



Figure 1 Proposed Map of Gorkhaland by Gorkha Janmukti Morcha which incorporates Darjeeling, Kurseong, Kalimpong, Siliguri, Bhaktinagar, Malbazar, Chalsa, Nagrakot, Banarhat, Birpara, Madarhat, Jaigoan, Kalchini and Kumargram.

Source: <http://www.darjeelingtimes.com>



Figure 2 Map of the Proposed Kamtapur issued by All Koch Rajbangsi Student's Union

Source: Arup Jyoti Das, *Kamatapur and the Koch Rajbangshi Imagination*, Montage Media Publication, Assam, India, 2009, Pg. 13.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Post Cold War the ideological conflict between Capitalism and Communism has largely been replaced by ethno-identity based conflicts between ethnic and national groups. In the Developed West or the Third World, minorities and majorities clamour for more resources and rights involving recognition of language, federalism and regional autonomy, political representation, religious freedom, education curriculum, land claims, immigration, naturalization policy and even national symbols such as the choice of national anthem or public holidays. Meeting the demands of one group leads to the discontentment of the other instigating inter group conflicts and anti-national sentiments.¹ Today Liberal democracy is thus challenged by volatile ethnic as well as nationalist conflicts that are undermining the peace and integrity of the Nation. Questions of the rights of immigrants, indigenous peoples, and other cultural minorities are now daunting the political as well as the academic circles.

The Liberal theory of Justice long adopted a 'colour-blind' approach that refused to recognize any difference between the groups in a bid to treat them all equally. This theory however was challenged with the upsurge of movements based on recognition, ethnic identity, language, and cultural membership. Minority groups, each with their unique history aspire for greater recognition and accommodation of their cultural differences. They even seek to secede, if they form the view that their aspirations could not be met within the existing state. Western democracies are thus witnessing an emerging trend towards the greater recognition of minority rights, both in the form of immigrant multiculturalism and self-government for national minorities.

The South East Asia has also not been bereft of secessionist movements and ethno-cultural conflicts following the homogenization policy adopted by the state post decolonization to consolidate feelings of oneness and to establish itself as a

¹ Will Kymlicka, '**The Rights of the Minority Cultures**', Oxford University Press, New York, 2009.

unitary state. The policy of national homogenization met with resistance by ethnic and religious minorities that condemned any form of assimilation demanding recognition of their differences. Consequently South East Asian countries coming to terms with the irrevocable reality of their ethnic and religious cleavages adopted policies to accommodate minorities. These policies however are largely based on the Western models of Multiculturalism often unsuited to the specific historical, cultural, demographic, and geopolitical circumstances of the region with the legacies of colonialism and national liberation struggles.

The political history in India since her decolonization has shown flexibility in politically accommodating the political needs of diversity. The Indian Constitution does not declare India to be multicultural. Nevertheless, there are guarantees in the Constitution that has made a multicultural society possible in India. Article 29(1) of the Indian Constitution says that any section of the citizens of India having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the fundamental right to conserve the same. The Constitution also defines a positive, directional role for the state in this regard. It directs every state (federal units) to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education of children belonging to linguistic minority groups. The Constitution not only provides for the protection of minority interests, but seeks to ensure that the individuals belonging to minorities do not suffer from discrimination. Article 29(2) forbids any discrimination against any citizen on the basis of religion, race caste or language in the matter of admission into educational institutions maintained or added by the state. As far as the institutional means of protection and cultivation of minority culture is concerned, Arts.29 (1) and 30(1) stipulate that the minorities can establish and administer educational institutions of their own choice, and the state cannot compel them to attend educational institutions not to their liking.

However the aggrieved but territorially-rooted minorities find the existing provisions of the Constitution ineffective in protecting their identity within the

existing state. Consequently they have taken recourse to statehood demands.² Various institutional measures such as the districts, or regional council, union territory, and associate states, or sub-state have been the state's response to such ethnic identity based statehood movements. Yet in many cases, the statehood movements have in fact grown out of dissatisfaction with the existing institutional measures as mentioned above.³ The Gorkhaland and the Kamtapur Movements in West Bengal which constitute the focal point of the present study are such ethnic identity based separate statehood movements.

The Gorkhaland Movement by the Gorkha living in and around Darjeeling and the Dooars though has an economic aspect was mainly an expression of the desire of the Gorkhas to assert their ethnic individuality which has been diluted due to the large immigration of Nepalese of Nepal origin after the Indo-Nepal Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1950. Due to the similarity in their cultures and facial features it is difficult to recognize the difference between the two. Consequently the Indian Nepalis are often looked upon and treated as foreigners. Accordingly the Gorkhas demand a separate state of Gorkhaland, which, to them, would establish their identity as Indian nationals. Although they have persistently been denied a separate state of Gorkhaland on the grounds of misplaced identity the Indian Constitution has incorporated Gorkhali/Nepali language in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution and also established Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) in 1988 in response to the Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) agitation for Gorkhaland. The Gorkhaland Movement however has been resurrected by Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJMM) under the leadership of Bimal Gurung bringing about political unrest in West Bengal.

The Kamtapur Movement by the Koch Rajbangsi assert that they are the original inhabitants of the present six districts of North Bengal viz. Jalpaiguri, Cooch Behar,

² Harihar Bhattacharyya, *'Multiculturalism, Autonomy for Ethno-National Groups and the Unity of India'*, in edited **Multiculturalism: Public Policy and Problem Areas in Canada and India**, Christopher Raj, Marie Mc Andrews, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 2009.

³ Gurpreet Mahajan , *'Negotiating Cultural Diversity and Minority Rights in India'*, **Democracy, Conflict and Human Security: Further Readings**, Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.

Darjeeling, Malda, Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur area. According to the Koch Rajbangsi in North Bengal these districts together with Dhubri and Kokrajhar districts of Assam formed the princely state of Cooch Behar which was merged with India following the 'Instrument of Accession' signed by Maharaja Jagddipendra Narayan of Cooch Behar on 9th August, 1947. Subsequently the previously self-governing, territorially concentrated culture of the Koch Rajbangsi was incorporated into a larger state of West Bengal. The Koch Rajbangsi as such demand a separate Kamtapur state for the sons of the soil comprising the above mentioned six districts of North Bengal as well as Dhubri and Kokrajhar districts of Assam so as to preserve their distinct culture and bring about their socio-economic upliftment. Further the Government has not incorporated the Kamtapuri language in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution thereby denying constitutional recognition to it. Education at the primary level and All India Radio does not include Kamtapuri language as the medium of instruction. The West Bengal government has out rightly rejected both the demands for a separate state of Gorkhaland and Kamtapur calling the Movements as "an unreasonable and unhistorical movement". The present study is thus an attempt to study both the Gorkhaland and Kamtapur Movements within the conceptual framework of Multiculturalism in order to analyze its causes as well as means to preserve the richness of the cultural diversity in West Bengal.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Literature Review is broadly divided into the following sub-division; **first**, Review of Literature on Multiculturalism; **second**, Review of Literature on Gorkhaland Movement, **third**, Review of Literature on Kamtapur Movement and; **fourth**, Summation of the Literature Review.

LITERATURE REVIEW ON MULTICULTURALISM

Democracy, Difference and Social Justice (Gurpreet Mahajan, 1998) ⁴ is a compilation of various essays dealing mainly with the concept of difference and equality. It discusses how differences can be a source of discrimination even in a democracy. It examines the demands for equality by the minority groups together

⁴ Mahajan Gurpreet, edited **Democracy, Difference and Social Justice**, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1998.

with the idea of group rights as a mechanism to accommodate their demands. It further analyses the politics of non-discrimination involving policies of protective discrimination to ensure equal opportunity to the marginalized section of the population as adopted in India. It discusses strategies through which social justice could be established in a democracy and a social difference no longer forms the basis of exclusion from the political domain. It thus centers on the values of homogeneity and difference in a democratic society and challenges to social integration.

The Multicultural Path: Issues of Diversity and Discrimination in Democracy (Gurpreet Mahajan, 2002)⁵ provides a conceptual analysis of Multiculturalism as distinguished from pluralism. It links Multiculturalism to democracy and insists on equal status of different cultures in private as well as public domain. It criticizes policies of homogenization promoting cultural diversity and the idea of differentiated citizenship. It further analyses the feminist and liberal critique of Multiculturalism and responds to the criticism by providing mechanisms to promote intra-group and inter-group equality. It draws upon the case of India insisting that the source of cultural discrimination is not the homogenizing policies of the nation-state but also the actions of other groups in a society. It insists that Multiculturalism must reinvent itself to dismantle structures of cultural discrimination by differentiating rights based on different claims to group rights.

The Politics of Identity (Michael Kenny, 2004)⁶ deals with the idea of politics based on group identity. It examines various arguments leveled against liberal philosophy as being incompatible to the idea of group rights mainly by the Multiculturalists that advocate recognition of group difference. It also deals with the contemporary liberal theories that view politics of identity as a challenge to a liberal democratic society. It emphasizes the increasing demand for the recognition of identity in the private as well as public domain. Accordingly it puts forward that politics of identity reflects a trend wherein citizens form

⁵ Gurpreet Mahajan, **The Multicultural Path: Issues of Diversity and Discrimination in Democracy**, Sage Publications India, New Delhi, 2002.

⁶ Kenny Michael, **The Politics of Identity**, Polity Press, USA, 2004.

alignments on the basis of shared culture and are no longer confined to individual interest or ideological debate. It comes across as a 'new politics' that is challenging established ideologies and political boundaries by communities asserting their distinct identity and making demands for recognition and equal rights. These groups often demand redress of past injustices inflicted on their group for which they make demands premised on liberal ethos of democratic inclusion, non-discrimination and equality. It thus deals with the debate between Liberalism that values autonomy or individuality and the Multiculturalism that asserts difference and recognition. It is in the light of this debate that it attempts to theorize the emerging phenomenon of identity politics.

Negotiating Cultural Diversity and Minority Rights in India (Gurpreet Mahajan, 2005)⁷ observes that the linguistic reorganization of regional state boundaries has been a major instrument for protecting and nurturing linguistic diversity. The creation of linguistic identity based units, each with political rights to govern itself within the framework of the federal system, meant that a specific linguistic community became a majority within a region. Its language became the official language of that state and the medium of instruction, public examination, communication and media networks. As a consequence, the language of the regional majority grew and flourished. On the other hand, the creation of linguistically defined federal units provided opportunities to regional linguistic elites which might otherwise have remained marginalized in the national level. It brought in more and more people into the political process, giving them opportunities to participate actively and debate the issues that concerned them immediately. The growth of regional languages has not only been an asset for the local elites and the regional population; it has also benefited speakers of that language living in other parts of the country. They now have access to literature and information in their own language, and it is so much easier for them to pass on this cultural capital to their children. Today the constitution recognizes languages as official languages of the Union state in addition to Hindi and

⁷ Gurpreet Mahajan, '*Negotiating Cultural Diversity and Minority Rights in India*', **Democracy, Conflict and Human Security: Further Readings**, Volume 2, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, Sweden, 2005.

English, which enjoy the status of national languages. Recognition for specific languages has not always been easy. It has come after strong popular movements, but what has become evident is that, despite liberal apprehensions, the creation of linguistic identity-based states has not weakened the nation state. If anything, it has strengthened democracy, made it more inclusive, and given opportunities to previously excluded groups to share in the political decision-making process. This has strengthened India and minimized discontent against the Union.

Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights (Will Kymlicka: 1995)⁸ mainly deals with the theory of Multiculturalism. Here Kymlicka argues that minority rights are a legitimate component of the liberal tradition. He distinguishes between national minorities and ethnic minorities on the ground that the latter are immigrants that do not occupy homelands. He further distinguishes three kinds of minority or group differentiated rights that are to be assured to ethnic and national groups: self-government rights, poly-ethnic rights and special representation rights. According to Kymlicka the terminology ‘collective rights’ often used both by the proponents and critics to describe the various forms of group-differentiated citizenship can be misleading. The term ‘collective rights’ refers to rights exercised by collectivities and is assumed to be opposed to rights exercised by individuals. However many forms of group-differentiated citizenship are in fact exercised by individuals. For example, a minority language right is a right accorded to and exercised by individuals. So describing group-differentiated citizenship in the language of collective rights is misleading. Kymlicka also explains that minority rights are not only consistent with individual freedom, but can actually promote it.

Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Citizenship (Will Kymlicka, 2001)⁹ insists that the idea of minority rights are debates within liberalism and not just a subset of the traditional liberalism-vs.-communitarian debate. It holds that ‘liberal culturalism’ is a viable alternative which guarantees

⁸ Will Kymlicka, **Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights**, Oxford University Press, New York, 1995.

⁹ Will Kymlicka, **Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Citizenship**, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

the individual civil and political rights together with various group-specific rights intended to accommodate different identities and needs of ethnocultural groups. It insists that the state even though ensures individual rights to its citizens can still be a source of cultural discrimination with regard to its settlement policies, language policies and decisions about the boundaries and powers of political subunits. Accordingly it outlines a form of ‘multination federalism’ so as to ensure power-sharing among different cultural groups and establishing justice in a liberal democracy. It further examines the specific forms of injustice towards the indigenous minorities resulting from the economic development and settlement policies of the nation-state and challenges the perception of ‘multicultural’ model of immigrant integration to be a threat to individual rights.

Liberalism, Community, and Culture (Will Kymlicka, 2002)¹⁰ is concerned with the view of Liberalism on individual rights and state neutrality. It defends Liberalism from the communitarian attack as being insensitive to minority rights. Instead it attempts to account Liberalism as a political philosophy that is sensitive to the individual’s membership in a cultural community and does not promote individualism at the expense of value an individual holds to their shared community and culture. It however also insists that Liberalism value of cultural community is premised on the way each individual understands and evaluates a cultural community.

Multiculturalism in Asia (Will Kymlicka and Baogang He, 2005)¹¹ studies Multiculturalism in Asian countries of China, Lao, Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan, Sri Lanka, Burma and India. It examines the western models of Liberal Multiculturalism as practiced in Asia. It attempts to analyse the steady growth of homogenizing nation-states into a multicultural one in the post colonialisation era. It analyses the various policies adopted by the South and East Asian countries for the peaceful co-existence of different ethnic and religious groups. It however reveals that the western model of Multiculturalism is not fully

¹⁰ Will Kymlicka, **Liberalism, Community, and Culture**, Oxford University Press, New York, 2002.

¹¹ Will Kymlicka and Baogang He, in edited **Multiculturalism in Asia**, Oxford University Press, New York, 2005.

adopted in Asia that has a colonial legacy as well as tradition relatively different from the West. Accordingly the multicultural model as adopted in the Asian countries reflect the value of tolerance imbibed from their religious traditions as practiced in the region varying from Confucian and Buddhism in China, Myanmar, Japan to Islam in Bangladesh and Hinduism in India. It thus explores various theoretical perspectives that shape the discourse of Multiculturalism in Asia.

Multicultural Odysseys: Navigating the New International Politics of Diversity (Will Kymlicka, 2007) ¹²deals with the global diffusion of the idea of Multiculturalism and its codification by various international inter-governmental organizations. The intense mobilization of the minorities cultures in a number of countries have led to the refutation of the older models of assimilationist and adoption of Multiculturalism as a new model in various liberal democracies. There has been an increasing trend towards cultural and religious accommodations of immigrant groups, of the acceptance of demands for territorial autonomy and language rights of the national minorities and self-government rights of the indigenous minorities. It examines the internalization of the issue of minority's rights in the convention of international organizations like UNO, UNESCO and ILO whereby each declares that the rights of minorities are an inseparable part of a larger human rights framework and national legal system is to operate within the limits of this framework. Thus there is a shift from the earlier trend of homogenizing nation-states to a multicultural state and of citizenship. It further studies about Liberal Multiculturalism, its origin, sources, forms and thereby evaluates the paradoxes in its practice. It also examines the challenges to adopt Multiculturalism in a global context in view of state elites unwilling to share their powers with the minorities. He also provides tentative suggestions to reconcile the conflicting forces so as to successfully diffuse the idea of Multiculturalism globally.

¹² Will Kymlicka, **Multicultural Odysseys: Navigating the New International Politics of Diversity**, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007.

The Rights of Minority Cultures (Will Kymlicka, 2009)¹³ is a compilation of various articles broadly divided into six units that deal mainly with cultural membership, cultural pluralism, individual rights versus group rights, minority cultures and so on. Jeremy Waldron put forwards the idea of cosmopolitan alternative that does not deny the importance of culture in constituting human life but questions the idea of strict demarcation of cultural boundaries as we live in a mixed up world imbibing the cultural values and ethos of variant culture from around the world. Allen Buchanan attempts to establish a community's moral right to secede on the grounds that cultural boundaries must coincide with the political boundaries. Avishai Margalit and Joseph Raz provide moral justification for national self-determination and thereby attempt to identify those features that qualify a group for the right to self-determination. Nathan Glazer analyses the debate of individual rights against group rights in a multiethnic nation. Glazer takes into account various issues to identify policies that would overcome discrimination and yet satisfy all the groups of a multiethnic society maintaining mutual harmony among them. Michael Walzer analyses the idea of Pluralism. It examines how the idea of 'one people one state' is shadowed by movements of secession in multicultural nation-state. He however cites the example of American Exceptionalism which despite being a land of immigrants did not experience secessionist demands as such. Leslie Green analyses the internal pluralism of a minority group which consists within itself minorities termed as 'internal minorities'. Green analyses the rights of these minorities which are ethnic, cultural, religious, or sexual minorities within a minority cultural community to safeguard them against persecution from their own cultural community at large. Chandran Kukathas argues in defence of liberalism emphasizing that liberalism is not averse to the minorities concern. In fact liberalism values individual rights and liberty to restrict the power of majority over the minorities. Arendt Lijphart puts forward the concept of consociational democracy which refers to a power-sharing democracy as a solution to the problems of a plural society.

¹³ Will Kymlicka, Op.cit.no.1

Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory (Bhikhu Parekh, 2006)¹⁴ discusses multicultural perspective to be based on the harmonious relationship between unity and diversity. Here Bikhu Parekh put forward the theory which is dialogically constituted. He asserted that since every political doctrine is structurally embedded to a particular cultural perspective a broad and impartial framework to conceptualize other cultures is marked with partiality. In this context, he rejects liberalism to endorse a particular vision of good life. Instead he put forwards the idea of cultural diversity based on inter cultural dialogue. It stresses the centrality of a dialogue between cultures in both the political and non-political areas of life as the unifying focus and principles of society. The dialogue is to come up with principles, institutions and policies that are collectively acceptable to all the communities in a multicultural society marked with cultural diversity. It insists on the creation of a climate in which effective dialogue can be carried out stretching the boundaries of the prevailing forms of thought. This he suggested was possible through the existence of certain institutional preconditions such as freedom of expression, agreed procedures and basic ethical norms, participatory public spaces, equal rights, a responsive and popularly accountable structure of authority, and empowerment of citizens. He further insists that the guiding norm in a multicultural democratic polity is not to be cultural diversity but the principle of non-discrimination. Democracy, to Parekh is to commit to the ideal of non-discrimination which requires than no individuals and groups are excluded or accorded subordinate position from the political domain owing to their social or ascribed identity. The value promoted by Parekh is that of ‘non-conformist membership’ for the cultural communities in a multicultural democratic polity that which insists on special group rights that is structured taking into cognizance the changeable nature of the cultures.

¹⁴ Bhikhu Parekh, **Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory**, Palgrave Macmillan, United Kingdom, 2006.

Composite Culture and Multicultural Society (Bhikhu Parekh, 2007)¹⁵ provides a theoretical study of multicultural society as one with a plurality of cultures. However it emphasizes that multicultural society should not be confused with ‘plural societies’. Plural societies emphasize plurality but not the equality of cultures while Multiculturalism deals with the equal participation in the collective affairs of the state. Accordingly it insists that a constitutional society is better suited to a multicultural society which gives its citizens a share in the conduct of collective affairs together with a sense of dignity and empowerment. It argues against the view that a society needs a singular, unified and homogeneous culture. Rather it asserts that a multicultural society provides for a ‘composite’ culture which is internally diversified and multiculturally constituted. It is marked with a shared culture premised on interaction between different cultural communities that compose a multicultural society. A multicultural society allows diversity wherein identities are shaped through constant intercultural interaction.

Indian Democracy: Exclusion and Communication(Dipankar Sinha:1999)¹⁶ discusses how the gulf between the process of enumeration and that of implementation widens to a dangerous level if the state, amidst ritualistic tributes to democracy, effectively caters to the interests of the few at the cost of many. Being armed with the legitimating rationale of ‘nation-building’ which ironically is “a polite term for cultural and ideological homogenisation” the state (more specifically, those who wield its power) feels little need to reach out to the people ‘down below’ by way of a valid and extensive process of communication which would induce involvement of people and develop their empathy for the activities of the state. The state’s communicative dynamics – constitutive of its voice and feedback in the form of the voice of the people – remain half-formed, with the majority of people remaining silent and inactive in the business of governance. This blocks consolidation of democracy and prevents its organic integration with society.

¹⁵ Parekh Bhikhu, ‘*Composite Culture and Multicultural Society*’, in edited **Composite Culture in a Multicultural Society**, Bipan Chandra, Sucheta Mahajan, Pearson Longman Education, South Asia, 2007.

¹⁶Dipankar Sinha, ‘*Indian Democracy: Exclusion and Communication*’, **Economic and Political Weekly**, Volume 34 Number 32, August 7, 1999.

Case of Multiculturalism in India(Amir Ali, 2000)¹⁷ discusses how the Indian state place more emphasis on protecting the private domain of religious and community practices and overlooks the need for equal recognition to minority groups in the public sector. It places greater emphasis on public sphere so as to ensure greater participation and inclusion of marginalized and beleaguered minorities and hence the greater democratization of the public sphere. The Indian polity's efforts at ensuring minority protection have had perverse effects resulting in the strengthening of patriarchal tendencies within communities. This is mainly because unlike the West where religion and the church have ceased to be parallel sources of authority to the state; in India the hold of the religion continues to be strong obstructing greater democratization within communities. It thereby suggests that Indian Multiculturalism should shift its emphasis from the private to the public domain, wherein accessibility to the public sphere is ensured by making it more conducive to the expression of minority cultures.

Multiculturalism in Twentieth-Century India: Ambiguity and Ambivalence (T.K. Oommen, 2007) ¹⁸examines the policy and practice of Multiculturalism in independent India. It emphasizes that India although recognizes cultural differences providing conducive conditions for Multiculturalism to flourish yet there are certain constitutional provisions which conflicts with the spirit of Multiculturalism. It views secularism as guaranteed by the Indian Constitution as dampen by the state that rarely intervenes to curb the activities of religious organizations intimidating minority religious community. Besides the policy of 'reservation' for the depressed class violates the Article 15 which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of caste among others. The failure of the Indian state to establish Uniform Civil Court firmly in the legal structure and the imposition of Hindi as the national language (Article 343) inspire of twenty-two languages guaranteed official language status clearly exhibit the gap between the

¹⁷ Amir Ali, '*Case of Multiculturalism in India*', **Economic and Political Weekly**, Volume 35 Number 28-29, July 15, 2000.

¹⁸ T.K.Oommen, '*Multiculturalism in Twentieth-Century and Multicultural Society*', in edited **Composite Culture in a Multicultural Society**, Bipan Chandra, Sucheta Mahajan, Pearson Longman Education, South Asia, 2007.

theory and practice of Multiculturalism in India. It further suggests four plausible approaches to Multiculturalism in India namely pluralist, individualist, strategic and cosmopolitan.

The Incompleteness of the Multiculturalist Agenda: Overlooking the Need for a Shared Identity (Sushila Ramaswamy: 2007)¹⁹ deals mainly with the theories on Multiculturalism. It discusses Will Kymlicka's theory of Multiculturalism, Charles Taylor theory of recognition and non-liberal critique of liberal Multiculturalism. It also put forwards the objection raised to the aforesaid formulations on Multiculturalism on the grounds that aboriginal peoples, on whose behalf multiculturalists speak, see Multiculturalism as facilitating further marginalisation of their communities and culture in a modern state which is more attuned to the needs of migrants than to the aborigines. Besides in pleading for special rights for cultural groups or religious communities, it may permit these groups to continue with practices that are sexist and highly disadvantageous, if not harmful to women.

The Dialogue of Cultures from Paranoia to Metanoia (Rudolf Cheredia: 2007)²⁰ discusses the identity formation of individuals and groups. It holds that identity formation is never an entirely passive process. One's identity is never developed in isolation but in interaction with significant others. "Who I am" is always reflected off, and refracted through others. The denial of recognition and affirmation amounts to a negation of one's human identity. In a world increasingly characterised by anxiety, uncertainty and disorder, there is an urgent need for the reassurance of security, trust and a sense of solidarity in a collective identity. The only way of being human is to be in constructive and creative interrelationships with others, not in isolation from them. Accordingly one must be tolerant and in dialogue. Multicultural exchange and inter-religious sharing can bring about shared interests and deepen common concerns. Only thus can one genuinely be authentic selves, true believers and truly human.

¹⁹ Sushila Ramaswamy, 'The Incompleteness of the Multiculturalist Agenda: Overlooking the Need for a Shared Identity', **Economic and Political Weekly**, Volume 42 Number 37, September 15, 2007.

²⁰ Rudolf Cheredia, 'The Dialogue of Cultures from Paranoia to Metanoia', **Economic and Political Weekly**, May 26, 2007 (<http://www.epw.in>)

Crisis of Australian Multiculturalism (Vibhanshu Shekhar: 2009)²¹ examines the factors responsible for the erosion of Multiculturalism in Australia in face of the attack on Asian immigrants in Australia recently. Multiculturalism was a consensus principle of Australia till the late 1980s. However with the large scale of Asian immigration and their support for the Labour Party prompted the Liberal Party under the leadership of John Howard to widen its social base by drawing within its fold the Anglo-Celtic constituencies consisting approximately 75-80% of the country's population. Accordingly the Liberal Party began the anti-Multiculturalism campaign giving fillip to the racial politics in the country and widened the socio-political divide between the Anglo-Celtic and immigrant population of Australia. Thus the anti-immigrant campaigns of the Liberal political elite delegitimize the principle of Multiculturalism which was once the consensus motto of Australia.

Reorganisation of States in India (Mahendra Prasad Singh: 2008)²² discusses how the federalism as a political mechanism has been more successful in protecting the identity and interest of major national minorities that happen to be state or provincial majorities (e g, Muslims in Jammu and Kashmir, Sikhs in Punjab, Nagas in Nagaland, etc) than of internal minorities and "discrepant" majorities that happens to be a provincial minority in some states. These sub-regional identity assumes further importance when inter- regional disparities and discrimination surface. It is within this explanation that it enumerates the demand of Andhra Pradesh (Telugu-speaking), Tamil Nadu (Tamil-speaking), Karnataka (Kannada-speaking), Gujarat (Gujarati-speaking), Maharashtra (Marathi-speaking), Punjab which was trifurcated into Punjab (Punjabi-speaking with a Sikh majority), Haryana (Hindi-speaking with Hindu majority), and Himachal Pradesh (Hindi-speaking with Hindu majority) in the 1950s and 1960s, the bifurcation of Nagaland out of Assam (1962), Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. Such Sub-state movements based on tribal or ethnic identities have persisted in varying degrees in several states in the 1980s such as Gorkha National

²¹ Vibhanshu Shekhar, '*Crisis of Australian Multiculturalism*', **Economic and Political Weekly**, Volume XLIV Number 52, December 26, 2009

²² Mahendra Prasad Singh, '*Reorganisation of States in India*', **Economic and Political Weekly**, Volume 43 Number 11, 15 March, 2008.

Liberation Front in the Darjeeling hill district of West Bengal, Bodoland agitation in Assam and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha in the Chhota Nagpur region mainly in Bihar but marginally also in the adjoining states of West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. It suggests a “the cosmopolitan model of democracy” that envisages a global and regional order comprising multiple and overlapping networks of political, economic, and social power and clusters of individual autonomy and rights “within and across each network of power” spanning states, civil societies, and regional and global organisations. These developments would give birth to “an empowering legal order – a ‘democratic international law’”. The emergent legal principles would “delimit the form and scope of individual and collective action within the organizations and associations of state and civil society. Certain standards are specified for the treatment of all, which no political regime or civil association can legitimately violate”. Accordingly this cosmopolitan model of democracy alone can ensure simultaneous pursuit of democracy and development and an escape from the vicious cycle of war and poverty.

Understanding Indian Multiculturalism (Saumyajit Ray: 2009)²³ mainly deals with Multiculturalism in India. It views that since liberal Multiculturalism is a product of immigrant societies, there is a danger that India may not fit into the Western liberal multicultural scheme. It analyses the policies necessitated by the Indian Constitution to safeguard minority interests. It further discusses the problem faced by the Indian Constitution in establishing Multiculturalism in India. It observes that the Indian Constitution and the government stand for equal respect, equal rights, and equal opportunities for both individuals and groups in India. It is not difficult to secure equal rights and equal opportunities: they can be constitutionally granted. The problem is with equal respect; that can come about only if there was mutual respect between communities. This has made India a cultural pantheon: equal legal standing of cultural communities minus equal respect. As a result the demand for a separate state arises out of a sense of discrimination felt by the minority community’s distinct cultural tradition.

²³ Saumyajit Ray, ‘*Understanding Indian Multiculturalism*’, in edited **Multiculturalism: Public Policy and Problem Areas in Canada and India**, Christopher Raj, Marie Mc Andrews, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 2009.

Multiculturalism, Autonomy for Ethno-National Groups and the Unity of India (Harihar Bhattacharyya: 2009)²⁴ views that Multiculturalism, autonomy and national unity do not go well together. It holds that many ethno-national groups demanding autonomy, or inter self determination, would not pass Kymlicka's liberal test because the internal societies of such groups may lack in liberal ingredients. In many cases, such autonomy, as so often granted, is used as a shield against some liberal encroachment upon some customs and practices of ethno-national groups, or to jealously protect them against radical reforms. Liberal multiculturalist autonomy is thus deeply individualistic, and does not adequately cover the whole scope of autonomy for ethno-national groups particularly those territorially concentrated.

North-East: Crisis of Identity, Security and Underdevelopment (Jayanta Madhab, 1999)²⁵ responsible for ethnic turmoil in north east region. It holds that even after the creation of seven states to satisfy the ethnic aspirations of the local people, further balkanisation is being demanded due to the failure of the Indian state to meet the basic needs of the people. The regional disparity between the north-east and the other states has widened due to the uneven development accompanied with the corruption. Accordingly in view of the failure of the existing policies it suggests various measures to be adopted by the Government to end ethnic crisis in northeast, for instance, Encouragement to free, frank and open debate on the issues of the north-east within and outside the region; letting the population understand the issues in their perspectives and in totality, willingness on the part of the government of India to discuss unconditionally with all major insurgent groups, sincere efforts on the part of the central and state governments to strengthen the functioning of tertiary level institutions like panchayats, autonomous districts/village councils, reassessment of the foreigners issue in view of the current situation, identity and

²⁴ Harihar Bhattacharyya, '*Multiculturalism, Autonomy for Ethno-National Groups and the Unity of India*', in edited **Multiculturalism: Public Policy and Problem Areas in Canada and India**, Christopher Raj, Marie Mc Andrews, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 2009.

²⁵ Jayanta Madhab, '*North-East: Crisis of Identity, Security and Underdevelopment*', **Economic and Political Weekly**, Volume 34 Number 1, February 6, 1999.

security which are such emotional issues in the north-east to be assured through various means which need to be explored.

LITERATURE REVIEW ON GORKHALAND MOVEMENT

Behind Gorkhaland Agitation (B P Mishra, 1986)²⁶ mainly accounts the causes that led to the violent uprising during the period 1985-88 by the GNLF with regard to its demand for the separate state of Gorkhaland. According to the article such violent uprising was basically a case of transferred anger over the expulsion of the Nepali people from Meghalaya. It gives a complete detail of how large numbers of domiciled Nepalis were evicted from Meghalaya which was precursor to the similar eviction of the Nepalis from Assam as part of their anti-foreigners agitation. The article further criticized the Clause VII of the Indo-Nepal Treaty (1950) that allowed huge migration of the Nepalese nationals to India. It viewed the treaty as the main cause of the identity crisis of the Nepalis of the Indian origin.

Gorkhaland Agitation: The Issues, an Information Document I (Government of West Bengal, 1987)²⁷ was published by the Government of West Bengal in September, 1986 in view of Gorkhaland Movement led by the GNLF in the Darjeeling district and the adjoining areas of West Bengal. The booklet gives description of the socio-economic profile of the Darjeeling district depicting the region as developed in comparison to the other parts of the West Bengal States. Giving a historical outline of the Migratory Movements in Darjeeling, it claimed that the area was originally inhabited by the Lepchas and that the Nepalis and the Bengalis came to this region as migrants. It also gives a brief account of the programmes, actions and demands of the GNLF with regard to the 'Gorkhaland' Agitation. Finally, the document put forwards the standpoint of the Government of West Bengal that refutes the allegations of the GNLF on it as illogical and half-truth and termed the GNLF agitation as 'secessionist' and 'anti-national'.

²⁶ B.P.Misra, '*Behind Gorkhaland Agitation*', **Mainstream**, Volume.25, No.7, Nov. 1, 1986.

²⁷ **Gorkhaland Agitation: The Issues, Information Document I**, Government of West Bengal, Sept, 1987.

Gorkhaland Movement: Quest for Identity(Mahendra P Lama, 1996)²⁸ mainly deals with the GNLF phase of the Gorkhaland Movement .It consists of articles published in various newspapers such as Hindustan Times, Indian Express, The Times of India, Economic Times, Business Standard, Patriot, Statesman, Hindu and Telegraph between 1986-89.It has interviews given by Ghising during the hey days of the Gorkhaland Movement led by GNLF to different weekly magazines like The Sunday Observer, The Week, Himalaya Today, Frontline and The Illustrated Weekly of India. It also includes memorandums submitted by Hillmen’s Association, All India Gorkha League and GNLF with regard to the demand for exclusion of the Darjeeling district from West Bengal. Finally, it consists of agreements concluded between GNLF Chief Subash Ghising and the Government of India dealing with the formation of Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) in the year 1988.All this is systematically compiled by Mahendra P.Lama in a chronological order.

Gorkhaland: Evolution of the Politics of Segregation(Dyutish Chakraborty, 1998)²⁹ mainly deals with the political cause of the “Gorkhaland” movement spearheaded by the GNLF during the 1980s.Unlike other literatures on Gorkhaland Agitation that discussed mostly its socio-economic causes, the article discovered the root cause of the Gorkhaland demand in the British administrative policy of Preferential space treatment. It viewed that having tasted the benefits of the special status in the form of ‘excluded area’ or as ‘partially excluded’ area under the colonial regime, the Nepalis felt insecure once the protection was uprooted in the post-independence era. As a result, they demanded a separate state so as to fulfill their political as well as economic aspirations. Refuting the claim of the GNLF that the Movement has no economic aspiration, the article put forwards that the demand of the GNLF for a separate Gorkha Regiment involves the question of employment which is definitely economic in nature. Additionally, the article regarded the issue of identity and citizenship equally responsible for

²⁸ Mahendra P. Lama, **Gorkhaland Movement: Quest for an Identity**, Department of Information and Cultural Affairs, Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council, 1996.

²⁹Dyutish Chakraborty, ‘*Gorkhaland: Evolution of Politics of Segregation*’, **Special Lecture**, Centre for Himalayan Studies, University of North Bengal, April, 1988.

the outbreak of the Gorkhaland Movement. It viewed that the decision of the Indian Government to reorganize the Indian states on linguistic basis was primarily responsible for the growth of 'Gorkha identity' as various hill groups in Darjeeling in a drive for a separate state of Gorkhaland gave up their distinct dialect to be recognized as 'Gorkhali'. The language demand as such further intensified the Gorkhaland Movement. It thus explores the various causes that fomented the Gorkhaland Movement in the past.

Ethnicity, State and Development: A Case Study of the Gorkhaland Movement in Darjeeling (T.B.Subba:1999)³⁰ deals with the political, ethnic and economic history of the Darjeeling district. Dealing with the political history, it shows how the British through wars and subsequent treaties incorporated Darjeeling and the adjoining areas into the political map of colonial India. In the ethnic history, it showcases how the various hill tribes and groups in Darjeeling amalgamated to form a common "Nepali" identity. While in the economic history it gives an account of the development of agriculture, tea, trade, and forest and tourism sector in Darjeeling. Most importantly it deals with the history of the demands for a "Separate Administrative Set-Up" in Darjeeling from the colonial period till the Gorkhaland Agitation headed by the GNLFF Chief Subash Ghising. It gives a detailed description of the violence encountered during the GNLFF agitation for a separate state of Gorkhaland. It also explains the circumstances that led to the signing of the Darjeeling Accord on 24th August, 1988 as well as the aftermath of the Gorkhaland Movement on economy, ethnic relations, education, cultural activities of the Darjeeling district and on the interstate and international relations.

Ethnic separatist movement in Darjeeling (A K Samanta, 2001)³¹ provides a detailed analysis of the historical background of the ethnic separatist movement in Darjeeling led by the Gorkhas who claim to be the original inhabitants of the region. It begins with the history of Darjeeling dating around 1788-90 when it was annexed to Nepal through military conquest from Sikkim and Bhutan. It then analyses how

³⁰ T.B.Subba, **Ethnicity, State and Development: A Case Study of the Gorkhaland Movement in Darjeeling**, Har-Anand Publications, New Delhi, 1999.

³¹ A K Samanta, '*Ethnic separatist movement in Darjeeling*', **Journal of Anthropological Survey of India**, Volume 50 Number 1 and 2, 2001.

the British the British annexed Darjeeling to British India and brought about the planned migration of the Nepalis into Darjeeling as a part of its frontier policy. It gives anthropological references about the Lepchas being the aboriginals of the Darjeeling but later swamped by the Nepalis who steadily constructed a Nepali lingua franca accommodating several ethnic tribes within its manifold. It examines the development of the demand for a separate state of Gorkhaland made by Hillmen's Association (1917) and later by Gorkha National Liberation Front (1985). It further examined the earlier stance of the Indian communists particularly in West Bengal that extended support to the ethnic separatist movement in Darjeeling and demanded autonomy for the district and its neighbouring area as early as in 1942.

The Nepalis in Northeast India: Community in Search of Indian Identity (A C Sinha and T B Subba, 2002)³² encompasses articles written by various scholars dealing with the struggle of the Nepalis in the NER to establish their Indian identity. It traces the evolution and growth of the Nepali community in the NER giving detailed description of the marriage alliances contracted between the royal families of both India and Nepal since time immemorial. It explains the migration of the Nepalis to India during the colonial period as a sponsored migration by the British as part of their colonial strategy. It also narrates the incidents of violence meted out against the Nepalis particularly in Assam that targeted them as foreigners from Nepal rather than Indian citizens and how the Assam Nepalis assimilated to resurrect their distinctive identity as the Nepalis of the Indian origin.

Poverty, Malgovernance and Ethno political Mobilization: Gorkha Nationalism and the Gorkhaland Agitation in India(Rajat Ganguly, 2005)³³ deals with the failure of the States Re-Organization Commission to accommodate the aspirations of the various ethno-linguistic groups within its framework. The article holds the sense of socio-economic deprivation of the ethnic minorities as

³²A.C.Sinha and T.B.Subba, in edited **The Nepalis in Northeast India: A community in search of Indian Identity**, Indus Publishing Company, New Delhi, 2002.

³³Rajat Ganguly, '*Poverty, Malgovernance and Ethnopolitical Mobilization: Gorkha Nationalism and the Gorkhaland Agitation in India*', **Nationalism and Ethnic Politics**, Routledge Publications, 2005.

mainly responsible for the separatist tendency. According to the article, the ethnic minorities feel entrapped in a state which is mainly ruled by the ethnic community who are in majority and wield maximum socio-economic and administrative power in the state machinery. As a result, the ethnic minorities demand autonomy so as to ensure rapid reprisal of their socio-economic and political grievances. It is in this context that the article discusses the plight of the Gorkhas as an ethnic minority in the West Bengal state of Indian Union which is mostly dominated by the Bengalis. It expresses apprehension that the failure of the administration to bring about the socio-economic development in Darjeeling might lead to the resurgence of the Gorkhaland Movement in Darjeeling district of West Bengal.

Rethinking Gorkha Identity: Outside the Imperium of Discourse, Hegemony, and History (Bidhan Golay, 2006)³⁴ discusses the construction of the Gorkha identity as a martial race by the British colonial administration when it encountered the martial qualities of the Gorkhas during the Anglo-Nepal war. It holds that that the Gorkha are still mainly viewed as a “martial race” as established by the British which seals all other possible self-identity of the Gorkhas. It studies the planned migration and settlement of the Gorkhas in India by the British colonial administration and attempts to trace the trajectory of the formation of the identity of the Gorkhas as an indigenous ethnic community in India. It attempts to explain how the identity of the Gorkhs as constructed by the British administration conflicts with the emerging cultural identity of the Gorkhas for which demands for autonomy have been made by the Gorkhas in India from time to time. It insists that since identities are constantly evolving the Gorkha identity too should be viewed as a post-national or a South Asian identity as Gorkhas are spread all over the world and thus hybridised by the local traditions, languages, and culture.

³⁴ Bidhan Golay, ‘*Rethinking Gorkha Identity: Outside The Imperium Of Discourse, Hegemony, And History*’, **Peace and Democracy in South Asia**, Volume 2, No 1 - 2, 2006.

Darjeeling-Dooars People and Place under Bengal's Neo-Colonial Rule (D.S.Bomjan:2008)³⁵ examines the causes of the ongoing Gorkhaland Agitation led by Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJMM) Chief Bimal Gurung. It gives an account of the corruption and poor administration of the DGHC under the chairmanship of Subash Ghising. It discusses in detail the provisions of the Sixth Schedule and criticized it as a deliberate attempt on the part of the Central and State Governments to permanently seal the fate of the demand of the separate state of Gorkhaland in Darjeeling. In fact, it viewed Ghising's approval to the Sixth Schedule as his biggest administrative blunder that led to his downfall, and the resurrection of the Gorkhaland Movement in Darjeeling in the present decade. It showcases the rise of Bimal Gurung as the linchpin of the ongoing Gorkhaland Movement and gives details of the activities of the GJMM in the Darjeeling and the adjoining areas with regard to its demand for a separate state of Gorkhaland.

Through the Mists of Time: The Story of Darjeeling, the Land of Indian Gorkhas (Basant B Lama, 2008)³⁶ deals with the socio-economic as well as the geographical profile of the Darjeeling district. It gives details of the various Anglo-Nepal War and Treaties that led to the amalgamation of the Darjeeling and the adjoining areas into India. It discusses the history of the demand of the Gorkhas for "separate status". It also deals with the demise of the uninterrupted rule of the GNLFC Chief Subash Ghising as the caretaker of the DGHC and the political implication of the victory of Prashant Tamang in the "Indian Idol" television show aired on the Sony Channel that acted as a spark that ignited the ongoing movement for a separate state of 'Gorkhaland'

Indian Nepalis: Issues and Perspectives (T.B. Subba, A.C. Sinha, 2009)³⁷ is composed of various articles written by scholars who deal mainly with issues revolving around identity crisis of the Indian Nepalis. It traces the history of Nepali settlement in NER and the formation of a common Nepali identity in

³⁵ D.S.Bomjan, **Darjeeling-Dooars People and Place under Bengal's Neo-Colonial Rule**, Bikash Jana Sahitya Kendra Publication, Darjeeling, 2008.

³⁶ Basant B.Lama, **Through the Mists of Time: the Story of Darjeeling, the land of Indian Gorkhas**, Bhavani Offset Printing and Publication, Kurseong, 2008.

³⁷ T.B. Subba, A.C. Sinha, G.S. Nepal and D.R. Nepal, in edited **Indian Nepalis: Issues and Perspectives**, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 2009.

India. It explains how the Indian Nepalis are mistaken as Nepali nationals by virtue of the Indo-Nepal Friendship Treaty (1950) that promotes large scale migration of Nepalese nationals to India. It showcases incidence of discrimination and violence against the Indian Nepalis as a result of the mistaken identity. It further explains how this problem of identity crisis of the Indian Nepalis has led to the outbreak of demand for autonomy by the Indian Nepalis in the Darjeeling District of West Bengal.

Why Gorkhaland? (Gorkha Janamukti Morcha, 2009)³⁸ is a document published Gorkha Janamukti Morcha (GJMM). It gives an account of history of the Darjeeling district and the adjoining Dooars area under the Jalpaiguri district showcasing that these areas historically did not form a part of the present West Bengal state. It insists that the Darjeeling and Dooars were parts of kingdom of Sikkim and Bhutan which were annexed by British to India. It further claimed that Darjeeling and Dooars were administered separately by the British colonial rule and were kept outside the purview of the Provincial Government of Bengal. It attempts to explain that the identity of the Gorkha's as a distinct community is in jeopardy as long as it exists within West Bengal. It particularly insists that the Gorkha as a cultural community is entirely different in its language, customs, culture and practices from the dominant culture of West Bengal and so its demand for a separate state of Gorkhaland is justified. It also highlights economic neglect of the region by the West Bengal government and the failure of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council set up in 1988 to meet the aspirations of the Gorkha's in West Bengal. It thus attempts to explain why the formation of Gorkhaland is justified and a demand which need immediate resolution.

Why Not Gorkhaland? (Gorkha Janamukti Morcha, 2013)³⁹ is a document published by Gorkha Janamukti Morcha (GJMM) which attempts to reinforce its demand for a separate state of Gorkhaland. It highlights the role of Gorkhas in the freedom struggle of India as a testimony to the nationalist spirit of Gorkhas thereby refuting all the allegations of brewing secessionist aspirations often alleged by the West Bengal government. It makes reference to the Article 3(A) of

³⁸ *'Why Gorkhaland?'* Gorkha Janamukti Morcha, Darjeeling, 2009.

³⁹ *'Why Not Gorkhaland?'*, Gorkha Janamukti Morcha, Darjeeling, 2013.

the Indian Constitution which provides for the provision for the creation and reorganisation of new states within the Indian Union and thus insists that its demand for a separate state is constitutional. It also makes reference to the history of the region claiming that it was never a part of the West Bengal state. It also expresses its displeasure over the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) agreement which allows for the unwarranted interference of the West Bengal government in the functioning of the GTA preventing it from functioning as an independent and autonomous body. It thus views the GTA to be the conspiracy of the West Bengal government to contain the Gorkhaland Movement. The document thus strongly put forwards its demand for the separate state of Gorkhaland as the only solution to the socio-economic problems of the Gorkhas in India.

LITERATURE REVIEW ON KAMTAPUR MOVEMENT

The Koches: Their Racial Affinities and Original Homeland (D Nath, 1986)

⁴⁰gives a historical account of the Koches as one of the aboriginal tribes of North-east India. He examines the various descriptions given by the British anthropologists about the ethnic origin of the Koches in India. Accordingly it alleges that the Koches are of Mongoloid origin having close affinities with other Bodo tribes like the Meches, Rabhas, Dhimals, Hajongs and Garos. They migrated to India from Tibet and settled first in the north and north-eastern Bengal. They gradually extended towards western part of Assam and then occupied large areas of south and west Bengal where they came into contact with diverse racial elements including the Dravidians. In course of time the Koches formed marital alliance with the Dravidians and a mixed Mongolo-Dravidian race having preponderant Mongoloid characters came into being. However the subject of the origin of the Koches still remains a subject of debate and discussion.

⁴⁰ Nath, D, *The Koches: Their racial affinities and original homeland*, **Journal of Indian History**, Volume 64 No. 1-3, 1986.

Uttarakhand Movement: A Sociological Analysis (Rajatshubro Mukhopadhyay, 1987)⁴¹ analyses the Uttarakhand Movement for a separate state named 'Uttarakhand Pardesh Sangha' the call for which was given by the representatives of Cooch Behar State Praja Congress, along with Darjeeling Gorkha League, Sikkim Praja Sammelan and Jalpaiguri Gorkha League organised a meeting at Darjeeling in 1949. The Uttarkhand movement was mainly an outcome of the discontent with the socio-political conditions of the Rajbangsi in West Bengal. The leaders of the Uttarkhand movement appealed to the ethnic sentiments of the Rajbangsi populace against the established and politically powerful immigrant population who dishonour the Rajbangsi by addressing them as Bahes in the society. The movement was thus an attempt to establish and revive the lost glory of the Rajbangsi identity for which particular emphasis was put on the establishing the Rajbangsi dialect as a distinct language separate from the mainstream Bengali language. Uttarkhand movement was successful in the collective mobilisation of the Rajbangsi and made a significant contribution in bringing about a social change in the structure of the West Bengal society. The Uttarkhand movement can thus be viewed as a social movement.

Integrated Decentralization: A Case of Cooch Behar District in West Bengal (Dilip Kumar Sarkar, 1998)⁴² examines the administrative system of Cooch Behar prior to its accession to India in 1950. It holds that Cooch Behar was a princely state with a highly centralized administrative structure. It was under the aegis of the western educated liberal Maharaja Nripendra Narayan that the system of administration underwent changes with the enactment of various development oriented Acts such as the *Chaukidari* Act, 1893 which was framed on the model of Bengal Act. Even after the accession of Cooch Behar to the British India, the Act continued in vogue until 1958. Cooch Behar however enjoyed an

⁴¹ Rajatshubro Mukhopadhyay, '*Uttarakhand Movement: A Sociological Analysis*', **Special Lecture VIII**, Centre for Himalayan Studies, University of North Bengal, West Bengal, 27th February, 1987.

⁴² Dilip Kumar Sarkar, '*Integrated Decentralization: A Case of Cooch Behar District in West Bengal*', **Journal of Indian Anthropology**, Volume XXV No.2, January-December, 1998.

autonomous status under the British administrative system owing to its distinctive cultural heritage and administrative system.

Kshatriyaization among the Rajbangsi: An Appraisal (Rajatsubhra Mukhopadhyay, 1999)⁴³ gives an account of the movement by the Rajbangsi of north-eastern Bengal to elevate their status in the hierarchical social system based on the *varna* or caste during the nineteenth century. The movement known as the Kshatriya movement was mainly the outcome of the social humiliation faced by the Rajbangsi in north-eastern Bengal by the upper caste Hindu migrants who migrated to North Bengal during the British rule. The Rajbangsi were looked down upon as an inferior caste by the Hindu migrants who completely changed the pattern of the Hindu society in North Bengal. This made the Rajbangsi caste conscious who thereby launched a movement to proclaim themselves as Kshatriyas who were placed only next to Brahmins. Accordingly they adopted sanskritization of their style of life by initiating the usages of other superior castes as such wearing of the sacred thread as the insignia of caste distinction. The Kshatriya Movement however was restricted only to the affluent class of the Rajbangsi community with improved economic and material condition, and educational status and as desire for a higher berth in the social hierarchy. It was not entirely successful as the poor section of the Rajbangsi community kept themselves aloof from the Kshatriya Movement.

Contradiction and change in social identity of the Rajbangsi (Rajat Subhra Mukhopadhyay, 1999)⁴⁴ examines the contradiction and change in social identity of the Rajbangsi against the background of the Kshatriyaization movement wherein they insisted to be recognised as Kshatriya rather than the tribe 'Koch'. This was mainly to remove them from the category of 'Depressed Class' which were subjected to practices of untouchability prevalent in the Indian social system. The 1911 Census however recognised Rajbangsi to be different from Koch but denied to record them as Kshatriya. With the 'protective

⁴³ Rajat Subhra Mukhopadhyay, 'Kshatriyaization among the Rajbangsi: An appraisal', **Man in India**, Volume 79 No. 3-4, July-December 1999.

⁴⁴ Rajat Subhra Mukhopadhyay, 'Contradiction and change in social identity of the Rajbangsi', **Journal of the Indian Anthropological Society**, Volume 34 No. 2, July 1999.

discrimination' introduced by the British administration to curb anti-British agitations involved reservations in matters of education, employment and constitutional rights. It was first extended to the Muslims and later to the 'depressed classes'. It was founded that the Kshatriya Samiti, which was founded in 1910 and instrumental in Kshatriya movement, later in order to reap benefits of the 'protective discrimination' demanded the status of Scheduled Castes. The demand was successfully as the British government provided recognition to the Rajbangsi as the 'Depressed Class'. At present, a new demand has been initiated by the Koch-Rajbangsi to be recognised as Schedule Tribe. This is mainly in view of the Rajbangsi in Assam who are recognised as the Other Backward Class resulting into the confused identity of the Rajbangsi in India. Accordingly demand for the tribal status is gaining momentum among the Rajbangsi on the ground that many scholars assert that the Koch-Rajbangsi originally belong to the Indo-Mongolian tribal stock and that the Koch-Rajbangsi of Assam and Bengal cannot have two separate officially ascribed statuses.

Rajbangshis: The Deprived People of North Bengal in the State of West Bengal (Moumita Ghosh Bhattacharyya, 2002)⁴⁵ examines the socio-economic conditions of the Rajbangsi in North Bengal. It views Rajbangsi as the indigenous population of the North Bengal who lost their land to the immigrants mainly the upper caste Bengalis and Marwaris and is now dominated by the later in the politico-economic system. It attempts to trace the origin of Rajbangsi providing references of various British anthropologists of the Rajbangsi ethnic origin. It also examines the societal structure of the Rajbangsi such as marriage, family, dress, food habits and occupation. It studies the economic system of Rajbangsi which is rural and agrarian. It further studies the gradual decline of the *jotedar-adhiari* system prevalent in North Bengal wherein the Rajbangsi exercised control over their land with the rapid industrialisation and burgeoning tea gardens that attracted immigrants who monopolized the Rajbangsi and possessed control over their lands. The marginalisation of the Rajbangsi in the socio-economic

⁴⁵ Moumita Ghosh Bhattacharyya, *Rajbangshis: The Deprived People of North Bengal (in the State of West Bengal)*, **International Journal of South Asian Studies**, Volume 2 Number 2, Puducherry, July-December 2002.

milieu led to assertion of ethnic identity of the Rajbangsi as the indigenous population of North Bengal and demands for the separate state of Kamtapur.

Destination Kamtapur (Anirban Biswas, 2002) ⁴⁶explains a sense of alienation among the Rajbangsi in North Bengal as the cause of Kamtapur Movement in North Bengal. The Koch-Rajbangsi identity could not merge and develop into Bengali nationality owing to a lack of a shared history. The refusal of the West Bengal government to give the Kamtapuri language an official status as distinct from the Bengali has deepened the feeling of alienation among the Rajbangsi. The assertion of the Bengali linguists that the Kamtapuri language is the sub-language of the Bengali language and that its difference is only dialectical makes the Rajbangsi identity feel shadowed by the dominant Bengali identity. This has resulted into the identity crisis of Rajbangsi in North Bengal who in an attempt to establish their identity as separate from the Bengalis have launched the Kamtapur Movement. In addition to this, the steady flow of immigrants into North-Bengal districts, mainly Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar have led to the dispossession of land and other means of livelihood for the Rajbangsi. The scarcity of resources has further alienated the Rajbangsi who feel isolated, deprived and discriminated thereby viewing a separate state of Kamtapur as the only solution to all their socio-economic problems.

Kamtapur Liberation Organisation: The New Face of Terror (Alok Kumar Gupta and Saswati Chanda, 2003) ⁴⁷ examines the activities of the Kamtapur Liberation Organisation (KLO) formed in 1992. It alleges KLO to be the underground armed wing of the Kamtapur People's Party (KPP). KLO like KPP demands a separate state of Kamtapur comprising of Cooch Behar, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, North and South Dinajpur, Malda and Goalpara in lower Assam. It was involved in a series of unconstitutional activities like the abduction of the members of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). This however resulted in the distancing of the KPP from the KLO. It further discusses about the Operation Kamtapur launched by the West Bengal government in November 2000 to

⁴⁶ Biswas, Anirban, '*Destination Kamtapur*', **Frontier**, Volume 35 No.20, 2002.

⁴⁷ Alok Kumar Gupta and Saswati Chanda, '*Kamtapur Liberation Organisation: The New Face of Terror*', **Third Concept**, Volume XVI No. 191, January 2003.

contain the widespread terror caused by the KLO which resulted into the surrendering of KLO militants. It holds the socio-economic deprivation of the Rajbangsi and the large influx of immigrants from Bangladesh and Bhutan in North Bengal as the root cause of the outbreak of such an armed struggle by KLO having strong regional linkages with ULFA in Assam and international support from similar militant and fundamentalist religious organizations.

A Ruthless Hit Squad (Suhrid Sankar Chattopadhyay, 2004)⁴⁸ discusses the successful attempt of the West Bengal government to contain the unconstitutional activities of the KLO alleged to be the armed wing of the KPP. It analyses the major setback that the KLO suffered with Royal Bhutanese Army (RBA) that assisted the West Bengal government in destroying the camps of KLO in the India-Bhutan border. RBA handed over to the Indian authorities founder-members of the KLO Joydeb Roy and Milton Burman, and other important leaders such as Sanjoy Adhikari, Bhim Dakua and Pabitra Singha. The West Bengal Left Front government led by the CPI (M) in further appealed the militants of the KLO to surrender following which five militants' surrendered who were reported to have given Rs.12, 000 each and the license to start trade in river bed materials.

A History of Cooch Behar (Hiten Nag, 2005)⁴⁹ gives an elaborate historical account of the various royal descendants of the Cooch Behar and socio-economic activities undertaken by them. It attempts to compile not only the social-economic structure of the people in Cooch Behar during the early times incorporating also the folktales, rituals and proverbs associated with the region. It describes the history of Cooch Behar as an integral part of the history of undivided Bengal, Assam and Bhutan. It further deals with the origin of the word 'Koch' and 'Bihar' and insists that the term 'Cooch Behar' is the outcome of a resolution of the royal court in 1896. It also discusses at length the Cooch Behar Treaty (1773 AD) and the close association of the Cooch Behar with the other royal state Bhutan. Lastly it gives a chronological summary of the important events that occurred in the princely state of Cooch Behar.

⁴⁸ Chattopadhyay, Suhrid Sankar, 'A Ruthless hit squad', **Frontline**, Volume 21 No.1, 2004.

⁴⁹ Hiten Nag, edited **A History of Cooch Behar**, N.L. Publishers, Siliguri, West Bengal, 2005.

Social and Political Tensions in North Bengal Since 1947 (Sailen Debnath, 2007)⁵⁰ is composed of articles mainly dealing with the socio-political issues in the North Bengal. It analyses the historical transition of North Bengal in the wake of various socio-political movements affecting the region that exhibit the failure of the Government to fulfill the aspirations of the people in the region. It discusses how even during the British rule the region witnessed socio-political movements like 'Tebhaga' movement of the share-croppers against the *zamindari* system that prevailed in the region. It also studies the issue of migration of people from Nepal and Bengal leading into the change in the demographic profile of the region. Consequent of the large cross-border influx has caused identity crisis among the aboriginals in the region culminating into socio-political movements for a separate state like Uttarkhand, Gorkhaland and Kamtapur. It also examines the Naxalite Movement organised by the peasants on the ideology of Mao-Tse-Tung in Naxalbari village of West Bengal. Amidst all these socio-political movements in North Bengal, the role of the West Bengal government is also studied with regard to contain these movements and establishing peace and order in West Bengal.

Social Formation of the Rajbangsi and the Emergence of the Kamtapuri Identity (Rajatsubhra Mukhopadhyay, 2009)⁵¹ analyses the trajectory of social mobility of the Rajbangsi in North Bengal. The Rajbangsi to be elevated in the caste system of the Indian societal order organised the Kshatriya movement whereby they adopted the rituals and practices associated with the upper caste. This was mainly to separate them from the identity of Koch which was recognised as a lower caste and therefore subject to social discrimination. The British government in response to the Kshatriya movement although registered the Rajbangsi as distinct from the Koches but not as the upper caste. The Kshatriya movement being restricted mainly to the landed aristocratic Rajbangsi

⁵⁰ Debnath Sailen, edited **Social and Political Tensions in North Bengal (Since 1947)**, N.L. Publishers, Siliguri, West Bengal, 2007.

⁵¹ Rajatsubhra Mukhopadhyay, '*Social Formation of the Rajbangsi and the Emergence of the Kamtapuri Identity*', in edited **Identity, Cultural Pluralism and the State: South Asia in Perspective**, N K Das and V R Rao, Anthropological Survey of India, Macmillian Press, 2009.

did not get the support of the poor Rajbangsi who could not relate to the practices of the upper caste. Later however with the introduction of the reservation system by the British government to contain the anti-British sentiments the Rajbangsi made appeals for preferential treatment meant for the category Depressed Classes. Recently a new move has been made by an international forum of the Koch-Rajbangsi that demands a uniform legal status for Rajbangsi as a Scheduled Tribe in India. Thus the assimilation of the Rajbangsi into the Bengali mainstream society is fraught with divisive demands of Rajbangsi for the separate state of Kamtapur. The Rajbangsi from time to time have insisted on having their own ethnic identity independent of the Bengalis of West Bengal.

Kamatapur and the Koch Rajbangsi Imagination (Arup Jyoti Das, 2009)⁵² deals with the demand for the separate state of Kamtapur by the Rajbangsi in North Bengal. He asserts that Kamtapur is an imaginary state for the Koch Rajbangsi with no material existence. This imagination is largely based on their belief on the existence of such a state in the ancient history dating back to the 13th century. Accordingly the Koch Rajbangsi does not name their proposed state on the name of their community rather they derive the imagination or the idea of Kamtapur from the history which indicates the Kamtapur was the capital of the Karumpa Kingdom which constituted of the present day Assam together with West Bengal. The Rajbangsi of North Bengal tends to identify themselves to this Kamtapur Kingdom which is a historical reality and not the present West Bengal state of which they now form a part of. Accordingly various organisations like KPP, KLO and Greater Cooch Behar Party have demanded for a separate state for the Koch Rajbangsi to preserve and maintain their distinct identity and a glorious past.

The Dooars in Historical Transition (Sailen Debnath, 2010)⁵³ provides a description of the Dooars region in West Bengal on which there is a dearth of academic research. It begins with early history of the Dooars describing the

⁵² Arup Jyoti Das, **Kamatapur and the Koch Rajbangsi Imagination**, Montage Media Publication, Assam, India, 2009.

⁵³ *Sailen Debnath, The Dooars in Historical Transition*, N.L. Publishers, Siliguri, West Bengal, 2010.

foundation of the Kamtapur, medieval Bengal and the impact of Mughal rule in the Dooars. It provides a detailed description of the Koch Kings in Dooars. It further discusses the socio-cultural origin and identities of various communities in Dooars such as Koch, Bodo, Lepcha, Totos and Ravas. It examines the impact of the Land Revenue Settlements in the Dooars under the British and Bhutanese rule on the Dooars. It analyses the emergence of the autonomy movements like Gorkhaland as well as the Kamtapur both of which demand Dooars to be incorporated in the prospective states respectively. It also examines the strategic importance of the Dooars as the chicken neck connecting the troubled North-east India with the rest of the country and also in view of the persistent Chinese threat of encroachment into the border of India.

Summation of the Literature Review

The above literature review provides an analysis of Multiculturalism as a conceptual framework that values collective community identities as it enables the individual to live a life of dignity. Multiculturalism asserts that community identity should not only be recognised but also respected. It is only when cultural community identity is secure and treated equal that the individual can explore options and make choices. Accordingly Multiculturalism advocated granting the minority culture special community rights so that they can determine their own way of life without discrimination. These rights include the freedom to promote their collectively valued way of life, to live and be governed according to the norms of their culture, and to observe the practices of their cultural community. Most scholars have discussed Multiculturalism in the context of Indian as well as western societies.

Multiculturalism however comes across as a political rhetoric as there is an existence of a gap between its propagation and implementation. They have discussed why the policy of Multiculturalism failed to prevent the outbreak of ethno-autonomy movements in western as well as third countries including India. They have also suggested various mechanisms by which Multiculturalism can be successfully established in different societies. Literatures on Gorkhaland and Kamtapur Movement discuss the ethnic crisis in West Bengal with special reference to the separate statehood demands of the Gorkhas and the Koch

Rajbangsi. It studies the identity formation of the both the communities and provides a historical account of their movements. The present study is an attempt to understand the ethnic unrest in West Bengal within the framework of various multicultural theories. It examines the separate statehood demands of the Gorkhas and Koch Rajbangsi as distinct ethnic groups with an identity and culture of their own and their claims to the minority group rights in West Bengal.

C. OBJECTIVES

1. To study the process of identity formation of the Gorkhas and the Koch Rajbangshis so as to analyse the complexity of the ongoing identity politics in West Bengal.
2. To understand the factors responsible for the emergence of Gorkhaland and Kamtapur Movements in West Bengal
3. To investigate the nature of both the Movements together with their history and their present status.
4. To analyse the Gorkhaland and Kamtapur Movements within the Multicultural framework.
5. To analyse the viability of Multiculturalism in view of the regional movements of the Gorkhas and the Koch Rajbangsi in West Bengal.

D. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study is exploratory in nature. Accordingly the study focuses on the following research questions:

1. What are the factors responsible for the emergence of Gorkhaland and Kamtapur movements in North Bengal?
2. What is the nature of the developments of Gorkhaland and Kamtapur Movements?
3. What is the response of the Government and mainstream political parties to Gorkhaland and Kamtapur Movements?
4. Can the claims of Gorkhaland and Kamtapur Movements be reconciled with each other?
5. Are Gorkhaland and Kamtapur Movements ethnocentric in character?

6. Is Multiculturalism a viable alternative to maintain and moderate identity politics in West Bengal?

E. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Multicultural as a conceptual framework is in contrast to Liberalism that viewed collective community rights as both theoretically incoherent and practically dangerous. To Liberalism, granting of collective community rights to specific communities breeds the danger of undermining the sense of shared civic identity that binds a liberal society intact as one. Such community rights would lead to the failure of a democracy as different communities would refrain from accommodating their cultural needs in consonance with other communities thereby undermining the spirit of unity. Liberalism in order to establish liberal equality therefore advocates equal citizenship rights and equal access to opportunities for all. It promotes the value of common undifferentiated citizenship status for all the cultures in a liberal state that would develop a shared civic identity instead of differentiated cultural identity. It recognises the value of only those ties that are freely chosen and thereby advocates the centrality of the 'right to exit' in a liberal state. Multiculturalism on the other hand asserts that individuals do cherish bonds and memberships that are not entirely chosen by the self. It is this cultural community membership that partly shapes the identity of the individual and is therefore valued and cherished by the individual. It views equal citizenship rights as endangering their distinct identity as it leads to the assimilation of minority cultural communities into a single culture thereby. It fears that in a bid to produce common single culture, Liberalism would result into the withering away of minority cultures into oblivion. Multiculturalism therefore advocates group-differentiated rights to prevent the obscurity of their unique cultural identities and memberships.

Thus the point of difference between Liberalism and Multiculturalism is on the emphasis placed on the value of community membership over undifferentiated citizenship of the individuals. It is however noteworthy that the concerns of both Liberalism and Multiculturalism are fairly similar. Liberalism is premised on the assumption that each individual has its own conception of good and so no one group can encompass the entire range of goods which differs from individual to

individual. It thus desists from group rights and attempts to construct a unified citizenship guaranteeing equal individual rights to all. Multiculturalism too maintains that no one cultural group can incorporate the entire range of values that we, as human beings, prize deeply and thereby advocated group differentiated rights that respect the cultural identity and the practices of each cultural group. Taken together, these two frameworks converge with regard to their concerns though they have divergent perspectives on the same.⁵⁴

The theory of Multiculturalism has been propounded by different authors. In the following we shall try to present the expositions of some of these scholars.

WILL KYMLICKA

Kymlicka's theory of Multiculturalism mainly provides a set of general principles to assess the claims of and regulating the relations between different cultural groups within society. He also reflects on the systematic link between Liberalism and Multiculturalism. According to Kymlicka both the 'isms' are committed to the ideal of 'revisability', i.e., the right to revise and rethink our choices. Liberalism as an ideology not only insist on an individual's right to choose but also in his liberty to revise, rethink his choice and choose another vision of good life. Multiculturalism however put forwards that for an individual to revise certain traditions and conceptions, a secure cultural context is essential. Multiculturalism sustains cultural diversity through safeguarding minority cultures in order to create a society where liberal values can flourish. Multiculturalism while affirming the ideal of revisability locates the individual within the community emphasizing the need to provide a secure context. Liberalism, on the other hand, gives centrality to the idea of individual autonomy of an autonomous and unencumbered self. Accordingly Liberalism protects the rights of individuals as citizens while Multiculturalism protects the rights of minority cultures within the nation-state.

⁵⁴ See Gurpreet Mahajan, **The Multicultural Path: Issues of Diversity and Discrimination in Democracy**, Sage Publications India, New Delhi, 2002.

Kymlicka defines culture as ‘an intergenerational community, more or less institutionally complete, occupying a given territory or homeland, sharing a distinct language and history’. He rejects the assimilation of the minority culture with the majority on the following grounds; **first**, culture is vital to human development and so minorities should have a right to their culture; **second**, the principle of justice requires that minorities together with the majority should enjoy and be able to exercise equal cultural rights; **third**, enforced assimilation leads to the psychological and moral disorientation of the minority nations as they do not share a common culture, a common language, common historical memories with the majority thereby drawing a deep wedge between the two.

Kymlicka identifies two sources of cultural diversity. **First**, the involuntary incorporation of different culture into a single state through invasion or colonisation where one cultural community is invaded and conquered by another, or is ceded from one imperial power to another. Such a state is termed by Kymlicka as ‘Multination’ states which can also arise voluntary if different cultures mutually agree to form a federation for their mutual benefit. **Second**, when a country accepts immigrant families and individuals from cultures distinct from its own it results into cultural diversity. Kymlicka termed it ‘Polyethnic’ state which allows the immigrants to maintain their ethnic distinctions and attempts to bring about their institutional integration. A multicultural state can be both multinational and polyethnic.

Kymlicka defends ‘group-specific rights’ on the ground that they are rights of non-discrimination. It is not special privileges for distinct minority cultures in a multicultural state. This is because in certain circumstances, integration rather than separation is perceived as a badge of inferiority. To illustrate he puts forward Michael Gross distinction between the cases of blacks and Indians: where blacks have been forcibly *excluded* (segregated) from white society by law; Indians—aboriginal peoples with their own cultures, languages, religions and territories—have been forcibly *included* (integrated) into that society by law. Here assimilation for the Indians, like segregation for the blacks is a badge of inferiority. Group-specific rights based on differential citizenship thus become a necessity in multicultural societies to prevent the disintegration of a cultural community.

Kymlicka puts forward three group-specific rights so as to accommodate national and ethnic differences in a multicultural state. These rights can overlap as groups can claim more than one kind of right.

(1) Self-government rights: In most multination states, minorities believe their self-determination is not possible within the multination nation state. Thus in order to ensure the full and free development of their cultures they demand political autonomy or territorial jurisdiction and even secession. Such demand can be accommodated by guaranteeing the minorities' self-government rights in the form of federalism which divides powers between the central government and regional subunits (provinces/states/cantons). To make federalism more effective the boundaries of the federal subunits can be redrawn to ensure that the national minority forms a majority in one of the subunits. Thus Self-government right empowers a national minority to make its own decisions without the fear of being outvoted by the majority.

(2) Polyethnic rights: These group-specific rights are usually intended to promote integration of the minorities into larger society. It does not involve self-government but includes public funding of the minority's cultural practices and institutions so that they can express their cultural particularity without the fear of elimination from politico-economic institutions of the dominant culture. It includes the funding of ethnic associations, magazines, festivals, ethnic studies and ethnic associations which enables the minorities to sustain their culture and practice them with pride. Like self-government rights, polyethnic rights are seen as permanent.

(3) Special representative rights: These rights involve process to ensure the representation of the minorities in the institutional structure of the state. It aims to reduce barriers for the greater participation and inclusion of the minorities, i.e., ethnic, women or even poor in institutional structures and processes believed to be controlled by dominant groups. Thus special representative rights involve system of proportional representation, reservation of seats for the disadvantaged minorities in legislature and other governmental agencies.

According to Kymlicka the demand for polyethnic and special representation rights by a minority group is underpinned by an integrationist philosophy. It is when groups feel excluded and want to be included in the larger society that they

demand recognition and accommodation of their ‘differences’. Here he illustrates the case of Sikhs who could not join the Royal Canadian Mounted Police because of the obligation to wear a ceremonial headgear as a part of the uniform. They as such demanded exception from the obligation to wear a ceremonial headgear and instead permit them to wear a turban in consonance with their religious practices. Their demand however met with criticism and objection as disrespect to the ‘national symbol’ undermining the fact that the Sikhs wanted to contribute to the larger community by joining the national police forces. Similarly the special representation right involving defining of geographical constituencies is to ensure equal representation of minority communities so that they do not get swayed by the majority. To view it as a threat to national unity is a fallacy for it intends to induce larger civic participation and strengthen political legitimacy.

Thus polyethnic and special representation rights guaranteed by the multicultural state promote integration and not separation. To assume that polyethnic and special representation rights would impede the integration of immigrants promoting ‘ghettoization’ or ‘balkanization’ is a false alarm. What needs to be understood is that demand for both these rights by the immigrants reflects the desire to participate and commit to the mainstream society. It is the demand for reformation of the mainstream institution that is accommodative of cultural differences and values minority cultures. The basic impulse for both the polyethnic as well as special representation right is only that of social unity.

A self-government right, on the other hand, is not integrationist. It is based on the idea of differentiated citizenship that views national minorities as ‘distinct’ peoples with inherent rights of self-government. It divides peoples into separate ‘nations’, each with its own historic rights, territories, powers of self-government and its own political community. It is unlikely to integrate the minorities with the mainstream society. Rather it would create dual citizenship as the minority community views their own political community as primary, and the authority of the larger federation as derivative. Moreover, it may simply fuel the ambitions of nationalist leaders who with increasing self government rights will ultimately demand secession for the creation of their own nation- state on the grounds that democracy is the rule of

‘the people’ and that there are more than one people, each with the right to rule themselves.

To summarize, Kymlicka put forwards the idea of ‘pluralizing’ or ‘hybrid’ Multiculturalism. It is ‘pluralizing’ in two distinct forms. **First**, it aims not to isolate the minority group from the larger society. It rather promotes its participation into the mainstream society thereby pluralizing it. **Second**, it also pluralizes the minority groups themselves. While promoting the non discrimination of the minority culture, liberal societies break cultural boundaries. Different ethnic groups mingle with each other exploring and adopting new identities and practices in a non-discriminatory civil society. Over time, as boundaries of ethnic identities weaken it results in ‘pluralistic integration’. Institutional integration is also likely to result together with a sense of psychological identification. ‘Hybrid’ Multiculturalism thus does not involve the preservation of distinct cultures nor is it assimilation in strict sense. In short, Multiculturalism rejects integration but involves revision in the terms of integration.⁵⁵

BIKHU PAREKH

Bikhu Parekh’s theory of Multiculturalism primarily focuses on cultural diversity based on the presence of ethnic, cultural and religious minorities. He attempts to find mechanisms through which the distinctiveness of these minorities can be accommodated and preserved. According to Parekh, every modern state is characterised by cultural diversity. Cultural diversity to Parekh is the presence of different and sometimes incompatible cultural communities seeking sustenance and preservation of their ways of life. Cultural diversity is accompanied with the challenges that involve accommodation of differences without losing social cohesion, reconciliation of conflicting demands of equality of treatment and recognition of cultural differences without undermining the spirit of common citizenship among its culturally diverse members. Parekh puts forward the following four types of cultural diversity:

1. Cultural diversity emanates from the presence of ‘aboriginals’ or indigenous peoples. These people are those whose way of life is governed by their land with

⁵⁵ See Will Kymlicka **Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Politics**, Oxford University Press, New York, 2004.

which they are integrally and spiritually bond with. They lose control over their land owing to western imperialism but do not demand for themselves independent state. Rather their main concern is to recover or retain their land together with the freedom to practice their pre-modern ways of life within the framework of the existing states. They do not seek power but only the right to preserve and practice their distinct and traditional ways of life.

2. Cultural diversity also emanates from the territorially concentrated communities that desire to preserve their distinct languages and cultures within the existing states. They are politically conscious communities and share with the wider society its economic, social and political aspirations. They view the traditional federal framework of the state granting administrative autonomy and equality of status with other provinces as inadequate for the survival of their distinct linguistic and cultural identity. They assert that although the mechanism of federalism is not inherently unfair or unequal it cannot fulfill their cultural needs which are unique to other provinces. They as such seek rights and power that are distinct from the rest of the provinces. They demand rights such as to control immigration, to impose measures designed to protect their language, culture and ethos, and to remain a 'distinct society' within the state.
3. Cultural diversity can be caused by the territorially dispersed cultural groups. This group is composed of immigrants, indigenous ethnic minorities and religious communities. They seek to preserve their distinct ways of life but do not demand isolation like the first group or political autonomy like the second. They only demand cultural space to carry and transmit their cultural way of life and opportunity to contribute to the collective life-opportunity.
4. Culture diversity can even result from the groups of men and women leading a common self-chosen life-style. They include groups such as that of homosexuals who demand not just toleration but respect for their chosen unconventional practices as distinct sub-cultures.

According to Parekh, the guiding norm in a multicultural democratic polity is not cultural diversity but the principle of non-discrimination. Democracy, to Parekh is committed to the ideal of non-discrimination. This requires than no individuals and groups are excluded or accorded subordinate position from the political domain

owing to his social or ascribed identity. Rather they are to be included as equals in public domain. Equality here does not imply assertion of sameness or identity but non-discrimination on account of one's identity. It is this concern for non-discrimination which is a distinguishable feature of Democracy that should be upheld even in a multicultural framework challenging cultural majoritarianism and assimilation.

Parekh condemns cultural majoritarianism and assimilation not for its insistence on uniformity but for privileging majoritarian culture and subordinating the minority culture within the polity. It is in the same spirit that cultural diversity is to be valued that is to the extent it helps in destroying the structures present in a homogeneous national culture that are discriminatory. A multicultural democratic polity should thus pursue cultural diversity through the principle of non-discrimination. The way diversity is prioritised over assimilation, similarly the principle of non-discrimination should be given preference over unconditional pursuit of cultural diversity. Accordingly the assimilationist model that adopts a culture-blind or difference-blind approach refusing to accept cultural diversity so as to integrate the minority communities with the wider society is rejected by Parekh as a solution to the demands of the minorities. To Parekh some of the central principles of liberalism are violated by the assimilationist model which are as follows;

1. It violates the very liberal principle that individuals should be respected equally. It fails to take into notice that human beings are culturally embedded individuals as culture partly imparts them their identity. Thus to ignore a group's cultural distinctiveness is to disrespect their ways of life;
2. It equates equality with uniformity but fails to recognise the inequality that emanates from uniformity. For instance, the Jews are reduced to opening their shops only five days a week with Sunday declared as holiday which is favourable to Christians as they visit Church on Sundays but not the Jews. Thus if differential treatment can cause for unfair discrimination, so can uniform treatment. To find ways of being discriminating without becoming discriminatory and of guarding against the misuse of differences appears to be the only solution to accommodate cultural diversity;

3. Different ways of life correct and balance each other. They enrich the overall richness of the society. However if different ways of life are destroyed to establish autonomous way of life, there would remain no resources from which to draw new inspiration and strength;
4. When the demands of cultural minorities are not accommodated they exploit the very ethos of liberalism to legitimize their demands. For instance, if religionization of their demands fails to address their needs they ethnicize their cultural practices to legitimize their demands. Thus refusal to accept the demands of cultural minorities as legitimate only makes them to ground their demand on religion and ethnicity which are intractable and non-negotiable;
5. The argument of the assimilationist model that the voluntary immigration makes the immigrants liable to the liberal way of life is deeply flawed. This is because immigration may occur so as to escape persecution and preserve their ways of life. Beside a host state in need of labour can also encourage immigration by offering lucrative incentives to the migrant recruits. The act of immigration is a bilateral relationship between the host society and the immigrants. It involves consent and commitments on both sides which are violated if the host society entitles the immigrants to equality only on the condition that they surrender their cultural identity and assimilate into the liberal way of life.

Parekh rejecting the assimilationist model provides a multicultural perspective which is a creative interplay of three complementary insights, i.e., the cultural embeddedness of human beings, the inescapability and desirability of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, and the internal plurality of each culture. It is based on the harmonious relationship between unity and diversity. Parekh put forwards the following general principles to reconcile the demands of unity and diversity in a multicultural society:

Equality of difference

In a multicultural society, visible symbols of cultural identity like dress are deeply valued by the individuals. It however often becomes a source of resentment within a wider society. Attempts should therefore be made to define such objective symbolic symbols of cultural identity in a way that is culturally sensitive and do justice to both the minority and majority ways of life. Uniforms in schools and

hospitals should be open to appropriate modifications when demanded by the cultural minorities. Such an arrangement does not de-culturalize the organizations rather facilitates minority integration into the suitably opened-up mainstream society.

Equal treatment

In a multicultural society recognition of cultural differences might entail granting of additional rights to some groups or individuals. These are groups who have been marginalized or suppressed for long and were denied the opportunity to participate in the mainstream society as equals. Accordingly these groups generally lack the confidence and hence there is a need to give them rights not available to others. Such rights include special or disproportionate representation in parliament, the cabinet and other government bodies and the right to consultation and even a veto over laws relating to them. The aim is to draw the groups into the mainstream of society and give substance to the principle of equal citizenship. For instance, many countries allow Sikhs to carry a suitably covered *kirpan* (a small dagger) in public places on the ground that it is a mandatory symbol of their religion. Similar demand by other citizens would be turned down. Here the non-Sikhs cannot legitimately complain of discrimination or unequal treatment since their religious requirements are just as respected as those of the Sikhs.

Rectification of past injustices

Cultural diversity in a multicultural state requires it to grant the minorities traumatized in past history rights not available to the majority so as to make them feel culturally secure. The purposes of these rights are to promote social harmony and foster a common sense of belonging. It thus involves reassuring the minorities that they are not under particular threat in the present state. By giving the cultural minorities extra resources and rights a multicultural state enables them to flourish and contribute toward the formation of a rich and plural society. This although clearly favours and privileges the cultural minorities over majority is still justified if it is in the larger interest of society. For instance, the Constitution of India with a history of traumatic partition marked by inter communal violence grants its religious minorities special rights and resources. Such special privileges are resented by the majority to be unjust and even become a cloak to buy minority

electoral support. It is to be therefore granted only when justified with their purpose clearly stated and explained.

Parekh thus rejects the liberal claim that all citizens should be given same rights so as to establish equality. He defends additional rights of the minorities on the ground that this does not imply inequality. Rather it is to equalize the minorities with the rest and achieve collective goals of political integration, social harmony and cultural diversity. These goals like equality are important values.

Dialogical Multiculturalism

Parekh puts forward a theory which is dialogically constituted keeping in view the challenges posed by the cultural diversity in a multicultural state. The dialogically constituted theory stresses the centrality of a dialogue between cultures in both the political and non-political areas of life as the unifying focus and principles of society. The purpose of such a dialogue is to come up with principles, institutions and policies that are collectively acceptable to all the communities in a multicultural society marked with cultural diversity. The primary concern however is to create a climate in which effective dialogue can be carried out stretching the boundaries of the prevailing forms of thought. This is possible through the existence of certain institutional preconditions such as freedom of expression, agreed procedures and basic ethical norms, participatory public spaces, equal rights, a responsive and popularly accountable structure of authority, and empowerment of citizens. In addition to this it also calls for such essential political virtues as mutual respect and concern, tolerance, self-restraint, willingness to enter into unfamiliar worlds of thought, love of diversity, a mind open to new ideas and a heart open to others' needs, the ability of dialogue, and a society that draws a line against those too dogmatic, self-righteous or impatient to participate in its conversational culture and accept its outcome.

The dialogically constituted theory brings about a creative interplay between Liberalism and Multiculturalism. It neither confines Multiculturalism within the limits of Liberalism nor confines Liberalism within the limits of Multiculturalism. Liberal values that give primacy to individuals, their basic rights and liberties are integral to the culture of dialogue. It does not privilege a particular cultural perspective but views individuals to be culturally embedded and insist that public

institutions and policies should recognize and cherish their cultural identities. The common good and the collective will vital to any political society are generated not by transcending cultural and other particularities, but through their interplay in the cut and thrust of a dialogue. The dialogically constituted multicultural society that Parekh cherishes builds on an interactive and dynamic Multiculturalism which is neither static nor ghettoized.

According to Parekh, valuing a cultural community identity does not involve protecting a culture and its practices. Most views on Multiculturalism insist on protecting the minority culture for it constitutes a part of an individual's identity. This although true should also take note that all identities including cultural are subject to construction and re-configuration. This implies that culture and their practices are in a state of constant flux changing and re-building itself. Consequently, special group rights as suggested by Multiculturalism are to be structured taking into cognizance the changeable nature of the cultures. Rather than viewing these group rights as a protection shield to safeguard the minorities culture; they must be designed to give the individuals the choice whether to carry on with a given a way of life, if they so desire. Thus the value promoted by Parekh is that of 'non-conformist membership' for the cultural communities in a multicultural democratic polity.

This does not imply that cultural diversity holds no value in a multicultural state. It is in fact through cultural diversity that the oppression of the majority can be recognised and challenged. This is evident as the majority asserts its hegemony by negating and suppressing differences which in turn is countered through the creation of space for the expression of cultural diversity in the public domain. Multiculturalism while framing the additional rights of the cultural communities must understand that creation of space for the expression of differences is not pursuing the goal of enhancing cultural diversity and devising policies that promote this end. Identity of an individual being closely bound up by the community affiliations the citizenship to state must not negate the cultural memberships and the identities. The public domain must be open to differences and create space for the expression of these cultural differences. It should however understand that cultural communities are not homogeneous entities and are

subjected to continual alteration and redefinition. Elimination of discrimination therefore does not imply creating space for the communal communities to hold to their differences. It should not mean that cultural communities be incorporated into the political system as a unified group with congealed common interest or values. What Multiculturalism requires are ways through which the sense of alienation and disadvantage accompanying a minority be removed but in a way that keeps their nature to change and reform intact. Parekh thus endorses 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.

The culturally plural society that Parekh endorses is liberal in character as it advocates respect for the individual, is tolerant, welcomes dissent, limits the role of the government, does not turn cultures into ontological super-subjects enjoying the right to subordinate and oppress their members, and so on. It however departs from the mainstream liberal thought as it views individuals as culturally embedded beings and defines them in communal and non-individualist terms. It also locates their choices and autonomy within a wider and richer framework. It further revises the traditional liberal mode of separating private and public realms. It rejects the conventional liberal concern to abstract the state from society, and reintegrates and establishes a creative partnership between them. It also redefines the traditional liberal views on the nature and functions of government, and gives the latter a socially constitutive role. The government is not merely to 'govern' society but also nurture its moral and cultural resources and help it become cohesive and self-regulating. The culturally pluralist society as sketched by Parekh is not liberal as the term is defined by such liberal writers as Rawls, Raz and Dworkin. It is characterized by diverse ways of life: some liberal, others non-liberal; and each in turn nurturing its own diverse forms. It thus de-absolutizes liberalism, cherishes the so-called non-liberal ways of life and institutionalizes a dialogue between them.

Parekh asserts that a multicultural society consists of several cultures or cultural communities with their own distinct systems of meaning, significance and views on man and the world. Therefore to theorize a multicultural society from the conceptual framework of any political doctrine is bound to be biased and unjust to

other cultural perspective. This is so because each political doctrine is structurally embedded to a particular cultural perspective and would fail to provide a broad and impartial framework to conceptualize other cultures or their relations with it. This holds true for liberalism as of any other political doctrine that represents a particular vision of the good life, and is therefore necessarily narrow and partial.⁵⁶

LESLIE GREEN

The Problem: Minorities within Minorities

According to Leslie Green a liberal state restricts the interference of the state into the private life of the minorities. By doing so, it keeps religion outside the public domain but permits religion to oppress their internal minorities like women or children. Liberals with exception to J. S. Mill have concentrated on political tyranny ignoring the possibility of social tyranny. They are concerned only with the establishment of conditions of freedom within which diverse social groups can flourish. They do not interfere with the internal constitutions of these social groups which contain within it other minorities such as ethnic, cultural, religious, or sexual minorities termed as 'internal minorities'. Leslie Green criticizes the theory and practice of the liberal state where fundamental principles of political morality are applied only at the molecular level.

Rights and Minority Groups

To Leslie Green, Minority rights, in morality or in law, are based on two sources; **first**, there are rights that are granted to individuals because they are members of a certain minority group like ethnic, cultural, national, or religious communities. These rights are based on collective goods. The right to self government is an example of such rights; **second**, the rights emanate not just from membership in a social group but also individuated interest and goods. A communists or a gay enjoys personal liberty just as any other individual. The communists thus have a right to organize politically and a gay to exercise sexual liberty

Minority rights are defended by multiculturalists like Will Kymlicka on the ground that these are required for the survival of the group. Special group rights including powers, liberties and rights are justified as ex ante compensation for the

⁵⁶ See Parekh Bhikhu, **Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory**, Palgrave Macmillan, United Kingdom, 2006.

discrimination meted out on a group for the cultural resources which is an unchosen circumstance of life. Leslie Green however asserts that minority status does not necessarily correlate to social marginalization and discrimination. Minorities such as rich are powerful whereas women who are in majority are not. The rich in the majoritarian decision procedures such as voting might be outvoted but rarely be outbid. It is thus that groups with least power and resources though not in minority can still be vulnerable to discrimination and marginalization.

The special rights to the minorities are varied which generally includes national self-determination, granting limited autonomy in certain areas (for instance, over education), exemption from certain general obligations (such as military service), giving recognition to their divergent practices (as in marriage), supporting their distinctive institutions, and so on. The right to national self determination is extreme in the sense that it cannot be accorded to all minorities and is to be restricted for the Aboriginals. The granting of other lesser forms of protection must take into account that different minorities are in different positions. Accordingly, some minorities are to be entitled to substantial support and other to a minimum which might be so small as to institutionalize it in the legal system.

The Rights of Internal Minorities

Leslie Green asserts that the internal minorities too are minorities and have two different minorities to contend with. Consequently they should be granted not just individual rights but also collective rights as members of internal minority. If cultural membership can ground special rights of the minority groups; so can membership to sub-culture be a source of special rights to the internal minorities. Here he cites the example of English-speaking Quebecers who, in addition to the individual rights of freedom of association and expression also enjoy a collective right to the resources needed for their cultural and linguistic security.

Two Claims

Theory and ideology that deny granting to the internal minorities special group rights draw an analogy between the situation of minority groups and that of their internal minorities. The analogy centers on two claims; **first**, internal minorities have the power to exit a minority group to which they are affiliated as and when they feel discriminated or mistreated by the same. This however is not the case

with the minority community at large. Minority groups function within the compulsory state jurisdiction and cannot exit on their own. Even if they are allowed to exit; it is on the terms of the state which is necessarily not in the favour of the minority group that exit. Moreover if a minority group exits a state it seeks admission in another state or inclusive societies that regulate their admission within it even more closely. The situation of the internal minorities is thus different from that of the minorities who are granted special rights. The internal minorities have with them the option to either assimilate with the majority or exit a minority group that compose civil society and are not like states or inclusive societies that deny right to exit or regulate the terms of exit.

Second, the relationship between internal minority and the minority group they belong to is different from that between minority and majority groups with respect to relative power. The minorities are given power because they are relatively weaker than the majority. The aim is to strengthen the minority who are purported as powerless to protect themselves. In contrast, giving special rights to the internal minorities would mean strengthening them against an already weak group which makes for an illogical idea.

These claims if perceived to be correct denies the internal minorities the kind of rights that the minority groups themselves enjoy. It would establish a liberal regime which permits a minority group to mistreat its members in ways that would be condemned if practiced by the larger community against the same minority group. Leslie Green thus raises doubt on the morality of these claims that deny the internal minorities special group rights. According to him, the claim that the internal minority can exit is based on the liberty principle is sound only if internal minorities have a fair chance to exit the group if mistreated.

Legal institutions in liberal state upheld individual rights over group rights on the ground that an individual is free to believe in, and to practice, any religion or tradition, if he chooses to do so. That he cannot be coerced or forced to participate in one by any group purporting to exercise their collective rights in doing so. His freedoms and rights are thus not subject to the collective rights of the aboriginal nation to which he belongs. In spite of the legal protection individual rights of the internal minorities often suffer violation at the hands of a minority group they are

part of. Polygamy for instance violates both liberty and justice of the Mormon women and yet it is kept outside the public domain or the interference by the state. Internal minorities thus find themselves trapped in an institution whose character they cannot change but that structures their lives. Besides, the meaning and costs of departure are practically different. This is because it is risky, wrenching, and disorienting to have to tear oneself from one's religion or culture. The real prospects of leaving a minority group differ from the model of voluntary association. That is the mere existence of an exit does not necessarily make it a reasonable option but a costly one. Green thus view the exit claim to be a poor one and insists that the right of the internal minorities be guaranteed.

Besides the claim based on relative power that the inadequate resources and power entitle the minority group to special rights ignores the fact that the condition of internal minorities is even worse. They are in many ways vulnerable to discrimination and exploitation. They suffer from being members of minority groups struggling to defend themselves not only from the majority but also from other members of their own minority. They thus in many ways are doubly vulnerable to discrimination and exploitation. A minority group although is relatively weaker than the majority but is not weak in relation to its own internal minorities. Accordingly the claim from relative power is no better than the one of exit. Internal minorities are as entitled to minority rights as the minority groups. The onus to make minority rights real lays not just on the majority but also to the minority groups themselves.⁵⁷

JEREMY WALDRAN

Jeremy Waldron is critical of Kymlicka's argument that people cannot choose a conception of the good for themselves in isolation, but that they need a clear sense of an established range of options to choose from. He asserts that although choice takes place in a cultural context, among options that have culturally defined meanings, it does not follow that there must be one cultural framework in which each available option is assigned a meaning. Meaningful options may come to us as item or fragments from a variety of cultural sources. We need cultural

⁵⁷ See Leslie Green, '*Internal Minorities and their Rights*', in Will Kymlicka (ed) **The Rights of Minority Cultures**, Oxford University Press, New York, 2009.

meanings, but we do not need homogenous cultural framework. We need to understand our choices in the contexts in which they make sense, but we do not need any single context to structure all our choices. We need culture, but we do not need cultural integrity. Since none of us needs a homogenous cultural framework or the integrity of a particular set of meanings, none of us needs to be immersed in one of the small-scale communities which, according to Kymlicka are alone capable of securing this integrity and homogeneity.

To Waldron we live in a world formed by technology and trade; by economic, religious, and political imperialism and their offspring; by mass migration and the dispersion of cultural influences. In this context, to immerse one in the traditional cultural influences involves an artificial dislocation from what actually is going on in the world. That it is an artifice is evidenced by the fact that the immersion often requires special subsidization and extraordinary provision by those who live in the real world, where cultures and practices are not so sealed off from one another. Just as individuals need communal structures in order to develop and exercise the capacities that their rights protect, so minority communities need larger political and international structures to protect and to sustain the culture goods that they pursue. So in the modern world particular cultures and national communities have an obligation to recognize their dependence on the wider social, political, international, and civilizational structures that sustain them. They are not entitled to accept the benefits of its protection and subsidization and at the same time disparage and neglect the structures, institutions, and activities that make it possible for indigenous communities to secure the aid, toleration, and forbearance of the large numbers of other citizens and other small communities by which they are surrounded.

Waldron as such puts forward the cosmopolitan view of self. The cosmopolitan view does not deny the role of culture in the constitution of human life, but questions, **first**, the assumption that the social world divides up neatly into particular distinct cultures, one to every community, and **second**, the assumption that what everyone needs is just one of these entities—a single, coherent culture—to give shape and meaning to his life. The cosmopolitan view of self refuses to think of self as defined by his location or his ancestry or his citizenship or his

language. The self is a creature of modernity, conscious of living in a mixed-up world and having a mixed-up self. It challenges the claims that are made by modern communitarians about the need people have for involvement in the substantive life of a particular community as a source of meaning, integrity, and character. Waldron uses ‘community’ in the sense of ethnic community: a particular people sharing a heritage of custom, ritual, and way of life that is in some real or imagined sense immemorial, being referred back to a shared history and shared provenance or homeland. Accordingly the cosmopolitan alternative undercuts the importance of the preservation of minority cultures. Cultures live and grow, change and sometimes wither away; they amalgamate with other cultures, or they adapt themselves to geographical or demographic necessity. When we live a cosmopolitan life, we draw our allegiances from here, there, and everywhere. Bits of cultures come into our lives from different sources. The self constituted under the auspices of a multiplicity of cultures has or can have a variety, a multiplicity of different and perhaps disparate communal allegiances. Waldron thus puts forward the vision of cosmopolitanism which provides the basis of an alternative way of thinking—one that embraces the aspects of modernity with which we all have to live and welcomes the diversity and mixture that it brings with it.⁵⁸

SUMMATION OF THEORETICAL REVIEW

Multiculturalism is more than just a theory of minority rights. It is a conception of democracy in which diverse cultures are represented as equals in the public domain. It emerged as a reaction to the assimilationist theory adopted for long by nation-state to establish itself as unified whole submerging diverse ethnic groups into one large national identity. It questions the idea of universal citizenship premised on the established norms of liberal democracy. Instead it endorses ‘differentiated citizenship’ with group-differentiated rights. It views people not just as citizens but also members of communities possessing multiple loyalties. It is in this framework of ‘differentiated citizenship’ that the special rights for the minorities are discussed and justified. Multiculturalism as a theory thus outlines a

⁵⁸ See Jeremy Waldron, ‘*The Cosmopolitan Alternative*’, in Will Kymlicka (ed) **The Rights of Minority Cultures**, Oxford University Press, New York, 2009.

new vision of democracy wherein cultural community identities are not both valued as well as protected.

The Multiculturalism theory enunciated in the western democracies although provides a systematic defense of minority rights has its limitations when applied to India having different historical background and circumstances. The rights given to the religious and cultural minorities in India was a product of political consensus reached after much debate and discussion in the Constituent Assembly. However the rights that were granted to specific minorities lacked a theoretical defense. The commitment of the Constitution to the welfare of the minorities was taken for granted as it was looked upon as a compensation meted out against them in the past. A theoretical justification as such was neither demanded nor given. The idea of group equality although received attention but was never theorised.⁵⁹ The result was a weak multicultural polity with no theoretical foundation that could systematically uphold the principles of multiculturalism. Consequently the Multicultural framework of India has been challenged time and again by ethno cultural conflicts between groups as well as separatist movements. Moreover the fact that state mechanisms such as grant of huge economic funds, signing of peace accords with the agitating ethnic group and setting up of autonomous council have failed to provide a permanent solution to such conflicts makes the situation even more alarming. The present study examines the ethno-identity based demands of the Gorkhas and Koch Rajbangsi for a separate state of Gorkhaland and Kamtapur respectively within the framework of Multiculturalism. The Koch Rajbangsi and Gorkhas who do not share common culture, tradition and language with the dominant community of the state; the concept of 'we' and 'other' is clearly visible in their interrelationship with the dominant community. Accordingly their relationship with the dominant community as well as their rights as a minority groups is studied with the insight provided by various multicultural theorists.

F. SIGNIFICANCE

Today every society is internally plural. In a cosmopolitan age of globalization where inter-mixing of different cultures is on rise; there are groups who at the same time are struggling to maintain their ethnic individuality and solidarity.

⁵⁹ Op.cit.no. 54

Contrary to the general belief, community identities have not dissolved or replaced by a cosmopolitan identity in market economies or liberal democracies. Collective group identities continue to be of relevance to its members. While resource competition is an important source of ethnic struggle between two groups the fear of losing identity due to influence from outside culture is paramount. Consequently ethno-cultural conflicts are often marked by violence and counter-violence causing immense human sufferings in the form of displacement, loss of live, molestation and economic setback. Given this if the democratic fabric is to be sustained then the differences of cultures should not only be accepted but only recognised and respected. Failure to do so is bound to result into a hiatus between the majority and the minorities resulting into identity based ethnic violence and conflicts in each polity

Multiculturalism attempts to contain the dangers of cultural majoritarianism that harbours feelings of cultural discrimination among the minorities by promoting equality of cultures. It sensitizes all to the feelings of alienation suffered by the minorities and endeavours to initiate policies that allow citizens to maintain their cultural distinctiveness preserving minority cultures. Accommodation of the aspirations of the smaller community in the national framework of policy making while keeping the territorial integrity intact is the primary challenge confronting a Multicultural state. It is particularly so when the identity of a particular ethnic group is disputed like that of the Gorkhas in India. Moreover when two communities sharing same territorial boundaries demand separation from the host community like Koch Rajbangsi and the Gorkhas in North Bengal; clash of interests and demands is obvious. Some rethinking as such is necessary so as to understand the ongoing autonomy movements in West Bengal and thereby suggests measures where by the aspirations of the two minority communities is accommodated in the national framework of policy making without pulverizing the territorial integrity of the Indian Union.

G. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study being historical, descriptive and analytical in nature, the information for the study have been collected both from primary and secondary sources. Information on Gorkhaland Movement led by Gorkha Janmukti Morcha

(GJMM) and that of Kamtapur Movement led by Kamtapur Peoples Party (KPP) has been elicited from GJMM and KPP party members respectively through interviews and schedules. Views of Internal ethnic minorities on Gorkhaland and Kamtapur Movement was further studied with the help of the inputs provided by Vice Chairman of Lepcha Development Board, Kalimpong and President, Chamber of Commerce, Kalimpong through interviews and discussions. Telephonic interview was also conducted of the President of Bangla O Bangla Bhasha Banchao Committee to provide access to the views of the majoritarian community on Gorkhaland and Kamtapur Movements. Books, journals, newspapers related to the research work available in the library of Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, North Bengal University, Siliguri and Assam University, Silchar have been consulted. Party publications such as those published by GJMM like ‘Why Gorkhaland?’ and ‘Why not Gorkhaland?’ published in 2009 and 2013 respectively and memorandums submitted to Government by various organisations leading the Gorkhaland and Kamtapur Movements have also been consulted. Extensive use of Internet materials such as e-journals has also been made.

H. ORGANISATION OF CHAPTERS

Chapter I-Introduction

It provides the structure of the present study comprising of the statement of the problem, literature review, objectives, research questions, theoretical review, review of literature, significance and the methodology adopted in conducting the present study.

Chapter II- Multiculturalism and Identity Politics

It discusses the concept and fundamental principles of Multiculturalism. It explains the conceptual distinction between multiculturalism and pluralism. It examines the shift from the model of homogeneous nation state to a multicultural model of the state. It deals with the idea of cultural diversity which forms the core of a multicultural state. It further discusses nation-state as a source of cultural discrimination that fails to provide recognition to the minority culture in the public domain. It examines the multiculturalism’s concept of differentiated citizenship and heterogeneous public culture as a way to safeguard the minorities

from discrimination. It also discusses the idea of special rights for the minorities as a mechanism to ensure preservation of their distinct identity. It analyses what identity means to an individual and group. It examines upsurge of the politics of identity involving a tussle between the majority and minority communities for more power and resources in a multicultural polity.

Chapter III- Identity Formation of the Gorkhas

It discusses the evolution of the distinct identity of Gorkhas in India which is often questioned and disputed. It examines the process of planned migration and settlement of the Gorkhas in various parts of Northeast India by the British administration as a part of their frontier policy. Later the emergence of the Nepali lingua-franca uniting different ethnic community speaking their individual dialects under the umbrella Gorkha identity is discussed and analysed. The contribution of various organisations in the development and assertion of a unified Gorkha Gorkha identity is further studied. The attack on Gorkhas in Northeast India with the eruption of the Anti-Foreigners Agitation (1980s) and the subsequent resurgence of Gorkha identity in the form of demand of separate state for the Gorkhas is analysed. The Indo- Nepal Peace and Friendship Treaty (1950) which led to the influx of Nepalis from Nepal and the consequent identity crisis of the Gorkha ethnic community in India is also discussed.

Chapter IV- Identity Formation of the Koch Rajbangsis

It studies the trajectory of the identity formation of the Koch Rajbangsi which is found to be dynamic and fluid with the changing socio-economic and political conditions. Accordingly it attempts to trace the origin of Koch Rajbangsi in North east India based on the descriptions given by various British anthropologists in the pre colonial period dealing with the dichotomy of Koch-Rajbangsi identity. The Kshatriya Movement which was mainly organized by the upper class of the Rajbangsi population to be recognized as the Kshatriya by the British administration so as to enjoy a higher status in the social structure is also discussed. The reservation system introduced by the British and its consequential impact on the Rajbangsi identity wherein demands to be recognized as a Depressed Class was made is also examined. Lastly the struggle of the Rajbangsi to form a unified social identity as a nationality is discussed.

Chapter V- Gorkhaland Movement: Growth and Development

It deals with the Gorkhaland Movement for a separate state of the Gorkhas in and around Darjeeling and the Dooars area in West Bengal. It studies the development of the Gorkhaland Movement when the demand for a separate administrative unit for Darjeeling was first made by the Hillmen Association in 1907. The Gorkhaland Movement was then carried forward by All India Gorkha League which was a political organization exclusively for the hill people under the banner 'Gorkha' formed under the leadership of Dambar Singh Gurung on 15th May 1943. It was however the Anti Foreigners Movement in Northeast India that led to the eviction of the Nepalis settled in Northeast India leading to a violent uprising by the Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF), an organisation formed by Subhas Ghising in Darjeeling in 1980s. The Gorkha Hill Accord was finally signed in Calcutta on August 22, 1988 that led to the formation of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) an autonomous body to run the administration of Darjeeling. However the proposal of Sixth Schedule for the Darjeeling coupled with the poor administration of the DGHC resulted into a renewed call for a separate state of Gorkhaland. The Movement is at present led by Gorkha Janamukti Morcha (GJMM) formed on 7th October, 2007 by Bimal Gurung. Unlike GNLF the Gorkhaland Movement led by GJMM follows the Gandhian philosophy of Non Violence. It was after the three years of agitation for the state of Gorkhaland led by GJMM, a bill for the creation of Gorkha Territorial Administration (GTA) was passed in the West Bengal Legislative Assembly on 2 September 2011.

Chapter VI- Kamtapur Movement: Growth and Development

It deals with the Kamtapur Movement for a separate state of the Rajbangsi living in and around Dooars and Cooch Behar for a separate state to be carved out of West Bengal namely 'Kamtapur'. It gives an historical account of the merger of the princely state of Cooch Behar with West Bengal on the basis of the 'Instrument of Accession'. It studies the development of the Gorkhaland Movement when the demand for a separate administrative unit for Darjeeling was first made by the Hitasadhani Sabha formed on 19th May, 1947. The Kamtapur Movement was then carried forward by Uttarakhand Dal formed under the

leadership of Panchanan Mallick on 5th July, 1969. The Movement is at present led by Kamtapur People's Party (KPP) constituted in 1992. Its activities like that of the GJMM involve non violent activities like *bandhs*, *dharna* and peaceful negotiations with the West Bengal Government. However Kamtapur Liberation Organisation which is alleged to be the armed wing of the KPP indulges into violent activities against the West Bengal government. Owing to the unconstitutional practices of the KLO it is found that the KPP denies any linkages with the former. The demand for a separate state for the Rajbangsi is also made by the Greater Cooch Behar Democratic Party (GCDP) formed by Bangshi Badan Barman on 9th September 1998. The 'Greater Kamta United Forum' was later formed through an alliance between KPP and GCDP so as to exert greater pressure on the Government for their common demand of a separate state for the Rajbangsi.

Chapter VII- State versus Ethnic Minorities: Union and State Governments response to Movements for Gorkhaland and Kamtapur

It deals with the Nation-state as a source of discrimination to the minority ethnic groups. It is the majority ethnic groups that capture control over public spaces expressed in political and symbolic terms. A multicultural state recognizes that the amicable co-existence of different communities in social domain does not indicate their same status in the public domain. It draws a distinction between public and private domain. It discusses the dual approach adopted by a multicultural state to contain identity politics involving granting the minorities group differentiated rights as well as individual rights as citizens. It examines the status of Darjeeling as a schedule district under the British colonial administration enjoying special status which led to the growth of the belief that the well being of its people can be best ensured as a separate administrative unit. It further discusses the stance of the Government with regard to the Gorkhaland and Kamtapur Movement in post-independence era. While the Government have been responsive to the demand of the Gorkhas' granting official status to the Nepali language and setting up of autonomous administrative agencies in the form of the DGHC and GTA; the demands of Rajbangsi has received a passive response from the Government.

Chapter VIII- Quest for identity: A Multicultural perspective of Gorkhaland and Kamtapur Movements

It examines the geo-political formation of West Bengal to analyse the form of cultural diversity prevalent in West Bengal. It views that cultural diversity in West Bengal mainly emanates from the indigenous peoples or the 'original nations' who seek to preserve their distinct ways of life which is integrally bound up with land which they lost to colonizers. In addition to this, it examines the instrumentalist dimension of group identities guided by survival needs and the desire of the ethnic communities for a share in the limited public resources. The politico-economic marginalisation of the minority ethnic community has triggered a call for cultural preservation in West Bengal. It also analyses the impact of the process of immigration on ethno-autonomy movements in West Bengal as a new 'politics of cultural difference' is now taking a centre stage in a globalised world clamoured with diverse ethnic communities. It also studies the trend of "vernacular communitarianism" in West Bengal which refers to the feelings of obligations many people have, not so much to the modern nation-state, but rather to their own local ethnic, religious or linguistic community. It further examines the challenges from the majoritarian community to the minorities in a culturally diverse society. The majoritarian community tend to oppose unravelling of the cultural character of the state that reflects the majoritarian cultural biases giving advantage to the majority communities over the minorities. Accordingly it discusses the response of the majoritarian ethnic communities that oppose the autonomy movements of the Gorkhas and the Rajbangsi through such organisations such as BOBBC and *Amra Bangali*. It also discusses the response of the internal minorities like Lepchas, Marwaris, Poliyas and Mech to the Gorkhaland and Kamtapur Movements respectively. It deals with the mechanisms adopted by the state of West Bengal to deal with the separate statehood demands of the Gorkhas and the Rajbangsi such as policies of Divide and Rule, Sixth Schedule, Autonomous Council and symbolic recognition to minority history. Lastly it discusses the challenges to and prospects of Multiculturalism in West Bengal in view of the separate statehood movements of Gorkhaland and Kamtapur.

Chapter IX- Conclusion

It is the final chapter that discusses the findings of the present study.