TILAK’S VIEW OF METAPHYSICS TO ATTAIN GOAL OF HUMAN BEING: A NOTE

Dr. Hitesh Ch. Kalita
HOD & Associate Professor in Philosophy
MNC Balika Mahavidyalaya, Nalbari, Assam, India

ABSTRACT
The work studies Tilak’s concept of ultimate reality or metaphysics in reference to goal of human being. In general sense the discussion of ultimate reality is called metaphysics. According to Tilak the realization of the true nature of the self as permanent is metaphysics. A person who can bring a necessary harmony between the Absolute Self or Parabrahman and its spontaneous practice attain the state of perfection.

INTRODUCTION
Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak’s (1856-1920) wrote the Gita Rahasya as the interpretation of the Gita in the Mandalay Jail in March, 1911. He was a mainly freedom fighter, philosopher, social reformer and humanitarian. He actually following this work tried to interpret the Gita to be free for attaining salvation.

METHODOLOGY
It has been mainly used by rational method. Moreover, following philosophical studies of its secondary data it is mainly helped by television, newspaper, book, journal, research paper, internet (web resources) and discussion of the issue.

OBJECTIVE
The main objectives are to be stated as following:
(1) To study the main concept Tilak’s Gita Rahasya..
(2) To study the concept of metaphysics.
(3) To study the goal of human being through the realization of the true nature of the self.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION: METAPHYSICS AND GOAL OF LIFE
Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920) wrote the Gita Rahasya in the Mandalay jail in March 1911. The principal aim and purpose of this book was to elaborate and critically evaluate the characteristic features and concepts of the karma-yoga as a religious and moral attitude for acquiring liberation of man. But he felt that ultimate goal of man is fully dependent on freedom from all kinds of bondage. India was under foreign power at that time. So in his view
the implication of the interpretation of the Gita can establish Swaraj and Freedom of self or body by which process man’s ultimate goal can be attained. Though the Gita in general sense is of religious nature, yet it deals with many metaphysical perspectives also. Its metaphysics is very exceptional that it wants to transform mere philosophical theories into practical ones. By metaphysical discussion Lord Krishna tried to remove the melancholy and doubts that enveloped Arjuna in the battle field before the enemies who were his own relatives and respected persons. This metaphysical discussion leads Arjuna to the main theme of the Gita viz. total surrender. To attain this one must be free from delusion. So, the Gita’s teaching is not only scholastic and theoretical but has practical relevance also. The metaphysical conversation between the Lord Krishna and Arjuna forms the ground of the esoteric input of the Gita.

Tilak’s view of the Ultimate Reality is, “the realization of the true nature of the self as immortal, all-pervasive, unchangeable and infinite”¹ as the Gita uses the word Samkhya. For Vedanta, all the animate and inanimate objects have come into existence through the union of nature and spirit. If nature (prakriti) alone could produce everything without the help of the spirit (purusa), then nobody could cognize anything. Both Prakriti and Purusa are united in the individual ego. Similarly the absolute spirit and eternal energy in the cosmic sense, when united, then becomes the personal God. This personal God is active and activity in nature. The individual ego does not make the body without being subject to the laws of nature, while the personal God creates the laws to govern the phenomenal universe. It is necessary to go beyond the idea of the Personal God, which leads us to a state beyond it no human mind, not even the cosmic mind can go, because the mind is dissolved at the very approach towards the Infinite. So Lord Krishna says,

“samam pasyam hi sarvatra
samavasthitam isvara
na hinasty atmana’ tmanam
tato yati param gatim.”

“Realising that the Paramesvara equally pervades everywhere, that man, who by such knowledge escapes self-destruction (that is, who, of his own accord, takes to the path of virtue) attains thereby an excellent state.”² It is evident that the Absolute which is beyond Personal God is all-pervading, which dwells in the individual ego and forms the background of the whole empirical universe as well as the individual ego and the cosmic ego. It is our divine nature. The individual, who sees the Lord dwelling alike in all, can’t kill or injure anyone, because he realizes the Self as well as the true nature of that person as the Absolute. When a person realizes all things and beings resting in One then he attains to Brahman. As the Gita states,

“yada bhutaprtbhaybhavam
ekastham anupasyati
tata eva ca vistaram
brahma sampayate tada”

“When he sees that the manifold of beings is centred in the One and from just that it spreads out, them he attains Brahman.”³
The immutable Atman or Self is the background of the individual ego. The individual ego is affected by the fruits of actions while the individual Atman is not affected by any fruits. The knower of the field illumines the whole field, the world of becoming. Tilak explains the nature of three constituents which spring from Prakriti, in the following words, “But these three constituents never exist independently, independent of each other, and they are always together. For example, although it is the nature of the satta constituent to make a man do any action, yet as the inclination to do the good action results from the rajas constituent, there must also be mixture of the rajas constituent with the sattvika temperament……….in the world are created by the mutual support or mutual inter-relations of these constituents.”

From this verse it states that the universe must have come into existence out of some substance and all the constituents (gunas) which we see in the universe must have also been in this original substance, Prakriti. For the Gita, the Samkhya Dualism of Matter and Spirit is unacceptable. Purusattanam or the Absolute Sel is the Principle which is all per-vading and imperceptible and imperishable. It is the real permanent principle of the entire cosmos. The Gita states,

“uttamh purusah tv anyah paramatmety udahrtah
Yo lokatrayam avisya bibharty avyasa isvarah”

That is, “that Purusa, which is different from both these (Matter andSpirit) is the Super-Excellent, the One which is known as the Absolute Atman, the inexhaustible and all-Powerful; and pervading the three-spread universe.” It follows that there are a higher and a lower purusa, of which the former is always unattached by gunas, whereas the lower purusa which is different in different bodies is always associated with prakriti and its gunas and is continually affected by their operations. According to Tilak, the words mutable and immutable are actually synonymous with the perceptible universe and the imperceptible Prakriti. Ksara is a perceptible perishable thing. The adjective ‘aksara’ has often been used in the Gita in the case of Parabrahman. But here in the verse 16 ‘aksara Prakriti’ is meant. For clarifying this confusion ‘aksara’ is stated as meaning ‘Kutastha Prakriti’. Shortly the aksara Brahman is beyond the perceptible cosmos and the imperceptible Prakriti. Ksara is a perceptible perishable thing. The adjective ‘aksara’ has often been used in the Gita in the case of Parabrahman. But here in the verse 16 ‘aksara Prakriti’ is meant. For clarifying this confusion ‘aksara’ is stated as meaning ‘Kutastha Prakriti’. Shortly the aksara Brahman is beyond the perceptible cosmos and the imperceptible Prakriti which is the same as Purusattama, beyond ksara and aksara. Both these are known as Parabrahman which resides in the body in the form of Ksetrajna. It is untouched by the imperfections of mutable objects. By its inner consciousness it reveals as individual souls and it pervades the whole universe by its consciousness and vital energy. Actually by His mere existence the Lord supports the existence of the whole universe.

For Tilak the metaphysical foundation of ethics is found in the Gita’s distinction between vyvasayatmika buddhi (Pure Reason) and Vyvsanatmika buddhi (practical Reason). Pure reason gets the knowledge that there is only one Atman in all human beings and realizes the true nature of the Absolute Reality by yoga or knowledge, then the it automatically becomes self-devoted reason (Atmanistha buddhi).

Tilak accepts Advaita philosophy of the Absolute Self, but sometimes is different from it. According to Tilak, for the Gita, “…… the Aksara Brahman, which is beyond both the perceptible Cosmos and the imperceptible Prakriti is essentially the same as the Purusattama
Who is beyond the ‘ksara’ (Visible Cosmos) and the ‘aksara’ (Prakriti). Both these are known as the Parabrahman; and... this is only one Purusattama both in the Body (panda) and in the Cosmos (brahmanda)."⁶ According to Sankara ksara is the changing world and aksara is meant as the mayasakti of the Lord. But the Absolute Reality is said to be eternal, pure consciousness and free from the limitations of ksara and aksara. But it is very important that if the Sankara’s mayasakti is identified with Prakriti, then there is actually no difference between Sankara and Tilak on the metaphysical perspective. For Tilak, the Supreme Being is beyond both matter and spirit. It is very clear that all works on the Vedanta philosophy including the Gita also accept the glory of that Supreme Being which pervades the whole cosmos, maintains it and also transcends it. The Advaita Vedanta believes that the Parabrahman is qualityless and indescribable. Seeing the appearance of the qualified universe in the qualityless Parabrahman is the cause of ignorance. When the ego is lost in a wrong unity with the not-self and its forms, it is not free.

CONCLUSION

When the ego acquires the real nature of the self then he gets freedom from all kinds of bounds as well as he attains salvation. Then that person spontaneously performs action by the guidance of his that self. It is the highest significant to Tilak that he made the bridge from the eternal self to the practical world. The person who can bring down from the self to the natural world he gets salvation in this world. So Tilak said, “just as space (akasa) is part of the receptacle (ghata) which contains it and not as an amsa (particle) which has been cut out”⁷

REFERENCE

2. Bhagavadgita13.28Tilak’s Translation.
5. Tilak B.G., P.274, see also Bhagavadgita, p.15.17.
6. Bhagavadgita, Tilak’s Translation, p. 15.15.
7. Tilak, Gita Rahasya, p.1142-43