CHAPTER SIX

An Overview of Gandhian and Nehruvian Visions

This research started with the purpose of identifying the rationale of an age-long debate in India, which has relevance till today that although India started its nation-building in the footsteps of Jawaharlal Nehru in the post-independence period, it might have been led in an altogether different path, i.e. the Gandhian path and that the pursuing of the Gandhian path could have a long-enduring impact upon the developments of the Indian nation. Throughout the previous chapters, Gandhian and Nehruvian ideas in respect of their conceptualizations of the process of nation-building in India addressed to three specific aspects viz. economic development, challenges of Western culture and the structure and the modalities of power—have been examined. It comes out of the research that both Gandhi and
Nehru had separate discourses of nation-building and while Nehruvian ideas set the frame for nation-building in accordance with the path initiated by the colonial modernity, Gandhi with his craving for political participation of the people in the *Panchayati Raj*, with his fighting against untouchability, with his efforts to organise social fabric by making scope for the autonomous centres, with his emphasis on small group grassroots social life and with his essential humanitarian interest in harmonious living—sets up a long term goal of nation-building in India, which remains in contrast to the path of nation-building as initiated by the colonial modernity. Looking back reflectively the concluding observations will be presented in this Chapter in nut shell with an aim to provide an explanation in terms of theoretical and ideological coherence of their visions in the context of modernity discourses.

**Concluding observations:**

It has been observed in Chapter -2 of this thesis that Gandhi believed that a homogenous community having a unique mode of life and a singular culture embodying the thought process of the community reflects the nation. He attempted to reconstruct the structure of identity of the Indian nation on the basis of a common cultural discourse and a common ethics and morality for all the Indians which, as he believed, had existed in India from time immemorial irrespective of distance between the different religious groups. Since religion, to Gandhi, cannot be the basis of a nation, he described the theory of two-nation as proclaimed by Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah, as 'untruth.' He believed that India, predominantly the land of religion was a truly spiritual nation which transcended sectarianism and upheld the basic values
of all the religions providing a cultural basis for unity. Gandhi, thus, delinked nation from its concomitant historical phase of emergence retrospectively called as modern and believed that it was the British who tried to split the already existing Indian nation on the basis of religion.

On the other hand, the linking up of nationalism with the variants of socialist movement at different phases of his life led Nehru to change the primacy of the nationalist ideas over other ideas viz. ideas of proletarian internationalism or of socialism, time and again, although he upheld the viability of nation as a determinate product of history. He categorically established nation as a phenomenon of modern age, which has its root in the imagination of the old traditions and delinked it from religious elements. He wrote that "Nationalism is essentially a group memory of past achievements, traditions and experiences." and believed that the solidarity of a nation flourishes best at the times of war or similar crisis, that is to say, when the material demain of a society i.e. the economy and the state craft and so on is encroached upon by some outside forces.

Nehru also emphasised upon the economic content of a nation. With regards to the unity of non-co-operation movement he viewed that the basis of national movement was largely economic distress and unemployment. In fact Nehru had three phases of his ideological evolution. In the first phase, which lasted until 1927, Nehru in his own words was a vague ‘humanist’, although he was familiar with fabian socialism and even showed certain interests in communism. His second phase of ideological evolution was marked by the growing influence of scientific socialism and the ensuing radicalisation of national demands. The third and last phase of evolution of Nehru’s political ideology began in 1946, when he headed the interim government of India. He became a democratic socialist at this phase.
and his revolutionary ardour considerably declined during this phase. Despite these phases of evolution which mainly concerned the evolution of ideas regarding the means of securing economic equality for all the people in India, Nehru never delinked the economic content in his ideas in building up the Indian nation, particularly in the last two phases of his life.

Hence, with reference to Chapter-2 it can be stated that Nehru’s concept of nation was primarily modernist. It accepted the universality of 'rationalist' social thought, which attempts to find out certain concrete basis of nationalism in economy. He represented a post-enlightenment rationalist spirit of Europe and with a scientific and secular make up felt uncomfortable with the attempt to introduce religion in politics.

2. It has been found in Chapter-3 that from the developmental perspective so far as the production is concerned Gandhi upheld the primacy of man over machine and the principle of decentralization. He was against organisations of large scale industries for the sake of production since, as he viewed, it would lead to the concentration of power and wealth in few hands. For achieving decentralization of production, Gandhi emphasized upon the development of an 'oceanic circle' of self-sufficient villages, having increasing number of cottage industries. Gandhi believed that such self-sufficient villages would ensure 'human happiness with full mental and moral growth.'

So far as economic distribution is concerned, Gandhi relied on trusteeship, in accordance with which he wanted zamindars and the privileged classes, "to outgrow their greed and sense of possession, and to come down in spite of their wealth to the level of those who earn their bread by labour."
Gandhi believed that "The state represents violence in a concentrated and organized form." and that "If the state suppressed capitalism by violence, it will be caught in the coils of violence itself and fail to develop non-violence at any time." Hence, Gandhi did never agree to give any distributive role to the state since that could lead to a greater degree of violence and oppression.

Thus it is observed in Chapter -3 that so far as the economic development of the Indian nation was concerned, Gandhi wanted to choose an ethical path since he believed that ethics and economics could never be separated and that right means could only help at arriving at right goal. The goal being a non-violent society formed by an 'oceanic circle' of self-sufficient villages, Gandhi wanted to dissociate state from his nation-building process.

On the other hand, with reference to Chapter -3 of this thesis, it has been observed that Nehru believed that India became "a political and economic appendage" of Britain under the colonial rule. He believed that the self-sufficient village community, with its traditional division of labour could not have continued in its old form with the development of the world market and the new capitalism. But the change that took place was not a normal development and it disintegrated the whole economic and structural basis of Indian society. This led to unparalleled misery of the Indian people engaged in cottage industries and land. The introduction of landlordism by the British, as Nehru viewed, had changed the whole conception of the ownership of land. The village community which controlled the land lost that privilege. According to Nehru this great economic change "struck at the whole Indian conception of a co-operative group social structure" and a new land-owning class was created.
With this understanding, Nehru, as it has been analysed in Chapter -3, reflected a 'rational' socialist consciousness in building up the Indian nation from its economic perspective, although he chose the path of democratic socialism at the final phase of his life. He clearly contradicted two Gandhian view points.

i) He believed that "It is not large-scale industry that brings any injustice and violence but the misuse of large-scale industry by private capitalists and financiers." He believed that a socialist society was the only solution to this problem.

ii) In constructing this socialist society, Nehru laid down the primary importance of planning by state. Since, Nehru under the influence of Gandhi, detested violence, he particularly in the third phase of his life, proclaimed his firm commitment to the peaceful democratic means and relied exclusively on the role of state in bringing about social justice to all people in India.

3. For Gandhi, as it has been observed in Chapter -4 politics divorced from religious values and certain universal moral principles has absolutely no meaning. As he views, the western civilization is bereft of morality and as such devoid of religion and leads to the multiplication of wants in an acquisitive manner. To him all the western institutions, including the Parliament reflect the mere persuit of power devoid of thinking what is right and what is wrong. He even compared western democracy with Fascism or Nazism.

This should not be taken so as to interpret that Gandhi was anti-democratic. Gandhi believed in the Swaraj of the masses - a form of
democracy which would come through a non-violent and truthful means of *Satyagraha* where the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest and which would emphasise upon decentralisation as its main pillar. Gandhi believed that this form of political system would suit to the genius of the Indian people since he identified Indian civilization along with its institutions as essentially plural, moral and non-dogmatic.

So far as Indian civilization is concerned Gandhi saw no hostility between reason and tradition although he started a critical dialogue with the Hindu tradition in order to elucidate the historical rationale of the unacceptable practices and to expose their irrationality. This was required by Gandhi within a colonial context to refuse the justification of colonial rule on the basis of 'white man's burden' establishing thereby the supremacy of the western civilization.

Thus, it is observed in Chapter -4 that Gandhi on the one hand rejected western civilization calling it 'a disease' which spreads immoral materialistic aggrandisement, unethical pursuit of power and the exercise of violence in an organised manner and, on the other hand, he established the Indian traditions on the firm grounds of reason, although he started a critical dialogue with the Indian traditions like showing the irrationality of the practice of the 'out caste' in Hindu tradition. But whatever he did, he did it on the basis of certain universal criteria of truth viz. non-violence, self-suffering and non-possession, which specified the ultimate constraints to which all his thoughts were subjected.

Nehru, on the other hand, believed that moral standards have no relation to social needs and organised religion inevitably becomes a vested interest. He views that it is irrational to think that since India is industrially backward
and her external development has been slow, therefore her inner evolution has been greater. He specifically wrote to Gandhi, "... I neither think that the so-called Ram Rajya was very good in the past, nor do I want it back. I think that Western or rather industrial civilization is bound to conquer India, may be with many changes and adaptations, but nonetheless in the main based on industrialism."\(^7\)

Nehru distinguished between two Englands: the liberal, noble, modern England and the England of 'the savage penal code and brutal behaviour of entrenched feudalism and reaction'. He believed that the 'wrong England' was reflected through the colonial rulers who were not only not interested in modernizing Indian society, but also stunted the growth of such consciousness and obstructed the process of social and political change in India in collusion with the feudal reactionary forces.

Epistemologically Nehru professedly relied on the 'reason' and the 'scientific' method of observation. His rational approach to the past led him to declare that "The culture of a people must have its roots in the national genius. But it cannot live for ever on the earnings of its forefathers or an old bank account to which nothing is added. ... In India the moment we tried to make our culture rigid in order to protect it from foreign incursions, we stopped its natural growth, and slow paralysis crept in and brought it near to death."\(^8\)

Nehru's 'rational' approach to social problems led him to put faith on the equality of men and in the democratic system of government. But he was a practical democrat with faith in the democratic apparatus as necessary for the management of the state and wanted to establish western model of parliamentary democracy, which he believed, upheld the virtues like ability, devotion to work, co-operation, self-discipline and restraint.

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Thus, it has been observed in Chapter -4 that Nehru imbibed certain basic and essential elements of western culture and thereby showed a positive response towards western civilization, although he viewed that these elements were not being practised in British India. On a broader perspective Nehru reflected the spirit of the post-enlightenment western modernity establishing a liberating break from the tradition.

4. The discussion in Chapter -5 reveals that regarding the structure and modalities of power Gandhi upheld non-violence as the first and last article of his faith. Gandhi considered non-violence as truth, both as means and end, a moral force par excellence and believed that a nation or a community which had capitalist possessions, acquired by means of violence, would have to divest itself voluntarily of such gains. Gandhi conceived and practised Satyagraha for his relentless pursuit of truth through love and non-violence.

To Gandhi, violence includes not only physical coercion but also economic and social coercion. Socialism is usually taken to mean a form of society and government under which the state assumes ever-increasing functions regulating the life of the individual in the different fields of activity. But Gandhi believed that “The state represents violence in a concentrated and organized form.”9 Hence, Gandhi was never in favour of state coercion in distributing the wealth of the society. He relied on the individual in dispossessioning his superfluous wealth. The method of such dispossession as professed by Gandhi, was trusteeship.

Gandhi had an ultimate political ideal of a decentralised, non-violent, state-less society. But since that ideal was rather unrealizable, he believed in a predominantly non-violent society. He viewed that such a society could usher in through the process of Sarvodaya, a term coined by him meaning
the generation of power from below. Such generation of power is a process to change the distribution of social power in favour of the underprivileged both in the arena of interpersonal relations and in societal institutions, which is essentially an emancipatory concept.

For such generation of power Gandhi, in his *Constructive Programme*, wanted to create new symbols and meanings. Hence for Gandhi *Swaraj* meant more than mere political independence; it meant spiritual liberation through a fundamental change in each individual's moral perception. For realizing such spiritual liberation Gandhi upheld the simplicity of village life and viewed that "this simplicity can best be found in the *Charkha* and all that *Charkha* connotes."\(^{10}\) So, it is evident that Gandhian ideas on nation-building hammered on a new conceptual and symbolic network which could influence the life-style of the people of the Indian society and thereby could initiate the foundation of non-violent structure of the society. Gandhi's occasional reference to the "enlightened anarchy" as his political ideas is firmly established on this conceptual and symbolic network.

Thus, it is observed in Chapter -5 that Gandhi's ideas reveal a resistance to the increasing salience of a new mechanism of power in the modern western society. It has also been observed that Gandhi wanted to establish that colonial power is based on colonial wisdom, which was a unitary, formal and scientific discourse and that to uproot the colonial power one would have to fight also against colonial wisdom. Hence, what Gandhi provides is not merely a novel and ingenious theory of power, but a profound critique of the western project of modernity by sundering positive link between modern forms of knowledge (like knowledge of medical science or a knowledge of English as he viewed in *Hind Swaraj*) and human liberation through pursuasive portrayal of the former as carriers of disciplinary power leading to an immoral subjection.
Nehru, on the other hand, rejected the theory of trusteeship. Nehru wrote that "The new theory of trusteeship, which some advocate, is equally barren. For trusteeship means that the power for good or evil remains with the self-appointed trustee, and he may exercise it as he will. The sole trusteeship that can be fair is the trusteeship of the nation and not of one individual or a group."11

Nehru believed and wrote to Gandhi that the defects of capitalism, "which is based on exploitation of others," are expressed through industrialism. He believes that under the capitalist system the conflict between capital and labour is unavoidable which Gandhi does not believe.

For the destruction of the imperialism and capitalism Nehru in his Marxist phase believed in force as the only means and recognised the need to find a suitable combination of the class ideology and the national objectives of the liberation movement. However, in the post-independence period Nehru's views changed sharply to accommodate a correlation between reform and revolution so that it can be fully applied to the future of state apparatus. During this phase of his life, Nehru's understanding of the irreconcilability of class conflict gradually evaporated making place for the ideas of active intervention by central state power. His ideas of the state power did not include its class character. Consequently in a vague manner he deemed it necessary to bring the state apparatus closer to people.

For combining socialism with democracy through peaceful and legitimate methods, Nehru relied on planning and also accepted bureaucracy both in theory and in practice as an instrument in expanding the growing intervention of the state in the economic and social spheres.
Nehru wholeheartedly accepted western democracy and in accordance with its principles he wanted to break the numerous irrational divisions that existed in the then India. Hence he was in favour of doing away with the caste system. As a believer in liberty and rationality – two basic traits of the western modernity – Nehru wanted to establish power-relationships in the society on a 'rational' basis, since that could alone provide legitimacy to a modern state structure. For the development of such a 'rational' outlook Nehru advocated secularism strongly.

Thus with reference to Chapter -5 of this thesis one can conclude that Nehru's ideas on power reflect an etatisme. He believed that colonial power and colonial wisdom were mutually exclusive and antithetical. Hence in his scheme of things colonial wisdom has been appropriated as a combative device against colonial power.

II

Many authors have broken new ground by focussing on the fact that Gandhi made an original contribution to the understanding of modernity through his critique of modernity. The epistemological and methodological foundations of his critique, attempt in particular to understand and explain how a deformed rationality has been embodied in the structures and practices of the modern world.

In their book The Modernity of Tradition Rudolf and Rudolf viewed that “If tradition and modernity are seen as continuous rather than separated by an abyss, if they are dialectically rather than dichotomously related, and
if internal variations are attended to and taken seriously, then those sectors of traditional society that contain or express potentialities for change from dominant norms and structures become critical for understanding the nature and processes of modernization.\textsuperscript{12} The authors opined that “Gandhi should have been one of the most conspicuous modernizers of Indian politics suggests that some elements of tradition can serve modern functions.”\textsuperscript{13} Thus the authors are of view that Gandhi successfully made traditions function in a modern way and thereby modernized the tradition.

In his book \textit{Traditions, Tyranny, and Utopias} Ashis Nandy interprets Gandhi as having a 'most creative' frame of critical traditionalist, decolonizing thought and action. As he viewed, Gandhi's critique of modernity was done not from a traditionalist standpoint but from a standpoint that was critical - traditional and post-modern / post-contemporary at the same time.\textsuperscript{14}

Nandy wrote, “Today, when 'Westernization' has become a pejorative word, there have reappeared on the stage subtler and more sophisticated means of acculturation. They produce not merely models of conformity but also models of ‘official’ dissent. It is possible today to be anti-colonial in a way which is specified and promoted by the modern world view as ‘proper’, ‘sane’ and ‘rational’. Even when in opposition that dissent remains predictable and controlled. It is also possible today to opt for a non-West which itself is a construction of the West.”\textsuperscript{15}

But he found that “Gandhi queered the pitch at two planes. He admitted that colonialism was a moral issue and took the battle to Kipling's home ground by judging colonialism by Christian values and declaring it to be an absolute evil. At the second plane he made his 'odd' cognitive assessment
of the gains and losses from colonialism—a part of his critique of modernity and found the British wanting in both ethics and rationality. This threatened the internal legitimacy of the ruling culture by splitting open the private wound of every Kipling and quasi-Kipling to whom rulership was a means of hiding one’s moral say in the name of the higher morality of history in turn seen as an embodiment of human rationality.”16

Thus Nandy shows that despite being a counter-modernist Gandhi re-emerged for moderns as a major critic of modernity. The decolonising efforts of Gandhi include bicultural elements from both traditions and modernity. In Gandhi, thus, Nandy find "a critique of traditions coupled with a critique of modernity.”17

Joining the issue Bhikhu Parekh wrote that “Critical- traditionalism represented the third response by Hindu leaders. The traditionalists, the modernists and the critical-modernists were all in their own different ways convinced that civilisations could be compared and assessed on the basis of some universal criteria. The critical traditionalists ... rejected the assumption. For them a civilisation was an organic whole and could not be judged in terms of criteria derived from outside it.”18

Parekh observed that among the four pre-Gandhian trends of thought viz. traditionalism, modernism, critical-traditionalism and critical-modernism. Gandhi was sympathetic to the critical- traditionalism although Gandhi viewed that the regenerative resources of the Hindu tradition has not been fully explored by this trend. Hence in his efforts to regenerate Indian tradition and reconstruct modernity, Gandhi fought against both traditionalism and modernism.
Thomas Pantham, in analysing Gandhian thought argued that “Gandhi's theory – far from being ‘all fine Ruskin-Tolstoyan rodomontade by a lawyer with a printing press’, or the primitivist yearnings of a withdrawn music-offers guidance in transforming what he called the ‘nominal’ democracy of the modern Western type into a truer or fuller democracy, which he referred to as *Purna Swaraj* (complete or integral democracy), *Rama Rajya* (‘sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority’), or *sarvodaya* (a social order promoting the good of all).”

He also argued that “the Gandhian project is aimed at resolving a fundamental contradiction in the theory and practice of liberal democracy, namely, the contradiction between the affirmation of the freedom of the individual in the so-called private sphere of morality and its curtailment in the allegedly amoral or purely technical public/political sphere ... by dereifying the objectified state through *Swaraj* (participatory democracy combining ‘self-rule and self-restraint’) and by integrating politics and morality through the *Satyagraha* process of socio-political action.”

Pantham thus estimates the Gandhian efforts in showing the hollowness of the western liberal democracy by focussing on the Gandhian projection of *Swaraj* as an alternative to an ‘objectified state’ and on Gandhi’s obliterating the dichotomy between public and private morality. Also he stroke a note of comparison between Gandhi and Habermas in reacting to the untruth of the legitimacy claims of the late capitalist state.

From the above discussion it becomes evident that Gandhi had a critical outlook to the tradition synthesizing the best of the traditions with the needs of time and in that sense he modernized the tradition. Gandhi had the idea of sundering the nation from the political domain and returning it to the sphere of culture and civil society from which it springs.
This research joins the issue with the above-mentioned authors in identifying the uniqueness of the Gandhian idea of nation-building in being unificatory as well as emancipatory. Emancipation means freedoms of various kinds: freedom from the arbitrary hold of tradition, from arbitrary power and from all the constraints of material deprivation. Hence the creation of the autonomy of action is central to the emancipatory ideas. Gandhian idea of nation as a social entity gives an exclusive emphasis upon a 'single way of life' and attempts to relinquish the state as an ultimate political ideal creating spaces for autonomy of action, and, thereby, distinguishes itself from the colonial perspective of nation-building that upholds an ultimate idea of building the state.

Gandhi believed that the Indian nation is perennial and immemorial. In his view, nations and nationalisms are the basic forces and processes of the modern as well as pre-modern epochs although the term 'nation' came into vogue in the contemporary world. For him nations provide social cohesion, order and the like and Indian nation, though no part of any 'natural order', seem to their members to be all-embracing and immemorial which reflect the power and enduring quality of the fundamental cultural ties. Gandhi thus separated the cultural level of the nation from the political level of the state.

Edward Said wrote, "My contention is that without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage— and even produce—the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-enlightenment period. ... In brief, because of Orientalism the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought or action." 21 In the same book he wrote," ... since the middle of
the eighteenth century there had been two principal elements in the relation between East and West. One was a growing systematic knowledge in Europe about the Orient, (which is in Said’s version ‘Orientalism’) knowledge reinforced by the colonial encounter as well as by the widespread interest in the alien and unusual, exploited by the developing sciences of ethnology, comparative anatomy, philology, and history; further more, to this systematic knowledge was added a sizable body of literature produced by novelists, poets, translators, and gifted travellers. The other feature of Oriental-European relations was that Europe was always in a position of strength, not to say domination. ... But the essential relationship, on political, cultural and even religious grounds, was seen—in the West, which is what concerns us here—to be one between a strong and a weak partner.”

Taking into consideration the whole of Gandhian discourse on nation-building, it seems that Gandhi gives an effort to emancipate the Indian mind from the above mentioned dominating framework of Orientalism. For Gandhi truth is not only an undiluted search for real, but also an exercise of power within knowledge, since knowledge constitutes the regimes of truth. Gandhi did not pose any meta-theory or ‘grand-narrative’ of ‘progress’. His basic approach was also piecemeal with a strong belief in humanism. But throughout his ideas a logical coherence has always been maintained in fighting against ‘orientalism’.

Nehru on the other hand, imbibing the spirit of post-enlightenment rationality fixed up his value premises on the basis of ‘science’ and technology although the influence of other indigenous sources like the Vedic literature produced at times within him a conflict between science and other forms of thought, which he himself has admitted. In fact, Indian national identity, for Nehru, is pre-eminently functional for ‘modernity’, being suited to the
needs of a wide variety of social groups and individuals. He believed that such a national identity was a political necessity since it alone can establish order in the principles of popular sovereignty and will of the people, defined in whatever way.

Nehruvian thought also bears a tension between two different approaches to socialism viz. class approach and non-class approach. He wanted to solve the problem through a 'middle way' which propagated that the contradictions between capitalism and socialism were being smoothed out. He wrote, "Socialism is basically a different approach from that of capitalism, though I think it is true that the wide gap between them tends to lessen because many of the ideas of socialism are gradually being incorporated in the capitalist structure."

In reality, this middle way in Nehruvian thought led him more to rely on the state structure along with bureaucracy, planning and a strong public sector. The basic rationale for such reliance was that state could be made a moral entity stimulating the economic development and the well-being of the Indian people, which Nehru imbibed from the colonial modernity.

III

Any discourse reflects the specificity of a particular context. Both Gandhi and Nehru interacted with the contextual specificity of the Indian society and the identity of such a society is in large part a function of historical interpretation, fraught with politically contested claims and counter-claims. Thus, despite such variance in the interpretations of specific discourse
in any society, the concluding observations of this thesis broadly establish that Gandhi being uniquely free from the taint of enlightenment rationalism, experimented with ‘truth’ from a spiritual perspective and became engaged in the ambitious project of developing a comprehensive texture of social theory on the basis of ‘truth’, ‘non-violence’ and ‘self-suffering’, which illuminates the ethical substance of both the end and the means at the same time. His conceptual apparatus leads one to think that the primary role of science is to discover those empirical generalizations, which are ethically limited, if not constricted. The unintended consequences of science themselves pose the question against linking science with ‘progress’. Consequently to him the primary task of nation-building is to reinforce a unitary value system required to contend the western value system, upon which the colonial modernity is based.

In a sense, it is very difficult to categorize Gandhian discourse under a particular heading, since the liaisons of Gandhi’s political, social, moral and economic categories with those of the rest of the Indian people were very often the liaisons of identity, sympathy and co-operation. The difficulty increases with the contextual interpretations of Gandhian thought by different interpreters. For instance, Benoy Kumar Sarkar interpreted that “Gandhi was at one with every non-Gandhi or anti-Gandhi, if there were any.” Sarkar pointed out that Gandhi’s equation of British Government with the ‘Rule of Satan’ in 1920 as a reaction to the British massacre of Indian men, women and children at Jalianwalabagh (Panjab) was some sort of cult of hatred unknown to universal brotherhood or religion of love. As he shows there were limitations in Gandhi’s fetish of Ahimsa. For the Dominion of India (estd. August 15, 1947), both in internal and external affairs the utility of arrangements to deal with violence by methods of violence was recognised in Gandhi’s creed of non-violence in no questionable manner. This becomes
evident as Gandhi did neither recommend the abolition of the police in the administration of new Indian state nor did he prescribe the annihilation of the defence departments. Furthermore, Sarkar showed that Gandhi's very slogan of 'Quit India' had contained neither universal brotherhood nor peaceful revolution and everything in that movement was calculated to force the British to withdraw. He pointed out that Gandhi wrote in Harijan on July 26, 1942 that "The programme of mass movement covers every activity included in a mass movement. I would not hesitate to go to the extreme limit, if I find that no impression is produced over the British Government." This spirit was later reflected in the pronouncements of the Working committee of the Indian National Congress on August 4, 1942. Sarkar viewed that the unarmed character of Gandhian movement was the virtue of necessity. The Gandhian way was taken to be the common and universal way of Indian as of other armless emasculated peoples. Lastly, Sarkar shows that Gandhi understood that if the masses were to be touched by political leaders the hope of economic amelioration and the fact of material prosperity must have to be brought home to the teeming peasants in daily routine of agricultural life. Sarkar shows that this is the foundation of Gandhi's obsession by handicrafts manual professions, cottage industries and specially Khadi (hand spinning) that touch every man, woman and child of the villages.25

In fact Gandhian thought always bears a tension between Gandhi's ultimate political ideal and the immediate political objective. Gandhi provided a thorough unqualified critique of colonial modernity and presented an alternative discourse of ultimate political ideal. He was engaged in mobilizing people's power to fight against colonial power. But at the same time he was also engaged in negotiating with the British in a diplomatic way. His acception and upholding of the reconstruction of social realities in India
through the Poona Pact of 1932 ensuring reservation for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes reveals his compromise with a new state system.

Gandhi viewed that India must be rebuilt by her inherent strength. Throughout a greater part of his life, Gandhi was busy, both in thinking and in practices, with the ways for removing the socio-economic ills of the Indian society. He was also active in preaching that human civilisation must be based on certain universal values.

Thus, it is embodiment of so many roles in a single man which led Gandhi to negotiate with Nehruvian etatisme time and again. Consequently his rejection of modern science, his uncompromising challenge to unlimited technology that he believed would have an immediate impact on social relationship and human self-image, his persistent call for limiting human wants, his craving for ethical means to achieve a right end, his vision for an echo-friendly socio-economic structure—all of which point out to an alternative discourse of not simply nation-building but also of an alternative human civilization, ultimately gave way to Nehruvian ideas of state building.

This is not to suggest that Indian nation seems to have been proceeding rejecting the essential elements of Gandhian discourse on nation-building. The Indian nation represents a sometimes uneasy but necessary symbiosis of Gandhian and Nehruvian elements, built upon popular-social as-well-as bureaucratic bases. When this symbiosis is almost perfect, the alignment of social forces, the one able to command the organs of state, the other to mobilize the energies of the people, mirror a fuller interaction between culture and citizenship reinforcing each other and the capacities of nation are fully realized. Conversely, when this symbiosis is undermined, the unity or power of the nation are impaired, and citizenship and ethnicity may be brought into conflict.
M.N. Srinivas wrote, "The reasons for India's relative success in nation-building are many and complex but, in my considered opinion, a fundamental factor has been the existence for over a hundred years of a Westernized elite committed to the dual aims of reforming their society and achieving freedom."27

The space for examining such a contention here is severely restricted by the scope of this research. But what is conclusive is that under the patronage of Nehruvian ideas all ultimate goals of nation-building like achieving freedom from all sorts of bondage and the material and mental well-being of the subjects are linked up with the historicist model of industrial growth under the overall perspective of colonial modernity. Gandhi had little faith on such a model and fixed up a set of normative premises ensuring that certain traditional values are integral to the reshaping of Indian polity and society.

In the conclusion of his book, A.D. Smith wrote that "I have argued that, despite the capacity of nationalisms to generate widespread terror and destruction, the nation and nationalism provide the only realistic socio-cultural framework for a modern world order. They have no rivals today. National identity too remains widely attractive and effective and is felt by many people to satisfy their needs for cultural fulfilment, rootedness, security and fraternity."28

In fact, this point about the essence of nation-building being an exercise of collective human choice needs reiteration at the present phase of India, where designing and re-designing of the alternative futures are continuously appearing in the socio-economico-political scenario. Consequently the ideas of the two chief-architects of India need to be assessed, which this research has attempted.
Notes and references


20. Ibid., p.326.

22. Ibid., pp. 39-40.

23. *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches*, (1964 edition), Vol. 4, op.cit., p. 120.


25. Ibid., p. 22.

