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# The State, Minorities and the Dynamics of Multiculturalism in the Developing World

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#### Abstract:

The idea of multiculturalism emerged in the wake of the 1970s, in the United States of America, United Kingdom, Canada and Australia. The circumstance was the incorporation and harmonious co-habitation of multiple cultural groups within these states. By and large, the groups with diverse cultural origins owed their presence to transmigration undertaken during the colonial as also the post-colonial times, in those countries where the movements began. To state precisely, multiculturalism as an approach, was advanced in particular, to deal with the problems of marginalization of a certain group or groups, for that matter, by recognizing that every culture, in actuality was inherently plural in nature. This implied that cultures never grew in isolation but in conjunction with the other cultures, with absolutely different traditions and customs, which meant that, the identity of one culture got defined in contrast to the 'significant other'. This in turn, sought to inculcate a sense of belonging among the divergent identity-groups with the recognition of 'group-differentiated' rights that would confer equal status to one and all. However, given that each state has its own history and dynamics of growth and development and this got reflected respectively on the policies and their implementation as well as the outcomes. The success or the failure of the very concept itself was hinged on the nature of the state machinery and hence, the relevance of the idea itself lends itself to the nature of the state.

**Keywords:** Multiculturalism, minority rights, colonialism, post-colonialism, constitutional democracy, differentiated citizenship.

# 1. Background

The twenty-first century world is a place of extreme complication when one tries to understand the issue of peace and well-being of the human race. Does peaceful living simply mean the absence of war or does it go beyond to articulate a situation where harmony defines every step, taken to make way for a better living? Political scientists and philosophers have been abound with ideas and theories to understand as well as explain the dynamics of peaceful co-existence and harmonious living. One of the outcomes of such efforts was the formulation of a strategy for accommodating multiple cultural entities in the confines of a single state. This was the policy of 'multiculturalism'.

The concept of multiculturalism originated in the modern first world societies and came to be applied in the context of post-colonial societies later on. As a body of thought in political philosophy, multiculturalism seeks to prescribe the proper way to respond to cultural and religious diversities, which eventually brings in the question of minority and majority cultures. Its importance lies in the fact that multiculturalism nurtures the practise of putting noticeable emphasis on, what can be called the "group-differentiated rights," a term coined by Will Kymlicka. This does not merely stop at tolerating group differences but also recognizes as well as positively accommodates such differences to treat the members of minority groups as equal citizens.

I propose to analyse the background, content and implications of the concept of multiculturalism through my study in the context of the developing world which precisely refers to those regions which have been in the throes of colonial bondage for a century or two till the middle of nineteenth century. The specific reason for taking up the context of the developing world is that this was the part of the world which has always been understood to have experienced unique forms of state formation throughout the ages in history and yet, at the turn of the twentieth century, it is this very region which turned to be the imperfect replicas of the 'Mother States' of the colonial masters.

# 2. Multinational, Multi-ethnic and Multicultural

#### 2.1. Multinational versus Multi-ethnic

T. K. Oommen makes a distinction between 'multinational' and 'multi-ethnic' states, both of which, according to him, pertain to the definition of multiculturalism but are dissimilar r in nature. In case of a multinational state, dissidence can come in the form of

secession from the state by the national minorities because they have historically rooted territorial claims. But more often than not, these clusters of minorities become 'state renouncing nations' and end up insisting on "territorial autonomy, official status for their language in that territory and education through their language" (Oommen 2007: 220).

On the contrary, one deals with 'ethnic minorities' when it comes to multi-ethnic states. These ethnic minorities are however, at a disadvantage to the national minorities mostly because of their disparate nature and immigrant status and therefore, lack of historical claim to the land of their current residence. In both the cases, the societies stand to represent multiculturalism on the ground that both defy the established ideas of 'nation-state' and therefore a 'composite culture'. The fact that they can be multicultural shall be borne by the leverage given to the recognition of cultural diversities instead of homogenizing as well as ensuring equality to each of the cultures.

# 2.1.1. What is a Multicultural Society?

In the opinion of Bhikhu Parekh, multicultural societies are those which exhibit a plurality of cultures and thereby, tend to throw up a 'composite culture' instead of a broadly shared one which, in general opinion, safeguards the harmony of the society (Parekh 2007: 3). Instead of prescribing a state-centric solution to preserving the unity of the state, he argues in favour of a shared culture in a multicultural society which need not be unified and homogenous but could be "composite, internally diversified and multiculturally constituted" (Parekh 2007: 8). Either way, multicultural societies are understood to be those where members of the society belong to different bodies of ideas and therefore, have different conceptions regarding understanding or organising their respective lives in relation to others.

Parekh also takes note of the fact that modern industrialized economy does not make it conducive for any single community to lead a self-contained life, without affecting others or getting themselves affected by others (Parekh 2007: 5). He attributes this to the "logic of democracy" which requires a commonality of approach towards matters of general concern even amidst differences. However, he also infers that the spread of liberal ideas makes this difficult to achieve because everyone feels the need to be heard and "resist the dominant community's attempt to impose its norms on them." (Parekh 2007: 5).

So it becomes imperative that everyone would seek to find a place for their own and thereby, carve out a niche for themselves. In this process, a liberal society gets pluralized. This is where he differentiates the concepts of pluralism and multiculturalism –

"Plural societies and cultural pluralism emphasized the plurality but not the equality of cultures, were concerned with the peaceful coexistence of more or less self-contained cultures rather than their equal participation in the conduct of their collective affairs, and had little interest in mounting a critique of, and radically transforming, the dominant culture." (Parekh 2007: 5)

In fact, the terms 'cultural pluralism' and 'multiculturalism' give out the idea that a given society accommodates more than one community as well as culture, who co-habit in harmony or otherwise. That is to say, a multicultural society is a society with a plurality of cultures. However, in the words of Gurpreet Mahajan,

"...the existence of plurality at the societal level does not imply that multiculturalism as a value prevailed in these societies. The simultaneous presence of many cultures and communities within the same social space points to a plural social fabric, but it does not betoken the presence of multiculturalism." (Mahajan 2002: 11)

This implies that there is a special characteristic that distinguishes multiculturalism from pluralism and this, according to Mahajan, is its emphasis on the equality. That is,

"...it asks whether the different communities, living peacefully together, co-exist as equals in the public arena." (Mahajan 2002: 11) It can be wisely stated that all multicultural societies are plural societies but all plural societies can very rarely be connoted as multicultural.

# 3. The Primacy of 'Culture' in Multiculturalism

The centrality of culture is an inevitable part of the multicultural liberal theory and it is none other than Kymlicka, as an eminent exponent of this theory, who maintains that "cultural membership affects our sense of personal identity and capacity." In the words of Ronald Dworkin, culture exists when there is a "shared vocabulary of tradition and convention." (1985: 231) and one needs a common culture and particularly a common language "even to have personalities" which goes on to emphasise the point that all are, at the end, "the creatures of the community as a whole." (1989)

Therefore, it falls upon the policy makers in a multicultural state to formulate certain ways and means that makes multiculturalism a success. Social psychologists like John W. Berry is of the opinion that the success of multiculturalism lies on two planks: "cultural maintenance" by the immigrants and "cultural acceptance" by the host societies (2005). It would not be inappropriate to elucidate in this context as to who happens to be an immigrant. An immigrant is understood to be the resident of one country who becomes the emigrant to another through the process of transmigration. According to some scholars, an immigrant faces the conflict of 'departed' versus 'host' cultures when one leaves behind the anterior or departed culture and becomes an immigrant into the posterior or host culture. In the process, there comes the question of accommodation for the immigrant by the host that is manifested through the issue

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>In the opinion of Bhikhu Parekh, it can take two forms –

<sup>&</sup>quot;Cultures might be embedded in the lives of relevant communities and such a society has a plurality of well-defined cultural communities" or it might happen that its members get "drawn to different bodies of ideas and subscribe to them in different degrees without forming distinct communities." In either case, members of a multicultural society are not all agreed on common ways of understanding and organizing their lives (Parekh 2007: 3).

of minority and individual rights. This is especially the case with those states where the very individuality of the immigrants is found to be at stake due to lack of proper rights. On a similar note, Berry continues to note that strong cultural maintenance against weak cultural acceptance by the host society lead to separation and marginalization. He maintains that 'integration', fostered by the dominant group as a dimension for acculturation in a society, leads to diversity becoming an accepted feature of the society as a whole, including all the various ethno-cultural groups, ultimately giving rise to 'multiculturalism'. (2005: 706)

It is an obvious fact that any discussion of multiculturalism essentially involves the mechanism of the state and the nation and it is necessary in the context of the article to present a brief understanding of these concepts because the terms, as simple they might sound, have provoked major academic debates since their appearance. It also needs to be understood that the process of nation and state building in the developing world is a dissimilar yet unique phenomenon from that of the developed world. History is in fact, witness to the distinctive nature of the growth of nation and state as certain alien concepts on the developing world before getting forcibly absorbed into and upon the indigenous political structures of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

#### 4. What is a Nation and the State?

Modern states, as per the notions of Kymlicka, are in actuality, motleys of co-existing 'nations', where 'nation' means a historical community, more or less institutionally complete, occupying a given territory or homeland, sharing a distinct language and culture (Kymlicka 1995). A country which contains more than one nation is, therefore, not a nation state but a multi-nation state and the smaller cultures form the 'national minorities'.

In the words of Ernest Gellner (1983: 6), nations, like states, are a 'contingency' and therefore, the product of historical changes that emerge in response to particular circumstances. In essence, it implies the development of a sense of community which evolves through time to either replace or rather enhance what can be called an 'earlier' sense of community. Such communities assumed various forms of manifestation, be it the empires or successive nations and nation-states.

The concepts of nation and nationalism which we have become increasingly familiar with, originated in Europe. Originally synonymous with some of the greatest empires in history including the Habsburgs or the Holy Roman Empire in Europe, the final transition from empires and kingdoms to the modern state-system was achieved through the Treaty of Westphalia (1648). There are several fundamental reasons as to why the terms of the treaty are time and again invoked in any discussion on the modern state system. First of all, the treaty was the culmination of thirty years of ghastly conflicts (the Thirty Years' War 1618-1648) which compelled the warring parties to give up the doctrine of arms and look for a possible solution to their contentions. It is true that wars and treaties prevailed even after the treaty came to be realised. Yet, the signing of the treaty remained a watershed event in modern political history solely, because it laid down certain principles that re-defined the concept of modern state and the future of inter-state politics as well. The demarcation of the state's territorial limits was one such matter of concern as was the recognition of the sovereign authority within the territorial boundary of the state by other states.

The boundary limit of the Westphalian state became an inviolable aspect under the treaty. This was a sharp contrast to the former trend where the imperialistic ambitions of the various ruling powers denigrated any sort of territorial limits and reshaped them to their convenience. Eventually, the sovereignty or the supremacy of the state became an accepted norm. To sum it all, the Westphalian world order stood on three pillars:

- The first was rex est imperator in regno suo which meant that the king was the master in his own land. It also stipulated that all sovereign states were equal.
- The second pillar laid the onus on the head of the state to determine the religion of the state. It is following these two provisions that Charles Tilly had summarised the political condition in Europe before 1800 as "the demand for political autonomy in the name of cultural distinctiveness was confined to two specific contexts. These were (a) when empires imposed or tried to impose official religions on dissenting minorities, and (b) when empires attempted to increase central control through imperial administration." (Tilly 1994)
- The third and the most important pillar, something on which the current global order has tottered on for long, was that of 'balance of power'. This evolved to keep the hegemonic ambitions of the states in check.

It was "the coming together of" this "state and people" that made "a modern nation. A nation is a people who have hold of a state or who have developed quasi-governmental capabilities for forming, supporting and enforcing a common will. And a nation-state is a state that has become largely identifiable with one people." (Deutsch 1969: 19)

However, it is nationalism that binds people to form a nation. For Ernst B. Haas, "nationalism is the convergence of territorial and political loyalty irrespective of competing foci of affiliation, such as kinship, profession, religion, economic interest or even language..." (1986: 708). According to him, nationalism was a "modern" concept because it stressed "the individuals search for identity among strangers in an impersonal world." Moreover, "all nationalisms imply a principle of identity based on impersonal ties...". Following this, he defined nation as "a socially mobilized body of individuals, believing themselves to be united by some set of characteristics that differentiate them (in their own minds) from outsiders, striving to create or maintain their own state. These individuals have a collective consciousness because of their differences... fostered by the group's sharing of core symbols." (1986: 726)

Anthony Smith added a cultural dimension to the idea of nation as a "...named human population sharing a historic territory, common myths, and historical memories, a mass public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members" (Smith 1991:14). Some others have stressed on factors like territory as well as self-determination to define a nation. This is exemplified by the comments of Nodia – "a nation is a community of people organized around the idea of self-determination" (1994: 11).

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Very interestingly, one gets to see a reciprocation of such ideas in what Edward Said (1978) had surmised through a general observation. He was of the opinion that nationalist identity is often constructed by defining an image of the "cultural other". He emphasised the fact that every nationalism inherently implied that every "us" needed to have a "them". Thereby, one defined her/himself against each other as well as the groups to which she/he belongs against the groups that are different from her or his. On a definitive note, "a nation ceases to exist when, among other things, these (core) symbols are recognized as not truly differentiating the group from outsiders." (Haas 1986: 726)

The transition from empire to nation-state was one of slow organic growth. It was built on certain abstract notions of togetherness, manifested through cultural artefacts and social contracts and transformation of the 'subject' to 'citizen', who could claim equal status before the eyes of law. This was followed by the phase of gradual alignment of territorial boundaries in accordance with the cultural identities, thus making it apparent that almost all nation-states have come to constitute a society of homogenous culture and had an identity forged through this cultural bond. This was the process of nation-building, a theory that was primarily used by stalwarts like Charles Tilly or Reinhard Bendix to describe the processes of national integration and consolidation that led up to the establishment of the modern nation-state – as distinct from various form of traditional structures, such as feudal and dynastic states, church states, empires, etc.

Just as Europe had begun to abandon its identity as an empire to give way to the formation of nation-states, it eventually got divided along religious lines (D'Anieri 2012: 28). Interestingly, one can find the undercurrents of pluralism here but only in the religious sense. Here it entailed the acceptance of several faiths rather than enforcing what is understood as one 'true religion'.

On the contrary, one comes across a different picture in the circumstances of Asia, Latin America or Africa, where there was hardly any instance of such periodic evolution of the 'body politic' as was observed in the West. In fact, Asian 'state system' was fundamentally different from the European 'state-system'. Hence, when the baton of authority was being passed from the colonial ruling class to their native counterparts as part of the decolonisation process, the transfer of power did not however, witness any fundamental change in the state structure that was already implanted on this soil during the colonial period. In most cases it turned out to be blind emulation by the natives of the colonizers, typically resembling the case of 'black skin, white mask'. As a result, these new 'states' faced overwhelming challenges in putting the Western liberal-democratic structure in place. Instead of being a natural outgrowth of time and corresponding political processes, the western model of nationalism and nation-building seemed to occur without precedence within the socio-political structure of Asia, Africa and Latin America. As a result, these societies which were well accustomed to a certain degree of bestowing loyalty and subjection to a certain authority, had inevitably, come into contradiction with the Western concept of a nation-state. As E. Kadourie puts it,

"The destructive effect of European administrative methods – whether applied by European officials, as in India and Burma, or by native ones, as in the Ottoman Empire – was greatly magnified by the increasing involvement of these traditional societies with the world economy." (Kadourie 1970: 24)

Thereafter, it fell upon these newly formed states to accommodate various cultural entities under a single governing body. Unfortunately, this was a first-of-a-kind situation that the native bureaucracy came to encounter having had no prior experience in the matters of state politics. This put the nascent administrative body in dire straits. First of all, there was hardly any provision that could address the problems of space for the indigenous society in the new state-system coming up in Asia, Africa and Latin America. One could say that the legacy of colonial administration had resulted in certain positive outcomes for example, the constitution as the guiding principle of the nation-state. But then what was the use of such a document that was reduced to mere paperwork as it became an exclusive instrument to suit the ruling class rather than the general body of people inhabiting the land? It would not be impertinent to say with a minor tweaking of Lord Macaulay's comment, that the new administrators were actually native in blood and colour but European in opinions, morals and intellect. This was the reason why the post-colonial governing body failed to take into account the burgeoning anomalies of the subject population within the states.

If a nation-state, according to Deutsch, was the one where the state became one with its people, then the colonial territorial arrangements gave rise to many such nations within a single state. This brings forth another major problem. Here, most of the states were constituted of cultural entities who were divided within several politically-defined spaces. This resulted in drawing borders between certain cultural groups who ultimately lost their strongholds and thereby became foreigners in an unfamiliar terrain to pledge allegiance to a new ruling head. In this respect, one can point to the Naga problem, divided along the borders of India and Myanmar and even within the Indian provinces of Assam, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur or the African Hutu population divided along the boundaries of two or more states.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>This has been taken from the title of Frantz Fanon's book published in 1952. Primarily dealing with racism, the book is a sociological study of the psychology of the racism and dehumanization inherent in situations of colonial domination. Here the negro/black man symbolized the colonised pitted against the superior whites. The former suffered from inferiority complex resulting from two factors, namely, economic and internalisation of the fact that they are inferior than the latter. He goes on to say that, "the black man has two dimensions. One with his fellows, the other with the white man. A Negro behaves differently with a white man and with another Negro. That this self-division is a direct result of colonialist subjugation is beyond question..."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>"It is impossible for us...to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern – a class of persons Indians in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect." - Lord Macaulay's Minute on Education, 1835.

Moreover, it was not just the aborigines of the land who were affected as a result of the colonial interventions. The colonial policy encouraged import of labour from other colonies and this policy subsequently led to a radical change in the very demographic structure of that region as these new entrants had begun to resettle themselves in the course of their stay. In the new state, the contest for survival therefore, arose not only among the natives themselves but also between the native and the diasporic population. Therefore, this was a pluralism which was by nature different from its counterpart in the West.

# 5. Multiculturalism as State Policy

#### 5.1. Migration and its Impact on the Composition of the State

Inferring from the above discussion, it would therefore, be appropriate to observe that every modern nation-state, is a plural entity which is composed of people from various cultures. Henceforth, pluralism arises from the diversity of population in a country. This diversity is sometimes historically attributed to the movements of people from one part of the globe to the other, as one of several factors. Most of the Eastern as well as Western civilizations and empires have been witnesses to the phenomenon of population movements, whether it was the traders to ferry their trade-items, scholars to impart or gain knowledge in the new land or at the least, people emigrating to start lives anew.

It is important to note here that, migration was never a homogenous process and it has therefore, exhibited varying trends in the various ages that it has occurred in. It is also important here to note the intent as well as how different the composition of the migrating subjects was. In the ancient to the medieval period, the passage of people from the native land to another was more out of reasons of cultural as well as commercial exchanges. Hence, this was mainly undertaken by the traders and the merchants as also artisans under royal patronage.

Colonialism effected migration to become a worldwide phenomenon, thus giving it a whole new meaning. This is usually attributed to the turning of the tide of commerce and trade in the eighteenth century and corresponding efforts of the western colonial powers to extend their reach far and beyond the Atlantic and into the Indo-Pacific zone. It all began with the Industrial Revolution in England, and later in other countries of the West. This in turn, led to the search for and consequently, the birth of colonies which turned out to be the satellites to the Metropolitan state. Here one group of people, that is the colonialists, sought to wield socio-political and most importantly, economic control over the lives of the 'colonised'. This led to the development of various profitable initiatives in the colonies, of which mention must be made of the plantation economy, which called for huge manpower, hard-working yet cheap. In most cases, necessity was felt to import labour as manpower from one colony to another. This led to the creation of the diasporic communities in almost all the colonies.

The dawn of 'New Imperialism' gave a new dimension to population movements as newer trade routes came to be discovered between the colonies which were to complement the revenue-yielding methods that were being innovated to supplement the 'mother-state'.<sup>4</sup>

The next phase of migration started with the end of the Second World War which also coincided with the end of colonialism. Here old colonies gave way to new independent states thus giving rise to a new state-system in the East. The new-found independence compelled states to bring complementary developments to the economy and generate adequate employment opportunities to the new citizenry. This change in political status called for a corresponding change in the economic circumstances hence putting additional pressure on the new nation-states. Thus began a new phase of migration where groups of people voluntarily started moving in hordes, in search of employment, from the Third World into the developed world of the West, which now goes by the nomenclature of New World, including the states of Canada, U.S. and Australia. Although not at all alien to the phenomenon of immigration influx, the post-war volume of the incoming population had no precedent in the history of immigration into the West. This was best put forward by Papastergiadis (2007) by virtue of the term 'turbulence of migration', aptly describing what was eventually the overwhelming presence of the ethnic minorities in the New World.

#### 5.1.1. The Origins of Multiculturalism

The sole reason that much focus was laid on migration as a factor is because it had significant contribution as a very important source of pluralism in the western countries, which had originally been constituted along ethno-cultural lines to give it a homogenous structure. It is again the West therefore, that the origin of multicultural state policies had been attributed to.

When and how did the usage of multiculturalism come into existence? The term was first reportedly used by the Canadian Royal Commission in 1965 and came to be in use in both Canada and Australia in the 1970s "as the name for a key plank of government policy to assist in the management of ethnic pluralism within the national polity" (Ang 2005: 34). In the United States, the term emerged in the early 1980s in the context of public school reform where school curricula were accused of excessive Euro-centrism. As a means to cope with the emerging challenges, western countries like Great Britain and Germany also set up individual commissions to formulate ways and means to accommodate and implement multiculturalism or multikulti (as in German).

Gary Freeman is of the opinion that Western democracies had been gradual to "accept the permanent presence of ethnically and religiously diverse immigrants and their descendants", especially, for those who had previously refused to adopt or simply disregarded the aspect of "permanent settlement that was transforming them into multi-ethnic societies" (Freeman 2004: 945).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>According to Kant, a colony is a people that has its own legislation and land on which another state has supreme executive authority. The state having that executive authority is called the mother state. (Vanhaute 2014)

The acceptance of this plurality manifested through the strategies of –

- Assimilation
- Integration
- Multiculturalism

Freeman, in the course of his study, had observed that these strategies of "immigrant incorporation", as he would call it, adopted by the states varied in accordance with the composition of the immigrant population. In his words –

"No state possesses a truly coherent incorporation regime. Instead, one finds ramshackle, multifaceted, loosely connected sets of regulatory rules, institutions and practices in various domains of society that together make up the frameworks within which migrants and natives work out their differences." (Freeman 2004: 946)

Both the strategies of 'Assimilation' and 'Integration' required the immigrants to blend in with the host culture but in different degrees. That is to say, while the former necessitated the outsiders to toe the line determined by the hosts, the latter adopted a liberal approach in that it approached "multi-ethnic societies functionally and legalistically requiring equal treatment under the law, equal political access, and equal opportunities, especially those connected with or derived from citizenship." (Williams 2013: 3)

However, it was multiculturalism that proved to be the turning point because of the thought that underlay this approach.

Anthropologist Terence Turner defined multiculturalism as "Multiculturalism represents a demand for the dissociation (decentering) of the political community and its common social institutions from identification with any one cultural tradition." (Turner 1993)

It is in this context that we come across quite a pertinent problem regarding the issue of incorporation and that is the legal status of the immigrants upon entering the foreign land. To quote Freeman,

"Among the aspects of a country's immigration policy that bear on incorporation are the methods and purposes in recruiting, accepting, and deterring immigrants, enforcement of immigration rules regarding illegal entry and unauthorized work, and rules regulating acquisition and rights of citizenship." (Freeman 2004: 950)

In view of the above statement about how "citizenship policy directly shapes the ability of the migrants to acquire full legal and constitutional rights", Freeman had accordingly re-articulated four policy strategies of which, one group of states were shown to have chosen the extreme step of complete and permanent immigrant exclusion through highly restrictive citizenship laws. On the other hand, rest of the three, that is a) Assimilation, b) Integration and c) Multiculturalism, were incorporative in nature and were simply modifications of one another in various degrees.

All this while, this chapter had been dealing with how cultural pluralism was being dealt in the western world where the discussion held out two very important and interlinked aspects of a modern plural society. These were –

- The policy strategy of 'multiculturalism' and
- The role of citizenship laws in shaping the strategy in the respective states.

In fact, any discussion on multiculturalism is rendered void without bringing citizenship into view as it has been one of the pivotal political institutions of the state through which the 'members of a multicultural society can carry on their activities in an orderly manner' (Parekh 2007). Hence it becomes imperative for the benefit of the discussion to have a brief understanding of the subject of citizenship and its laws.

The following section would give a brief detailing on the development of the concept of citizenship which we will see, is essentially of western origin but have slowly but surely gained ground as an integral part of state-building process in post-colonial states of Asia and Africa. However, it is worth mentioning that multiculturalism in the West has mostly focussed on the immigrant population which worked their way up to carve a niche in those societies along with the resident population. This was incidentally less of a concern for the developing states at the time of their independence something which Will Kymlicka sought to focus on what he called the 'national minorities', thus pointing towards the main concern in the developing states.<sup>5</sup>

# 6. Citizenship and its Role in State-building

What is citizenship? It is understood as the status of an individual as a full and responsible member of a political community. Thus citizen is a person who owes allegiance to the state and in turn receives protection from the state. Therefore, it implies a two-way relationship between individual and the state. It is, as T. K. Oommen puts it best, "an instrument of equality in the contemporary world" (Oommen 2010: 165).<sup>6</sup>

The history of citizenship bears testimony to its evolution as an idea through the ages since its inception in Aristotelian Greece. In fact, the form of ancient Greek community was completely different from the present-day political community of democratic nation-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>In his book, Kymlicka observed that most discussions of multiculturalism and\or minority rights focused on "the case of immigrants, and the accommodation of their ethnic...differences within the larger society. Less attention has been paid to the situation of indigenous peoples and other nonimmigrant 'national minorities' whose homeland has been incorporated into the boundaries of a larger state, through conquest, colonization, or federation" (1995a: vii).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> It is an irony that citizenship and equality were not always as coherent as is conceptualized now. The incoherence is pointed out by Oommen as he marks out the relationship between citizenship and property introduced by Locke in the seventeenth century. The definition of property was essentially anthropological to the extent of referring to the 'property of the self' i.e. the capacity of an individual to control and dominate his passions to be able to possess 'material' property. One who possessed this capacity was worthy of citizenship. It is this aspect which also legitimised the European colonial expansion into places where the inhabitants were not thought to be characterised by the property of the self and hence not individual at all (Oommen 2010: 165).

states. This is because, in ancient Greece, very few inhabitants enjoyed the status of 'freemen' and therefore were outside the scope of full citizenship. The rest of the community comprised of slaves, women and aliens who had no rights of citizenship.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century and for about three hundred years, citizenship lost much of the significance in Europe that it had earlier enjoyed, although saved from a complete demise at the same time (Reisenberg 1992: 203). Citizenship remained relevant here just because, in the words of Reisenberg, "it was the state-service side to citizenship" rather than the idea that people were the ultimate source of political authority that appealed to these rulers. The form of citizenship that is relevant to our study came to fruition in the early modern era or the Age of Revolution, when the final phase of "citizenization" manifested itself (Nisbet 1974: 614).<sup>7</sup>

While it becomes evident through the discussion that the idea of citizenship grows and becomes compliant with the needs of the time, associated concepts like 'citizen' and 'subject' also go through a similar phase of evolution. According to Nisbet, the word 'citizen' initially meant simply an inhabitant of a town in the Middle Ages, in sharp contrast to 'subjects' who were under the feudal princes and kings in the countryside (Nisbet 1974: 614). In due course of time, the urban connotation of the term was removed from the word 'citizen' and gradually utilized "... first as synonym for, then as replacement of, the word 'subject'... Roman Law, which by the fourteenth century was ... becoming ... an useful instrument to prince and banker alike, did a great deal to rationalize the process of conversion of subject to citizen, for the idea of citizenship is just as luminous in Justinian Code and Digest alike as are the...ideas of sovereignty, contract, and not least, the concession doctrine that could make perilous the position of all that lay between sovereign and citizen." (Nisbet 1974: 614)

Several models on the study of citizenship had seen the light of the day, the most influential of which was the one attempted by Thomas H. Marshall in his Citizenship and Social Class (1949). His ideas were rooted in the liberal tradition of James Mill and J. S. Mill and were an attempt to mend the flaws of liberalism in addressing the "the problem of social inequality in relationship to individual freedom" (Laski 1962). Based on the case study of Great Britain, Marshall presented a tripartite content of citizenship which according to him, had historically developed in the order as follows –

- Civil This implied equality before law. According to him, there was a significant development of civil rights in the eighteenth century which were mainly targeted at the legal status and civil rights of the individual and safeguarding these rights required a system of formal law courts. As for civil rights, these were mainly concerned with basic issues like the freedom of speech, rights to a fair trial and equal access to the legal system.
- Political In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, political rights culminated into the right to vote and therefore ensure access to parliamentary process.)
- Social The coming of the welfare state in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The tripartite model of citizenship sought to incorporate all the necessary attributes that contribute toward a holistic development of an individual. The model also emphasised the fact that citizenship was meaningless without the state because it is the state that acted as an anchorage for citizenship (Oommen 2010: 170). Therefore, it becomes inevitable or rather falls upon a multicultural state to possess such provisions in the form of citizenship rights so as to give leverage to its members. Taking this into account, some theorists have formulated what is to be understood as the 'Pluralist Theory of Citizenship'.

As an important proponent of this theory, David Held (1989) finds it misleading to regard citizenship only as an outcome of evolution or a product of class struggle, as had been propounded by the other schools of thought. For him "Citizenship is about involvement of people in the community in which they live; and people have been barred from citizenship on grounds of gender, race and age among many other factors. To analyse citizenship as if it were a matter of the inclusion or exclusion of social classes is to eclipse from the view a variety of dimensions of social life which have been central to the struggle over citizenship" (Held 1989).

The evolving debates on citizenship have therefore, proved its escalating importance for the current times where every person, irrespective of class and creed and the community to which one belongs has become aware of his/her identity and position in the society and which in many cases do not coincide with what he/she feels ought to deserve. The Pluralist theory therefore, recommends that the problem of citizenship should be analysed in the context of social movements like the feminist movement, Black movement, religious reforms, backward classes/Dalit movements etc. or any movement that involves the marginalized section of the society.

# 6.1. Constitutional Democracy and Differentiated Citizenship

The new evolving trends and discourses on citizenship make it evident that it is not only the matter of deprived classes becoming aware of their place in the society and beginning their struggle for equality, it is also of equal importance that they have also started questioning the logic of inequality. In the process they had begun the struggle for the democratic state, or specifically, 'constitutional democracy'. The requirement for such has been advocated by the likes of Parekh who asserts its immediate need to sustain a multicultural society amidst doubts that these societies are unstable and liable to be broken along cultural lines (Parekh 2007: 6).

How does a Constitutional Democracy hold together a multi-cultural society? In all respects, a democracy had come to be synonymous with the rule of the people, by the people and for the people. But what happens when there are certain irreversible divisions among these people along the levels of empowerment, other than numerical representation, that makes one the majority and the other, the minority? To make a democracy work, the need arises to lay down rules and regulations in the form of inviolable rights and liberties for each and every member of this society. It is the constitution that embodies all the rights and privileges to ensure that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>This phase began alongside the emergence of nationalism in the modern sense of the term (Nisbet 1974: 614). It is supposed to have been the manifestation of the transformation of the State into the nation, where members became citizens and 'active cooperation' instead of passive citizenship became the norm of the day.

every member gets his due from the state and that nothing comes in the way to this assurance. As a matter of fact, the constitution is the supreme document in a constitutional democracy,

It is nonetheless equally important to set and implement measures to preserve the legitimacy of the institution that is the source of all empowerment for the citizens – the state. For a multicultural society to thrive, it is crucial for the state to be an impartial institution along with all its organs like the judiciary, police and the civil services. In an event where the state fails to be impartial, laws are ideally required to come into play and place the highest authority in the hands of body, which all the communities can put their faith into (Parekh 2007: 8).

It is in this context that Gurpreet Mahajan comes up with the notion of 'differentiated citizenship'. As a matter of fact, Mahajan points out that within multiculturalism, minority communities are singled out as a special category of citizens. This special treatment is meted out on the ground that minorities are numerically weak and insufficiently empowered and are therefore, marginalised or discriminated against. Drawing inferences from this, one can bring into context the 'politics of equal recognition' of Charles Taylor speaks (Taylor 1994: 37). To quote him –

"With the move from honour to dignity has come a politics of universalism, emphasizing the equal dignity of all citizens, and the content of this politics has been the equalization of rights and entitlements." (Taylor 1994: 37)

The concept of right to equality owes its origin to the thoughts of John Rawls (1972) who as an exponent of Liberal Egalitarianism held that rights, which in the liberal tradition are considered to be "conditions of social life without which no man can seek to be himself at his best" (Laski 1951), belonged to all disinterested political individuals beyond the veil of ignorance. The rights which people accepted in their original or natural position included an equal right to the most extensive liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others. Most importantly, rights were open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity. Thereby, this advocated the grant of certain egalitarian rights to citizens.

Right, for Rawls, pertained to the basic civic or political liberties, such as voting rights or freedom of expression. The relevance for the discourse on rights becomes all the more relevant in the present context because multicultural states are essentially heterogeneous and this entails the fight for individual and group rights, followed by the consciousness of one's identity and the movement for its recognition thereafter. In addition, "the development of the modern notion of identity has given rise to politics of difference" which thereby asks for the recognition of the unique identity of the individual, however minor he\she might be in presence to an overwhelming majority (Taylor 1994: 38). In recognition of the modern realities of plural societies, Kymlicka had therefore, argued for certain 'group-specific rights', in addition to the available civil rights, in liberal democracies. For the convenience of this discussion, the rights can be narrowed down to –

- Self-government rights to acknowledge that the nation-state is not the sole preserve of the majority (national) group and that legitimate national minority ethnics have the right to equivalent inclusion and representation in the civic realm. and
- Special representation rights essentially temporary in nature, these rights are remedial measures to alleviate the disadvantageous situations to which a minority group or groups have been subjected to. When it is deemed that the particular group or the groups have been given their due in terms of representation and voice, these rights are taken back.

In view of these provisions, one finds that Mahajan is of a similar opinion where she thinks that the principle of universal rights discriminates against the minority communities. The assumption of sameness of identity disadvantages "groups whose experience, culture and socialized capacities differ from those of the privileged groups" (Young 1990: 164).

It is therefore, for the objective of including people of all cultures and communities as equals within the nation-state, that multiculturalism advocates a heterogeneous public culture (Mahajan 2002: 88). This is carried out through the mechanism of 'differentiated citizenship' which makes it certain that the identity of a person is not restricted to the identity of a state citizen. Rather, that person can carry his\her cultural identity into the public domain. This therefore, requires giving due recognition to individuals as "members of the state as well as members of cultural communities" (Mahajan 2002: 88).

Mahajan also argues that the notion of differentiated citizenship approaches the issue of rights "with the belief that equal citizenship is not always achieved by giving uniform rights to all persons. At times special consideration is needed for a few so that they are neither excluded from the public culture nor compelled to endorse the culture of another." This is realized through the enactment of special rights, an example of which are reservation or quota system in some states for the backward\marginalized classes of the society. Liberalism, as we know, gives primacy to the individual. But here it is also believed that the well-being of the individual can only be ensured through the overall well-being of the community that he\she belongs to.

From the above discussion, we have come across certain ideas and concepts that point towards the changing notions of citizenship and rights which happens in response to the rise of the politics of equal dignity, subsequently followed by the rise of politics of difference. In a plural democracy, the presence of a majority and one or more minorities is a constant fact and multiculturalism, be it in the developed or the developing world, is in constant friction with this fact. In view of this reality, the form and role of citizenship has also undergone reforms in the scholarly debates in that, it has transcended the general and adopted a more issue-specific approach. In fact, it is now perceived that the role of the state in a plural democracy does not end with the grant of citizenship rights to its members. Rights are also enabled to become instruments that can address the loopholes of its administration through the mechanism of special rights that assume the role of 'incorporating differences of perceptions, beliefs, and even practices in the public domain' (Mahajan 2002: 122).

# 7. Multiculturalism in the Developing World

It has been adequately stated how nation- and state-building in the developing world had taken a completely different trajectory from the Western model. In the words of Kymlicka and He (2005), "in the first few decades following decolonization, talk of multiculturalism and pluralism was often discouraged, as states attempted to consolidate themselves as unitary and homogenizing nation-states."

At this juncture, it would not be inappropriate to bring on the debate on nation-building once again. This follows from a contentious article by Walker Connor (1972) titled "Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying?" where he inflicted a scathing attack on the Deutschian tradition of nation-building which, according to him, has whisked off the fact of as well as the problems associated with ethnic diversity so as to enable state integration. Ironically, he found that even the stronghold of accomplished nation-building, that is, Europe had been unable to stall the backlash of ethnic revivalism, compounding its failure to assimilate the ethnic minorities, whose inclusion was necessitated in response to the political changes, in and around the world. In this context, Charles Tilly observes that "...only a tiny portion of the world's distinctive religious, and cultural groupings have formed their own states, while precious few of the world's existing states have approximated the homogeneity and commitment conjured up by the label 'nation-state'" (Tilly 1994: 137)

It is rare to come across voluntary policies by the states in the East that can be explicitly termed as multicultural. But there are certain measures, both institutional and non-institutional, a deep look into which might reveal the concern of the governing bodies to take account of the burgeoning socio-economic-political disparities between the citizens of the country. It is widely believed, by scholars and non-scholars alike, that multiculturalism in the developing world is best exemplified by the state of India. Having come to terms with the emerging realities of internal differences, which resulted from the inherent heterogeneity of population, the Asian states gradually sought to find ways that would completely suit the peculiarities of their societies and harmoniously incorporate the differences therein. According to Gurpreet Mahajan, India was in fact, among the first few democracies to 'embark on the multicultural path.' She goes on to say that "At a time when Western liberalism advocated neutrality and difference-blind approach, India acknowledged the rights of minorities and valued cultural diversity" (Mahajan 2005).

The history of state-building in India is fraught with the gravest of adversities that hounded those at the helm of affairs down to the grass-root level. The colonial administration had already divided India along the lines of majority and minority communities as they did in many other colonies by constituting an electorate along communal lines. These divisions ultimately culminated in the partition of India. So while Pakistan was constituted as an Islamic state, India on the contrary, chose to tread the secular path toremain committed to the highest ideals of humanity and human development, with disregard to sectarian divisions. India stands as one of the best examples of a multicultural state despite several drawbacks especially exemplifying a society internally divided along the lines of caste, class, religion and much more. The constitution is invoked at every instance of discrimination to right the wrong which somehow deepens the belief of the countrymen upon the supremacy of the political system of which the constitution is the ultimate bedrock. Hence, just as it has remained true to the notion of constitutional democracy on one hand, multiculturalism has attained a new dimension here which is to say that India has been nearly successful in preserving its tenets but in a manner that is completely unique and unparalleled.

The continent of Africa was similarly exposed to such communal forces, the repercussions of which could be felt later on. In an attempt to seek the root of "bankruptcy of Africa's elite and the continuing degradation of the living conditions of Africa's peoples" scholars in fact, have held responsible the "cannibalistic dismemberment and partitioning of Africa for purposes of exploitation by European powers without regard to ethnic or nationality boundaries" (Oyelaran and Adediran 1997: 188).

The de-colonisation process and the events thereafter, elevated India to a level different from that of Africa. So while modern life in Africa was "built around colonial ownership and exploitation" (Du Bois 1946: 82)<sup>8</sup>, which led the continent to go "from the frying pan and into the fire" (Mutua 1995: 505), extensive efforts were made in India to look over all the aspects to provide a good life to its member-populationthrough the making of the Constitution. Various rights were being considered for incorporation that could provide remedy against exploitation. Most importantly, the policy makers thought the better of treating the multitude as merely citizens without considering their caste and community affiliations and in the process, India self-consciously adopted the path "that acknowledged persons as citizens of the state as well as members of specific cultural communities" (Mahajan 2005). This is best exemplified by the insertion of articles 14-35, better known as the Fundamental Rights which are at the same time legally enforceable as well. At the same time, the Constitution imposes certain restrictions upon the state machinery which although aren't legally enforceable like the Fundamental Rights, yet makes it a point to compel the policy makers to abide by the words. These are the Directive Principles of State Policy, running from articles 36-51.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>"Colonial ownership and exploitation" eventually involved owners of labour – the exploited on one hand and the exploiters – who consumed without producing anything – on the other. At the onset of independence, African nationalist leaders and their successors "not only inherited despotic administrations, complete with their institutions for economic exploitation, they cultivated and improved upon their former master's taste and consumption habits to the detriment of Africa's toiling masses" (Oyelaran and Adediran 1997: 189).

None of such provisions, on the other hand is conspicuous to the public eye in the context of Africa. Laitin aptly describes this as – "Perhaps the most grievous horror in postcolonial nationalism has been the treatment of minorities. It might be said that what Africa has produced in the post-colonial era has been refugees." (Laitin 1992: 58)

Basil Davidson is of the opinion that while "human blunders and corruption involving post-colonial leadership" could be used as justification for the post-colonial crises of Africa, yet he found the fundamental source of the problem to arise "from the social and political institutions within which decolonised Africa have lived and tried to survive." According to him, it was primarily "a crisis of institutions." (Davidson 1992: 10)

Africa has time and again, seemed to have ignored the most obvious cause of conflict which has ripped apart the continent since the 1950s and that is – the question of accommodating the minorities. There is, according to Davidson, an alienation process in the fray which brings about a disconnect between the post-colonial African State and its ethno-culturally diverse population. He attributes this to the "unsuitability of the basic structures of governance to accommodate the identities and interests of its diverse population". (Davidson 1992: 10)

For some others, it is also the lack of intellectual intervention into the matters of protection of minorities in Africa which forms one of the "core causes of conflicts and of gross violations of Human Rights throughout the continent." (Ramcharan 2002: 99-100)

Turning focus to Latin America, one comes across a continent which, along with the Caribbean, hosts the largest concentration of people with African ancestry outside Africa, some even going up to 70% in several countries in addition to people belonging to multiple ethnicities. Like Asia and Africa, Latin America came into the throes of colonialism as a consequence to which this region imported over ten times as many slaves as US and kept them in bondage. So the overall population of this region is an exemplar composition of the African or 'Blacks', as they are commonly referred to, along with indigenous Amerindians (somewhere around 55%) as well as mestizos (mix of Amerindians and whites) and lastly, the whites.

Unlike its counterparts in Asia and Africa, Latin America has been witness to rights movements that ranged from that of the indigenous population to the political activism of the Afro-descendants. The major character of the black social movements, according to Jean Muteba Rahier, was –

"... their passage from ideological monocultural mestizaje and 'invisibility' to multiculturalism and state corporatism/co-optation. The former refers to ideologies in which prototypical national identity has been imagined as a mestizo identity (mixed race of Spanish and native Americans) to which would correspond a single national culture, itself the product of a particular history of cultural hybridity between, mostly, Spain and Native America, commonly at the exclusion of African contributions." (2012: 1).

Multiculturalism, on the contrary, has beckoned certain positive changes which, according to Rahier, "have been crystallized in new Constitutions and special laws, which now recognize the culture, ethnic and racial diversity of national populations, making visible Afrodescendant populations."

Instances of subordination of their original Afro-identities were of common occurrence in countries like Colombia. According to Peter Wade, Indianizing all their claims was the only gateway to success for the Negro population as the 1991 Constitution played out, by rewarding the Black communities of the Pacific Coast with collective rights and ignoring the rest (1997).

The participation of supranational bodies like the United Nations through UN World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance provided the necessary boost to this invisible community of the blacks. The biggest success of these movements till date has been the constitutional recognition of their presence in the society by declaring the nation-state to be diverse and multicultural as well as providing certain collective and legal rights to the Negro population in Brazil, Colombia or Guatemala.

Symbolic recognition of indigenous rights was another feather in the cap for the Latin American constitutional polities like Colombia and Bolivia. According to Lee Van Cott, this was a very significant achievement for this section of the L. American society, comprising roughly from 1% in Brazil to approximately 30-45% and above in Peru, Ecuador, Guatemala and Bolivia. This was especially so in the face of certain adversities that ranged from removal of references to indigenous people from the region's constitutions to having minimal presence in the local constituencies of the countries. Most importantly, the constitution itself had lost the revered position it ought to enjoy, at the hands of the lawmakers with frequent its makeovers. The development is something that he remarks as a new political wave of constitutional reforms, ushering in since the 1990s and putting the marginal groups, fighting for group rights, at the forefront of national politics.

# 8. Conclusion

Multiculturalism made its appearance in the political parlance in the 1970s as a response to the changing circumstances in world politics and much water has flown under the bridge since then. Nearly every country in the world tends and serves to populaces as diverse as chalk and cheese and the state machinery has therefore, felt the compulsion to attend to the differences more as a complement to their political structure and less as a burden. But surely the outcome has not been homogenous. There were some success stories and some utter failures. Each state had its own dynamics and weaknesses to cope with and multiculturalism thereby came to acquire a local character for each of them. Multiculturalism had completely different outcomes in the Eastern hemisphere in contrast to the Western part owing to the diverse origins of the state machinery in each of the regions. An inherent difference in the process of state building went a long way to dictate the aspects of state formation, be it the formulation of citizenship laws or the grant as well as safeguard of basic human rights, the distinctiveness of which varies from state to state and region to region.

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