CHAPTER II

MULTICULTURALISM AND IDENTITY POLITICS

Alienation of the minorities and ensuing struggle for the accommodation of their identity and rights is a vexed issue. Multiculturalism as an approach attempts to accommodate the demands of the minorities and prevent the growth of malignant feeling of alienation among them. To understand the politics of identity of the Gorkhas and Koch Rajbangsi in West Bengal, the present chapter 'Multiculturalism and Identity Politics' provides a conceptual analysis of Multiculturalism and identity politics. Accordingly the chapter has been sub divided into various sections: the idea and principle of Multiculturalism, distinction between Multiculturalism and pluralism, Multicultural model of the state: an antithesis to the homogeneous nation state, Multicultural panorama of cultural diversity, nation state as a source of cultural discrimination, differentiated citizenship: path to heterogeneous public culture, special rights for minorities: antidote to cultural discrimination, identity: meaning and components, distinction between person and identity, individual and group identity and Multiculturalism and identity politics.

THE IDEA AND PRINCIPLE OF MULTICULTURALISM

Multiculturalism is about the proper terms of relationship between cultural communities. A Multicultural society is one that includes two or more cultural communities. It might respond to its cultural diversity in one of two following ways, each in turn capable of taking several forms. **Firstly**, it might welcome and cherish it, make it central to its self-understanding, and respect the cultural demands of its constituent communities; **secondly**, it might seek to assimilate these communities into its mainstream culture either wholly or substantially. In the first case it is Multiculturalist and in the second monoculturalist in its orientation and ethos. Both alike are Multicultural societies, but only one of them is Multiculturalist. The term 'Multicultural' refers to the fact of cultural diversity, the term 'Multiculturalism' to a normative response to that fact. [1]

---

[1] Bhikhu Parekh, **Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory**, Palgrave Macmillan, United Kingdom, 2006, pp.6.

A Multicultural polity values diversity of cultures and aims to devise a system of special rights by which this diversity can grow and flourish. Cultural diversity is desired, both for enhancing self-understanding and for increasing the available range of options. It cherishes cultural diversity and envisions a society in which different communities forge a collective identity while retaining their cultural provenance. As such, Multiculturalism represents a new kind of universalism—one where integration of individuals in the state is not predicated on a total disengagement from particularistic community ties. Rather, people are included in the nation-state as members of diverse but equal ethnic groups. And the state recognizes that the dignity of individuals is linked to the collective dignity of the community to which they belong. This radical redefinition of a democratic polity makes Multiculturalism a normative value that is applicable as much to the modern liberal democracies of the West as it is to modernizing politics like India.[2]

DISTINCTION BETWEEN MULTICULTURALISM AND PLURALISM

Within Multiculturalism, preservation of cultures is linked to recognition of identity. Who we are and what we aspire to be, it maintains is influenced by our community membership. It also allows it to differentiate between the majority community and the minorities, and make a case for minority rights. Since community membership is valued by individuals, advocates of Multiculturalism maintain that all cultures, particularly minority cultures within a society, must be protected and made secure. Within Multiculturalism, preserving cultures is a way of recognizing minority cultures and representing them as equals in the public arena. In their view, minority cultures require protection and special consideration to ensure equal treatment within the nation-state. Hence, their interest in preserving cultures is prompted by their commitment to democratic equality.[3] It is this emphasis on equality that distinguishes Multiculturalism from pluralism. The simultaneous presence of many cultures and communities within

---

[2] Gurpreet Mahajan, **The Multicultural Path: Issues of Diversity and Discrimination in Democracy**, Sage Publications India, New Delhi, 2002, p.63.

[3] Ibid, pp.78-79

the same social space points to a plural social fabric, but it does not betoken the presence of Multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is concerned with the issue of equality: it asks whether the different communities, living peacefully together, co-exist as equals in the public arena. Multiculturalism probes inequalities that may prevail even after some basic degree of political and civil rights are granted to all.

Within the framework of plurality, the major concern is peaceful co-existence and amity. So long as communities have some degree of freedom to live by their own religious and cultural practices, their position vis-à-vis other groups and communities in the public arena is a non-issue. Pluralism, in other words, indicates the presence of differences and marks a departure from policies aimed at annihilating the other, but that is all. It remains silent about the public status of these communities. A plural social fabric or stories of collective participation in festivals and processions are, therefore, no indication of the absence of hierarchy and inequality. In fact, it often exists when authority of the dominant community and the symbols of its power are readily accepted by others.

What characterizes structures of pluralism is that power is displayed and conceded frequently in the domain of the symbolic. The dominant community asserts its supremacy by stamping its presence in public places, and *vice versa*, challenges to these symbols are taken as a sign of rebellion, to be strongly resisted. Different communities do not occupy the same social place in the public domain although they live amicably together and participate in each other's cultures. Inequality in the public domain can, and often does, co-exist with degrees of legal and social pluralism. Thus, in plural societies, the presence of close interaction between communities and the existence of plural legal systems is misread as a sign of equality between communities.[4]

---

[4] Ibid, pp.11-12

MULTICULTURAL MODEL OF THE STATE: AN ANTITHESIS TO THE HOMOGENEOUS NATION STATE

Historically, virtually all liberal democracies have, at one point or another, attempted to diffuse a single societal culture throughout all of its territory.[5] In most countries, this ideal (or illusion) of national homogeneity had to be actively constructed by the state through a range of 'nation-building' policies that encouraged the preferred national identity while suppressing any alternative identities.[6] So states have engaged in this process of 'nation-building'—that is, a process of promoting a common language, and a sense of common membership in, and equal access to, the social institutions based on that language. Decisions regarding official languages, core curriculum in education, and the requirements for acquiring citizenship, all have been made with the intention of diffusing a particular culture throughout society, and of promoting a particular national identity based on participation in that societal culture.[7]

Public policies were used to promote and consolidate a common national language, national history and mythology, national heroes, national symbols, a national literature, a national education system, a national media, a national military, in some cases a national religion, and so on. Groups which resisted these nationalizing policies were subject not only to political disempowerment, but also, typically, to economic discrimination and to various forms of 'demographic engineering' (e.g. pressuring members of the group to disperse, and/or promoting settlement by members of the dominant group in the homeland of indigenous/minority groups). These and other policies were aimed at constructing the ideal of a nation-state. Nation-building policies became such a pervasive feature of modern life that most people scarcely even notice them. Some policies adopted to achieve this goal include:

---

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

[6] Will Kymlicka, **Multicultural Odysseys: Navigating the New International Politics of Diversity**, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, pp.62

[7] Op.cit.no.5

- The adoption of official language laws which defined the dominant group's language as the only official 'national' language, and which required this to be the only language used in the bureaucracy, courts, public services, the army, higher education, etc.;

- The construction of a nationalized system of compulsory education promoting a standardized curriculum, focused on teaching the dominant group's language/literature/history (which are redefined as the 'national' language, literature and history);

- The centralization of political power, eliminating pre-existing forms of local sovereignty/autonomy enjoyed historically by minority groups, so that all important decisions are made in a forum where the dominant group forms a majority;

- The diffusion of the dominant group's language and culture through national cultural institutions, including national public media and public museums;

- The adoption of state symbols celebrating the dominant group's history, heroes, and culture, reflected for example in the choice of national holidays, or the naming of streets, buildings, mountains, and so on;

- The construction of a unified legal and judicial system, operating in the dominant group's language and using its legal traditions, and the abolition of any pre-existing legal systems used by minority groups.

- The adoption of settlement policies which encourage members of the dominant national group to settle in areas where minority groups have historically resided, so as to swamp the minorities even in their historic homelands;

- The adoption of immigration policies that require knowledge of the 'national' language/history as a condition of gaining citizenship, and that often give a preference to immigrants who share the same language, religion, or culture as the dominant group;

- The seizure of lands, forests, and fisheries which used to belong to minority groups and indigenous peoples, and declaring them to be 'national' resources, to be used for the benefit of the nation.

A wide range of justifications have been offered historically for this pursuit of national homogeneity. In some contexts, it was argued that the state needed to be more unified in order to effectively defend itself against external or internal enemies, or to build the civic solidarity needed for a welfare state or that a culturally unified state was easier to administer, and would have a more efficient labour market. But these sorts of justifications were also typically buttressed by racialist and ethnocentric ideologies which asserted that the language and culture of minority groups and indigenous peoples were backward and inferior unworthy of respect or protection. Such groups are excluded entirely by the process of nation building, or included only at the price of accepting assimilation and second-class status, stigmatized by the racialist and ethnocentric ideologies used to justify nation-building. The result, over time, has been the creation of multiple and deeply rooted forms of exclusion and subordination of minorities, often combining political marginalization, economic disadvantage, and cultural domination.

Accordingly, various minorities have contested this attempt to construct homogeneous nation-building states, and have advocated instead a more Multicultural model of the state. The precise details of the Multicultural model vary from country to country. However, there are some general principles that are common to these different struggles for a Multicultural state. **First**, a Multicultural state involves the repudiation of the older idea that the state is a possession of a single national group. Instead, the state must be seen as belonging equally to all citizens. **Second**, as a consequence, a Multicultural state repudiates any nation-building policies that assimilate or exclude members of minority or non-dominant groups. Instead, it accepts that individuals should be able to access state institutions, and to act as full and equal citizens in political life, without having to hide or deny their ethno cultural identity. The state accepts an obligation to accord recognition and accommodation to the history, language, and culture of non-dominant groups, as it does for the dominant group. **Third,** a Multicultural state acknowledges the historic injustice that was done to minority/non-dominant groups by these policies of assimilation and exclusion, and manifests a willingness to offer some sorts of remedy or rectification for

them. These three interconnected ideas—repudiating the idea of the state as belonging to the dominant group; replacing assimilationist and exclusionary nation-building policies with policies of recognition and accommodation; and acknowledging historic injustice and offering amends for it—are common to virtually all real-world struggles for 'Multiculturalism'. All struggles for Multiculturalism thus share in common a rejection of earlier models of the unitary, homogeneous nation-state. [8]

MULTICULTURAL PANORAMA OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Multiculturalism accepts that the policies of cultural homogenization are a major source of minority discrimination. Homogeneity promotes, in their view, assimilation. It encourages uniformity in social and public life and this tends to disadvantage minorities. Multiculturalism seeks to protect minority cultures from forced assimilation by the nation-state and the majority culture. It is to correct the cultural biases of the nation-state and to promote cultural diversity that Multiculturalism aims to protect minority cultures. Multiculturalists also accept that assimilation into the majority culture is not always induced through coercion. Members of the minority communities at times themselves seek the 'instrumental' aspects of that culture. Such choices are generally guided by the unequal positions that the majority and the minority cultures have in the marketplace. To take an example: the selection of English as the national language invariably places the French-speaking populations of Canada at a disadvantage. Linking opportunities to facility in English speaking places there is pressure on the French speakers to learn that language. Young members of these communities try to assimilate into the mainstream by learning the official language and the way of life that comes with it. Parents also encourage this, they send their children to English medium schools so that they can compete for, and occupy prestigious public positions. Pressures and incentives to integrate into the majority culture eventually result in the disintegration of the minority culture. Since uniformity works to the disadvantage of minority communities and often camouflages the dominant position of the majority culture within the nation-state,

---

[8] Op.cit.no.6, pp.62-66

Multiculturalism is deeply sceptical of the ideal of uniformity. It is these forms of disadvantage and inequality of cultural circumstance that Multiculturalism targets and hopes to remedy. To the extent that the majority does not face the same pressure to assimilate into a way of life that is hostile, alien and imposed, the fate of majority culture and the changes and challenges that it faces, are not the subject of Multicultural discourse. [9]

The agenda of preserving marginalized cultures gets its justification mainly from the Multicultural analysis of cultural discrimination within the state and the assertion of the value of diversity in society. The notion of diversity receives a positive value within Multiculturalism. It does not simply indicate the absence of cultural homogeneity. Rather, it points to the presence of several distinct and heterogeneous cultures. It suggests that each culture has an individualized particularity, and it must be appreciated in terms of that uniqueness. Multiculturalism introduces three important elements which nuance the idea of diversity; **first**, Multiculturalism places diversity within the boundaries of the nation-state. The Multiculturalists recognize diversity that is found across societies and civilizations, but they are concerned primarily with diversity of cultures within the liberal nation-state. **Second**, while locating diversity within a society, Multiculturalism draws attention to the presence of heterogeneous communities within the state and support the preservation of this diversity of cultures. **Third,** in the course of supporting cultural diversity, the Multiculturalists distinguish between the majority community and the minorities. The diverse cultural communities are categorized as majority or minorities. In modern democratic polity, the state is generally identified with the majority culture, while other communities that are different are designated as minorities. Multiculturalism emphasizes the irreconcilable differences between the majority and the minority cultures. They use the concept of cultural diversity to analyse the fate of minority cultures in the state. They want different cultures to be treated equally. [10]

---

[9] Op.cit.no.2, pp.30-34

[10] Ibid, p. 58

<u>NATION STATE AS A SOURCE OF CULTURAL DISCRIMINATION</u>

Within Multiculturalism, the issue of cultural discrimination and diversity are discussed in the context of the nation-state. Multiculturalism does not differentiate between the majority and the minority on the basis of numerical strength. Numbers matter but what is of utmost importance is the cultural orientation of the nation-state. The community whose culture is endorsed by the state and expressed in national public culture constitutes the majority, irrespective of its numerical size. Public endorsement does, however, ensure that the culturally dominant community will, over time, become the numerically larger community. When the nation-state, for instance, grants official recognition to the language of a community, other languages and cultures existing within the state are inevitably devalued. Hence, the crucial factor is endorsement by the state rather than numerical size. The majority community is one whose culture is recognized by the state while minorities are those whose cultures are not represented in the public domain.

According to the Multiculturalists the continued presence of majority culture in national and public life gives that culture certain legitimacy. Its customs and practices appear to be neutral, and are often treated as symbols of the nation-state rather than those of a community. Disadvantages of this kind that accrue from the prescription of norms in social and public sphere are reinforced by the nation-state through its choice of the official national language, declaration of public holidays, curriculum of educational institutions, accepted dress codes in public life, rituals of the state, etc., all exhibit the culture of the majority. This cultural orientation of the nation-state places ethnic and cultural minorities at a disadvantage in the public arena. It even discriminates against them. For instance, the decision to have Sunday as a weekly holiday conforms to the practices of the Christian majority. It complies with the Christian belief that Sunday is a day of rest. This public endorsement of a religious belief places other minorities at a disadvantage. In England, Muslims claimed that a public holiday on Sunday worked only to the advantage of the majority. While practicing Christians could, with Sunday off, go to Church for their customary prayers, a religious Muslim

could not act in a like manner as the prescribed day of prayer for Muslims is Friday, which is a working day. The policies of the state took care of the majority interests only. Minorities were unequally treated as their preferences were not given the same consideration by the nation-state.

The choice of the official national language also creates a distinction between the majority and minority as it distributes resources and opportunities unequally in society. To take an example: the selection of English as the national language invariably places the French-speaking populations of Canada at a disadvantage. The school curricula in its textbooks particularly give representation to the contribution of the majority ethnic group of the nation's history. Together, these policies exclude, marginalize and disadvantage minority communities. Multiculturalism thus uses the case of language and education policies to show that the nation-state has a majoritarian cultural bias. Multiculturalism questions the presumed neutrality of the liberal democratic state. In their view, no state can be entirely neutral.

Multiculturalism thus holds that the liberal democracies have not been able to ensure equal citizenship for all their members. Discrimination on cultural grounds is perpetuated, directly or indirectly, by the policies of the nation-state. It is evident in the laws and the policies of the state as well as in the forms in which communities are represented in the public arena; for instance, the reactions of the educational institutions, state authorities and the vast majority in France to the issue of wearing *hijab*. Here, the minority practice of wearing *hijab* was identified as a religious symbol, and for this reason, disallowed. On the other hand, the practice of wearing a cross, clearly a religious symbol for the Catholic community, did not meet with the same censure. In many cases, minority communities get discriminated against because the majority enjoys special privileges, either on account of the past policies of the state, or its current practices.[11]

---

[11] Op.cit.no.2, pp.26-29

DIFFERENTIATED CITIZENSHIP: PATH TO HETEROGENEOUS PUBLIC CULTURE

Multiculturalism advocates a heterogeneous public culture in order to include people of all cultures and communities as equals within the nation-state. It pursues this ideal through the framework of differentiated citizenship. The latter begins with the understanding that people have multiple identities and overlapping loyalties. The identity of a person as a citizen is only one of the many identities. More importantly, the presence of these other community identities does not weaken or threaten his or her identity as a citizen. Besides, individuals often carry their cultural identities into the public domain. Consequently, one needs to give due consideration to individuals as members of the state as well as members of cultural communities. Their claims and rights in this dual capacity must be taken into account. If, for some reason, we neglect their claims as members of cultural communities, they are likely to be alienated from the political community and this would certainly weaken their commitment to the state.

Since Multiculturalism believes that the state is not neutral towards different ways of life, it pays particular attention to the rights of marginalized minority communities within the state. To the adherents of Multiculturalism while some rights are to be given to all persons as citizens, a few may be extended to only a few individuals belonging to specific communities. In most cases, special rights allow individuals to continue with their cultural community practices while also giving them a voice in defining the public domain and the norms that govern it. Multiculturalism entertains collective rights of these diverse kinds within the system of differentiated citizenship. The notion of differentiated citizenship approaches the issue of rights with the belief that equal citizenship is not always achieved by giving uniform rights to all persons. At times, special consideration is needed for a few so that they are neither excluded from the public culture nor compelled to endorse the culture of another.

Although rectifying sources of cultural discrimination is the postulated goal here, enhancing cultural diversity is perceived to be a way of addressing that issue. Indeed, it is to further this latter end that the idea of differentiated citizenship

rather than substantive equality is advocated. The notion of differentiated citizenship further maintains that different treatment on account of cultural community membership would not pose a threat to the territorial integrity of the nation-state. On the contrary, incorporating the legitimate claims of marginalized minorities is likely to build a stronger and more integrated nation-state. Furthermore, special rights are given to minority communities so that they can protect their culture and enjoy a life of equal dignity and respect. It is because special rights fulfil these conditions that they are perceived as a way of enhancing 'civic integration'. Multiculturalists maintain that differential citizenship will promote a deeper sense of belonging to the state. [12]

SPECIAL RIGHTS FOR MINORITIES: ANTIDOTE TO CULTURAL DISCRIMINATION

Within the framework of differentiated citizenship, Multiculturalism focuses on three categories of special rights that minorities may claim within the nation-state. These are: (i) cultural rights in the form of *exemptions, assistance, symbolic claims* and *claims for recognition*; (ii) self-government rights, and (iii) special representation rights.

(i) CULTURAL RIGHTS

(a) *Exemptions*

Multiculturalism suggests that exemptions allow minority communities to continue with their customary cultural practices while simultaneously making the public sphere more heterogeneous. While some of these collective rights introduce heterogeneity by giving members the option of endorsing a way of life, others empower communities and give the right to ensure that a given way of life is made secure. Ensuring that minorities have access to their culture requires rectifying the cultural biases of the state. More importantly, it requires that differences in group practices be respected and reflected in the public domain. Exemptions are, in this sense, a double-edged weapon. On the one hand, they correct the biases that emanate from the cultural orientation of the nation-state, and on the other, they provide equal opportunity to minorities to live in

---

[12]Op.cit.no.2

accordance with their own religious and cultural practices. Thus, exemptions have been demanded, and often granted, for the sake of minimizing majoritarian cultural biases, incorporating group differences into the public domain and giving minorities an opportunity to continue with their customary religious practices. In comparison with other claims for minority rights, the demand for exemptions has met with a more positive response from state institutions.

(b) *State Assistance for minority cultures*

To overcome the disadvantage that minorities face in observing their own distinct way of life, communities frequently supplement exemption claims with those of special assistance from the state. The nation-state, according to the Multiculturalists, protects the culture of the majority community. The heritage of the majority—its art, language, architecture, music and other such artefacts—receive state patronage. Or else, on account of its dominant position in society it is protected in the public arena. As a consequence, the majority enjoys access to its culture. It knows that its culture is secure within the nation-state. The minorities, by comparison, feel vulnerable. The pervasiveness of the majority culture disadvantage minority cultures. They threaten the very existence of these marginalized cultures. To offset marginalization of this kind, minorities frequently seek assistance from the state to promote their culture and to give it some space within the public arena. At the very least, they may request financial support or other related state resources for sustaining their cultural institutions, such as minority educational institutions, museums for ethnic arts and crafts, theatres, community newspapers, cultural clubs and institutions for the learning of ethnic languages.

(c) *Symbolic Claims*

Besides minority claims for exemptions and assistance, Multiculturalism also draws attention to symbolic claims that are sometimes presented by the marginalized communities. Minorities asserting such claims challenge the way a community is represented in the public arena and in the symbols of nation-state—e.g. the national anthem, declared public holidays, recognized national languages and even the name of the state that tend to reflect the orientation of the majority. Through symbolic claims minorities seek to challenge their exclusion from the

cultural expressions of the nation-state. In positive terms, they attempt to alter the way in which they are represented in the public arena through the chosen symbols of national life. To find a space in the name of the polity, its insignia, flag or public holidays suggests that they belong to the political community and are its full members. Since these claims are closely associated with the prestige of the community in the public arena, they have a special place within the framework of Multiculturalism, and are strongly supported by it.

(d) *Claims for recognition*

Recognition rights do not simply grant communities the opportunity to continue with their customary practices, they acknowledge and protect traditional community structures and systems of authority. As such, recognition claims are generally a means of preserving cultural practices and maintaining a certain degree of continuity with the past. Although preservation is often favoured to protect these communities from external forces of disintegration, nevertheless, it is important to note that recognition is aimed at sustaining existing community structures. It provides official state recognition to community structures and systems of authority. One might even say that recognition rights set up an alternative system of authority, and in this specific way, limit the nation-state. They challenge the use of universal principles by the nation-state and suggest that there are areas of collective social life which could be governed by multiple codes that are determined by particular communities.

Recognition rights tend to uphold traditional and customary laws. In some cases, these traditional norms receive exclusive jurisdiction over their members, but on other occasions, traditional laws are placed alongside the laws of the nation-state. This can be done in a variety of different ways: by dividing the area of jurisdiction, establishing a parallel system of governance, or by giving members the option to choose and subject themselves to a specific set of laws. For instance, in some states of America, jurisdiction is shared between the tribal governments and the state. While certain kinds of criminal actions are tried and punished in accordance with traditional tribal laws, cases involving death penalty are placed under the jurisdiction of the federal authority. In some other states, recognition of tribal customs has meant the existence of a parallel system of

jurisdiction wherein indigenous people are tried under tribal laws while the white population, living in the same area, is governed by the laws of the state.

Recognition rights thus legitimize the presence of community-based authority and are among the most strongly contested collective rights. While all forms of community practices are rarely justified, state intervention is usually considered undesirable. Thus, recognition rights do not merely introduce parallel systems of jurisdiction; they provide a rationale for giving greater power and control to the community in matters of cultural life.

(ii) SELF-GOVERNMENT RIGHTS

Self-government claims supplement recognition rights. Like the latter, these claims affirm the need for dual jurisdiction. However, there is one significant difference between these two kinds of minority claims. Self-government rights are generally linked to territorial claims. Usually communities that are concentrated in a specific region, or those that have occupied a given territory over a long period of time, seek the right to govern themselves. On most occasions, communities that ask for self-government rights see themselves as distinct nations; and it is in this capacity that they ask for special status within the polity. By comparison, recognition rights are not accompanied by analogous claims to territory. While the groups claiming recognition see themselves as culturally distinct entities, they do not bolster their identity claims with rights over territory. Moreover, the right to self-government can be claimed only when communities are concentrated in a given region. Recognition rights, on the other hand, can be claimed by, and given to, communities whose members are scattered in different regions of the nation-state.

Within the framework of Multiculturalism, self-government rights are also justified as measures necessary for protecting a culturally distinct way of life while simultaneously affirming the territorial integrity of the polity. It is argued that in conditions where a way of life is collectively valued by its members, communities that are a minority at the national level but a majority in a given region may be given special rights to govern themselves. Usually these rights entail greater devolution of power to the identified region so that the group can take decisions on key matters such as education, immigration, language, land and

resource use, family law, cultural rites, and administrative structure. A degree of political and territorial autonomy is favoured within the framework of a federal system in the belief that it will help to protect marginalized cultures and allow them to shape policies in consonance with their distinct way of life.

Since self-government rights give certain degree of political authority over a defined territory to communities who perceive themselves as separate nations within the polity, these have met with the considerable resistance. Approaching this issue through the framework of differentiated citizenship, Multiculturalism argues that when the unitary conception of citizenship is abandoned, the presence of self-governing nations, dual allegiances and overlapping obligations would not appear as divided or incomplete loyalty to the nation-state. Self-government rights are clearly located within the framework of differentiated citizenship. Differentiated citizenship assumes that people can belong to a particular cultural community as well as the political community or the nation-state. Multiple identities and loyalties of this kind could exist simultaneously without threatening each other; and people, or even regions, could be incorporated into the polity in different ways with the different sets of rights.

(iii) SPECIAL REPRESENTATION RIGHTS

Justification for special representation rights are predicated upon the basic Multicultural understanding that to ensure equal citizenship and genuine inclusion, group differences should not be eliminated. Rather diverse communities should have an opportunity to set public agendas and enrich policies by contribution through their distinctive cultural perspectives and experiences. Although separate representation rights also enable minorities to protect their special needs and interests, what is emphasized here is that they allow differences to be counted and weighed in decision-making. Since separate representation is likely to enrich political life by enhancing diversity of perspectives, Multiculturalism suggests that constituent groups, particularly groups that have been marginalized by the policies of the state, need to be represented in the democratic polity. In fact, special arrangements must be made to include their

point of view so that public norms and spaces reflect the cultural diversity that constitutes the polity. [13]

Multiculturalism, thus, approaches the issue of minority rights by focusing on the value of a cultural community membership for the individual, and the ways in which individuals are disadvantaged when this fundamental condition of human life is not met. Moreover, when special rights are advocated, be they cultural rights or self-government rights, for national minorities or for immigrants, they are seen as a way of incorporating differences of perceptions, beliefs, and even practices, in the public domain. Furthermore, as expression of a parallel rationality, special rights are not seen as being segregationist in intent. Instead, the framework of differentiated citizenship is invoked to discuss minority claims that are to be accommodated within the nation-state. Within it, it is assumed that people have dual membership: they are members of a political community as well as members of a cultural community, and that they value both these memberships. Hence, their cultural identities have to be taken into account along with their political identity. In fact, cultural identities need to be protected and preserved so as to ensure equal treatment to diverse communities.[14]

While discussing the issue of special rights for minorities, Multiculturalism concentrates on discrimination that occurs through the policies and cultural orientation of the nation-state. The focus, therefore, is on cultural rather than economic marginalization. Although the latter is an important source of subordination, Multiculturalism addresses culture-related discrimination. Some communities, in its view, remain vulnerable irrespective of the economic clout they possess. Lower economic status may significantly accentuate the feeling of marginalization, but an improved economic position is not enough to overcome the disadvantages the community faces within the nation-state. Hence, it is the cultural identity rather than economic status that is seen as the crucial condition here. [15]

---

[13]Op.cit.no.2, pp.94-114

[14] Ibid, p.122

[15] Op.cit.no.2, p.92

While living with differences is a fact of our social existence, Multiculturalism reflects upon the status of different cultural communities within a polity. Even when legal equality and political rights are given to all persons, some cultural communities continue to be marginalized and disadvantaged in the public arena. The question of cultural discrimination thus lies at the very centre of Multiculturalism. Multiculturalism makes us aware that promoting sameness may itself be a mode of unequal treatment. Multiculturalism also makes us aware that cultural nationalism discriminates by using the language of equality to justify its intolerance of cultural differences in public life. Multiculturalism thus mistrusts the pursuit of uniformity because it is usually a way of establishing the hegemony of the majority community within the polity. [16]

IDENTITY: MEANING AND COMPONENTS

The concept of identity has to do with sameness. Sameness of relevant features over time is integral to any notion of identity. To have an identity, a thing must have features that are both relevant and enduring. Persons cannot be exhaustively identified only with their bodies. The complete identity of a person is at best supervenient on bodily features. This is so because a person is a person only in so far as he/she has mental attributes. There also exist beliefs and desires. Persons cannot have their beliefs and desires without some minimal awareness. It is necessary, therefore, that to have an identity a person must consciously be able to identify with some of his/her beliefs, desires and acts.

Not all but only enduring beliefs and desires which people persistently hold and strive to realize are crucial for identity. More importantly, of the ones that endure, only relevant ones count; if they are to enter the definition of their identities, beliefs and desires must matter to them, is viewed by them as relevant. These are *identities-constituting* beliefs and desires. Since such beliefs and desires are formed within an enduring framework, not to possess such a framework is to fail to have an identity. What is relevant to a person's identity is what he values strongly. The identity of a person is defined not by any odd set of beliefs but only those held firmly, with good reason, and by values that cannot be reduced to mere desires, are judged by him or her to be more important than unevaluated desires.

---

[16] Ibid, pp.23-25

Only those beliefs and desires that a person strongly values, finds worthy, are crucial to his or her identity. The identity of persons is further defined by the language they happen to use. Identification with beliefs and desires is impossible without language because a person would not know what these beliefs and desires mean and therefore what they are. Language therefore plays an important role in the formation and the ongoing definition of identities.

A world of meanings can only be held in common with others. Therefore, to identify with beliefs and desires is to identify with something which is ineluctably social, necessarily shared with others. A human individual recognizes his identity in socially defined terms. Indeed, since these desires and beliefs emerge through interaction with others, it might be legitimate to assert that the identity of a person is largely a matter of social construction. This is true as much for a manufactured identity as for an identity engendered by the gentler, almost invisible process of social interaction.[17] Thus when we examine any system of identities, their reciprocal definition becomes obvious. Masculine identity has its particular meaning in relation to feminine identity; black to white; Protestant to Catholic; proletarian to bourgeois. Context has a marked effect on differentiation as a *process*.[18]

DISTINCTION BETWEEN PERSON AND IDENTITY

The distinction between *person* and *identity* is seen when we examine the possible identities of a single person who is a Catholic, a woman, A Basque, a worker and a cripple. Each of these identities can be mobilized (perhaps jointly) in several episodes. Identity is appearance—for—self—and—others; person is a system of identities. Identities are not equal. A person has a 'real' identity, a central self from which he speaks most truthfully. The core identity is to be created out of the relation between the appearances of his self, so that he may speak as himself—as Tolstoy or Freud—and not as one of his parts. What is

---

[17]Rajeev Bhargava, Amiya Kumar Bagchi and R. Sudarshan, **Multiculturalism, Liberalism and Democracy**, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999, pp.4-9

[18] Peter Du Preez, **The Politics of Identity: Ideology and the Human Image**, Basil Blackwell Publisher, England, 1980, p.3

required is that identities be coordinated. A coherent style, sense of integrity and continuity, do not depend on the abolition of our different identities.[19]

Identity is a broader concept than role, just as person is a broader concept than identity. In particular identity-pairs, defined within an ideology, the role may be clear. But each of these identities can be engaged in other contrasts, and in episodes beyond the scope of a particular ideology. Each contrast draws on different properties of the identity: a Catholic confronted with the poor, the unconverted, with a friend, engages in different actions. It is only where an identity is defined specifically by one contrast and one episode (or series of episodes conceived as a history), that we can equate identity and role. In general, we may say that: Roles are identities mobilised in a specific situation; where role is situationally specific, identities are trans-situational. [20]

Identity is never simply given. We have the elements of an identity, presented as a name, a history, a social class, a family reputation, attributions, and so forth. But these elements are like the forms of our language. Language is all about us, but we still have to learn to do something with it; though the elements of identity are 'given', we have to learn to use them. And some of the elements will be our personal achievement. Thus, when we say that identity is constituted in core roles, this does not mean that is simple to discover what this identity is. For the simpler kinds of collective, this may be the case; but for individuals for complex collective agents, identity has to be invented. The elements have to be combined melodically, given a style and an aesthetic whole, in an environment of others who are doing the same thing.[21]

INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP IDENTITY

The individual persons may be both individual agents and members of a collective agent in a particular action. Because we can identify a person individually and describe his individual actions, does not mean that he is not, at the same time, participating in a collective action.[22] In fact certain agents exist for the performance of particular acts. Their identity may be said to be constituted in

---

[19] Ibid
[20] Op.cit.no.18, pp.5-7
[21] Op.cit.no.18, p.32
[22] Ibid, p.12

their proper performance of these acts. A regiment which does not fight (when required), a rugby club which exists solely to enable its members to drink together, or a school in which no learning is attempted, seem to be failing in their core roles. Each person has to make something of the identity elements he finds in his community. He has, to use an analogy, to speak his own 'identity-sentences'. [23] Subjects and objects of action are constituted by reciprocal appearances and tasks. Without a common identity, individuals cannot form a collective agent. The individual, too, cannot be either the subjects or the object of action without an identity which orients him towards others in transactions. Identity is not maintained in isolation. Identities exist in systems of relations which maintain each other. A collective, like a person, can be an agent with an identity relating it to other agents. [24]

Social agents compete for recognition, acclaim, social position, material necessities and all the other goods of different ways of life. If individuals do not obtain the necessities of life, they die and collective agents die with them. If they do not receive recognition, they change, oppose, or sink into despair. The individual derives from a group a 'place in society' and a positive identity which can only be assured if his group can be positively evaluated in relation to other groups. Hence, attempts are made by the individuals for the preservation of the distinctiveness of groups which are particularly successful at conferring the benefit of a positively evaluated identity on their members. Since an individual belong to many possible groups, he/she have to determine in each comparison what group membership is being used, for instance, the supporters of different football teams may all be Methodists, but for the purpose of the current conflict they are members of rival groups, seeking enhancement, each through the victory of his own team. [25]

The identity of a group makes political action possible. [26] In political movements, persons are mobilized as collective agents with a common identity. There are

---

[23] Ibid, p.32

[24] Ibid, pp.1-3

[25] Op.cit.no.18, pp.21-22

[26] Ibid, p.3

differences in the degree to which events are structured so as to reduce us to that identity: fragmentation of roles, terror, information control, distance from our victims, anonymity, indoctrination and other factors may contribute to such a reduction.[27]The responses of the individuals to inferior group membership result into an attempt to leave the group—and the phenomenon of 'passing' is known in all societies where people conceal their religious affiliations, their race, their working-class origins, their caste or their family. They may attempt to change the dimension of comparison and achieve a special niche in society (spiritual values are substituted for material; intellectual for economics); they may attempt a transvaluation of characteristics (blackness, femaleness, jewishness, or whatever) by aggressive action; or they may sink into despair and adopt the qualities of the superior group.[28]

IDENTITY POLITICS

Identities not only define who we are; they also operate as objects that are open to manipulation and instrumental use. Identities can be mobilized to secure access to valued social and economic goods. In other words, claims for due recognition of a given identity-based community come both from the desire to seek some redistribution of goods as well as deeply felt expressive needs. Most often the two are combined. The tendency on the part of the state is to ignore these demands and treat them merely as claims for more resources. The point that is forgotten in the process is that, when identities are mobilized, it is necessary to address concerns of recognition. Ignoring the latter often alienates a community resulting into identity based political movements.[29] Identity politics is thus born of a deeply felt lack of identity, which means that it has something to do with an element of dysfunction within the individual concerned or for that matter the collective, a dysfunction that prevents it from attaining the autonomy it requires to assert itself vis-à-vis other individuals or collectives.[30]

---

[27] Ibid, p.8

[28] Ibid, p.23

[29] See Saumyajit Ray, *'Understanding Indian Multiculturalism'*, in (ed*)* **Multiculturalism-Public Policy and Problem Areas in Canada and India**, Jawaharlal Nehru Publication, New Delhi, 2009.

[30] Girindra Narayan Ray, *'The Rajbanshi Identity Politics: The post colonial passages'*, in Sailen Debnath (ed) **Social and Political Tensions in North Bengal (Since 1947)**, N.L. Publishers, West Bengal, 2007, p.155

The last four decades of the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of a cluster of political movements led by such diverse groups as the indigenous peoples, national minorities, and ethno-cultural nations, old and new immigrants. They want society to recognize the legitimacy of their differences, especially those that spring from and constitute their identities. Although the term identity is sometimes inflated to cover almost everything that characterizes an individual or a group, most advocates of these movements use it to refer to those chosen or inherited characteristics that define them as certain kinds of persons or groups and form an integral part of their self-understanding. These movements thus form part of the wider struggle for recognition of identity and difference or, specifically, of identity-related differences.

Identity based political movement's demand for recognition goes far beyond the familiar plea for toleration. Rather they ask for the acceptance, respect and even public affirmation of their differences. Some of these groups want the wider society to treat them equally with the rest and not to discriminate against or otherwise disadvantage them. Some go further and demand that it should also respect their differences; as equally valid or worthy ways of organizing the relevant areas of life or leading individual and collective lives. While acceptance of differences calls for changes in the legal arrangements of society, respect for them requires changes in its attitudes and ways of thought as well. Some leaders of the new movements go yet further and press for public affirmation of their differences by symbolic and other means.

These movements although spearheading the politics of identity sometimes appear to be exclusively preoccupied with the issues of recognition and difference; their more articulate spokesmen appreciate that the latter cannot be dissociated from the wider economic and political structure. Identities are valued or devalued because of the place of their bearers in the prevailing structure of power, and their revaluation entails corresponding changes in the latter. Women, gays, cultural minorities and others cannot express and realize their identities without the necessary freedom of self-determination, a climate conducive to diversity, material resources and opportunities, suitable legal arrangements, and so on, and all these call for profound changes in all areas of life.[31]

---

[31] Bhikhu Parekh, **Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory**, Palgrave Macmillan, United Kingdom, 2006, pp. 1-3

Politics, considered from this standpoint, is centrally concerned with maintaining or imposing an identity system. It is concerned with the consolidation of interlocking symbols which give a sense of integrity and continuity of action. The predominance of persons of a particular identity in positions of power—dispersed throughout society—is often sufficient to maintain an imbalance. Identity cannot be detached from the 'real' interests of agents. Identity is validated while tangible advantage is obtained. Thus one of the consequences of the political consolidation of an identity system is that certain persons are privileged. **Firstly**, the political agent (nation, state, party or other movements) attempts to win privileges for all or many of its members in relation to the members of other groups. **Secondly**, within the political entity, there are identities which are more privileged than others. Men may be more privileged than women, adults than children, Protestants than Catholics, citizens than foreigners, whites than blacks, Brahmins than non-Brahmins—and so forth.[32]

The first step in the growth of political movements often takes the form of histories which define a set of relations between the collective and others. The collective may be distinguished from others by a list of grievances and achievements. The positive identity of the collective is affirmed by tales of the early martyrs. These incidents confirm the existence of oppressors and can be used in calls on us to share the identity of the martyrs and to admit the implications of their identity. Once this identification has occurred and has led to reaction, any repressive action simply confirms the relation between the national martyrs and the oppressors. The whole national history is rewritten to confirm this relation and to propound an ideal state of affairs. The result is a political movement which attempts to translate symbolic relations into real ones.

Political ideologies often attempt to maintain their agents as personae with finite and mechanical relations to one another. There is, from an ideological point of view, a well understood and predictable relation between collective identity-pairs such as Aryan/Jew; Catholic/Protestant (in Northern Ireland); white/black (in nationalist politics); Basque/Spaniard; or Hindu/Muslims (in India). Each of these

---

[32] Op.cit.no.18, pp.1-2

pairs is to be understood in a particular ideology at a particular time and place. Political issues crystallize in such oppositions and ideologies supply with accounts of them, where an account takes the form of an idealized scenario, including goals, objectives, identities, histories, excuses and justifications. The degree of detail will depend on the amount of work which the intellectuals of the movement have put into the theory. Pamphlets, histories, novels, films, paintings and statues embody the vision.[33]

Politics as the consolidation and elaboration of an identity system in which the allocation of opportunities is regulated, not only includes the 'material' interests which that system serves, but also 'aesthetic' and 'spiritual' interests. In all these things, men hope for the exchange of symbols of acceptance and admiration while searching for confirmation of what they are; nor do they reject (except in special instances) negotiable symbols which purchase the necessities of both further activity and identity promotion.[34] Consequently identity politics is—among other things—a dispute about who gets what under which circumstances. The dispute of politics is conducted by agents, both collective and individual.[35] The works of Tajfel (1978) and Turner (1975) show that the mere existence of another group induce competitive behaviour, even when the groups are not negatively interdependent; that is, the rewards due to a group do not depend on its performing better than the other group.[36] Naturally, to the extent that resources are limited, competition intensifies. The greater the number of social agents competing for the same finite resources in the same way; the greater will be the competition.

Politically active members of groups often promote group distinctiveness in order to gain power. Their emphasis on group characteristics eliminates competition from outside in their quest for control of the group itself, and as pioneers of the view that the group has its own identity they establish their claim to lead it. In the larger areas of society they then have a basis for an assault on the citadels of

---

[33] Op.cit.no.18, pp.4-5

[34] Ibid, pp.2-3

[35] Ibid, p.13

[36] Ibid, pp.21-22

power.[37] These processes are of very greatest importance in identity politics. It is sometimes possible for an ambitious man to rise through existing parties, but often enough the really large changes are brought about by men who exploit needs which no established party can accommodate. Hitler is a remarkable example of this. The rise of disruptive ethnic movements where, superficially at least, there are adequate political means for the expression of views and the achievement of the purpose is a common phenomenon. It is not so much that ethnic needs are not being satisfied as the fact that a niche exists in the power structure which is as yet unexploited that gives such movements their momentum. Entrepreneurs of political distinctions can work on substantial grievances to produce a movement which will carry them to power. The more this is an authentic vision, a 'disinterested' task, the more successful they are likely to be, finding exactly the right information, the right words, the right style. In the course of this, new movements with an identity which is sharply differentiated from the old are created and the established order is criticized and attacked.[38]

MULTICULTURALISM AND IDENTITY POLITICS

For Multiculturalism, bonds of cultural community identity define personal identity. They provide an anchor for self-identification. One's sense of personal identity is closely bound up with one's language, characteristic modes of thought, customs, collective memories, and so on, in a word, with one's culture. Accordingly Multiculturalism is not about difference and identity *per se* but about those that are embedded in and sustained by culture; that is, a body of beliefs and practices in terms of which a group of people understand themselves and the world and organize their individual and collective lives. Culturally derived differences carry a measure of authority and are patterned and structured by virtue of being embedded in a shared and historically inherited system of meaning and significance. Multiculturalism, then, is about cultural diversity or culturally embedded differences.[39]

---

[37] Ibid, p.23-24

[38] Op.cit.no.18, pp.39-40

[39] Op.cit.no.28

Multiculturalism seeks to protect cultural practices which are perceived by the community to be signs of their identity. For example, the Quebecois way of life is associated with the preservation of a linguistic tradition; but the way of life of ethnic communities from West Asia and Africa is most often linked to their religious identity. Thus, in their case it is religious practices usually associated with Islam that are defended. In positive terms, existing cultural and religious practices, or even linguistic practices that are regarded to be collectively valued by a community are sought to be protected against liberal opposition. Thus, preservation aims to allow minority communities the rights to continue with practices that they see as being essential to their cultural self-definition.[40] In the case of India, the continuance of personal laws with regard to civil cases is clear example whereby the resistance on the part of the Govt. of India to impose uniform civil code is an attempt to accommodate sentiments of various religious communities with regard to their personal affairs. Similarly the inclusion of the languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution is a way to include and recognise the languages which are collectively valued by the members of the community as a determining factor of their identity.

Within Multiculturalism respect for cultural community identity is valued for yet another reason. While individual identity is shaped by the community in which the individuals are situated, their self-perception is affected by the way they are perceived by others. Individual members suffer if their community membership is not valued by others and if it had low prestige in the public arena. Alternately, instead of locating themselves in their respective cultural norms, they aspire to conform to values that are, in their view, endorsed by the majority. Being a social stigma, it is a 'potent instrument of one's oppression' and can be an instrument of self-depreciation.

Accordingly Multiculturalism upholds that the existence of cultural community memberships and the value they have in the lives of individuals should to recognised and appreciated.[41] Multiculturalism argues that social identities, with

---

[40] Op.cit.no.2, p. 82

[41] Ibid, pp.45-46

which we are born, such as race, religion, caste and gender, must not be the basis of differentiating between individuals. As human beings, they are members of a common humanity and must be considered alike, at least in the eyes of the law. The fact that the ideal of universal citizenship has helped include people who were previously excluded from the public-political domain is today widely acknowledged. Multiculturalism does not deny this contribution. It, however, asserts that this ideal has not effectively realized the goal of equality. While it has enabled people of different identities to achieve *membership* of the state, it has not provided equality of democratic citizenship. The principle of universal and uniform citizenship has, in fact, left many structures of discrimination untouched within the polity. Multiculturalism identifies three reasons for this: (a) universal citizenship acknowledges commonalities only at the level of the state; (b) it assumes the existence of a *homogeneous* public, and (c) it mandates identical treatment for all.

From the point of view of Multiculturalism, the idea of universal citizenship speaks only of individuals as citizens. It recognizes only one membership: namely, of the state, and dismisses all other affiliations and loyalties. As a consequence, it makes no attempt to accommodate the latter. Only individuals as citizens of the state receive consideration within it; they alone have rights and can make claims against the state and other individuals. Communities have no recognized standing within it. It judges everyone, even those belonging to different cultural contexts—and endorsing different values and ways of life—by the same rules and standards. What is even more significant for Multiculturalism is that the chosen standards generally express the culture of the majority community within the state, i.e. what is permitted and prescribed as desirable is shaped by the preferences of the majority. As a result, the principle of universal rights discriminates against the minority communities. The assumption of sameness and identity disadvantages groups whose experience, culture and socialized capacities differ from those of the privileged groups'. As a result, some communities remain marginalized. Their points of view and perspectives get gradually silenced and excluded from the 'common culture of the state'[42]

---

[42] Op.cit.no.2, pp.86-88

CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES TO MULTICULTURALISM

Globalization was supposed to extinguish minority national identities, to be replaced by a supra-national cosmopolitan identity. Contrarily most minority nationalisms are as strong now as ever before, and show no sign of losing steam. Globalization does raise many new challenges for minority nationalism, and one of these is the impact of immigration. A noted aspect of globalization is the movement of people, particularly the significant increase in the numbers of economic migrants. The presence of these immigrants has given impetus to minority nationalist movements practising identity politics. This is because both minority nationalism and immigration are often intimately connected, and not always in complementary ways. Each of these minority groups sees itself as a distinct and self-governing nation within a larger state, and has mobilized along nationalist lines to demand greater regional self-government and national recognition. However, the presence of significant numbers of immigrants into the minority's regions is affecting the sort of national identity. Many minority nationalists have seen these changes as regrettable, and have viewed immigrants as a threat, rather than potential benefit, to the national minority.

Immigration, therefore, is a challenge to the self-conceptions and political aspirations of those groups that see themselves as distinct and self-governing nations within a larger state. Large-scale immigration has typically been seen as a threat to national minorities. There is a strong temptation for immigrants to integrate into the dominant culture (which usually offers greater mobility and economic opportunities). Immigrants are unlikely to understand or share the mentality of '*la survivance*' which national minorities typically have developed in their many years (or centuries) of struggle to maintain their distinct language, culture and political autonomy. So even if immigrants do learn the minority's language and integrate into the minority's society, they are still unlikely to support nationalist mobilizations. They may join the minority nation, but they are unlikely to become minority nationalists. As a result, minority nationalisms have often taken the form of 'ethnic' nationalisms which privilege bonds of blood and

descent, which are deeply xenophobic and often racist, and which seek to exclude immigrants.[43]

People from different national groups share an allegiance to the larger polity if they see it as the context within which their national identity is nurtured, rather than subordinated. This is difficult enough in a country which simply contains two nations. It gets much more complicated in countries which are not only multinational but also polyethnic, containing many national and indigenous groups, often of vastly unequal size, as well as immigrants from every part of the world. People decide who they want to share a country with by asking who they identity with, who they feel solidarity with. This idea of a *shared identity* derived from commonality of history, language, and religion is precisely not shared in a multination state giving way to Identity politics. [44]

To conclude, identity of an individual is not a single entity. Rather it is composed of several dimensions of which the group identity shared by its members on the grounds of common race, language, history, customs and practices holds primacy over other identities. It is this group identity that enables its existence as independent entity from the groups against others. Such group identities based on primeval factors are exploited by members of the groups to achieve material as well as aesthetic ends. Multiculturalism as an approach deals with collective identity of the groups and tries to accommodate diverse groups within the manifold of peaceful co-existence. The setting of Multiculturalism is challenged by identity politics which is assertive of the distinct group identity. Both Multiculturalism and Identity Politics are concerned with assertion of the group identity and its relevance to an individual's existence. However where they fall apart is the approach while the former seeks accommodation the later division. It is in this mise-en-scene, the identity formation of the Gorkhas and Rajbangsi would be studied so as to analyse the interplay of identity issues and separate statehood demand challenging the very set up of Multiculturalism in West Bengal.

---

[43] Will Kymlicka, **Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Citizenship**, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001, pp.275-278

[44]Op.cit.no.2, pp.188-189