Introduction

The very title of the thesis – *Re-thinking Swaraj in the Context of Contemporary Discourses of Nation* – draws our attention to two content-words “Swaraj” and “Nation”. Of course the words “Re-thinking”, “Contemporary” and “Discourses” are other noticeable content words. Before a semantic relationship is explored among these words, it is very important to understand their underlying theoretical implications. These words are not just lexical items in English language, mere dictionary meaning does not explain the dynamics and complexities in-built in culturally loaded terms like “nation” and “swaraj”. Before explicating upon the rationale and relevance of the present project, it is essential to understand, the cultural history that goes into the making of these terms. In this part of the thesis the accent falls on the term “swaraj” as it constitutes the basic framework that is set
against the barrage of new theories of nation emanating from the sophisticated metropolitan academia of the high West.

Before the semantic connotations of the term *swaraj*, as are in vogue in the critical parleys, are explained it is important to understand as to what the phrase "discourses of nation" imply. But first, discourse as a critical concept itself needs some explanation. Discourse is "Usually a learned discussion, spoken or written, on a philosophical, political, literary or religious topic. It is closely related to a treatise and a dissertation. In fact, the three terms are very nearly synonymous". The term 'discourse' has been given extensive treatment by Michel Foucault. Foucault while admitting the problems in defining discourse, ventures to define discourse as "the group of statements that belong to a single system of formation". But Foucault puts a significant rider over this definition by insisting on taking statement as a textual truth rather than any original pure monologic fact. Discourse, Foucault argues "must not be referred to the distant presence of origin, but treated as and when it occurs."

Nation, today, is a highly contested category of political analyses. Its origin cannot be attributed to some divine force.
A whole range of discursive formations goes into the making of nation, making it a very transitional even slippery construct. No obvious technical definition exists, but only a working definition in the social sciences would include most of the following criteria. The normal criteria identified is this: "A nation is a body of people who possess some sense of a single community identity, with a shared historical tradition, with major elements of common culture, and with a substantial proportion of them inhabiting an identifiable geographical unit"\(^4\). But such a definition has its problems. Such a definition does not accommodate, for instance, the predicament of Jewish diaspora, nor does it explain the polyethnic framework of nations like India\(^5\). In the present thesis, nation has not been defined in one particular way. Therefore the term discourses of nation has been preferred over simple 'nation' alone. The very use of 'discourses' is suggestive of multivalent possibilities that a nation can configure in. Nation can no longer be visualized or theorized in any exclusive frame. In the present work nation has been theorized in four broad terms of 'idea', 'state', 'class' and 'postnation'.

Coming back to swaraj, its historical and philosophical foundations are as old and rich as Indian civilization. The term
has Vedantic forbearings. During our freedom struggle the term regained currency and caught the imagination of those leaders who invoked ancient Indian past and its culture as an answer to modernism let loose by English education and Western value-system in colonial India. Moderates stood for swaraj defined as self-government within the empire, achieved through the constitutional means of gradual reform 'granted' by the imperial parliament. These moderates included early leaders of Congress - Allan Octavian Hume, Sir William Wedderburn, Dadabhai Naoroji, Gopal Krishan Gokhale and Baddrudin Tyabji. Some of these leaders are mentioned later on by Gandhi in Hind Swaraj with respect. The Extremists stood for swaraj as complete sovereignty achieved through constitutional means if possible, but through other means if necessary. "In contrast to Moderates, no Extremist is mentioned by name in Hind Swaraj." Tilak's battle-cry against the evil of colonialism in the form of his much quoted slogan that "Swaraj is my birthright, and I shall have it" brought forth a rare metaphysical intensity in an otherwise political project of Indian freedom from English Raj. By associating "swaraj" with "birthright", Tilak reminded the so-called emancipated and liberal Britshers the coloniality in-built in the very project of imperialism.
In the present thesis, the term “swaraj” has been used in a very specific context. This, however, does not mean that its multivalent political or moral ramifications have totally been sidelined or underplayed in favour of some reduced notion of swaraj. The context is Gandhian, and the text that informs the dynamics of this concept is Hind Swaraj. This delimiting of the context calls for some explanation. Gandhian use of the term “swaraj” finds a full and authentic treatment in Hind Swaraj. Prior to Gandhi, the leaders invoked the term quite often, but none theorized it in an extended manner as full-fledged philosophy of political and social emancipation and freedom. Moreover they had limited vision of swaraj, which Gandhi subsequently critiques in the course of Hind Swaraj. Gandhian connotations of the term “swaraj” are inclusive and subsume its historical meaning(s); they are positive as well as moral as against the prevalent negativistic and legalistic notions of swaraj. Bhikhu Parekh sums up Gandhian concept of swaraj in positive terms thus:

Swaraj was [is] a form of collective integrity, a community’s mode of being true to itself and running its affairs in harmony with its deepest
truth. For Gandhi, *swaraj* was [is] the ultimate ideal of every territoriality organized society. Independence was [is] its necessary but by no means sufficient condition and was[is] desirable only because a country forced to live by its ruler's truth remained untrue to itself.⁹

In the course of the thesis various other facets of *swaraj* viz *swaraj*/*metaphysical idea, swaraj* as blueprint of modern nation-state, *swaraj* as tangible socialist programme, *swaraj* as post-nation would be explored in detail with reference to various contemporary theories of nation.

*Hind Swaraj* therefore becomes a seminal text in the context of the present project. Before the concept of *swaraj* as theorized by Gandhi is spelled out, it is important to justify the importance being given to *Hind Swaraj* in the thesis. It is a work that Gandhi himself translated from Gujarati into English: not even his autobiography enjoys this distinction. So it is the most authentic Gandhian text, unmediated and uncorrupted by the translator's own cultural politics. In his introduction to *Hind Swaraj and Other Writings*, Anthony J. Parel sums up the
seminal importance assigned to this text by various scholars of Gandhi thus:

No wonder it has been called 'a very basic document for the study of Gandhi's thought' (M. Chaterjee 1983, 89), his 'confession of faith' (Nanda 1974, 66), 'a rather incendiary manifesto' (Erikson 1969, 217), 'a proclamation of ideological independence' (Dalton 1993, 16), and 'the nearest he came to producing a sustained work of political theory' (Brown 1989, 16).¹⁰

_Hind Swaraj_ can be seen as one among the first attempts to theorize nation in post-colonial perspective. In the Indian context, it can be cited as Bible of post-colonial theory. It is comparable to Frantz Fanon's _The Wretched of the Earth_¹¹, and also to Marx's _Das Capital_¹² in terms of its understanding of Western civilization and the marginalization of the indigenous and the local in the wake of globalism implicit in the grand-narrative of Capitalism. Later post-colonial texts like _The Orientalism_¹³ by Edward Said or _The Nation and Narration_¹⁴ by Homi Bhabha look at best sophisticated derivatives or minor corollaries of the Gandhian text.
Swaraj: The Conventional Treatment.

The present thesis is certainly not the first full-length study of the concept of swaraj or Hind Swaraj as such. Such is the significance of this concept/ text that it has invited critical attention from scholars across the globe, and even across the disciplines. Ever since its publication, it has been at the centre of critical inquiry. Here, there is intention of going into the history of criticism of Hind Swaraj\textsuperscript{15}. Of course, some of the recent responses to it are included in a rather brief measure to understand its reception in current political/ cultural debate. Let us first understand the diverse facets of swaraj as studied so far along the 'conventional' axes of the moral/ philosophical, the political, the cultural and the economic so far.

Swaraj as a Philosophical Ideal:

Most of the contemporary critics of Gandhi try to metaphysicalize him to the level of a deity. Swaraj in their critical discourses marks the pinnacle of Indian philosophical ideal of advait or non-duality. Ramchandra Gandhi in his
essay “The Swaraj of India”, begins his explication of the concept of swaraj by way of relating Gandhi’s political struggle for swaraj with Sri Ramana Maharshi’s svanubhuti thus:

What could be the significance, the esoteric and civilizational significance, of the remarkable coincidence that precisely during the half-century when Mahatama Gandhi was steering India’s struggle for at least political swaraj, Sri Ramana Maharishi (1879-1950) mightily witnessed to the truth of svanubhuti, self-realization, radical freedom from all delusion and ignorance of non-self alienation? 16

Ramchandra locates swaraj in the philosophic ideal of advait: “swaraj in politics or economics or in ideas or whatever is etymologically the kingdom of or order or dispensation of sva, self, myself; consequently, in all seeking of swaraj I seek, sva seeks, to be the ruler, the center, source of all things; and this seeking is wisdom and not paranoi, health, i.e., svasthya or self-situatedness, and not sickness, sarvodaya and not
serlfishness, only in and through the truth of advaita, the truth that you and I are not other than one another (p.302).” 17

Further more Ramchandra explains the advait implicit in the concept of swaraj by way of positing its fundamental opposition to British imperialism or the Western discourse of modernity which are nothing but manifestations of unabashed self-aggrandizement:

Thus the Gandhian struggle for swaraj, and indeed the Indian struggle for swaraj under the leadership of thinkers and revolutionaries rooted in Indian metaphysics and spirituality such as Lokamanya Tilak and Sri Aurobindo, is always implicitly advaitin struggle, a struggle for the kingdom of self or autonomy and identity as opposed to the delusion of and chaos and dishonor of not-self or heteronomy and divisiveness. British rule or modern industrial civilization and its imperialism and materialism, missionary Christianity and Islam and their soul-lust, the self-contradictoriness and shame of advaitin Hinduism’s practice of untouchability etc, are symbols and powers of
illusion of not-self, otherness, *Maya*; and the historical struggles of metaphysical Indian civilization have always been, not excluding the modern period, attempted overcomings of all such *Maya* so as to see God face to face in the truth of self-realization. Such alone is the *swaraj* of India, at least such (p. 302). 18

Gandhi has invariably been compared with religious thinkers and saints by scholars of the creed of Ramchandra Gandhi. This has no doubt brought forth the metaphysical inclinations of Gandhi, but this also in a way forecloses the other numerous possibilities inherent in the very conceptualization of *swaraj*. In the essay, Ramchandra seems to be more than fascinated by the very happening of Raman Maharishi along with Gandhi in the first half of twentieth century. In fact he goes on to establish the precedence of Vivekenand, Ramana Maharishi and Ramakrishan over Gandhi in any understanding or attainability of *swaraj* thus:

really the outer struggle gathered momentum only after 1896 when Sri Ramana arrived Tiruvannamalai. Indeed, it is only in 1897 that
Swami Vivekananda establishes the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, and metaphysical Indian thought, *advaitin* thought, is world news, good news, great news. Renaissance is not rebirth, but second birth, *dvijatva*, birth into Brahmanhood.

Nationally, in the modern period of history, Indian *dvijatva* is promised by Sri Ramakrishna’s catholic spirituality and marked by Sri Ramana’s unambiguous, effortless, *sahaja* self-realization at the end of the nineteenth century. Brahma Samaj and Arya Samaj, powerful self-images of defensive Indian self-confidence, lose catholicity in their flight from the truth’s image worship, and lose Indian distinctiveness and truth’s ultimacy in their flight from *advaita*. It is only in the post-Vivekananda and post-Ramana phase of Indian awakening that social awareness begins to acquire the catholic *advaitinshakti* of *swaraj*. Aurobindo and Tilak and Gandhi are inconceivable before Ramana and Ramakrishan, and without them.¹⁹

Ramashray Roy, another familiar name in the field of Gandhian studies, even on re-thinking, finds an absence of any
real co-ordinates for the actual social praxis in *Hind Swaraj*. In his paper on “Moral Foundation of *Hind Swaraj* and Nonviolence”, Roy does not discover any rigorous social analysis in *Hind Swaraj*:

Gandhi’s *Hind Swaraj* has little to do with a careful analysis of social conditions, the institutional structures and individual motivations and their interactions that produce an outcome which he labels “the satanic civilization”.  

To Roy, *Hind Swaraj* is a prescriptive text in which instead of any logical examination of the challenges of modern society, Gandhi ends up with prescribing number of morals: “The sensibility underlying *Hind Swaraj* has its roots not in the intellectual but in the moral. . . .”  

Political freedom must be preceded and informed by moral discipline. National freedom therefore is not an enterprise of plain politics or diplomacy. It is a project of moral recuperation. Those who study *swaraj* in moral terms rely on statements such as these made by Gandhi in *Hind Swaraj*.
“Only men with mature thoughts are capable of ruling themselves, and not the hasty-tempered.”  

"It is Swaraj when we learn to rule ourselves."

"Those who will rise to power by murder will certainly not make the nation happy."

Swaraj as Affirmation of Tradition:

Tradition holds a central position in Gandhian thought. Of course, the tradition which Gandhi invokes time and again is not “a one-time [cultural] event.” He holds Indian tradition more scientific than the modern civilization thrust on the colonized world. Hind Swaraj contains many statements which reveal Gandhi’s unflinching faith in tradition thus:

“A nation that is desirous of securing Home Rule cannot afford to despise its ancestors.”
"We were one nation before they [the colonizers] came." 27

Swaraj as a Political Strategy:

In the contemporary age of power-politics, Gandhi can be dismissed for being impractical and therefore apolitical. Obviously if politics is seen purely in terms of self-aggrandizement, Gandhi's gospel of swaraj based on the principle of self-sacrifice for the attainment of the larger goal of freedom of society as a whole, may appear only an outdated and jaded perspective. Gandhi was neither Chankya nor Machiavelli. Yet swaraj as it emerges in Hind Swaraj, is intensely political. There are many significant political/polemical statements that Gandhi makes during the course of his dialogue with 'the reader'.

Swaraj as a Principle of Rural Economics:

There is a widespread fallacy that Gandhi was oblivious of the hard nitty-gritties of the world of economics. He was at
best a wishful utopian who believed in the benevolence of the capitalist. His emphasis on small-scale handicraft industries is totally archaic and medieval. However, a close reading of *Hind Swaraj* reveals outlines of a subtle ‘alternative model of economics’. Instead of competent economics, Gandhi visualizes a co-operative economics. There is almost a total rejection of the very concept of big, metropolitan urban centre: “Large cities were a snare and a useless encumbrance”.

**Swaraj as Theory of State-Society Relationship**

Critics like K. Raghvendra Rao, however, find *Hind Swaraj* a text of immense possibilities on state-society relationship. According to Rao, the Swarajist paradigm of state-society relationship is distinct, yet very much universal in terms of its efficacy and relevance. He warns critics like Ramashray Roy not to take Gandhi’s otherwise “desophisticated style” for lack of intellectual rigour. He adds: “Hence as a ‘modern’ social scientist I feel obliged to take *Hind Swaraj* to be a serious document in the technical mode of social science methodology and vocabulary. We must be honest with ourselves, as *Hind Swaraj* would require us, and face up to the fact that we, as social scientists, have failed to decipher that
Gandhian paradox of sophisticated desophistication or desophisticated sophistication. In his exposition, Rao brings forth the elevation of "local culture" to the level of "civilization" in *Hind Swaraj*. In his critique of the railways, Gandhi presupposes a society that is locally-oriented and physically immobile.

Raghvendra Rao suggests some of the potent areas of critical speculation latent in the discourse of *Hind Swaraj*. These suggestions deserve a special mention because the present thesis addresses to some of the issues suggested by him. In fact the thesis takes off from the clues given by Rao. Rao believes lists some of the gray areas in the discourse of *Hind Swaraj* which demand rigorous critical attention:

1. How far is the contention in *Hind Swaraj* that India has evolved a crystallized society-state framework of its own in pre-British India valid?
   Are its characteristics indicated reasonably correctly by Gandhi?

2. How right is *Hind Swaraj* in asserting that the foundations of Indian political culture as
crystallized and stabilized are intact at the level of our vast rural masses?

3. If the claim of *Hind Swaraj* turns out to be true in regard to issue no. 2, why has this foundation been unable to make an impact on the elite superstructures in polity, economy, and society? Is it because it is weak or unorganized or unorganizable? 31

Rao underlines the need of demystifying Gandhi. He strikes a sound academic note when he asks the future researchers of Gandhi to “take precautions against mystifying, romanticising or fetishising Gandhi or *Hind Swaraj* or its ideas”. 32

*Swaraj as a Possible Theory of Nation:*

In this thesis *swaraj* has been re-viewed from an altogether different perspective - a perspective hitherto not taken up in a visibly sustained manner33. This is the perspective of nation. *Swaraj* as theory of freedom and liberty is understandable, but how can it be taken as a frame of nation? - remains a moot question. True it is that *Hind Swaraj* does not directly deal
with the theme of nation as such, but a deeper probe into the various formulations of freedom suggested by Gandhi definitely leads us to a conceptualization of nation at subtextual level. It is not mere coincidence that the very first chapter of the book deals with important issues of home and nation. Gandhi as Editor highlights the importance of ‘National’ in National Congress. Then he goes on to explain the role of Gokhale in terms of his contribution to the making of nation: “Professor Gokhale, in order to prepare the Nation, . . .” Further Gandhi describes Gokhale as “the author of Nationalism.” The word ‘Nation’ and ‘nationalism’ occurs at least seven times in the chapter revealing Gandhi’s preoccupation with the idea of Nation. It must be remembered that Gandhi is addressing to the larger issues of freedom and liberty of the self etc. through his concerns of Home Rule and national independence. The moral, cultural, social imperatives of self-rule described above deal as much with the self of the individual as with the self of the nation. Hind Swaraj visualizes nation as an externalized macro manifestation of the inner micro self. It is in this sense that Hind Swaraj becomes a seminal discourse on nation.
What are the salient features of *swaraj* as a concept of nation? Some of the chosen statements/ concepts, directly addressing to the issue(s) of nation, from *Hind Swaraj*, are listed below. Also critical comments are given along with these statements underlining the importance of each statement as signifier of 'theory of nation':

1. **Nationhood is never granted.** Nor do nations come into being without struggle. A desire for the nation has to be created and cultivated. The people need be prepared for nation. The use of the expression “prepare the Nation” in the context of Gokhale is quite significant in this context.

2. **Nationalism as dormant feeling has to re-invented.** It has to be authored. It is in this context that Gandhi describes Dadabhai as the author of Indian nationalism: "We must admit that he is the author of Nationalism". Dadabhai’s drain-theory was the first systematic endeavour underlining the colonial nature of the *Raj*. It is for this seminal contribution of Dadabhai that he is credited with the title of being the very author of Indian nationalism.

3. **Nation, before it actually becomes a nation-state, has to pass through a long process of history.** In this context, Gandhi
makes his significant statement that "Nations are not formed in one day" 38.

4. Nation is a process rooted in history. In order to realize nation, its ancestors must be respected. “A nation that is desirous of securing Home Rule cannot afford to despise its ancestors” 39.

5. Each nation has to invent its own model. Mere imitation or import of alien models is self-defeating to the very idea of independent nationhood. Clearly Gandhi holds nation to be the very site of alternative civilization. “If India copies England, it is my firm conviction that she will be ruined” 40.

6. Nation must have its distinct civilization. Gandhi believes in nation-civilization compatibility. By identifying nation with civilization, Gandhi extends the very scope of nation. Secondly he also rules out the very viability of official nationalism as a sustainable strategy of nationhood. A civilizational foundation of nation make the very quest of nation, organic and integral.

7. If nation has to be co-extensive with specific and distinct civilization, civilization must also be rooted in religion. In simple terms nation has to have a religious basis. Of course Gandhi never uses the term ‘religion’ in its narrow sectarian sense. It is synonym of dharma.
8. The basic unit of nation for all practical purposes is village. With constant focus on village as a self-sustaining republic, Gandhi obviously does not recommend nation to be a closed monolithic construct.

9. Nation is not a mechanical entity where railways or communication network across the length and breadth of its land mass can induce a sense of belongingness among its people. It is in this context Gandhi refuses to accept the British claim of engendering a sense of pan-Indianism among the badly-ridden caste and communal Indian society. Gandhi holds India to be one nation much before British came to India. He writes: "...our leading men travelled throughout India either on foot or in bullock carts. They learned one another's languages, and there was no aloofness between them. What do you think could have been the intention of those far-seeing ancestors of ours who established Shevtbindu Rameshwar in the South, Juggernaut in the South-East, and Hardwar in North as places of pilgrimage? You will admit they were no fools. They knew that worship of God could have been performed just as well at home. They taught us that those whose hearts were aglow with righteousness had the Ganges in their own homes. But they saw that India was one undivided land so made by nature. They therefore, argued that it must be one nation.
Arguing this they established holy places in various parts of India, and fired the people with an idea of nationality in a manner unknown in other parts of the world. Any two Indians are one as no two Englishmen are. 41

10. Nation should not be institutionalized. Gandhi, therefore always doubted the role of national parliament in national governance. He holds “Parliament to be a costly toy of the nation” 42. He endorses Carlyle’s criticism of British Parliament as ‘talking shop of the world’. Far form being the Mother of Parliaments, British Parliament has been condemned as sterile woman. Even he wanted the dismemberment of Congress as a national party once the immediate project of political independence was over.

11. Nation is not a modern invention. “We were one nation before they [the colonizers] came” 43, thus Gandhi discounts the colonial claim that India was made one nation primarily because of pan-Indian colonial administration and a net work of railways and telegraph etc. In fact Gandhi attributes the centralized Raj of British in huge and diverse country like India to its oneness right from ancient period down to the medieval.
12. **Nation as an informing idea has always united India despite its sprawling and uneven terrain and diverse climate.** Gandhi believes that there must have been a vision of one India among our ancient saints and seers that they “travelled through out India either on foot or in bullock-carts”⁴⁴ There must have been a national imagination that beckoned our “far-seeing ancestors”⁴⁵ to establish “Shvetbindu Rameshwar in the South, Juggernaut in the South-East, and Hardwar in the North as places of pilgrimage”. ⁴⁶

What is the swarajist frame of nation, then? In nutshell, it envisions a nation which is organic and is at the same time nurtured by history. It is held together not by any elaborate state machinery, but by the shared experiences of history. It is a collectivity where the real sovereignty lies with people. In the swarajist frame nation is a construct of distinct civilization. It needs to be remembered that in Gandhian frame, civilization is never defined along communal lines. Despite the fact that India has people of all religions and sects, it civilization is one and unique.

Another important aspect swaraj as nation is that individual’s space is never undermined or tampered.
Individual's freedom is first condition of realizing a swarajist notion of nation. Swaraj does not mean anything if it encroaches upon or in any measure it compromises the subjectivity of any individual. From, the individuality of an individual, swaraj as theory of nation accords an autonomy to village as a self-sufficient republic. Village is an important link between the individual and the nation.

Swaraj as nation does not encourage competitive politics. It is a principle of harmonious and cooperative co-existence. The village population must divide its labour/ resources in such a manner that each one proves complementary to another. Swaraj does not permit hierarchy in human relationships. The division of labour or division of society in varnas is acceptable as long there is no social hierarchy attached to it.

The present work intends to explore a possible re-thinking of swaraj as nation vis-à-vis other theories of nation that keep pouring form the sophisticated West. Also in the wake of some recent developments viz. fortification of Europe, the balkanization of USSR, the possible re-alignment of central Asian Islamic republics, the disintegration of Yugoslavia etc. the nationhood of India is being doubted and questioned. What
can really help us to understand the dynamics of India as a nation? Or how can we define India's rather enigmatic nationhood?

In the thesis swaraj is seen as an indigenous alternative frame which can possibly answer some of these nagging questions on India's national status, its chequered past and its uncertain future. Those who iconize notions of official or empirical well-defined nationhood do not predict any viability of India as nation. In fact the continuity of India as nation has surprised many of these dooms-day speculators. Its heterogeneity, its communally sensitive past, its poverty has lead many political commentators to talk in terms of India being many nations within the so-called nation.

In this age of globalization and multinationalism when the pundits of India's disintegration have begun parroting out their old swan song of threat to India, a discussion of swaraj becomes all more significant. Any such threat can be countered effectively once India's foregrounding in the principle(s) of swaraj are highlighted. One of the major tasks undertaken in the thesis is to underline India's nationhood in the principle(s) of swaraj. But such a use of swaraj at best makes the study a
backward-looking project or swaraj at best an old paradigm which has no future applicability.

While foregrounding India’s unity in the metaphysics of swaraj, it is also suggested that in terms of realizing its ideals of modern statehood and economic development, swaraj holds potential and can guide India to newer heights. Swaraj is not simply metaphysics, it does address to the needs of economy and other administrative requirements of the nation as state. While so many experiments have been tried in post-independent India, none could break free absolutely from swarajist mould. In the thesis, by way of implication, it is suggested that swaraj as a principle of polity, administration and rural growth can be re-thought and re-framed to combine India’s material growth with its position as spiritual leader of the world.

Swaraj as a theory of nation is not re-iterated here in the thesis with any jingoistic zeal. What is suggested is that it is high time that instead of seeking answers from culturally very dissimilar West, we develop our own theories, rather re-work indigenous theories which are co-extensive with our spiritual credo and material needs. India’s distinctness can be ensured if
do not whore after derivative Western models or diktats of progress without proper negotiation.

The Scheme of the Thesis:

The present thesis is divided into four chapters besides the introduction and conclusion. The first chapter attempts a detailed analysis of theories of nation foregrounded in dharma or a set of cultural values informed by an undefined metaphysical impulse and shared by a community or communities. These theories locate nation in trans-spatial or extra-temporal frame of the metaphysical. In the second half of the chapter, the attempt would be to see and evaluate the extent to which swaraj as a concept of nation subsumes the metaphysical drift of these theories. Here it needs to be remembered that contemporary theories of nation are not homogenous or plainly analogous to each other. Some of the contemporary thinkers, particularly Indian philosophers and political theorists, continue to regard nation (India) as an idea.

The second chapter discusses nation as a political construct informed by the modernist enterprise of rationalism, democracy, secularism etc. In the first part of the chapter, the
views of some of the leading thinkers of ‘nation as state’ would be recounted in capsule form. Thereafter the second part of the chapter explores the modernity in-built in swaraj. In the concluding part of the chapter it would be seen to what an extent swaraj as nation-state fits in the scheme of thinkers who still hold nation to be well-defined, structured and fairly homogenous administrative space. Also the differences between Gandhian modernism and West European modernism as an informing ideology of nation-state would be highlighted in the chapter.

The third chapter gives an extended account of postmodern theories of nation which dismiss nation as an unwanted third between the local and the global. To what an extent does swaraj lapse into these postmodern theories of anti-nation? The second part of the chapter would highlight the statelessness in-built in the concept of swaraj and this statelessness would be situated against the postmodern disbelief in the continuity of nation. Do Gandhian postmodernism and Western postmodernism as a basis of postnation coincide or fall apart? Is it fair to discover element of postnationalism in Gandhi at all.
The fourth chapter is an extension of the third with a slight shift in focus. In this chapter an attempt is made to evaluate *swaraj* in the context of theories of nation given by the left and the new left. In the first part of the chapter, the concept of nation as it emerges in the theories of Russian Marxism, particularly in the political thought of Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky would be taken up along with the perspective offered by the New Left thinkers viz. Gramsci and Althusser. The second part would be given to theory of nation as defined by the Indian left, right from M.N.Roy, Jai Prakash Narain, Vinoba Bhave to Ram Manohar Lohia. The third part would bring forth the socialist sub-text of *swaraj* as theory of nation. The last part of the chapter would compare and contrast the socialism in-built in *swaraj* and socialism espoused by ideologues of leftist ideology. Does *swaraj* steer the middle path? Is *swaraj* oblivious of socialist commitments of nation as state?

The chapter no. 3 and 4 can be mutually altered as both chapters are complementary in nature to quite an extent. Both chapters posit the demise of nation. Whereas in chapter 3 the accent is on liquidation of nation on account of growing awareness of communal, racial and ethnic rights, in chapter 4, the accent is on the class character of society across political,
cultural boundaries of the nation-state. In the marxist scheme nation becomes subservient to class.

The conclusion tries to situate the above-suggested dissimilar trends of theorizing the nation in the Gandhian concept of swaraj. It answers questions like -- Does swaraj as a concept of nation fall into one category? Or does it incorporate little bit of each of these three streams? Or is it altogether an alternative concept of nation? The inclusiveness or the exclusiveness of swaraj has been commented upon in the concluding part of the thesis. Also an attempt is made to evaluate the future of the concept of swaraj as theory of nation in the light of emerging discourses of hyper-real space and internet.

Finally a word on notes and references. Although footnotes and references are indispensable to any research work, yet in this work they gain a special urgency. Since the project is of comparatist nature, sometimes, the comparisons are realized through notes. Of course, comparative observations form the main the argument, yet at times in order to retain the main drift of the argument, some of the comparative remarks have been made through notes. At times these notes tend to be rather
long, elaborate and even digressive. As such these notes demand special attention.
Notes/ References:


3. Ibid., p. 25.


5. "For example, while Belgium is clearly a nation, the sharp, and historically, long-term, religious and linguistic cleavages between the Flemish (largely Catholic Dutch speaking) ands Wallon (largely anti-clerical French-speaking) peoples, and the fact Belgium only existed in its present form from the 1830s seem to counter the definition. An even clearer example of historical discontinuity which has not prevented a very intense national identity would be Poland, which has not existed as an independent state for much of the last 1,000 years and whose territory has shifted across much of central Europe. Similarly nations can exist despite extensive dispersion geographically; the identification of the Jewish diaspora with..."
its traditional Palestinian homeland, both before and after the
creation of the state of Israel in 1948 is a good example of
this. Although the political usage of the term does generally
denote something approximating to the nation-state, as in the
'British nation' (which might more appropriately be seen as a
union of three or four separate nations), the example of the
Jewish nation, as well as the affinity felt for an ancestral
homeland among Africans, Chinese, and many other peoples
now dispersed through much of the world, indicates that a deep
human sentiment of 'belonging' is involved" ~ Ibid.

6. These forbearings are explained in the next chapter where the
metaphysical foregroundings of swaraj are explicated.

7. Anthony J. Parel (ed.), *Hind Swaraj and Other Writings*,
mentioned as *HS*.

8. Gandhi critiques three prevailing notions of *swaraj*. One
limited view of *swaraj* was championed by the moderates
within Congress. For the moderates, home-rule meant
autonomy of the type enjoyed by Canada and South Africa, that
is, independence within the frame of the British constitution
and the British Empire. The means of attaining this status, it
was argued, was the constitutional method of gradual reform of
the existing machinery of the government of India. The extremists believed that the physical withdrawal of the British from India was necessary and sufficient requirement of true home-rule. For them, home-rule was the rule of Indians by Indians. There was yet another perspective being pressed forward by the middle class Indians. For this class home-rule meant the establishment of the modern state that would satisfy their ambitions of becoming rich and powerful. They looked upon nation but as means of their own self-aggrandizement. See B.N. Ray’s Tradition and Innovation in Indian Political Thought (Delhi: Ajanta, 1998, pp. 375-379) for an extended treatment of the prevailing notions of swaraj prior to Gandhi’s concept of swaraj.


10. Anthony Parel, IIS, p.xiii.

11. Frantz Fanon’s, an Algerian revolutionary, in his book The Wretched of the Earth examines in detail the irreparable damages colonialism has done to Third World in terms of engendering in the ruling elite of the colonized world a sense of nationalism which was derived from colonial Eurocentric
notions of totalizing nation-states. Fanon's views on the nature of colonialism, racism and the role of violence in Third World revolutions are enormously influential. The main theme of the book is the critique of negritude and the development of a political philosophy for Third World liberation. Fanon receives extensive treatment in the thesis in the third chapter.

12. *Das Capital* has been heralded by thinkers and scholars as the book of the millennium. “In *Das Capital*, the work to which Marx devoted the latter part of life, he sets out to identify the ‘laws of motion’ of capitalism. The capitalist system is presented in this book as a self-reproducing whole, governed by an underlying law, the law of value. But this law and its consequences are not only not immediately apparent to the agents who participate in capitalism, indeed they are actually concealed from them. Thus capitalism is a deceptive object, one in which there is discrepancy between its ‘essence’ and ‘appearance’” – Michael Rosen, “Marx, Karl (1818-83)” in *Concise Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, London and New York: Routledge, 2000, p.528.

13. Said’s *The Orientalism* is seminal study of the rather tainted representation of the East in the West. The book exposes how the so-called empirical West constructed East as backward, ritualistic, barbaric, archaic and uncouth under its colonial
project of representing itself as culturally superior site. Ubai Nooruddin sums up the main thrust of The Orientalism thus—“It is a reflection of relationship of imperial and intellectual domination of a West which feels it is superior to an ‘inferior’ East. This often results in an understanding of Islamic philosophy which sees the latter as essentially unoriginal, derivative and of only historical interest. While orientalists have produced interesting and important work, most fail to appreciate the independent status of the material which may analyse”.— Ibid, p. 649.

14. The Nation and Narration is significant collection of articles on the emerging forms that nation as a political unit may have in the post-condition. The introductory essay by Homi Bhabha underlines the problematics of defining nation in the transnational scenario of cross-border migrations. Homi Bhabha’s critique of ‘nation’ has been included in the third chapter of the present work.


17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid., p. 303.


21. Ibid., p.43.

22. HS, p.16.

23. Ibid. p.73.

24. Ibid., p.77.


26. HS, p.16.

27. Ibid., p.48.

28. Ibid., p.69.

30. Ibid., pp. 112-13.

31. Ibid., pp. 124-25.

32. Ibid., p. 124.

33. Rajmohan Gandhi in his *The Good Boatman: A Portrait of Gandhi*, does refer to *Hind Swaraj* as a discourse of nation thus:

Then there is Gandhi's view of the Indian nation.

. . . Hind Swaraj's nation is not the state. Its author accords a smaller role in the rise of nation to the guns and swords of rulers than to the compassion described in Tulsidas's verse, and to fearless peasants and citizens. 'That nation is great which rests its head upon death as a pillow' (Ch. 17).

Also Gandhi's nation includes all the races and faiths found in India. He admits conflicts among them but stresses India's capacity to accommodate a variety of newcomers and
viewpoints. 'In reality, says Gandhi, 'there are as many religions as there are individuals; but those who are conscious of the spirit of nationality do not interfere with one another's religion .... In no part of the world are one nationality and one religion synonymous terms; nor has it ever been so in India.' (New Delhi: Viking, p.155).

Rajmohan Gandhi however does not give an extended treatment to the concept of nation as it emerges in Hind Swaraj. To him Hind Swaraj remains at best "a warrior's manifesto, not a scholar's survey. It was the East's assertion of identity in a world and an age dominated by the West, and Gandhi's assertion of himself before an India undecided between petitioning and bomb-throwing ...." p.164.

34. HWS, p.14.

35. Ibid., p.15.


37. Ibid., p.15.

38. Ibid., p.20.

39. Ibid., p.16.

40. Ibid., p.33.
41. Ibid., p. 49.

42. Ibid., p. 31.

43. Ibid., p. 48.

44. Ibid.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.

47. The scheme of the thesis has directly to do with C.L. Wayper's much-acclaimed book Political Thought in which the writer divides the book in three chapters viz. "The State as machine", "The State as Organism", and "The State as Class". The titles of the chapter in the thesis retain almost the same nomenclature except for one chapter titled "Swaraj and Postnation". Since the focus of the thesis is on nation, instead of 'the state', the titles retain 'nation' as the primary unit of critical speculation. Even in the contemporary political thought, the paradigms of political theory remain very much the same. In fact, the model proposed by Wayper is fundamental and easily the most comprehensive one as it has the potential to cover the entire gambit of political thought of various thinkers of various shades. Dividing a wide spectrum of political ideas into the stereotyped categories of 'Machine', 
Organism' and 'Class' has its own limitations and risks because no two thinkers think alike. Also thinkers do not fit into easy slots; they cross boundaries and at times stake claim to more than one category.