
C O N C L U S I O N

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Lokmanya Tilak considered to be a great freedom fighter was born in Ratnagiri in the year 1856, in traditional and most orthodox Brahmin family. He had his education in Poona, completing his Law examination in the year 1879. Tilak was involved in nationalistic endeavour right since his early days. Besides this he has also contributed to educational development by establishing various schools and colleges. He has left a great impact especially in Maharashtra as far as socio-political development is concerned. He had sacrificed much for the cause of society and the nation in general. His was a unique personality, and he was perhaps fond of getting involved with various controversies. He was frank and forth right. His involvement in Brave Case, the Sharda Sadan controversy of Pandita Ramabai, provocation of Hindu-Muslim riots in Bombay province by writing article on Shivaji; his speeches at Ganapati festivals, his conflict within the Pune Sarvajanik Sabha are some of the major events which point to his nature and personality traits of Lokmanya Tilak. It is at times difficult to assess his personality as such.

The freedom movement cannot forget his contribution; as a great freedom fighter. He asserted his concept of 'Swarajya'. His concept of 'Swaraj' was rooted in the Indian tradition; attaching more importance to the Sanskrit tradition. He tried to bring forth the ideas of 'Vedas' and hence he tried to revive the traditional ideas of ancient India. It was exactly in this period in 1900's - 1920, the traditional India: 'Hinduism,' Brahminical domination was attacked. The contribution and the work of Jotiba Phule's platform "The Satya Shodhak Samaj", established in 1873, had a big impact on the masses. Jotiba Phule had great mass following who preached the black side of Brahminism. After the death of Jotiba Phule in 1890, 'Brahminism' was most hated. Tilak exactly in this phase tried to revive this, and hence in due course took to many unconvincing postures and positions. In doing so he attacked the Kolhapur princely state and came in conflict with the liberal thinkers of his time. His conservatistic approach contributed to various conflicts within the society. Poona been the centre of 'Brahmins' he was naturally influenced by the traditionalist in Poona. He did inspire the spirit of activism among the Indian people. He exhorted the people to prepare their forces,

organize their power and rebel against the British. Quite opposite to what Tilak was doing for nationalism, Mahatma Gandhi advocated for non-violent methods to fight against the British. At the national level (Indian National Congress) he came in conflict with the moderate leaders, and in Poona he came in conflict with Agarkar, Ranade, Gokhale who advocated a liberal approach.

His conflict at Poona was to give ' Social Reform ' a secondary position and ' Freedom ' the first position. The non-Brahmin movement which I had gained much importance during 1900-1918 attached more importance to ' Social Reform ' rather than ' Freedom '. They felt that freedom with^{out} social reform would be meaningless to the masses, and it would benefit only the classes (Brahmin). One aspect when assessing Tilak is to be noted. Tilak has to be assessed taking into consideration the non-Brahmin movement. In this context Tilak's extremism is more rooted in what non-Brahmin movement pleaded. He simply contradicted the non-Brahmin ideology, which clearly stated that it was not against the Brahmin caste as such ; but it was more against ' Brahminism ', (what Brahmins practised). The socio-economical, political conditions of

the down troddens was never considered in what Tilak advocated. In this context, to attack the non-Brahmin movement, and to consolidate his position in the freedom movement he came in contact with Annie Besant to launch what was termed as 'Home Rule Movement.' If Tilak's leadership was more important, and if he had a following amongst the masses, then India could have achieved independence right in 1920's rather than in 1940's. Tilak took positions which did not appeal much either to the masses or to the classes. This has worked as a severe limitation in what Tilak was interested in doing. Besides this English education and the Christian missionaries have played a major role in introducing egalitarian outlook in the masses. Perhaps the role played by them for women upliftment cannot be overlooked. Tilak even went to the extent of attacking even this. He was against the education of women, which was not much convincing. Annie Besant getting influenced by Tilak's approach tried to do the same thing in Madras Presidency. She launched an English daily - "New India", in which she tried to extoll ancient India, and role of Dharma. Her theosophical society was also attacked in Madras, by the 'Justicites' through their newspaper 'Justice'.

Tilak's philosophy was a synthesis of the Vedantic idea of the spirit. And to reach this philosophy he started ' Kesari ' a vernacular newspaper (Marathi). The ' Maratha ' was in English language. His argument that a Nation has much to do with language, literature and religion is of great importance. He tried to develop nationalism on spiritual and religious foundations. Perhaps again this worked against him, as India is considered to be a " Cradle of Civilisations " by many scholars. Tilak in all his moves was always supported by the middle class and petty bourgeoisie belonging to the high caste, who were basically opposed to all social reform. Tilak always depended on them for his support.

In 1893, his love for Ganpati festival resulted in Hindu-Muslim riots. Tilak openly supported the Hindu, much against the advice of Justice Ranade, but he did so, thinking that he would develop a following amongst the non-Brahmin masses, and show the British that Hindu's were united. The Ganpati festival since then has contributed to various problems even to this day. He also used the ' Shivaji Festival ' and tried to extoll Shivaji's militant nature in fighting for the defence of ' Hindivi Swaraj '. He tried to develop nationalism by preaching the history of ' Shivaji The Great '.

Tilak as a person had great pride in Hindu religion and culture. As a political leader he wanted to preserve the legitimate right of the Hindu people, and was interested in removing the ' cowardice ' element among the Hindus. Many scholars like V. Chirol, Powell, R. Palme Dutt, are right when they pointed that this was how the Muslim League was born.

On matters of social reform, he had his own approach. But almost all social reformers in India have had one major grievance; and that is, it has never gained momentum due to insufficient support. And if they have been such movements like Arya Samaj, Brahma Samaj, Buddhism, Jainism, they have resulted in (Sects) further adding to the problem. It is the misfortune of social reform movements. But one aspect needs a mention that efforts of the ' Moderate Group ' in the Congress should have gained importance. Social reform should have been given its due place in arousing the required ' Nationalism ' in India. But it was the extremist lot which opposed social reform to gain importance. But instead the revivalists considered that the so called reformers were mischievous and had been playing in the hands of Mr. Malabari. In this direction the efforts made by National Social Conference

need to be mentioned. Tilak was opposed even to the holding, of the meetings of ' National Social Conference ' in the pendal erected of I.N.C. meetings. This points to the extent of Tilak's hatred for social reform. Leaders like M. G. Ranade, Gokhale, Agarkar tried in their own way social reform movement. The approach of Dadabhai Naoraji at the Second All India Congress Session, to leave the question of social reform for adjustments was as good as bad. Good because he felt that Congress was a political body to tackle political questions; and not a social body. Bad in the sense, it was the only opportunity to include social problems in the political body. Much would have been achieved if they had attached equal importance to 'National Social Conference.' It was a right opportunity for the Congress; because the Congress could have defined ' Indian Nationalism ' by this time. It is because of this approach in India we have not been able to define Nationalism. It is found that Indian Nationalism has been evolved around Hinduism, by individualistic approach. It has been a most difficult task. This does not mean that leaders like Tilak are underestimated, as their contributions are important. Most of the Congress leaders felt that the imperative demand of the Congress was political progress. Tilak has elaborated his philosophy of social change through various articles in the ' Kesari '. His main contention was that

' Political Power ' once achieved can be used to introduce ' Social Reform '. To support this he cited the example of U. K. He felt that ' Social reforms ' need ample long term approach. Social reforms cannot be suddenly introduced; so it would be unwise to postpone^{of} the achievement political Independence. But an examination of his thought, it can be stated that Tilak was set against the entire philosophy of the social reform movement. There is no doubt that Tilak also did not want social reforms to be based on the values the reformers had learnt from their western education. Perhaps Tilak in search of the solution to this approach brought forth his ideas of Ancient India and this naturally landed him to be criticised as revivalist Tilak felt that this new generation (G. K. Gokhale, Prof. Bhandarkar, Malbari, Ranade, Agarkar) represented the gross materialism of the west. He also stated in his writings that ' a number of our education men have began to accept uncritically the materialistic doctrine of the westerners. He further felt that the " downfall of India was not because of Hindu religion but to the fact that Indians are foresaking religion."

Nevertheless one aspect which cannot be denied, and that is various socio-reform movements which took place in India during the British rule were the expression of the rising

national consciousness and spread of liberal ideas of the west among the Indian people. These movements increasingly tended to have national scope and programme of reconstruction in the social and religious sphere, and it is but also a natural development. These need not have met the faith which they have faced. The new intelligensia had also some convictions about the past history of India, and they had also felt that these were the obstacles to the national advancement. These were the results of democratic yearnings. They aimed at democratizing the Indian society, on the basis of which national unity or nationalism could be built. The impact of giving secondary importance to the social reform is felt even to this day. The rise of various movements; linguistic movements, dalit movements; regional, sub-regional movements, leftist movements, naxalite movements, separatist movements have all been the result of giving secondary importance to socio-reform movements. Much of the debate on this account took place because of Maharashtra the then (Bombay Presidency) which was the centre of many movements advocated that social reform should be given priority than the freedom. Whatever position Tilak enjoys to-day, as the ' Father of Indian Unrest ' is the result of this controversy.

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