effective way to obtain political freedom for India's. When Tilak died in 1920 Gandhi paid his respects at his cremation in Bombay, along with 20,000 people. Gandhi called Tilak "The maker of modern India". Tilak is also today considered the father of Hindu Nationalism. He was the idol of Indian

¹⁶ V.R. Mehta, *Foundations of Indian Political Thought: An Interpretation*, New Delhi: Manohar Publishers and Distributor, 1992, P, 181.

revolutionary Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, who penned the political doctrine of Hindutva.¹⁷

Tilak's writings on Indian culture, history and Hinduism spread a sense of heritage and pride amongst Indians for India's ancient civilization and glory as a nation. He was the first leader in congress to suggest that Hindi written in the devanagari script should be accepted as the sole national language of India, a policy that was later strongly endorsed by Mahatma Gandhi. English, which Tilak wished to remove completely from the Indian mind, remains an important means of communication in India. But the usage of Hindi (and other Indian languages) had been reinforced and widely encouraged since the days of the British Raj and Tilak's legacy is often credited with this resurgence. His newspaper, *Kesari* founded in 1881 is still currently published.¹⁸

¹⁷ www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/bal-gangadhar_tilak

¹⁸ *Ibid.*,

CHAPTER-IV

TILAK'S TECHNIQUES FOR THE CULMINATION OF NATIONALISM INTO NATIONAL FREEDOM

Tilak participated in the Indian politics as a radical leader, and strongly criticized the government for the brutality in suppressing free expression, especially in face of protests against the division of Bengal in 1905, and for denigrating India's culture, its people and heritage. He demanded that the British immediately give Indians' the right of self-government.¹ Tilak was the first leader who openly declared *Swaraj*. It was mostly due to his efforts and those of its associates that the Congress resolution at Calcutta in 1906 demanding self government, boycott and the national education was passed. He become a national hero and adopted a new slogan at Lucknow Congress of 1916, "Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it!" These were the fiery words of Tilak, which roused a sleeping nation to action.²

Swaraj was one of the main political goals of Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Though Tilak entered into the Indian National Congress as a moderate he lost faith in British bureaucracy and British Judiciary. So he wrote the time has come to demand *Swaraj* or self-government. No piece meal reform will do. The system of present administration is ruinous to the country. He must "Mend or end".³

He founded Deccan Education Society to give better education as per the country's needs. He wrote scathing

¹ www.indianetrone.com//balgangadhar.tilak

² Ibid.

³ Dusmanta Kumar Mohanty, *Indian Political Tradition: from Manu to Ambedkar*, New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 1997, PP, 200-201.

articles over inhuman punishment meted out to the nationalist youth who protested the division of Bengal (Vanga Bhanga). Indian newspapers were not to criticize the British policy in those days and two articles titled "How the Government Lost its Head?" and "To Rule is not to Wreak Vengeance" appearing in *Kesari*, landed him in jail. Tilak advocated his own case and when the judgement of six years of imprisonment (*Kalapani*) was pronounced, he gave the famous statement, "All I wish to say is that in spite of the verdict of the jury, I maintain my innocence. There are higher powers that rule the destiny of men and nations. It may be the will of providence that the cause I represent may prosper by suffering than by remaining free".⁴ There was unprecedented jubilation in India after Tilak was free and was free in Indian, freedom movement. The concept of *Swaraj* and nationalism had taken deep roots. Tilak's suffering did not go in vain. A band of leaders, full of zeal for nationalism and self-sacrifice had come up in India.⁵

"*Swaraj* is my birth right and I will have it" was not just a rhetorical expression of Tilak's patriotic emotions. A complete well knit argument underlied this expression. Tilak equated freedom with the right of the people to shape their own destiny. As such, he thought that freedom was the natural right and moral necessity of every nation. He maintained that the people have the right to claim freedom just by the virtue of their becoming part of a human society and that no further justification is necessary. It is just sufficient to declare. "We are human beings and as such we have the right to be free"⁶. To Tilak, 'desire for freedom' was a natural human instinct and 'to strive for freedom' was an 'inherent right of every people'.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ www.indianetzone.com/balgangadhar.tilak

⁶ Shanta Sathe, *Lokmanya Tilak, His Social and Political Thought*, Delhi: Ajanta Publication, 1994. P. 93.

'Accordingly' there is no need for the subject people to prove that they deserve freedom; for, it is only in the conditions of freedom that the people can develop the necessary virtues and qualities for freedom. In a way, he was echoing the maxim, "it is liberty alone that makes people fit for liberty".⁷

Tilak's concept of *Swaraj* had different foundations like political, moral, spiritual, nationalist and realistic. It was neither in the true extremist tradition reflected by Aurobindo and Bipin Chandra Pal nor in the line of moderate approach pursued by Ranade and Ghokhle. It sometimes lacked consistency. His concept of *Swaraj* advocated during the anti-partition agitation in Bengal differed from his demand for home rule (avoided to see the word *Swaraj*) in year 1916. This was because Tilak was not only a restless nationalist but also a political realist. By *Swaraj*, in his heart of hearts, he meant independence from foreign rule. His slogan *Swaraj is my birth right* still echoes and inspires every lover of freedom to make sacrifice in protecting the *Swaraj*. He still remains the symbol of 'swaraj in India'. As mentioned earlier, Tilak had excelled others as student of Sanskrit literature and mathematics. He read threadbare the pages of the *Bhagaved Gita*, the *Vedas*, the *Mahabharata*, *Kautilya's Arthasstra*, *Shukranti* and *Kamandaka Nitisar*. He also read J.S. Mill, Spencer and Rousseau's social contract theory. The fight for freedom in Ireland, Russian and the revolutionary activism influenced him. But as a product of the ground realities of Indian life, he was not far away from realism.

Tilak borrowed the term *swaraj* from the Vedic term "*Swarajyam*". The term *Swaraj* was used in the Vedanta to indicate the highest spiritual state, where in the individual having realized his identity with the universal was not merely

⁷ Ibid., P. 1.

freed from bondage, but was established in perfect harmony with all else in the world. This Vedic concept of *Swaraj* is different from the western concept of "freedom" or independence. '*Swaraj*' is a positive concept implying self-subjection, self-realization, and self-rule, for Tilak, *Swaraj* was both a political right and a moral necessity. Politically *Swaraj* meant, according to Tilak, the ruler and the ruled are of the same country, same religion or race. Secondly, it referred to a well governed state or system of rule of law. Third, it meant a government promoting the well being of the people. Fourthly, it meant a government elected by and responsible to the people. Tilak's main highlight was people's participation in the Government. He endorsed the slogan which Dadabhai Naroji had given at the Calcutta Conference of 1906, namely that the thirst for self-government (self-rule) can not be assuaged by good government (*Surajya*). In this way, his concept of *Swaraj* was nationalistic.

Tilak's concept of *Swaraj* also has moral foundations. In his opinion self-control and self-realization also lead to *Swaraj*. It could be attained through spiritualism to be pursued by the individual, but individual can not pursue this without *Swaraj* in political sphere. Both are correlated unless there was *Swaraj*, Tilak's interpreter says, the conscious lawful living under *Dharmarajya*, the right ordering of the community could never be attained, individual life situations could not be morally profitable, man could not live in their true natures, and the purpose of life and creation could not be fulfilled. The political community existed only to preserve and promote Dharma, and without *Swaraj* this was not possible. *Swaraj*, therefore, was a moral imperative for both the individual and the community.

Swaraj, according to him was a life centred in self and dependent upon self. It can be realised within this world and after also but one who has not enjoyed *Swaraj*, in this world,

cannot do so in the other world.⁸ By *Swaraj* Tilak meant a *Dharmarajya*. It was not only a transfer of political power but beyond that. It was required to build a superstructure on Indian culture and civilization. It was a status in which every Indian would get all the rights natural to man.⁹

Swaraj meant the self-rule, the operation and management of domestic affairs of India by Indians. According to Tilak, *Swaraj* is possessing these rights which the native princes had in the Indian states, with this difference that instead of hereditary chiefs under *Swaraj* there would be an elected president."¹⁰ Foreign policy was to remain in English hands. British king was not to be replaced. According to Tilak "The ideas of *Swaraj* is an old one. Of course, when *Swaraj* is spoken of, there is some kind of rule opposed to 'swa' (i.e. our) and this idea arises at that time. Thus, when such a condition arises it begins to be thought that there should be *Swaraj* and even make efforts for that purpose".¹¹ "The question of *Swaraj* really means in whose hands should be vested the control of our affairs. I have said that we do not wish to change the immutable government or the king but what we demand is that the management of our affairs should not be, as it now is, in the hands of invisible government, the bureaucracy, but should be transferred to our hands".¹²

Swaraj was a necessity. By *Swaraj* he meant a federal type of political set up. Like the American Congress, the Government of India should have powers and the same powers be used through the imperial council. He accepted the

⁸ Dushmantha Kumar Mohanty, *Op. Cit.*, PP. 200-201.

⁹ *Ibid.*, P. 201.

¹⁰ Urmila Sharma, S.K. Sharma, *Indian Political Thought*, Atlantic Publishers, 1998, PP. 112-113.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, P. 113.

¹² *Ibid.*

possibilities of linguistic provinces. He said, "India is a big country. Divide it if you want, according to the language".¹³ He also recommended federal structure for the country so that all races, languages, religions and cultures could be accommodated. This could not be done under British Emperor, it would lead to an independent existence.¹⁴

Making Indian people aware of their political plight under a foreign rule, Tilak tried to breathe life into the moribund nation through three mantras.

- I. *Swadeshi* or self reliance
- II. Boycott of foreign goods.
- III. National Education

He realized that mere protest against British rule was not going to help. He said, "We have no arms but there is no necessity. But our strong political weapon is boycott (of foreign goods), organize your powers and then go to work so that they can not refuse you what you demand"¹⁵ ;

Though the idea of *Swadeshi* was much older than the nationalist movement in Bengal, it was advocated among others by Dadabhai, Ranade, and Gokhale, and even before Ranade by Gopalrao Hari Deshmukh who exhorted the people not to let any foreign article enter their household. It was popularised by Tilak throughout Maharashtra and Bihar after it had been taken up by the Bengal nationalists as a political weapon to bring pressure upon the British authorities. Tilak realized the potentialities of the movement on an all India scale and also that the centre of activity was shifted from Calcutta to Poona.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Dusmanta Kumar Mohanti, Op. Cit, P, 207.

¹⁵ www.nationalfirst.in

There was hardly any town or village in Maharashtra where the message of *Swadeshi* did not reach during 1904-08.

Though *Swadeshi* initially began with the moderates as a mere economic movement, it was conceived by the nationalists as a political weapon, as the positive counterpart of the programme of economic boycott of British goods. In the hands of Tilak it underwent a further development and assumed a wider and more comprehensive form. From self-sufficiency in the economic sphere it came to signify self-help and self-reliance in all things. Its object was to bring about the gradual disappearance of foreign ideas also. Tilak wanted the minds of people also to become *Swadeshi* in the sense that it should develop the spirit of independence. The *Swadeshi* movement soon developed into a movement of national regeneration; it became identical with love for the country. It became a spiritual principle. It is said that people who signed the *Swadeshi* pledge crossed out the words 'until partition is withdrawn'; they adopted it as a principle for life.¹⁶

He admired Calcutta for being the home of the *Swadeshi* movement and paid complements to leaders like Surendranath Bannerjee who had trained and inspired the people in the path of *Swadeshim*. He stated that the congress had been able to formulate a resolution which reconciled the views of the two groups the moderates and the extremists. He said "If we do not wish to be white men's slaves, we should vigorously carry on the *Swadeshi* movement. It is the only effective method for our deliverance. The object of the movement is to do away with the system under which we are treated like slaves by Europeans

¹⁶ Jyoti Prasad Suda, *Main Currents of Social and Political Thought in Modern India*, Meerut: Jai Prakash Co. Educational Publishers, P. 439.

and to force government to give us all the rights of British citizenship."¹⁷

Swadeshi was considered to be self help which implied dependence on Indian made goods rather than patronization of the retail outlets of the manufactured produce of Birmingham and Manchester. The effect of the *Swadeshi* movement was that the people turned to local Indian production of *Swadeshi* goods. *Swadeshi* was the first great encouragement to industrial development in India and soon came to mean a more than simple economic self-sufficiency. It, there, could be self-help in all walks of life. The dharma of action had taught self respect and self dependence and *Swadeshi* extended self-dependence to self-help in all things. *Swadeshi* was an acceptable way in which Tilak and the nationalists had been teaching the people the new spirit. Tilak pointed out: "To recognise the land of the Aryas as mother earth is the *Swadeshi* movement".¹⁸ It was indeed an economic, political and spiritual weapon.

Tilak advocated 'boycott' as a political technique for three different reasons i.e. firstly, to carry out the mission of *Swadeshi* movement which would not be successful without boycotting the foreign goods. Secondly to protest against the repressive laws and burdensome taxes on the people, thirdly to serve as a substitute for war and violent methods which he thought would not have been possible to apply successfully against the Britishers. By applying the technique of boycott he wanted to create a "Mass movement" against the British Government. Thus boycott was used by Tilak as an economic, political, nationalistic and democratic weapon. When excise

¹⁷ Ibid., P-439.

¹⁸ Hari Hara Das, *Indian Political Thought*, New Delhi: National Publishing House, 1997, PP.167-169.

duty on Indian cloth was raised in order to balance the customs duty imposed on British cloth, Tilak made a scathing attack on British Government policy to impose new tax and appealed the Indians to boycott foreign cloth and use *Swadeshi* cloth. He cited examples of Americans who threw tea boxes into the sea and refused to pay taxes to the British Government. In a nationalistic and revolutionary spirit he said "people must fight for the vindication of their rights... If you are fit to be called human beings. If you are really perturbed at the injustice in the hands of Government of anybody, if your hearts do flutter at insults of you really take pride in, your brave ancestors and heroes, then boycott foreign cloth."¹⁹ He further said, "As we can not go to war as did the Boers in South Africa, the next best thing is to refuse to buy the British goods. That is the spirit behind the *Swadeshi* and bcycott movement".²⁰

Tilak gave a detailed idea of different spheres in which boycott is to be applied as a political weapon. He said: "we shall not give them our assistance to collect revenue and keep peace. We shall assist them in fighting beyond the frontiers of or outside India with Indian blood and money. We shall not assist them in carrying on administration of justice. We shall have our own courts and when the time comes we shall not pay taxes. Can your do that by your united effort. It you can, you are free from tomorrow. This is the line of thought and action in which you must train your self. This is the way a nation progresses; this is the way national sentiment progresses and this is the lesson you have to learn from the struggle now going on".²¹

¹⁹ Ibid., P,169.

²⁰ Ibid., P, 213.

²¹ Ibid.

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Tilak's techniques of boycott having economic, political, nationalist and democratic dimensions was applied by Gandhi in 1920 non-cooperation movement, though, in a more puritan way. In the post-independent India, Jayprakash Narayan applied it to fight corruption and injustice.²²

In modern India the rise and growth of nationalism has been associated with the spread of educational institutions organised on nationalistic lines. Chiplunkar, Agarkar and Tilak were the forerunners of a new educational movement in Maharashtra. In his *Pleasures and Privileges of the Pen*, N.C Kelkar writes that all these pioneers wanted: "the nation to know itself and its past glories so that it may have confidence in its own strength and capacity to adapt itself wisely and well to the new surroundings without losing its individuality".²³

After completing his university education, Tilak started his mission in life. As he was intensely interested in education and public service from a young age he was determined to dedicate his life to the cause of reorientation of Indian education and radical social and political reforms. Hence, he started his new English school at Poona in January 1880 with 19 students on the rolls. Tilak and his colleagues undertook the work of teaching for a nominal salary. The school eventually became the centre of public life and achieved uncommon success as a centre of education. Tilak thought of setting up a college that would help in spreading education through more schools. For that purpose, the Deccan Education Society was formed in 1884 to initiate the establishment of a college. In 1885, the Fergusson College was established and Tilak worked there till 1890 as a specialist in Mathematics and Sanskrit. He was the moving spirit behind the institution and did the work of

²² Ibid., P. 213.

²³ Ibid., P. 160.

organization and collection of funds. Later, due to his loyalty to the original ideas of dedication and service, Tilak developed differences with the members of the Deccan Education Society in 1887 and severed his links with them in 1890. After this, he decided to give more time and attention to the two weekly papers *Kesari* and *Maratha* as their editor.

Tilak was highly critical of the prevalent system of English education, as it had neglected religious education. He observed. "After twenty years, rotting in their system, one has to look elsewhere for religious study. Men who develop the idea that religion is a force all along their educational course are afterwards not found to be wanting in any conception of duty".²⁴ He emphasized on the four factors, which are essential in making a national system of education. These are (i) religious education (ii) industrial education and (iii) political education. He gave the foremost importance to religious education. He said that this type of education is needed because the study of high principles keeps people away from bad pursuits. He also spoke on the necessity of industrial education. Added to this, he observed that political education should be imparted in educational institutions to enable the citizens to know about their rights and duties. During 1907-08, he delivered a series of special lectures on national education in different places of Maharashtra.

He had realized much earlier that the western education started by Lord Macaulay and followed in all the government supported schools was dangerous to the future health and welfare of the nation. Through such education the younger generations were being weaned away from not only the great majority of the Indian people but also away from the value system of India's civilization. Government supported western

²⁴ Ibid., P. 161.

education was disliked by Tilak and the nationalists. They argued for the establishment of national school and colleges throughout the country to provide inexpensive and wholesome education envisaging the new spirit of self-help and self-dependence which young people could not hope to get in the government supported institutions. Tilak was actively associated with the national education which became an integral part of the national programme for the India of the twentieth century.²⁵

On his return from Burma after completing the term of imprisonment Tilak thought of organizing people to demand Home Rule. As he was out of the Congress, he also thought over the question of re-entry of extremists into the congress. The year 1916 was important in the political career of Tilak for two reasons: firstly, he joined his old comrades at the Lucknow session of the Congress, and secondly, he formed the Indian Home Rule League with the object of attaining self-government for Indian people within the British Empire by constitutional means. Tilak undertook an extensive tour of the country propagating in favour of Home rule. By 1917 the extremists took complete control of the Indian National Congress.

Originally, the activities of Tilak's Home Rule League were intended to be confined to Bombay and Bihar Provinces, but from the records of the League it is evident that the branches of the League were spread over the whole of the country, as far as in Punjab in the northwest, Bengal in the east and Madras in the South. The president of Tilak's Home Rule League was Joseph Baptista of Bombay and secretaries N.C. Kelkar and Gokhale. Within a year, since its establishment, the membership of Tilak's League registered a strength of thirteen to fourteen thousand; in 1918, it reached thirty-four thousand. The League

²⁵ Ibid.

membership was drawn from people of different religious, including Muslims and Christians, of different casts among Hindus, Upper, middle and lower, and also from women.²⁶

Tilak went to England in 1918 to represent the country demanding Home Rule. He made a great impact on English public opinion through his writings and speeches. In a letter to an English man Tilak wrote. "It is necessary for me to dwell upon the imperative importance of solving the Indian question for purposes of ensuring the future peace of the world and the progress of the people of India."²⁷ The Home Rule movement launched by Tilak was the natural culmination of the nationalist movement. Hence he softened his stand on *Swaraj* and started organizing the Home Rule League in India. He made it clear that within the British Empire the Indians must attain have their right to rule themselves. He was supported by the English liberals like Mrs. Annie Besant. The people of India must be given more and more power in the administration of the country. The monopolistic rule of British bureaucracy should end. Tilak went to London to influence the British statesman and public opinion in favour of Indian people's demand. The Government of India Act which gave some power to the people was the result of Tilak's struggle for Home Rule in India. The mass movement which he initiated worked a miracle in the hands of Gandhi after the death of Tilak in 1920.²⁸

²⁶ Verinder Grover, *Political Thinkers of Modern India: Bal Gangadhar Tilak*, Vol-4, New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publication, 1991. P. 418.

²⁷ Urmila Sharma, S.K. Sharma, Op. Cit., P. 111.

²⁸ Dusmanta Kumar Mohanty, Op. Cit., PP. 210-211.

CHAPTER-V AN EVALUATION

Lokmanya Tilak, one of India's greatest nationalist leaders, is also one of India's most misunderstood prophets. His life and work constitute a great heritage, yet the meaning of his message has been often obscured. He was a political realist, though, dubbed as disciple of expediency. At the same time his philosophy was based on the highest idealism. His critics call him a communalist and a provincialist, while actually he was the one who first taught the need for overcoming communal disagreements in the name of love of the country. He has also been accused of being an extremist believing in violence, whereas, in reality his influence was of moderation and contrary to violence, he was the first to urge non-violent political action.

He was a great scholar. Dr. Radha Krishnan argued that the field of politics to which Tilak devoted the best years of his life was not the one for which he was made. He was by nature a scholar and only by necessity a politician. He played a very significant role in imparting education to the people in early years of life. He insisted on national education. In Dhananjay Keer's opinion, "his vast knowledge made him a ready speaker, a walking encyclopedia. At many meetings where subjects like sanskrit literature, mathematics, astronomy and history were discussed, Tilak, the scholar, would often reply to or introduce himself as an eminent scholar. At a meeting in Bombay he spoke on the new research of Sir Jagdish chandra Bose. Bose declared that he wondered how Tilak could simplify so difficult a subject and explain lucidly to the audience. Men of learning in the world looked to him for light on the riddles of humanity and liberators of nations like Lenin watched his stormy career

with hope and admiration. He was a rare combination of a great scholar and a great mass leader.¹

The first requisite for a leader is boldness in thought and action. The second is ability to take quick decisions. The third is fearlessness and the fourth is sincerity of purpose. Tilak possessed all these qualities. He was courage incarnate, his coolness and self-control in time of danger was uncommon and his practical sense was marvellous.

He was a great humanitarian. He did a lot of humanitarian work during the famine and plague in India. His humanitarian activities were very significant. They showed him to be a constructive political genius of the highest order. He never cared for money nor kept any accounts. Had he followed the profession of law with his unique qualities, he would have built up a fortune. But he subordinated and sacrificed everything to the service of the nation. In Dhamanjay Keer's words "At a time when Indian men of learning were eulogizing British rule, the masses had grown lethargic and oblivious of their degradation, and darkness had enveloped India, Tilak appeared on the horizon and infused into the minds of the people self-respect and courage to stand up for their rights".²

As far as the evaluation of his concept of nationalism is concerned, the fact that has to be taken into consideration is that can not be totally divested from the emotional aspect especially when the people are in peril. Tilak looked upon nationalism as a means of material improvement or a political agency. For him it was not a mystic phenomenon and he did not furnish any spiritual or metaphysical explanation of nationalism. Tilak, as a political thinker expounded, the theory

¹ Dhananjay Keer, *Lokmanya Tilak: Father of the Indian Freedom Struggle*, Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1969, P. 452.

² *Ibid.*, P. 445.

of nationalism which was a synthesis of the teachings of both eastern and western thinkers. To him, 'Nation' did not mean some 'ethereal entity' and national glory was not some imaginary thing but was synonymous with people's welfare. His approach to nationalism was rational. It had secular bearings and was by no means narrow or antithetical to liberal thought. Tilak described 'nationalism' as being a stage between smaller social organizations and the ultimate goal of universal brotherhood-*Vishwa-Bandhutva*. Tilak who believed in the need of going beyond material happiness, in search of *Shreyas*, was highly critical of the 'my nation above all' attitude. Welfare of humanity, he prescribed, as the ultimate goal. It thus clearly stands out that Tilak was, by no means, in favour of aggressive nationalism.

Nationalism represented to Tilak an emotional experience of common affinity which lends the people the necessary separate national identity. The feeling of common affinity is an abstract thing. To identify with this abstract feeling, some perceivable attributes, he felt, were necessary. It is clear that Tilak was aware of the evasive character of nationalism. As he observed, it was not, therefore, possible to specify which one of these attributes would prove as the catalytic agent. Even in the same society, the focal point of attachment may change with times. New groups could, thus, be accommodated, commonalty of interests being the major component of nationalism. This clearly indicates that Tilak was aware of the fact that the formation of a nation is a live process, and this was a fundamental point of vital importance.

Tilak's explanation about how the spirit of nationalism develops among the people of nation, is also revealing. It clearly indicates that he was aware of the historical process of emergence of a nation. It is worth noting that Tilak gave a

thought to the management of problems emerging in a multicultural society. While developing his own strategy too, Tilak unfolded his understanding of nationalism. Firstly, in the context of the situational constraints that Tilak had to face, and with reference to his ideas about the future of Indian polity, he was keen to utilize the historical opportunity for India, to emerge as a nation for which common people had to be involved in the process of nation-building. Tilak chose methods which, he felt, would prove most effective.

Tilak is often criticized for promoting cultural nationalism. By this, the critics suggest two things; firstly, Tilak sought inspiration from the historical glory and his eyes were revealed to the bygone past. Secondly, he totally ignored the economic aspect of nationalism. Tilak in fact, fully understood the nature of British imperialism. Besides political implications, it also had religious and cultural overtones. Naturally, Tilak felt like challenging the claims of cultural superiority of the west that lent legitimacy to the imperial rule. He further witnessed that the Indian people were suffering from inferiority complex, and had lost all hope and confidence. Tilak wanted to fight back this feeling. Sense of inferiority, itself, constitutes a great source of weakness. Hence the need of assuring the people that their rich traditional heritage still retained the potential to guide the present. A fallen people need reassurance about their capacity to achieve. Tilak never ignored the economic aspect of nationalism. More than any other Indian leader, it was Tilak who put in conscious effort to give a concrete shape to the forces of economic nationalism in India by focusing people's attention on the colonial exploitation of the Indians.

Tilak has been dubbed as communalist but it was he who rightly understood that 'nationalism' is not a tangible thing. People need to be made aware of some sort of commonness to

make them feel that they constitute a nation. As he perceived, the Indian situation was very complex. He believed that Hinduism would provide at least some semblance of unity. He did not lose sight of the fact that eventually, the non-Hindus were to be accommodated, but in Hinduism he identified the highest common factor. He believed that retaining ties of Hinduism was convenient, feasible and also necessary. It was not wise to neglect this common, binding, link, as, otherwise, Indians would fall apart like grains of sand.

Tilak, in the context of his times, felt that the presence of multiple linguistic regions posed a greater threat. He took cognizance of the fact that India is a land of multiple religions, as well. He was trapped in a difficult situation. It was necessary to ensure that while uniting the Hindus, the non-Hindus are not alienated. To accomplish this task, Tilak also suggested certain corrective measures. Tilak looked forward to a federal form of polity as being the possible solution. Whether it was the issue of multiple languages or religions, he was not in favour of imposing unity from above, instead, he wanted to reconcile diversity with unity.

Tilak was also aware of the stresses and strains that emerge as a result of multiplicity of cultures. He believed that the only solution to the problems posed by diversity, is willing acceptance of the reality, an assurance, convincingly extended, that the diverse cultures would be respected. Tilak at the same time advocated the need of strictly meeting out impartial treatment. Likewise, while the majority was to show a spirit of accommodation, Tilak expected the minorities also to display spirit of understanding and adjustment. His preference for a federal political set up clearly indicates that he favoured a formal political arrangement in order to realize the above mentioned assurance. He further advocated the need of

searching some common cementing forces which would go beyond the existing differences. It may, thus be rightfully claimed that Tilak advocated the concept of composite nationalism. His composite nationalism (though he did not use the specific term) i.e., reconciling unity with diversity, could thus be considered as a fundamental contribution. It does reflect a positive dimension of nationalism. Tilak's views on the issue of nationalism, clearly bring out that his approach was not merely emotional. He was not only fully aware of the complexities involved, but endeavoured to find proper correctives.

The central point of his philosophy, as mentioned earlier, was the doctrine of self-rule or *Swaraj*, the culmination of his concept of nationalism. His belief in *Swaraj* was derived from *Advaita* which had taught him that moral autonomy is the very life of the individual soul. According to him, the ideal of *Swaraj* applied both to the nation as well as to the individual. According to the critics his philosophical approach to the problem of freedom has left few gaps in the structure. He valued individuality on the one hand and sanctified sociality for its fulfillment on the other, but he produced no formula to reconcile individuality with society. The nation, in Tilak's philosophy, is not the leviathan to enforce obedience of its citizens to it. Tilak firmly predicated the credibility of an administration on citizens view of it. But he says nothing of how an individual's loyalty to his group is to be enforced. There is no institutional compulsion to prevent an individual from turning his back to his group. Tilak seems to have been aware of it but not duly concerned about it. But when it is realized that all the men are not equally discerning in their approaches to social and political questions, one is compelled to the conclusion that the nation, of Tilak's conception, would always necessarily require a charismatic leader to make a meaning of itself.

However, an order based only on charisma of a leader could hardly be stable. Tilak in fact, does not seem to have addressed himself to the problem of evolving sensible safeguards for individual *Swaraj*.

Tilak has also been criticized for underestimating the role of the state as an agent of social change. However, his ideas if examined in the context of the political conditions of the nation at that particular time, he was not prepared to give much powers to the state, as in practice it would have increased the powers of an alien government. He also rejected the state as an agent of social change because in his opinion the reforms to be enduring must grow from within. This opinion of Tilak is in fact very true because if people are not sufficiently prepared for due change it is useless go ahead by only imposing laws.

Some critics regard him as a violent revolutionary. The truth is that Tilak believed in the theory of righteous violence of *Gita*. However, he did not favour political murders and terrorist acts as expedient instruments of political action. He argued that violence would only give scope to the bureaucrats to crush the national movement which was still in the early stages. He did not preach the omnipotence of force as Machiavelli did. His realism preached him to act in such away that his opponents could not take undue advantage of him. He believed that *Swaraj* could be attained by the united action of the people. Therefore, everyone should contribute to the cause of the nation in his own way. He argued that extreme non-violence was not possible in the practical life.

Tilak was not merely a leader but also a movement. In political ideas he was a through nationalist. He is a liberal as he acknowledged that democracy was important and freedom of opinion valuable. His belief in the power of education to bring socio-political change would hold true for all times to come.

Freedom, for Tilak, was not merely independence from the British rule but a capacity to develop India in terms of its own peculiar heritage, through a system of *Swadeshi*. The system of *Swadeshi*, if reinterpreted according to the needs of the present times can be useful during the period of economic slowdown. Opportunities can be given to small scale manufactures, in the absence of demand for goods from abroad. Capital can be invested on long term projects in own country such as infrastructure development, giving employment to our own people and development as such.

Despite being criticized for not prescribing any scheme of political institutions to actualize his ideas, his ideas are very much relevant for the present day society. His selflessness, dedication, strong will power, practical and realist attitude towards social and political problems, patriotism, etc. can all serve as examples to guide the present day society. No doubt he gave importance to the nation and national freedom, but he moved beyond nation and talked in terms of humanity and God. It was an important contribution of Tilak to the world in the contemporary scenario when the idea of internationalism is directly needed for the world peace. For Tilak nationalism and peace went together. Since formation of a nation is a live and continuous process, awakening of the sense of nationalism under all circumstances, in peace and as well as in conflict or strife, is a pre-requisite for the growth of a nation.

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