

Bal Gangadhar Tilak and the Transformation of Indian Political Culture

Manisha Kumari

Research Scholar, Department of Political Science, Netaji Subhas University, Jamshedpur, Jharkhand

Abstract

Bal Gangadhar Tilak was, honestly, one of the most influential leaders in the Indian nationalist movement and he had a crucial role in shifting the political mindset of colonial India. Back then, when Indian politics was mostly stuck with educated elites, and “proper” constitutional routes, Tilak came in with a more forceful kind of nationalism. He tried to bring in ordinary people too, not just scholars or office holders, sort of, in everyday engagement. Through his newspapers, Kesari and The Mahratta, he kept criticizing British colonial policies and he also built a kind of political awareness in Indians. Then he helped reshape public celebrations like the Ganapati Festival and the Shivaji Festival, into tools for social coordination and a stronger nationalist awareness. In fact, his well known line, “Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it,” became this bold, clear statement of the push for self-rule. Tilak’s political thinking, his ways of mass mobilizing, and his stress on national unity all mattered a great deal for what we now call modern Indian political consciousness. This article looks closely at Tilak’s life, his political ideas, his mobilizing strategies, his part in the nationalist movement, and what he contributed to the transformation of Indian political culture.

Index Terms

Indian Nationalism, Swaraj, Political Culture, Mass Mobilization, Ganapati Festival, Shivaji Festival