Nation-building is one of essentially contested concepts. A society has many pasts, from which it chooses and out of this it creates its nation. The choice is frequently determined by the 'imagination' of those who are dominant, although occasionally the voice of others may also be heard. In effect the nature of this 'imagination' of a 'homogenous community' fixes up the visions for the future perspective not only in economic respect but also in respects of culture, polity and administration.

The conscious attempt to imagine India as a homogenous community started with the freedom movement in India, that embodied national solidarity and obligation. During this period, the basic concern of the Indian
thinkers, starting from Rammohan to Nehru, was to organize a just and egalitarian social fabric upon which the new political order could be based. And all the political, moral and philosophical thoughts, put forward by Gandhi in course of Indian freedom struggle, were directed to organize this social fabric by making scope for the capacity for autonomous centres, small group grass roots social life and essential human interest in harmonious living. But towards the closure of the freedom struggle, this society centric basic concern began to shift towards stability oriented etatisme, the basic object of which was to secure the consent of the governed. It is in this context that the ideas of the two chief architects of modern India - Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, who apparently look polarized, are of crucial importance.

**Purpose of the research:**

The term nation-building brings forth the presumption that the nation can be built following certain path of development in respect of economy, polity and culture. M.N. Srinivas wrote that "The problem of nation-building is common to all 'new nations' – an inelegant term used by Western political scientists to categorize countries from which colonial powers withdrew during the year following the World War II"! India, being such a 'new nation' is beset with the problem of maintaining her political stability which requires, among other things that her economic development is fast enough to catch up the rapid population growth, that existing inequalities between different sections of the population, and different regions are rapidly reduced and that the structure and the modalities of power should be institutionalized so as to uphold the legitimacy of the exercise of power.

But the nature and form of such development is bound to arouse dialogue
in every society and India is no exception. This is more so because the
concept of development itself is a value-loaded one, making its meaning
dependent upon subjective interpretations. Despite the variance in
interpretations, Rajni Kothari has identified modernization as major trend
of nation-building in the third world. The perspective of such approach, as
Kothari writes, "...is that of 'world history' according to which the seeds
of progress were sown in the rise of modern science and rationality in Western
Europe, and its intellectual flowering in the eighteenth century
'enlightenment'. Everything that followed was an unfolding of the
enlightenment— the commercial and industrial revolutions, the growth of
representative institutions, the rational bureaucracy, the egalitarian ideology,
the socialist state, and the modern urban culture. Colonialism and the white
man's burden were themselves integral to this process of modernization —
in facilitating its implicit sequence and in furnishing a series of prerequisites
before individual societies became modern and developed."² Thus it is
obvious from the above text that, from the perspective of modernization
nation-building is a process of eroding tradition and primordial loyalties in
favour of a new political and cultural identity of people as a nation.

There is little justification in the way of thinking that such a
modernization perspective appeared in the Indian scenario only after the
withdrawal of the colonial rulers. In fact throughout the anti-colonial struggle
Indian political thinkers stroke vital questions pertaining to the nature and
form of transformation of India from a classical civilization to a national
polity. Consequently, the thinkers like Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi,
Jawaharlal Nehru and many others devoted substantial time to illuminate
the texture of the political society, which was crystallizing. In doing this
Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore and some others highlighted the primacy of
social institutions and of cultural and religious values as the basis of social
and intellectual texture of would-be India, while some others like Nehru felt that the logic of nationalism demanded or worked for having a vehicle of modern state with all its institutions and processes for the Indian people, which would find a nation in due course of time.

Tagore said that "A nation, in the sense of the political and economic union of a people, is that aspect which a whole population assumes when organised for a mechanical purpose. Society as such has no ulterior purpose. It is an end in itself." He also viewed that "When this organization of politics and commerce, whose other name is the Nation, becomes all powerful at the cost of the harmony of the higher social life, then it is an evil day for humanity." Tagore thus established a relation between nation and organised power, which he looks up with suspicion. He believed that nationalism is an invention of the West and a relatively new concept in the East and that the Indians are trying to imitate the West in order to imbibe the ideas of nation. He wrote that "India has never had a real sense of nationalism. Even though from childhood I had been taught that idolatory of the Nation is almost better than God and humanity, I believe I have outgrown that teaching, and it is my conviction that my countrymen will truely gain their India by fighting against the education which teaches them that a country is greater than the ideals of humanity." Tagore emphasised upon India's history and culture and shows that without having any 'nation' India encompassed and preserved the heterogeneity and diversity of culture throughout the history.

Unlike Tagore, Gandhi believed that since India remained united by a single culture throughout the history, she remained as a single nation, although the Indians did not know her as a 'nation'. His views will be discussed in depth and in details, throughout this thesis; but for the time being this may be pointed out that like Rabindranath, Gandhi also upheld the primacy of
social institutions and the values of humanity in building up the texture of the would-be political society in India.

In contrast to Gandhian views, Nehru, on the other hand, upheld an etatist philosophy and for the nation-building in India put faith on the processes that somewhat resemble the processes of modernisation as put forth by Rajni Kothari.

There is a long-standing debate in India, which has not lost its relevance even today, about whether India could have been led to the Gandhian path of nation-building, which would have highlighted on a non-party village-centric democracy with Panchayats at its centre in protecting the interests of the poor and exploited and in abolishing untouchability, on a village-centric self-reliant economy basing upon cottage industries in place of big machines and industries, on state avoiding philosophy deriving inspiration from Tolstoy, Ruskin and Thoreau, focussing on decentralisation instead of an encroaching state power, antagonistic to autonomy. The purpose of this research is to delineate the substance of these dialogues by a close examination of the differences that existed between Gandhi and Nehru in respect of nation-building in India and the theoretical rationale of such differences.

Besides, since nation-building reflects more a civic discourse than a political one, it is not independent of the basic image of the society, in which it takes place. The term discourse is generally used in political analysis as a body of ideas having a certain internal coherence both due to their linguistic meaning and external association with political events. Thematically colonial modernity presented a specific political discourse which revealed a coherent narrative about a segmented Indian society, thereby restructuring.
its social spaces in accordance with technological rationality. The term 'modernity' renders accurately the defining traits of the social conditions that gave birth to the concept of nation in anywhere in the world. If modernity begins with the "attempt to make reason critical, i.e., to establish the limits and legitimate use of reason"⁶ and more specifically in rejecting reason's dogmatic claim to provide truths about the transcendent reality, then it is on this perspective that the two chief architects of India distinguish themselves divergently in their visions in respect of future Indian nation.

K. Raghavendra Rao has observed, "It is to the credit of Gandhi that, without flourish or fanfare, he manages to become a spokesman for the non-modern or pre-modern or even the anti-modern sectors lodged in the intestines of the modern cosmos."⁷ To Gandhi politics is the medium of self-realization based on the highest human ideals. Consequently his vision of nation reflects certain religeo-ethical non-violent voluntary ideas. Nehru, on the other hand, represented a post-enlightenment rationalist spirit of Europe. He did not regard nationalism as some sort of religious faith, but rather as a phenomenon that had arisen in a specific situation and had a historical perspective. His linking up of nationalism with the movement of humanity to socialism, which he perceived as inevitable, gave him proper guidelines for determining the shape of India. Consequently it has been customary to analyse Gandhian vision of Indian nation as 'non-modern' or 'anti-modern' which contends the modernist or rationalist attitude of Nehru regarding the same. But this research aims at exploring the fact that in contradistinction to the discourse of colonial modernity in India, which has been termed as 'derivative discourse'⁸ by Partha Chatterjee, Gandhi revealed an alternative discourse of nation-building, whose appeal is not simply religeo-ethical, but political as such and the framework of its reasoning is entirely secular.
Thus at one level, the purpose of this study is to make explicit the various divergences that exist between Gandhian and Nehruvian visions of nation-building in India and to provide an explanation in terms of theoretical and ideological differences. At another level, it seeks to explore the logical coherence of their visions in terms of modernity discourse.

**Focus of the research:**

This research is an attempt to explore five basic queries in this context:

i) In what term did Gandhi and Nehru conceptualize the process of nation-building in India and to what extent are their interpretations in this respect incompatible?

ii) In what ways the pattern of post-independence economic development of India is different in the Gandhian vision, as compared to the Nehruvian vision?

iii) If it is that Gandhi and Nehru originally represented two divergent responses to the challenges of the industrial society and the western civilization on the economic, social and cultural planes, what are the essential features of those responses?

iv) In respect of the structure and the modalities of power, not only in the political realm but also in the realms of economy and administration, what are the exact positions occupied by Gandhi and Nehru?
v) Can the divergences between Gandhi and Nehru in respect of nation-building be analysed and explained in terms of two discourses of modernity viz. Nehruvian acceptance of the discourse of the colonial modernity and Gandhian discourse of an alternative to that colonial modernity?

Method of research:

For exploring these basic queries, a close examination of the relevant writings of Gandhi and Nehru - particularly Gandhi’s *Hind Swaraj, An Autobiography or the Story of My Experiments with Truth, Satyagraha in South Africa, Interpretations of Gita, Constructive Programme - Its Meaning and Place* and his relevant writings published in *Young India* and *Harijan* and Nehru’s *Glimpses of World History, An Autobiography, The Discovery of India* have been undertaken. Besides, the correspondences, which took place between them and their relevant speeches have also been undertaken for an in-depth analysis. Methodologically, it is difficult to separate out particular areas of thoughts of these two chief architects in this context (e.g. concept of state and society). Heuristically, the focus on their thoughts, on the structure and autonomy of the society, the concept of polity, the bases of power and the instrumental mechanisms for allocation of power have been the acceptable parts of analysis in identifying major areas of their contrasts and combinations. Analysis of events led by them and specific themes, where the ideas of the two leaders converge or diverge, have also been studied to prove their complimentarity and/or contradictions. On the basis of these a comparative historical analysis of the ideas of Gandhi and Nehru has been attempted in this thesis.
Chapterization:

As far as the main chapters are concerned, the first chapter that is, this introduction deals with the statement of the problem and discusses the basic concepts used in this research. The second chapter consists of the conceptualization of nation by Gandhi and Nehru.

The third chapter deals with the views of Gandhi and Nehru on the pattern of the economic development in India.

In the fourth chapter, the divergent responses made by Gandhi and Nehru to the challenges of the industrial society and the western civilization have been examined.

The fifth chapter deals with the views of Gandhi and Nehru regarding the structure and the modalities of power.

In the final chapter the divergences between Gandhian and Nehruvian ideas in respect of nation-building have been placed in the broader perspectives of their different orientations towards the discourse of colonial modernity.

II

Notion of nation:

In his efforts to define nation, Earnest Gellner has made nationalism as the starting point. As he observed, "Mankind is irreversibly committed to industrial society and therefore to a society whose productive system is based on cumulative science and technology." and that "the age of transition to industrialism was bound according to our model, also to be an age of
nationalism, a period of turbulent readjustment, in which either political boundaries or cultural ones, or both, were being modified so as to satisfy the new nationalist imperative which now, for the first time, was making itself felt." Gellner observes that "Nationalism has been defined, in effect, as the striving to make culture and polity congruent, to endow a culture with its own political roof, and not more than one roof at that. Culture an elusive concept, was deliberately left undefined. But an at least provisionally acceptable criterion of culture might be language, as at least a sufficient, if not necessary touchstone of it." 

Conceptualization of nation as concomitant to definite phase of development and/or progress in the field of science and technology and consequently with economy in Europe is prevalent in both Marxist and liberal analytical streams. E. J. Hobsbawm in his book Nations and Nationalism Since 1780 wrote, "Like most serious students, I do not regard the 'nation' as a primary nor as an unchanging social entity. It belongs exclusively to a particular, and historically recent, period. It is a social entity only insofar as it relates to a certain kind of modern territorial state, the 'nation state', and it is pointless to discuss nation and nationality except insofar as both relate to it." He also wrote, "The basic characteristics of the modern nation and everything connected with it is its modernity." Hobsbawm views that the conceptions of nation and nation-state as seen by the ideologists of the era of triumphant bourgeois liberalism, specifically from 1830 to 1880, speaks of three criteria of the nation. "In practice there were only three criteria which allowed a people to be firmly classed as a nation, always provided it was sufficiently large to pass the threshold. The first was its historic association with a current state or one with a fairly lengthy and recent past..."
"The second criterion was the existence of a long-established cultural elite, possessing a written national literary and administrative vernacular.

"The third criterion, it must unfortunately be said, was a proven capacity for conquest. There is nothing like being an imperial people to make a population conscious of its collective existence as such, as Friedrich List well knew."14

Thus in the perspective of liberal ideology the nation was the stage of evolution reached in the mid-nineteenth century projecting the assimilation of smaller communities and peoples to larger ones.

If one goes through Lenin's 'The Right of Nations of Self-Determination', it may be observed that the Marxian position on the concept of nation reflects almost the same attitude although the ideological orientation is different. As Lenin wrote, "Throughout the world, the period of the final victory of capitalism over feudalism has been linked up with national movements. For the complete victory of commodity production the bourgeoisie must capture the home market and there must be politically united territories whose population speak a single language, with all obstacles to the development of that language and to its consolidation in literature eliminated. Therein lies the economic foundation of national movements. Language is the most important means of human intercourse. Unity and unimpeded development of language are the most important conditions for genuinely free and extensive commerce on a scale commensurate with modern capitalism, for a free and broad grouping of the population in all its various classes and lastly, for the establishment of a close connection between the market and each and every proprietor, big or little, and between seller and buyer."
"Therefore, the tendency of every national movement is towards the formation of national states, under which these requirements of modern capitalism are best satisfied. The most profound economic factors drive towards this goal, and therefore, for the whole of Western Europe, nay, for the entire civilized world, the national state is typical and normal for the capitalist period."\(^{15}\)

On the basis of the above mentioned citations one may attempt to explore the basic criteria of a nation. The development of nation is connected with a definite phase of evolution of human society and is based on a single language, consolidating itself in a definite cultural heritage. Also the development of nation is bound to be associated with a politically united territory or in other words with the formation of a nation-state.

However, the consolidation of a nation on the basis of 'general linguistic unification' according to Benedict Anderson, is a contribution of 'print capitalism'. As he defined, the nation "is an imagined political community and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign."\(^{16}\) Anderson explains that "It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion."\(^{17}\) Then, "the nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic boundaries, beyond which lie other nations."\(^{18}\) And "It is imagined as sovereign because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm."\(^{19}\) "Finally, it is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship."\(^{20}\) Anderson argued
that this imaginative search of the 'homogenous community' was fruitfully precipitated by the "print-capitalism, which made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways."21

Anderson ties up the epoch of the enlightenment, of rationalist secularism with the development of the nation-states, as 'a secular transformation of fatality into continuity, contingency into meaning'. He precisely reveals, "I am not claiming that the appearance of nationalism towards the end of the eighteenth century was 'produced' by the erosion of religious certainties, or that this erosion does not itself require a complex explanation. Nor am I suggesting that somehow nationalism historically 'supersedes' religion. What I am proposing is that nationalism has to be understood, by aligning it not with self-consciously held political ideologies, but with the large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which - as well as against which - it came into being."22

For the purpose of this research Anderson's definition of nation has been accepted, although the process through which the 'imagination' of India as a 'political community' flourished, makes it a point of conjecture with which this research is concerned.

III

In one of his articles John Plamenatz wrote, "I shall confine myself to arguing that nationalism, a phenomenon peculiar to peoples who share a cosmopolitan and secular culture in which the belief in progress is strong,
has taken two markedly different forms. One form I shall call western and the other eastern.”

He also clarified that “What I call eastern nationalism has flourished among the Slavs as well as in Africa and Asia, and is to be found in Latin America. So I could not call it non-European, and have thought it best to call it eastern because it first appeared to the east of Western Europe.”

To Plamenatz, “nationalism is a reaction of peoples who feel culturally at a disadvantage. ... Where there are several peoples in close contact with one another and yet conscious of their separateness, and these peoples share the same ideals and same conception of progress, and some of them are, or feel themselves to be, less well placed than others to achieve these ideals and make progress, nationalism is apt to flourish.”

He then views that “Cultural nationalism can pass easily into political nationalism.”

Plamenatz, however, shows that in difference with the western nationalism, eastern nationalism “is both imitative and hostile to the models it imitates and is apt to be illiberal.” As he views, eastern nationalism has appeared among the “... peoples recently drawn into civilisation hitherto alien to them, and whose ancestral cultures are not adapted to success and excellence by these cosmopolitan and increasingly dominant standards. This is the nationalism of peoples who feel the need to transform themselves, and in so doing to raise themselves; of peoples who come to be called ‘backward’, and who would not be nationalists of this kind unless they both recognised this backwardness and wanted to overcome it.”

Thus Plamenatz shows that in ‘eastern nationalism’ people culturally feel themselves as backward, and also feel that they are not culturally equipped, measured by the standards which are widely accepted and fast spreading. Hence they imitate the models set by the dominant standard. But this
desperate attempt to ‘catch up’ with others even going against hitherto their own culture and civilisation of the eastern people is profoundly disturbing. Hence Plamenatz observes that “Eastern nationalism is disturbed and ambivalent.”

Taking the cue from Plamenatz, Partha Chatterjee observes that “By my reading, anti-colonial nationalism creates its own domain of sovereignty within colonial society well before it begins its political battle with the imperial power. It does this by dividing the world of social institutions and practices into two domains - the material and the spiritual. The material is the domain of the ‘outside’, of the economy and of statecraft, of science and technology, a domain where the West had proved its superiority and the East had succumbed. ... The spiritual, on the other hand, is an ‘inner’ domain bearing the ‘essential’ marks of cultural identity. The greater one’s success in imitating Western skills in the material domain, therefore, the greater the need to preserve the distinctness of one’s spiritual culture. This formula is, I think, a fundamental feature of anti-colonial nationalisms in Asia and Africa.”

Chatterjee also observes that despite the fact that the colonial state is kept out of the “inner” domain of national culture, it also is changed in accordance with the development of nationalism. “In fact, here nationalism launches its most powerful, creative, and historically significant project: to fashion a ‘modern’ national culture that is nevertheless not Western. If the nation is an imagined community, then this is where it is brought into being. In this, its true and essential domain, the nation is already sovereign, even when the state is in the hands of the colonial power.”
At the same time, Partha Chatterjee with a discursive analysis of 'Nationalism as a problem' raised the fundamental question about the 'moral and epistemic status of a bourgeois-rational conception of universal history.' As Chatterjee observes "Rationality becomes the normative principle of a certain way of life which is said to promote a certain way of thinking, namely science. Hence the question of culture does become relevant."33

As Chatterjee views, the notion of rationality as an ethic ultimately results in an "essentialism" which means "certain historically specific correspondences between certain elements in the structure of beliefs in European society and certain, albeit spectacular, changes in techno-economic conditions of production are attributed the quality of essences which are said to characterize western cultures as a whole."34 This essentialism, according to him, "divides up the history of Western society into pre-scientific and scientific, and casts every other culture of the world into the darkness of unscientific traditionalism."35

But when the privileged position of this essentialism is challenged due to anti-colonial movements, "it is the epistemic privilege which has become the last bastion of global supremacy for the cultural values of western industrial societies."36

Since to Chatterjee nationalism in the non-European world takes form of the struggle against colonial exploitation, he wants to see the nationalist thought in the colonial world within a discourse of power, "to approach the field of discourse, historical, philosophical and scientific, as a battle ground of political power."37 With an examination he comes to the conclusion that although the nationalist thought "challenged the colonial claim to political domination, it also accepted the very intellectual premises of 'modernity' on
which colonial domination was based.\textsuperscript{38} And thus he explores the nationalist thought in the colonial world as a ‘derivative discourse’.

This research joins issues with the above mentioned authors and their standpoints. It is proposed that Gandhi, who had an alternative vision of the colonial modernity, had an altogether different discourse of an indigenous modernity, although he used the ‘derivative’ language. Thus, the divergence between Gandhi and Nehru can be summed up in the light of Nehru’s acceptance of colonial modernity and Gandhi’s opposition to it with an alternative discourse of nation-building.

IV

The kind of society that, retrospectively, came to be called modern, emerged out of human efforts in legislating, defining, structuring, segregating, classifying, recording and universalising, – in a word rationalising the standards of truth and thereby making order prevail in the society on the basis of regularity and predictability rather than on contingency. That way modernity has got the preoccupation with the distinction between ‘reason’ and ‘unreason’ and as such generates a conflict between science and other forms of thought.

According to Giddens, there are four main institutional aspects of modernity: capitalism (the production of commodities for markets), industrialism (the transformation of nature through productive techniques), surveillance (the control of information and monitoring of activities by states
and other organizations), and military power (the concentration of the means of violence in the hands of the state). As Giddens observes, taking together these four institutional aspects of modernity provide a framework for understanding some of the distinctive tensions and inherent developmental tendencies of modern societies.39

This conception of modernity, which was excaveted through the colonial channels in India, has its root in the enlightenment in Europe. In their article Dreyfus and Rabinow have observed that "In 1978 Kant responded to the question posed by a Berlin newspaper: 'What is enlightenment?' by equating enlightenment with the attainment of maturity through the use of reason."40 In that article the authors observed that "Foucault like Habermas holds that our modernity begins with Kant's attempt to make reason critical, i.e., to establish the limits and legitimate use of reason."41 In the Kantian sense, 'critical reason' begins with the rejection of the western project of developing a theory which mirrors substantive universal truths about human nature."42

In effect the distinction between the "public" and "private" reason followed from this critical rational tradition of modernity. Due to this critical rationality that one could give up dependence on religion and/or metaphysics as a basis for justifying and criticizing the practices of the epoch.

However, the promises of the enlightenment tradition remained unfulfilled as the detachment of the substantive 'critical' part from the 'rationality' occurred in the Western capitalist culture of the post-enlightenment practices. The yawning vacuum was then filled by certain formal 'universal' rational procedure, which made possible rational communication about content. Consequently the rational ideas also fell back on the empty formal structure which was reflected through the colonial modernity.
Colonial perception of reordering Indian society is more or less based on its discourse of power, which reflects that there is always an available position for the colonizer by asserting the autonomous subjectivity of the oppressed. The project of rationalizing and reforming the 'burden of the civilization' is the sole reason in the application of colonial power. This ideological emasculation no doubt reveals the almost inexhaustible capacity of colonial power to protect itself under threat. What one needs in order adequately to understand its essential character is to know what might be called plural perspectives of colonial modernity—a kind of comprehension which entertains three scenarios at the same time and accepts, up to a point, validity of each. The three perspectives are respectively the philosophical, the socio-economic and the political perspectives.

The philosophical text upon which colonial modernity is based reflects that the state is essentially a moral community or moral association, possessing proper moral authority, and meting out impartial justice. The first perspective is, then germane to perspective of traditional Western political philosophy. Its most famous representative texts are Plato's Republic, Rousseau's Social Contract, Hegel's Philosophy of Right. There is an implicit logic underneath these philosophical texts—that what the state does, it does for the interest of its general subjects. On the formal side, this logic specifies that the state provides the universal moral law, which is unconditionally binding over the subjects and ties every rational creature equally. On the substantive side the view under consideration specifies that the state being the moral agent should elevate human lives towards certain moral ends. Obviously it is not argued here that this basic concept of morality is either perfectly coherent or all inclusive or was uniformly held by colonial authority in India, or for that matter they have stood out in history with their exemplary observance of these and derived categorical imperatives.
The important point here is to recognise the philosophical basis of colonial modernity, which defines the state as essentially a moral community.

But the moral being of the colonial state is not quite the same as its empirical being. It could be argued that this discrepancy does actually follow from the fact that colonial modernity is based on technological development. Technology, far from being neutral, is wielded by powerful interests, whom it successfully serves. In the process it gives birth to a technological rationality which justifies the breaking up of cultural tradition for the sake of 'development' and those who come in the way of this process are ruthlessly crushed.

The colonial techno-economic requirements were supplanted in India by a new 'social mobilization' through a 'rational' bureaucratic establishment through which the major clusters of traditional social, economic and psychological commitments were either eroded or broken. It introduced a set of new unfamiliar institutions of a centralised state structure into the Indian society and through them introduced some sort of new procedural rationality. Thus the empirical being of the colonial state presented some compulsive sequences and closed options for both traditional ruling groups, consisting of rajas, nawabs and their nobilities and also the lower social groups of society, who were customarily far removed from turmoil at the upper stratum of political authority.

Finally, the political perspective of colonial modernity was revealed, as Kaviraj has argued, by the incorporation of a fundamental change that impoverished the earlier 'fuzzy' sense of community and insisted upon the identification of the community in the 'enumerable sense'. Previously the communities were fuzzy, in the sense that, a community did neither claim
to represent nor exhaust all the layers of self-hood of its members; nor did it require its members to ask how many of them were in the world which could be made explicit for the purposes of social interaction. Kaviraj views, "Thus, this imposed on social action a completely different picture of what the social world was really like. From fuzzy communities people had to get used to the strains of living in enumerated ones - with very different consolations and highly abstract threats. Nationalists soon began to turn this counting to good use, and often began to comfort themselves with the eventual power of such overwhelming numbers, particularly when their movements seemed to be in decline. Colonial authorities would try, at a later stage, to turn this counting against Hindus. This showed one implication of living in a society that was enumerated; it was not just a secular nation which could name itself in this way."

In effect this perspective established the aspect of 'surveillance' - 'the control of information and monitoring of activities by states and other organizations' - one of the four main institutional aspects of modernity as proposed by Giddens. Surveillance specifically was essential in concentrating the means of violence in the hands of the state, making the colonial state 'the purveyor of violence' in both domestic and foreign affairs. Taking together these three perspectives established somewhat monopoly of a centralised state power along with a 'new technology of subjection'.

Through out this thesis we will have ample opportunities to see that Gandhi did not believe in this formal rational structure of colonial modernity and once again blurred the distinction between 'private' and 'public' reason. He believed that human beings are alike in nature, which is essentially Godliness. He put forward religion and morality as the acid tests of political action (i.e. Satyagraha) and "experimented with a post-liberal or trans-
liberal concept of the person or self, namely a self not only of civil / political / economic liberties but also of dharmic or satyagrahic qualities or potentialities."46

Gandhi's economic thought was also not devoid of these potentialities. Gandhi held very clearly that those who subscribed to the idea of an exploitation-free economic order, should begin with a reordering of their own lives. His idea of trusteeship expresses the concern to reform capital and labour so that the divisions of society into antagonistic classes would end and be replaced by commonwealth of harmony. To get rid of the technological rationality he upheld the basic importance of small-scale cottage industries.

Besides, Gandhi conceived of 'Rama Rajya', a self-regulated and well-ordered stateless society, consisting of oceanic circle of self-sufficient villages based on non-violence and Satyagraha, as his ultimate ideal. For the approximation of such a society he admitted the need for an agency of state, though only as a necessary evil and only when its ends were moral. As a necessary element of this statehood Gandhi came to the point of a free decentralized government where the real power would be held by the people. Gandhi, although not very systematically, discussed at some length his concept of democratic governance, which reveals definite logic in his thinking towards nation-building enterprise. And in this logic it is observed that even while identifying a definite role for the state in the programme for national construction, Gandhi was not abandoning his fundamental belief that the state could never be the appropriate machinery for carrying out this programme.

Taking together all these mean Gandhi was never within the rational
structure of the 'derivative discourse', although for the purpose of communication he used the derivative languages. On the contrary, this research proposes that Gandhi's conceptualization of nation, his reliance on an essential, harmonious nature of society and its capacity for autonomous action, – all these in fact opened up an alternative to the colonial modernity.

In his article, 'On State, Society and Discourse in India' Sudipta Kaviraj has showed "how strong the relations are between the positions advocated by earlier nationalists like Naoraji, and later, far more radical ones like Nehru, if seen in terms not of political ideology but of the discourse about history." In effect Kaviraj has argued that to Nehru, the proposal of rationalistic modernity was "rationally acceptable and indeed deeply desirable." Nehru was steeped in bourgeois-humanist liberal tradition and never went beyond the liberal discourse. Hence, his ideas on nation and nation-building were deeply rooted in the rational structure of the colonial modernity.

Despite these contrasts, the Indian state seems to have been proceeding historically on the understanding that these two political profiles have substantive relations and for the Indian state, it is not a case of either rejection or acceptance of these two profiles. Fighting against untouchability, craving for popular participation or Panchayati Raj are some of the residues of Gandhian tradition, whereas the points of strong centre, modernization in terms of a new technology, application of science to solve the social problems or the kind of institutional structure related to parliamentary pluralist democracy – all these are linked to the ideas of Nehru. This, therefore, seems to be an indication of the very fact that the philosophies of both Gandhi and Nehru are coexisting and the process of nation-building in India continues to be a matter of conjecture, which seems to be oscillating.
between their apparently contrasting philosophies. To be specific, this research proposes to examine the ideas of these two politico-philosophical profiles both in contrast and in combination – about the process of nation-building in India in respect of economic development, of structure and modalities of power and of the nature of the social and cultural fabric upon which the new political order would be based at the termination of the imperial rules and to place them in the broader perspective of the two discourses of modernity viz. Nehruvian acceptance of the discourse of colonial modernity and Gandhian discourse of an alternative to that colonial modernity.


4. Ibid., p. 7.

5. Ibid., ‘Nationalism in India’, p. 64.


10. Ibid., p. 40.

11. Ibid., pp. 43-44.


17. Ibid., p. 15.

18. Ibid., p. 16.
19. Ibid., p. 16.

20. Ibid., p. 16.


22. Ibid., p. 19.


24. Ibid., p. 23.

25. Ibid., p. 27.

26. Ibid., p. 28.

27. Ibid., p. 34.

28. Ibid., pp. 33-34.

29. Ibid., p. 35.


31. Ibid., p. 6.

33. Ibid., p. 16.

34. Ibid., p. 16.

35. Ibid., p. 16.

36. Ibid., p. 17.

37. Ibid., p. 11.

38. Ibid., p. 30.


41. Ibid., p. 111.

42. Ibid., p. 110.


48. Ibid., pp. 82-83.