

Theatre and Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak

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ABSTRACT: Patronised and energetic nature of Lokmanya Tilak infused countrymen to understand the real-time situation. He pioneered various activities and concepts to generate political assertiveness among society. Through the drama and theatre, he tried to change the mentality of people and stimulated the audience. The researcher understood that Indian stage received a new impetus of growth, and Marathi Rangabhumi tasted the golden days. While performing this study, we found that various historical or mythological stories and Lokmanya Tilak's philosophy caused the education of people. Through dramas, he established a treasure trove of revolutionary ideologies.

KEYWORDS: Mass education, drama and theatre, British, Bal Gandharva, contributions of Lokmanya Tilak, national progress, Marathi rangabhumi

Date of Submission: 18-01-2020

Date of Acceptance: 06-02-2020

I. INTRODUCTION:

In ancient times, India was a remarkable country; some people referred to it as a melting pot of people. It was filled with an extensive and rich cultural heritage, a deep-seated and enormous diversity. India was a single country consist of a variety of religions, languages, geography, demography, ethnicity, caste and creed. Even during the British crown, India survived a mere privilege. While going through available literature and historical documents, we found that all the heritage gets engulfed, and there was no unity in the country under British rule. It caused the disturbances in the harmony, unity and patriotism among the people. Under the British ruling, the country's ordinary people were suppressed, and they had no urge to achieve freedom.

Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak was a person with a powerful mind and thoughts and mainly known as a founder of Swarajya. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 66. Tilak's contributory work in obtaining freedom was monumental. He awakened political consciousness by considering and focusing on strengthening the pillars of democracy. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 66. Lokmanya Tilak's kind nature and ability to work for others, country and countrymen helped him in earning the popularity in the society. His work and character were accepted by the people and society, and they gave him a title as Lokmanya. His constant dedication and untiring efforts helped in earning the respectful title of 'Lokmanya'. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 66. The title bestowed upon him and the masses revered it.

Besides this, the researcher found that Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak conceived India's Swarajya and freedom movement. He became popular as the spokesman of Swarajya. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 66. His indomitable will imbibed in people the spirit of Swarajya and enlightened, inspired the masses to fight for their own rights. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 66.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The statement of the problem is "THEATRE AND LOKMANYA BAL GANGADHAR TILAK".

OBJECTIVES:

- i. To understand the Lokmanya Tilak's motive behind the conceptualization of theatre
- ii. To understand the Lokmanya Tilak's acts for mass education
- iii. To find out the Lokmanya Tilak's contribution to theatre
- iv. To understand Tilak's recognition for drama and theatre work
- v. To find the impact of various theatre plays on the mass movement

BACKGROUND OF THEATRE AND LOKMANYA BAL GANGADHAR TILAK:

Lokmanya Tilak was a person with a strong will; he was the strong pillar and the spirit for of common man. While doing this study, the researcher found that Tilak kept his soul open for liberal thoughts and

development. Every step taken by him was for the cause of the nation and the overall progress of the country. He was the ocean of knowledge and store of spirit, nationalism, and political assertiveness.

The researcher found that Lokmanya Tilak was a champion and the great mobilizer of the mass and mass movement. Hardikar S.& Nandy R., (2016), "Tilak's sacrifice", Pragyata. During the time of India's independence struggle, Tilak made extraordinary contributions in the form of the partisan narratives on Indian politics and academia. He was the nationalistic leader who worked on forming the concept of a glorious India. While performing research, we found that theatre and drama were a source of pleasure. It was a great way of relaxing the minds tired of the struggle, needs, and everyday anxieties. Besides entertainment, the drama could also be the way of influencing and uplifting the spirits of viewers. Hence, Lokmanya Tilak favoured and supported theatre to introduce the sense of political assertiveness and nationalism amongst the country people. He wanted to awake the sleeping nation to take action. With this objective, he started the Marathi drama and theatre plays.

METHOD USED IN THE PRESENT RESEARCH:

To get the idea of the contributory work done by Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak in the field of drama and theatre, the researcher studied various literature. After performing thorough research, the researcher has collected detailed information from the books, papers, and other online platforms. All the obtained data was used for the understanding of Tilak and his contribution to theatre. Also, the researcher has used that data for understanding the impacts of drama and theatre on mass education and movement before Independence.

Apart from this, the researcher has conducted interviews and interaction sessions with selective individuals. The researcher has chosen the individuals from Tilak's family and closed ones. All the data collected was checked for authenticity and verified. Here, to match the research goal, the researcher has made descriptive and historical research. The whole study was based entirely on the primary and secondary data available on Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak's life.

NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH:

To obtain the proper understanding of Lokmanya Tilak's contribution to theatre and its impact on mass education, the researcher has used various literature. We got information and knowledge through multiple resources available in the form of writings, speeches, and published books. Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak strived hard to create awareness among the mass about British policies. Here through the present paper, the researcher has presented all the obtained information in a detailed form.

1. Tilak's aim behind the conceptualization of drama and theatre
2. Impact of theatre and plays on mass education and society
3. Formation of various theatre plays and its impact on the mass movement

IMPLEMENTATION OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Here, for the research purpose, the researcher has studied primary and secondary sources for data collection. Also, the researcher has taken guidance from the research guide. All the data was collected from the published and unpublished form of resources. Unpublished data were cross-verified using various study parameters and analytical tools. Along with this, the researcher has preferred survey method of data collection. Through the present study, the researcher has made an approach to provide insight on the work done by Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak in the field of drama and theatre plays. Here, the researcher has kept the scope of research short and brought all the information by the survey method. The survey method has helped the researcher to define the authenticity of the obtained data. For the survey purpose, the researcher has chosen members from the Tilak family and close circle. After that, the researcher implemented the mentioned research methodology and received adequate information about the same.

OUR FINDINGS:

The researcher has gained comprehensive knowledge about Lokmanya Tilak and his actions in the pioneering theatre concept. After referring to the research papers, books, and other resources, all the collected data were processed further for the research purpose. For the presenting purpose, the researcher has edited, organized, and interpreted every obtained information. All the obtained data and critical points were tested by using defined procedures and techniques. Here, in the present research, the researcher has gained the understanding of the following mentioned points of Lokmanya and theatre for the cause of the nation.

Lokmanya Tilak's Motive Behind the Conceptualization of Theatre

Reaching out to personages was a dismaying task during the pre-Independence era. By understanding the need of the time, Lokmanya Tilak took initiatives. He launched and created a range of circumstances for the benefits of ordinary people. He pioneered Kesari and Mahratta newspapers to generate awareness among the people. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra

Vidyapeeth, Pune, 66. He wanted to develop the sense of self-rule among the youth and the common man. He desired to educate country people to achieve success in the future, and he started the New English School, and Ferguson college. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 66.

While establishing or implementing various platforms, for the cause of the nation, he faced multiple challenges in the form of literacy. To deliver a clear understanding of concepts and encourage the masses, he used mythological and historical themes. Tilak paved his thoughts by organizing spiritual get-togethers like Sarvajanik Ganesh Utsav, Shivaji Jayanti Utsav. He tried to consolidate the national spirit during cultural occasions like bhajans, kirtans, and debates, elocution competitions, literature, the arts, and theatre. To sow the seed of Swarajya, Lokmanya Tilak skilfully used all these mass media alternatives based on religion, culture, and entertainment.

The festivals like Sarvajanik Ganesh festival, Shiv Jayanti, Moharam processions are vivid illustrations of his commendable work and that we celebrate till now. As described above, Lokmanya Tilak has created theatre as a suitable and most suitable method to communicate and educate the masses. His primary motto was to make aware the people about their current situation. Even though Lokmanya Tilak had no personal liking and yearning for music, singing, or drama, he understood that they were an authentic source for reaching the masses. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 68.

Notwithstanding, Lokmanya Tilak put all his likes and dislikes aside to create a unique platform for socio-political interaction. To attain the goal, he tried to build a firm bond with singers, drama artists. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 68. Hence, he has used write-ups on a particular topic, and when viewers could see that, then it was elementary for them to compare it with their situation. He often inserted such paragraphs in 'Kesari'. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 66.

Lokmanya Tilak's Acts for Mass Education

Lokmanya Tilak has used 'Kesari' and 'Mahratta' as the fundamental ways of educating the masses by using write-ups. He began publishing his views through these newspapers. Besides this, he organized various festivals, including the Ganesh festival and Shivaji Jayanti Utsav, to collect people together and make them aware of the things. He wanted to inspire them about self-respect, self-rule, and nationalism. He tried to make all the masses to participate in the movement of Swaraj. To spread the idea of Swaraj and mass education, he used popular means of mass communication, including Kirtan, Mela, Drama, Lectures, Art, and Music.

With the accurate foresight and vision, Lokmanya Tilak had realized the power of theatre along with its entertainment, and it was used as a powerful medium for public education. He looked to the theatre as a means of national propaganda and a platform to produce social reformation. During the early stage, i.e., when the drama and theatre industry was trying to stand on its own feet Lokmanya Tilak through 'Kesari', supported Annasaheb Kirloskar. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 67.

Lokmanya Tilak's Contribution to Theatre

During the evolutionary time of Marathi Theatre, theatre performances were not recognized as an incredible source of mass education. During that time, the power and concept of theatre play were not well regarded. During those days, industrialisation in Europe caused the evolution of new ideas and values. Along with this, the Western education had conveyed the concepts of democracy and new religious theories. Pagdi G., "LOKMANYA BAL GANGADHAR TILAK", Indus Source Books. They caused alterations in existing norms and changed the perceptions of people. Tilak and Agarkar recognized the theatre's political potential. Hence, through writing, Lokmanya Tilak tried to emphasize theatre performances. Lokmanya Tilak's contribution to theatre begun with the 'Kesari's' editorial. He published nine powerful writing through the editorial columns of 'Kesari' with the support of Mr. Agarkar. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 66.

While performing the study, we found that Lokmanya Tilak had supported a novel concept of education through entertainment. For this purpose, he took the support of the literature and portrayed ideas by gaining the help of Shakespeare, Bhavbhuti, and the compositions of Kalidas. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 67. On December 20, 1881, there was the editorial published, which was immensely for the educative purpose. While performing this research, we come to know that a lot of time required to convince people about the importance of drama and theatre to develop one's cultural richness (Kesari 1881). Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 67.

In 1896, Lokmanya Tilak strengthened the editorial board of 'Kesari'. He added Krishnaji Khadilkar, a renowned playwright whose thought process, ideation, and literary was very similar to that of the Tilak. Hence, one would find and compare the ideas propagated by Tilak. He used the stage to foster unrest against British

rule. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 67. 'Keechakvadh' was based on the story from the 'Mahabharata'. Some of the other plays Bhaubandki, saangeet Manapaman reflects the courageous ideas of Lokmanya.

Tilak's Recognition for Drama and Theatre Work

We found that Lokmanya Tilak attended the singing show of Narayan Shripad Rajhans. Tilak got impressed with the singing and acting talent and bestowed him with the title of Bal Gandharva. On the occasion of the Ganesh festival, i.e., on September 2, 1914, one live concert was organized. He didn't understand the intricacies of classical singing, yet he felt the purity and divinity of the song. He conferred on Bhaskarbua's by the title of Deva Gandharva (god among celestial musicians) and honoured him with a golden silk robe. (Ref. Lokmanya Tilakanchya Athavani by Indu Tilak). Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 68.

Lokmanya Tilak started and supported many drama and theatre organisations in Pune, Mumbai, Kolhapur, and Belgaum. He witnessed the inaugural performance of "Atmatej". In 1889, Shakuntal was shown to people during the Congress conference. Tilak gave a recommendation letter to Das babu for the drama on Swayamwar. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 68.

Under the leadership of Lokmanya Tilak, the 20th century witnessed a sea change. He encouraged the drama movement. For canvassing drama shows, he permitted the drama companies to use his name. The drama industry has bought a huge success after the endorsement by Lokmanya Tilak. Besides this, we found that he established a free library at Wai and performed fund raising shows. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 68.

In 1916, under the guidance of Lokmanya Tilak, makeup colours got certified by European expert Dr. Myan. We found that Lokmanya Tilak was a person with lion-heartedness. For the benefits of a drama company, he allowed the company to use his name. Besides this, he attended "PunyaPrabhav" by neglecting health issues. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 68.

The Impact of Theatre and Drama on Mass

With the involvement and support of Lokmanya Tilak, theatre acquired a major political significance. We found that theatre was used in the anti-imperialist struggle also. By taking the support of religious stories, drama industries tried to educate mass. We found one example of such teaching, based on the 'Kichaka Vadh', dramatist taught mass about the torture and harassment of Indians by British. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 70. The primary aim behind this act was to encourage freedom fighters to tackle the British. Through Kalicha Narad was made by using Lokmanya's famous quotes, through this drama, they tried to ignite the spirit of nationalism and produced an impact on mass. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 70.

Lokmanya Tilak's political national aggression was portrayed through Madhavrao Patkar's 'Bhasmasur'. The British banned such provocative Marathi plays, which instigated people against their rulers. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 68. The national movement began through drama and theatre and served their definite purpose. Besides this, we found that "Sita Swayamwar" was made to showcase Tilak's strong militant leadership against British rule. The drama was made to showcase the chaos and confusion that had taken place during the Surat Congress. In 1917 the government of the Central Provinces realised that this play was a mere tool of educational entertainment and to achieve freedom. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 70.

While performing this study, we found various revolutionary Marathi plays like 'Sundopsund' by Achutrao Kolhatkar, 'Chandrasena' by Anant Barve. These plays held the base of the extremist political views and political assertiveness of Lokmanya. (Ref. Kesari – Special Issue 15.07.1956 by Vithal N. Kothiwale). Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 70.

The British government banned some historical dramas of Maharana Pratap and Rag Ragini (Zhashi chi Rani) as they were very close to Lokmanya Tilak's fighting spirit and philosophy. Lokmanya Tilak first coined the term Mahatma for a Marathi play even before M. K Gandhi. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 70. Besides this, we found that "Dandadhikari" was made to represent the character of Lokmanya Tilak. Through "Chandrawak" was forced to close down by the government. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 70.

At last, the researcher got a clarification on Marathi Rangabhumi (theatre) that Lokmanya Tilak and the Marathi Rangabhumi are complementary. Also, we found that Lokmanya Tilak has contributed the lion's share in creating awareness among the people through the development of Marathi theatre. In the history of Indian theatre, Marathi theatre has etched a golden chapter and played the best role in the freedom struggle. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 70.

II. CONCLUSION:

The researcher has performed the present study to understand the contribution of Lokmanya Tilak and theatre plays in the mass movement. The researcher made this study to appreciate the literature available on drama and theatre plays. Here, through this study, the researcher has tried to meet the aims of the study.

1. Lokmanya Tilak encouraged theatre and tried to infuse the spirit of political assertiveness and patriotism among the people of the country.
2. We found many stories that were prepared to show Lokmanya's philosophy among the viewers.
3. Through theatres, Lokmanya Tilak had created awareness among the people about education, women's education, marriage, casteism, social development, and economics, etc.
4. Lokmanya Tilak preferred drama as an excellent medium to educate people on the national freedom struggle.
5. All the dramas caused the nationalistic zeal by using the base of historical or mythological stories

III. RECOMMENDATIONS:

Here the researcher has concluded the paper with recommendations for future research.

1. Further the researcher can perform the study to understand the status of drama and theatre before Lokmanya Tilak.
2. Various drama and theatre plays performed by Bal Gandharva and other artists.

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Dr. Geetali Tilak. "Theatre and Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak". *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention (IJHSSI)*, vol. 09(1), 2020, pp 47-51.