



DIASPORAS IN INDIA

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MDIE 002: DIASPORAS IN INDIA

Historically India has been a country which has experienced both inward and outward migration. Hence, there are many communities settled in different stages in India. There are communities from Africa, Europe, Central Asia, Persia etc. Some of them came as traders such as Parsis and Armenian, some of them came as soldier, some of them came as refugee. In this course you will learn about their history and current socio-economic issues and challenges. Block 1 discusses the general issues relating to the challenges of pluralism, inclusion/exclusion, issues of citizenship, multiculturalism hence provides a broad theoretical understanding of the various socio-cultural challenges various diasporas faces within India. Block 2 discusses two major phases of the arrival of those diasporas namely pre-colonial phase and colonial phase. Block 3 discusses about the contemporary diaspora formations that happen after India got independence. There are diversities of issues as each of these diasporas have their own political-economy and cultural challenges



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COURSE 8: DIASPORAS IN INDIA

BLOCK 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

UNIT 75 PLURALISM, INCLUSION/ EXCLUSION

Structure

- 75.1 Introduction
- 75.2 Conceptualising Plural society
- 75.3 Pluralism in Practice in India
- 75.4 How diasporas promote a plural society in India
- 75.5 The Case Study of Habshis/ Siddis
- 75.6 The Case Study of Portuguese in Goa
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- 75.12 Check Your Progress- Possible Answers

75.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear Learners,

Pluralism is an interesting concept that includes diverse voices and acknowledges multiple identities and associated cultures of people with their inherent distinctiveness in several countries. Similarly, India has also witnessed the cultural integration of various nationalities over the centuries. Therefore, it will be interesting to learn more about the concept of pluralism with particular reference to different diasporic communities living in India and how their distinctive identities have played a crucial role in establishing a plural society in India.

In this unit, you will be able to:

Learn characteristics of the plural society

Understand the practices of pluralism in India

Comprehend the contribution of diasporas in India

Analyse the integration of diasporas in India

75.2 CONCEPTUALISING PLURAL SOCIETY

Pluralism is a concept encompassing the acceptance, acknowledgement and celebration of diversities. These diversities could be cultural, political, religious, ethnic, philosophical and so forth. According to J.S. Furnivall, plural society may be considered to comprise “two or more elements or social orders which live side by side, yet without mingling, in one political unit” (Rabushka & Shepsle, 1972, p. 10). Similarly, Crowley remarks that pluralism becomes possible in societies through plural acculturation. Such condition of plural acculturation develops from “mutual knowledge in such vital areas as language, folk belief, magic practice, mating and family structure, festivals and music”, which paves the way to the framing of common ground for social unity. In plural acculturation, “persons within each ethnic category retain their own identity yet are familiar with the cultural activities of other groups. Mutual understanding between groups thus prevents the society from fragmenting to the point of dissolution.” (Rabushka & Shepsle, 1972, p. 14). For, “a society is plural if it is culturally diverse and if its cultural sections are organized into cohesive political sections”. (Rabushka & Shepsle, 1972, p. 21).

From a cultural viewpoint, cultural pluralism recognises the importance of culture as the expression of various beliefs, practices and values. It paves the way towards the ethical dimensions associated with diversity. It appreciates the existence of heterogeneity in beliefs, traditions and values in society. Plural society opposes the undue dominance of one culture over another and strives towards the co-existence of various cultures. Multicultural education helps people understand the several ways of life and associated cultural differences. It is based on the premise that conflicts can be sorted out with peace and harmony.

We know that the political structure and political power play a dominant role in the country’s governance. Political parties accommodate diverse interests and provide the voice and representation to various plural identities. Therefore, the role played by political parties also holds importance in ensuring pluralism. Moreover, the country’s constitutional provisions also play a crucial role in accommodating varied differences and diverse voices of citizens. Therefore, the secular fabric of the constitution is essential for the integration of various sections providing space to plural identities.

Therefore, it may be said that diversity of race, language, religion, tribe and customs gets due representation in the plural society. The heterogeneity of society needs to be acknowledged and appreciated so that the diversities of communities can be accommodated without discrimination.

75.3 PLURALISM IN PRACTICE IN INDIA

The historical account proves that India has been a plural society for centuries, becoming the originator of various religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. Additionally, various religious groups from outside the Indian subcontinent have integrated into Indian culture. Some of them include

Christianity, Islam, Jewish and Zoroastrianism. Religious co-existence and the plurality of Indian culture are also depicted in several monuments, including the Taj Mahal in Agra, Gommateshwara in Karnataka, Golden Temple in Amritsar Kashi Vishwanath Temple in Varanasi, Basilica of Bom Jesus in Goa, and Ajanta caves in Aurangabad. Such examples reinforce the religious plurality of India. As per the 2011 census of India, 79.8% Hindus, 14.2% Muslims, 2.3% Christians, 1.7% Sikhs, 0.7% Buddhists, 0.5% tribals, 0.4% Jains, and 0.15% (Bahai, Parsis, Jews) are residing in India. It is indicative of the religious diversity and pluralism in India.

There is a saying in India in Hindi- "*Kos-Kos Par Pani Badle Aur Chaar Kos Par Waani*," implying that after approximately every 1.8 kilometres, we can witness the change of dialect in India. It speaks about India's linguistic pluralism, where local, regional, national and international languages are learnt and spoken. India's educational system ensures the three-language formula across the country, which provides teaching of regional language (regional language), the teaching of Hindi (State language) and English (international language) in schools. It has helped India accommodate group identities, affirming national unity and increasing administrative efficiency. Under the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution, 22 languages have been recognised, officially paving the way to the enrichment and promotion of these languages.

There are numerous castes in India. Caste includes both Varnas and Jati. It is argued that there are four Varnas (Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra) and approx. 3000 Jatis in India. Each caste or community follows its own customs and worships its own God. In addition to the Hindu religion, it has been observed that the caste system exists in Sikh, Islam, and Christians. Jat Sikhs and Majhabi Sikhs are examples of the caste system in the Sikh religion. Hierarchy among Sheikh, Saiyad, Pathan in Islam religion testifies it. Converted Christians in India has retained some elements of the caste system. Indian constitution has been providing reservation to people with socio-economic backwardness, paving the way to their empowerment. Despite all the caste differences, people live in harmony, indicative of pluralistic co-existence in India.

Besides these characteristics mentioned above describing pluralism practised in India, our traditional ethos says "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*," implying that the entire world is one family, providing the cosmopolitan perspective. Constitutional provisions, welfare institutions, inter-state mobility, vibrant civil society, presence of multiple political parties, pilgrimage, economic integration, sports, cinema and the celebration of festivals are some of the binding factors helping India preserve its religious and cultural plurality. Pluralist aspects of Indian society have also helped strengthen secular, liberal and democratic ethos.

75.4 HOW DIASPORAS PROMOTE A PLURAL SOCIETY IN INDIA

Indian has been a destination country for people from all across the globe. Students from many countries come to India for study purposes because English is a language of instruction in higher education. Besides that, an affordable and quality education is also one of the reasons for the attraction of international students to India. The interaction of international students with the Indian community enriches the culture. All diaspora possesses their own distinct

identity, and their presence increases the cultural vibrancy in India. Moreover, the diaspora of various countries has helped build people-to-people connections, thereby enhancing the plural fabric of society.

Diasporas from many countries have helped in establishing a multicultural society in India. Integration of various diasporas in India also testifies to India's accommodating nature and the peaceful environment of the country. Diasporas from multiple countries also diversify cuisine, and hence a variety of foods are available in Indian society. For instance, multicultural cuisine, including Chinese food, Korean food, Tibetan food, Italian food, is widely available in various parts of the country. Diaspora also influences the clothing culture in the host country. For instance, it has been observed that the Portuguese presence in Goa influenced people's clothing style. European clothes with specific codes were made compulsory to reduce gender discrimination prevalent in society. Diaspora also influences thought processes in the host society, which helps develop a deeper understanding of the diverse experiences of the world. It helps people develop a mature, harmonious, and plural sense of the world phenomenon.

75.5 THE CASE STUDY OF HABSHIS/ SIDDIS

The incisive historical account of Africans in India has been provided by (CZEKALSKA & KUCZKIEWICZ-FRAŚ, 2016). According to them, Africans of India have been called by many names over centuries, including Habshi, Kaffir, Sidi, Siddi, Siddhi, Shiddhi, Seydi, Chaush, and in modern times, specifically after 1935, they are known as Negritoes and Proto-Australoids in the academic domain. The first wave of migration took place from Africa to India about 60,000 years ago in which ancestors of Negritoes arrived, and their progenitors may include "the Andamanese and Nicobaris, Kadars, Kanikkars, as well as Muthaiwans, Paniyans, Puliyan and Uralis, who live in the hills of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka". Proto-Australoids are assumed to have arrived in the second wave of migration around 50,000 years ago. This racial group can be traced in India's central and southern region, specifically in hills and forests. They are known as Gond, Khonds, Bhil, Santhal, Bonda, Kola and Munda. It may be argued that over time, members of both groups became primarily tribal people becoming a permanent part of the Indian population.

75.5.1 The Siddis

Siddis were brought from Africa to the Indian subcontinent as slaves primarily in the last five hundred years. It has been observed that Siddis have become naturalised to the Indian way of life and adopted the Indian culture quickly and with ease. The term Sidi was introduced by the British in the 19th century. Africans in Gujarat and Karnataka are known as Sidi, whereas Africans in Andhra Pradesh identify themselves with Yemeni Muslims and hence call themselves Chaush and sometimes as Sidi because of multiple identities. One viewpoint suggests that the Sidi term is derived from Syd implying master or ruler in the Arabic language. This term was used to bestow honour to African Muslims holding high positions under the Deccan kings. Another viewpoint suggests that Siddhi term has originated from Saydi implying captive or prisoner of war in the Arabic language. In contemporary times, Siddis live in coastal Karnataka, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh, most of whom are part of the tribal

population and are considered descendants of slaves brought from East Africa to India. Historical accounts mention that Siddis became powerful warriors and loyal servants and held significant roles in armies and political warfare. However, most of the Indian Siddis are living in poverty in the present times. (CZEKALSKA & KUCZKIEWICZ-FRAŚ, 2016).

75.5.2 The Habshis

The Habshi Dynasty ruled Bengal for six years, indicating Africans' willpower and strength in India over the years. The Habshi Dynasty of Bengal, which started in 1486 and ended in 1493, comprised four rulers over six years. These rulers included Ghiyas ud-din Barbak Shah (1486-1487), Saif ud-din Firuz Shah (1487-1489), Qutb ud-din Mahmud Shah (1489) and Shams ud-din Muzaffar Shah (1490-1493). Historical accounts suggest that new monarch Alauddin Husain expelled Africans from the kingdom of Bengal. After that, Africans sought refuge primarily in Delhi and later on migrated towards the south in Deccan and then westward to Gujarat. Many of them got employment as mercenaries. Habshis have been known for loyalty and powerful physique and hence were deployed as mercenaries in local armies of Deccan. They also worked as concubines, domestic servants and farm labourers. Gradually, their prominence increased, which can be witnessed from the fact that Habshis were appointed as sarlashkars (governors) of 2 out of 8 provinces of Mahur and Gulbarga and received equal representation as royal guards equivalent to Deccanis and Afaqis. Some prominent Habshis include Ikhlash Khan of Bijapur Sultanate, Randaula Khan, Ahang Khan, and Malik Ambar. Presently, minor residues of African tradition are left in India as original African names, language, and culture have been lost over centuries. However, African heritage can be traced in the music, songs, stories and musical instruments. (CZEKALSKA & KUCZKIEWICZ-FRAŚ, 2016).

75.5.3 Present Condition of Siddis/Habshis in India

“The specialist sources contain different data regarding the population of Siddis or Habshis in today’s India, with the highest estimation coming to 55,000 (after the partition, the vast majority of Siddis found themselves on the territories belonging to Pakistan and today it is Pakistan that has the most people of African descent in South Asia). Most of them live in small, provincial communities, in villages and forests of Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh. They are, predominantly, poor and uneducated, mostly Muslims, but also Christians and Hindus. The majority of the Siddi population all over India still remains isolated and economically and socially neglected, even though in recent years they have been registered on the governmental list of Scheduled Tribes. Theoretically, this privileged status provides access to reserved quotas of government jobs, quotas in state schools, bursaries and subsidized housing. However, most Siddis continue to subsist as very poorly paid agricultural and casual labourers or, at times, also as domestic help.” Cited in (CZEKALSKA & KUCZKIEWICZ-FRAŚ, 2016, pp. 209-210).

Check Your Progress 1

- Note:
- a) Write your answers in about 60 words.
 - b) Check your answer with possible answers given at the end of the

unit.

1. What do you mean by plural society?
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2. How diaspora helps in sustaining the practising of pluralism in India?
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3. Discuss the historical and contemporary identities of Habshis/ Siddis in India.
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75.6 THE CASE STUDY OF PORTUGUESE IN GOA

In the late 15th century, Vasco da Gama discovered the new sea route between Europe and India, paving the way for direct Indo-European trade. Vasco da Gama was a Portuguese sailor sponsored by the king of Portugal named Manuel I for reaching India, which was well-known for producing spices and controlling trade routes. The establishment of the first trading centre at Kollam in Kerala in 1502 marked the beginning of the Portuguese colonial era. In 1530, the Portuguese capital was shifted from Calicut to Goa. Under colonial rule, Goa was given the status of “Vice Kingdom” by Portugal, providing the same citizenship rights to people of Goa equivalent to the Portuguese in Europe. Consequently, it developed deep-rooted historical, cultural and social relationships between Goa and Portugal, which had a commercial and power-based relationship. (Chanda & Ghosh, 2012, pp. 1-2).

75.6.1 Magnificence of Goa

Describing the significance of Goa, 17th Century French traveller Francois Pyrard remarked that “Whoever has been in Goa may say that he has seen the choicest rarities of India, for it is the most famous and celebrated city, on account of its commercial intercourse with people of all nationalities of the East who bring there the products of their respective countries, articles of merchandize, necessaries of life and other commodities in great abundance because every year more than a thousand ships touch there laden with cargo’ ‘as for the multitude of people, it is a marvel to see the number which come and go every day by sea and land on business of every kind. One would say that a fair was being held every day for the sale of all sorts of merchandise.” (Government of Goa, n.d.)

A significant Portuguese community settled in Goa which remained the Portuguese colony from 1510 to 1961. Portuguese used to call Goa with several names, including Golden Goa, the El Dorado, the Rome of the East. During this colonial period, Portuguese remained the official language in Goa. In 1961, the Indian army was commanded to take over Goa, marking the end of the colonial regime of Portugal in Goa. It remained the union territory of Goa, Daman & Diu till 1987. In 1987, Goa became a full-fledged state of India. At present times, the Konkani language is widely spoken in Goa. It has been observed that the Portuguese language has been declining over the years in Goa, and out of the 1.6 million population, only 8,000 people approximately speak Portuguese.

75.6.2 Portugal Influence in Goa

“Goan architect Lucio Miranda strongly believes that the Portuguese culture has greatly impacted the culture of Goa. One can find the influence in the Konkani language they speak which has many Portuguese words. The people are also observed to be more sophisticated and liberal in mannerism and opinion, that is quite different from the rest of India. It was the first place in the East that met West in its purest form. The Goan scholars were introduced to the European philosophy that changed their overall take on life. The Portuguese culture impacted various streams in Goa – art, architecture, culture, food, ethnicity, music, and literature, etc. Many objects with Portuguese elements are still seen in Goan churches and convents – the huge structures, dome-shaped windows, arches, tilted roofs and verandahs are decorative and expressive. The European style bungalows have wrought-iron balconies and inner courtyards. In regard to the colors used – only churches and chapels were painted white as this is the color related to purity and sanctity, no private house could be painted white. Not only the Goan Christians but the Goan Hindus also followed this rule. Western Education reformed the thinking process of the Goans, they understood the scientific aspects of Latin impeccably. In fact, the first printing press in India was brought by the Portuguese. It initiated the migration of Goans to different places in the world since cross cultural exchanges became easy. The transfer of ideas, technology, and good was feasible at all ends. Eating habits were also impacted; beef and pork became an integral part of their daily meal. People also started wearing European clothes, and codes were made mandatory to diminish gender discrimination. Goans also learned to play western instruments and opted for music professionally. Thus, Goa is unique in various fields and we can say that Goa is a perfect imagery of a city of Portugal with some Eastern influencez;lmbktjpf.” (Realty Myths, 2017).

75.7 THE CASE STUDY OF PARSIS IN INDIA

The insightful account of Parsis in India by (Hinnells, 2008, pp. 255-262) covers various dimensions, providing several examples that show that Parsis’ influence has not declined in 20th century India. Integration of Parsis in India can be assessed through the representation of the Parsi population in various professions. In the armed forces, almost 39 Parsis have achieved high military ranks over the years. One of the most famous names in India is Field Marshal Sam Maneckshaw, who fought against the Japanese in the II World War and led the Indian army in the war against Pakistan in 1971. More examples of Parsi’s representation at high posts include Aspi Engineer as the Air Chief Marshal in 1960 and Jal Cursetji as Naval Chief of Staff in 1976.

In the law profession as well, the prominence of Parsis can be witnessed. Soli Sorabji became India's Attorney General from 1989 to 1990 and 1998 to 2004. He received Padma Vibhushan in 2004 to protect human rights and defend freedom of expression. Tehmtan Andhyarujina became the Solicitor-General from 1996 to 1998. Bombay High court witnessed the presence of 19 Parsi judges over the years. As far as industries are concerned, two prominent names emerge- Tata Companies and Godrej. Tata company was founded by Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata, starting from textile to reaching the steel industry in Jamshedpur. J.R.D. Tata (cousin of Jamsetji) became the company's Director in 1926 and then Chairman in 1938. In addition to many charitable works, he diversified the company in several sectors, including automobile manufacturing and chemicals. Ardashir Godrej established Godrej firm in 1897 to make padlocks. The firm got diversified in many sectors, including making highly secured safes; soap-making from vegetable oil challenging the western model of using animal fat; canning, steel cupboards, typewriters, fridges and engines earmarked for the Indian space programme. Godrej company is also involved in various charitable works for the welfare of all communities.

The participation of Parsis can be seen in Cricket. In 1911, there were seven Parsis in the all-India cricket team that went to England. There were four Parsis in the Indian team when the first official test match between England and India. Some prominent names include Polly Umrigar and Farokh Engineer, who played 59 and 46 test matches, respectively. In the realm of music, Zubin Mehta and Freddie Mercury are famous. Famous novelists include Rohinton Mistry and Bapsi Sidhwa. In the field of Science, the contribution of Homi Bhabha has been incredible. Bhabha persuaded J.R.D. Tata to invest in Sciences and establish the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. He also persuaded Nehru to pass the Atomic Energy Act in 1948, which paved the way for establishing the Atomic Energy Commission. (Hinnells, 2008).

As per the 2011 Indian census, 57, 264 Parsis live in India. A high literacy rate has been observed among the community. However, the Parsis population of India is in decline due to the slow birth rate and migration. It may be argued that Parsis, who migrated from Iran to India, have successfully integrated into India and has shown commitment towards the Indian progress through their contribution in several fields.

75.8 INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION DEBATE

As per an academic study, it has been found that patriotism does not play a significant role in the development of attitudes either towards immigrants or towards the immigration process. However, nationalism has primarily led to the development of negative emotions and attitudes towards immigrants and the immigration process. As far as internationalism is concerned, it usually plays a strong and positive role in developing attitudes towards immigrants and the immigration process. Therefore, it may be said that national attachment as such does not create negative attitudes towards immigrants. However, when the national attachment takes the form of nationalism, it starts developing a negative attitude toward immigrants. (Esses, Dovidio, F., Semanya, & Jackson, 2005, p. 326).

One crucial way to understand the inclusion or exclusion of citizens in the

country's polity is to measure to what extent their voices are being listened to in the public-policy processes. Additionally, one can also look at dimensions associated with their eligibility prospects for specific assistance and programmes. However, there is one more substantive way to comprehend the inclusion of citizens. In addition to the governmental agencies, the response of non-governmental agencies like religious organisations, philanthropic societies, schools, parents, medical associations towards the specific community can provide deeper insights in understanding the inclusion or exclusion in the real sense. (Sullivan & Strach, 2011, p. 104).

The politics of citizenship is witnessed when citizens are being distinguished because of their specific status. The scenario should be to assure equality by ensuring that everyone receives an equal chance or entitlement to accomplish the work. (Sullivan & Strach, 2011, p. 105).

It has been witnessed that host states often deny refugees their basic rights, thereby abdicating responsibilities towards international organisations like United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Lack of citizenship in host states render refugees incapacitated to speak for political rights and the right to be heard. In addition to “the inability of refugees to claim their other rights in the host society, including freedom to movement”, those who do not receive ‘refugee’ or ‘displaced person’ status become more vulnerable due to “limited and disadvantaged access to jobs, lack of access to education for children, lack of access to health services”. (Mehta & Napier-Moore, 2010, pp. 234-236).

The conventional notion of citizenship is being challenged by refugees to claim the political space, thereby attempting to break the formal and conventional triad of the state-nation-territory triad. People with multiple citizenship and split lives have also challenged the traditional dimensions associated with citizenship, inclusion and belonging. (Mehta & Napier-Moore, 2010, pp. 236-237). Newer and more inclusive definitions of citizenship are being conceptualised, including external citizenship, multi-layered or multiple citizenship, territorially defined or deterritorialising citizenship, denationalised citizenship and global citizenship. In the absence of state initiatives and positive response, displaced people are attempting to self-realize rights or “looking beyond the host state as the sole duty bearer”, thereby “creating lived multiple and multilayered citizenship experiences, beyond or beneath the state” (Mehta & Napier-Moore, 2010, p. 246).

According to (Mehta & Napier-Moore, 2010), achieving global citizenship is hard to achieve shortly, but it does not mean that this normative project should be stopped. It is evident that the current paradigm of the nation-state is clearly failing to address the issues associated with displacement. Therefore, there is a need to keep challenging conservative notions of citizenship. For refugees and non-citizens, challenges to attaining global citizenship include insufficient knowledge and access to accountability mechanisms. Moreover, corruption, excessive bureaucratisation, and weak enforcement by global institutions also pose challenges. However, despite all challenges, the conception of “global citizenship would be based on membership of a global political institution, and the dilution of sovereignty could provide a positive stimulus for enhanced civic engagement”. (Mehta & Napier-Moore, 2010, pp. 248-249). It is necessary for

providing inclusion and belonging to the vulnerable and powerless sections of society who are finding it challenging to attain substantive citizenship rights.

Global Citizenship

“A historical look at ‘global citizenship’ includes Nansen passports, internationally recognized identity cards first issued by the League of Nations to stateless refugees. They were designed in 1922 by Fridtjof Nansen, and fifty-two countries were honouring them by 1942. The first refugee travel documents, these passports are today recognized as one of the greatest achievements of the League of Nations. The World Service Authority, a non-profit organization that promotes ‘world citizenship’, issues a ‘World Passport’ (purportedly under the authority of Article 13, Section 1 of the UDHR) with the de facto acceptance of 170 countries that offer stamped visas, of which six countries – Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Mauritania, Tanzania, Togo and Zambia – recognize it de jure”. (Mehta & Napier-Moore, 2010, pp. 246-247).

After doing a research study on six countries, Diane Sainsbury (Sainsbury, 2012, pp. 138-142) concludes that primarily five analytical components determine the extension of rights by countries, thereby indicating the politics of inclusion and exclusion for immigrants:

1. **Issue Framing:** Both problem construction and justification are part of the framing, which play a crucial role in the policy process. Framing determines the specific authority for resolving the issue and devising solutions. For instance, if immigrant policies are formulated to promote the social or economic integration of immigrants, the ministry of social affairs or the ministry of labour would be the main policy venue. On the other side, if immigrants’ cultural integration is the government’s objective, then the main policy venue could be the ministry of culture.
2. **Institutional Arrangements, Policy Venues and Policy Coalitions:** Policy venues may be defined as the “institutional locations where authoritative decisions are made concerning a given issue.” Each policy venue possesses its own distinctiveness in terms of priorities, rules and actors. For instance, legislative venues prioritise compromise, negotiation and reciprocity, whereas bureaucratic venues prioritise impartiality, rational procedures and expertise. There has been a viewpoint that suggests that crucial features like insulation from public view and pressure have facilitated bureaucratic and judicial venues to grant rights to the immigrant community, thereby making these institutions favourable in comparison to other institutions.
3. **Territorial Dimension:** There are two components involved in the territorial dimension. Firstly, “the distribution of powers and responsibilities between the levels of government and its relationship to social and immigrant policies”. It is important as both unitary and federal countries can provide different opportunity structures to supporters and opposers of immigrant rights. Secondly, “the pattern of immigrant settlement and the degree of immigrant concentration”. One viewpoint argues that decisions made at local levels or under decentralised units often go against the social rights for the welfare of immigrants and minorities. More insights may be gained through the argument that “concentration over resources in localities with high concentrations of immigrants can alter the calculus of immigration

policy leading to a restrictive rather than an expansive policy”.

4. **Political Parties:** Political parties play a crucial role in three significant ways. Firstly, they play a significant role in the framing of issues and policies associated with immigrants. Political parties influence the voters’ perception and public opinion. Secondly, Political parties’ main objective is to win the election and maximise votes and can become the crucial source in bringing policy change. Thirdly, Political parties play a significant role in the formulation of policies. The “partisan composition of government, the degree of fragmentation of the party system, and the structure of party competition” holds immense significance in understanding the welfare policies associated with inclusion aspects earmarked for immigrants. For instance, one view suggests that centre-right parties usually take restrictive positions on immigration and integration, continuing their traditional stance on issues like national security, law and order, and low tax.

5. **Nature of Immigrant Organizing and Penetration of Policy Process:** There has been much emphasis on the discourse that immigrants are minorities and they lack political rights with fewer resources in comparison to the majority populations. Such discourse limits our understanding just to focus on ethnic mobilisation and claim perspectives. However, there is a need to understand the “politics of presence” so that actors in representative politics can be focused upon. In addition to the focus on elected positions, there is also the need to emphasise towards appointed posts, including experts and members as part of government enquiry commissions and various positions in the central government and state administration. Ultimately, the analysis should include examining the penetration of immigrants in the policy process and the potential impact of policies after the participation of immigrants.

Check Your Progress 2

1. Assess the influence of the Portuguese diaspora in India.
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2. How do you perceive the role of Parsis in India?
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3. What do you understand by the inclusion and exclusion debate?
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75.9 LET US SUM UP

In the initial section of the unit, we have conceptualised the idea of plural society from multiple viewpoints. After that, we understood the practising dimensions associated with pluralism in India. Then we comprehended the diasporic role in promoting a plural society in India. Subsequently, three case studies of Habshis/Siddis, Portuguese and Parsis diaspora in India have been discussed to understand the historical and contemporary dimensions relating to their identity with specific respect to inclusion and exclusion. In the end, an attempt has been made to study the debates about inclusion and exclusion.

75.10 KEY WORDS

Patriotism: It may be defined as the affective attachment to one's nation.

Nationalism: The belief in the superiority of one's nation compared to other nations may be defined as nationalism. It also includes the crucial dimension relating to belief in the importance of promoting the welfare of one's nation above all others.

Internationalism: It may be described as a concern for global welfare. Internationalism specifically relates to the identification of oneself with a world community.

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Pluralism, Inclusion/
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75.12 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS- POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

Answer 1: In the plural society, persons within each ethnic category retain their own identity yet are familiar with the cultural activities of other groups. Mutual understanding between groups thus prevents society from fragmenting to the point of dissolution. Pluralism recognises the importance of culture as the expression of various beliefs, practices and values. It paves the way towards the ethical dimensions associated with diversity. It appreciates the existence of heterogeneity in beliefs, traditions and values in society. Plural society appreciates the mutual knowledge in such vital in many areas to ensure social unity.

Answer 2: Diaspora of various countries has been contributing to ensuring pluralism in India through multiple ways. Diaspora has brought their own distinct identities with them ensuring the multicultural society in India. Various ideas, values, cuisine, clothing and music from diverse countries have assimilated into Indian culture. Such diverse interactions enable people-to-people connections and help in establishing cosmopolitan values.

Answer 3: Habshis/ Siddis is the name of African communities that migrated to India over centuries due to various reasons, including slavery. They have got integrated into Indian society, and many of them reached the highest positions in the military due to their muscular physique and courageous attitude. However, in the present times, it has been seen that most of them are living in villages and forests. Many of them are considered in the official Scheduled Tribe category and primarily engaged as farmers, casual labourers and domestic help. It indicates that most of them are living in poverty.

Check Your Progress 2

Answer 1: Portuguese community in India is mainly living in Goa that was once under the colonial rule of Portugal. The influence of the Portuguese in Goa is visible in the culture of Goa. Konkani language uses many Portuguese words. Portuguese have influenced art, architecture, culture, food, ethnicity, music, and literature among others. The clothing pattern of residents of Goa has also been influenced in some ways. Therefore, it may be said that the presence of the Portuguese community in India has contributed to ensuring a pluralistic society.

Answer 2: Parsis follow the Zoroastrianism religion, who migrated from Iran to India. Parsi community is highly integrated in India and has a high literacy rate. Parsis have contributed immensely to the development of India in almost all fields. Some prominent Parsi names include Dadabhai Naoroji (political economy), Homi J. Bhabha (science), J.R.D. Tata and Ardashir Godrej (industry), Sam Manekshaw (Military) and Farokh Engineer (Cricket) among others in several fields. It can be said that Parsis have contributed significantly in almost all fields, thereby facilitating plural society in India.

Answer 3: The inclusion and exclusion debate mainly cover the issue to claim the citizenship of immigrants in the host country. It covers the procedural and substantive dimensions of inclusion, exclusion and belonging. The politics of inclusion and exclusion are based on critical components, including issue framing, institutional arrangements, territorial dimensions, political parties and immigrants' access in the policy process. It helps to understand how the diaspora has been integrated into the host country.



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UNIT 76 MINORITY, CITIZENSHIP AND MULTICULTURALISM

- 76.1 Learning Objectives
- 76.2 Introduction
- 76.3 Defining diaspora as minority
- 76.4 Features of diaspora minority communities
- 76.5 The role of migration in minority diaspora formation
- 76.6 Defining citizenship
- 76.7 Nature, form and types of citizenship
- 76.8 Extension of Citizenship: Dual Nationality/ Dual Citizenship/ Transnational Citizenship
- 76.9 Multiculturalism
- 76.10 Integration and assimilation of minorities in a multicultural societies
- 76.11 Multiculturalism in a transnational space
- 76.12 Let us sum up

76.1 OBJECTIVES

This Unit will attempt to explain the conceptual framework of key terms like minority, citizenship and multiculturalism and hope that after you have gone through it, you will be able to

1. Understand the key terms like minority, citizenship and multiculturalism
2. The Role of migration diaspora community formation
3. The need and the role of citizenship in their lives
4. The concept of dual nationality/citizenship
5. The relationship between multiculturalism and diaspora and
6. Multiculturalism, as a sustainable human co-habitation?

76.2 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding Units, we discussed some of the conceptual framework on diaspora formation and their residential and political rights along with the attempts of the host countries to assimilate and integrate them in the mainstream. As we learnt, individuals or group of people when they migrate from one place to another, they tend to form a community of their own and start living as a cohort in an enclave. They tend to segregate and differentiate themselves from the rest of the people or majority group, thus leading to both geographical and psychological distancing. This is often done for a communal feeling of security, safety and intra-community bonhomie.

When such a group lives longer in a given geographical area for a considerable period of them, they tend to form a diasporic group. These diasporic groups henceforth tend to differentiate themselves on the basis of race, culture, language, and profession and are akin to inbreeding pattern of some societies. Such a group also poses a challenge to the host country's governments as they are considered an 'outsider' and beyond the preview of political control of the host country. This is so because some of the co-habitants continue to hold the citizenship of their country of origin. When these groups of people live in the host country for a longer period of time they are naturalized and become the citizens of the host countries.

In the modern democracies there are deliberate attempt to either integrate or assimilate these diasporic minority groups with the native majority. It is based on the principle of multiculturalism which treats all humans as equal and does not discriminate them based on race, caste, religion, gender or nationality. Multiculturalism believes that people from diverse background and ethnicity can co-habit a place peacefully and work towards the development of a just and democratic society. So, in a way, one sees that all the three concepts - minority, citizenship and multiculturalism are correlated and have a bearing on each other.

76.3 DEFINING DIASPORA AS MINORITY

All diasporas, whether it's ethnic, religious, colonial or professionals are minority in origin. The process of migration and diaspora formation are demographic phenomenon and by virtue of its own definition enjoy a minority status. In fact, minority is understood to be a group of people, united under a common ethnicity, religion or language, which is "numerically inferior to the rest of the population" and constitute minority (Capotorti, 1991: 96). It has nonetheless been contested that minority-majority are binary categorization and was created by colonial narrative in most of the under-developed and developing countries. Sometimes, the very concept of minority is contested on the ground whether it is self-imposed or imposed by the outside forces.

As mentioned, the labeling of minority status to a group of people is the result of demographic movement. Had people lived at the same place from time immemorial, sharing the same language, culture and religion, there would neither be a minority nor a diaspora formation. According to one estimate, 10 to 20 per cent of the world's population, numbering between 600 million and 1.2 billion, live under minority status and are categorized based on ethnicity, religious beliefs and linguistic differentiation. These minority groups need special protection to survive and flourish in a majoritarian state. It was for this reason that the United Nations Declaration on Minorities under Article 3 on December 18, 1992 came out with special measures to safeguard the rights of such individuals and communities. It was expected that the States within their territories would defend the national, ethnic, cultural, and religious and linguistic rights of minority groups and would create conditions to promote and safeguard their identities.

76.4 FEATURES OF DIASPORA MINORITY COMMUNITIES

Conceptually speaking, the safety and security of minority groups in multicultural

society rest on the principles of protection of the existence, non-exclusion, non-discrimination and non assimilation. To allow the minority groups to retain their individuality, it is stipulated that they should not be forced, as part of policy, to assimilate with the rest of the majority group, thereby losing their individuality. Instead, they should be integrated with the majority group under a common law, thereby allowing them the freedom to exercise their cultural, linguistic and religious uniqueness. Integration allows the existence of a pluralistic society, thus allowing the minority groups to retain its individual identity. In India, Siddis or Habshis and Parsis are good examples of diaspora communities fully assimilated and integrated in Indian culture with full citizenship rights to them (Case Studies I, II)

Case Study I: Siddis or Habshis - A community fully acculturated and assimilated

Siddis/Sidis/Sidi Badshahs or Habshis are ethnic, tribal people of Afro-Indian origin settled and assimilated in Indian culture. They live in coastal Karnataka, Gujarat, and in some parts of Andhra Pradesh. A large number of them are Muslims; while there have been recent convert to Christianity as well. Their antiquity dates back to centuries and bear the testimony of the rich maritime trade India once had with African countries. Genetically, they are aligned to the DNA of Bantu tribe of Africa and were brought as slaves, soldiers, labourers and merchants. They have inherited ancestry from Africans, Indians, and the Portuguese, who brought them in large number as slaves to India. They are also called Habshis, a term which is of Abyssian (Ethiopia) origin. The total population of Siddi's in India is estimated to be around 8, 50,000.

A large number of Siddis reside in coastal Gujarat, especially in Junagadh, Jamnagar, Rajkot, Surendranagar, Bhavnagar and Amreli. They are economically and socially marginalised community. As a result of hundred years of living in the region, they have been assimilated and become part of Gujarati cultural landscape. In order to empower and make them mainstreamed, both state and union governments have included them in the Scheduled Tribes list. At some other places, where they have been excluded, their community leaders have been demanding for inclusion in the Scheduled Tribes list.

In a transnational and multicultural society in which people are constantly moving, the States have been facing severe challenges to recognize the rights of minorities, especially in some of the liberal democracies. There have been demand to accommodate the differences of culturally different and marginalized communities. As part of democratic representation, they are extended 'reservation' for the preservation of their identity. This becomes possible only after a community is recognized minority by the States. Understandably, this has spiraled into the 'politics of recognition' in some of the countries. Such political and social recognition to minority are often hotly contested by the native majoritarian communities who feel that their rights and resources have either been liquidated or shared. This has been noticed in some of the European countries where natives have been seen protesting against their social welfare assets being shared.

In fact, the native right-wing ideology has been one of the reasons for a shift

in the global geopolitics in recent years. Such perception is not unfounded as during the time of inter-ethnic rivalries, the minority diaspora groups are seen actively participating to serve its own interest or of their home country. This was witnessed in the insurrectionist movements in Nagorno-Karabakh, Israel, Palestine, Kosovo, Ethiopia and Kashmir. Such a minority group is known to have stirred and sustained unrest in some of these places. But there is also a positive side of the diaspora activism as they help in the resolution and restoration of peace in conflict zones. This was seen among the Eritrean and Sri Lanka diaspora. The orientation of such a group however depends whether they are ethnic-parochial or cosmopolitan in its approach. Their racial and cultural conceptualization tends to shape their social and political behaviour. It has also been observed that some of the minority diaspora, over a period of time, transformed themselves and undergo metamorphosis in identity reaffirmation. This was noticed among the Turkish migrants who, over a period, became Kurdish diaspora, thus leading to change in their identity.

Another feature of minority diaspora is the existence and perpetuation of the myth of 'model minority', which has been noticed among Indian immigrants in the US. It is assumed that they are homogenous mass of people who are highly educated, IT savvy and proficient in English language with higher per capita income than the rest of the American population. Contrary to this, there is another group of Indian diaspora within the US, whose migration pattern and settlement has been responsible in their marginalization within the same ethnic group. This has led to creation of a minority within the minorities who are less educated and have lower occupational status (Sharma 2010, Scop and Altman 2006).

76.5 ROLE OF MIGRATION IN MINORITY DIASPORA FORMATION

As mentioned earlier, migration is the predominant factor in the formation of diaspora and their identity affirmation as minorities. The phenomenon of such a demographic formation is slow and protracted, sometimes extending to decades and centuries. Sometimes, because of their numerical strength, over the course of time, they undergo change in their status as was evident in the migration of indentured labourers from India. In almost all countries, except Mauritius and some other countries, people of Indian origin live under minority status. For example they are 2.3% of total population in the UK, 4.5% in Canada, 1% in the US. In some countries their number is relatively high. As in the Netherlands 14%, South Africa 17%, Surinam 40%, Guyana 38%, Mauritius 70%, Reunion (France) 24% and Fiji 35%.

While observing some other global diasporas, it has been seen that they dominate in numerical strength in a particular geographical region by forming ethnic enclaves. Historically, Jews migrated over a period of 2500 years to various countries because they were exiled not only from the place of their origin, but also from countries where they went to settle down. Now, there are more Jews living outside Israel, their mythical and reimagined homeland. While Israel is home to 30% of the Jews global population, the US has 51%, France, Canada and Russia (3% each), the UK has 2% and Argentina, Germany, Hungary, Ukraine and Australia have 1% each.

As mentioned in the earlier chapters, Jews diaspora is an arch-type example of living in minority. It was also the reason that they were discriminated against and were victimized during the course of history. It is because of their minority status that they felt the need of a separate homeland and also as a means to safeguard their freedom. Because of racial and political discrimination, they were barred from political participation in various countries. Despite living for decades and in some countries for centuries, they were granted citizenship rights much later. The US granted them citizenship in 1789, France in 1791, and other European countries in the late 18th century. Russia granted them citizenship rights as late as 1917.

Like the Jews diaspora, the Black diaspora too have been victim of deprivation and slavery because of their minority status. According to one estimate, the numbers of people of African descent in Europe are 3.51 million, North America (39.16 million), Latin America (112.65 million), and the Caribbean (13.56 million). Although their numerical strength is sizeable, they have continued to be discriminated and were deprived of political rights in most of the country.

76.6 DEFINING CITIZENSHIP

While discrimination and deprivation of political rights has been a common feature of most diaspora in the initial years of its formation, the birth of liberal democracies has seen a progressive recognition of their rights. But before we delve into its finer points, let's discuss the conceptual framework on which the idea of citizenship based and how it historically evolved over the period. In its most rudimentary form, citizenry is quite akin to tribal communal living where affinity and loyalty forms the crux of the association. A member of a tribal community is expected to perform certain services for the betterment of the community and be loyal to its ethos. They are expected to respect and perform certain rituals, symbols, follow norms and customs and swear to live by it. In its modern form, these symbols of affinity can be seen in the artifacts of national anthem, national flag, and other nationalistic icons.

During the Graceo-Roman civilization, the tribal affinity, as a form of citizenry, was extended to much larger geographical and demographic areas. It was soon followed by written norms, a precursor to the present-day Constitution. These norms included rights, privileges and duties of citizens towards the territorial sovereignty. It was responsible in forming the basic principles of polity, especially during war and conquest and aggression. These norms took the shape of conventions, practices and laws which were codified. But it was the French Revolution which strengthened the territorial nation-state. It was based on two kinds of citizenry - the Insider and the Outsider. While the Insider was the member of the territorial community, the Outsider was a foreigner or a stranger who was not to be trusted. The binary seems to exist even now, in the form of natives and immigrants and diaspora, with the latter being looked upon less-favourably on some of the countries.

It should be noted that the modern concept of citizenship and diaspora are quite in contrast to each other. While citizenship is a territorialized and immobile concept, migration and diaspora are mobile and de-territorialized phenomena. Migration thwarts homogenization and exclusion of social, cultural, political and economic categorization. While citizenship binds people, mobility frees

them from the boundedness and makes them responsible towards multiple belonging. It also stands in quite contrast to the nation-state rhetoric of ‘purity’ ‘ethnicity’ and loyalty to nationalism. It is the territorialized citizenship that has been responsible in differential categorization of ‘we’ and ‘otherness’.

Citizenship is territorial belongingness whereby a person is a part of sovereign state and carries with him/her certain duties and obligation towards the State. A citizen is a statutory status whereby he/she draws rights from the Constitution of the state and identifies himself/herself as the part of the State. Citizenship of some States can be acquired while in most cases, it is inherited by virtue of belonging or an ancestral lineage. The State, especially liberal democracies, on its part, is expected to provide security and some inalienable rights to its citizen which include freedom of religion, livelihood and expression. It is also considered contributory rights because citizens have to contribute to the welfare of the state. But citizenship is also known to alienate and assimilate as much as it ostracizes and equalizes a group of people, whether they are migrants or the diaspora. It is as much inclusive as exclusive in its disposition. The Rohingya Muslims refugees and Tibetan refugees in India offer good example of an exclusive and inclusive processes respectively and the changes in the citizenship laws (Case Studies III, IV and V).

Case Study III: Rohingyas - A Stateless People

Rohingyas Muslims are a minority community in Myanmar who have been living there since centuries. Of the 54 million people in Myanmar about 1.3 million are Rohingya Muslims. After a military crackdown following the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army’s attack on Myanmar’s military posts, over a million Rohingya Muslims fled to Bangladesh, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia. They were also made stateless as a result of a 1982 citizenship law in Myanmar which deprived them of their citizenship rights. As they were no longer citizens of Myanmar, they were not issued passport that could help them to migrate to another country legally.

Rohingyas in Myanmar have been described by the United Nations as “the most persecuted minority in the world.” According to an estimate, there are some 40,000 Rohingyas in different parts of India as refugees and some 300 to 500 are in jails because of their illegal status. In India, they were convicted under the Foreigner’s Act and detained at Assam’s Silchar detention center since 2012 for illegal entry into the country.

The new law enacted by India in 2019 called Citizenship Amendment Act does not grant citizenship to Muslim asylum-seekers. As a result, the Government of India is making an attempt to deport them to Myanmar. The CAA is also applicable in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir which holds a sizable Rohingya population. As India is not a signatory to the Refugee Convention, 1951 and 1967 Refugee Protocol, it does not recognise the Refugee Cards issued by the UNHCR.

Case Study IV: Tibetan Refugees – India as Second Homeland

Most Tibetan refugees arrived in India after the failed revolt against the Chinese rule in March 1959. The event led to the flight of the Dalai Lama and around 8000 Tibetans who sought refuge in India and other neighbouring South Asian countries. Out of the total Tibetan diasporic community of 128,944 worldwide, around 94,203 are based in India. According to Central Tibetan Authority (CTA) survey, there are some 127,935 Tibetans registered in the diaspora. Out of which 94,203 are in India; 13,514 in Nepal; 1,298 in Bhutan and 18,920 in other countries. In India, they were housed in 53 settlements across various parts of the country. The Tibetan diasporic communities all over the world regard India as their 'second homeland'.

Tibetans who arrived in India were given Identity Certificates which grant them all rights as Indian citizens except the right to vote and right to government employment. They are incidentally recognised as 'foreigners' and not as refugees. As a result, they cannot own any property, neither can they apply for government jobs. After 2014, only qualified professionals from among the Tibetan refugees were permitted to take jobs in private and non-government sectors.

Indian Citizenship Act (Amendment) of 1986 allowed for the grant of Indian citizenship to anyone born in India between January 26, 1950, and July 1, 1987. The amendment made a large section of the second and third generation Tibetan refugees eligible for Indian citizenship. However, the government of India listed the following four conditions for Tibetans seeking Indian citizenship: 1) they are required to get their Registration Certificate (RC) and Identity Certificate cancelled; 2) they should not be staying in designated Tibetan refugee settlements; 3) they should submit an undertaking that they no longer enjoy the benefits offered by the Tibetan government-in-exile; and, 4) they should submit a declaration that they no longer enjoy any privileges, including subsidies.

Although the clauses of obtaining Indian citizenship rights are hotly contested, but unlike many other refugee-hosting countries, India did not adopt the policy of integrating Tibetans into mainstream Indian society. Rather, it facilitated the preservation and promotion of their distinctive culture, tradition and identity by setting up separate Tibetan settlements in various parts of the country. India established separate schools for the Tibetan children and allowed the functioning of the Tibetan government-in-exile to manage their affairs.

Some of the countries allowing dual citizenship are those who, as part of policy, began to engage its diaspora. There were various reasons for this. In some cases remittances were the main reasons as it played a critical role in the host country's economy. In countries like Mexico, political diaspora is an integral part as it not only sends remittances but also finances political parties. It is for this reason, it is said, that no Mexico political party can afford to ignore its diaspora. In fact, many of these parties try to win over its expatriates and offer them lucrative deals in terms of investment and other rights.

The concept of citizenship has been undergoing major change, especially in the 21st century which is characterized with mass mobility and transmigration of capital, goods and services and off-shore manufacturing and technology. As a result, citizenship is no longer a monolithic or homogenous legal status and varies from country to country. The expansion of citizenship to include denizens, quasi-citizenship and dual citizenship are some of the examples which have found new proponents in many multicultural democratic societies. The relationship between the citizenship and the diaspora has, in the past, resulted into 'breached diaspora' as was witnessed after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. There were people who were left outside the borders of their titular states. As a consequence of this there was a deliberate attempt by Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan to reconnect with its people as a measure of nationalistic sentiments.

Kazakhstan, as a measure of policy, made an attempt to exhort its diaspora to return to the country to balance the demographic disadvantage. But once such a balance was achieved with the returns of Kazakhs, the country turned lukewarm towards its diaspora. Offering citizenship to its diaspora, it seems to work as carrot and stick for the home country. It also explicitly showed that just as diaspora use home country for the vested interested, likewise the home country use them for its own advantages. A similar case of breached diaspora was witnessed with the dismemberment of British colonial India as Indian indentured labours in Malaya, Burma, Sri Lanka and Fiji were left stateless. The problem had become more acute for Tamil Indians in Sri Lanka who had gone there as labourers. With the passage of Citizenship law by Sri Lanka, some 900,000 Indian Tamils were disenfranchised. It was only as late as 2003 when Sri Lanka passed the Grant of Citizenship to Persons of Indian Origin Act that some 300,000 Indians stateless Tamil Indian were able to receive the citizenship of Sri Lanka.

Check your progress 1

- Note:
- a) Write your answer in about 50 words.
 - b) Check your answer with possible answers given at the end of the unit

1. What are the challenges faced by the States in recognizing the rights of minorities

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2. Write a short note on Jews diaspora as a minority community.

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76.7 NATURE, FORM AND TYPES OF CITIZENSHIP

The relation between nation-state and the natives and the diaspora can be broadly classified into six categories based on the rights bestowed on them by the State. They are: Jus Sanguinis, Jus Soli, Jus Matrimonii, Naturalisation, Excluded categories and transnational citizenship. Jus Sanguinis means right of blood whereby individuals are given citizenship rights based on the relation of blood, parentage and heritage. It is a cultural, racial and territorial concept of exclusion of outsiders and immigrants. China, India, South Korea are some of the examples who give citizenship based on the history of belonging. The term Jus Soli, on the other hand, means right of the soil, whereby an individual obtain citizenship rights based on being born within a particular territory. Here, the ancestry and the citizenry of parents are not taken into consideration while granting citizenship rights. The US, Canada, Germany and Israel are some of the countries offering such kind of citizenship to people born in their territory.

Jus Matrimonii is another form of citizenship by virtue of matrimonial alliance. While some countries follow their own citizenry laws, they also grant citizenship to individual who marry people who are already its citizens. Naturalisation is yet another form of citizenship whereby an individual becomes citizen in the natural course of time based on either long-time residency or matrimonial rights. This form of citizenry is of most recent origin and resulted from transnational movement of people crossing borders for work, business and for other reasons. Most countries provide naturalised citizenship based on either residency or jus matrimonii. As mentioned earlier, while citizenship is a form of inclusion, it is also a mean to exclude a group of people who are deliberately deprived of political rights. This had been the case with the indentured labourers, slaves, women and indigenous people. In fact, all Gulf countries exercise this form of citizenry to exclude working immigrants, despite the fact that they have been working there since decades.

76.8 EXTENSION OF CITIZENSHIP: DUAL NATIONALITY/DUAL CITIZENSHIP/ TRANSNATIONAL CITIZENSHIP

Like the Tamil Indian diaspora in Sri Lanka, people of Indian origin were, over the period of time, naturalized in other countries including Fiji, Mauritius, Malaysia and some other countries. However, as human and workforce mobility became a common feature in the 21st century and in some countries much earlier, there also emerged a need to respect their political rights both in the home and host country. It found expression in the form of dual nationality and dual citizenship, which became a novel innovation in political governance. There are however a distinctive difference between the two terms. As a matter of policy, dual nationality extends certain rights and privileges to diaspora which may include unlimited visit to the home country, the right to own property and carry out business, but it debar the overseas citizens from political rights to contest or vote in elections and hold government offices, as in the case of India. Dual citizenship, on the other hand, extend these rights to include voting rights as well, thus making the diaspora an integral part of the political process.

There are some 64 countries including Ireland, the US, the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and others which offer dual citizenship. Some countries like the Netherlands, Bulgaria, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Cambodia, South Korea offer citizenship based on descent. There is another category where the US dual citizenship is not allowed. Some of these countries include Cuba, Japan, Myanmar, Pakistan, Surinam, Tanzania among others. India offers only dual nationality through its Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) scheme which was enacted in law in 2003. It fell short of providing dual citizenship which allows voting rights to its overseas citizens.

Historically, India categorizes its overseas citizens in three broad categories. One, persons of Indian Origin (PIOs), who were part of Old Indian diaspora in Fiji, Mauritius, Surinam, Trinidad and Tobago, South Africa and Caribbean Island. The other category of non-resident Indians (NRIs) is of more recent origin and was formed post-independence. A large number of NRIs were in the Gulf countries post-oil boom phase and other developed economies like the US, the US, Australia, Canada and some European countries. An NRI is a person who continues to be a citizen of India and hold Indian passport. He/she continues to enjoy political rights to vote in Indian elections. To exercise the franchise, the person has to be in India to exercise his/her voting rights. The other category of OCI as mentioned earlier is of the most recent origin. As part of the scheme, all other citizenship including PIO was merged with the OCI and now forms the predominant form of India's diaspora citizenry.

The concept of citizenship has been undergoing major changes in recent times because of economic liberalisation, globalisation and new means of information and communication technology. To accommodate multiple identities with political rights at more than one place of residence, the discourse has now moved on to provide non-territorial and extra-territorial citizenship to people who owe allegiance to multiple sites. As a result, both home and host countries have begun to provide citizenship rights to people who are living beyond the territories of its sovereignty. The new form of transnational citizenship, on the other hand, is based on the premise, as Bauböck said, that the 'rights and obligations of citizenship change when an individual leaves the territory of citizenship, but they do not disappear altogether'.

As we have seen earlier, the diaspora continue to identify with the country of origin, both socially and politically. The sentiment of belonging and transnationalism has found wide acceptance in the tenets of global supranational organisations like the European Union which under the Maastricht Treaty made a provision to extend EU citizenship to its members. Under the new law, a person could be citizen of the EU as well as to the country of belonging. The new configuration between the states, citizens and supranational bodies has resulted into reconstruction of new order in citizenship. Not only this, it has decoupled the territorial boundaries of the State and Nation. As a consequence, while State continues to identify itself with the territorial borders, the nation on the other hand has expanded itself to include extra-territorial individuals, living beyond its border in the transnational locations.

76.9 MULTICULTURALISM

While the phenomenon of migration, citizenship and transnationalism has

been contesting grounds in overseas community formation, their coalescence led to the emergence of multiculturalism. To understand multiculturalism it is important to understand culture and its accompanying features. Although there is no definitive definition of culture, scholars have agreed to some of its broad features which include a common language, a shared history, a shared set of religious beliefs and ethos and moral values, in addition to a shared geographical belonging. These features constitute one set of culture while multiculturalism means simultaneity or co-existence of several cultures. There is an element of distinctiveness in each culture but they are not exclusive to each other. There is no water-tight compartment which separate one from the other as boundaries between cultures blur with some common feature encompassing all cultures.

Multiculturalism, a form of plural society is one which is a "...medley of people...for they mix but do not combine. Each group holds by its own religion, its own culture and language, its own ideas and ways. As individuals they meet, but only in the market-place, in buying and selling. There is a plural society, with different sections the community living side by side, but separately, within the same political unit" (Furnivall 1948: 304)

Multicultural societies are much more than what was earlier thought as plural society, multi-racial, multi-ethnic or polytechnic societies. Within the ambit of multiculturalism, race remains a suspect term while culture is a celebrated term. The positive image of culture rests on the ground that it affirms identity belongingness of individuals as well as communities. In contrast to multicultural societies, monoculture society believes in the dominance of one ethnic or religious group over the other. In a much milder form it takes recourse to 'coercive assimilation' to bring homogeneity to the group. And there are various instruments like schools, law, citizenship and civic mechanism or soft coercive forces which states exercise to bring homogeneity to multiculturalism.

76.10 INTEGRATION AND ASSIMILATION OF MINORITY DIASPORA IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES

In fact, it's the diversity of the societal group which forms the tapestry of multiculturalism. Any attempt to either integrate or assimilate the minority group with that of majority group is anathema to its individual character. To understand the phenomenon of assimilation and integration, scholars have often compared the two with a melting-pot and a salad-bowl. In the melting pot, various cultures are liquidated and mixed with the existing elements to form an altogether a new alloy. The new alloy or the social group thus formed loses their original character and culture. In the melting pot, the existing elements equally get influenced or altered by the new elements. Integration or a salad-bowl phenomenon, on the other hand, is like various fruits and vegetables, each retaining its usual taste and flavour, while co-existing with each other. Some recent scholars have however opposed both the model of assimilation and integration on the ground that they are forced and artificial attempts of homogenize diverse societies in a well defined mould.

Historically, multiculturalism found fresh ground in the US and the UK because of ideological shift both in the polity and society. It was the civil rights

movement and Black Power campaign in the US in the mid 1960s which forced American societies to realize the liberal ideology and extending equal rights and recognition to the Black citizens. In the UK, on the other hand, the massive influx of immigrants from the New Commonwealth countries was the turning point in integrating diverse group of people who were ethnically and culturally different from each other. It added a new dimension to its demography. The expulsion of Asians from East Africa and boat people from Vietnam added a new dimension to the discussion on multiculturalism. Their immigration to the US, the UK, Australia and Hong Kong made the receiving countries realize the unique features of these cultures and an attempt was made to accommodate them.

There were two broad strategies - whether to allow them to live together or to segregate them in different groups and mainstream them with the rest of the population. The challenge with the former option was that it would lead to their ghettoization, while the latter would lead to psychological trauma inflicted on them because of separation from the rest of the community members. An insight into the challenge was added taking recourse from feminism and Black Power movement which was based on W.E.B. Du Bois' (1868-1963) perception of double consciousness. It was important to understand the prevailing perception — of how they were perceived by their own community members and by the outside Western White agents. This led to what has been popularly called Male Gaze and the White Gaze with regard to feminism and Black minority groups respectively.

The ethnic minorities in the meantime began demanding that the perception about their culture should be based on what they thought about their culture rather than what others thought about it. It was self-appraisal of the value and meaning of culture by the indigenous people instead of the receiving countries, state government or outside agents. This has been responsible in spurting cultural relativism among the policy makers. It means that no culture is superior or inferior to other and as a rule it opposes dominance of one over the other. The same bi-polar binary of right and wrong, good or bad, ethical or non-ethical were extended to religion at the lower level and nation at the macro level.

Initially, when nations and states began postulating multiculturalism, the prevailing political establishments, perceived a serious threat to its sovereignty. As people of various race, ethnicity, religion and ideological affiliation began inhabiting a common metropolitan space, the site of their settlement soon became the site of contesting space, both in the theme and the narrative. With the dissolution of Communism and the ensuing globalisation, some manpower-deficit nation realised that they needed fresh blood to run their economy and growth engine. There was no way they could achieve this without opening the gate of immigration to the skill workforce. With more and more immigrants making their way into developed nations, multiculturalism offered a unique blend of pragmatism and contrasting contradiction into a wholesome landscape.

76.11 MULTICULTURALISM IN A TRANSNATIONAL SPACE

The new global order of multiculturalism, decoupled the territorialized nation-state with citizenship issues and let the people of diverse citizenship, identities,

and culture inhabit a common space. It did not however mean that these people would lose their individual identities but instead, it revitalized new connections with other identities. The multi-centrality of identities began to flourish as a result of news social, political, linguistic and cultural situatedness. In most such cases, the initiator of multiple cultural living was of economic origin as people began to form transnational communities, transcending geographical and cultural space with ease. The explosion of hybridity became more intense and extensive in the postcolonial phase to urban metropolitan centres in countries like the US, the UK, Canada and Australia. The new inhabitants of these urban spaces maintained bi-statal affiliation to the county of origin and settlement.

At these centers of urban multiculturalism, the states agreed to accept and promote plural differences and create equal access to resources to all groups including the minorities. It positively accepted the religious, cultural, and racial differences of the inhabitants. The minority rights were not shunned but given proper space in the governance. Multiculturalism also began to refute racism and ethno-centric domination of the majoritarian demography. It began celebrating the differences which results from race, culture, religion, gender and sexuality.

There are nonetheless, critique who oppose multiculturalism on the ground that it prevents development of pan-ethnic consciousness as it essentialises an identity and fails to recognize the fluidity of mobility and identity. It also differentiates between the individual preferences at the cost of scripted group identity. In multiculturalism, individuals on the other hand are expected to live and act a scripted identity of the group, rather than express their individual creativity. This often builds a false and a narrow fixed identity based on ethnicity and religious affiliation within the cohort and fails to develop a broader pan-ethnic solidarity.

Another critique of multicultural practices is that it tries to control and manage cultural and racial differences obscuring the issue of power and dominance of one community over the other. It tries to homogenize the horizontal uniqueness of each community. It has been noticed that while multiculturalism tries to safeguard the civil and religious rights of the non-Western communities, it attempts to avoid questioning the false hierarchical western religious model. For example, the perception of Christianity being superior to other tribal religions is hardly put on discussion. In a way, it could be said that while multiculturalism allows expression and protection of minority rights, it conceals the contradiction and prejudices of a pan-ethnic majority under the carpet. The policies of multiculturalism, initiated by some of the First World countries are in a way are also an attempt to accommodate cultural differences in order to serve its broader economic and diplomatic need.

Sometimes, host countries have been seen making deliberate attempt to incorporate multiculturalism through suggested gestures and to add authenticity to its discourse. This was evident in 2009 with the then US president Barak Obama celebrating Diwali at the White House. This not only added credibility to the State's policy of multiculturalism but also made American Hindus feel at home in the receiving country. It helped in promoting religious identity of a particular group of diaspora and thus giving credence to the politics of recognition.

76.12 LET US SUM UP

Multiculturalism was recently seen coming under severe attack during the time of crisis, especially during the terrorists' attack. The racial targeting of South Asians post-9/11 in the US based on phenotype features suggests how religious identities become an easy markers of differentiation. The threat to multiculturalism is not only from the public at large but also from states who promote essentialised identities. Racial attacks and discrimination, while harming the minorities, also harms the host countries. It mobilizes the victimized ethnic groups based on identity thus making host countries a contested site in the long run.

Check your progress 2

- Note: a) Write your answer in about 50 words.
b) Check your answer with possible answers given at the end of the unit

1. What is the difference between dual nationality and dual citizenship?

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2. How a minority group is mainstreamed? Write a short note on the model.

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ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check your progress 1

1. In a multicultural society in which people are constantly moving, the States have been facing severe challenges to recognize the rights of minorities, especially in some of the liberal democracies. There have been demand to accommodate the differences of culturally different and marginalized communities. As part of democratic representation, they are extended 'reservation' for the preservation of their identity. This becomes possible only after a community is recognized minority by the States. Understandably, this has spiraled into the 'politics of recognition' in some of the countries. Such political and social recognition to minority are often hotly contested by the native majoritarian communities who feel that their rights and resources have either been liquidated or shared. This has been noticed in some of the European countries where natives have been seen protesting against their social welfare assets being shared.
2. While observing some other global diasporas, it has been seen that they dominate in numerical strength in a particular geographical region by forming ethnic enclaves. Historically, Jews migrated over a period of 2500 years to various countries because they were exiled not only from the place of their origin, but also from countries where they went to settle down. Now, there are more Jews living outside Israel, their mythical and reimagined homeland. While Israel is home to 30% of the Jews global population, the US has 51%, France, Canada and Russia (3% each), the UK has 2% and Argentina, Germany, Hungary, Ukraine and Australia have 1% each.

Check your progress 2

1. As human and workforce mobility became a common feature in the 21st century and in some countries much earlier, there also emerged a need to respect their political rights both in the home and host country. It found expression in the form of dual nationality and dual citizenship, which became a novel innovation in political governance. There are however a distinctive difference between the two terms. As a matter of policy, dual nationality extends certain rights and privileges to diaspora which may

include unlimited visit to the home country, the right to own property and carry out business, but it debars the overseas citizens from political rights to contest or vote in elections and hold government offices, as in the case of India. Dual citizenship, on the other hand, extend these rights to include voting rights as well, thus making the diaspora an integral part of the political process.

2. To understand the phenomenon of assimilation and integration, scholars have often compared the two with a melting-pot and a salad-bowl. In the melting pot, various cultures are liquidated and mixed with the existing elements to form an altogether a new alloy. The new alloy or the social group thus formed loses their original character and culture. In the melting pot, the existing elements equally get influenced or altered by the new elements. Integration or a salad-bowl phenomenon, on the other hand, is like various fruits and vegetables, each retaining its usual taste and flavour, while co-existing with each other. Some recent scholars have however opposed both the model of assimilation and integration on the ground that they are forced and artificial attempts of homogenize diverse societies in a well defined mould.



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UNIT 77 CONTESTED IDENTITIES

- 77.1 Learning Objectives
- 77.2 Introduction
- 77.3 Defining Identity: Historical and Anthropological Perspective
- 77.4 The Legacy of Pre and Post Colonial Contested Identities
- 77.5 The Process of Identity Formation
- 77.6 Contesting Identities: A Cultural Construct
- 77.7 Assimilation and Integration Of Contested Identities
- 77.8 Identity Politics
- 77.9 Racism, Holocaust, Genocide and Discrimination
- 77.10 Contested Identities in Indian Diaspora
- 77.11 Religious Identity
- 77.12 Policy Frameworks for Resolving Issues of Contested Identities
- 77.13 Conclusion
- 77.14 Answers To Check Your Progress

77.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Based on a broad outline as mentioned above, the Unit will attempt to look into contesting identities among the immigrants and the diaspora and the inter linkages between them. It will look into identity formation historically as well as conceptually and provide 'real world' examples which will be helpful in understanding the concept. After you have gone through it, you will be able to:

1. Understand various forms of identities in their historical perspective
2. The role of identity in migration and diaspora formation
3. Various forms of identities like cultural, ethnic, political and linguistic identities
4. The new challenges emerging from the contested identities
5. The need for comprehensive policy to resolve the issues of contesting identities

77.2 INTRODUCTION

When people migrate from one geographical area to another, they carry with them their physical self, their language, rituals, symbols, ethnic attires and food habits. All these unique attributes are subsumed under identity and find expression in their daily rituals and also while interacting with people of other identities. In fact, there is a close relationship between identity and culture. While culture is bounded in a geographical area and shaped by tradition and rituals, identity is the outcome of belonging to that particular culture and its

subsequent mobility. The individual members tend to internalise the aesthetics of identity and cultural practises in their daily rituals.

Identity is also self assertion of belonging to a particular culture, which is ascribed by the individuals themselves as well as by the society. It creates an image of belonging and becomes the main tool of survival for immigrants and the diaspora as they negotiate their social and political space in their immigration journey. Identity is, in fact, always in creative tension with itself, as it evolves and transforms and mutates to various other sub-identities. On the other hand, an identity becomes a contested identity when it comes in association or in confrontation with other identities and attempts to create its social and political space. And in order to achieve its objectives, identities negotiate, manoeuvres and repositions and sometimes confront other identities.

It was Theodore Schwartz who in mid-1970s used a catching phrase called 'migrants of identity' to describe the continual search by American youth for an identity that they found acceptable and authentic (1975: 130). The same analogy was later extended to transnational migrants and diaspora groups. In fact, "the diaspora experience is defined, not by essence of purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity: by a conception of "identity" which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity" (Hall 1990, p 235.).

77.3 DEFINING IDENTITY: HISTORICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Identity plays a critical role in a migrant and a diaspora's life as they negotiate their social, political, economic or transnational space based on it. It is a locus standi on which an individual or a group is known for its attributes that differentiate itself from others. But what exactly is identity? How it is formed, transformed and establishes itself in the long run? Before we set forth to answer some of these fundamental questions let's look at its various forms, as it has evolved over the millennia and centuries. When we talk about anthropological evolution of mankind, you must have heard about Homo erectus, Australopithecus, Neanderthal, Homo sapiens and various species and genus which evolved, branched off, and some of them became extinct. The categorization of these species and genus was based on certain features which were unique to each of them. This was probably the first attempt to identify these categories based on identity which was common to species and genus.

We, a Homo sapiens, are the only human tribe called Hominini, left on earth and enjoy unique identity. When mankind evolved and spread out to various geographical areas and continents, they were further categorised as Africans, Mongoloids, Caucasian based on certain phenotype features. As mankind began living in societies, their spiritual quest led to the birth of religions -Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam which was an identity creation based on religious beliefs. The formation of nation-states in the 18th century onwards further resulted in creation of newer identities based on ethnicity and nationality. The process of fission (breaking down of earlier identities into smaller identities) creates new identities based on ethnicity, nationality, ideology, language, culture and profession and is an ongoing process.

When these identity groups were living separately, there were fewer chances

of conflict arising from their association. However, as new identities multiplied and their interests clashed with each other, it created conflicting and contested spaces where they negotiated their social and political space. With natural resources being limited, there were attempts by various dominant groups to appropriate it and claim rights over it. The weaker or minority social groups were either left out or were deliberately deprived of some of these rights. The onset of globalisation, mass movement of resources and manpower and technological revolution in transport and communication further aggravated such claims. People started contesting their rights to resources based on identity and belonging. This led to discrimination and racial assaults based on ethnicity, nationality and religion and continue till date.

77.4 THE LEGACY OF PRE AND POST COLONIAL CONTESTED IDENTITIES

A false belief in identity and superiority of races was the brainchild of the British and European colonial conquest, beginning from the sixteenth century to nineteenth century. It defined colonial belief of the White supremacy over all others identities and their attempt to civilise the rest of the world. It gave rise to terminology like African barbarism and Asian Orientalism which were full of racial connotations and were degrading to other identities. A similar labelling was noticed among the Dutch settlers in Indonesia and Spanish colonial settlers in North America. A series of institutionalised racisms, dehumanisation, violent exploitation and subjugation had set in by that time. A precursor to these racial identities was seen earlier in the transatlantic slave trades in Europe and America which was based on differential identity. It was the beginning of racial segregation of the "White" and the "Black" identity across the continents which became the insidious bedrock of contested identities.

However, from the middle of the twentieth century the ideology of racial configuration began to change as more and more people began crossing international borders for employment and as part of the manpower supply chain. As of now, there are multiple identities living a simultaneous existence in the world, while some are tied to their home country, there are others who are tied to the host country; and some to both the sites of belonging. There have been ideological and institutional shifts as nation-states become more tolerant to diverse ethnic diversity and their simultaneous engagement to the country of belonging. The ethnic, linguistic and transnational engagements have become a preferred choice because of its advocacy by the civil rights movements and multiculturalism and the United Nations. In fact, the concept of dual identities and multiple engagements of the immigrants and the diaspora is considered as a legitimate and beneficial asset for the new social group as well as the receiving country.

77.5 THE PROCESS OF IDENTITY FORMATION

The practice of identity-formation is a recent phenomenon which is considered to be late-capitalist and post-modern, though it has been in existence since centuries. But there is another school of thought that believes that identity-creation has become redundant in the age of globalisation. This is so because the new era is now characterised by creolization, compression, hybridity and

synchronicity of diverse ethnic identities. These ideologies and rituals have somehow tapered the intensity of identity impact. Moreover, identity has no impact if it does not involve mobility or fluidity of physical movement. The traditional anthropological definition of identity somehow fails to convey the fluidity of movement and migration. “A world of movement can be understood in terms of actual physical motion around the globe and also as an imagination: an awareness of movement as a potentiality and a vicarious knowledge of movement” (Rapport and Dawson, 1998: 4).

Looking at the large movement of people across the world, it has been argued that it is a quintessential phenomenon of the 21st century. More and more people are travelling across the globe for work and because of other compelling reasons like market forces, ideological conflict and environmental changes. Under such circumstances, the identity of migrants keep changing and transforming as they travel across various cultural zones. They also, depending on their numerical strength, impact the host country and also get impacted by them in turn, thus shifting their identity a bit left, right or centre or between conservative and liberal ideologies.

Based on identity, the issues of home and belonging are perennially contested among the migrant and the diaspora groups. But there have also been cases when identity assertion and contestation has been observed among the immobile population. It is expressed in the dominance of one particular ethnic group over the other. This was seen, for example, in the English ascendancy over the Irish, the Scottish and the Welsh and has been contested as a hegemonic practice of one group over the other. Likewise, the differences, diversity, pluralism and hybridity are also contested by the majoritarian social groups. In India, the Indian identity, it has been argued, was contested on the ground that there was no nation-state identity prior to British colonialism. It emerged only from the resistance to colonialism. The freedom struggle against British rule helped in strengthening the concept of Indian identity.

77. 6 CONTESTING IDENTITIES: A CULTURAL CONSTRUCT

Contesting identity, it has been argued, also signifies practises and idioms in which social meaning is constituted, appropriated and transformed. In Europe and America for example, contested identities cannot be understood without the reference to the ‘White’s Supremacy’ and the ‘Black’s Subjugation’. It has led scholars to ask some fundamental questions as why in a given context, certain identities come to play in a given role. Are these concepts reinforced or challenged and contested by the political forces alone? In certain cases, some of the key concepts like belonging, cultural constructs, and identity are contested and appropriated by another group.

To create a new political identity, sometimes a dominant group takes recourse to cultural continuity and similarity with other minor ethnic groups in order to mobilise support. It is for this reason that the concept of multiculturalism has been contested by the Right wing politics leading to identity conflict, which is quite similar to race conflict, cultural conflict and gender conflict.

But identity is elusive and has always remained an enigma as diaspora keep

trespassing one boundary after another. But despite their mobility, there are some inherent characteristics which define them and differentiate them from others. It asks some fundamental identity questions as 'who' they are 'what' they are and how they associate with other groups. As a result of this, identity becomes a marker between I and We versus He/She and they.

It was Erikson (1968) who defined identity as "a subjective sense of sameness and continuity - a process located in the core of an individual as well as in the core of a communal culture. It is an unconscious process that creates 'identity consciousnesses in an individual or a group of people. Berger and Luckman (1970) on the other hand saw identity as a reality of everyday life, which is shared with a common set of meaning. It is both subjective as well as social and is expressed through lifestyle and culture. In fact, differential culture is one of the basic markers that differentiate one identity from the other.

In a diaspora or an immigrant's life, these differential identities are sometimes challenged in the host country. For example in Britain in 1959, the Sikhs were banned from work because of their use of turban and they had to fight a bitter battle to retain their rights (Beetham 1970). In the 1960s in Britain there was an attempt of 'bussing' Asian children in schools outside the cities meant exclusively for immigrants and was responsible for racial discrimination in education, housing and employment. In order to overcome these differential treatments to immigrants, Roy Jenkins in 1966 emphasised the process of 'integration' instead of assimilation to mainstream them into Britain's social milieu. According to him, assimilation was a flattening process while integration meant empowerment, acceptance of diversity and mutual trust (Jenkins, 1966: 4). In a sense, it was an attempt to accept and respect other identities in a multicultural society.

While some of the host countries have practiced racial discrimination in one form or the other, the immigrants, on their part, have also been unable to overcome their narrow identification particularized identity. For example, in spite of having migrated to multicultural societies, the Indians continue to retain their caste identities. While it was no longer possible to practice caste rituals in its purest form in the host countries and at modernised workforce, it nonetheless was replicated in one form or the other. As a result of this, caste-based community organisations were formed at the industrial sites of Britain and solidarity between the same-caste identities became more pronounced. It was, in fact, re-inscribed in a cultural milieu of the host country. Like in their home country, their caste identity was equally differentiated, heterogeneous, and variable and contested space.

Unlike India, in Europe and elsewhere in the world, new forms of belonging, citizenship and identities emerged in the post-war era as new nation-states were formed and new nations were established. The incessant migration of people across nation-states was responsible in creating new identities based on citizenship and through the process of inclusion and exclusion. In some cases, new immigrant groups were instrumental in challenging the citizenship laws as was witnessed in Germany and Britain.

In some cases, immigrants were denied citizenship rights because of their differential identity. For example, the Turkish immigrants in Germany have

been historically and culturally part of it since long time, but many of them did not enjoy citizenship rights. Because of their sizable number, the Turkish immigrants began demanding inclusion of Islamic studies in the local schools based on Islamic identity. Incidentally, their argument was not based on religious identity but on the principles of immigrant inclusion and Universal Human rights. A similar case was also seen in Britain where Islamic immigrants demanded religious freedom to pursue their education system. These incidents were responsible in bringing a change at the institutional and ideological levels and in transforming their national identities. It also added legitimacy to immigrants' own culture and identity.

The individual identities of immigrants and diasporas, over the period, is also responsible in the formation of collective identities, which is well recognised and codified in human rights. These identities have been able to create new solidarity groups, which are mobilised based on their individual identities, thus leading to the formation of multi-level identity politics. As a result, new institutions were established and the legal framework of inclusive politics evolved. The allocation of rights and identities to different groups has also been responsible in diffusing the concept of citizenship in countries where immigrants and diaspora form a sizable population.

There is yet another feature of identity creation, as seen in the immigrants and diaspora, as it naturalises a group in a particular identity based on language, kinship, homeland, nation and territory. It means that one cannot help but need to have an identity to lay claim to social, political and economic rights. It has been observed that to achieve such claims, ethnic and national identities are mobilised both in the host and home countries of the diaspora.

Check your progress 1

- Note:
- a) Write your answer in about 50 words.
 - b) Check your answer with possible answers given at the end of the unit

1. Define Identity and its role in Diaspora formation.

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2. How an identity is formed and sustained in the long run?

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77.7 ASSIMILATION AND INTEGRATION OF CONTESTED IDENTITIES

To accommodate new immigrant groups in its fold, a large number of Western countries have adopted various processes. They have tried to mainstream them in their national identity which is based on language, culture and national laws. In general, these countries have taken recourse to the processes of assimilation and integration. In case of hard assimilation, the homeland identity of the diaspora is supplanted by host country identity leading to their complete assimilation which is generally achieved by the second generation. In case of permanent culturalism, it is the homeland identity which is retained and given prominence to at the cost and exclusion of adopted country identity. A large number of immigrant receiving countries do not favour this kind of assimilation as it leads to ethnic enclaving, segregation and isolation of the immigrant community.

The process of soft assimilation of immigrant identity, on the other hand, is tolerant to ethnic diversity and attempts to integrate them gradually over a period of time. While integration is the ultimate objective of the assimilatory process, it is often voluntary on the part of immigrants and diaspora and with their informed knowledge of the adopted country's culture, education, language and legal framework. The process of soft assimilation celebrates hybrid identity and encourages migrants to embrace the adopted country's lifestyle, while still allowing them to retain their homeland identity. The soft assimilation, in a way, is a win-win situation both for the immigrants as well as the receiving country. This is so, because both live in a symbiotic relationship and are able to enjoy the best of both the worlds.

77.8 IDENTITY POLITICS

As identity is a political status and a process as well, it gives rise to politics of identification. This happens when a new social group jostles with each other for political space in democratic governance. Identity politics on the other hand looks at identity, as a category which could be mobilised for political reasons. This has been evident in electoral democracies where social groups identify themselves closer to political ideologies. In fact, no diaspora or immigrant ethnic group could live without identity as their very existence depends on it. By virtue of its definition, such identity groups problematise the notion of political allegiance, citizenship and rights as they straddle across national boundaries.

While an identity group could be privileged, they at the same time could stand condemned because of their existence in two different political worlds. One is the world of the adopted country to which their existence depends and the other, their home country, to which they feel intimately connected. The world they 'come from' becomes the source of their identity. This is in quite contrast to their differing politics of identification.

The politics of identity also makes a diaspora an extension of nationalistic discourse of their homeland. This could be seen in the creation of pressure groups by the diaspora in their adopted country, as among the Jews and Indian diaspora in the USA. Sometimes, they also work in opposition to their existing homeland to bring political change as seen among the Cuban diaspora. Here,

their identity becomes a rallying point for political engagement: both in the home and host countries. The notion of identity, in fact, shares a multifarious relationship with both the countries. This is probably the main reason that a diaspora cannot afford to ignore its identity as it plays a critical role in their political negotiation. They have to take into account how they are similar and different from the native majority in order to negotiate their identity claims.

But there is yet another group of diaspora who is neither tied up with the home nor the host country. This has been observed in the case of radicalised British Muslims of Asian descent. They are known to show a deterritorialized allegiance to universal umma at the cost of home and host country. They deny the existence of specificity and locatedness and claim atypical identity which is different from other social groups. So, in order to distinguish their identity, the diasporas sometimes set the boundary and mark it prominently. And if necessary, they accentuate their identity to seek favour for their personal interest.

77.9 RACISM, HOLOCAUST, GENOCIDE AND DISCRIMINATION

The assertion of identities, that of the natives, the diaspora and the immigrants have been at the core of major conflict. It has led to political retaliation, violent repression, imprisonment and expulsion of some of these communities. Based on identity discrimination, there have been anti-Semitic racism, fascist class warfare and fatal and systematic institutionalized violence in some of the countries. In Germany, the Nazi-designed and SS-orchestrated holocaust led the killing of over six million European Jews in the late 1930s and early 1940s. At times, communities have been forcefully expelled from the adopted country based on identity discrimination, as in the case of South Asians in East Africa and more particularly Indian-Ugandas who were expelled by President Idi Amin in 1972 because they were considered ethnically “impure” bodies. At times, new immigrant groups are negatively racialised and pejoratively described as unwanted foreigners called *étranger* and *ausländer*.

In addition to ethnicity, religious identities too have been the cause of major conflicts and have led to bloodshed and massacre of innocent people. The partition of British India into India and Pakistan was based on religious identity. When India became independent from the British colonial rule in 1947, over 15 million people belonging to various regional-linguistic groups, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Punjabis and Bengalis were killed in both the countries. Such a process of ethnic cleansing, it has been argued, is the principle characteristic of postcolonial, post-World War II, when nation-states were formed based on religious-ethnic divisions.

The root cause of religious-ethnic differentiation however was the result of the British colonial census which defined and divided people based on religious and ethnic lines. It was also the cartographic restructuring after World War I, which led to the formation of a nation-state based on ethnic-religious formation. The hostilities between warring groups continued through the twentieth century with the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the geographical dispute between Albania and Yugoslavia and between Greece and Turkey. The hostilities continued to exist and were practised not only between these nation-states but also against immigrant groups like Franco-Maghrebi in France and Turkish

Gastarbeiter in Germany. They became easy targets of racism based on ethnicity, religion, nationality and class. Similarly, the prejudices and discrimination against Vietnamese "boat people" and Haitian refugees was based on identity and continues till date. Likewise, in the wake of 9/11 terror attack, Arabs and Muslim immigrants became target of racial and religious persecution across the world and more specifically in the US, which was based on phenotype identification.

Conceptually speaking, the term race, from which the term racism has emerged, has no scientific validity. It was based on the 18th century anthropological classification of Linnaeus, Blumenback, Buffon and others who based their categorization on phenotype characteristics including the skin colour and the types of hair of the individuals. Incidentally, the term became popular and found expression in the works of popular thinkers of the time including John Locke, Thomas Hobbes, Hume, Immanuel Kant and Hegel. In the 19th century, the concept of race became a pseudo-science and found expression in the works of Comte de Gobineau's *On the Inequality of Races*. While the earlier conception of race was biological, it was Franz Boas who, with scientific evidence, showed that race is a cultural construct and a product of culture, history, language and power relations between the communities. Identity, like racism, created and sustained a hierarchical relation of power among various groups based on artificial distinction.

77.10 CONTESTED IDENTITIES IN INDIAN DIASPORA

The Indian diaspora is one the largest ethnic groups outside the country of its origin. While being acculturated in the host country, they show marked social and religious behaviour which is quite similar to their country of origin. As mentioned earlier, the Indian diaspora is not a monolithic social formation and is known for its diversity, heterogeneity and its own peculiarities. While social identity based on caste system has lost relevance in some of the countries to which Indians migrated centuries back, the recent migrants, on the other hand, show a close affinity to caste system quite similar to that prevalent in the country of origin. It has been argued that they try to replicate similar social and religious identities in their host countries as they had experienced in the country of origin.

While caste could be a prominent determinate of Hindu society, there are other identities which have become equally powerful. For example regional-linguistic identities like Punjabi/Sikh diaspora, Gujarati diaspora, Malayalee diaspora, Telugu diaspora occupy prominent places in the host country based on their regional-linguistic affiliation. These identities also become a major political marker when the diaspora home country faces major issues based on these identities. It also gets reflected in the politicisation of these issues amongst the diaspora. For example, the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh into Andhra proper and Telangana led to a similar division in the Telugu-speaking diaspora and the formation of new social and political groups based in new identities.

The Indian diaspora is also further divided based on profession and their skills. For example doctors and engineers who migrated to the more developed economies of the US, the UK and Australia in the 1960s and 1970s are now quite different from the IT professionals of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. Some of the examples of profession-based identities include Indian American Physician Association (AAPI), Silicon Valley Entrepreneurs (TIE)), taxi workers and domestic workers (Andolan and Awaz). Some of them are also divided based on the trajectory of migration and settlement.

77. 11 RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES

There are various factors which are responsible for the formation of identity groups. In addition to ethnicity and culture, religion has been a powerful marker in identity formation. In fact, mediaeval period history is replete with conflict, crusade and conversion and continues to draw salience in the post-modern world, with the re-emergence of powerful religious identity groups. While each religious group self-ascribed to a particular religious belief, the immigrant receiving countries also, at times, unwittingly play truant to the process of identity imposition. For example, in the beginning of 20th century, all South Asian immigrants to the US were classified as “Hindoos” . This was despite the fact that it included people from diverse faiths. It played a key role in identification and subsequent racialisation. It also created a framework for the immigrants to live and act a particularised identity as marked by the receiving country.

A strong sense of religious belonging and identity has also been observed among the Indian diaspora in recent years. The resurgent Hindu nationalism has become a powerful marker based on religious-identity. These diaspora groups equate their religious affiliation with their national affiliation based on the premise that India is the only country to which Hindus could identify with, unlike the Muslim and the Christian diasporas who have multiple sites of identification. This however seems to be a twisted logic based on religious identity and identification as belonging to a nation-state is based on citizenship rights rather than religious identification. Israel, probably, is one exception where identification and belonging is based in Jewish ethnic belonging rather than to a multicultural nation-state ideology.

Religious identities also produce political mobilisation to gain recognition, political mileage and to promote its cause. The Hindu American Political Action Committee (HAPAC) and Hindu American Foundation (HAF) in the US have been instrumental in promoting Hindu political candidates in the US election. This has been responsible in creating cleavages within the Indian diaspora as it includes other religious groups like Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, vying for political representation. These “contestation is reflective not only of internal cleavages such as class, religion, nations and sexuality but also of ideological orientation and aspirations (Mishra 2018, 217).

Religious identities have also produced differential racialisation experience for the diaspora and distinct response to such racialization attempts. The post -9/11 racial backlash against the Muslims and Sikhs was responsible for mobilisation of immigrants on religious ground. The Muslims of South Asian origin and Sikh diaspora formed a coalition, articulated their interest and exerted pressure on policy makers.

The above incidents also show that during a crisis, social groups coalesce their identity and form strong identity-based organisations to thwart threats to their identities. There are enough qualitative data which suggest that threat perception and the fear of racial attack leads to higher levels of pan-ethnic identification. In fact, multicultural institutions in the United States have been used by Hindu groups to promote politics primarily based on a Hindu religious identity, despite the diversity of religious faith among the Indian immigrants (Kurien, 2007).

77.12 POLICY FRAMEWORKS FOR RESOLVING THE ISSUES OF CONTESTED IDENTITIES

While every diaspora and immigrant groups try to safeguard its interest, stay relevant and promote its culture, host countries, on its part, have come out with policy framework to integrate them in the mainstream. We have already discussed culturalism, assimilation and integration of these minority communities in some of the host countries. One of the primary motives of the host countries is to safeguard its own security measures as these groups have been behind civil unrest, political upheaval, human rights violation, human trafficking and also in drugs business.

In order to resolve the issues of contesting identities, some countries feel a moral responsibility to educate them and bring them closer to the mainstream. Giving political rights through the process of naturalisation has been one of the major policy decisions in some of these countries including the US, the UK, Canada and Australia.

During the course of naturalisation, it has been observed that while the first generation immigrants show reluctance to the process of integration, the second generation, who were born in the host countries, are readily mainstreamed because of their identification with the host country. It has been argued that it is attachment to the home country that keeps the first generation migrant socially and politically distant from the host country.

As assimilation and integration are purely political issues, some countries have shown willingness to include new immigrants in their electoral process. But not all immigrant groups show equal enthusiasm to such overtures. For example, in the 2002 California election, it was observed that the voting percentage of Latino and Asian immigrants were much lower than the White immigrants. In fact, “the role of ethnoracial identities in democratic participation has been an enduring and intractable issue for American democracy, and immigrant and minority communities have always negotiated these identities while striving to find a place in social and political arenas (Mishra, 2018, 207).

77.13 CONCLUSION

As discussed earlier, contested identities are a natural byproduct of the human migration process. When people of different identities cross cultural borders and confront other identities, conflict and altercation come in creative tension to negotiate social and political space. Sometimes identities create their own enemy as it excludes itself from other identities, thus depriving itself of the progressive and encompassing ideologies. While identities are binding, they are also self-limiting as it stops its further expansion. In order to survive, sometimes a particularised identity has to be tolerant to its internal diversity. Nonetheless, identity has its merit as it helps minority and marginalised communities to negotiate and manoeuvre political and social space for itself.

It would be a hasty assertion to contest that all contested identities can live in harmony because the very process of creating conducive conditions is a power

relation in which an influential identity group supersedes the minority identity. It is the identity of nationality and citizenship that has become a powerful marker as other identities including ethnic, religious, and cultural and other identities are subsumed under it. When two nations are at loggerheads, it's the two national identities which are pitted against each other. As these contested identities cannot be eliminated in a multipolar and multicultural world, there have been progressive attempts towards conflict resolution and to minimise the friction through policy measures and other initiatives including bilateral and multilateral talks between the stakeholders of diverse identities.

Check your progress 2

- Note: a) Write your answer in about 50 words.
b) Check your answer with possible answers given at the end of the unit
3. What role does assimilation and integration play in mainstreaming a diaspora group?

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4. Write a short note on the religious identity in the Indian diaspora.

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SUGGESTED READING

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77.14 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check your progress 1

1. Identity is a locus standi on which an individual or a group is known for its attributes that differentiate it from other identities. When people migrate from one geographical area to another, they carry with them their physical self, their language, rituals, symbols, ethnic attires and food habits. All these unique attributes are subsumed under identity and find expression in their daily rituals and also while interacting with people of other identities. In fact, there is a close relationship between identity and culture. While culture is bounded in a geographical area and shaped by tradition and rituals, identity is the outcome of belonging to that particular culture and its subsequent mobility. The individual members tend to internalise the aesthetics of identity and cultural practises in their daily rituals.
2. Identity is a cultural attribute and is formed based on a sense of belonging and identification with a particular ethnicity, culture, religion or nationality. It is ascribed by the individuals themselves as well as by the society. It creates an image of belonging that becomes the main tool of survival for immigrants and the diaspora as they negotiate their social and political space in their immigration journey. Identity is, in fact, always in creative tension with itself, as it evolves and transforms and mutates to various other sub-identities. On the other hand, an identity becomes a contested identity when it comes in association or in confrontation with other identities and attempts to create its social and political space. And in order to achieve its objectives, identities negotiate, manoeuvre and reposition itself to confront other identities.

Check your progress 2

1. Assimilation is the process of acceptance and incorporation of a minority group in the majoritarian mainstream. It is considered to be a flattening process while integration means empowerment, acceptance of diversity and mutual trust between two or more ethnic groups. In a sense, it is an attempt to accept and respect other identities in a multicultural society. In case of hard assimilation, the homeland identity of the diaspora is supplanted by host country identity leading to their complete assimilation which is generally achieved by the second generation. In case of permanent culturalism, it is the homeland identity which is retained by the diaspora and given prominence at the cost and exclusion of the adopted country's identity. A large number of immigrant receiving countries do not favour this kind of assimilation as it leads to ethnic enclaving, segregation and isolation of the immigrant community. The process of soft assimilation of immigrant identity, on the other hand, is tolerant to ethnic diversity and attempts to integrate them gradually over a period of time. While integration is the ultimate objective of the assimilatory process, it is often voluntary on the part of immigrants and diaspora and with their informed knowledge

of the adopted country's culture, education, language and legal framework. The process of soft assimilation celebrates hybrid identity and encourages migrants to embrace the adopted country's lifestyle, while still allowing them to retain their homeland identity.

2. A strong sense of religious belonging and identity has also been observed among the Indian diaspora in recent years. The resurgent Hindu nationalism has become a powerful marker based on religious-identity. These diaspora groups equate their religious affiliation with their national affiliation based on the premise that India is the only country to which Hindus could identify with, unlike the Muslim and the Christian diasporas who have multiple sites of identification. This however seems to be a twisted logic based on religious identity and identification as belonging to a nation-state is based on citizenship rights rather than religious identification. Israel, probably, is one exception where identification and belonging is based in Jewish ethnic belonging rather than to a multicultural nation-state ideology.



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