

WRITING AN IMAGI(NATION): DISCURSIVE FORMATION OF SELF-RULE IN GANDHI'S HIND SWARAJ

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ABSTRACT

Nation is always an imagination and perhaps none other than Gandhi could realize the significance of such an imagination at least in early twentieth century. Writing such an imagination in his seminal text *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule* (1909), Gandhi narrates his nation through a specific form of representation that he calls Swaraj or self-rule. This article argues that Gandhi's depiction of Swaraj or self-rule can be seen as a discursive formation which has double implications. On the one hand, it encompasses many existing competing ideological positions concerning the idea of nationhood, on the other it could answer the colonial charges made against India. This article also examines the rhetoric strategy of the text by which Gandhi establishes a fundamental correspondence between the nation and self-rule in his text. It is imperative to point out that *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule* originally written in Gujarati was translated into English by Gandhi himself and no other work of his, not even his *Autobiography*, enjoys this distinction. Written in the form of dialogue between the 'Reader' and the 'Editor', in which the Editor is Gandhi himself and the Reader is the voice of the common beliefs and arguments of the time concerning Indian Independence, this text is considered today as a modern Classic and Gandhi's foundational text. Although the text is generally read as the severe condemnation of modern civilization, however, there are many subtexts in it and it can also be read as an intervention in the then existing nationalist and colonial discourses.

I

The idea of nation described by nationalists through their texts has always been open to debate among the scholars of nationalism. Reading, re-reading or interpretations of such texts by scholars critically engage the discursive politics of nationalists' milieu and their choice to accept or reject them. Generally speaking, these scholastic efforts, more often than not, reach to a conclusion that what is presented as the idea of nation by nationalists is 'not something that exists' but it is 'invented' and 'performed'. In this regard, Bhabha argues "Nations, like

narratives, lose their origins in the myths of time and only fully realize their horizons in the mind's eye" (1). This mind's eye perceives nation as "large scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future" (Renan 19). Thus, the idea of nation presupposes a summarized past, tangible present fact, and future desire to continue a common life.

From the historical perspective, the idea of 'nation' emerged in Europe in a very discursive way. Anderson argues, "The century of the Enlightenment, of rationalist secularism, brought with it its own modern darkness. . . [Few] things were (are) suited to this end better than the idea of nation (19)". This modern darkness engrossed the most part of the world in the name of civilization mission that took the form of colonialism and the 'idea of nation' was applied by the colonials to justify their rule over the colonies. The impact of such European discourse of nation was so powerful that it virtually erased the natives' conception of their own nation like categories. It may be seen perfectly in Raja Rammohan Roy, who wrote a letter in 1830's to the British Parliament stating that India was not a nation because Indians were 'divided up among castes'. Thus, Roy implicitly accepted that India could become a nation if its people shifted their primary loyalties from caste to country. In 1870, Keshav Chandra Sen also attempted this view of nation in the light of his India's educational development and social reforms. In 1885, moderate Indian leaders formed a Congress in Bombay named -the Indian National Congress- that also indirectly proclaimed the proposition that India is a nation.

Although the existence of India as a country had long preceded the British rule due to the facts of its geographical location, with the Indian peninsula separated by mountains and the sea from the Eurasian continent, and within this limit cultural affinities had developed that led people to distinguish those in India from the rest of the world, however, it was generally assumed that the unification of the country was the product of uniform administrative and economic policies as well as the construction of railways introduced by the British in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, it was also argued that colonial education and the rise of the press also disseminated the ideas of India's nationhood and its prospective single political entity. A substantive basis for India's nationhood was laid further when nationalists like Dadabhai Naoroji in his book *Poverty and UnBritish Rule in India* (1901) and R.C. Dutt in his *Economic History of India* (1903) raised the issues of poverty of the Indian people and the burden of colonial exploitation, which was felt in equal measure throughout India. However, it is crucial to note that in the earlier stages, religion also played an important role in spreading nationalism as it could provide a source of mass mobilization. In this regard, Tilak's agitations in the 1890s against the Age of Consent Bill and plague inoculation, together with his espousal of the Shivaji cult, offer classic illustrations of this tendency. Aurobindo Ghosh (1872-1950) also provided simultaneously the theoretical basis for a 'Hindu Nationalism'. Thus, one may see three complex and competing processes that attempted to prove India as a nation: the preceding notion of India as a country, the influx of modern political ideas, and the struggle against colonialism.

II

In this contesting milieu, positioning *Hind Swaraj* may be seen as Gandhi's intervention in Indian politics. Of course, one of Gandhi's concerns was to establish a degree of legitimacy within the nationalist movement and thus one finds Gandhi addressing not only the name of higher-ranking figures of Congress in his text but also strategically placing himself with respect to the existing paradigms of Indian nationalist discourse –characterizing them according to the

conventional levels of ‘moderates’ and ‘extremists’. Interestingly, Gandhi defines himself against these ‘moderates’ and ‘extremists’ factions and attempts to formulate a discourse that could mediate them. Therefore, Gandhi’s major task in *Hind Swaraj* seems to provide a higher space where the reconciliation could be made among the different nationalist factions as well as the idioms of elite politics and those of the masses. This is not unsurprising that Gandhi writes that the only motive to write his book “is to serve my country, to find out truth and to follow them” (Parel 7). Thus, Gandhi establishes a fundamental correspondence between truth and nation and it is this correlation between nation and truth that serves as a framework in which Gandhi elaborates his idea of self –rule or Swaraj which could mean both personal and political self –rule.

In such a complicated scheme, it is quite natural that the category of nation emerges in the text in a discursive way. The discourse of nation emerges in the text to counter the colonial arguments that proposed nationhood as inextricably linked to modernity. Colonial arguments were based on the assumption that the only the modern nation–state constituted the legitimate container for a common set of cultural and political properties. Thus in colonial view, as India was neither sufficiently mature to sustain the operation of a modern nation state on its own, nor it developed such a common cultural framework, hence it could not lay claim to ‘nationhood’. To counter this argument, Gandhi’s *Hind Swaraj* challenges the view that modernity represents the ultimate standard for deciding whether or not a given collectivity qualifies as a ‘nation’. As against the colonial argument of India lacking a common cultural framework, the text seeks to establish the age-old existence of common ‘Indian cultural properties’ and thus lay claim to its nationhood. It is not difficult to see Gandhi arguing in *Hind Swaraj* that India was nation much before the British came.

Idea of nation in Gandhi’s imagination in *Hind Swaraj* may be gauged from the number of times the word ‘nation’ and its cognates occur in the book: they occur 75 times; not an insignificant fact, considering that the text occupies only 56 pages in collected work of Mahatma Gandhi. Another interesting thing regarding the concept of nation in *Hind Swaraj* is that the Gujarati edition of this text uses the word ‘*praja*’ instead of ‘*rashtra*’ for the nation. One may notice that instead of using more common term ‘*rashtra*’, which emphasizes the dimension of state power, ‘*praja*’ carries the strong denotation of ‘people’ or ‘cultural community’. Parel argues:

In Gujarati, as in other languages, *praja* is a civic term, meaning the subjects of a *rajah*. India had always had *rajah* and to that extent Indians had always been *praja*. The idea of *praja* was well suited for Gandhi’s purpose: it transcended such pre–political identities as caste, religion, language, region, and the like. Thus a Hindu king could have as his subjects (*praja*) Hindus as well as Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Janis, Parsis, and Jews. They were all equally his subjects. What Gandhi has done to the term, however, is to invest it with a new modern meaning –that of nation”. (39)

These discussions suggest that Gandhi was very much careful about the use of term nation. However, in the text, the discussion of whether or not India is a nation is introduced by the Reader as a causal aside to the discussion of the railways introduced by the British. One of

the hidden benefits of the introduction of railways into India, the Reader claims, is that “we see in India the new spirit of nationalism” (40). Gandhi as the Editor sharply and quickly denies it: “I hold this to be a mistake. The English have taught us that we were not one nation before and that it will require centuries before we became one nation. This is without any foundation. We were one nation before they came to India. One thought inspired us. Our mode of life was the same. It was because we were one nation that they were able to establish one kingdom” (40).

This response attempts to answer several question posed in discursive politics of his time. First, it argues against those who assert that India is not a nation. Gandhi challenges colonialists’ and nationalists’ opinion that there is nothing in Indian history or traditions that signify nationalism and India is an artificial nation put together by the British for administrative convenience. He also condemns this view, as discussed above, that if Indians now talk of India as being a nation, it is due to the introduction of western ideas and to the changes brought about by modern means of communication such as the railways and telegraph. The source of such opinion, according to him, is again the British interpretation of Indian history.

Furthermore the text also implies the basic difference between a country and a nation. Gandhi argues that a country can be a nation only it has capacity to merge outsiders in it. On the question of introduction of Muslims in India, asked by the Reader, Gandhi as the Editor replies, “The introduction of foreigners does not necessarily destroy the nation they merge in it. A country is one nation only when such a condition obtains in it. That country must have a faculty for assimilation; India has ever been such a country (43).

If we turn to the Gujarati edition of Hind Swaraj, the Gujarati word that Gandhi uses for ‘faculty of assimilation’ is *Samas*. In fact, *Samas* is a grammatical technique of forming new word by integrating two or more pre-existing words. In this process, something of the old identity is retained in the new compound word, but the latter has a new identity of its own. When Gandhi argues in the text that the Indian nation has been created by a process of *Samas*, he means that though the nation is formed out of distinct ethnic, religious and linguistic groups, the new identity that emerges has an identity of its own. India in this sense is a nation. In other words, though originally the Indian word *praja* was composed of simpler identities, in course of time, under certain historical conditions, it became capable of forming a more complex but unified *praja* through the process of *Samas*. Thus, Gandhi suggests that India as a nation is the result of a process of *Samas* taking place for over several centuries.

However, Gandhi as a nationalist does not ignore the differences and difficulties emerging from such *Samas* or faculty of assimilation discussed above. Then, how these differences were solved? I wish to quote Gandhi in full length, at this point, to highlight how these differences were resolved and how India was made a ‘nation’ before the British came. Gandhi argues:

I do not wish to suggest that because we were one nation we had no differences, but it is submitted that *our leading men* traveled 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 *farseeing ancestors of ours* who established Setubandha (Rameshwar) in the South, Jagannath in the East and Hardwar in the 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 thus, 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. And we Indians are one as no two Englishmen are. Only you and I and others who consider ourselves civilized and superior persons imagine that we are many nations. (76)

Here, Gandhi's stresses upon the activities of those whom he calls 'our leading man' or 'the foreseeing ancestors of ours'. By these, he is referring to the *acharyas* of ancient Indian culture. These individuals, he points out, traveled the length and breadth of India 'either on foot or on bullock carts,' and their activities had the effect of creating a common consciousness. Here, he implies the slowness of their locomotion was the very source of their strength. It enabled them to come to know the people among whom they moved and to establish among them a sense of community. Moreover, indirectly Gandhi also draws a contrast between railway and bullock cart in respect to advancement of nationality. Reader, who thinks that modern sense of nationality comes from railway, Gandhi argues that bullock carts do better in this regard as slow travel is still a very powerful way of reinforcing national sentiment.

One very surprising thing in this dialogue is that Gandhi credits saint/learned person for being India's 'nation builder'. It is worth mentioning that he does not mention the role of kings and emperors in the whole text. In fact, Gandhi seems highly critical of the role of rajas and maharajas in history. On the contrary, there "tyranny", he says "was greater than that of English" (59). On the other hand, by stating that, '...they saw that India was *one undivided land* so made by nature. They, therefore, argued that it must be one nation', Gandhi makes a geographical argument that India has been a nation like other modern nation for which a territory is needed. Thus for him, India not only culturally but geographically too has been a nation. Thus, for Gandhi India has been a nation because of 'one undivided India', 'one thought', 'same mode of life', and 'faculty of assimilation'.

On the other hand, Gandhi in his text severely criticizes the 'modern' European notion of nation which is, according to him, is based on violence or 'brute force'. In this connection, one may note; Gandhi defines modernity in *Hind Swaraj* not as an objective phenomenon but a deluded state of mind characterized by selfishness and violence. Thus, through a discursive analysis, Gandhi argues that colonial imagination of India that represents itself as 'modern' is out of tune with the spirit of Indian traditions and its vision of India as a nation. In fact, he suggests the true nationhood is impossible under the condition of modernity. Assuming a link between the virtues of nonviolence, tolerance, and morality and 'true and genuine nationhood' what India as a nation represents, Gandhi argues by this matrix 'modern' but morally underdeveloped European countries have not yet earned the distinction of being true nations.

Extending this argument, he persistently calls in *Hind Swaraj* to "drive out modern civilization in order to return India to its nation- bestowing spiritual essence" (80). This link provides the justification for his rejection of the 'suicidal policies' of Indian radical nationalists who have mistakenly adopted "modern civilization and modern methods of violence to drive out the English" (Parel, 7). In accordance with the ideal of nation as *praja*, Gandhi's home- rule seems depending upon the transformation of modernity by means of a different type of nationalism, which according to him should not be 'fixed' in modern civilization and its reliance on violence. The political purpose of such a nationalism was not to give a another modern nation –state like

European nation state but to build a exemplary nation guided by its own pre-modern tradition of performing duty and observing morality. Thus, *Hind Swaraj* claims, “real home rule is self -rule or self- control” (90).

III

Thus one of the important themes that emerge in Gandhi’s text is the fundamental correspondence between the nation and self –rule. However, this association is not as simple as it appears. In fact, the term self-rule articulated as Swaraj itself presents its discursive formation. It may be noted that Swaraj was the ambiguous term during the Indian freedom movement. From historical perspective, it was simultaneously recognized as an attribute of the nation and yet it was open to a wider range of meanings. As Krishnavarma (1857- 1930) one of the prominent revolutionary understood it as signifying “one’s own country” and saw at it as an equivalent to Home Rule. “The word ‘Swaraj’”, Krishnavarma expounded, “or correctly Svrajya, which is the Sanskrit equivalent for Home Rule, must therefore have been familiar . . . before Mr. Dadabhai used it in his Address . . . , etymologically speaking, Home, in the word Home-Rule, really means *one’s own* (Country, etc) and is practically the same as *svam* in Sanskrit, the Latin words *suum regnum* being literally in Sanskrit *svrajyam* i.e. one’s own rule—home rule”(11). Furthermore, Bal Gangadhar Tilak had been consistently emphasizing on ‘*Swaraj*’ as the birthright of people since 1896.

Although the concept of Swaraj being the point of contention among different nationalists might be understood, but in *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhi defines it as self-rule that means ‘rule of the mind over itself and the passions’ (80). Gandhi seems to derive his technical definition of Swaraj from *Gita* – especially from *The sthithprajana darshan*. According to this philosophy, there is fundamental difference between self as *atman* (which is eternal and imperishable) and self as *dehin* (temporal self, composed of body and mind). Although the *dehin*’s ultimate end is self-realization-*atmadarshan*, its intermediate end to pursue *arth* and *kama* within the frame work of *dharma* for active life. But *dehin* cannot do that if mind is not controlled over itself and the senses. According to Gandhi, this *dehin* is directly involved in politics-in pursuit of Swaraj. Hence, the possession of disciplined mind is the prerequisite for true Swaraj. Thus ‘possession of disciplined mind’ emerges as main faculty of Gandhi’s political discourse of *Hind Swaraj*. This refers to Gandhi’s conception of the connection between *atmadarshan* (self realization) and *rajyaprakaran* (politics). Gandhi’s position is that the two may not be radically separated. It implies that inner change within the individual ought to be the starting point of outer changes in society. It is axiomatic in *Hind Swaraj* that good of self-government or true home rule that India achieves will be in proportion to the good of self-rule that India achieves. Thus, Swaraj as self-government or home rule is the rule of nation (*praja*) by the nation. It is assumed in the text that Swaraj is the basis of good state (*surajaya*).

However, close reading of *Hind Swaraj* suggests that the concept of Swaraj that Gandhi proposes is not as unequivocal as it appears. In its discursive formation, Swaraj connotes at least four different meanings in the text. First, the text implies it as a way to achieve ‘nationals’ independence’ from colonial rule; second, it means the concept of political freedom of individual; third, it has been used as economic freedom that extends to Swadeshi (90), and fourth; it means self –rule (90).

Furthermore, if one de-codes the subtext of the term Swaraj employed in *Hind Swaraj*, one finds it is both Indian and Western in its denotations. The first three meanings of Swaraj that the text implies are Western in nature. One may argue here, the classical Indian political philosophy as well as Islamic political tradition of medieval India was based on theory of monarchy that lacked a tradition of political freedom of the individual. It was only in nineteenth century that India awoke to the idea that the people, not kings or emperors were the legitimate source of power and authority. The Indian National Congress, from its inception in 1885, gave this concept a formal recognition. At personal level, Gandhi's training in London as lawyer and his later reading and activities in South Africa also made him staunch advocate of national as well as individual political freedom. Thus, it is not wrong to argue that Gandhi might have included this political meaning of Swaraj in his own formulation of Swaraj.

The discursive formation of Gandhi's Swaraj may be seen in the language in which he expresses it. In fact, Gandhi uses this term in two ways in his text. In the English version of the text Gandhi draws a distinction between Swaraj as self-rule and Swaraj as a self-government or home rule. On the other hand, if we turn to Gujarati version of *Hind Swaraj*, we notice that the Gujarati text uses same word Swaraj, for self-rule and self-government. Gandhi's rhetoric strategy of putting Swaraj with multiple meanings makes it both a model and a programme. As a model, Swaraj sets the ideological theme of struggle against British and as a programme; it provides nationalist a blueprint for independent India. This blueprint includes the revival of the golden Indian tradition with critical eyes that Gandhi highlights in his text. On this basis, he argues for a fundamental moral transformation of Indian people who will adopt love force, which in turn will make British rule impossible and establish true freedom in India. Gandhi constantly reminds Indians that India once enjoyed self-rule before the advent of colonialism and modern civilization (54).

Swaraj as a discursive formation gives Gandhi enough space to encompass competing nationalist discourse in his own discourse. It included the idea of the educated Indian class, who were deeply committed to Western model of democracy and favoring democratic and parliamentary form of Government on the British model. It also included the view of nationalist wing of moderates who argued for autonomous status of India within the British Empire through peaceful process of constitutionalism. It also encompassed extremists' view of complete independence. Apart from this, the structure of Gandhi's discourse of Swaraj had also potential to be located in the two dominant social-political processes of early twentieth century called nationalism and democratization.

The discursive formation of Swaraj may also be located in the backdrop of colonial discourses. As discussed above, Gandhi gave the logic of Indian nationhood based on Indian antiquity that was a perfect reply to the colonial argument which alleged that India never was and could never be a nation. However, Gandhi was well aware that it was a daunting task to even portrait a faint picture of nation or to define Indian nationhood even vaguely because India lacked the essential ingredients of a conventionally conceptualized notion of nation. However, by his notion of Swaraj, Gandhi was able to begin the 'politics of inclusion' as political strategy that was relatively less controversial, especially when we see varieties of nationalism existing in early twentieth century. Thus, Gandhi's Swaraj "not only brings self rule to country and its people but also unites Indian to one another" (Tercheak 140). In this sense, Swaraj seems great leveler that helped mobilize people despite their social –political –cultural differences.

However, if Gandhi Swaraj had so many connotations one may wonder; what was really the true nature of Gandhi's Swaraj? In fact, Gandhi accepts the difficulty of notion of Swaraj as there were many definitions and connotations which were related with this term. Discussing with the Reader in the chapter 'What is Swaraj?', Gandhi accepts, "It is difficult for me to understand the true nature of Swaraj" (27). It seems that throughout the text Swaraj is a working hypothesis for Gandhi, which he mends time to time according to the context and discussion with the Reader. In the final paragraph of Hind Swaraj, Gandhi confesses, "we have used this term 'Swaraj' without understanding its real significance". And "I have endeavoured to explain it as I understand it" (86).

As a subtext, the debate on the nature and meaning of Swaraj between the Reader and the Editor in the text also exposes the ideological limitation of Indian nationalists' consciousness. Gandhi argues that Swaraj defined only in terms of anti-colonial discourse, shows what Indian nationalist are against, but not what they are for. Consequently, Gandhi interprets the agenda of both the moderates and extremists factions of nationalists as seeking merely 'English rule without the Englishman. You want the tiger's nature, but not the tiger; that is to say, you would make India English and when it becomes English, it will be called not Hindustan but Englishtan. This is not the Swaraj that I want" (26).

Gandhi's this significant statement may be read in terms of postcolonial engagements with several implications. The term 'English rule' is very noteworthy here, as it was based on the idea of 'other' and 'difference'. Hence, 'English rule' in India 'without English' means retaining or constructing the 'other' and 'difference' within India by the Indians rulers, henceforth creating an 'internal colonization' within India. Second, this statement shows that Gandhi's sense of Indian independence, what he envisions in Swaraj, is entirely different from the conventional understanding of national self-determination. History of decolonization suggests that as nationalism develops in any nation, a particular class emerges and after the end of colonization, it becomes the constitutionally designated officials that claim the right to arrange and rearrange everything of the nation on the name of well being of nation. This can be seen as the special feature of almost all strands of anti-colonial ideologies whose goal was to wrest sovereign control from alien hands and place it under indigenous control.

Gandhi's 'English without English rule' challenges this view finding that such ideologies unwittingly trap themselves when they accept the definition of former colonial master that the winner exercises unrestricted sovereign control. From Gandhi's perspective, such a victory not only breaks the harmony of community, it also permits officials to ignore the individual freedom, autonomy and tradition. He sees that modern sovereignty downgrades these latter goods, and they become remainders, subordinate and in disposable position. In this way, Gandhi puts a critique of modern sovereignty indirectly in his comment on 'English rule without English'. Further, from Gandhi's perspective, if national independence is exercised apart from a cosmological outlook, the very purpose of Indian independence is defeated. National independence is meaningless for him, if Indians replace colonial officials and dominate their fellow citizens or destroy their own civilization and society.

Another part of this statement shows Gandhi's fear that some Indians want a Swaraj that is tiger-like and thus more 'English' than 'Indian'. This explains the psychological impact of colonialism as how the battle for the minds of men was to a great extent won by the Raj. As Nandy puts, "This colonialism colonizes minds in addition to bodies and it releases forces within

colonized societies to alter their cultural priorities once and for all. ... Particularly, once the British rulers and the exposed sections of Indians internalized the colonial role definitions ... the battle for the minds of men was to a great extent won by the Raj” (6-7).

However, the discursive formation of Swaraj and its climax can be seen in the last chapter of *Hind Swaraj*. The final chapter conveys two important themes on this issue. First, Gandhi translates the discourse of Swaraj into the concrete form of programme and second he argues that moral transformation of the Indian elite class is prerequisite for Swaraj. Thus, how the emerging Indian elite might achieve this Swaraj become the focus of the final argument of *Hind Swaraj*. Moreover, this argument is introduced with great artistic flair. ‘What will you say to the nation?’ the Reader asks. The Editor responded with a question, ‘Who is the nation?’ (87), it is as if Gandhi wanted to emphasize the point that the elite were the nation in a special sense. If up to the last chapter Gandhi had been talking of nation in general sense as *praja*, then, in the concluding chapter, he took it in narrower sense. Through the mouth of the Reader he conveyed this narrower meaning: “For our purposes it is the nation that you and I have been thinking of, that is those of us who are affected by European civilization, and who are eager to have Home Rule” (87).

Thus, *Hind Swaraj* propounds the thesis that nation’s tasks lay before the national elite. The most important corollary to this Gandhian theorem is that the fate of India as a nation depends on the moral character of the Indian professional classes i.e. the character of its lawyers, doctors, and wealthy. It is further interesting to note that Gandhi put a vehement critique of these professionals in Chapter xi and xii of the text. Gandhi criticized that professional classes, who exerted tremendous influence on general masses, were hypnotized by greed and were victims of caste, creed and status considerations, which affected the unity and integrity of the nation. One might notice here a striking resemblance between Gandhi’s idea to that of Plato who said that there was a link between the health of the soul and the health of the city, and the maintenance of the health of the city depended, in practical terms, on the moral character of the ‘guardian’ class. In the same way, Gandhi suggested that national elites as the ‘guardians’ must undergo a moral transformation and serve their country men. Here, Gandhi seems deconstructing the binary opposition of professional life and personal life and suggesting that liberation of the nation and true Swaraj depend upon the replacement of greed of power and wealth by selfless love and service of others. To bring about this mental transformation of the Indian elite and bring true Swaraj, Gandhi proposes 19 points in the final chapter of *Hind Swaraj*. Of the 19 points, three are addressed to doctors, four to lawyers, and the rest to what Gandhi calls ‘wealthy’. Gandhi thought that only such moral transformation could give them the requisite strength required for Swaraj.

Thus, the discursive formation of Swaraj in its representation establishes a fundamental correspondence with the nation that demands moral strength of its subject. In other words, lack of the ‘moral strength’ of Indians is the reason why Indians are deprived of Swaraj. Making a sharp analysis in the chapter, ‘Why India was Lost’, Gandhi argues, “The English have not taken India; we have given it to them. They are not in India because of their strength, but because we keep them. ...it is truer to say that we gave India to the English than that India was lost” (37).

Thus, for Gandhi it was the moral failure on parts of Indian that led to the conquest of India and deprivation of Swaraj. Gandhi’s this claim completely rejects the British as well as some nationalists’ argument like Bankim who asserted that it was the backwardness or lack of modernity in Indian culture that made India subject nation. In other words, Gandhi rejected the

argument that India became subject because it was not ‘civilized’ or had a ‘lack of cultural attributes’ needed to face the power of the English. Further, Gandhi’s argument of ‘moral failure on parts of Indians’ makes, if on the one hand whole argument of ‘civilization missions’ thoroughly meaningless, on the other, it attempts to regenerate a nationalism based on morality. He suggested that British were retaining India because leading section of India was under the dazzling impression of English civilizational glitter and had completely forgotten their national duty.

Thus, the Editor argues that many Indians have accepted foreign rule for purely materialistic reason as “We keep the English in India for our base self-interest. We like their commerce; they please us by their subtle methods, and get what they want from us. To blame them for this is to perpetuate their power (35)”. Gandhi here seems following Tolstoy’s argument, who asserted in ‘Letter to the Hindu’ that only possible explanation for the stranger phenomenon of 30,000 ‘rather weak and ill looking’ Britons enslaving 200 million of ‘vigorous, clever, strong, and freedom loving people’ was that Indian had to come to embrace the materialist values of their colonizers (Chadha 156). Hence, Gandhi’s all political effort to achieve Indian ‘home rule’ i.e. Swaraj goes together with a rigorous programme of moral transformation of individual.

The discursive formation of Swaraj also helps Gandhi to put a vehement critique of modern civilization and its impact on Indians. He argues that under the impact of modern civilization and its materialistic life style, Indians had turn into sly sycophants and willing servants of the empire, thereby proving to the world that they were morally “unfit to serve country” (41). Thus, the Editor never hesitates to drive his stern message to his fellow citizens of having become lazy and ‘effeminate’. Yet, it can be observed, behind all these arguments, there is an unequivocal assertion that India had declined from ‘golden age’ to its ‘present degenerated condition’, and that might be reversed by successful recovery of the authentic values of glorious ancient civilization and its eternally valid moral standards (41). Thus, Swaraj that Indians needed had to be different from other forms of self-rule and it had to be based on grand narrative of Indian civilization to make it most authentic and original.

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