
MULTICULTURAL CONCEPTIONS OF CITIZENSHIP

Gyanaranjan Swain

Lecturer
Department of Political Science
Ravenshaw University

ABSTRACT

With the advent of globalization and rise in international migration, the concept of citizenship has undergone wide changes. Traditional concepts of citizenship no longer seem capable of providing a sufficient basis for political belonging in the light of new developments in the world. It has become untenable for citizenship to demand political and cultural homogeneity. Nation states have become increasingly diverse in terms of culture and ethnicity. This ethnic and cultural diversity call for a form of 'multicultural citizenship', which acknowledges not only the individual but also the value of the different cultural forms in and through which individuality is expressed. The present essay is an brief attempt to discuss about multicultural conceptions of citizenship.

Key Words: Multiculturalism, Oppression, Culture, Equality of cultures

Introduction

Cultural diversity is not a recent phenomenon. It is an outcome of the process of globalization and international migration. Cultural diversity demands that how people of different cultures can live together. It is quite natural that there will be some

minority cultural groups. These cultural groups claim for recognition of their cultural identities. This is a problem which is faced by all most all the liberal democratic countries of the world. Charls Taylor, visualizes the problem in a peculiar way. He argues that for a liberal society two types of problems

arise. One is that the dignity of the individual be recognized and that the claims of the groups or cultural communities to which individuals belong be recognized. Taylor argues that a more complex, and nuanced, answer must therefore be given to the problem posed by this politics of recognition. Diverse states needs to show attitude of tolerance towards each cultural groups.

DEFINING MULTICULTURALISM

Most societies today are multicultural. Although this was also true of earlier societies, contemporary multiculturalism is unique in several aspects. As a fact, multiculturalism simply registers many cultures. As a value multiculturalism morally endorses many cultures. To put it in simple words, multiculturalism resists and challenges the fact and value of single-culture society. Multiculturalism responds to the issue of cultural discrimination by privileging the goal of protecting minority cultures. Based on the understanding that *policies of cultural assimilation* and homogenization render minority cultures unviable, it aims to make these marginalized communities and cultures

secure so that they can flourish within the nation state. Politics of cultural assimilation refers to a state of condition where there is an attempt to protect a single culture and an attempt is made to assimilate other cultures into the main culture. Promotion of cultural diversity is one of the cherished objectives of multiculturalism. It is seen as the essential pre-condition for equality of cultures. Multiculturalism assumes that diverse cultures are acknowledged and accorded respect in the public domain.

Diversity as a positive value within multiculturalism does not simply indicate the absence of cultural homogeneity. Rather, it points to the presence of several distinct and heterogeneous cultures. The concept of diversity further asserts that each culture has attributes that deserve our respect. This perception affirms the goal of preserving minority cultures and in a way supplements the importance given to cultural community membership within the multicultural framework.

Contemporary multiculturalism also endorses the idea of difference and heterogeneity that is exemplified in the

concept of diversity. It does not simply point to the presence of many cultures within the nation-state, rather it admits that these multiple cultures are discrete and often incommensurable. The concept of cultural diversity constitutes the basic idea on which the edifice of multiculturalism is constructed. However in its enunciations, multiculturalism introduces three important elements. They are as follows.

First, multiculturalism places diversity within the boundaries of the nation-state. Multiculturalists are concerned primarily with diversity of cultures within the liberal nation state. Second, while locating diversity within a society, multiculturalism draws attention to the presence of heterogeneous communities within the state. Third in the course of supporting cultural diversity, the multiculturalists distinguish between the majority community and the minority community. State is usually identified with the majority culture and it overwhelmingly discriminates against the minorities. Multiculturalism is concerned about the fate of minorities and their rights. They use the concept

of cultural diversity to analyze the fate of minority cultures in the state.

WHY MULTICULTURAL CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship is a state centric concept. In general terms citizenship implies a bundle of rights and obligations. The state guarantees some basic rights to the individuals and at the same time expect the citizen to carry forward the objective of protecting the unity and integrity of the country. However with the emergence of globalization and widening of democratic process in the nation states, the notion of rights has gone under great transformation. Earlier the definitions of rights were meant for a homogeneous set of population. But now globalization has changed the composition of state altogether. Today there is a movement of other nationalities into a particular nation. We can see many Indians are going abroad for getting jobs. So the state needs to protect their rights. For that the state needs to rework upon its notion of rights. Similarly the democratic movement has deepened in the states. The state is increasingly facing the demands to grant rights to the minority groups present in the

country. The state has realized that they are an important part of society and they need to be recognized by means of guaranting their rights. These minorities have particular groups and they need recognition. For example the Tribals, Muslims etc are minority groups which need special protection from the state in order to protect them from the onslaught of majority. It is important to note here that the project of democratization is far from complete today. Today there are many groups and communities which continue to be disadvantaged. So Multiculturalism promises to look at these communities and their rights.

Constructing a public domain where many different cultures are present as equals is the primary agenda of multiculturalism. The need to protect minorities and their culture through a system of special rights is seen as a necessary step in the realization of this goal. Multiculturalism does not differentiate between the majority and the minority on the basis of numerical strength. Multiculturalism underlines the importance of collective identities in everyday life. Multiculturalism argues

that community membership gives individuals a specific history. While arguing that cultural communities constitute the context in which individuals live, experience and form judgments, multiculturalism does more than assert the existence of cultural community. It claims that a secure cultural context is essential for the wellbeing of the self. The multicultural agenda flows from this understanding of the value of cultural community membership and it is this assessment of community membership that shapes its commitment to ensure that minority cultures survive and flourish within the nation state.

MULTICULTURAL CITIZENSHIP: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

As its most fundamental level, multicultural citizenship involves a departure from traditional notions of citizenship, which emphasize on individual rights and duties in a particular state. Multicultural citizenship insists we recognize cultural difference among citizens and the

unique identity of an individual. Citizens should be viewed not merely as abstract entities. Multicultural citizenship seeks to protect the integrity of the individual while recognizing that individuality is formed in a variety of social and cultural contexts.

There are two distinctive theories of multiculturalism. They are radical and liberal. A distinction should be made between radical and liberal theoretical versions of multicultural citizenship. Radical formulations of multicultural citizenship advocate a fundamental shift in understanding of citizenship. It criticizes the liberal idea of universal citizenship. It argues that the concept of universal citizenship makes an attempt to assimilate other cultures into a single dominant culture. Proponents of the radical version argue for a 'differentiated citizenship', which reserves special rights for 'oppressed' minority groups-for examples, affirmative action measures to improve the educational or occupational level of disadvantaged minorities. This notion is developed by Marion Young. She develops her concept of differentiated

citizenship around the idea of oppression.

However, the notion of multicultural citizenship can not be built around the concept of oppression as it is a problematic concept. It is extremely difficult to define who the oppressed groups are and which minorities should be considered as oppressed. This is why Marion Young's idea of differentiated citizenship is rejected in political theory as a viable solution to the problem of minority rights. Marion Young was not able to define properly who the oppressed groups are.

These problems to a large extent are absent from the 'liberal' version of multicultural citizenship, which mediates more adroitly the relationship between the individual, identity group and the state. A liberal theory of minority rights explains how minority rights co-exist with human rights, and how minority rights are limited by principles of individual liberty, democracy and justice. Articulated most comprehensively by Will Kymlicka, this approach presents multicultural citizenship as a liberal theory of

minority rights, taking as its premise individual freedom as the defining principle of liberalism. For Kymilcka, individualism, autonomy, critical self-reflection, and choice are central to liberalism. Kymilcka was sure that liberalism provides the best opportunity for protecting minority rights. But he is quite aware of the limitations of liberalism. First, a liberal conception of minority rights will not justify internal restrictions. Internal restrictions imply that the minority groups demand to restrict the basic civil or political liberties of its own members. Liberals are committed to supporting the right of individuals to decide for themselves which aspects of their cultural heritage they should retain. Liberalism propounds that individuals should have the freedom and capacity to question and possibly revise the traditional practice of their community. Second, liberal principles are more sympathetic to demands for external protections, which leaves the minority vulnerable to the decision of the larger society.

In short liberal view requires freedom within the minority group and equality between minority and majority

group. Because of these two limitations, a liberal conception of minority rights can not accommodate all the demands of majority groups. For example some cultural minorities do not want a system of minority rights that is tied to the promotion of individual freedom or political autonomy. Kymilcka has tried to defend the right of national minorities (defined later on) to maintain themselves as culturally distinct society but only if they are governed by liberal principles.

Kymilcka prescribes a new thesis of multicultural citizenship which is essentially different from Young's concept of differentiated citizenship. The notion of oppression does not figure in Kymilcka's understanding of multicultural citizenship. Marrior Young opposed universal citizenship and replaced it with differentiated citizenship. But for Kymilcka, multicultural citizenship is not a critique or substitution of universal citizenship. Rather he would like to add something to the notion of universal citizenship. A multicultural state or society needs universal rights as well as a special status or some group

differentiated rights for minority cultures. This will produce a comprehensive notion of justice in a multicultural society.

Marrion Young heavily depends on the concept of oppression to highlight her concept of differentiated citizenship. Kymilcka uses the phrase 'societal culture'. Kymilcka defines societal culture as shared history, language making it synonymous with nation or people. Kymilcka argues that in multicultural society, access to a societal culture can become an issue of equality and justice under certain circumstances. It is important to note here that no state can be culture neutral. Most of times the state promotes the majority culture at the cost of minority culture. It proves that there is a nexus between the state and the majority culture. The traditional liberal explanation of ethnic and cultural difference has not been enough. Liberalism needs to give more emphasis on the special rights of the minorities. It has to recognize and protect the cultures of minority groups.

Kymilcka tried to redefine the concept of minorities since he was

aware of the problem of Yung's definition of minorities. As mentioned earlier, Young defined minorities which included the vast majority. It was no more a minority. Kymilcka tried to narrow down the minority groups entitled to special rights. Since Kymilcka takes 'societal culture' as the central point of reference for defining minorities, it considerably narrows down the "minority groups." This definition excludes non-ethnic groups, such as gays, lesbians, the disabled etc.

Kymilcka argues that only national minorities and immigrants come under the category of minorities. A country which contains more than one nation is called a multination state. Within a multination state, there are small cultures which are called national minorities. Similarly because of immigration the nation state acquires the character of multi-ethnic states. Kymilcka argues for giving these identities specific rights. In this context he discusses about three important rights. They are

1) *Self government rights*: Kymilcka argues that multination states need to consider the demand of different

cultural groups to have government of their own. One way of looking at the problem is to grant federalism. But again Kymilcka insists that there should be a balance between centralization and decentralization. But Kymilcka gives this self government rights to only the national minorities.

2) *Polyethnic rights*: In the age of globalization and international migration, immigrants tend to argue for their rights. Polyethnic rights implies group specific rights given to a particular community. They are intended to help ethnic groups and religious minorities express their cultural particularity. But unlike self government rights, polyethnic rights are usually intended to promote integration into the larger society and not self government.

3) *Special representation rights*: There is a wide belief that democracy fails to reflect the cultural diversity of the society. That is why there is a demand for special representation rights in order to rectify the present democratic process. However this should be seen as a temporary measure till we achieve a

state of condition where the need for special representation no longer exists.

For Kymlicka, then, cultural membership, that is, membership of a stable and historically continuous cultural community, is essential to human freedom and autonomy, and hence is a primary good. Although individuals have a right to cultural membership and all that follows from it, Kymlicka thinks that the right does not belong to all minorities equally. As we saw earlier, he is largely interested in two kinds of minorities, national and ethnic. For him the right to full cultural membership belongs only to the national minority because it is territorially concentrated, has a more or less complete cultural structure, and is often protected by treaties. Unlike the majority community whose culture is embodied in the major institutions of society and enjoys considerable power and dignity, the national minority is often disadvantaged by factors beyond its control and needs the relevant rights to equalize it with the majority community. It may therefore legitimately claim the right to self-government, to control immigration, to

restrict the sale of land, to make its own language policy, and so on. As for the national minorities, Kymlicka thinks that a liberal society should not impose its values on them largely for pragmatic reasons. Liberal institutions “can only really work if liberal beliefs have been internalized” by the members of the community concerned and by its very nature such internalization is a slow and voluntary process. However a liberal society cannot digest non-liberal practices, and has “a right and a responsibility” to discourage them. While it should appreciate that it might not fully understand minority cultures and that liberality is “a matter of degree,” it should act if they are intolerant of dissent or violate basic civil liberties and rights. Although it may not use coercion, it should speak out against their illiberal practices, support and encourage liberal opinion in them, offer incentives and apply pressure with a view to stimulating liberal reforms, devise mutually acceptable mechanisms for respecting individual rights, etc. If such means do not work and if the violations of liberal rights are gross and systematic, liberal society may rightly

intervene in the internal affairs of national minorities.

Ethnic minorities come under the second category. Immigrants are treated as ethnic minorities. They have voluntarily uprooted themselves from their natural homes, and thereby waived their right to their culture. Their cultural community is fragmented and cannot be reproduced in their host countries. And they enter the latter in full knowledge of its values and practices and implicitly undertake to abide by these. Kymlicka argues that they therefore have no right to self-government, to provision of public services in their mother tongue, and so on. This does not mean that they have no claims to the recognition of their cultural differences. They may rightly ask that they should not be discriminated against, that they should be exempted from laws and regulations that unjustly disadvantage them, be allowed to retain their mother tongues, have their presence affirmed in the symbols of the state, and so on. By and large, however, their concern, unlike that of the national minority, is or should be to integrate into the

mainstream society and these and other related measures are justified only as aids to that process.

Kymlicka's minority rights thesis comes under lot of criticism. Let us take the case of Quebecois in Canada or aboriginals in Australia. They are fit to be called national minorities because they have an institutionally complete culture. They are victims of nation-building process. They are forced to be part of their culture. That is why these groups always have a strong secessionist tendency. To accommodate these groups in a multicultural state, we need to give them strong self-government rights. This can be justified from a liberal point of view. However, Kymlicka himself admits that these rights pose a serious threat to the integrative function of citizenship, i.e., they are part of a political unit and they have to respect its unity and integrity. This minority group's basic thrust has been separation and not integration.

Kymlicka provides his multicultural theory in the context of a liberal society. But the synthesis between liberalism and multiculturalism is not always possible

since all multicultural societies are not necessarily liberal and vice-versa. Kymlicka argues his theory within the framework of a specific tradition. Kymlicka sometimes suggests that since we live in a liberal society, we should conceptualize and defend minority rights in liberal terms. This will not be applicable to societies. This is because our society constitutes both liberals and non-liberals and there is a perpetual conflict between them. It will not be appropriate to call the society liberal as it would exclude non-liberals. Nonliberals are very much a part of a society. But Kymlicka's is silent about them. This is because he assumes that every society has a single "societal" or national culture. This leads him to impose a single and homogeneous identity on Western societies and to turn liberalism into their collective or national culture. Critics argue that this theory is more or less an internal dialogue within the fold of liberalism.

Kymlicka rightly argues that a culture performs a variety of functions. It includes structuring one's world, giving life a meaning, building a community, and providing a context of

choice. Kymilcka stresses the autonomy fostering function of culture. This is a standard liberal understanding of culture. But there is no reason why this view will be shared by all. For him individuals should freely and self-consciously affirm their membership in their cultural communities. They should reflect on it critically, locate it within a range of options, and decide freely whether they wish to subscribe to it. This is certainly a plausible way of conceptualizing and relating to one's culture, but it is not the only one. Some communities such as the indigenous peoples, Hindus and orthodox Jews view their culture as an ancestral inheritance to be cherished and transmitted as a matter of loyalty to their offsprings. Some others, especially Catholics and other religious communities, take their culture as a divine self-revelation and view it as a sacred trust to be preserved in a spirit of piety and gratitude. For Jews, culture adds to their sense identity and it is not desirable to detach it from the latter. Many of these communities are not averse to self-reflection, self-criticism and even change. Indeed they are

intelligent enough to know that they must adapt to changing circumstances, but firmly believes that it should be done through their legitimate authorized representatives and in accordance to their traditions and in a spirit of humility.

Even feminists are not happy with the multicultural notion of citizenship. For example in many countries significant minority groups place girls under the constraint of their family. They restrict their dress code and impose restriction on their movement. They expect them to take a significant domestic responsibility from which their brothers are exempt. It is therefore difficult to understand how these young women 's cultures could be viewed as providing for them the background enabling them to make informed decisions about how to lead their lives. There are many instances of discrimination in the private sphere on cultural grounds which will never emerge in public. Thus one's place within one's culture is also important as it is important for a culture to enable the individual to develop its self respect and make choices about life.

Michael Walter criticizes the liberal theory of multicultural citizenship from a different perspective. He argues that in states where state neutrality is observed, there is no point in granting minority rights here. States like the United States of America and even international organizations like the European Union have shown the tendency towards state-neutrality. In such a situation the doctrine of multicultural citizenship appears to be obsolete.

**OTHER DEBATES IN
MULTICULTURALISM: CHARLES
TAYLOR AND BIKHU PAREKH**

In his essay “the politics of recognition”, Taylor argues that the reason why demands of various groups for some kind of social recognition have raised stakes in contemporary debates about multiculturalism is that the issue being debated is not simply material welfare but the identities of the participants in the life of the society. In modern society, the understanding that identities are formed in open dialogue, unshaped by a predefined social script. This has made the politics of equal recognition more central and stressful.”

Taylor argues that equal recognition is not just appropriate but essential.

In every society, there is a demand for recognizing the unique identity of this individual or group, their distinctness from everyone else. The charge it makes against contemporary politics is that distinctness has been ignored, or assimilated into the dominant majority. In Taylor’s analysis, the proponents of the politics of difference are right, and liberalism is inadequate to respond the demands for respecting distinct identity of individuals or groups. This is because liberalism is ultimately unsympathetic and inhospitable to difference. For this reason, Taylor is highly critical of the solution offered by Will Kymilcka in his own effort to show how liberalism can accommodate difference. Kymilca’s solution is to maintain a position of liberal neutrality, but to argue that since individuals need certain basic cultural goods to pursue the good life, neutrality requires granting certain groups differential rights(to allow them to maintain their cultural integrity) so that their members have an equal opportunity to pursue the good life. The

problem with this solution, according to Taylor, is that it works only for existing people who find themselves trapped within a culture under pressure, and can flourish within it or not at all. But it does not justify measures designed to ensure survival through indefinite future generations.

More broadly, Taylor's point is that the very idea of liberalism as a procedural doctrine is untenable. Those who put forward this view of liberalism see it as defending a neutral regime of tolerance of different ways. The claim of difference-blind liberalism is that it can offer neutral ground on which people of all cultures are able to meet and coexist. On this view, it is necessary to make a certain number of distinctions between what is public and what is private, for instance or between politics and religion and only then one can relegate the contentious differences to a sphere that does not impinge on the political. But this view, he argues is wrong. Liberalism cannot claim cultural neutrality. And the controversy over Salman Rushdie's Satanic Verses shows how wrong it is, since mainstream Islam refuses to separate religion and politics.

"Liberalism is not a possible meeting ground to separate religion and politics. Liberalism is not a possible meeting ground for all cultures, but is the political expression of one range of cultures and quite incompatible with other cultures.

The politics of recognition focuses on people's different values, languages, and symbols. For example, it takes a Muslim Women's belief in the principle of modesty as equally fundamental to her humanity as the capacity for autonomy. The politics of recognition applies to many disadvantaged groups, including cultural minorities, women, gays, blacks and the disabled. The theory is broader than that of Kymilka in that, while it accepts the importance of of group rights, it maintains that rights are unlikely to be enough to being about mutual recognition between groups. Taylor does support the group right of the Quebecois of self government, but he is also concerned that for example, granting a right to Sikh policemen to wear turbans on their patrols means only that others must tolerate them: they do not have to appreciate the wearing of the turban as

a valuable cultural practice. (Recently Government of France banned Sikhs wearing Turbans). This goes against the values of multicultural society. The politics of recognition is concerned to transform attitudes by ensuring, for example, greater professional role models or political representation of minority cultures. It echoes feminist claims that while women now have many formal rights to equality, they will not gain real equality as long as they experience social discrimination.

The politics of recognition has been especially appropriate in relation to the vast tribal population of India. They have a communitarian conception of life and the politics of liberal individualism is inadequate for their sense of justice. This is partly because it seeks to give positive value to non-liberal groups. The politics of recognition appreciates that the very idea of rights is problematic for indigenous people. This is because the concept depends on the view that individuals are separate from one another and are the ultimate source of value. The idea is often foreign to indigenous peoples whose cultural

framework concentrates on people's connection to others and to the environment. The politics of recognition enables liberals to recognize not only a set of rights, but also radically different community's understandings of justice and the good. Indeed, the politics of recognition even question liberal conceptions of nationhood and sovereignty.

Bikhu Parekh presents another variety of multiculturalism. He firmly criticizes Kymilka for his conception of liberal conception of minority rights. Parekh argues that most societies today are multicultural and not all of them are liberal. A liberal theory of multicultural citizenship has no relevance for the latter. Kymilcka is therefore unable to show them why they should respect minority rights. Traditionally, political theory has entered the wider ambition of showing how and why all good or properly societies constituted should be organized, what rights they should respect, and so on. Perhaps Kymilcka thinks, like John Rawls in his second incarnation, that all political theory is necessarily embedded in and articulated

within the framework of a specific tradition. However, he nowhere defends such an impoverished view of his discipline. Kymilka sometimes suggests that since we live in a liberal society, we should conceptualize and defend minority rights in liberal terms. This will be by a constant struggle between them. To call our society liberal is arbitrarily to appropriate it for the liberals and to rule our nonliberals by a definitional fiat. Nonliberals are very much a part of our society, but Kymilka's liberally articulated arguments have no appeal for them. Part of his difficulty arises from his assumption that every society has a single societal or national culture. This leads him to impose a single and homogeneous identity on western societies and to turn liberalism into their collective or national culture.

Even if we accept Kymilka's view that our society is liberal, the problem would still remain. On his own account, many of the minority communities are not liberal. They do not share his liberal principles and base their demands on different grounds. For them the grounds on which Kymilka defends their claims are not the ones on which they rest

their claims, and impose a false or irrelevant self understanding on them. They would therefore see his theory as no more than an internal dialogue among liberals, from whose results they do not mind benefitting but whose terms and assumptions they disown. When two parties to a dispute do not share common principles, one of them is bound to feel morally shortchanged and to complain of paternalism and worse if their dispute is conducted entirely in terms of principles and idioms acceptable to only one of them. A liberal theory of multicultural citizenship seeks to account for the latter within the framework of a monocultural theory, a paradoxical and incoherent enterprise.

After criticizing Kymilka, Parekh discusses his own understanding of multiculturalism which is popularly known as dialogical or conversational approach. The prospect of conversation between people of radically different world views is distinct from the other approaches, because it embraces the idea that cultural diversity is educational and the cause for

celebration; it is not merely a problem that must be controlled or overcome.

In multicultural society, there are two important aspects of life. The first aspect is the matter of how conflicts should be resolved legally. This has received maximum attention from the liberals. Parekh argues that only through dialogue between the majority and minority we can resolve the conflicts. The conversation between the two helps a multicultural society to recognize that there are some liberal principles that should never be forsaken- such as tolerance and dignity. At the same time there are non liberal principles such as solidarity, humility, and selfishness that can also find a place in a multicultural society.

The second important aspect of multicultural life- one that is seldom discussed by liberal theorists is its common culture. Different cultures influence and illuminate the dominant society's music, dance, arts, literature and life style through their participation. This leads to building of a public culture. This common culture is likely to be the precondition for open minded conversation about justice.

MULTICULTURALISM IN PRACTICE

We have witnessed that there are serious deficiencies within the two dominant theoretical strains of multicultural citizenship. Perhaps more significantly, theoretical discussion of multicultural citizenship has predominantly been concerned with minority or group-differentiated rights. Here, a notable gap within multicultural citizenship arises between the levels of theory and practice. This is evident upon an examination of multicultural citizenship regimes in practice, namely in Australia and Canada-the two most prominent examples of countries with explicit multicultural citizenship policies. As Joppke has highlighted, multicultural citizenship in Australia and Canada differ 'from that of the theorist by being a citizenship for all, not just for minorities.' Multicultural rights in these contexts have not been limited to specific minorities, but have been framed in terms of the entitlements of all citizens.

We find in the Australian experience, for instance, that multiculturalism at the point of its

initial adoption as policy was expressed in terms of allowing ‘all members of our society to have equal opportunity to realize their full potential and must have equal access to programs and services’ and ‘every person...to maintain his or her culture without prejudice or disadvantage.’ multicultural policies in Australia have always been couched in the language of universalism and integration. There has always been a concern within Australia that multicultural claims be interpreted as demands for greater inclusion as citizens and not for the fragmentation of the policy into a set of strong and possibly mutually antipathetic communities. Hence the emphasis on multiculturalism as enhancing social cohesion within a framework of shared fundamental values. The latter has been given particular stress since late 1980s with the emergence of a ‘citizenship model’ of multiculturalism. This model, articulated in the National Agenda for Australian Government policy documents, defines multiculturalism expressly in terms of the rights and obligations of citizenship. Since National Agenda, multiculturalism has

been understood as conferring the right to cultural identity, but balanced by a number of limits or obligations.

Canadian multiculturalism has, in a very similar way, been situated within the boundaries of common political values and structures. It would, of course, be incorrect to conflate the Canadian experience of multiculturalism within the Australian. Most notably, whereas Australian multiculturalism has essentially been a response to immigration, Canadian multiculturalism can not be understood in isolation from the claims for recognition made by its French-speaking minority. The adoption in 1971 of a ‘multiculturalism has sought not only to accommodate claims made by immigrant or ‘ethnic’ groups, but also those made by French-speaking minorities for a form of bilingualism. In contrast to Australia, where the language and vehicle of multiculturalism have been frozen, respectively, in a dialect of universal citizenship and the territory of equal and identical rights, Francophone claims for special rights have meant that multiculturalism in Canada has

been understood more expansively. Nowhere is this demonstrated more clearly than by the so-called Meech Lake amendment to the Canadian constitution, which proposed the recognition of Quebec as a 'distinct society', with the possibility for variation in the interpretation of the constitution in different parts of the country. While Australian multiculturalism has been delimited by a commitment to an existing political structure and culture, Canadian multiculturalism has indeed challenged the character of the existing Canadian political system itself.

MULTICULTURAL CITIZENSHIP IN INDIA

Theoretically speaking India can be considered to be one of the classic examples of a multicultural state. The constitution guarantees protection of minority rights. In India minority can be defined on the basis of religion, caste, ethnicity and language. Even though the constitution protects these minorities through different provisions yet there is growing amount of tension within the nation state with regard to the problem of minority rights. As we see in the case of Canada and Australia,

there is a huge gap between theory and practice, the same is the case with India. Theoretically Indian state is a neutral. But there are many instances where we find that the state is not a neutral player. Secularism is a proclaimed policy of India. But examples are there where the state has come out openly for the majority. In Gujarat, the state openly supported the majority religion. Similarly different tribal groups also face a similar situation. In the name of development their rights are violated. And in most cases, the state is a party to the conflict. Construction of big dams, mining cause displacement of tribals from their livelihood much against their wishes. This constitutes violation of fundamental right. Yet the state provides no adequate solutions. Similarly the caste based minorities or dalits also face the same situation. The constitution protects their rights through reservation. But in many instances reservation has failed to guarantee their right. Dalits continue to be marginalized. Many argue that reservation has divided the dalits. The actual pors are not getting benefits.

The state has failed to address the grievances of the minorities. The compulsions of party politics has made accountable to the majority. In the process the minorities are discriminated. So it is evident that there is a huge gap between theory and practice. In India the question of minority rights are increasingly politicized and the policy decisions depend on who comes to power. If BJP comes to power, then there is Hindu dominance, if Congress comes to power, then there is Muslim appeasement. Each party has its own policy of how to look at minorities.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion we find that the liberal and the radical attempts to define multicultural citizenship have many problems. Radical's attempt to ground minority rights in "oppression" has many difficulties since the concept is very vague. On the other hand, the more concise concept of societal culture narrows down the range of legitimate multicultural elements. Even though Kymilcka gives an exact elaboration of who are the minorities, yet in most cases national minorities get precedence

over ethnic immigrants. It is significant to note that in practice multicultural citizenship has remained exceedingly rare. Today only Australia and Canada explicitly declare the use of the doctrine. However, their multicultural citizenship differs significantly from what we find in theory. The challenge of globalization has forced every society to have flexible norms towards the minorities. With the rise in communication technologies, the ethnic minorities are now increasingly asserting their rights. Even multiculturalism is silent about intra-group inequality. Cultural differences can not be a source of discrimination and marginalization in the public arena. Multiculturalism therefore needs to explore the ways by which the sense of alienation and disadvantage that come along with being a minority are visibly diminished. It must, therefore aspire towards a form of citizenship that is marked neither by a universalism generated by complete homogenization, nor by the particularism of self-identical and closed communities.

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