

**MINORITY RIGHTS IN THE LIBERAL TRADITION:  
THE EMERGENCE OF MULTICULTURALISM**

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**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

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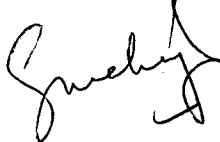
## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the Dissertation entitled **Minority Rights in the Liberal Tradition: The Emergence of Multiculturalism** submitted by me, **Amir Ali**, Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** is my original work and has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree or diploma in any other university.

  
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This may be placed before the examiners for the evaluation for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy**.

  
Professor Kuldeep Mathur  
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## INTRODUCTION

This study is concerned with analysing the most recent manifestation of a liberal theory of minority rights - multiculturalism. There have been many forms that a liberal theory of minority rights has taken, the late nineteenth and early twentieth century being notable for the concern among liberal theorists for the issue. Here, it is argued that multiculturalism emerged in the late nineteen seventies and early nineteen eighties in the Anglo-American world. Its importance lies in the fact that it has successfully reintroduced the concern for minority rights after almost a half-century of the neglect of such issues in the liberal tradition.

Its emergence is thus, a welcome retraining of the liberal gaze towards a much neglected area, especially considering the fact that there has more recently been an alarming profusion of ethnic violence and 'ethnic cleansing' in many parts of the world. Many have linked this ethnic explosion to the end of the Cold War. Without doubt the Cold War may have prevented or at least diverted these ethnically based grievances and hatreds from being articulated, but the fact remains that ethnicity has throughout remained a powerful determining force in peoples lives. The ethnic strife in Sri Lanka began in 1983, much before the Cold war had actually ended. Yet, the list of areas in the world ravaged by ethnic conflagrations does significantly jump after the end of the Cold War. Rwanda's feuding Hutus and Tutsis are probably the most horrendous examples of such strife in the last decade of the twentieth century and without doubt, the savagery on display in Bosnia Herzegovina and other breakaway republics of the former Yugoslavia provide an equal in Europe itself. Everywhere in the world violence between ethnic groups and directed towards minorities has been increasing steadily. Fiji has recently been engulfed by a constitutional crisis that threatens to put an end to the protection that had till now been extended to minority groups.

The point in enumerating these many examples from across the world is to show that the issue of minority rights can be for many, struggles of life and death. Any theory that wishes to take cognizance of the rights of minorities must be deeply aware of the actual plight that they face. Multiculturalism, it has already been mentioned above, is a welcome end to the silence in liberal theory on the issue of minority rights. However, it will be argued in the first chapter that it has emerged in the advanced liberal democracies of the West, towards the end of the twentieth century; that it has been lauded by most sections of society, and an increasing number of liberal democracies are keen on declaring themselves as multicultural; as a consequence it has almost, as it were, entered a self-laudatory phase. This attitude prevents it from continuously reformulating itself in such a manner as to make it as effective as possible. What is being objected to here is the bland theorizing on multiculturalism that is at present taking place, which ends up providing us with little more than homilies on the niceties of cultural pluralism and the coexistence of diverse cultures. This attitude fails to take into account the actual struggles that members from marginalised minorities undergo in their attempts to achieve equal dignity and self-respect.

A description of the main features of this liberal multiculturalism would be in order. Firstly it views the nation state not as being culturally homogeneous, as the case used to be previously, but as consisting of a number of discrete cultural communities, the viability of which it is committed to maintaining. Linked to this point is the realization that the very act of national self-determination results in the creation of a public sphere in which the cultural values, norms, practices and lifestyle of the dominant majority are institutionalized and thus come to define the public sphere (Tamir, 1993: 70). Minority disadvantage arises when members of the minority community are prevented from carrying their distinctive cultural practices into the public sphere (ibid.: 53). The nation-state is thus, inevitably weighted against minorities and this happens through the choice of national symbols, national holidays, the choice of

the official language etc. It is indeed these very concerns that have been central to the multicultural agenda as it has evolved over the past two decades.

Having realized the cultural gap that exists between the public sphere and the private sphere of different communities and their cultures, it avers that the kind of procedural justice talked about in Rawlsian liberalism and its resolute determination not to allow the political principles of the state to define or specify any conception of the good life is misplaced. It emphasizes the cultural embeddedness of individuals, as opposed to the unencumbered nature of the Rawlsian self, which is prior to its ends and attachments. It further argues that the idea of autonomy of the individual and the liberal emphasis on the right of an individual to exercise choice on matters that may define in a significant way the course of his/her life can only be made meaningful by securing for the individual the cultural context or community of which he is a part. Strengthening of the cultural context or community of which the individual may be a part is thus meant to enhance the autonomy of the individual and is thus meant to make the exercise of choosing more meaningful.

After pointing out the existence of numerous discrete cultural communities within the nation-state, multiculturalism goes on to argue for the equal respect and treatment of each of these communities. Equal respect for each community ensures the dignity and well being of the members of the community and a failure to do so would entail a denial of dignity to the members of that community. It would thus result in the inability on the part of the individual to make meaningful choices and decisions regarding his life as the choices that his culture hold out to him have been devalued and disrespected by the larger society. What is perhaps most notable in this regard is that the liberal polity views all the communities that constitute it as worthy of equal respect, even if some of them may be characterized and defined by illiberal cultures.

To gain a further understanding of multiculturalism it would be useful to differentiate between two different kinds of communities that it deals with. The

first are ones that are territorially concentrated like the Quebecois and the Inuits in Canada. The second are the ones that are territorially dispersed throughout the length and breadth of the country e.g. the Blacks in the US and the immigrant population of Britain. While the territorially concentrated kind of communities have typically been dealt with through provisions for devolution of powers and other forms of asymmetrical federalism; the second kind of communities pose a different problem altogether as members of different communities share the same public spaces, common services, workplace and leisure facilities (Raz, 1994: 69). It is these second types of communities that this study of multiculturalism will be concerned with.

One of the central concerns of this study will be to look at the ways in which the period of the emergence of multiculturalism in the late seventies in the Anglo-American world, a period most notable for the rapid rise of neo-liberalism, has resulted in the complete neglect of issues of material redistribution. It is on account of this reason that a serious evaluation and interrogation of multiculturalism as it has been presently formulated will be undertaken. Such an evaluation and interrogation will attempt to bring out some of its shortcomings and the ways in which these shortcomings seriously compromise its ability to address the issue of minority disadvantage. Therefore, the first chapter looks at the context of the emergence of multiculturalism using a periodising hypothesis similar to the periodising hypothesis used by Frederic Jameson (1984). Jameson understands the cultural changes that are characterized as post-modernism as being the cultural logic of late capitalism. Further, the language of the Marxist regulation school pioneered by Aglietta is used to locate multiculturalism in the 'mode of social and political regulation' of the transformed capitalist 'regime of accumulation'. The post-Fordist regime of accumulation was to develop subsequent to the dissolution of the previous Fordist regime. It will thus be argued that the emergence of multiculturalism is inextricably intertwined with the changes in the global capitalist accumulation process.



As this study uses as its point of departure a periodising hypothesis, the crucial period in question being the late nineteen seventies when multiculturalism simultaneous with the structural transformations in the economy emerges in the West; it looks at two concepts, which are central to multicultural theory. The first is the conception of the self in liberal theory and the second is the particular concept of community that multicultural theory has privileged. The concepts of the self and community in liberal political theory are analysed in chapters two and three respectively. Both the chapters argue for a reconceptualisation of these concepts, a reconceptualisation that is sensitive to the wide ranging political and cultural changes that followed close on the heels of the massive economic shifts of the nineteen seventies. This reconceptualisation would perhaps help to resolve the intractable dispute that is posed by the self and the collectivity and that has been debated intensively in liberal political theory in terms of individual and collective rights.

The second chapter takes as its point of departure the critique that has been launched upon the Rawlsian conception of the self by the communitarian Michael Sandel. The reason for taking this particular critique as the point of departure is that it has very effectively brought out the limitations that the Rawlsian conception has faced in the changed circumstances that the nineteen seventies have brought about. These changed circumstances have of course resulted in the breaking up of the liberal-Keynesian consensus. The critique is particularly effective and convincing in the manner in which it has shown how the Rawlsian conception of the self in combination with the difference principle fails to provide a coherent justification for the liberal welfare state. However, inspite of the limitations in Rawlsian liberalism that the communitarian critique has brought out, this chapter will argue that later multicultural theory has been unable to incorporate the concern for material redistribution that is to be found in the Rawlsian difference principle. This concern for material redistribution that is found in the difference principle and its neglect in later multicultural theory

explains the relative silences in multicultural theory on such issues of redistribution (see Fraser, 1995; Zizek, 1997). It will be argued that this failure in multicultural theory to incorporate the concerns for redistributive justice found in the Rawlsian difference principle, is a result of the emergence of multiculturalism in the period of the nineteen seventies. Thus, multiculturalism could not fail to be influenced by the deleterious effects of the increasingly dominant neo-liberalism that was adopted by the new right under Reaganism and Thatcherism. A reconceptualisation of the self it will be argued should be sensitive to the changed circumstances that have been brought about by economic changes of the seventies. Further, such a reconceptualisation should bring back into multicultural theory the concern for redistributive justice that is found in the Rawlsian difference principle.

One of the central arguments of the third chapter is that the concept of community has been revived and given a new lease of life through the importance that it has received from the communitarian camp and from multicultural theory. This renewed interest that is being displayed towards the concept is rooted in the kind of economic uncertainties that the post-industrial set up in the Western world, particularly the Anglo-American world gave rise to. Further, it will be argued that the certainties and security afforded by communities also became significant in the immediate aftermath of industrialization. The problem with the concept of community as it has been conceived in contemporary times is that the idea has been uncritically accepted from the time that it was first conceptualized after industrialization. The third chapter thus argues for a reconceptualisation of the concept of community that eliminates some of the shortcomings mentioned above. The most pressing of these shortcomings is the fact that the present construction of community has implicit within its structure, the existence of social bonds and political mechanisms which hold the community together. These social bonds and political mechanisms may often be oppressive and coercive and therefore harm some individuals within the community.

The reconceptualisations that have been referred to above and the concern with material redistribution are a reflection of the distinctly left-liberal position from which this study has been written. Such a left-liberal position seeks to incorporate the benefits of political liberalism but which simultaneously seeks to counter the harmful effects of economic neo-liberalism. Obviously, welfarism and redistribution have been the worst victims of neo-liberalism that became dominant in the period in which multiculturalism itself emerged. In this regard Michael Walzer's observation on multiculturalism is particularly relevant: 'If multiculturalism today brings more trouble than hope, one reason is the weakness of social democracy (in America: left-liberalism). But that is another and a longer story'. He also opines in the same article that: 'Multiculturalism as an ideology is not only the product of, it is also a program for, greater social and *economic* equality (Walzer, 1994: 191). The point that needs to be emphasized here is that multiculturalism can only be effective if it is part of a resurgent left-liberalism that has as among its central concerns, the countering of economic neo-liberalism; learning from the mistakes made by social democracy in the post-War period; and continuing the espousal of concerns that have traditionally been close to the left like ecological movements, protecting gay rights as well as upholding the rights of ethnic minorities (Mouffe, 1992).

The first, second and third chapters can be considered to be linked in the sense that they look at the ways in which the historical context, in which multiculturalism emerged, has resulted in certain inherent limitations. These limitations have the potential to seriously undermine the emancipatory promise of multiculturalism. The fourth and final chapter shifts the emphasis both in terms of time and geographical location. Thus while the first three chapters analysed the ways in which the Anglo-American world of the late nineteen seventies and the early nineteen eighties have shaped multiculturalism, the fourth chapter looks at the ways in which the British Empire in India gave rise to various mechanisms of

minority protection. Some of these mechanisms were later incorporated in the present Indian constitution.

This theme is not entirely unconnected to the earlier three chapters. The first chapter looks into the manner in which the Deobandi School of Islam's preoccupation with the creation and maintenance of an autonomous private sphere has influenced the formation of British multiculturalism in the eighties. This influence was to come about with the transplantation of this form of Islam, which originated in the Indian sub-continent, to Britain in the latter half of the twentieth century. This was a process that took place with the waves of post-War migration from the sub-continent to supply the demand for cheap labour to rebuild Britain's war ravaged economy. The Deobandi School of Islam was a direct response to the rise of British power in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The particular feature which has characterized it, both in the context of the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in India and the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Britain, is a preoccupation with the creation and maintenance of an autonomous private sphere. This autonomous private sphere is protected from the influences of the larger society to facilitate the observance of the Islamic *shariah* (the sacred law of Islam). It has also significantly influenced the formation and maintenance of a private sphere in post-independence India. Chapter 4 takes a look at the ways in which the provisions for minority rights in the Indian constitution predated later liberal concerns with cultural pluralism in the West by a good three decades and how the present provisions for minority rights came to acquire their present shape.

The argument this study makes regarding the origin of multiculturalism in the context provided by the late seventies in the Anglo-American world might be objectionable to some on the grounds that it does not explain the origins of Canadian multiculturalism where it has been the official policy of the state for quite some time. It would therefore be relevant to point out that this study limits itself to analysing the way that multiculturalism has been formulated in the Anglo-American world (understood as the United States and Britain) particularly

in the context of the revival of Anglo-American political theory after the publication of John Rawls's *Theory of Justice*.

Obviously, the manner in which multiculturalism has been formulated in the Anglo-American world could not fail to be influenced by prominent Canadian theorists like Will Kymlicka and Charles Taylor. However there is again a distinct difference between the concerns that are central to Canadian multiculturalism and multiculturalism in the US and Britain. One of the most central concerns of Canadian multiculturalism has been the French province of Quebec and this has been the concern that has probably influenced Canadian multiculturalism the most. What is distinctive about Quebec is that it provides one with a territorially concentrated population of French speaking Quebecois which makes the problem of providing them with cultural rights qualitatively distinct from the territorially dispersed immigrant population of Britain and the various ethnic minorities of the US, the most prominent being the Blacks. The dimension of territorial dispersal brings in to question an attempt to 'imagine a community' (Anderson, 1991) of people who share many common cultural traits and suffer marginalisation and discrimination on account of this reason.

There is a further similarity between British multiculturalism and the US model. This similarity has to do with the political economy of marginalisation. It will be argued in this study that the large-scale economic changes of the 1970s, a central feature of this study, were to hit ethnic minorities in the US and vulnerable sections of the immigrant population in Britain the hardest. It is on account of this very reason that the issue of material redistribution is emphasised time and again in the course of this study. This again sets it apart from the more affluent conditions in Quebec where issues like material redistribution do not count.

Having considered the differences between the Anglo-American context and the Canadian context, a separate analysis of the Anglo-American variant of multiculturalism is warranted, which is precisely what this study seeks to do. However as mentioned earlier the study does not remain confined to the Anglo-

American world but brings into the discussion the evolution of strategies for minority protection in the Indian sub-continent during the time of the British Empire. These schemes of minority protection that were incorporated later in the Indian constitution in the decade of the 1940s shows the manner in which concerns with cultural pluralism in India presaged such concerns in the Anglo-American world by a good three decades. Besides presaging such concerns, they actively influenced the formulation of British multiculturalism in the 1980s.

## **Chapter 1- The Context of the Emergence of Multiculturalism.**

This chapter examines the context in which multiculturalism has emerged in the West. It argues that the period of the late nineteen seventies and the early nineteen eighties with the large-scale economic transformations that accompanied this period are crucial to an understanding of multiculturalism. These large scale economic transformations beginning with the first oil shock of 1973, proceeding to the second oil shock of 1978 and culminating in the deep recession that began in the late nineteen seventies, resulted in the break up of what is termed the liberal-Keynesian consensus. This was a consensus that lay on the left of the political spectrum and which had been prevalent from around the end of the Second World War. The break up of this particular consensus, as a result of the economic changes that have been outlined above, also signalled the passage from what has been described as a Fordist to a post-Fordist or post-industrial society. All these changes were to result in one of the most significant shifts in the political spectrum to the right in the Anglo-American world with Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan being voted to power in the UK and the US respectively.<sup>1</sup>

Another crucial aspect linked to this particular period is its being preceded by a landmark event in political theory with the publication of John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* in 1971. This event has been welcomed as a revival of the tradition of political theory, a tradition which had been declared by some to have already died. Rawls's theory has served as the reference point around which all subsequent debates on liberal theory have been conducted. Multiculturalism and the manner in which it has been formulated as a liberal theory of minority rights can only be understood by examining this historical context of its

emergence in the late nineteen seventies and the manner in which political theory has been revived in this decade itself.

Having delineated the historical period which is crucial to an understanding of multiculturalism in the first section, this chapter also seeks to look at some of the formative influences that have fed into the multicultural discourse and helped in shaping it in the form that we find it today. As it was the Anglo-American world that provided the context in which multiculturalism emerged, two different sets of influences will be especially considered. The first formative influence is American and is the movement for Black pride led by Malcolm X and which has often been disparagingly described as a form of Black separatism by some. The third section of the chapter looks at the contribution that Malcolm X has made to the development of the multicultural model, a contribution that would become obvious only a decade and a half after his assassination in 1965 (Kepel, 1997). This was also the time when the Civil Rights Movement was at its height and multiculturalism is also considered in comparison to this particular movement, of which it is considered to be a major development. However, there is a definite qualitative distinction between the two, which the third section attempts to bring out.

The other formative influence is British and is linked to the Empire in the Indian sub-continent. Section four of the chapter looks at the way that the British Raj dealt with religious communities, in particular the Muslim community, and how a particular form of Islam, namely the Deobandi form, was to emerge in the late nineteenth century in India. This was a specific response to a double dilemma faced by the Muslims of the sub-continent. The first part of the dilemma was how to respond to the loss of political power to the British in the aftermath of the Mutiny of 1857; secondly, how this response was to be conditioned according to the fact that the Muslims of the subcontinent constituted a numerical minority. The important point to note is that this particular form of Islam and its influence



did not remain confined to the Indian sub-continent, but that its influence was transplanted to Britain in the second half of the twentieth century along with the waves of post-war migration to that country that took place from the sub-continent. Once it was located in Britain it was then to influence the formation of British multiculturalism in the eighties in a manner similar to the way that it influenced colonial British policy in the late nineteenth century (see Kepel, 1997).

Multiculturalism has foregrounded the importance of cultural difference. One of its important contributions has been to challenge the assumption of the culturally homogeneous nation state. In fact Yael Tamir (1993: 70) has shown how the roots of minority disadvantage lie in the very act of exercising the right to self determination, which she feels leads to the creation of a public sphere that is defined by the cultural values, norms and lifestyle of the majority. Minority disadvantage she feels stems from the alienation that members from minority groups feel and the consequent exclusion that they suffer when they are unable to carry their cultural distinctness into the public sphere, which she has already argued is defined by the culture of the majority. This problem was compounded by the fact that behind this 'façade of cultural homogeneity' lay hidden the 'oppressive maintenance of a hegemonic majority culture' (Habermas, 1996: 289).

This chapter will argue that the recent attempts by multiculturalism to acknowledge, accommodate and encourage cultural difference are an attempt to bring about a certain widening process within liberalism. This widening seeks to correct the traditional 'narrowness' that has characterized liberalism from J.S. Mill down to John Rawls (Parekh, 1994). This attempt to widen liberalism explains the shift in emphasis that has taken place from the 'colour-blind' model of the Civil Rights Movement to the 'colour-conscious' model of multiculturalism. Indeed, this widening process within liberalism has been welcomed by many as it is felt that it will now be able to make liberalism more conducive to the expression of cultural difference and hence extend its principles to greater sections of the polity.

However, what this chapter and subsequent ones in this study will attempt to do is interrogate the concept of multiculturalism to arrive at an understanding of the extent to which multiculturalism's emancipatory and inclusionary potentials can be realised. Thus, it will proceed on the assumption that deep within liberalism there lies a kernel of exclusion that gives rise to a certain exclusionary potential, a potential that is to be found in liberal multiculturalism as well. This exclusionary potential arises despite the fact that liberalism professes to be universal in its principles. From this exclusionary kernel is determined the horizon of alterity, which then dictates who is to be excluded and who is to be left out; which kinds of difference can be accommodated and which kinds cannot etc. (Mehta, 1999). Mehta has argued in his book *Liberalism and Empire* that the exclusionary basis of liberalism derives from its theoretical core and the 'litany of exclusionary historical instances' is an elaboration of this core. Mehta's book is a study of 19<sup>th</sup> century British liberal thought in relation to the British Empire. Having noted the strong links that exist between British multiculturalism and the British Empire in India (see Kuper, 1997) what will be argued here is that this exclusionary potential within liberalism, if it is not kept under sufficient check, threatens to add multiculturalism as yet another item in the long 'litany of exclusionary historical instances' of liberalism.

Before going on to look at the emergence of multiculturalism it would also be important to point out that a liberal theory of minority rights is not something completely new and that there have existed varying forms of minority protection in the liberal tradition. Kymlicka has pointed out that the issue itself has not received the attention it deserves in more recent political theory and that important theorists like Rawls and Dworkin have completely neglected it. He points out that minority rights were an important philosophical issue for political theorists in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century (Kymlicka, 1989; 3,5). He thus hopes to draw on certain

neglected areas of liberal theory which he obviously feels support the idea of minority rights. This would challenge the reluctance of many contemporary liberal theorists who hold that such an idea could not possibly be accommodated in liberal theory. It is on account of this that Kymlicka feels that there is a need to have a more thorough study of the relationship between minority rights and liberalism (ibid.: 212).

### **I - The Economic Changes of the 1970s and the Emergence of Multiculturalism.**

The period of the late nineteen seventies and early nineteen eighties it will be argued served as the historical context in which multiculturalism emerged in the Anglo-American world. In this study a periodising hypothesis will be used to understand multiculturalism as an outcome of the changing capitalist 'regime of accumulation', to use the language of the Marxist Regulation school.<sup>2</sup> The period in consideration is crucial on account of a number of important and related developments.<sup>3</sup> These were the two oil shocks of 1973 and 1978; the consequent recession that took place from the late nineteen seventies and which continued well into the first half of the nineteen eighties; and the shift in the political spectrum in the Anglo-American world to the right with the coming to power of Ronald Reagan in the US and Margaret Thatcher in the UK. All these developments signalled the break up of the liberal-Keynesian consensus that had been prevalent from the end of World War II, simultaneous with the post war boom in the economy. It will also be argued that this particular context has greatly influenced the shape that much of the theorising on multiculturalism has taken place and explains the relative neglect in multicultural theory towards the issue of material redistribution, a theme that is dealt with in more detail in the second chapter.

The Monetarist policies that now began to be introduced and which formed such an important part of the ideology of the new right (Thompson, 1989), had a significant impact on the relationship between minority ethnic groups and the welfare state. These groups had been able to successfully organise themselves in the form of interest groups to articulate their demands and extract benefits like jobs, housing, social security etc. from the welfare state, which was also willing to oblige and use ethnic categories to distribute welfare benefits (Glazer and Moynihan, 1976). Ethnic groups had thus been able to gain a significant amount of leverage with respect to the welfare state. The cuts in welfare expenditure and the rolling back of the state during the nineteen eighties as a result of the rise of Monetarist economic policies under the aegis of the New Right was to seriously compromise the bargaining power of these groups. However this significant leverage that ethnic minority groups had acquired with respect to the state was to be channelised elsewhere and emerged as recognition and status in the form of multicultural policies that respected their cultural difference and gave public space to it. There thus exists a strong link between the decline of the welfare state and the emergence of multiculturalism.<sup>4</sup>

A plausible explanation of this transition from material redistribution to cultural recognition is to see multiculturalism as the articulation of a privileged elite, which does not value material redistribution to the extent that a more depressed industrial underclass would. Critics of multiculturalism like Chandran Kukathas (1992) have pointed out that it takes too simplistic a view of culture. What is considered to be the culture of a group may in fact be the culture of a self-serving elite, which in the latter's interest is made to appear as the culture of the group as a whole.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps it would be useful to look at the period of the nineteen seventies and the economic transformations that accompanied it, especially the deep recession that continued well into the nineteen eighties, in a little more detail. It

might be useful to begin with John Stuart Mill. Mill, who was a classical political economist has written a chapter entitled 'The Stationary State' i.e. when a capitalist economy stops growing, in his *Principles of Political Economy*. He begins by noting the inevitability of the stationary state: 'It must always have been seen, more or less distinctly, by political economists, that the increase of wealth is not boundless; that at the end of what they term the progressive state lies the stationary state, that all progress in wealth is but a postponement of this, and that each step in advance is an approach to it'. (Mill, 1973: 746). After noting the fear with which most 'political economists of the last two generations' regarded such a state in the economy he goes on to register his difference with them and his own attitude of welcoming the arrival of such a stationary state: 'I cannot, therefore, regard the stationary state of capital and wealth with the unaffected aversion so generally manifested towards it by political economists of the old school. I am inclined to believe that it would be, on the whole, a very considerable improvement in our present condition' (ibid.: 748). Mill also explains that the reason why he would welcome the arrival of such a stationary state in the economy has its basis in the opportunities that such a state affords for large-scale social improvements: 'It is scarcely necessary to remark that a stationary condition of capital and population implies no stationary state of human improvement. There would be as much scope as ever for all kinds of mental culture, and moral and social progress; as much room for improving the Arts of Living, and much more likelihood of its being improved, when minds ceased to be engrossed by the art of getting on'. (ibid.: 751).<sup>6</sup>

Michael Sandel, one of the foremost critics of Rawlsian liberalism, has argued that in the late nineteen seventies there was a sense in America that events were spinning out of control. This sense he feels resulted from the failure of the procedural republic, which strived to remain free of the competing conceptions of the good life. Sandel feels that the Keynesian revolution, the procedural republic

and the liberalism dominating America for the major part of the twentieth century represent a complimentary arrangement. The reason why Sandel feels the Keynesian revolution is the economic expression of the procedural republic is that it offered a way for the government to control the economy without having to choose from controversial conceptions of the good society. This preoccupation with remaining neutral towards the competing conceptions of the good life was one of the central principles of the dominant liberalism of the times. Earlier reformers had sought economic arrangements that would cultivate citizens of a certain desired kind. Keynesians on the other hand aimed at doing no such thing. They proposed to accept consumer preferences as they were, with control of the economy being made possible through manipulating aggregate demand. This particular strand in Keynesian fiscal policy, particularly its emphasis on consumer choice and preferences and its total abandonment of the ambition of inculcating certain habits and dispositions among the population reflects the liberal idea of persons as free and independent selves, capable of choice. (Sandel, 1996: 262). Those who practised and championed the new political economy according to Sandel articulated three themes of the Keynesian revolution that together reveal the contours of the new public philosophy that Keynesian economics brought to prominence. One was the shift in emphasis from production to consumption as the primary basis for political identity and the focus of economic policy. Second was the rejection of the formative projects of the earlier reform movements and the republican tradition in general. The third was the complete acceptance of the voluntarist conception of freedom and the conception of persons as free and independent selves capable of choosing ends for themselves. (Sandel, 1996: 267).

Sandel thus locates the crisis in American public life in the fading away of the civic conception of freedom and the republican tradition from which it stemmed. In its place emerged a voluntarist conception of freedom which had a particular conception of the person that preferred to see them as willing selves capable of independent choice. Sandel feels that the circumstances that prevailed for two

decades after the Second World War obscured the passing of the civic conception of freedom. However the supreme confidence that characterised American public life was soon to subside ' when the rigours of the early Cold War was eased and the economy faltered and the authority of government began to unravel - Americans were left ill-equipped to contend with the dislocation and disempowerment that they confronted.' (ibid.: 278).

By the decade of the 1970s Sandel opines that the version of liberalism that prioritises the right over the good had become the reigning public philosophy in America. This undisputed dominance, was however, coupled with the fact that this liberalism failed to secure the liberty that it promised. Despite achievements like the extension of rights and entitlements and in distributive justice, there was a general sense of despair among Americans that they were no longer in control of the forces that shaped their lives. The liberal welfare state as it emerged from the New Deal of the 1930s down to the present times is an institution that embodied the dominant version of liberalism. However its supporters did not provide a justification for its existence on the basis of civic or communal obligations but on the voluntarist conception of freedom so as to respect each persons ability to choose his own values and ends (ibid.: 280).

It is in the decade of the 1970s and 1980s, although the beginnings lie much earlier, (Sandel fixes the year 1968, beginning with the Tet offensive in Vietnam) that events really started spinning out of control for Americans. In these decades the institutions of public life failed to respond to the frantic efforts that Americans made to restore some kind of order in their lives. Sandel mentions a whole host of events that added up to this feeling of powerlessness- the Watergate scandal and Nixon's resignation; the fall of Saigon; the inflation of the 1970s; the OPEC oil shocks and the resulting energy shortage; the Iranian hostage crisis and the failed rescue attempt; the killing of 241 US marines in their barracks in Beirut; the growing federal budget deficit and the inability to bring it under control; the

growing urban violence and decay (ibid.: 297). All of these events were a reflection of the tumultuous times that were experienced in America and which brought about large-scale social, economic, political and cultural change.<sup>7</sup>

Perhaps one of the most comprehensive studies of the period under consideration, that has been carried out is by David Harvey in his book *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Harvey states that without doubt the transformations taking place in the political economy of late twentieth century capitalism are radical and of far reaching consequences. He however feels that in spite of all these changes, the basic rules of the capitalist mode of production continue to operate. Harvey takes the help of the Regulation School pioneered by Aglietta and views the transition in the language of the 'regime of accumulation and its associated 'mode of social and political regulation' (Harvey, 1989: 121). Harvey feels that the virtue of Regulation school thinking is that it 'insists we look at the total package of relations and arrangements that contribute to the stabilisation of output growth and distribution of income and consumption in a particular historical period and place' (ibid.: 123). In this manner one is forced to look at the 'complex interrelations, habits, political practices and cultural forms' that allow a dynamic and hence unstable capitalist system's 'mode of social and political regulation' to remain in step with its 'regime of accumulation'. Harvey broadly accepts the view that the long post-war boom from 1945 to 1973 was built upon a certain set of labour control practices, technological mixes, consumption habits and configuration of political economic power'. This configuration he terms 'Fordist-Keynesian' and he views the transformations of the decade of the nineteen seventies as the break up of this 'Fordist-Keynesian' system and the development in its place of a more flexible post-Fordist system of accumulation as a consequence of which 'a period of rapid change, flux and uncertainty' was inaugurated (ibid.: 124).



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Harvey feels that as a consequence of the transformations that took place in the seventies in the capitalist regime of accumulation, the eighties have witnessed a period of 'economic restructuring and social and political readjustment'. He goes on to say that the novel experiments that are taking place in the realms of industrial organisation and in social and political life 'represent the early stirrings of the passage to an entirely new regime of accumulation, coupled with a quite different system of social and political regulation' (ibid.: 145). Harvey has also pointed out that the economic restructuring that has taken place in the eighties and the new labour market conditions that have come to prevail as a result, have for the most part re-emphasised the vulnerability of ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged groups such as women (ibid.: 152).

All these changes are thus a key to understanding how minority disadvantage arises and how remedial measures may be taken to improve their conditions. Following the arguments put forward by Harvey and the use that he has made of the Regulation School the emergence of multiculturalism can be located in the new 'mode of social and political regulation' that has evolved as a result of the transformation in the 'regime of accumulation'. This transformation took place in the seventies after the break up of the Fordist-Keynesian regime of accumulation or what was earlier identified as the liberal-Keynesian consensus.



## II - The American Influence: Malcolm X and Black Identity.

e flexible post-Fordist accumulation process that the economic changes of the 1970s were to inaugurate has led to the complex phenomenon of the post-Fordist hyperghetto. This phenomenon, it may be mentioned in passing, is the complex outcome of the sectoral shift in the American economy from manufacturing to industries; the lack of requisite skills possessed by the Black population in particular and other ethnic minorities in general, to secure them the jobs that were on offer in such a service based economy; the waning influence of unionised



labour; the withdrawal of the welfare state etc. The importance of the phenomenon of the post-Fordist hyperghetto (Wacquant, 1994) and the importance of the Black leader Malcolm X in the context of the post-Fordist hyperghetto (Diawara, 1994) will be analysed in the second chapter. Here the distinction between him and the other important Black leader of the time, Martin Luther King will be analysed to look at the Civil Rights Movement led by King in relation to multiculturalism, the shaping of which has been greatly influenced by Malcolm X.

Malcolm X is significant because his politics of difference, his articulation of pride in a black identity, and his total and outright rejection of even the slightest hint of assimilation or integration for the Blacks was radically different from the Civil Rights Movement of the nineteen sixties. His ideas also stand out in sharp contrast to the other prominent Black American leader to whom he has often been compared, Martin Luther King. While the latter made an appeal for equality on the grounds of a universal colour-blind model, the former with his emphasis on difference and colour consciousness was to significantly influence the rise of multiculturalism in the eighties. This emphasis was to crystallize a decade and a half after the Civil Rights Movement of the mid-sixties and Malcolm X's own assassination in 1965, (Kepel, 1997) in the definite articulation of difference. This happened towards the end of the seventies, which it has earlier been noted, is the period in which multiculturalism begins to emerge.

The assertion and celebration of difference, the emphasis on taking a pride in Black identity - all the result of a reaction against cultural racism faced by ethnic minorities and their resistance to assimilation in the larger society first appeared in the US and more gradually in Britain (Modood, 1997: 156). Without doubt the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s was one of the most significant moments in the extension of liberal principles in the second half of the twentieth century. Multiculturalism must be seen as a significant development and addition

to the Civil Rights Movement in the last two decades of the twentieth century and the continuous process of the extension of liberal principles to hitherto excluded sections of the polity.<sup>8</sup> However the Civil Rights Movement made an appeal for equality on the grounds of a universal colour-blind model. It thus accepted the hegemonic position within contemporary liberalism that the colour-blind model enjoyed. On the other hand multiculturalism has been able to mount a serious challenge to the colour-blind model. Kymlicka points out that the model has only a contingent relationship with the Western liberal tradition and its post-war popularity has to do with the state of Black-White race relations in the US in the fifties and sixties. It has proved to be so successful in the US that by the seventies many commentators could claim that it defined the liberal tradition from which demands for minority protection are a recent and illiberal deviation (Kymlicka, 1989: 214).

The relationship between multiculturalism and the politics of difference that it entails with the Civil Rights Movement and its emphasis on equal dignity is not very straightforward. It involves a dialectical shift away from the principles that were being argued for by the Civil Rights Movement and almost ironically, a reaffirmation of those very principles of segregation and exclusion that the Civil Rights Movement had fought against. Arguing against the difference blind model it emphasises precisely those differences that had been ignored by the earlier model on account of two reasons. Firstly it values these differences in themselves as they are supposed to provide a number of alternative cultural contexts for the individual to choose from, thereby significantly enhancing diversity and preserving the cultural capital of a society. Secondly the differences that exist between groups have to be taken into account while trying to provide them with measures like reverse discrimination or affirmative action that are meant to improve their conditions. It is on account of this very reason that critics of

multiculturalism have attacked it for encouraging those very distinctions that they feel the earlier difference blind model has been able to counter.

An analysis of multiculturalism in relation to, and as an extension of the Civil Rights Movement, thus reveals that while the former can be considered to be a development of the latter, this did not involve a linear growth or progression from one to the other. The relationship is rather more complex and less straightforward. In a way it involves the undercutting of those very principles that were espoused by the Civil Rights Movement to result in a totally different set of principles emerging and defining multiculturalism. While both the Civil Rights Movement and multiculturalism emerged in the latter half of the twentieth century, they were inspired by two totally different but equally charismatic leaders, Martin Luther King in the case of the Civil Rights Movement and Malcolm X in the case of multiculturalism. The changes that have been inaugurated by the post-Fordist economic structure and the phenomenon of hyperghettoisation that it has given rise to have more recently encouraged the development of taking a pride in a separate Black identity.

The upsurge of multiculturalism in the Western world has for many promised to be the next wave of the extension of liberal principles towards the end of the twentieth century and, as mentioned earlier is a significant development after the Civil Rights Movement. One of its most significant strengths has been its ability to successfully mount a serious challenge to the colour-blind model of equality and to posit against it an emphasis on colour consciousness and difference. However, the important question that remains to be asked is whether multiculturalism can effectively address the marginalisation of minorities, especially as a large part of this marginalisation has arisen from the structural transformation of the capitalist accumulation process. This question becomes all the more pertinent when multiculturalism itself is be considered a

part of the new 'mode of social and political regulation' that arose with the change in the 'regime of accumulation' (Harvey, 1989).

Having linked the development of multiculturalism to the exigencies of the capitalist accumulation process in this manner would seem to suggest a serious inability on the part of multiculturalism to address the issue of minority disadvantage. However, this manner of looking at multiculturalism is not meant to undermine some of its achievements. Some of the most important achievements have been its ability to challenge the colour-blind model of equality and favour a colour consciousness that is reflected in the movements for Black pride in the US; or its ability to reject the well-accepted idea of the culturally homogeneous nation state. What this analysis seeks to do is bring out some of the inherent limitations present within multiculturalism. These limitations are a result of the constraints under which it has emerged and is at present operating. They arise from the shift in the capitalist 'regime of accumulation' to a post-Fordist regime of accumulation and multiculturalism itself, it is argued is a part of the new 'mode of social and political regulation'. These constraints threaten to seriously undermine the promise that it has held out. This manner of looking at multiculturalism and bringing out its inherent limitations hopes to look for ways that would then make it more effective.

### **III - The British Influence: The Legacy of the Empire.**

The important formative influence in the multicultural model as it developed in the United States has already been noted. In Britain the shift in the political spectrum to the right through Margaret Thatcher's coming to power was to prove equally important in the development of multiculturalism. In Britain the assertion of a separate community identity on racial, ethnic and religious grounds is an accepted and long established practice. The series of laws that were passed like the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Bill, the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of

1968 followed by the Immigration Act of 1971 'racialised' the legal framework. Since minorities suffered from negative discrimination, it was now necessary to entitle them to compensatory positive discrimination. All these developments were similar to the ones that had already taken place in the United States where a colour-conscious anti-racism had already taken place. The trend towards the institutionalisation of minority identities was further reinforced through the Race Relations Acts of 1968 and 1976. Both resulted in the allocation of sizeable amounts of money and also the according of legal recognition to the representation of minorities.

What is particularly noteworthy of the decade of the 1980s in Britain is the assertion of an Islamic identity by the restive Muslim population of the country. What was remarkable about this population was that the majority, in fact three quarters of the population, was drawn from the Indian sub-continent. On account of this they followed the forms of Islam that are unique to this part of the world, the most important of them being the Deobandi and Barelwi forms that arose as a direct response to British colonial dominance in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (see Metcalf, 1982; Sanyal, 1996). These two forms of Islam were transported to Britain in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the waves of immigrants from the Indian sub-continent, who supplied the need for cheap labour to rebuild Britain's war ravaged economy. Kepel (1997) has observed that the reaffirmation of this Islamic identity in the context of Britain did not involve a straightforward return to the forms of self-definition that obtained in the Indian sub-continent. Rather, it was shaped by a conscious selection and adaptation of those features that proved to be conducive to the affirmation of identity and the organisation of community (see Lewis, 1994).

The decade of the 1980s was to be characterised by a series of controversies that took place at the local level involving these immigrants and their concern with preserving their distinct Muslim identity. Thus, controversies

arose over demands for *halal* meat, separate dress codes for Muslim girls in schools and educational institutions etc. What is notable about all these campaigns was that they took place at the local level and would invariably be supported by local authorities controlled by the Labour Party. However these campaigns slowly started acquiring larger national proportions, an example of which was the Honeyford Affair in which Ray Honeyford, the headmaster of a school in Bradford passed disparaging remarks on the practices of Asian families and the effects that this had on Asian schoolchildren. What is important to realise is that it was these campaigns that led to the shaping of British multiculturalism. The Thatcher years were important and contributed in an indirect way to the strengthening of community identities and boundaries as the state found it convenient to farm out many social services to community leaders in exchange for subsidies. The economic costs of this were of course low and it suited the Thatcher government's aim of rolling back the state (Kepel, 1997).

It was however an event that took place towards the end of the Thatcher years in Britain that really brought the small local level campaigns mentioned earlier onto the national scene. This was the controversy that arose over the publication of Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses* in 1988. The novel was considered by British Muslims to be blasphemous and hence calls were made to ban the book, calls that were to be followed by the infamous *fatwa* against the writer. While the details of the controversy need not detain us here, what is important about the controversy is the manner in which it has been able to set the agenda for future theorising on the nature of multiculturalism and the extent of minority protection (Parekh, 1990). It has also been able to initiate a debate on the idea of Britishness. With the benefits of hindsight it can be said that the most intriguing aspect about the controversy was its being full of ironies. The book itself was on Britain and the experience of an immigrant in a particular moment in Britain's history, the height of the Thatcher years. The fact that it aroused such a

great deal of resentment from the immigrant population, from whose point of view the book was supposed to have been written and the problems like racial discrimination which they faced and which the book was meant to highlight, is indeed an irony. Further, the controversy was to draw forth a conservative reaction from some sections of British society who favoured a reassertion of a traditional British identity that strongly disapproved of the kind of reactions the British Muslim population was displaying on the streets of Britain.<sup>9</sup> Ironically enough, the Rushdie affair, by successfully placing on the agenda of political philosophy the nature of minority protection, has called into question that very same traditional British identity.

In the case of the development of British multiculturalism, the articulation of a distinct identity by the Muslim immigrants in Britain drawn from the sub-continent and the manner in which this articulation drew on the traditional expression of identity on the basis of religion, race and ethnicity brings out strong echoes of the British Empire. For Kepel, British multiculturalism resembles the communalism of the Empire even though the Labour party may have supported it on progressive grounds. It encouraged the rise of community leaders who acted as intermediaries between their religious and racial kin and the state. As a consequence the sense of 'otherness' felt by these communities in their dealings with the outside world was greatly strengthened (Kepel, 1997: 110).

Kymlicka has stressed the important links that exist between the British Empire and the liberal discourse on minority rights. Thus, the issue of minority rights itself fell into a state of neglect in the second half of the twentieth century because of the decline of the British Empire and the rise to pre-eminence of American liberal theorists. The British Empire was to encourage contemplation on such issues because the principles of liberalism that the British were taught did not in any way prepare them for the vast profusion of ethnic, religious and linguistic divisions that they were confronted with when they were sent to the



Empire's overseas territories. Such a confrontation obviously led to a great deal of contemplation on such issues and Kymlicka notes: 'Problems of nationality arose throughout the Commonwealth - from Canada and the Caribbean to Africa, Palestine and India - and the colonial experience led to a wealth of experimentation regarding communal representation, language rights, treaties and other historical agreements between national groups, federalism, land rights, and immigration policy. With the decline of the Empire, however, liberals stopped thinking about these issues, and little of this experience was fed back into British liberal theory' (Kymlicka, 1995: 55).

In fact the manner in which multiculturalism seeks to privilege certain communal identities on the basis of religion, race and ethnicity can be seen have its origins in British colonial practices. Thus in the Indian subcontinent Sandria Freitag notes that the imperial 'intruding state' in British India offered no possibility of a direct relationship between the individual and the state. It chose instead to emphasise a representational mode of government based sociologically on communities and interests with particular individuals representing those entities. Freitag focuses on the importance of state level rituals and observes that in the imperial setting such rituals operated in a very different way from the collective activities that were developing in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Western Europe. While in Western Europe national rituals stressed the common values, traditions and a history that defined participants as alike in their relationship to the state, imperial rituals emphasised the diversity of the British Empire, which was seen as one of its major strengths (Freitag, 1990: 191-92). This theme of diversity in a liberal democracy has obviously found a privileged place in later multiculturalism.

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<sup>1</sup> Apart from the fact that this particular period was most notably defined by the specific mix of political and economic ideas that were followed by these two leaders what is most remarkable is the social, intellectual and cultural trends that it was to give rise to. The political and economic ideas of the New Right were to be characterised by a concern to roll back the state from traditional activities that it had been engaged in and to bring about one of the most drastic cuts in welfare expenditure in line with the Monetarist economic thinking that guided the policies of these leaders. More remarkably in Britain there was to arise a significant opposition to Thatcherism from the left. Perry Anderson (1990) who has written an extensive survey of the effects that Thatcherism has had on the intelligentsia and academia has remarked: 'But whatever the strains imposed by political adversity in these years, with its train of muffled frictions or misfired arguments, basic solidarity on the intellectual Left was rarely breached; and out of the trial of emerged the liveliest republic of letters in European socialism' (ibid.: 44). It is obvious that multiculturalism in Britain was nurtured by the left in this particularly stimulating environment that has been described by Anderson.

<sup>2</sup> It is widely accepted that Michel Aglietta is the pioneer of the Regulation school. Aglietta's book *A Theory of Capitalist Regulation: the US Experience* published in 1979 has influenced sociologists and political scientists who have been concerned with the crises and changes that have formed an important part of capitalism. Aglietta taking issue with the neo-classical economics that has been dominant for the past century notes two aspects of this particular form of economics that makes it particularly problematic, first is its inability to provide a suitable account of the manner in which economic processes actually affect subjects or in other words to provide a historical account of economic facts; second is its 'inability to express the social content of economic relations, and consequently to interpret the forces and conflicts at work in the economic process.' (Aglietta, 1979: 9). Aglietta further complains that neo-classical economics is 'totalizing' as it is geared to the elaboration of one single concept, which is general equilibrium. Rather than focus on general equilibrium in the short run the advantage of the regulation school is that it would provide a historical explanation of capitalist growth and development thereby focusing on the shifts that have been brought about in capitalism rather than concentrating on the continuities. Indeed the great failure of neo-classical economics with its emphasis on general equilibrium according to Aglietta has been its inability to account for long-run economic movements (ibid.: 11). He thus presents a theory of social regulation as a complete alternative to the theory of general equilibrium (ibid.: 13).

Bob Jesop has noted that there are a wide variety of schools within the Regulationist approach and that they differ in terms of their respective theoretical points of departure, their concerns with different fields and/or levels of regulation. He broadly distinguishes seven main schools within the Regulationist approach (Jesop, 1990: 155). These are: the *Grenoblois*, or the GRREC which has been undertaking research into regulation in capitalist societies since the mid-seventies; the Parisian regulationists; the PCF-CME account which is the result of the French Communist Party (PCF) developing in the mid-60s a new view of state monopoly capitalism (capitalisme monopoliste d'etat or CME); the Amsterdam school which has developed a distinct approach based on a Marxist critique of political economy and a Gramscian analysis of hegemonic strategies; the West German school; the Nordic approach; and finally the American versions of the Regulationist approach, the most distinctive among which is the social structure of accumulation' (or SSA) approach.

<sup>3</sup> The periodising hypothesis that is used here is similar to the one that is used by Frederic Jameson in his analysis of post-modernism as the 'cultural logic of late capitalism' (Jameson, 1984: 55).

<sup>4</sup> This of course took place after the provision of welfare benefits had been withdrawn and the emergence of multiculturalism, two developments that took place around the same time. Nancy Fraser (1995) has gone into the dilemma of recognition and redistribution. She feels that

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mainstream multiculturalism is generating perverse effects. She further observes that multiculturalism is the 'cultural analogue' of the welfare state.

<sup>5</sup> Aijaz Ahmad (1992) has analysed immigration flows to the US and UK from the 1960s onwards and has noted that especially in the latter case, subsequent migration from Asia was substantially different in its class character from the migration that had taken place earlier. Thus, later waves of migration in the 1970s consisted of more prosperous professionals and members of the techno-managerial class. This more prosperous class supplemented, especially in the case of Britain, the already existing unskilled and semi-skilled class of migrant workers. It is this later class of university trained professionals, especially the ones taking up important faculty positions in metropolitan universities, who in the 'liberal pluralistic self-image of the university' mainly contributed to the articulation of multiculturalism. Ahmad takes note of the cultural 'schism' that exists between this class of university trained intelligentsia and the poorer migrant workers.

<sup>6</sup> John Gray (1989) has noted the manner in which J.S. Mill unlike other classical political economist welcomed the arrival of such a stationary state in the economy as an opportunity for large-scale social transformation. He notes that J.S. Mill is extremely relevant to our own times in the late twentieth century, when the threat of recession looms large in our minds, with his placing more emphasis on the manner in which existing wealth is used and allocated according to present needs rather than efforts at increasing it beyond a reasonable level.

<sup>7</sup> The times were no less tumultuous across the Atlantic in Britain. The decade of the nineteen seventies had witnessed such economic events as the Miners strike in 1974 and the Winter of discontent in 1978.

<sup>8</sup> This is indeed one of the great strengths of political liberalism i.e. the continuous extension of political empowerment and inclusion to sections of society that have so far been left out. The history of liberalism shows the manner in which this has been going on for the past century and a half. Thus the first stirrings of the Feminist movement under the inspiration of the writings of Harriet Taylor Mill and John Stuart Mill (1998); the series of Reform Acts that were passed in Britain in the nineteenth century to extend the franchise to members of the working classes; the Suffragette Movement led by Emmeline Pankhurst in the early part of the twentieth century; and of course the Civil Rights Movement of the nineteen sixties followed by multiculturalism of the nineteen eighties are all examples of this continuous and ongoing process that has been mentioned above. The important point to note here is that the continuation of this process is crucial for maintaining the strength and vitality of political liberalism. Francis Fukuyama's acclaimed book *The End of History* is indicative in this regard of a certain complacency that has set in after the end of the Cold War regarding the final and perfect form of Western liberal democracy as a form of governance. In this regard Sunil Khilnani and Paul Hirst (1996) note that it is important for liberal democracy to remain vigilant about potential forces of instability that may loom large on the horizon and which have the capability to undo the gains and advances made by liberal democracy. Obviously the complacency and false sense of triumphalism displayed by Fukuyama is unwarranted.

<sup>9</sup> Obviously one of the most outrageous of these examples for many sections of the native British society was the burning of *The Satanic Verses* in Bradford by Muslims led by the Bradford Council of Mosques on the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 1989. This particular incident, which was widely reported by the media reinforced many negative perceptions about the British Muslim population and was suggestive for many of a kind of medieval barbarism that chose to burn books rather than read them. The fact that it was happening in the heart of Britain was what made the incident all the more objectionable.

## Chapter-2 Multiculturalism and Redistribution

This chapter seeks to build on the insights regarding multiculturalism that were gained in the previous one. In the previous chapter, multiculturalism was located in the 'mode of social and political regulation' of the new post-Fordist 'regime of accumulation' that developed in the West in the decade of the seventies. This new 'regime of accumulation' was the outcome of the large-scale structural transformations that took place after the crises that beset the previous accumulation regime, described as Fordist-Keynesian, finally resulted in its break up. Using the analysis provided by the Marxist Regulation school, it is obvious that consequent to a change in the 'regime of accumulation' there is also a change in the institutional set up, norms and other societal aspects that facilitate the accumulation of capital under a regime of accumulation.<sup>1</sup> It is obvious in the West that the compulsions of the new post-Fordist regime of accumulation have given rise to a drastic rolling back of the welfare state and Thatcherism in the UK and Reaganism in the US have become almost synonymous with cuts in welfare expenditure.

One of the central arguments of this chapter is that multiculturalism as it forms a part of the new 'mode of social and political regulation' fails to incorporate concerns for material redistribution. Thus, the new post-Fordist regime of accumulation and the neo-liberalism that became dominant at around the same time were to result in the massive scaling down of the welfare state. The welfare state was of course one of the more prominent institutional features of the previous Fordist regime of accumulation.<sup>2</sup> Chapter 1 has already noted the relationship that ethnic minority groups had with the welfare state and this particular relationship provides us with an explanation of the manner in which the development of multiculturalism is linked to the decline of the welfare state. It has

for this reason been termed by Nancy Fraser (1995: 87) as the 'cultural analogue' of the liberal welfare state.

This chapter aims to understand the manner in which concerns for material redistribution have been lost in recent theorising on multiculturalism and this is done by tracing the varying conceptions of the self in liberal theory. The chapter will begin with the manner in which Rawlsian liberalism has conceptualised the self. One of the merits of this conception was that, along with the difference principle, it justified a concern for material redistribution. What will be suggested is that this particular concern that is found in the Rawlsian difference principle has been lost in later formulations of multiculturalism. This is a direct outcome of multiculturalism having arisen in the period of the late nineteen seventies when the rise of economic neo-liberalism completely discredited the concern for material redistribution. Obviously multiculturalism, which it has already been shown emerged in this period, could not fail to be influenced by the conditions that prevailed in it, the most important of which was the rise of economic neo-liberalism. The neglect of this issue becomes clearer when multiculturalism is understood as a constituent of the new 'mode of social and political regulation' that emerged with the change in the 'regime of accumulation'. It ends by suggesting that the vast cultural changes that have followed close on the heels of the economic shifts of the seventies warrant a reconceptualisation of the self to suit the changing nature of the times. The way to bring back concerns for material redistribution then, it is suggested, is through a reconceptualisation of the self. This does not in any way imply that the concerns in multiculturalism with cultural recognition are a sham, what is however being argued is that this relative unconcern for material redistribution acts as a serious hindrance to its emancipatory and equalizing potentials.

As the Regulation school looks at the ways in which institutions, norms and practices in a capitalist society are modified and changed to suit the changing nature of the capitalist 'regime of accumulation' it will be worthwhile to look at

the ways in which the post-Fordist accumulation structure has modified, indeed made all but redundant the role of the welfare state. The first section of the chapter will look at the manner in which the Rawlsian conception of the self has failed to adequately provide the philosophical underpinnings of the liberal welfare state. This failure of Rawlsian liberalism stems from the fact that while Rawlsian liberalism was indeed the philosophy which successfully underlay the institutions of the Anglo-American world till the seventies; it could not remain in step with the massive economic changes of the decade, described in the first chapter. These changes it has already been argued led to the break up of the Fordist-Keynesian regime of accumulation or the liberal-Keynesian consensus. This can be seen from the fact that Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* was published in 1971, two years before the first oil-shock of 1973. This is the first of the events which were to finally result in the breakup of the liberal-Keynesian consensus of which Rawlsian liberalism was the philosophical basis (Sandel, 1996).

Having looked at Sandel's critique of Rawlsian liberalism specifically the two aspects of the conception of the self and the inadequacy of the difference principle, the second section will take a very brief view of the varying conceptions of the self in the Western philosophical tradition. It will further go into the politics of identity and recognition that the discourse of the self has given rise to. The purpose of this section is to provide a background to the argument made in the next section, which looks at a possible reconceptualisation of the self. Having noted the manner in which conceptions of the self have varied, it will then be easier to think in terms of the direction along which the idea of the self can be recast. The third section will thus argue that the idea of the self has to be reformulated to suit the requirements of the post-Modernist (to use the term in the manner of Jameson and Harvey) conditions. Thus, the self has to be reformulated in a manner that takes into account the complexities of the conditions that are now prevalent in societies of late capitalism.

The fourth section of the chapter will look at the ways in which the American post-Fordist hyperghetto, itself a product of the failure of the American welfare state and its later withdrawal under Reaganism has resulted in forms of identity formation that are crucial to understanding the phenomenon of multiculturalism.

Having considered the phenomenon of the post-Fordist hyperghetto, the fifth and final section will go on to analyse the role of the Black leader Malcolm X in the formation of a separate Black identity and how this has had an important influence on multiculturalism. In a way the final section completes the argument for a reconceptualisation of the self that has been made earlier in the chapter by positing that any effective formulation of multiculturalism has to take into account the plight of the residents of the hyperghetto or decadent inner cities. It is precisely this section of the present post-Fordist society that can be considered the least well off. Any effective formulation of multiculturalism has to ensure that the conditions of this extremely vulnerable section of society are improved. Such a consideration would be in keeping with the spirit of the Rawlsian difference principle, which argues that social and economic inequalities are justified to the extent that they improve the conditions of the least well off. It is in this manner that the spirit of the Rawlsian difference principle is sought to be reincorporated in multiculturalism.

### **I - The Unencumbered Self and Sandel's critique**

One of the most remarkable features of the period under scrutiny is the fact that it has witnessed a drastic rolling back of the welfare state. To understand the more complex philosophical basis that underlies this phenomenon it would be useful to begin with the critique that has been launched on Rawlsian liberalism by one of the most important theorists in the communitarian camp, Michael Sandel. It would be important at this stage to point out that this chapter focuses on two

aspects of Rawlsian liberalism. The first is the Rawlsian conception of the self; the second is the Rawlsian difference principle, which embodies in recent liberal theory the concern for material redistribution and which provides the philosophical justification for the liberal welfare state. Multiculturalism has rejected the first aspect of Rawlsian liberalism mentioned above i.e. the idea of the unencumbered self. Instead it has taken a view that favours the cultural embeddedness of the self. While this is a welcome development it has simultaneously neglected the concern for material redistribution that is found in the difference principle. It is this particular neglect that is considered to be a serious handicap in present formulations of multiculturalism. Sandel's critique begins with a scathing attack on the conception of the self that forms a central part of Rawlsian liberalism; it then brings out the failure of the difference principle in providing a justification of the liberal welfare state.

Sandel begins by arguing that there is an underlying political philosophy that serves as the basis of our institutions and practices. Thus, in spite of 'our uncertainties about ultimate questions of political philosophy' we 'live *some* answer all the time' (Sandel, 1984: 81). He identifies the 'liberalism of much contemporary moral and political philosophy, most fully elaborated by Rawls, and indebted to Kant for its philosophical foundations' that serves as the theory which embodies the practices and institutions of late twentieth century America. Seeing how it has gone wrong as philosophy, feels Sandel, will help us in diagnosing the present political condition in the United States (ibid.: 82).

Sandel notes three striking facts about Rawlsian liberalism. First is its deep and powerful philosophical appeal. Second is the fact that in spite of its philosophical force, the priority accorded to the right over the good, in Sandel's view, ultimately fails. Thirdly in spite of what Sandel terms as its 'philosophical failure', this particular vision is the one which continues to be dominant and the one according to which Americans live (ibid.). The conception of the self, which forms a central part of Sandel's critique of Rawlsian liberalism and which lies at



the heart of Rawlsian liberalism, has been termed by him as the 'unencumbered self'.<sup>3</sup> One of the problems of the Rawlsian self, according to Sandel, is the fact that it rules out the possibility altogether of any constitutive attachments. The individual is thus always related to his/her aims and attributes in such a way that he/she is able to stand back from them. In this manner nothing, no constitutive attachments or membership in a community, can define the self in such a way that the individual would be left incomplete if that particular aspect is taken away or detached from the individual. The self is thus always prior to the ends that it chooses. In this way, an individual is free to join voluntary communities in the cooperative sense according to Sandel. However the unencumbered self is denied the possibility of membership in any 'community bound by moral ties antecedent to choice; he cannot belong to any community where the self *itself* could be at stake' (ibid.: 87). While Sandel acknowledges that this particular conception of the self holds out an exhilarating promise and the liberalism it animates is perhaps the fullest expression of the Enlightenment's quest for the self-defining subject, he however feels that the way that the self has been conceived is not true and that we cannot make sense of our moral and political life by the light of the self-image it requires (ibid.).

Having stated his opposition to Rawls, Sandel then proceeds to look at the manner in which, according to him, this particular conception of the self and the Rawlsian difference principle fail to provide a coherent justification for the liberal welfare state. This failure accounts for the present predicament that the welfare state faces in late twentieth century America.<sup>4</sup> Rawls justifies material redistribution on the basis that the distribution of talents and assets among individuals is arbitrary from the moral point of view and it would be a violation of justice if these natural and social contingencies are allowed to be carried over into social arrangements. These talents and assets are to be considered as belonging in common to all the members of society, so that everyone benefits from them. The difference principle thus posits that inequalities in these talents and assets are to

be tolerated to the extent that they improve the situation of the least well off in society (see Rawls, 1971: 60-75, 258-274). Sandel notes that the idea of natural talents and assets as having only a contingent relationship to the individuals who may happen to possess them fits in impressively with the idea of the 'unencumbered self'. He goes on to say that 'the priority of right, the denial of desert, and the unencumbered self all hang impressively together' (Sandel, 1984: 89). Where the argument flounders, according to Sandel, is the assumption that the difference principle makes about these assets being common ones that should benefit all the members of society owing to the fact that they belong only accidentally to the individuals who happen to possess them: 'But this assumption is without warrant. Simply because I, as an individual, do not have a privileged claim on the assets accidentally residing 'here' it does not follow that everyone in the world collectively does' (ibid.). Sandel believes that the location of other human beings in society and with whom we are supposed to share our natural talents and assets is no less arbitrary from the moral point of view than the fact that certain talents and assets happen to be possessed by a particular individual.

For Sandel there must be some prior moral tie that binds people in a common endeavour and which would justify the kind of sharing that Rawlsian liberalism favours. The difference principle and the idea of the self in Rawlsian liberalism are thus fatally flawed because they rule out altogether the possibility of constitutive attachments that could provide the basis of a common life. The unencumbered self, which held out such an exhilarating promise of emancipation is according to Sandel 'left to lurch between detachment on the one hand, and entanglement on the other. Such is the fate of the unencumbered self, and its liberating promise' (ibid.: 91).

## **II - The Varying Conceptions of the Self.**

This chapter argues for a reconceptualization of the self to make it compatible with the complexities that are prevalent in societies of late modernity. Before looking at the lines along which such a reconceptualization could possibly take place, it would be worthwhile to take a look at the discourse of the self and the politics of identity and recognition that it has given rise to.

Perhaps the most important aspect to note about the discourse of the self and identity is that it is inextricably linked to modernity. Thus, Calhoun feels that identity is politically defining of the modern era. This is according to Calhoun 'not just because of the cognitive and moral weight attached to selves and self-identity. Modern concerns with identity stem also from the ways in which modernity has made identity distinctively problematic' (Calhoun, 1995: 194). He goes on to explain that modernity has resulted in the breaking up, to a significant extent, or at least the reduction to near irrelevance of most all-encompassing identity schemes. Thus kinship still matters to many of us as individuals and many invest it with a good deal of emotional weight. However, Calhoun notes that kinship no longer offers us an 'overall template of social and personal identities' (ibid.: 195). What modernity has done is to increase the multiplicity of identity schemes. This has helped to constitute the modern era, as we know it. Identity then, is always being constructed and situated in a heterogeneous field which makes available a flow of contending cultural discourses amidst which the construction of identity takes place (ibid.: 196).

Calhoun notes that at the heart of identity politics lies the demand for recognition (ibid.: 212). Further, identity politics are collective and not merely individual, and public not only private (ibid.: 213). There is also an attempt to differentiate very sharply the self-image that the individual or collectivity now has and the self-image that has been sought to be imposed upon them by others. It thus involves 'refusing, diminishing or displacing' identities others wish to

impose. This resistance to labelling or what is also often called stereotypification can best be seen in the continuing changes that have been brought about in collective labels e.g. Negro, Coloured, Black, Afro-American etc. The resistance to identities that have been fixed or imposed by others has encouraged the shift from an emphasis on identity politics to a politics of difference and taking pride in an identity that is defined by the individual or collectivity in question (ibid.: 214).

Calhoun argues that the notion of identity politics being a new phenomenon and limited to the relatively affluent societies or 'post-materialist' societies is false. He argues that the women's movement, which is an important example of identity politics, is at least 200 years old. He also says that the founding of communes was as important in the early 1800s as it was in the 1960s. Identity politics has thus been an important element of modern politics for a considerable period. It has however had to face the stiff resistance of 'various more difference denying ways of thinking about politics and social life'. These have been highly influential in determining politics and academic thinking. This is obvious according to Calhoun from the fact that social science has not paid sufficient attention to issues of identity and identity politics (Calhoun, 1994: 23).

One of the most wide-ranging and ambitious surveys of the sources of the self in the Western philosophical tradition is to be found in Charles Taylor's book *Sources of the Self*. The book seeks to bring out the rich and expansive historical tradition that has gone into the making of the modern self as we know it today. Thus, the variegated nature of the modern self is constructed of elements taken from sources as diverse as Augustinian Christianity, the Enlightenment and Romanticism. Taylor observes towards the beginning of his book that the moral world of moderns is significantly different from that of previous civilisations. This becomes clear when one realises, among other things, the pride of place that modern Western moral philosophy invests in looking at the individual as commanding respect. One of the signal contributions of the West and which sets it apart from other higher civilisations, according to Taylor, is that it has formulated

the principle of rights and the manner that this is extended to every individual in terms of rights. In fact the emphasis on rights has become an established part of modern practices and can be seen in the way that the legal system has been formulated and as it has spread throughout the world (Taylor, 1989: 11). The notion of a right thus constitutes a claim or legal privilege that is then attributed to the individual as a quasi-possession.<sup>5</sup> Initially such rights were seen to be differential possessions belonging to some and not to others. Taylor argues that the revolution in natural law theory in the 17<sup>th</sup> century partly consisted in using this language of rights to express universal moral norms. Thus began the idea of natural rights to life and liberty which everyone supposedly possesses (ibid.: 11). Taylor's exposition brings out quite clearly the manner in which Western political philosophy has privileged claims based on rights. Taylor himself does not favour rights based claims which he associates with a procedural liberalism that seeks to recognise the autonomy of the individual and provide equal dignity through the extension of equal rights. Quite to the contrary he favours a politics of difference (as opposed to a politics of equal dignity) that calls for recognition of a person's unique identity, interpreted in terms of the idea of authenticity (Taylor, 1994). What is important about Taylor's exposition of the centrality accorded to rights based claims is that it shows how such claims have become a central part of modern practices reflected in the legal system. As an aside, it can be said that Taylor's analysis provides us with an explanation of how minority rights are also a manifestation of the vast proliferation of rights claims in contemporary liberal democracies. Minority rights are then, one more form of rights that have to compete in the 'pluralist political market place' where the profusion of rights claims or 'inflation of rights rhetoric' will result in the inevitable erosion of the argumentative power of rights in exactly the same manner that fiscal inflation reduces the value of money (Sumner, 1987: 8). Obviously the only way that minority rights can be made effective is by establishing them as a form of moral rights with moral force backing them.

Taylor has also referred to the objectification of time and how this has affected literature, as argued by Benedict Anderson, in his book *Imagined Communities*. This objectification of time makes it possible for us to imagine unconnected events as occurring simultaneously. The reader is, as a result of this change, made into an 'omniscient observer' who is able to hold these independently 'unfolding trains of events' together (Taylor, 1989: 288). This change has resulted in the possibility of conceiving of a disengaged self whose identity is constituted by continuously drawing on the resources provided by memory. Identity is thus made possible through self-narration. The story of the individual's life is thus woven around the happenings and circumstances of his life. This is done firstly by linking the chain of happenings in the person's life in a causal chain, with subsequent events flowing from and being shaped by the ones that preceded them; and secondly by making its meaning clear as the events in the life unfold. Taylor points out that it is not an easy task to accomplish the combination of these two elements. While the first makes the life appear as a simple chain of events with one flowing from the other, the second looks at the shape that the life takes on, as something already latent that is realised through the events as they unfold. This particular mode of narration according to Taylor is quintessentially modern and characterises the manner in which modern autobiographies starting with the great examples of Rousseau and Goethe emerged (ibid.: 289).

While dealing with the sources of the self in the modern period, Taylor also mentions as important the views that arose in the 18<sup>th</sup> century with the German *Sturm und Drang* and which represent nature as an inner source. The German *Sturm und Drang* continued developing after the 18<sup>th</sup> century through the Romantic period, and influenced both English and German Romanticism. Rousseau was of course an important early influence but it was articulated most importantly in the work of Herder. The idea of nature being an inner voice or

impulse within us encouraged the idea of knowing what lay within the individual. With Hegel's influence, this was to give rise to expressivism. (ibid.: 374).

### **III - The Failure of the Rawlsian Self and the Need to Reconceptualise the Self.**

After having taken a brief view of the varying conceptions of the self that are to be found in the Western philosophical tradition, it would be worthwhile to differentiate between two conceptions of the self. This differentiation and the earlier view of the varying conceptions of the self, will then serve as a background for the reconceptualisation that has been referred to earlier in the chapter. The first conception privileges the aspect of autonomy and is associated with Kant. The other is more diffuse but is the movement which broadly comes to see nature as a source of inspiration. Both are responses to the felt inadequacies of Enlightenment rationality, but while the first approach entails a radical break with nature, the second approach seeks to achieve harmony with nature (Taylor, 1989: 382). Having differentiated the two, it is important to note that there were also many similarities and that efforts were made to combine them. The ambition then was to reconcile autonomy on the one hand, and unity with nature on the other. Taylor further observes that there were no differences on substantive moral questions on political options. Thus Kantians as well as utilitarians alongwith those who espoused the 'nature as a source view' all tended to liberal views and believed in humanitarianism and liberal policies. The Kantian view privileges the idea of a radical autonomy of rational agents. Hence, the significant life is the one that is self-chosen. The expressivist view, which looks upon nature as a source of inspiration, sees the instrumental stance towards nature as constituting a bar to our ever attaining it. It thus objectifies nature and results in our separation and our moral independence from it (ibid.: 383).

It is obvious that the Rawlsian self with its Kantian foundations is one that seeks to assert the autonomy of the self over the circumstances that exert an influence on it. This particular conception of the self and the institutional arrangement that accompanies it, the procedural republic, have not been entirely successful in exercising the kind of autonomy envisaged by the Rawlsian self, a concern, which is a reflection of its Kantian foundations. It is precisely this failure that Sandel (1996) refers to, when he talks about the feeling among Americans, from 1968 onwards, of events spinning out of control and their helplessness in doing anything about it. This feeling, according to Sandel, became worse during the decade of the eighties and nineties. It also stands out in sharp contrast to the kind of exhilaration and supreme confidence that Americans felt from the Second World War onwards. Having observed the limitations that the Rawlsian idea of the self faces, especially with its emphasis on the aspect of exercising autonomy and its failure to do so, a failure that becomes especially obvious from the period of the nineteen seventies onwards, a reconceptualisation of the self is warranted.

The particular problem with the Kantian self according to Richard Rorty is that it 'divinizes' the self (Rorty, 1989: 30), attempting to make it transcendental. Rorty is obviously someone who would strongly oppose such a transcendental view of the self, preferring instead to talk about the 'contingency of selfhood'. Further, the Rawlsian conception of the self with its strong Kantian foundations fails to exercise the kind of autonomy over circumstances that Rawls envisages. This failure has been described by Sandel as a feeling of helplessness and inability to exercise any sort of control, both individually and collectively in the face of the forces that governed peoples lives in America in the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Sandel, 1984; 1996). This failure to exercise control brings out the relevance of Rorty's observation when he says: 'The final victory of poetry in its ancient quarrel with philosophy - the final victory of metaphors of self-creation over metaphors of discovery - would consist in our becoming reconciled to the thought that this is the only sort of power over the world which we can hope to



have. For that would be the final abjuration of the notion that truth, and not just power and pain, is to be found "out there".' (Rorty, 1989: 40).

Rorty thus conceives of a self that is able to capture the contingency of circumstances or 'blind impresses' that happen to shape it in a particular way. He thus envisages a concept of selfhood that is able to bring forth a variety of descriptions, 'an expanding repertoire of alternative descriptions rather than The One Right description' (ibid.: 39-40). He further adds that 'Such a shift is made possible only to the extent that both the world and the self have been 'de-divinized' (ibid.: 40). This variety of redescriptions provides one with the possibility of making greater provisions for variety as a 'new vocabulary' means 'one more vocabulary, one more human project, one person's chosen metaphoric' (ibid.: 39). It will thus lead to adding more and more distinct and different metaphors and vocabularies that can only further encourage difference. Rorty's ideas regarding the 'contingency of selfhood' could then serve as the lines along which the reconceptualisation of the self that has been alluded to earlier could take place.

#### **IV - The Post-Fordist Hyperghetto and its Importance in the Formation of a Black Identity.**

The phenomenon of the post-Fordist hyperghetto is linked directly to the transformation of the American economy and the consequent sectoral shift that this entailed from manufacturing to services. Inner-city Black residents accounted for a disproportionate number of those employed in factory work. Further, they tended to be employed in the least protected firms of declining sectors. It is therefore not difficult to understand that the hardest impact of this shift has been most fully borne by Black inner-city residents as they provided the largest supply of labour for the traditional manufacturing industries (Wacquant, 1994: 258). The

consequences of the phenomenon of hyperghettoisation are that, according to Wacquant, physical decay and interpersonal violence have reached such levels that public space has nearly withered away in the ghetto. He further says that it is not so much the impersonal workings of larger macro-economic and demographic forces that are to blame for the plight of inner-city residents as the lack of political will among the urban elite. Thus their decision to leave the ghetto to the mercy of the vicious effects of these larger economic forces explains the present plight of ghetto residents. It explains the creation of an urban racial colour line, which brings out the stark reality of the hyperghetto's composition of predominantly Black residents.

Wacquant has further observed that this continued residential segregation of poor Blacks in the inner city is central to the decline of the ghetto. This is because this continued residential segregation in combination with the suburbanization of Whites (and increasingly in recent years of middle class Blacks<sup>6</sup>) results in a distribution of employment opportunities, school chances, taxable wealth and political influence that deprives them of all support for socio-economic betterment.

Wacquant identifies the retreat of the welfare state during the nineteen seventies and eighties as another major political cause for the continuing deterioration of the life prospects of ghetto residents. He asserts that contrary to popular neo-conservative rhetoric, the last two decades have not been a period of expansion and generosity for welfare but one of blanket restriction (*ibid.*: 258). Wacquant further observes that it is widely believed that if the welfare provisions of the seventies had been continued and maintained at those levels, without being reduced, then the deleterious effects of deindustrialisation and polarized economic growth would have been greatly cushioned and that the poverty rate in cities would not have gone up so much. What has actually happened is that business lobbying and political concerns with cost reduction have combined to mischievously produce a harsh tightening of eligibility for welfare requirements.

They have resulted in the proliferation of administrative obstacles to the benefit of welfare measures. Consequently, the percentage of the unemployed covered by welfare nationwide declined from 50% to 30% of the jobless between 1975 and 1985. This decline was especially pronounced in the cities and was to have the worst effect on the inner-city minorities as they were confined to the lowest segments of the secondary labour market and were thus more likely to have short work tenures and frequent employer changes.

The fiscal policies of the state and federal government have further exacerbated the plight of ghetto residents. While the adverse repercussions of Reagan's federal tax policies on the poor have been adequately documented, what is less well known is the fact that many states have evolved tax schemes that further worsen the already precarious position of low income families (ibid.: 260). Interestingly enough the economic retrenchment of the seventies and eighties was combined with a reaction against any public efforts that sought to ameliorate the conditions of the ghetto.

At the federal level Wacquant has noted that starting after Nixon's 1973 landslide re-election, a sudden turnaround in urban policies was effected by the government that was to completely nullify and even reverse the small gains that were made in the war on poverty. Public housing funds were frozen and later replaced with federal sharing grants controlled by local elite who unscrupulously redirected them to the benefit of the real estate industry and property owners. The numerous compensatory programmes that were formulated with the aim of keeping inner-city institutions viable and which were originally set up under the Great Society were successively cut and dropped (ibid.: 260-261).

Wacquant concludes that the collapse of the public institutions in the urban core and the continued marginality of the ghetto population are the result of a politics that has fragmented the public sphere, weakened Black political capacities and stimulated exit into the private sector of all those who could afford it. Such a politics has thus left the poorest fractions of the Afro-American working

class to rot in the conditions of the hyperghetto. The refusal to link the state of the hyperghetto to the breakdown of the public sector has absolved the urban, housing and educational choices made by the federal and local governments of both the Democrats and Republicans, since the mid seventies, of all blame. Instead what has happened is a renewed emphasis on the idea of the underclass that places the blame on the personal motivations, family norms, and shared group values of the residents of the ghetto. In addition to this, welfare has been portrayed as the villain, which further exacerbated the conditions of the inner-city rather than improving it. The result according to Wacquant has been a further increase in the economic, social and cultural gap between inner-city minorities and the rest of the society. It is precisely this policy of abandonment and 'punitive containment' of the Black poor that explains, according to Wacquant, why one century after its creation and two decades after the country's aborted and ill-named 'War on Poverty' the American ghetto remains to borrow the words from the preface of the Kerner Commission Report 'the personification of that nation's shame, of its deepest failure and its greatest challenge'.

#### **V - The Importance of Malcolm X in the Development of Multiculturalism.**

Malcolm X, it has been mentioned earlier, was a product of America's depressed ghettos. He was an extremely charismatic Black leader and equals in stature the leader of the Civil Rights Movement, Martin Luther King. His autobiography is a passionate account of the race-relations problem in the United States and is a severe indictment of the American liberal establishment. There are repeated references to the futility of the Civil Rights Movement, which was premised on the fairness of this liberal establishment that Malcolm X was railing against. Gilles Kepel (1997) has noted that the Black movement of the 1960s was the combined result of the Civil Rights activists wish to situate their struggle squarely

within the American political forum and the 'separatist' identity politics of the Nation of Islam that was later reformulated by Malcolm X.

What is interesting to note about the autobiography of Malcolm X is the intense opposition that is displayed towards the concepts of assimilation and integration. He displays an extreme contempt for Blacks who seek integration into the mainstream white society. He notes that since the time of slavery, 'the American white man has always kept some handpicked Negroes who fared much better than the black masses suffering and slaving out in the hot fields. The white man had these "house" and "yard" Negroes for his special servants. He threw them more crumbs from his rich table, he even let them eat in his kitchen. He knew that he could always count on them to keep "good massa" happy in his self-image of being so "good" and "righteous".' (Haley and Malcolm X, 1968: 340). It is the very same kind of Negroes who had only become more sophisticated than the Whites selected in modern times. Malcolm X thus says: 'I'm not going to call any names. But if you make a list of the biggest Negro "leaders", so-called, in 1960, then you've named the ones who began to attack us "field" Negroes who were sounding *insane*, talking that way about "good massa" ' (ibid.: 341).

Manthia Diawara (1994) in her analysis of Malcolm X's autobiography has contrasted the first half of the book with the second half. While the first half is an affirmation of black culture, there is a sudden shift in the second half of the book, which exhorts Blacks to convert away from Black culture, which is now considered to be 'pathological'. This contrast itself, Diawara notes, is an old but still powerful theme (ibid.: 216). She contrasts the two parts of the book and notes that Malcolm X himself, in the second conversionist half, warns his readers not to embrace such a Black culture. Diawara goes on to argue that it is the life described in the first half of the book which really explains Malcolm X's popularity among inner city youth and their being able to identify with him.

The problem with the conversionist discourse, according to Diawara, is that such discourses whether they are motivated by religion, science, or politics

always assume that it is not a particularly difficult task to leave a culture behind. This assumption amounts to an under-estimation of the culture in question and the pull that it exerts on its adherents. The religious or political leaders who espouse such a discourse build their audience by placing the blame on the culture of the people they are seeking to convert. Thus Diawara observes that such leaders always expect people to come to a 'revolutionary consciousness' and to walk out of a culture 'shedding it like a shell or a cracked skin' (ibid.: 217).

Commenting on the structure of the autobiography Diawara notes that Malcolm X and Alex Haley have shaped it in the manner of a preacher delivering a sermon. Thus the particular stylistic device of referring to Malcolm X, in his early life known as 'Detroit Red', as another person is intended not to entertain the readers through a simple narration of Detroit Red's experiences. Rather the narrative is meant to convey to the reader the symbolism behind the story and to learn a lesson from it which amounts to exhorting the reader if he/she happens to be Black, to relinquish the culture that took Malcolm X to the very bottom of American society. Such experiences are described in chapters like 'Homeboy', 'Harlemite', 'Detroit Red', 'Hustler', 'Trapped', 'Caught' and 'Satan'. It is only after Malcolm X's introduction to the ideas of the Nation of Islam preached by Elijah Muhammad, when he is in prison, that the general tenor of the chapters changes with their titles conveying this change. After the conversion the chapters have titles like 'Saved', 'Savior', 'Minister Malcolm X' etc. Diawara observes that in the hands of Malcolm X and Alex Haley the autobiographical intent changes from an intimate and personal story to a public and conversionist essay (ibid.: 220).

Having noted Diawara's objection to Malcolm X's conversionist discourse, the particular problem that this poses is how to view the Black culture of the ghetto. This particular problem of ghetto culture has also been extensively debated especially with the coining of the term the 'culture of poverty' by the American anthropologist Oscar Lewis in his book *Five Families: Mexican Case Studies in the Culture of Poverty*. Briefly, the idea of the culture of poverty argues

that there is a difference between this term and poverty per se. While poverty is the lack of requisite material means to lead a life of reasonable material comfort, the culture of poverty is a way of life, behavioural traits and attitudes that lead to the inability or the unwillingness to take advantage of opportunities that hold out the promise of improving material conditions. What makes it particularly vicious is that it is self-perpetuating as it is passed on from one generation to the next. Removing poverty per se will not help eliminate the 'culture of poverty'. This would require a much more sustained attempt to root out the attitudes and behavioural norms that form a part of the 'culture of poverty' and which prevent individuals in it from being able to avail of economic opportunities that may happen to pass by their way.

Boxill has noted that the theory of the 'culture of poverty' was denounced and fell into disrepute, but the emergence of the American underclass has given it a new lease of life (Boxill, 1994: 250). Others have taken up the idea put forward by Lewis in his thesis of the 'culture of poverty', albeit with varying names being given to the phenomenon. The idea has thus been debated as 'slum culture', 'lower-class culture' and a 'culture of poverty'. As all these ways of life are thought of in terms of a culture or a sub-culture, with sociologists referring to these theories in general as the 'cultural school' (ibid.: 251).<sup>7</sup>

Boxill has further noted that the critics of Lewis's idea of the 'culture of poverty' fall into two main groups, the situationalists and the existentialists. Both these groups of critics differ in their understanding of 'lower-class culture' with the culturalists, who believe that the culture of poverty is a genuine culture with its own distinctive system of values. The situationalists concede that the culture of poverty appears to be a genuine culture. However what makes it distinctive is the fact that it is wholly an adaptation of mainstream institutions and practices. They further argue that rather than the culture of poverty being an imperfect adaptation of the values of mainstream society, as the culturalists see it; it is fully rational and functional. The situationalists also differ with the culturalists in their belief

about the elimination of the poverty of culture. While the culturalists argue that a mere removal of poverty will not suffice in the attempt to remove the culture of poverty, the situationalists see no reason why an improvement in material circumstances should not lead to an elimination of the culture of poverty as it is an adaptation to the institutions of mainstream society in a situation of acute material scarcity. An improvement of material conditions should therefore result in an adaptation that automatically eliminates the culture of poverty (ibid.: 258).

The existentialists also agree with the situationalists in opposing the culturalist view that sees the culture of poverty as being 'pathological'. The difference between the existentialists and the situationalists lies in the fact that while the latter view the culture of poverty as being a rational and functional adaptation of mainstream institutions to the acute poverty that is faced by poor people, in short as a response and reaction to the larger society; the former see it as a free and creative reply of the poor people to the circumstances of acute poverty in which they find themselves in. The fundamental objection of the existentialists has, according to Boxill, been best encapsulated by the novelist Ralph Ellison who spoke directly of Negro culture and expressed his objection to the idea of Negroes merely responding to and reacting to the oppression that they faced. What Ellison was emphasising was the creative reply of the poor to their circumstances of their oppression and which could entail an outright rejection of the values of the larger society (ibid.: 258-59).

In his assessment of the two positions, Boxill feels that the situationalists tend to romanticise the culture of poverty. The existentialists on the other hand are guilty of equating Negro culture with the culture of poverty. He argues that there is nothing distinctively Negro about the culture of poverty and that if there is a Negro culture it is certainly not a culture of poverty (ibid.: 276):

The purpose of taking such a detailed look at the culture of poverty is to understand the best way in which the habits and lifestyle of the residents of the ghetto should be seen. As this chapter is arguing for an incorporation into



multiculturalism of the concern for material redistribution that is found in the Rawlsian difference principle, it is important to identify that section of society that is the least well-off. After having done so it would then be possible to conceive of multicultural policies that seek to improve the conditions of this particular section of society. This would be in keeping with the spirit of the difference principle, which takes cognizance of the least well-off in society and justifying social and economic inequalities to the extent their conditions are improved.

Diawara has objected to Malcolm X's uncompromising conversionist stand in the second half of his autobiography, towards the 'putatively pathological' Black culture of the ghetto (Diawara, 1994: 216). The problem with such a conversionist discourse is that it expects the people in the pathological culture, of which they are a part, to renounce it, as it is this particular culture, which is the source of their problems. It thus expects people to come to a 'revolutionary consciousness' and to walk out of their culture 'shedding it like a shell or a cracked skin' (ibid.: 217). However it is difficult to see any other way of conceiving of such a culture. It is without doubt the product of the domination exercised by the mainstream society over the inner-city residents and this domination according to Boxill 'subverts reason and corrupts the social sentiments, and consequently may prevent people from fashioning mores and practices that are morally acceptable'. Boxill is worried about the readiness of cultural pluralism to attribute moral insights to all cultures. It is obvious that Boxill would be unwilling to do so in the case of the culture of poverty (Boxill, 1994: 249). If one is unwilling to do so, the only other solution that one is left with is an appeal to the people, unfortunate enough to belong to such a culture, to make attempts to do away with it. This would quite clearly be an effort that would be frustrated by the constraints placed by the structures of mainstream society on the residents of the ghetto. Obviously such appeals have to be combined with

greater efforts in the larger society to eliminate the roadblocks that act as obstructions to the upward mobility of such people.

In fact Malcolm X's great virtue lay in the fact that while he used the conversionist discourse to appeal to his people to extricate themselves from the morass of the ghetto; this ceaseless exhortation did not in any way diminish the ardour with which he argued for the removal of the structural constraints placed by the liberal white establishment. It has already been seen that his autobiography is a scathing critique of this liberal white establishment.

The purpose of going into the importance of the state and the fate of the American post-Fordist hyperghetto (Wacquant, 1994) was to underline the kind and extent of disadvantage that inner-city minorities suffer from. It has also tried to understand the effects that the economic shifts of the 1970s have had on the residents of the hyperghetto. This chapter has considered two aspects of Rawlsian liberalism. The first of these is the Rawlsian conception of the self and the second is the difference principle. It has welcomed the culturally embedded view of the self that multiculturalism takes, as opposed to the Rawlsian view of the self being unencumbered by antecedent ties of belonging to a culture or community. However, while welcoming this reformulation of the self and seeing this as an advance over the Rawlsian view it has also noted the simultaneous absence of a concern for material redistribution that is an important part of Rawlsian liberalism. This neglect is seen as offsetting the gains made by the earlier reformulation of the self. It thus argues for a reintroduction of the spirit of the Rawlsian difference principle in multiculturalism. The Rawlsian difference principle it has already been noted justifies social and economic inequalities to the extent that they improve the conditions of the least well off. Obviously the residents of the post-Fordist hyperghetto are among the worst off in the present post-industrial society of the West. Any formulation of multiculturalism must seek to improve and hence privilege this particular section of society, keeping in mind the spirit of the difference principle

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<sup>1</sup> One of the great advantages of the Regulationist approach is that it focuses attention on the institutional aspects, practices and norms that sustain a particular 'regime of accumulation'. While Regulationist approaches have devoted a great deal of attention to Fordism and the transition to a post-Fordist regime, it would be incorrect to think that every study of Fordism is regulationist or that every regulationist study is concerned with post-Fordism (see Aglietta, 1979; Brenner and Glick 1991; Jesop, 1990)

<sup>2</sup> This is the same as what Harvey (1989) has termed as Fordist-Keynesian and what Sandel (1996) terms as the liberal-Keynesian consensus.

<sup>3</sup> Sandel has gone into the Kantian foundations of the Rawlsian conception of the self. However there is an important difference that takes place and which Sandel notes in the shift from the 'transcendental subject' of the former to the 'unencumbered self' of the latter. This shift is located in the attempt to brush away the metaphysical and transcendental obscurities of German Idealism and to recast the idea of the self in an empiricism that would be more suited to the Anglo-American temperament. This is brought about by the role played by the original position in Rawls's theory of justice. Having referred to the German idealist tradition it may be worth mentioning that the second section of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of the self and identity formation especially in the context of the American post-Fordist hyperghetto. It may be noted that the process of identity formation is bound up with the advent of modernity (see Taylor, 1989) and that it is intrinsic to and politically defining of the modern era (Calhoun, 1994). Further the German idealist tradition plays an important role in any discussion of identity which can be seen in the fact that Fichte's simple equation 'I am I' is raised to a philosophical claim to the self-sufficiency of identity. In other parts of the German idealist tradition, this is joined to a stress on the fundamental formative power of the will (ibid.).

<sup>4</sup> Towards the end of his article on the procedural republic and the unencumbered self Michael Sandel (1984) notes that in the 1980s Americans stand near the completion of a liberal project that has run its course from the New Deal of the 1930s through the Great Society of President Johnson in the 1960s and into the present. He notes that a general sense of powerlessness over the forces that govern their lives has spread among Americans. The institutions of the procedural republic most notably the welfare state have failed miserably in dispelling this general feeling of despair. Sandel notes that a full account of this transition would take a detailed book which would look at the changing shape of institutions, constitutional interpretations and the terms of the political discourse in the broadest sense. This task has been accomplished by Sandel through his extensive survey of America's search for a public philosophy in *Democracy's Discontent* published in 1996.

<sup>5</sup> The well-entrenched nature of rights in Western liberal democracies can be seen in the profusion of rights claims. Thus L.W. Sumner in his book *The Moral Foundation of Rights* begins by making the following remark about rights in the West: 'Like the arms race the escalation of rights rhetoric is out of control.' (Sumner, 1987: 1). To illustrate the manner in which the language of rights is being used on an unimaginably vast scale and being deployed by both sides in a dispute he observes:

'Indeed, liberal societies appear to be replete with conflicts of rights: the young against the old, one race against another, natives against foreigners, the rich against the poor, men against women, humans against animals, one religious sect against another, believers against atheists, smokers against non-smokers, parents against children, the present generation against future generations, gays against straights, individuals against collectivities, one linguistic group against another, the media against the government, citizens against the police, employers against employees, opera-lovers against baseball fans, the public sector against the private, country dwellers against city-dwellers, motorists against pedestrians, producers against consumers, white-collar workers against blue-collar, puritans against libertines, families against the childless, the healthy

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against the handicapped, seniors against juniors, agriculture against industry, jobholders against the jobless, teachers against students, and everyone against the state.'

The above quotation provides an account of the almost farcical manner in which the language of rights is being used at present in western liberal democracies.

<sup>6</sup> The contempt that Black ghetto residents feel for their Black brothers' living in the suburbs is reflected in Malcolm X's biography.

<sup>7</sup> Boxill has noted that the cultural school became the eye of a storm in the war against poverty when it came to be associated with the views expressed in a book written by Daniel Patrick Moynihan published in 1965. The book in question *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* is also known as the famous 'Moynihan Report'. It began with the warning that the United States was facing an impending crisis in race relations. It warned that Black Americans would be bitterly disappointed with the outcome of the results of equal opportunities as they were expecting that they would have roughly equal results for them as a group compared to other groups. The book gave two reasons for this. The first one was that racism was still widely prevalent and secondly effects of past treatment of the Black Americans would act as an obstacle in the way of their being able to compete with other groups on an equal basis. The most important of these effects was the breakdown of the black family, which referred to Black families belonging to the lower class. Thus the crumbling of the Black family as an institution in the ghetto was the cause for the growing vices that were being witnessed in the ghetto like the incidence of high school drop-out rates, and the delinquency and crime that shook the ghetto. While the book blamed white America for starting and perpetuating the 'tangle of pathology' that it was described as, the phenomenon was now capable of perpetuating itself without assistance from the white world. The 'unkindest cut' that was dealt by critics to this book according to Boxill was that it was described as placing the blame on the victim. The cultural school was also implicated by critics for its having provided the theoretical background for the book (Boxill, 1994: 251-253).

### **Chapter 3 - Communities and Recognition**

This chapter seeks to negotiate the problematic posed by the duality of the nation state on the one hand and that of the individual on the other. It further goes into the significance of the demand for recognition by minority communities and analyses the extent to which multicultural policies that provide such recognition are helpful in correcting minority discrimination and disadvantage. Through an analysis of the concept of community and the importance that multicultural theory has placed on according recognition to communities it seeks to bring out some of the problems that multiculturalism suffers from in its attempt to provide equality to marginalised minority groups. The chapter has been subdivided into nine sub-sections. The first section looks at the neglect in liberal theory of the existence of ethnic communities, a neglect that has arisen on account of liberal theory's preoccupation with the individual and the state, the only entities that it has been willing to accept as rights and duty-bearing units. This section takes note of the more recent revival in political and social theory of interest in community. It argues that there have been two distinct historical periods which have privileged the idea of the community; the first is the immediate aftermath of industrialisation and the second is more recent with the advent of a post-industrial society. It argues that multiculturalism has uncritically accepted the idea of community as it has been transmitted from the time of the Industrial Revolution. This uncritical acceptance of the concept of community has resulted in the glossing over of the more authoritarian and less desirable aspects of community structures, which often serve to oppress individuals belonging to these communities.

The second section looks at ethnic communities in relation to the nation state. It looks at the reasons why minority groups are asserting the right to recognition within nation-states and argues that there is a remarkable similarity between the recognition that has been accorded to nation states in the form of the

right to national-self determination and the more recent demands for recognition within nation states that have been voiced by marginalised minority groups. It argues for the need to guard against some of the dangers that are inherent within recognition particularly that form which is indifferent to the legitimate democratic aspirations of individuals.

The third section goes into the dynamics of minority marginalisation and how this takes place within the nation-state. While the second section dealt with the right to national self-determination and how this right operates to create a public sphere that institutionalises the cultural norms, values and lifestyle of a particular dominant group, this section analyses the implications this has for non-dominant minority communities.

The fourth section goes further into the dichotomy of the public and private spheres and looks at the manner in which multiculturalism has fought to make the public sphere more conducive to the expression of minority cultures. It concludes with an analysis of how exactly multiculturalism has been able to achieve this.

The fifth and sixth sections raise two related issues. The fifth section begins with a discussion of the scheme of rights that are described by Kymlicka in his book 'Multicultural Citizenship; A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights'. It focuses particularly on two forms of protection for minority communities that he visualises. These are internal restrictions, which are meant to provide minority communities with a certain amount of control over their own members in order to ensure the cultural reproduction and hence continuity of these communities; and external protections which are meant to protect the cultural practices of the community from the harmful effects that economic and political decisions taken by the larger society may have on them. Having made this distinction Kymlicka rules out the possibility of a liberal theory of minority rights endorsing internal restrictions on a community's members. He however does endorse external protections which he believes promote inter-group equality.

The fifth section focuses first on the question of internal restrictions and how far Kymlicka is justified in ruling out these measures in his theory of minority rights. The discussion in this section flows into the next one, which deals with the question of oppressive and illiberal tendencies within minority communities. While appreciating Kymlicka's concern for eliminating undesirable and retrograde practices within minority communities and promoting the autonomy of the individual, it will be argued that Kymlicka's emphasis on ruling out internal restrictions to ensure that such practices are discouraged is misplaced. While emphasising the unacceptability of internal restrictions, Kymlicka like other multicultural theorists has been unable to sufficiently interrogate the concept of the community as it has been handed down from the time of the industrial revolution, which has implicit within it certain authoritarian tendencies.

The seventh section of the chapter then discusses the other form of protection i.e. external protection. It will look at the issue of cultural recognition that mainstream multiculturalists argue in favour of and to what extent such cultural recognition is sufficient to eliminate minority disadvantage. This section argues that recognition by itself is not enough and that there is a need to supplement cultural pluralism and its recognition with some degree of economic redistribution. This issue has been one of the worst victims of the Monetarist thinking that has become dominant since the period of the late nineteen seventies and early eighties. This dominance coupled with the weakness of the left liberal or social democratic agenda has made matters worse. The section concludes by positing the view that multiculturalism can only be effective in combination with a radical left liberal agenda, which in addition to recognising the value of cultural pluralism is sensitive to the issue of material redistribution.

The last two sections deal with slightly different issues. The eighth one looks at the accusation that is often levelled against multicultural policies that they are inherently divisive and lead to separatist tendencies within minority

communities. Such critics allege that this is a result of multiculturalism's treating communities as discrete entities that are then to be bestowed with cultural rights.

The ninth and final section looks at the extent to which multiculturalism is justified in viewing distinct communities as having individuated cultures of their own and the problems that this poses with regard to sub-groups within minorities that may have distinct cultures. Quite often this may lead to a situation in which the culture that is provided recognition is actually that of a self-serving elite within the minority, a situation that is unlikely to reduce or eliminate minority disadvantage.

### **I - The Individual, the State and Ethnic Communities.**

Vernon van Dyke (1977) has very effectively shown in his article on the individual, the state and ethnic communities that liberal theory has failed to consider the importance of communities which he feels exist at an intermediate level between the nation state on the one hand and the individual on the other. He has criticised liberalism's two level theory of rights for its preoccupation with the relationship between the individual and the state. In this way, by considering the nation state and the individual as the only entities that can become bearers of rights, he feels that intermediate communities have been neglected. He accuses liberal theorists of neglecting this very important aspect of the conditions that are prevalent in almost every nation-state of the world. He cites examples, both historical and contemporary in which communities and groups have actually been recognised and have been given representation accordingly. The most obvious examples he notes are the British Empire, which in governing its overseas territories resorted to providing political recognition and representation to different racial and ethnic groups.<sup>1</sup> He goes on to cite many other political practices from around the world to show that ethnic communities are treated as political units within countries.<sup>2</sup> This recognition as political units is done



through either the mechanism of territorial delimitation or the use of separate electoral rolls. Ethnic communities are often allowed to live under separate laws especially in the sphere of family or personal laws.

Van Dyke argues against the idea that group rights are reducible to individual rights and thus makes out a strong case for treating communities as distinct entities that should be given moral and political rights. He finds the reluctance of liberals, who believe in the liberal individualist ethic, to recognise the validity of group rights as a deliberate turning away from the heterogeneous conditions that exist in the world and the actual practices that are based on treating ethnic groups and communities as discrete political units.

Perhaps the present environment in academic circles is willing to look at communities in a much more favourable way than has traditionally been the case. Van Dyke's article itself is one of the more important ones in more recent political theory, which signals the revival of interest in theoretical conceptions of the community. In fact the concept of community has witnessed two periods which have given it a great deal of prominence. The first period was the late eighteenth to nineteenth centuries when the effects of industrialisation were to make their influence felt in ways that would undermine the old, secure *Gemeinschaft* groupings that characterised society, to give way to more associative *Gessellschaft* groupings based on the choice of individuals to participate in them or to opt out of them. The changes that modernity and industrialisation were bringing about gave rise to the feeling in some that it was only a matter of time before which the old groupings based on ascriptive identities would decay to be replaced by the more impersonal and associative groups that were thought to be more in line with the modern and industrialised society that was fast developing.

However the decline of the old communities had the opposite effect among some other sections, for which it became the object of a nostalgic yearning for a lost idyllic past whose forgotten virtues like affection and love

were to be cherished and treasured. This nostalgic yearning was of course accompanied by efforts to recover or salvage whatever remaining virtues there were from the ravages that industrialization had wrought. What we have as a result of such a construction of the community is a certain valorisation and romanticisation of some of its qualities. What one must realise is that this conception of the community was formulated in the immediate aftermath of industrialisation and tends to hide the 'complexity and variety of communal life before, during or after the Industrial Revolution' (Calhoun, 1980: 106).

The second period that has given rise to a renewed interest in community is the period of the late nineteen seventies and early nineteen eighties, which has already been delineated in the first chapter as being crucial to understanding the phenomena of multiculturalism and the particular configuration it has come to acquire. While it was the industrial society, which stimulated the earlier interest in community, it is the advent of a post-industrial society, which has brought about a renewed interest in the idea. Calhoun has complained that while social history has rediscovered the term community in recent years 'it has remained stuck in this static and invariant conceptualisation'. One of Calhoun's purposes then, is to refine and modify the concept. One of the problems with the concept of community as it has been constructed and handed down to us is that implicit within its structure are the social bonds and political mechanisms which hold the community together. These social bonds and political mechanisms may frequently be oppressive and coercive and thus harmful to the individual members of the community.

Having taken this into account it is not surprising that critics of multiculturalism have denounced it as protecting patriarchal and oppressive structures which demean the individuals within these communities. This criticism is especially valid if one takes note of the fact that multicultural theory has to a great extent uncritically adopted the concept of community as it has been transmitted to us from the time of the Industrial Revolution.

How then would one understand the communities of the Native Indians in Canada and the United States, or the Aborigines in Australia, or the tribals living in other parts of the world, who are reluctant to plunge headlong into the vortex of modernization that the governments heading the states to which they belong are eager for them to do? Many of the critics of multiculturalism have labelled it as nothing but a romanticised view of past cultures and an attempt to preserve the remnants of those cultures. It would thus, add a certain degree of variety and colour to the various nation states, which have already been reduced to a cultural monotony, owing to the processes of cultural homogeneity that they have inevitably given rise to. Further, critics like Kukatahas (1992) have argued that multiculturalism under the garb of liberalism would result in the encouragement of patriarchal, retrograde and fundamentalist tendencies within the community.

To this objection liberals and proponents of multiculturalism have pointed out that it is not the job of the government or the state to sit in judgment over which practices are retrograde or fundamentalist etc. That decision is best left to the community and its members and the liberal establishment has absolutely no right to intervene whatsoever. However, Kymlicka does accept that if certain community practices are extremely harmful to the individual, then that individual has the right to opt out of the community or group in question. This particular proviso that Kymlicka has added shows how he has sought to give to the *Gemeinschaft* like communities, some of the more associative liberal characteristics, like the right to opt out. Kymlicka (1995) has ruled out the possibility of a liberal theory of minority rights endorsing internal restriction on those of its members who decide to dissent and refuse to follow some of the traditional customs and practices of the community.

Without doubt the communitarians have played a major role in foregrounding the importance of community. Perhaps the uncertainty and insecurity created by the new capitalist accumulation process, characterised by the new importance attained by finance capital and the bewildering amounts of money

that flow across the globe, have played an important role in reviving confidence in the community with its compassion and caring. While John Rawls, the foremost amongst contemporary liberal political theorists has been sensitive to the criticism that has been directed towards him from the communitarian camp; it has been Will Kymlicka, who has realised the importance of the communitarian critique with regard to the importance of community and has incorporated it substantially in his conception of liberalism (see Kymlicka, 1989). In fact more recent liberal theory has shown an increasing interest in entities like communities and the rights that they possess vis-à-vis the state and their own members. Yael Tamir (1993) is optimistic that liberalism and nationalism are capable of being reconciled and finds the possibility of some kind of compatibility between the two, despite the fact that the 'liberal tradition with its respect for personal autonomy, reflection, and choice and the national tradition with its emphasis on belonging, loyalty, and solidarity' are 'generally seen as mutually exclusive'. Tamir thus hopes for the happy marriage of these two traditions. This would make it possible for liberals to acknowledge the importance of belonging, membership, and cultural affiliations as well as the particular moral commitments that follow from them. On the other hand, she hopes that Nationals will be able to understand the virtues of liberal values like personal autonomy, and individual rights and freedom as well as nurture a concern for social justice. However, what one finds in contemporary liberal discourse is a certain repugnance towards the nation and the preference for, and appreciation of more closely knit communities.

Indeed, Tamir has mentioned that liberals often take the side of those national demands that are raised by "underdogs" whether they are indigenous people, discriminated minorities or occupied minorities. In short liberals tend to side with those whose plight can easily evoke sympathy (Tamir, 1993:11). Tamir it seems would not approve of the appreciation of a bygone community, which is the manifestation of a nostalgic yearning for a long lost idyllic past. She feels

that this is a futile yearning and she quotes Bernard Williams to caution us of the dangers of this moving back to the past. For her, past forms of life as well as past forms of thought 'are not suitable options'. She concludes by saying that some nationalists as well as some communitarians might hope to return to the 'intimate, close, authoritarian communities of the past, that in the haze of history, appear as a lost Eden. But the past has withered, and trying to force it back can, as we have recently witnessed, be "ludicrous on a small scale and hideous on a large scale"'. (Ibid.: 12).

## **II - National Self Determination, Ethnic Communities and Recognition.**

In fact, one notes with a certain alarm that the demands for national self-determination and the more recent demand by communities for recognition, which has been given a good deal of importance by recent theorists of multiculturalism, have at least one feature in common. This feature is the demand to be recognised by others. This demand may not in itself be such a bad thing, but what can cause some disturbance for many of us on a little closer reflection is the fact that this demand for recognition stems from a conscious and deliberate effort to lessen in importance the differences that may exist within a group and play up the group's uniqueness vis-à-vis outsiders. Both national consciousness and the consciousness of belonging to a community or ethnic group involve the creation of boundaries to differentiate it from outsiders while it simultaneously attempts to lessen in importance the differences that exist within the group to make it appear more coherent than it may in fact be. Both nations and communities are therefore, forms of 'imagined communities' (Anderson, 1991). Both rely on the need for recognition. This craving for recognition can often lead to a suppression of legitimate democratic rights within the groups. Even if this is not the case and the group is sufficiently democratic in its orientation as not to trample upon people's

legitimate rights, the demand for recognition and the demand for civil political rights must be clearly distinguished.

Tamir (1993) has pointed out that the right to national self-determination has followed two distinct courses. The first of these is in tune with the idea of the members of a nation preserving their distinct existence and managing their communal life according to a particular way of life, and is termed by Tamir as the cultural version. The second version according to Tamir is the democratic version, which looks at the nation as synonymous with the governed and underscores the rights of the members of the nation to participate in the taking of decisions that will affect them as members of that nation. This second version is based on the principle explicitly stated in the 1947 Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country directly or through freely chosen representatives." Having made this distinction Tamir further adds that the 'first version reflects the national essence of the right to self-determination', while on the other hand the 'second does not derive its justification from national thinking but rather from liberal, democratic ideals' (ibid.: 69-70). Tamir further distinguishes between the two in their communal aspects and says that the idea of national self determination entails a process through which individuals attempt to give public expression to their national identity. It is thus described as the right of individuals to a public sphere, which implies that individuals are entitled to establish institutions and manage their communal life in ways that reflect their communal values, traditions, and history, in short their culture. On the other hand, the communal aspect of self-rule implies the right of individuals to participate in the determination of the aims and policies adopted by the political group that they belong to.

The point to be noted here is that the yearning for national self-determination may have nothing to do with, in fact, may even contradict the liberal democratic struggle for civil rights and political participation. There is the possibility of a nation state, which provides its members the right to national self-

determination, but is simultaneously anti-democratic in its impulse, and thus denies them of their right to self-rule. Tamir cites Isaiah Berlin to bring out how the right to national self-determination is a search not for Millian freedoms and civil liberties, but for status (ibid.: 70). This could also be considered true of the multicultural demands for recognition that are being voiced by marginalized minority communities. Here the reason why one needs to take some serious note is that this demand for recognition from minority communities, which feel compelled to acquire a certain status within the nation state, a status they had hitherto been denied, may contain within them an anti-democratic impulse. This impulse could seriously compromise the position of vulnerable groups like women within these communities.

Charles Taylor has provided one of the most comprehensive accounts of the need for recognition and has dwelt at length on the moral significance of this recognition. He begins by saying that 'a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves' (Taylor, 1994: 75). However Taylor does go on to take note of the fact that the demand for recognition as expressed in what he calls the 'ideal of authenticity' contains the 'seminal idea of modern nationalism, in both *benign* and *malignant* forms' (ibid.: 78) (emphasis mine). It is precisely such *malignant* forms of recognition that multicultural demands for communities must guard against. The excesses of such malignant forms of recognition have already been witnessed in vicious and violent expressions of extreme nationalism. Multicultural demands for recognition are by their nature similar to the demands for recognition expressed by nation states, the difference being that the communities, which are now voicing these demands, are doing so from within the nation state. Obviously one of the reasons why such demands are being voiced is linked to the fact that national movements may have overlooked altogether the need of these communities for recognition. As Tamir has argued, they had also proceeded to create a public sphere that

totally excluded the cultural symbols of the minority communities and thereby alienated them from what can be termed as the 'mainstream' of national life.

What is being implied here is that while minority communities must certainly be given recognition within the polity, this should perhaps be tempered with the logic of Millian civil rights and the impulse of liberal democracy. This would then serve to prevent the errors of excessive zeal that have already been made in national recognition, being repeated in the case of communities. There is also a possibility that such malignant forms of recognition are encouraged if an over valorised view of communities, which the previous section dealt with, is taken thereby overlooking the less desirable aspects of the exercise of power and authority within them.

### **III - The Dynamics of Minority Marginalisation.**

Having brought out the similarities between the right to national self-determination and the demand for recognition being voiced by minority communities, it would perhaps need some reiterating that the demands for recognition that are now emerging from ethnic minorities and acting as a significant challenge to the legitimacy of the nation-state are linked to the nation-states having denied them recognition. The right to national self determination further created a public sphere which was indifferent, indeed hostile to the cultural norms of minorities. In this regard Tamir has defined the right to national self-determination, as the right to ones own public sphere. She observes the manner in which national self determination operates to create a public sphere for the expression and institutionalisation of the symbols, values, lifestyle and culture that are cherished by the majority (Tamir, 1993: 70).

The right to national self-determination thus provides us with the rudiments of an understanding of the ways in which minority disadvantage occurs and how discrimination is built in to the very structure of the nation-state itself.



This occurs when the nation-state creates a public sphere that is supposedly culturally homogeneous and into which the minorities are expected to assimilate or integrate. It is this public sphere and its inaccessibility for the minority that causes the problem of minority disadvantage. Tamir has observed that problems arise when 'individuals wish to carry their culture into the public sphere: when Jews wish to wear skull-caps, Algerian schoolgirls in France to don veils, Palestinians to tie kaffias around their shoulders, Scots to wear kilts, Sikhs turbans, and Indian women saris when other clothes are *de rigueur* for everyone else' (ibid.: 53).

A number of writers have pointed out that the very fact that the nation state is identified with certain cultural symbols, adopts a particular language as a national language and further observes certain holidays in the calendar is enough to result in the marginalisation of groups which do not identify with the symbols associated with the nation state; whose language happens to be different from the one adopted as the national language or the language that is used for transacting affairs of the state; and whose holidays happen not to coincide with the ones officially designated as national holidays. There are numerous examples that have been used to substantiate this point. The choice of the day off in the week, which in most countries happens to be Sunday, is cited as an example of how, at least the followers of two major faiths, whose Sabbaths fall on days other than Sunday are disadvantaged. In India, the choice of Hindi as the national language is considered a major impediment in the way of non- Hindi speakers whose mother tongues may be Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada or any of the numerous languages spoken across the length and breadth of the country. In Sri Lanka the choice of the Sinhala lion as an important national symbol, prominently displayed on the flag, and the choice of the Sinhala language are cause for a good deal of grievance among the Tamil population, the effects of which are all too obvious in the ethnic strife that the island has been witnessing since 1983.

The nation state can thus be implicated for its role in actually having given rise to minority marginalization through the processes of cultural homogenisation that it has encouraged, a process which helps to secure its political legitimacy. On the basis of this implication a strong case can be made out for the state's active intervention in correcting this historical error. However there are certain other processes pointed out by Michael Walzer (1990), which are an outcome of modernity, and for which the liberal nation state can certainly not be held responsible. There are four mobilities that he describes and which he feels have led to the breakdown and dissolution of stable, close-knit communities and the emergence in their place of atomistic individuals 'continually in motion, often solitary and apparently random motion, as if in imitation of what physicists call Brownian movement' (ibid.: 11). The first of these is geographical mobility which refers to one of the characteristics of modern living especially in the societies of Northern America and Western Europe, in which more and more people change their places of residence more frequently. Walzer feels that a sense of fixed and permanent location is important for communities and geographical mobility has shown the potential to seriously disrupt them. The second mobility is social mobility by which Walzer means that individuals are more likely to occupy social positions and occupations distinct from their parents. This implies that the inheritance of community, that is the passing on of beliefs and customary ways becomes uncertain. The third mobility is marital mobility, which acts as another potential threat to the close knit-communities of yore as rates of separation, divorce and remarriage go up. Besides, more and more individuals are likely to find spouses outside their own class, religious and ethnic grouping. The fourth and last mobility that Walzer describes is political mobility, which means that nowadays individuals are more likely to switch their political loyalties to suit their convenience, rather than consistently following a political party or movement.

Having enumerated these four mobilities Walzer feels that the various associations in a liberal society are at risk and he argues for state intervention to

support and sponsor those that 'seem most likely to provide shapes and purposes congenial to the shared values of a liberal society' (ibid.: 17). This, the state must do if it is to remain a liberal state, as its strength is likely to increase in direct proportion to the rate at which individuals become dissociated, whereby an undesirable situation is reached in which its power and centralization may extend beyond the limits that liberalism has established as being desirable (ibid.).

We can therefore safely conclude that multiculturalism has been able to make liberal theory sensitive to or, at least conscious about two aspects that had till recently not been given much mention. These aspects are community and culture. Indeed this newfound consciousness is evident in the very choice of the title of Kymlicka's book- 'Liberalism, Community and Culture'. While much of the credit for stressing the importance of community goes to the communitarian camp, which has arisen as an influential and extremely important critique of liberalism; it goes to Kymlicka's credit of actually having been able to incorporate this critique effectively into mainstream liberal theory. The critique of the communitarians has also been incorporated quite substantially by Rawls and his recent book 'Political Liberalism' published in 1993 is a reflection of this incorporation.

#### **IV - The Dichotomy Between the Private and Public Spheres.**

Tamir has looked at the manner in which problems occur for members of minority communities when they seek to carry their cultural particularity in to the public sphere. Multiculturalism has thus attempted to make the public sphere more sensitive to the cultural norms and values of minorities. In this manner it has provided public space and recognition for the cultures of minority communities. Before the rise of the multicultural discourse minority groups were expected to either renounce their cultures and assimilate in to the dominant majority culture, or they were allowed to practice their culture in their own personal spheres. Once

they entered the public sphere all citizens were expected to follow the norms of this public sphere, which was supposedly neutral but in actual practise acted as a façade behind which lay the cultural hegemony of the majority. We thus find a very sharp dichotomy between the public and private spheres before the rise of multiculturalism as far as minorities are concerned. They were allowed to live according to their cultural norms and values as long as they were confined to their own private spheres, but as soon as they stepped in to the public sphere they were expected to assume the values of the majority. This has obviously resulted in a great deal of difficulty and trauma, especially for the younger generation of members from minority communities who have led one lifestyle in the confines of their personal spheres and a totally different one outside it in the public sphere. Here under the gaze of others, especially peers they have been made to feel ashamed about their distinct cultural practices.

Charles Taylor (1994) has also stressed the distinction between the private sphere and the public sphere, while dealing with the importance of recognition. He thus says that the discourse on recognition has become familiar to us on two levels - the first is what Taylor terms as the 'intimate' sphere and the other is the public sphere. In the intimate or personal sphere the formation of an identity takes place in a continuing dialogue and struggle with significant others. In the public sphere a politics of equal recognition has come to play a bigger and bigger role. Taylor concentrates on the public sphere and says that a politics of equal recognition means two different things, which are themselves linked to two important changes that have taken place in modern societies. The first change is linked to the major transition in society that has taken place with the shift from honour to dignity. This shift has resulted in the fore grounding of the principle of the equal dignity of all. This particular principle entails a politics that emphasises the equalisation of rights and entitlements. Taylor further notes that the actual measures that this principle justifies has been subject to controversy. While some have felt that equalisation affects only civil and political rights, others have

extended the principle to argue for equal socio-economic opportunities. The movement that best exemplifies this particular principle and which is considered to have scored a major victory in this regard is the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s in the United States.

The second change that Taylor talks about is the development of the modern notion of identity, which has fed in to the discourse on multiculturalism. Multiculturalism, it has been mentioned in the first chapter has been considered by many to be the most important moment in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the extension of liberal principles to hitherto excluded sections of the polity. It is thus considered to be a significant development in this century after the Civil Rights Movement. However the qualitative difference between the two has already been noted in the first chapter which argued that the period of the late nineteen seventies in the Anglo-American world served as the context in which multiculturalism emerged. Thus the Civil Rights Movement was in many ways was to set the stage for the later emergence of multiculturalism. The difference is that while the Civil Rights Movement appealed to a difference-blind model of equality, multiculturalism, especially the manner in which the discourse has been influenced by the charismatic Black American leader Malcolm X, celebrates difference and is profoundly colour conscious.<sup>3</sup> Multiculturalism is thus to be distinguished from the Civil Rights Movement in the manner in which it has celebrated difference and taken pride in being Black.

It is this politics of difference emerging from the concerns with identity and its preoccupation with celebrating this difference that has imparted the characteristic to multiculturalism that sets it apart from the Civil Rights Movement. The politics of difference seeks to take an individual's cultural specificity into account, something that the Civil Rights Movement, with its universalising thrust failed to do. Taylor adds that this should not be interpreted to mean that recognition and difference are particularistic in their approach and therefore not universalistic. Quite to the contrary, difference also has its own

universalist basis, which stresses that an individual should be recognised for his or her unique identity. Here, recognition for Taylor means something else which he distinguishes from the equal dignity of all in the following manner: 'With the politics of equal dignity, what is established is meant to be universally the same, an identical basket of rights and immunities; with the politics of difference, what we are asked to recognise is the unique identity of this individual or group, their distinctness from everyone else. The idea is that it is precisely this distinctness that has been ignored, glossed over, assimilated to a dominant or majority identity. And this assimilation is the cardinal sin against the ideal of authenticity' (ibid.: 82).

#### **V - Reconceptualising the Community.**

It has been seen in the third section that the roots of minority marginalisation are sown in the very process of the exercise of the right to national self-determination. This right operates in such a way as to institutionalise the cultural norms, values and lifestyle of the majority in the public sphere, a sphere from which the minority feels alienated. The homogenising logic of the nation-state alongwith the other dynamics of minority marginalisation have also been discussed in the third section. Having done so it might be useful to question the extent to which the scheme of group differentiated rights described by Kymlicka (1995) in his book 'Multicultural Citizenship; A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights' can be effective in setting the balance right as far as minority disadvantage is concerned. Kymlicka has enumerated three forms of group differentiated rights<sup>4</sup> which he feels reduce the vulnerability of minority groups to the economic pressures and political decisions of the larger society.

After an elaboration of these group-differentiated rights he goes on to make a distinction between what he calls internal restrictions and external protection. The former he believes act as a claim that a community makes against

its own members. The second claim is one that a minority community or ethnic group makes against the larger society. While both seek to protect the stability of the group or community and provide a certain continuity to the cultural practices that define it, they respond to different sources of instability. The first are thus meant to give the community a certain control and authority over dissenting members who may decide not to follow certain traditional practices of the community. The second on the other hand are meant to protect the community or minority group from the political and economic decisions taken by the larger society which may also prove to be inimical to the interests of the community (ibid.: 37). A later section of the chapter will look at the damaging effects that political and economic decisions taken in modern societies can have on minority communities and will attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of the external protections that Kymlicka describes. It will argue that mere cultural recognition is not enough and that such recognition, as envisaged by mainstream multicultural theory must be supplemented with some degree of material redistribution.

Kymlicka realises that internal restrictions may serve to oppress individual members within the community, particularly those who choose to dissent and not follow traditional, orthodox practices which membership in the community may entail. It is such internal restrictions which further clarify what Calhoun (1980) has earlier been cited as calling the structure of communities and the social bonds and political mechanisms that hold them together, mechanisms which could also become oppressive for certain individuals. Kymlicka after having delineated the differences between the internal restrictions and the external protections goes on to say 'liberals can and should endorse certain external protections, where they promote fairness between groups, but should reject internal restrictions which limit the right of group members to question and revise traditional authorities and practices' (Kymlicka, 1995: 37).

This clear endorsement of external protections and the simultaneous rejection of internal restrictions is commendable from the point of view of

protecting the autonomy of the individual. This is indeed the primary reason why Kymlicka wants to secure the cultural context in which an individual can exercise his right to choose from a number of alternatives. However, this emphasis by Kymlicka is misplaced and arises precisely because of his acceptance of the conceptualisation of the community as it has been handed down from the time of the industrial revolution. This concept, it has already been mentioned, hides behind it a particular power structure and certain authoritarian tendencies that could result in the oppression of dissenting members of the community. It is the same dissenting members of the community for whom Kymlicka wishes to extend protection through his refusal to allow a community the right to exercise internal restrictions over its members. It is on account of his accepting this conceptualisation that Kymlicka is forced to take up a position vis-à-vis illiberal minorities which can at best be called condescending, when he calls for efforts to liberalise them. The point is that if we take a more dynamic and less static or invariant view of community as theorists like Kymlicka have done, then there will be no need to call for liberalising them. Problems like the one that Kymlicka is faced with, and which lead him to call for liberalising communities, arise precisely because he conceives of communities as static entities that do not respond to changes in the external environment. Yet, one finds no reason why communities should be conceptualised in this particular manner. What is being suggested here is a reconceptualisation of the idea of community, a point that Calhoun (1980) has already made. Such a reconceptualisation and refinement of the concept would make it unnecessary to make appeals to a community to liberalise itself.

## **VI - Securing Communities as Viable Cultural Contexts.**

Having seen that the concept of community hides behind it a certain power structure that liberals may consider oppressive and undesirable, it might be worth



mentioning one important point in the defence of multiculturalism as it has been formulated. It has also, on account of these reasons come in for a good deal of criticism. One common misconception about multiculturalism is that it attempts to preserve marginalized minority cultures, which have been overwhelmed by modernity and are on the verge of dying, by keeping them in a pristine form in which they can continue to exist. Multiculturalism does not seek to capture and keep minority cultures in a time warp. All that it seeks to do, and this point has been quite effectively brought out by Kymlicka, (1989: 168), is to preserve the cultural context in which individuals belonging to a particular cultural community take crucial decisions affecting their lives and opt for a variety of lifestyles and choices that exist before them. It is thus a way of protecting the dignity of the individual, a concern central to liberal theory, and has absolutely nothing to do with preserving a culture in its authentic or pure form. This implies that the individual's dignity can only be preserved if the cultural community to which he/she belongs and which provides the cultural context in which his/her various decisions concerning his/her life are taken, are guaranteed to that person. There are threats inherent in the very nature of the nation-state, with its homogenising tendencies and assimilative impulses that could spell the complete destruction of some cultural communities. This would be extremely demeaning for the individuals who form a part of such communities. In this way it can be seen that multiculturalism far from being an artefact of mere aesthetic appeal, meant to add a little colour to the hitherto culturally insensitive liberal-democracies of the west, as it has been made out to be by its detractors and critics,<sup>5</sup> is in fact, a political discourse that can actually mean a lot to the marginalized and vulnerable sections of the polity. This is especially true of the indigenous people of many western liberal democracies like the Inuit in Canada, the Indians in the United States, the Aborigines in Australia and the Maoris in New Zealand.

## VII - Supplementing Recognition with Redistribution.

In the first chapter, using the language of the Marxist Regulation school, it has been argued that the emergence of multiculturalism corresponds to the transition that took place in the regime of accumulation from an economic system described by Harvey (1989) as being Fordist-Keynesian to a post-Fordist regime of accumulation. Multiculturalism was according to this argument located in the 'mode of social and political regulation', corresponding to the new regime of accumulation. This argument would suggest a serious inability on the part of multiculturalism to address the issue of marginalization, especially the kind of economic displacement that is faced by vulnerable ethnic minorities, who have borne the brunt of the large scale economic restructuring that has taken place.

Critics of multiculturalism have expressed serious apprehensions about the complete silence in multiculturalism on the issue of economic redistribution. Some have felt that this displays a typical liberal naivete on the issue of marginalization, especially economic marginalization. While accepting the sincerity of well-meaning liberals they have pointed to their inability to identify the various axes of discrimination and disadvantage.

Nancy Fraser (1995) expressing discontent with the current US political scene feels that the efforts to redress the injustices of the present society through a 'combination of the liberal welfare state plus mainstream multiculturalism are generating perverse effects' (ibid.: 93). She argues that 'justice today requires *both* redistribution *and* recognition' (ibid.: 69). She makes a distinction between recognition and redistribution by arguing that the former entails the 'calling attention to, if not performatively creating, the putative specificity of some group, and then of affirming the value of that specificity'. In short it promotes group differentiation. The latter on the other hand tends to promote 'group de-differentiation' (ibid.: 74).

For heuristic purposes Fraser conceptualises a spectrum of different kinds of social collectivities. At one end of this spectrum lie modes of collectivity that fit the redistribution model of justice and at the other extreme are modes of collectivity that fit the recognition model. In between are cases that exhibit a combination of both models of justice. At the redistribution end Fraser posits an ideal-typical mode of collectivity whose existence is rooted wholly in the political economy. The structural injustices that its members suffer arise from the economic, as opposed to the cultural order of society. The ideal-typical community that Fraser places at this end of the spectrum is the Marxian conception of the exploited class understood in an orthodox and theoretical way. The remedy required to redress the injustice will be political-economic redistribution rather than cultural recognition. Fraser observes that the only way to remedy the injustice is to 'put the proletariat out of business as a group' (ibid.: 76).

At the other end of the conceptual spectrum Fraser posits an ideal-typical mode of collectivity that fits the recognition model of justice. Such a collectivity exists by virtue of 'the reigning social patterns of interpretation and evaluation, not by virtue of the division of labour.' The injustices that arise for its members are traceable to the cultural valuational structure. An example of an ideal-typical community is the 'conception of a despised sexuality, understood in a specific, stylized and theoretical way' (ibid.). Fraser concedes that matters are quite clear-cut at the two extremes that she has described but that they get 'murkier' as we move away from them. She calls the collectivities that lie in the middle and which combine characteristics of the exploited class with features of the despised sexuality as 'bivalent'. These bivalent collectivities suffer from socio-economic maldistribution and cultural misrecognition. The problem that such communities pose is how to negotiate the dilemma between redistribution and recognition.

Fraser takes race and gender as paradigmatic bivalent collectivities, which implicate both redistribution and recognition. The bivalent character of both these

collectivities is the source of the problem, and the roots of injustice lie in both the political-economic dimensions and cultural-valuational aspect as well. In the case of gender women would need both redistribution and recognition. However the two remedies pull in opposite directions. While the logic of redistribution is to put gender out of business, the logic of recognition is to 'valorize' gender specificity. The same dilemma is faced in the struggle against racism. Race resembles class in that it structures the capitalist division of labour and to this extent it would be desirable to put race out of business. However race also has its cultural-valuation dimensions, which calls for the need for recognition.

Fraser introduces two further concepts into her argument - affirmation and transformation. By affirmative remedies for injustice Fraser means remedies whose purpose it is to correct inequitable outcomes of social arrangements without actually disturbing the underlying framework from which they emerge. By transformative remedies, on the other hand, she means the restructuring of the underlying framework that generates the inequalities. The second set of remedies therefore is more radical and far-reaching than the first. She makes two further distinctions between them by arguing that affirmative remedies play-up group difference while transformative remedies tend to blur them. She also expresses the fear that affirmative redistribution remedies can result in a backlash of misrecognition while transformative redistribution remedies she hopes, can help redress some forms of misrecognition.

Having introduced these two kinds of remedies, she goes on to describe a four celled matrix. The horizontal axis comprises the two kinds of remedies – affirmation and transformation. The vertical axis comprises the two aspects of justice – redistribution and recognition. On the matrix four sets of political orientations can be located. In the first cell where redistribution and affirmation intersect, lies the liberal welfare state, which is based on the idea of reallocation of existing goods to existing groups to correct the outcome of the distribution generated by the capitalist state. This is done without actually changing the

underlying framework of the system that has resulted in this inequitable outcome. The liberal welfare state supports group differences and, Fraser fears can generate backlash misrecognition. In the second cell where redistribution and transformation intersect, lies the project of socialism which is aimed at restructuring the very relations of production that generate inequitable outcomes that the liberal welfare state deals with on a surface level. It further tends to blur group differentiation and Fraser hopes can redress some forms of misrecognition. In the third cell where affirmation and recognition intersect lies mainstream multiculturalism focused on surface reallocations of respect among existing groups with its tendency to support group differentiation. Finally in the fourth cell where recognition and transformation intersect can be located the project of deconstruction aimed at a deep restructuring of the relations of recognition with its tendency to destabilise group differentiation.

Fraser observes that the matrix casts mainstream multiculturalism as the 'cultural analogue of the liberal welfare state', while deconstruction is cast as the 'cultural analogue of socialism'. Fraser concludes by expressing her doubts about the effectiveness of multicultural policies in providing justice to all and she feels that it is important to look for alternative conceptions of redistribution and recognition. She feels that it is the combination of transformative redistribution and transformative recognition that would be the most effective in 'finessing' the redistribution – recognition dilemma. This would involve some form of anti-racist social democracy in the economy in combination with the cultural politics of deconstructive anti-racism.

The significance of Fraser's ideas is that they look at the problem of recognition and redistribution in the context of the post-Fordist capitalist accumulation process or in a 'Post-Socialist' Age as Fraser terms it. They are further critical of the effectiveness of mainstream multicultural policies in providing justice to marginalized minorities. This criticism is all the more pertinent if one takes note of the context in which multiculturalism has been

argued as emerging from (see chapter 1). This context was the Anglo-American world of the late nineteen seventies and early eighties with Thatcher's Britain and Reagan's America setting the precedent for one of the most drastic reductions in the welfare state. This was a precedent that was to be later emulated in many other countries under the new prevailing orthodoxy of Monetarism.<sup>6</sup>

More interestingly, it may be asked how multicultural policies would respond to what is termed a 'culture of poverty'. The term was introduced by the American anthropologist Oscar Lewis in his book *Five Families: Mexican Case Studies in the Culture of Poverty*, published in 1959. Lewis argued that some poor people remain in their poverty stricken condition on account of their culture - the 'culture of poverty' acting in the manner of a vicious circle to keep them in such a state. Bernard Boxill (1994) taking note of the idea that just societies are likely to be culturally plural, puts forth his reservations regarding the readiness of some to attribute moral insight to all cultures. He further says: 'My qualms are not stirred by the folly in every culture. The view does not deny this. My qualms are stirred by the possibility that the domination of one people by another subverts reason and corrupts social sentiments, and consequently may prevent a people from fashioning mores and practices that are morally acceptable. I illustrate these claims by an examination of the culture of poverty' (ibid.: 249).

It would, of course be the duty of the state to break the vicious circle of the 'culture of poverty' to relieve the people belonging to it of their misery. For one it refuses to go away be merely removing poverty and raising the standard of living. It must be realised that people belonging to a 'culture of poverty' operate within a cultural context which makes them take decisions that prevent them from availing of the opportunities that may come their way. The only way to alleviate their conditions would be to design policies in such a way that the possibilities of their smooth transition to the mainstream are made a viable option for them. Such an effort would obviously require some degree of redistribution and there is no

question of recognising the value of the culture of poverty or attempting to preserve it, which would be a ridiculous proposition.

Indeed, the best way to design all multicultural policies that are aimed at remedying marginalisation and exclusion from the mainstream would be to facilitate the smooth transition of marginalised groups to the mainstream or public sphere. This must be done in such a way that members of minority groups do not face the threat of losing their cultural identity or particularity at the prospect of entering the public sphere. It has already been mentioned at the beginning of this chapter that the public sphere is not culturally neutral and is constituted by the norms and values of the dominant majority. This fact operates in ways to make the public sphere inaccessible to the members of minority groups. It must be emphasised that the costs of such exclusion from the mainstream are very high, as it is in this mainstream that opportunities and prestige are available. These costs are not just in terms of cultural devaluation but also involve a material element in the sense that it is in the public sphere that jobs are available. Thus multicultural policies especially the ones that Kymlicka envisages as going to, what he terms ethnic groups, as opposed to national minorities, have to be designed with this precise aim in mind - the facilitation of the easy transition to the public sphere or the mainstream of all members of marginalized minority cultures. Any cultural roadblocks or barriers in the way of minority groups that obstruct their access to the public sphere have to be removed. This will inevitably involve some degree of redistribution in addition to recognition and this is something that multicultural theory will have to take note of if it is to remain effective. Unfortunately the present political economic climate dominated by the orthodoxy of Monetarism coupled with the present weakness of left liberalism makes the task all the more difficult.<sup>7</sup>

The aim then, is not to preserve minority cultures in any authentic or pristine form, or to maintain the structure of traditional communities in their original state. On the other hand they are meant to preserve communities as viable

forms of association that can act as secure contexts in which individuals can take decisions that they may be confronted with. Here it would be worth mentioning that such communities are often endangered because of the political and economic decisions taken by the larger society. It is on account of such threats that Kymlicka feels that such vulnerable minority communities must be given external rights to protect them from decisions that may be detrimental to their cultures. The cultural practices of minority communities are to a great extent threatened by the all pervading influence and powerful effects of markets and the decisions taken in them.<sup>8</sup> After having secured these communities as such contexts, multicultural policies also aim to make the public sphere more hospitable and hence more easily accessible to the members of minority communities by challenging the cultural norms of the dominant majority that have defined it and replacing these with norms that take cognisance of the values of all sections of society. Multicultural policies must then work in two directions - securing communities as secure cultural contexts in which individuals take decisions affecting their lives. Once this is done, they must endeavour to recreate the public sphere in such a way that members of minority groups are not made to feel alienated from it.

### **VIII - Multiculturalism, Group Differentiation and Separatism.**

One of the frequent criticisms of multicultural policies is that they further encourage a group's tendency to play up its differences with outsiders and hence defines itself more and more sharply in relation to a perceived 'other'. This process goes hand in hand with an attempt to play down the differences that may exist within the group. Chandran Kukathas (1992) has pointed out the problem of defining group boundaries for the purpose of providing groups with rights. He feels that this is a futile attempt as group boundaries are in a constant state of flux



and often respond to political decisions. Multicultural policies would on this logic be guilty of promoting 'balkanisation' and ghettoisation as they tend to focus on differences between groups in the attempt to provide them with group differentiated rights (Kymlicka, 1995: 178). They deepen the threat of ethnic conflict by exacerbating such differences and institutionalising them.

However, this would be taking an unnecessarily one-sided view of such policies. Far from actually building higher walls around communities in order to preserve their cultural attributes, such policies are designed to facilitate the easy passage of marginalised minorities into the mainstream of society. Minorities find this mainstream or public sphere extremely inaccessible owing to the vast cultural gap that exists between their own culture and that of the public sphere. It could be asked whether multiculturalism in its efforts to eliminate minority disadvantage, which it does by recognising discrete communities and institutionalising such difference as may exist between them, undermines the 'ties that bind' a state together, as Kymlicka puts it, and thereby seriously jeopardises the possibility of a shared civic virtue that liberal theory has stressed. While polyethnic rights and representation rights can promote social integration and political unity, self-government rights pose a more serious challenge to the integrative function of citizenship. As Kymlicka has pointed out self-government rights reflect the desire to weaken the bonds with the larger political community. The question that will be considered in more detail in the next chapter, in reference to the Indian subcontinent, is whether such rights lead to separatism among minority communities. One major scholar, Francis Robinson would argue that they actually exacerbated separatist tendencies within the Indian Muslim community (Robinson, 1993).

## **IX - Communities and Culture.**

While the neglect of the concept of community has already been dealt with above, it would be proper to go into the reasons for the neglect of culture. Kymlicka (1989: 177) feels that it is not that Rawls and Dworkin, the two most influential post war liberal theorists, totally neglected the importance of culture and the value of cultural membership. On the contrary he believes that both Rawls and Dworkin did not ignore the importance of the cultural context of choice. The reason why neither of them considered cultural membership as a primary good or as a ground for legitimate claims is to be found in their simplistic assumption of the nation state being culturally homogeneous. In fact cultural membership remains a primary good in a culturally homogeneous country, however it is a kind of public good that is equally available to all and not the source of differential rights claims (ibid.).

Critics of multiculturalism have also accused it of taking too simplistic a view of culture. Kukathas (1992) has suggested that it is extremely difficult to define the culture of a community as there may be a number of cultures corresponding to the sub-groups that exist within the community. He fears that the identification of what is termed as a minority culture may in fact be the culture of a self-serving elite.

Multicultural theorists visualise discrete communities within a nation state. They consider these communities to have distinct boundaries and then these bounded communities are thought of as having separate cultures of their own. Critics have felt that it is meaningless to talk of 'individuating' cultures in this way. Jeremy Waldron (1995) is a significant critic of this manner of looking at cultures. He feels that seeing cultures in this way gives one the impression that cultures are totally separate from one another and impervious to each other's influences. He argues that in a modern cosmopolitan environment, individuals are

continuously crossing cultural boundaries and in this manner choosing attributes belonging to a wide variety of cultures.

Waldron is definitely correct in saying that viewing discrete bounded communities with their own separate cultures gives one the impression that little or no cultural contact is going on. However it must be emphasised that cultural exchange cannot take place without a cultural horizon. Even when an individual is enjoying the features belonging to another culture or even incorporating into his/her life certain alien cultural attributes, this can only be done through ones own cultural horizon or threshold, which is, as a result of this continuous exchange and incorporation, changing. However the cultural horizon or threshold remains, and it is on account of this reason that we are justified in looking at communities and cultures as bounded entities.<sup>9</sup>

Multicultural policies can be successful in setting the balance right as far as compensating for the lack of public recognition accorded to minority cultures in the public spheres of the nation state is concerned. This, multicultural policies achieve through bringing about the realisation that the nation state, far from being culturally homogenous, has within its boundaries a plurality of cultures. In the exercising of the right to national self-determination it was the majority or dominant culture that was able to institutionalise its culture in the public sphere. The citizens belonging to minority cultures were to face social closure from the public sphere on account of their inability to identify with the culture of the nation state. To the extent that minority cultures have been marginalised in this manner, multicultural policies seek to provide redressal.

However, there is one problem that multicultural policies fail to address, and this is the problem of providing for the extension of liberal democratic principles within the communities whose cultures it seeks to protect. Multiculturalism holds out the threat of actually encouraging the perpetration of illiberal and retrograde practices and tendencies within the community and this is a function of its being more concerned with recognition, which we have seen is

different from the concerns of civil and political rights. Here again it would be important to differentiate between the need for extending liberal-democratic principles to communities and Kymlicka's calls for liberalising communities. The extension of liberal-democratic principles to communities and their incorporation within community structures is a process that will inevitably come about if communities are thought of as dynamic entities that constantly respond to changes in the external environment. Kymlicka has been criticised in this chapter for taking a view of communities that is not dynamic and hence static. It is precisely because he visualises communities in this static and invariant manner that he is forced to make a call for liberalising the community, a call that is obviously made from outside the community. It then has the possibility of being received with a certain amount of suspicion from the members of the community that has been called upon to liberalise its practices.

This view denies the right to the community to respond to circumstances in its own ways. The extension of liberal-democratic principles and their possible acceptance by the community would be a process that is a dynamic and creative response by a community to an external environment being increasingly dominated by the principles of liberal-democracy, an environment that no community can fail to respond to.

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<sup>1</sup> Sandria Freitag (1990) has noted that the very nature of the imperial "intruding state" of British India offered no possibility of a direct relationship between the individual and the state. The imperial state emphasised a representational mode of government based sociologically on communities and interests with particular individuals representing those entities. Focusing on the importance of state level rituals Freitag notes that in the imperial setting such rituals operated in a very different way from the collective activities that were developing in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Western Europe. While in Western Europe national rituals stressed the common values, traditions and a history that defined participants as alike in their relationship to the state, imperial rituals emphasised the diversity of the British Empire, which was seen as one of its needs which

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strengthened it. Viceroy Lytton once proclaimed that if one wanted to know the meaning of the empire all that one would have to do was to observe the vast diversity that characterised the empire with its multitudes differing from each other linguistically, racially, in the number of their creeds and beliefs which shape their culture (ibid.: 191-92). This remarkable proclamation provides us with an almost prophetic view of the shape that British multiculturalism of the late twentieth century would take.

Kymlicka (1995) has also pointed to the linkages that exist between the British Empire and the discourse on minority rights. He feels that the issue of minority rights fell into a sudden state of neglect, after the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, which are characterised by considerable liberal concerns for such issues. The reason for this, according to Kymlicka is the decline of the British Empire. During the period of the ascendancy of the British empire, English liberals who had been taught their liberal principles in the sanitised academic environments of English universities were sent to the empire's overseas territories, where they found that their liberal principles confronted with the vast profusion and melange of ethnic, religious and linguistic divisions, failed to provide them with solutions as to how to govern. This realisation led to a good deal of serious thinking on the part of such liberals and the solutions that they came up with were often quite novel. Kymlicka thus observes: 'Problems of nationality arose throughout the Commonwealth- from Canada and the Caribbean to Africa, Palestine, and India – and the colonial experience led to a wealth of experimentation regarding communal representation, language rights, treaties and other historical agreements between national groups, federalism, land rights, and immigration policy. With the decline of the Empire, however, liberals stopped thinking about these issues, and little of this experience was fed back into British liberal theory' (ibid.: 55). Kymlicka feels that the decline of the British empire, the beginning of the Cold War and the rise to pre-eminence of the United States with American liberal theorists now dominating academic debates have all led to the present neglect of minority rights.

Kepel (1997) has also noted that British rule in India and the various political provisions enacted are the first examples of the legitimising of communalism in the world. He feels that multiculturalism has actually encouraged the development of many forms of community organisation – racial, ethnic and religious. As there was no possibility of identifying citizenship with nationality by law, the British system made use of the concepts of race and ethnicity, which acquired a legal status. He believes that there exists a very strong connection between the various Muslim religious and reformist movements that arose in late 19<sup>th</sup> century India after the Mutiny of 1857 and the discourse on multiculturalism and minority rights that emerged in Britain in the last two decades of the twentieth century. Among the various movements that arose Kepel concentrates especially on the Deobandi movement. This particular movement responds to the loss of political power to the British and the consequent fact that the sub-continent was now no longer a *dar-al-Islam* but a *dar-al-harb*, itself one of the central questions of Islamic theology, not by calling for the usual responses that such a transition to alien political rule would entail - a *jihad* (armed struggle) or *hijrat* (migration), but by looking for what Barbara Daly Metcalf (1982) has termed a *modus vivendi*. This means the acceptance of alien political rule by the British and thereby granting it legitimacy. However, in return for this, Deobandi Islam is able to hive off a personal sphere, in which the precepts of the Islamic *shariah* are applied without the fear of these distinct cultural and religious practices being swamped by the larger non-Muslim society or from the intrusions of the British state. Thus all the religious movements that arose in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially the Deobandi movement that was started in 1867 with the setting up of the Deoband *madarsa* (seminary) could not fail to respond to a context which had been defined most significantly by the loss of political power. He thus feels that 1857 is an extremely important historical marker as it finally signifies the end of Muslim political rule and dominance in the subcontinent. Indeed Kepel has shown a typical French aversion to differentiating the population

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on ethnic, racial or linguistic lines which may have the possibility of dividing the population along these lines.

<sup>2</sup> Van Dyke specifically mentions that some of the clearest illustrations of communities being given rights as units are to be found in British colonial practices. Thus in Tanganyika they thought in terms of three communities while setting up the legislative council: European, Asian and African. In 1948 there were 11000 Europeans, 57000 Asians and 7 million Africans in this British territory. He then mentions the example of Fiji where the racially divided population composed of approximately 50 percent Indians, 42 percent Fijians and 8 percent Europeans and others are registered on racial electoral rolls with each racial group having a quota of seats in the two Houses of the central legislature. The House of Representatives consists of 52 members with Indians, Fijians and Europeans and others entitled to 22, 22 and 8 seats respectively. Van Dyke suggests that it is not surprising that Fiji follows such a practice as it was a British dependency.

He further mentions the case of Belgium where linguistic communities are accorded constitutional recognition. He feels that in the case of the United States the dominant strain of individualism has been unable to prevent the language of group rights being used.

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of the importance of Malcolm X to the process of identity formation among Black Americans see Manthia Diawara's contribution 'Malcolm X and the Black Public Sphere: Conversionists Vs. Culturalists' in Calhoun (ed.) (1994). Kepel (1997) has also mentioned the importance of Malcolm X to multicultural demands for recognising difference in his discussion of Black Muslim movements in the US.

<sup>4</sup> These three forms of group differentiated rights are (1) self government rights (2) polyethnic rights and (3) special representation rights. The first form i.e. self government rights Kymlicka associates with national minorities which had been incorporated, often against their will through conquest or by being ceded from one imperial power to another, or when its homeland is overrun by colonizing settlers to result in the creation of a multinational state. Such national minorities may also be found in multinational states that are formed on the basis of the mutual consent of different cultures to form a federation that is likely to benefit all of them (Kymlicka, 1995: 11). The nation in question refers to a historical community that is more or less institutionally complete, occupies a given territory or homeland and shares a distinct language and culture. These particular characteristics make such minorities especially suited for self-government rights which serve the purpose of providing political autonomy or territorial jurisdiction, mechanisms that ensure the full and free development of their distinct cultures. Such rights may also take on the extreme form of the nation wishing to secede (ibid.: 27-30).

Polyethnic rights are those that less concentrated and more loosely arranged minorities than national ones demand to express their ethnic and cultural particularity. These rights are a result of the immigrant groups in the Anglo-American world having been able to successfully challenge the 'Anglo-conformity' model which assumed that they should abandon their cultural particularity and assimilate to existing cultural norms and practices. They are thus an attempt on the part of immigrant groups to carry their ethnic and cultural characteristics into the public sphere, which has been hostile to such cultural difference and its expression (ibid.: 30-31). Tamir (1993) has mentioned how this expression of ethnic particularity in the public sphere defined by the norms, culture and lifestyle of the majority, can be problematic. The examples under this category of rights are ones most often associated with multiculturalism like the demands of Sikhs to be exempted from wearing crash helmets in deference to their religious observances, the demand of Muslims girls to be allowed to wear headscarves to school in France etc.

Special representation rights guarantee a minority group a certain representation in the legislatures, which is often proportionate to their share in the population (ibid.:31-33).

<sup>5</sup> John Gray (1994) often writing in the conservative British journal *The Salisbury Review* has put forth such a view and he has denounced multiculturalism as being nothing more than a museum of cultures in which they are kept as mere curiosities.

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<sup>6</sup> These economic and political changes of the late nineteen seventies and early eighties have to be taken into account if one is to properly assess the strengths and weaknesses of multiculturalism for which the period in question served as the context in which it emerged (see chapter 1). The post-Fordist hyperghetto is a direct outcome of the welfare cuts of the seventies and eighties and many writers have pointed to its importance in the politics of identity and the way that this has influenced the demands for multicultural recognition. For a discussion on the importance of the post-Fordist hyperghetto to multiculturalism see Kepel (1997). For a more detailed discussion of the post-Fordist hyperghetto and its influence on the politics of identity see Wacquant (1994). Wacquant has pointed to a complex and dynamic concatenation of economic and political factors that explain the present degradation of the hyperghetto and the Black inner city residents of America. One of the most obvious of these factors has been the transformation of the American economy from a closed, integrated, factory centered Fordist system catering to the demands of a uniform mass market to a more open decentered and service intensive system geared to increasingly differentiated consumption patterns. The consequences of this shift from manufacturing to services has been borne the most by Black inner city residents as they provided the largest reserve of labour for the traditional manufacturing industries. David Harvey (1989) has also referred to the vulnerability of groups like ethnic minorities in the face of the large-scale economic transformations of the nineteen seventies. Tariq Modood (1990) has referred to the effects of these economic changes on the large industrial underclass of Muslim immigrant workers living in Bradford in Thatcherist Britain. It was this very same group who were at the forefront of the burning of Salman Rushdie's novel "The Satanic Verses" at the height of the controversy in 1989. The controversy over the novel itself forms a central part of the debate on multiculturalism and has been identified by Bhikhu Parekh (1990) as setting the agenda for research in political philosophy. All these examples make it amply clear that various minority groups who would be the most in need of recognition through multicultural policies also suffer from chronic under-employment and unemployment, and hence the need to take into account the need for redistribution in addition to recognition.

<sup>7</sup> Michael Walzer concludes his article on 'Multiculturalism and Individualism' by observing: 'If multiculturalism today brings more trouble than hope, one reason is the weakness of social democracy (in America: left liberalism). But that is another and a longer story' (Walzer, 1994: 191). He also opines a little earlier in the same article that: 'Multiculturalism as an ideology is not only the product of, it is also a program for, greater social and economic equality.' Chantal Mouffe (1992) attempts to set a future agenda for the left by arguing for a radical liberalism that is able to learn from the mistakes made by social democracy in the post-War period and that has, as one of its foremost aims the countering of neo-liberal economic policies which seriously compromise the position of vulnerable groups. In addition she feels that left liberalism must continue to uphold ethnic minority rights, gay rights and support movements for protecting the environment, issues that have traditionally been close to the left. The only way in which multiculturalism can be made effective is in combination with these other concerns central to left liberalism. A Multiculturalism divorced from these concerns would not have the desired results.

<sup>8</sup> Habermas (1987) has very effectively theorised the influence of advanced capitalism on the life-world of communicative actors. He terms this process as the 'colonisation of the life-world' in which the sub-systems of the state and economy become more complex as result of capitalist growth and lead to disruptions in the symbolic reproduction of the life-world (ibid.: 367-68). This process provides us with an idea of how capitalist growth can lead to an undermining of the secure cultural contexts of stable communities in which people take various decisions. The life-world of communicative actors acts as a stock of knowledge supplying members with unproblematic background convictions that are drawn upon in negotiating new situations (ibid.: 125).

<sup>9</sup> Thus Habermas while dealing with the concept of the life-world and its importance to communicative action says that communicative actors are always moving in the horizon of their

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life-world and that they cannot step outside it (Habermas, 1987: 126). In addition to this, new situations are negotiated by falling back on the resources provided by the life-world which acts as a stock of knowledge supplying them with unproblematic background convictions (ibid.: 125). In this way we find that despite new situations and the cultural exchanges that they entail, a certain continuity is maintained in the life-world through its symbolic reproduction.



## **Chapter 4 The Empire, Liberal Theory and Minority Rights.**

This chapter will look at the ways in which the practices that were first initiated during the time of the British Empire have significantly influenced the discourse on minority rights especially the manner in which British multiculturalism has evolved. One of the main aims of the chapter will be to look at the ways in which the practices that were initiated, especially in the Indian subcontinent, and which fell into a great deal of disrepute because of their obvious association with the Empire, have more recently been given a renewed credibility. This renewed credibility has arisen from the attention that is being given to them by liberal theory. In this regard, the Indian subcontinent provides almost a laboratory study of the ways in which the various mechanisms that are today being debated under the broad rubric of minority rights have operated in actual practice.

The first section of the chapter will look at the connections that exist between liberal theory and the British Empire. Kymlicka has noted in this regard that the recent neglect in liberal theory of the issue of minority rights is linked to the decline of the British Empire. More importantly, this section will look at the ways in which liberal theory as it was formulated during the period of the ascendancy of the British Empire had implicit within it a certain exclusionary potential. Thus, liberal theory while being avowedly universal, in actual practice resulted in the selective application of its principles. This exclusionary potential will be more fully elaborated in the first section of the chapter. The reason why it is important to consider this exclusionary potential is to understand the extent to which multiculturalism as a liberal theory of minority rights is also affected by this potential. This could thereby seriously undermine its ability to extend inclusion in the polity to diverse and hitherto marginalised cultures.

The second section of the chapter will look at two responses that arose from within the Muslims of the subcontinent to British rule. The first of these

responses came from what is described as the religious elite centred on the *madarsa* (seminary) at Deoband. The second response that was to arise came from the political elite or political intelligentsia that had as its rallying point the college at Aligarh which later became the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU). The political strategies of the religious elite and the political elite were completely different. The aim of the religious elite was the creation of a distinct autonomous community that would be free from the influences of the larger society and in which Islamic observances could be carried out faithfully. On the other hand, the political elite took a trajectory that from the beginning was to emphasize separate representation for the Muslims in the different branches of governance. Once the political elite found that their demands for separate political representation would not be conceded to the extent that they desired, they embarked on a course of separatism ultimately leading to the state of Pakistan.

The third section takes a look at the way in which the Islamic revivalism characterised by the Deobandi movement has managed to travel to Britain along with the waves of migration to that country from the subcontinent in the post-War period. It also looks at the ways in which British Muslims have drawn upon the religious and cultural resources provided by this form of Islam in the articulation of a distinct identity and how this has also significantly influenced the discourse on multiculturalism as it has developed in Britain.

The next section will look at the ways in which the two responses, the creation of an autonomous community and the demands for separate representation, that have been mentioned above, as arising from the religious and political elite respectively, were to significantly influence the course that minority rights would take in the post-independence period in India. In this regard, it would be worth mentioning that the Indian constitution devised a two-fold policy for minority rights. Firstly, it provided autonomy to each religious community to pursue its own religious and cultural practices and secondly it tried to ensure that no community is outrightly excluded or systematically disadvantaged in the

public arena (Mahajan, 1998: 4). It will be argued in the fourth section that this two fold policy and its constituent elements of ensuring autonomy to the community and according recognition to different communities in the public sphere was derived from the manner in which the British Raj dealt with the religious and political elites of the Indian Muslims respectively. Thus the religious elite centred in Deoband and its political strategy of creating an autonomous political community was to directly influence the first part of the Indian constitution's 'two-fold policy'. The Aligarh political elite was to directly influence the second aspect, which consisted in according public recognition to minority communities. In the fifth section an attempt will be made to understand the reasons for the Indian constitution's including only cultural and educational rights for minority communities and the reasons for the sudden exclusion of separate political representation to minorities.

The sixth and final section will conclude with a look at the actual operation of minority rights in post-Independence India and will suggest a possible direction for a future Indian multiculturalism.

## **I - Liberal Theory and the Imperial Connection.**

Kymlicka has noted that one of the reasons for the issue of minority rights falling into a sudden state of neglect, after the late nineteenth century and early part of the twentieth century, a period characterized by considerable liberal concern for such issues, is the decline of the British Empire. This particular fact combined with the beginning of the Cold War and the rise to pre-eminence of the United States with American liberal theorists now dominating academic debates explains the contemporary neglect of the issue of minority rights. The issue it has been mentioned has only recently been revived in the last two decades of the twentieth century.

One of the reasons why the British Empire was more conducive to such theorizing has to do with the fact that Englishmen tutored in the principles of British liberalism in the sanitized academic environments of British universities were confronted with a vast profusion and melange of ethnicities, races, languages and religions when they were sent to the Empire's overseas territories. They thus found it extremely difficult to govern these territories and because the liberal principles that they had been taught did not equip them for the kind of profusion of social cleavages that they were confronted with, this inevitably led to a good deal of serious thinking on their part. The results of such thinking were often quite novel and Kymlicka thus observes: 'Problems of nationality arose throughout the Commonwealth – from Canada and the Caribbean to Africa, Palestine, and India – and the colonial experience led to a wealth of experimentation regarding communal representation, language rights, treaties and other historical agreements between national groups, federalism, land rights, and immigration policy. With the decline of the Empire, however, liberals stopped thinking about these issues, and little of this experience was fed back into British liberal theory' (Kymlicka, 1995: 55).

Uday Mehta in a recent book *Liberalism and Empire* has brought out more effectively the connections that exist between liberal theory and the British Empire. He begins the book by showing how liberal theorists of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries came to view India as the 'promised land of liberal ideas – a kind of test case laboratory' (Mehta, 1999: 9). Mehta notes that almost without exception almost all the important British minds from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century into the 20<sup>th</sup> century dealt in an extensive and focused manner with India. Mehta names Edmund Burke, James Mill, John Stuart Mill, Macaulay, Sir Charles Grant, the Trevelyan, Thomas Carlyle, Walter Bagehot and in the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Fabians, Keynes and George Orwell as the significant British minds that grappled with the reality of India (ibid.: 65). However it is in this encounter with India and what for them was an unfamiliar country that Mehta tries to understand the ways in which

liberalism was formulated. It is through a severe indictment of the writings of James Mill, Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill and a more sympathetic treatment of Edmund Burke's voluminous writings on India that Mehta attempts to arrive at an understanding of the 'inclusionary pretensions of liberal theory and the exclusionary effects of liberal practices'. He further tries to understand how 'a set of ideas that professed at a fundamental level to include as its political referent a universal constituency nevertheless spawned practices that were either predicated on or directed at the political marginalization of various people' (ibid.: 46).

Mehta argues that the exclusionary potential of liberalism arises from its theoretical core and he feels that the 'litany of exclusionary historical instances' is an elaboration of this core. He goes to the root of this exclusionary potential and locates it in the fact that liberalism in its universalizing thrust ascribes to all individuals a certain 'anthropological minimum' (central among these anthropological characteristics or foundations for liberal theory and which are common to every individual are the claim that everyone is naturally free, that they are in the relevant moral respect equal and finally that they are rational) a common denominator, that fails to take into account the thicker set of social credentials that he feels are the real basis of political inclusion. Liberalism presumes that the anthropological minimum is sufficient and not merely necessary for an individual's political inclusion. Mehta argues that behind these universal capacities lie cultural and psychological conditions that act as preconditions for the actualization of these capacities. He thus believes that liberal exclusion works by 'modulating the distance between the interstices of human capacities and the conditions for their political effectivity'. It is therefore through an examination of these interstices that Mehta believes we can arrive at an understanding at how the boundaries between those to be included and those to be excluded are laid (ibid.: 49).<sup>1</sup>

One of the great merits of Mehta's book is the manner in which he has been able to unravel the sources of liberal exclusion and hence marginalisation, which he believes are located deep within its theoretical core. What is most remarkable about Mehta's study of liberalism is that it succeeds in identifying what it is in liberalism that leads to exclusion and marginalisation, a theme which a whole host of post colonial theories have been trying to grapple with, and the pitfalls of which Mehta avoids.

Uday Mehta's book is a study in nineteenth century British Liberal thought. There are a number of other studies that provide one with an understanding of the ways in which British imperial practices may have shaped liberal theory especially its formulation of a theory of minority rights. Sandria Freitag's (1990) book is a study of the ways in which collective action and public arenas resulted in the emergence of communalism in nineteenth century British India. She notes that the very nature of the imperial 'intruding state' of British India resulted in the ruling out of the possibility of the direct relationship between the individual and the state. This impossibility stemmed from the very nature of the ritual relationship the state had with the general population, which emphasized a representational mode of government based sociologically on communities and interests, with particular individuals representing those entities. This situation particularly, the way that it functioned in an imperial setting was to have results very different from those that obtained in Western Europe. While national rituals in Europe stressed the common values and traditions or a history that defined participants as alike in their relationship with the state, imperial rituals in imperial India tended to emphasize 'diversity' as a statement of the need for British imperial rule. The point to be noted here is the way in which the British Empire was to stress the aspect of diversity or difference as one of its strengths. This concern with diversity or difference is a theme that has reemerged more recently in the last two decades of the twentieth century with the rise of multiculturalism. Viceroy Lytton once proclaimed that if one wanted to know the meaning of the

imperial title, all one had to do was 'to look around' and see an Empire 'multitudinous in its traditions as well as in its inhabitants, almost infinite in the variety of races which populate it and the creeds which have shaped their culture' (Freitag, 1990: 191-92).

This remarkable statement provides us with an almost prophetic view of the shape that British multiculturalism has taken in the last two decades of the twentieth century. One of the reasons for taking an in depth view of the connections between the British Empire and liberal theory is that it allows us to understand the deep internal structures within liberal theory that have given rise to exclusion and marginalisation. Such an analysis can then be used to understand the links that exist today between multiculturalism as it has been formulated in the British context and the British Empire. This insight can then be used to interrogate the concept to look at the ways in which multiculturalism can be relied upon to address the issue of minority disadvantage. The attempt here is not to in any way disparage the idea of multiculturalism by exposing its colonial origins, but to use this insight to understand it in a more effective manner.<sup>2</sup>

## **II - Two Responses to British Rule.**

The second section will look at two responses that emerged among the Muslim population of the subcontinent towards British rule and how these two different sets of responses have contributed enormously to the liberal discourse on minority rights. It is worth noting that British rule towards the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent was characterized by its ambivalence. On the one hand, there was a realization that political power had been wrested from Muslim hands and that on account of this, the Muslims would be particularly eager to get this power back. In this way, the Muslims were perceived to be the most potent threat to the stability of the British Raj. This meant that steps would have to be taken to disarm the threat, which meant a policy of systematic persecution towards them. On the other

hand, some British officials realized that the Muslim population of the subcontinent could be effectively used as allies in their rule and this would necessarily imply a policy of accommodation.<sup>3</sup>

However, what would perhaps be more useful to take into account are the two sets of responses to this ambivalent policy of the British that emerged from among the Muslim population. Both these two major responses were centred on the most important educational institutions that the Muslims had set up and both of which were manifestations of the realization that Muslim rule in the subcontinent had ended and that British rule was here to stay. These two responses came from the centres of Deoband and Aligarh, both towns lying in the Western United Provinces. Deoband was home to the *madarsa* (seminary) that had been set up by *ulema* (Islamic theologians). It was here that a particular form of Islam that took its name from the town in which the seminary had been established, namely the Deobandi form, was formulated. Its principles were a response to Muslims in the subcontinent having to face the problem of living under alien, non-Muslim political rule coupled, with the prospects of living in a society as a numerical minority. This particular predicament or double loss of political power and the prospects of living in a predominantly non-Muslim society was solved by arriving at what Barbara Daly Metcalf has described as a *modus vivendi*. This implied the acceptance of alien political rule, but in return for this acceptance was created a private sphere that was then hermetically sealed off from the corrosive influence of the British state and the larger non-Muslim society (see Metcalf, 1982). The importance of this private sphere lay in the fact that it facilitated the observance of the precepts of the Islamic *shariah*, (Islamic sacred law) free from the intrusions of the state and larger society and was also jealously guarded by the *ulema*.<sup>4</sup>

Peter Hardy (1972) has described the strategy of the Deoband school as a form of 'judicial apartheid' as the precepts of the Islamic *shariah* were to be applied within the private sphere that has been described above and the



responsibility of interpreting and applying the *shariah* lay with the *ulema*. It is thus obvious that the *ulema* from Deoband played a crucial role insofar as the formation of the Indian Muslims as a political community was concerned. However, what has to be emphasized is that Deoband did not at any point of time conceive of, or favourably entertain the idea of a separate state of Pakistan where Muslims would form the majority. Their purpose remained the creation and continued existence of an autonomous community within a larger non-Muslim society in which the community would be allowed unhindered access to its religious and cultural practices. It was the other Muslim response that arose from the other major centre of Muslim educational activities – Aligarh that was to articulate the demand for a separate state of Pakistan. Perhaps the difference in the class bases of the two movements explains the divergent trajectories that the two took.<sup>5</sup> This divergence becomes more marked from the end of World War I. While the first World War and the later treaties leading to the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire did bring the orthodox religious leadership and the secular Westernised leadership together, they separated ways after that. The religious leadership formed the *Jamiat-al-ulema-I-Hind* in 1919 and decided to support the Congress led National movement.

After having focused on the response of the religious elite, it would now be worthwhile to look at the political strategy of the political elite or intelligentsia that had rallied around Aligarh. The political responses of Aligarh did not favour the kind of autonomous community that the Deobandis sought to create. The political elite was more concerned with securing political representation for the Muslim community through the means of separate representation. This concern marked the Aligarh movement right from its very inception, with Sir Sayyid often voicing his concern about the futility of Muslims actively engaging in the newly emerging politics of the National movement. Concerns with adequate representation for the Muslims increased with the controversy over the Nagri resolution. This led to an intensification of political activities in the Aligarh camp

under Mohsin-ul-Mulk. The Simla Deputation of 1906, which would subsequently give rise to the Muslim League was an outcome of this intensification of activities. The securing of separate electorates under the Morley-Minto reforms of 1909 was the first major victory scored by the Muslim League.

Yet, the point that has to be raised is why the British government was willing to concede demands like separate electorates to the Muslims. This is especially pertinent if one notes that the British were unwilling to extend fully the principles of representative government to the subject people in the colonies. Even a thinker like J.S.Mill defended this refusal to extend full representation rights on the grounds of the lack of maturity of the Indians. One partial and plausible explanation lies in the fact that the British looked at India from a particular perspective, in which the country was considered to be constituted by a multitude of religious communities. This resulted in the ruling out of the possibility of a direct relationship between the individual and the state. Instead a representational mode of government based sociologically on communities and interests, with particular individuals representing those entities was favoured, as pointed out by Sandria Freitag (1990: 191-92). This particular relationship between the individual and the state, which privileged the role of communities that existed at an intermediate level between the two, is important. It explains the manner in which the efforts of Muslim leaders like Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, created out of the vast number of geographically dispersed and culturally heterogeneous Muslims of the sub-continent, a discrete political community.

### **III - British Multiculturalism and the Legacy of the Empire.**

Gilles Kepel has brought out the connections that exist between the Deobandi school of Islam as it was formulated in the aftermath of the Mutiny of 1857 and British multiculturalism by showing the ways in which the precepts of

this particular school were transported to Britain alongwith the waves of migration that took place from the subcontinent in the post-War period.<sup>6</sup> The immigrants from the subcontinent were to draw upon the religious and cultural resources that they had brought with them from the subcontinent, especially in the many campaigns that took place in the nineteen eighties, which were supported by multiculturalism.<sup>7</sup> Kepel believes that this affirmation of an Islamic identity by immigrants did not involve a straightforward return to the forms of self-definition that obtained on the subcontinent but was shaped by a process of selection and adaptation of certain features towards which the host society proved more conducive.

#### **IV - Minority Rights in Post-Independence India.**

Having seen the ways in which the precepts of Deobandi Islam were to significantly influence the formulation of multicultural schemes of protection for minorities in Britain in the eighties, it would be worth noting the manner in which the discourse on minority rights has evolved in India in the post-independence period. One of the most important features of the Indian constitution is the specific provisions that have been included for the protection and preservation of minority cultures.

Gurpreet Mahajan has noted that the fact that the Indian constitution's devising ways in which cultural communities received equal consideration in the public sphere, while deviating from the liberal norms that were prevalent at the time of the framing of the constitution in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, significantly predated latter day liberal concerns with cultural protection that emerged in the West only in the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Mahajan, 1998: 5). What we find are developments in India, presaging the later liberal concerns in the West by a good three decades.

The Indian constitution she argues devised a two-fold policy (ibid.: 4). This two-fold policy itself was based on the distinction between the public and private domains. On the one hand, the constitution attempted to ensure that no community suffered from systematic discrimination and marginalisation in the public sphere and in this manner ensured equal recognition and inter group equality. On the other hand, it provided autonomy to each religious community to preserve its own way of life. This second aspect of the constitution's approach i.e. of guaranteeing autonomy to each religious community was an outcome of the earlier Deobandi insistence on creating an autonomous community or what Peter Hardy has termed the system of 'judicial apartheid'.

The fact that the Indian constitution was able to significantly presage the liberal concerns with community and cultural equality that arose in the West only in the latter part of the twentieth century is indeed a tribute to the foresight displayed by the Indian constitution. Gurpreet Mahajan feels that the importance given to the rights of religious communities and minorities in the Constituent Assembly reflects the more recent concerns of contemporary liberalism. She feels that the deliberations of the Constituent Assembly were shaped by the historical conditions that prevailed in India at the time of independence with assertive and contesting communities placing the issue of group equality on the agenda and refusing to accept the idea that individual autonomy would be the best guarantee of religious and cultural diversity (ibid.: 6).

Having looked at this development in India she goes on to make an important distinction between the Indian situation and the conditions prevalent in the West. While she accepts that the concerns with protecting the religious and cultural rights of the minorities in India and the West have brought them both in line with the present day liberal concerns with protecting cultural diversity and group rights, she notes a crucial historical difference.

This difference, she feels, has important implications for minority rights in India. She notes that in Western societies autonomy for religious communities

came at a time when religion had ceased to be a parallel source of sovereign authority within the nation state. Thus, when religious institutions had acted as a real threat to the sovereignty of the state, the state restricted the autonomy of such religious bodies. It was only after the threat of the religious bodies had subsided to a significant extent and they had been fully subordinated to the state that they began to be treated as autonomous associations that would further strengthen civil society.

This was clearly not the case in India where Gurpreet Mahajan notes that historical conditions and the ideological environment that formed the background against which the constitution was framed were strikingly different. She writes that at the time of independence the shadow of intense and widespread communal riots ensured that differences between communities were sharply articulated. Thus the 'self' and the 'other' were placed alongside each other and both were recognized politically by the colonial rulers. This distinction between us and them, which set the parameters of political discourse, was a state of affairs definitely not sympathetic to the liberal notion of the unencumbered self (ibid.: 37). It resulted in ensuring that cultural pluralism rather than liberal individualism became the operative principle of democracy (ibid.: 39).

Gurpreet Mahajan's distinction between the different historical contexts that prevailed in the West and in India is extremely useful. It helps us in understanding the manner in which the same liberal principles that foregrounded the community and the importance of inter group equality in liberal democracy have had different effects in the West and in India. She stresses that in India community rights have actually acted as a hindrance to the further extension of democratization in the sphere of community, where oppressive and patriarchal structures have actually been reinforced through the provision of minority rights. The granting of religious and cultural rights has, she argues, bolstered the position of religious leaders within the community and has limited the possibility of assessing and reconsidering ongoing community practices (ibid.: 9)

In spite of the relevance of the argument there is an inherent danger in what Gurpreet Mahajan is saying. She feels that in the West collective community rights have been placed on the agenda after a uniform structure of social and civil laws has been established in society. She finds a certain advantage in the existence of such a uniform code as it has, 'to some extent, prescribed the limits of permissible cultural diversity'. Thus 'aspects of the liberal ethic have been incorporated into community practices and as a consequence, in these liberal societies, community rights have not frequently conflicted with the principle of gender equality' (ibid.: 7). What has to be guarded against, especially after considering the present day political scenario in India, is that an academic or political consensus is not created in favour of a uniform structure of social and civil rights that has the potential of being captured by the forces of the Hindu right. While academic debates on the left do not necessarily have to be sympathetic to and indeed, should not look favourably upon demands like the ones voiced by the Muslim Personal Law Board on the issue of Muslim Personal Law, attempts have to be made to ensure that the issue of personal laws and indeed, a uniform civil code are conducted in a sensible and responsible way.<sup>8</sup>

#### **V - The Constituent Assembly Debates and Provisions for Minority Rights.**

One of the important features of the Indian constitution is the fact that it enshrines cultural and educational rights for minorities under Articles 29 and 30. It has already been noted that the Constituent Assembly's taking cognizance of these rights and the fact that they were enshrined is a reflection of the concern for minority rights among the members of the Constituent Assembly. However Iqbal Ansari (1998) goes into the history of the debates in the Constituent Assembly to show the manner in which the various provisions for minority rights were continuously 'denuded' and 'watered down' and concludes that the commitment of the framers of the Indian Constitution to cultural rights was merely 'skin deep'.

Ansari begins with the Congress's Karachi resolution of March 1931<sup>9</sup> and continues his narrative till 1949, the year the constitution was passed, to show the manner in which the whole issue of minority rights in the Indian constitution was derailed at the instance of Sardar Patel. The 1931 resolution dealt with Fundamental Rights and Duties of citizens, which provided for the right to equality and non-discrimination and sought to guarantee the protection of culture, language and the script of the minorities. It required the state to observe neutrality with regard to all religions (ibid.: 114).

Ansari also takes into account the Round table Conference that took place in the same year as the Karachi Resolution was passed by the Congress. He feels that the Round Table Conference is also important in a consideration of minority demands as the Congress accepted various provisions relating to them like non-interference with personal laws, in addition to which there were guarantees of provisions in the fundamental rights to protect such personal laws, the protection of language, culture, script, religion etc. The 'Objectives Resolution' moved by Nehru on 13<sup>th</sup> December 1946, pledged to provide in the constitution adequate safeguards for minorities, backward and tribal areas, and depressed and other backward classes. Ansari says that all these concerns remained right up to October 1949 when articles of the Draft Constitution relating to a minority's share in public services and appointments of special officers for minorities were scrapped (ibid.: 116).

Before going into the details of the ways in which the various provisions relating to minority protection were drastically reduced, Ansari notes that the Advisory Committee of the Constituent Assembly on Fundamental Rights and Minorities was headed by Sardar Patel, with the help of its sub-committee on minorities being headed by a Christian member, H.C. Mookerji, who Ansari describes as being 'pliant'. Ansari argues that the Advisory Committee accepted most of the recommendations of the sub-committee and adopted its Report on Minority Rights on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1947. He adds that the entire scheme of political

and economic safeguards provided for were consistent with the Congress's policy on minorities as it had evolved since the late 1920s. The Constituent Assembly adopted on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> August 1947 the entire Report of the Advisory Committee providing for reservations of seats for minorities on the basis of their population under joint electorates in the central and all provincial legislatures. Then in February 1948, the recommendations of the Advisory Committee were written into the Draft Constitution in Part XIV under the title 'Special Rights Relating to Minorities'. Ansari notes that things seemed to be on course till April 1949 and he credits the framers of the constitution for having stood their ground during the period of March-April 1947 through February 1948 and till April 1949. However, he notes that when the dust of partition settled the issue of minority rights was reopened by Sardar Patel who wrote a letter to the President of the Assembly on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1949.

The Advisory Committee of the Constituent Assembly on Fundamental Rights headed by Sardar Patel addressed itself to two sets of minority rights, each having two sub-categories:

1. One set related to political and economic rights
2. The other to religious, educational and cultural rights, the categories being of both individuals and the group.

The important point to be noted is that the Constituent Assembly adopted on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of August 1947 the entire report of the Advisory Committee, providing for reservations of seats for minorities on the basis of their population under joint electorates in the central and all provincial legislatures. It further incorporated the principle of representation of minorities in the cabinet under conventions that would be provided in a schedule of the constitution.

Ansari opines that the dilution of minority rights was done on the initiative of Sardar Patel on the basis of his appealing to the sentiments of pure nationalism. In this view, the rights that were being guaranteed to the minority were seen to be undermining pure nationalism. The scheme pledging to safeguard political and



economic interests of minorities was characterised as a compromise between the proposals based on undiluted communalism and undiluted nationalism. Even Nehru was happy with the voluntary rejection of minority members of the scheme of separate political representation. He even called it a 'historic turn in our destiny' which Ansari believes is quite obviously contrary to the opinion he expressed in 1931. He goes on to say that the various possibilities of ensuring adequate political representation for minorities like proportional representation were to 'melt in the heat of the forging of a homogenized, pure, undiluted nationalism'.

To show the manner in which the various provisions of minority rights were continuously eroded Ansari describes how apart from the dropping of minority representation in the legislature, another provision relating to the representation of minorities in the public services was greatly altered to the disadvantage of the minorities (ibid.: 123). Ansari observes that the 'ignominious burial' given to even a semblance of economic safeguards and to the provision for Minority Officers to monitor and report the working of minority safeguards, marked the culmination of a process of denudation that the majority performed on a 'demoralised' minority.

In this manner Ansari feels that no one in the Constituent Assembly recalled the specific assurances that were given to minorities, mainly Muslims, in the 1931 Congress scheme on minorities and in Nehru's letter of 1938 that Personal Laws would be duly protected when the issue of approving the desirability of uniformity in intimate cultural matters related to family life was taken up. He infers from this that such limited assurances in the limited sphere of family laws was the result of a compromise between undiluted pure nationalism and pure communalism that was accepted by the Congress to accommodate nationalist Muslims, when in the aftermath of partition it could very well have opted for a pure and homogeneous form of nationalism.

It is obvious that the provisions relating to minority protection in the Constitution of India would have been of a much more wide ranging nature if some of the provisions had not been deleted. The reason why provisions like personal laws were accepted and the measures of a more far reaching nature were not, can perhaps be understood in the light of the distinction that was made in section II between the two kinds of protection that were demanded by the religious and political elites. These two responses it has been mentioned, formed the major responses to British colonialism among the Muslims of the subcontinent. It has already been noted that the political strategy of the religious elite or the *ulema* was the creation of a private sphere or autonomous community that would facilitate the carrying out of the religious and cultural observances enshrined in the Islamic *shariah*. This particular section of Muslims was to remain within the folds of the national movement led by the Congress. This can be seen from the fact that a large number of *ulema*, drawn from a variety of institutions, but predominantly from Deoband, set up in 1919, the *Jamiat-ul-ulema-I-Hind*. This particular body was to become one of the major planks of Muslim opposition to the idea of Pakistan. The political elite or intelligentsia's strategy on the other hand was the securing of political representation for the Muslims and the most important victory for them in this regard was the 1909 Indian Councils Act, which guaranteed to them separate electorates. Obviously, the political trajectory of the political elite was to lead them to separatism and the demand for Pakistan. The obvious reason why the provisions relating to political representation were dropped by the Constituent Assembly were because of its being associated with the Muslim League, which later developed into a full blown demand for the creation of a separate state of Pakistan. On the other hand, the demands of the religious elite were more acceptable to the Congress partly because of the fact that the religious elite had always backed the Congress and remained consistently opposed to the idea of a separate state of Pakistan.

## **VI - The Actual Operation of Minority Rights in India: A Concluding Note.**

The fourth and fifth sections have looked at minority rights in India in the post-Independence period and analyzed the manner in which the issue was debated in the Constituent Assembly to result in the dropping of provisions relating to separate representation. This section makes one concluding note on the actual operation of minority provisions in India in the post-Independence period. The notable aspect of minority provisions in the post-Independence period is that they have tended to privilege the aspect of rights pertaining to the private sphere of community and religious practices. They have simultaneously placed less emphasis on providing equal recognition to minority groups in the public sphere.

The Indian State has thus been extremely sensitive to the need to protect the distinct cultural, linguistic and religious practices of various communities and has for this purpose enacted a number of provisions that protect the private sphere of communities from violation. While the state has been extremely sensitive in this regard and has also been extremely wary of encroaching upon the private spheres of community and religious practices, it has not devoted the same kind of attention to making the public sphere reflect the plurality and diversity of the country. In addition to this wariness on the part of the state, has been combined the jealous guarding of the boundaries of communities by religious and other community leaders. The most recent example of this wariness could be seen in the furore that erupted over the Shah Bano controversy. In this particular controversy the more orthodox sections of the Muslim community, represented most notably by the conservative members of the Muslim Personal Law Board, came out in defense of what they perceived to be a serious encroachment of their private sphere. The then Congress government's hastily passing the Muslim Women's Protection of Rights on Divorce Bill, on the ostensible grounds of protecting minority rights reflects the ways in which the private sphere of community practices receives an inordinate amount of attention and is thereby strengthened.

This resulted in preventing the voices of Muslim women from being heard in the controversy (Hasan, 1998). It further showed the ways in which the position of religious leaders was further bolstered and how the assessment and reconsideration of community practices was thereby completely ruled out (Mahajan, 1998: 9).

In any debate on multiculturalism in India and in any future attempt to place it on the agenda in this country, it is the aspect of making the public sphere more conducive to the expression of minority cultures that needs to be foregrounded. It is precisely this aspect and not the private sphere, which it has been mentioned has already received an inordinate amount of attention, that has to be given the most priority. The underlying reason for placing greater emphasis on the aspect of the public sphere rather than the private sphere of community cultural and religious practices is rooted in a concern for greater democratization. The attempt to sensitize the public sphere to the expression of diverse minority cultures will ensure the greater participation and inclusion of marginalised minorities and hence the greater democratization of the public sphere.

Further, it has to be realized that provisions for minority protection have actually acted as an obstruction to democratization within communities. While placing less emphasis on the private sphere of community practices, a simultaneous debate needs to be initiated on the vexed issue of personal laws for different communities. This debate has to be conducted using the benefits of hindsight and seeing the ways in which schemes for minority protection have operated in actual practice. Such a debate would allow one to take a critical look at provisions for minority protection and where they have gone wrong. It would also have to keep the issue of democratization uppermost in mind, an issue that has unfortunately been relegated in concerns for minority protection in this country.

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<sup>1</sup> Mehta further explains that liberalism sets a 'putative perimeter' of its sympathies, which is marked by the expansive range of the differences that it tolerates. The limiting point of this

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perimeter is a form of alterity beyond which differences can no longer be tolerated (Mehta, 1999: 67). It would be relevant to examine this 'putative perimeter' that liberalism sets and which it can safely be assumed is also a feature of liberal multiculturalism. By doing so it would be possible to arrive at an understanding of the extent to which multiculturalism can tolerate and accommodate difference. The question that can then be asked is the extent to which difference and what kinds of difference can be included in the liberal polity. How is liberal multiculturalism to countenance the existence of religious fundamentalists, neo-Nazis, cultural supremacists etc, within the liberal polity? Which of these can it include and which of them are to be excluded?

Many proponents of multiculturalism have pointed to the benefits of cultural plurality and the coexistence of diverse cultures. They have pointed to the ways in which cultures learn from each other. This is without doubt a noble sentiment and holds out the promise of a greater understanding between cultures. However, Mehta argues that in the encounter with the strange and the unfamiliar, liberalism suffers from an impoverishment of hermeneutic space. A culture perceived to be non-Western and hence, by extension backward, would be seen to be a threat to progress and moving forward. What ensues, according to Mehta, is a 'deathly struggle' in which the strange, unfamiliar and hence backward is sought to be overcome and defeated completely. Rather than resulting in understanding, what is deployed to come to terms with the unfamiliar culture is power and domination.

Mehta notes that this problem is especially characteristic of Mill's liberalism which views only a stark 'binary' of the backward and the progressive with nothing in between, what Mehta refers to as the impoverishment of the hermeneutic space that exists between the two cultures.

<sup>2</sup> A striking resemblance that perhaps effectively brings out the parallels that exist between the situation prevalent in nineteenth century British India and late twentieth century Britain can be seen in some of the similarities between W.W. Hunter's conclusions published in his book *The Indian Mussalmans* and the Swann report's conclusions published in 1985. Hunter was a civil servant in Bengal who was asked by Lord Mayo to write a book on the question of whether the Muslims of the subcontinent were bound by their religion to rebel against the Queen. He showed that Muslims did not necessarily have to rebel, provided that the ruling power was sympathetic to their needs. He felt that this was clearly not the attitude that British rule was displaying towards the Muslims. He examined his conclusions in the light of the conditions prevalent among the Muslims of Bengal where the administrative policies of the British had dried up the sources of Muslim wealth, the Permanent Settlement had made serious reductions in their income from the land, and the professions that they had monopolised almost a century ago had been closed to them. Hunter explained that the reasons for this marginalisation lay in the fact that British education was completely unsuited to the needs and traditions of the Muslims. He concluded by making recommendations along the lines of Lord Mayo's resolution of 7<sup>th</sup> August 1871, which said that the government should temper its educational system to suit Muslim requirements. The educational recommendations made by Hunter almost echo the conclusions of the Swann Report, which looked into the causes of the consistently poor performance of children belonging to the ethnic minorities. It surmised that this poor performance could be attributed to racism and discriminatory practices. It recommended the development of minority cultures as a solution

<sup>3</sup> Francis Robinson has noted that towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a strange paradox had developed in government's attitude towards the Muslims. On the one hand they were still regarded as dangerous, yet, owing to the success of the Aligarh policy an important group of Muslims was also regarded as a major support of British rule in North India (Robinson, 1993: 130).

<sup>4</sup> The fact that the private sphere was and still is jealously guarded has important implications for the way that minority rights have been debated in post-independence India. The implications of this preoccupation could be seen most recently in the uproar that resulted over the Shah Bano controversy and the manner in which calls for protection of the Muslim Personal Law were raised from significant sections of the Muslim population. For an extended discussion of the Shah Bano

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controversy, the manner in which the Congress government of the time passed the Muslim Women's Protection of Rights on Divorce Bill in 1986 and how, on the ostensible grounds of protecting minority rights, the government relied almost exclusively on the more conservative opinion of the members of the Muslim Personal Law Board, thereby precluding the voices of Muslim women see Zoya Hasan (1998).

<sup>5</sup> These class differences are extremely marked. Deoband constituting what can be called the religious elite drew upon Muslims who, while being predominantly urban and *ashraf*, were drawn from the lower middle classes and were mainly petit-bourgeois. Hardy has described them as being 'poor rather than rich', 'respectable rather than ruffianly', 'school educated rather than university or college educated' and 'traditionally rather than modern educated'. They were drawn from professions like printers, lithographers, booksellers, skilled craftsmen and petty zamindars. They were literate in the vernacular and able and willing to read the large output of Muslim devotional literature that was published every year (Hardy, 1972: 169). Aligarh on the other hand found its support bases in the more privileged upper classes and upper middle classes. Its most influential supporters were the large zamindars of the powerful landed aristocracy of the Western United Provinces and the English educated upper middle class Muslims who held important positions in the government. The religious and political concerns of the two movements were completely different. For Deoband it was maintaining the purity of the *shariah* and for Aligarh it was preserving the positions of pre-eminence that the Urdu speaking elite of the United Provinces had hitherto enjoyed. It was probably the realisation among the Deobandis that a future Pakistan would be led by Westernised secular Muslims devoid of respect for the Shariah which led them to cast their lot with a Hindu dominated India (Faruqi, 1963).

Having taken into account Aligarh and Deoband as the two most important responses to modernisation and colonisation it would be important to point out that South Asian Islam characterised by its pluralism was to exhibit a variety of responses. Lapidus has contrasted the religious organization of Mughal India with that of the Middle Eastern Empires and has noted that Muslims of the subcontinent as opposed to the Iranian Muslims recognised no single dominant concept of Islam and any single community or religious establishment. Lapidus taking note of this plurality with its profusion of points of doctrine, schools of law, Sufi brotherhoods, teachings of individual *shaykhs*, scholars and saints, feels that it has governed the relation of the Muslim community to the state (Lapidus, 1987:93). Lapidus has identified two responses to European colonialism –the first one coming from the political elites and the newly formed intelligentsia who had received Western education and upon whom the achievements of the West had left a deep and lasting impression. They favoured a modified interpretation of Islam to suit the changing circumstances. The second response came from the tribal leaders and the merchant and commercial farming strata led by the *ulema* and the *Sufis*, who argued for a reorganisation of Muslim communities and the reform of individual behaviour in accordance with fundamental religious principles. Taking note of this distinction that Lapidus has made, Aligarh can be categorised in the first response while Deoband would fit into the second response.

What is striking about the Indian situation is that it was the modern, secular and Westernised leadership provided by the political elites, which was to become the main proponent of a separatism that would ultimately lead to the creation of Pakistan. On the other hand, the orthodox religious leadership provided by the *ulema* was to consistently oppose the creation of such a state on religious grounds, reaffirm its confidence in composite nationalism and remain within the fold of the Congress led National Movement. Lapidus has located the cause for this development in the peculiarities of the Indian situation with its, attendant pluralism. This pluralism was to bring forth a multi-sided response to the colonial rulers and lead to a power struggle within the Muslim community amongst the several Islamic modernist, secularist, nationalist, socialist and Muslim traditional and reforming elites (ibid.: 97, 101).

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Lapidus notes that in societies with a strong heritage of state domination over the ulema, such as the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, the political intelligentsia led the way to national independence without facing any opposition. However in more pluralist societies like in India colonial rule precipitated a multi sided struggle for power. He thus concludes: '...in India the loss of political power, economic dominance and cultural supremacy to English and Christian rulers provoked a multiple Muslim response. From the displaced political elites transformed by modern education into an intelligentsia, came a movement for the formation of a national Muslim state in the subcontinent. From reformist *ulama* milieux came repeated efforts to define the identity of an Indian Muslim population in terms of personal religious values.' (ibid.:101).

<sup>6</sup> The exact size of the Muslim population in Great Britain is estimated to be around 1 million. Two thirds of this population is believed to be of South Asian origin from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. The majority of British Muslims thus follow the two most dominant schools of Islam that are unique to this part of the world –the Deobandi and Barelwi. For a detailed discussion of Islam in Britain and the South Asian influence see Lewis 1994.

<sup>7</sup> The decade of the eighties in Britain witnessed a strong assertion of an Islamic identity. Kepel believes that this assertion forms part of a traditional expression of identity through religion in the Indian subcontinent under British colonial rule and could be seen in the rise in the number of mosques, the greater demands for *halal* meat especially in schools, separate dress codes for the sexes etc. One of the most sustained campaigns of the eighties was the Honeyford affair, which gained national prominence when Ray Honeyford, headmaster of a school in Bradford, wrote an article in the right wing journal *The Salisbury Review* in which he passed disparaging remarks about South Asian children and the cultural practices of their parents which acted as a hindrance to their doing well in school. Kepel argues that glorification of multiculturalism in many ways resembled the communalism of the Empire even though the Labour party may have had the most progressive of intentions. Multiculturalism encouraged the rise of community leaders who acted as intermediaries between their religious and racial kin and the state and strengthened the sense of otherness felt by these communities in their dealings with the outside world (Kepel, 1997: 110). Most of the campaigns of the eighties were conducted at the local level with the help of sympathetic local authorities. These campaigns can be seen as setting the stage for the major Muslim campaign that erupted towards the late eighties –the controversy over the publication of Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses*, which British Muslims considered to be blasphemous. The controversy over this novel is believed by many as having led to a significant questioning of the idea of British national identity (for a discussion on the Rushdie affair see Parekh, 1990; Modood, 1994. On the question of British national identity especially in the context of the decline of Empire see the article by Hugh Kearney in *The Political Quarterly* volume 71, number 1, January- March 2000. The whole issue has been devoted to a consideration of the issue of British national identity).

<sup>8</sup> One commentator on the left has observed in a seminar that in response to the Hindu right one does not have to be necessarily opposed to the issue of a uniform civil code. However what one has to note is that the debate about a uniform civil code has rarely, if ever, reached beyond the level of political rhetoric and that it is today undoubtedly being manipulated and used as an issue with which the minorities, especially the Muslims, can be put further on the defensive. What better evidence for this could one have, the commentator noted, than the fact that no blueprint for a possible future uniform civil code has ever been discussed.

<sup>9</sup> Before the Congress' s Karachi Resolution of 1931 the Lahore Resolution of the Congress of 1929 assured the Muslims and the Sikhs that no solution to the communal question will be acceptable to the Congress that does not fully convince the parties concerned (Ansari, 1998: 113).

## Conclusion

It would perhaps be useful to recapitulate some of the points that this study has made. To begin with, the context of the emergence of multiculturalism it has been argued was the Anglo-American world of the late nineteen seventies. This decade was to witness severe economic crises in the form of the two oil shocks of 1973 and 1978, which were to be followed by the deep economic recession that continued well into the decade of the 80s. All these economic shifts were to lead to the break up of what has been termed the liberal-Keynesian consensus and a consequent shift in the political spectrum to the right. These overall political and economic conditions were to serve as the background against which multiculturalism emerged. The seventies was also a decade which witnessed the revival of the tradition of political theory with the publishing of John Rawls's landmark book *A Theory of Justice*. All later debates in liberal political theory have taken as their central point of reference the conception of liberalism that has been presented in this book.

What is obvious is that multiculturalism, as a liberal theory of minority rights has been influenced by this overall context that has been mentioned above and which has been elaborated upon in the first chapter. One of the most important aspects of multiculturalism, which forms a central focus of this study, and which effectively brings out the manner in which multiculturalism has been influenced by the political and economic conditions that have been prevalent in this period, is the absence in it of a concern for material redistribution. This absence, it is argued, is a direct result of the rise to dominance in this period, of Monetarist economic thinking under the aegis of the new right. The rise of monetarist economic thinking displaced the earlier dominance enjoyed by Keynesian economics. One of the most important consequences of the rise of neo-liberal economic policies under the new right and that was dictated by the new prevailing Monetarist orthodoxy, was the withdrawal of the welfare state. It has



been argued that there exists a strong link between the emergence of multiculturalism and the decline of the liberal welfare state. This link has to do with the way in which ethnic minority groups had organised themselves in the form of pressure groups to extract benefits from the welfare state, which was only too willing to oblige by using ethnic categories to distribute welfare benefits (Glazer and Moynihan, 1976). This relationship between the state and ethnic minority groups was to be disrupted when welfare provisions were withdrawn and consequently the welfare state did not have the kind of resources at its disposal that it earlier had to distribute, especially among members of ethnic minority groups. However the leverage that such groups had attained with respect to the state, was channelised in a different direction, to find expression in the form of multicultural policies that provided for the cultural recognition of ethnic minority groups and providing public space to their cultures. It has for this reason been described as the 'cultural analogue' of the liberal welfare state (Fraser, 1995: 87).

This study has undertaken an analysis of the formative influences that have gone into the shaping of multiculturalism as it is to be found today. These formative influences, it has been argued, are not however confined to the period of the late nineteen seventies, which is the period that is vital to an understanding of the emergence of multiculturalism. As the study looks at the emergence of multiculturalism in the Anglo-American world, it looks at two different influences that have fed into the discourse on multiculturalism. The first is the movement for Black pride that was led by the Black leader Malcolm X in the decade of the nineteen sixties. This movement emphasized the importance of difference through its support of a colour conscious model that mounted a serious challenge to the then dominant colour blind model of equality, upheld by the Civil Rights Movement led by the other Black leader Martin Luther King. The Civil Rights Movement itself has been viewed as setting the stage, as it were, for the later emergence of multiculturalism in the seventies and the eighties. Multiculturalism is thus considered to be a further development in the extension of liberal

principles to hitherto excluded sections of the polity after the Civil Rights Movement.

The other formative influence in the development of multiculturalism is British and stretches back further to the period of the late nineteenth century. This influence arises as a result of the manner in which the British Empire dealt with the many ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural cleavages that it was faced with in the Indian sub-continent. Kymlicka (1995) has already noted in this regard that the dominance of the British Empire was conducive to thinking on the issue of minority rights as the Empire's overseas territories presented a vast profusion of social cleavages. The British rulers of these territories had to contend with these numerous social cleavages and this led to a good deal of serious thinking on the issue of measures to protect different ethnic groups. It is specifically one form of Islam that arose in the latter part of the nineteenth century, as a direct response to the rise of British rule in the subcontinent, which is important to the formation of British multiculturalism in the last two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The form of Islam that is being referred to here is the Deobāndi form. It is important to the later development of British multiculturalism as it was transported to Britain in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the waves of immigration that took place to that country from the Indian sub-continent. Once this form of Islam had been established in Britain, it began to influence, the policy of the British State in much the same manner that it influenced colonial policies in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (see Kepel, 1997).

This study has tried to understand the emergence of multiculturalism in the Anglo-American world, particularly in the context of the large-scale economic transformations of the 1970s, which led to the end of the Fordist-Keynesian 'regime of capitalist accumulation'. It was to be replaced with the advent of a new 'regime of accumulation' termed as post-Fordist and it is in this shift from one regime of accumulation to another that multiculturalism was to emerge.

It has further been argued here that multiculturalism has been theorized in the context of the revival of Anglo-American political theory subsequent to the publication of John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* in 1971. To end the study it will be argued that multiculturalism would greatly benefit if it came under the influence of continental philosophy. This influence would lead to a richer and more rewarding theorization. Perry Anderson has already noted that Britain's crossroads position, its being geographically a part of Europe and linguistically tied to America, has made the importation of continental philosophy like structuralism, hermeneutics, and post-structuralism; and the ideas of Althusser, Gramsci, Adorno, Lacan, and later Bourdieu and Habermas possible (Anderson, 1990: 48). Such a continental influence would be beneficial, as it would be able to bring multiculturalism out of the bland theorization that it has fallen into. Such theorization cannot be relied upon to seriously address the issue of minority disadvantage. To give just one example in present multicultural theory is the manner in which culture has been theorized. Such theorization fails to take into account the influences that advanced capitalism has had on culture. This is particularly important as the period of the emergence of multiculturalism coincides, it has been argued, with a shift in the capitalist accumulation structure. In this regard Habermas's ideas regarding the 'colonization of the life-world' as an outcome of the effects of advanced capitalism provide one with a better understanding of culture and the effects that advanced capitalism has on it (Habermas, 1987). Such a continental influence would then be a good way to move forward in the attempt to reinvigorate multiculturalism, which it has been mentioned earlier has fallen prey to a certain self-laudatory tendency.

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