Multiculturalism and migration: Tariq Modood's perspective

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Abstract:

Multiculturalism is not a new concept. Multiple cultures existed in Europe and Asia during the mediaeval period. The multicultural society of Baghdad, Florence and Venice played an important role in the spread of knowledge and science. The knowledge transmitted from the House of Wisdom in Baghdad reached the multicultural societies of Venice and Florence. The multiculturalism of Venice and Florence played an important role in the emergence of Renaissance in Europe. But multiculturalism became an important political concept in the 20th century with the spread of democracy. In the post-World War II world, when the democratic system of governance spread as a universally accepted system of governance, the question of demand for political rights of multiculturalist groups and adjustment with the existing system arose. There was a massive increase in migration due to various reasons and which also gave rise to many other political problems. Multiculturalism and migration got adequate space in Modood's political literature. He presented its socio-political analysis. In discussing the interrelationships between multiculturalism and liberalism, the question of adjustment of many cultures in relatively less liberal systems, etc., it provides an alternative perspective to understand multiculturalism through migration.

Keywords: Colonial, ethnic, multicultural, multiculturalism, migration, post colonial.

Introduction

The 20th century had been a century of diffusion of rights to multiple cultural and ethnic groups and the hitherto deprived classes. And the middle of this century also saw the inception of Multiculturalism. Therefore there exists an organic connection between multiculturalism and democratisation which needs to be explored.

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Ever since its inception in the mid 20th century multiculturalism’s prominence has seen a consistent rise with time. The earlier uni-cultural nationalism had taken a back seat paving way for multicultural societies. In an ever globalised world order, every state is compelled to incorporate multiculturalism in one way or another. Today it is accepted even in mainstream liberalism, thanks to communitarians’ assertion that the expression of individual’s cultural identity is crucial to his overall growth. And in the contemporary post-industrial knowledge societies, fuelled by seamless connectivity, there is wide-scale movement of people and ideas. This creates considerable minor cultural groups in any state. Such societies witness a constant interfusion of cultures and ideas. Thus the state is obliged to look at the concerns of the minorities.

However this transition is not as smooth as it appears. Many countries succumb to the will of the dominant ethnic group and resist multicultural progression. This trend is particularly overt in South Asia where the colonial legacies weigh heavy. The fault-lines readily surface whenever social tensions escalate. Because of the trauma the partition has left behind, the unity and the integrity always remains a central concern of the state. Therefore the states have always been reluctant to fully embrace the tenets of multiculturalism. Many a times it is seen as a threat to the internal security. It is perceived that multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity not only not converge with national integration but stand poles apart. This skepticism shapes the choice path employed by the state to address the minority question. It is expected of the minor groups to shed their distinctiveness in order to better amalgamate with the mainstream. Their assertion of cultural identity in public spaces is seen as contrary to national integration and democracy.

Tariq Modood, professor of sociology, politics and public policy, founding director of the centre of the study of ethnicity and citizenship at the university of Bristol U.K. He is related to a migrant community in Britain and has written extensively on multiculturalism. Tariq Modood begins his discussion on multiculturalism with the question of the utility of multiculturalism. This is the title of the first chapter of his famous book Multiculturalism “Is Multiculturalism Appropriate for the 21st Century?” Thus he examines the various dimensions of multiculturalism, although his main field of study is Great Britain, but his analysis and model are applicable to the whole of Europe and in particular to the developed countries of the world. International migration after the industrial revolution, especially after colonialism, has an important role in Maudud's analysis.

Migration:

Modood analyses multiculturalism in a historical context, focusing on the question of the need and justification for multiculturalism, and tries to explain that multiculturalism is the result of amalgamation of populations. so migration emerges as a very important factor in his analysis. Migration is seen at three levels in Modood's writings.
Migration in the colonial period:

During the colonial period, the European superpowers established colonies across the world, resulting in massive migration. There was a huge amount of migration from Europe to the colonies, from the colonies to Europe and also from one colony to another. The colonial powers transported workers and newly educated clerical class and bureaucrats to the colonies as per their needs. All these facts encouraged a forced globalisation. In South America, Caribbean, Africa, Asia, Oceania et. There was forced migration of a large number of workers due to the need for workers in sugarcane cultivation, tea cultivation, copper, gold and coal mines etc. There was a huge migration of Indian workers to Fiji, Mauritius, South Africa, Caribbean and many countries of South America. Similarly, slaves from Africa were taken to America and South America. "It is important to be aware of historical patterns of migration. Today’s often polarised discourse on migration in democracies fails to acknowledge that most contemporary states are, in their way, the product of earlier waves of migration. After the colonisation of North America and Latin America and the Caribbean, migration from Europe increased in the post-Columbian period, as approximately 11.3 million Europeans migrated to the ‘New World’ by 1820 and some 8.7 million African slaves were transported there. The transition to free migration increased the share of free migrants as a proportion of the total population of the Americas from 20 per cent in the 1820s to 80 per cent by the 1840s. He believes that due to migration, new types of settlements were established in different parts of the world, there have been demographic changes, due to which the question of multiculturalism naturally arises. In the colonial period, labourers went from slave countries. " (Sisk 2017 p.3) Colonial-era migrants form an important political community today in these respective countries. They are the ruling community in Fiji and Mauritius now. Despite having settled there for a long time, they still have to face the problem of assimilation to some extent. "Amid rapid social change, migrants find themselves in new countries and societies where they may become long-term or permanent residents, but remain cultural ‘outsiders” (Sisk : 2017 p. 2) The strong impact and pain of this thing is visible in Modood's works. The titles of his books explain a lot. Still Not Easy Being British (2010), Global Migration, Ethnicity and Britishness (2011), as he says - "Multiculturalism also has a more restricted meaning, especially in Britain and other parts of Europe…By immigration, specifically, the immigration from outside Europe, of non-white peoples into predominantly white countries.” (Modood 2013 p 02)

The labour and marginally educated clerical classes from the slave countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America were taken by the colonial forces to places like USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South America, Fiji, West Indies, South Africa, etc., which remained the same after the end of the colonies and were quite. To some extent, the religions there got mixed in the language and culture, but even after
centuries their cultural identity remained and they were able to create a separate diaspora. Because the
democratic governance system in countries like America, Australia and Canada gave them an
opportunity to flourish, due to which their cultural identity, traditions and customs were protected and
all this was presented as a political demand. Canada and the United States are a classic example of this,
where the Sikh and French population in Canada and the Black population in the US became an
important political entity. As a result, multiculturalism naturally becomes a political question because it
is related to co-existence, social struggle and power sharing. As he said

"The recognition of group difference within the public sphere of laws, policies, democratic discourses
and the terms of a shared citizenship and national identity – while sharing something in common with
the political movements described above has a much narrower focus. struggles of a range of
marginalised groups or on group differences cannot be entirely separated from each other."

(Modood 2013 p 02)

Ethnic migration:

In America Australia New Zealand and Canada "most of the migrants were historically of European
descent" (Modood p 03) Anglo saxon and European migration took place from Europe, especially
from Britain, in countries like America, Australia, New Zealand, etc., in the context of the establishment
of the colony and in the context of the acquisition of gold, silver and other minerals in the colonial
period. Go and settle down. In the early period, they established colonies in these countries and settled
there after the end of colonialism, and taking advantage of the benefits of industrial revolution,
contributed to the progress of these countries and became the main population of those countries. In
these countries, this ethnic migration tried to impose its language, religion and culture instead of doing
cultural assimilation with the natives, due to which multiculturalism in these countries often means the
cultural identity of the natives and the cultural identity of another multiculturalist diaspora. Thus the
example of these countries presents a different background of multiculturalism.

Post colonial migration:

In the post-war period, migration increased drastically due to the existence of armed conflicts and large-
scale natural disasters, growing global inequalities and new international agreements liberalising
personal movement. Even so, annual immigration rose only gradually after World War II. The share of
the population born abroad increased by about one-third in Oceania between 1965 and 2000 (from 14.4
to 19.1 per cent), more than doubling in North America (from 6 to 13 per cent) and more than tripling in
Europe (from 2.2 to 7.7 per cent) (Williamson 2006). Since the 1980s, Europe has become a destination
for immigrants from Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and the Middle East and Iran. After the after the fall of
the Berlin Wall, Western Europe absorbed increasing numbers of immigrants from the countries of the
former Eastern bloc. Immigration from Eastern Europe to Western Europe increased fivefold between
1985 and 1989, and first exceeded one million a year in 1993. " (Sisk 2017 p.4)
They can return home or seek to influence politics there with ideas and a mentality that claims the right to democracy. Research on Mexico has assessed the ways in which democratic ideas travel across borders with returned migrants—so-called democratic diffusion. Similarly, research on Nepal underscores how returning migrants have been at the forefront of mobilising for access to justice back home.” (Sisk 2017 p.8) During the post colonial period, migration from the colonies to Europe and America took place due to economic reasons. The educated middle class from the colonies settled in Europe, America, Canada, etc. either for education or in search of work. By the last decades of the 20th century, when the Cold War came to an end and the process of globalisation progressed rapidly, the migration of this educated professional class took place very rapidly all over the world, especially in Europe and America. But most of these were non-European and non-white folk. Since this class was educated, it was more aware of its rights, so this class demanded political equality, equal rights of work etc. and became an important political unit. Black Americans, Muslim Americans, American Indians, etc. are important political groups in America. It is generally amalgamated in the society, but in the socio-political interaction, often they pay the price of being a diaspora. “migrants were more readily seen as prospective co-citizens and the nation was seen as multiethnic in its source, even if till the 1960s and 1970s, assimilation, what was expected from migrants and certainly their children.” (Modood 2013 p 02)

Intensity of the problem of assimilation is so high that Tariq Maudood himself realised it. The name of one of his important books "Still Not Easy Being British” (2010), tells the whole story. It is apparent how difficult it is to be British even today for a group having a multicultural or separate cultural identity. That's why multiculturalism becomes a multidimensional concept, Tariq Maudood himself finds himself unable to give any precise definition about it very clearly. So he tries to test the liberal bias about multiculturalism before defining multiculturalism, and in this process he critically examines the approach of Will Kymlicka.

LIBERAL BIAS AND KYMLICKA:

Will kymlicka is the first thinker who gave a theoretical dimension to multiculturalism and established it as a political concept but there are some major flaws in Kimlicka's analysis which Tariq Moudood points out. According to Maudood, Kimlika's analysis is more socio-economic rather than politico-cultural analysis. Kimlika looks at multiculturalism from the point of view of John Rawls and like Rawls he sees it in terms of socioeconomic inequalities and differences and diversities. In his view, the
state is an institution with socio-economic inequalities and differences and diversities, in which the function of the state is to remain neutral towards these socio-economic equality and equalities and not to interfere much. Modood says "The theory stressed that the citizens were only free and would rationally only cooperate together if the state the constitution, laws, government and the services delivered by the state was neutral between the diverse religious and ethical beliefs of its citizens. No citizen should feel that the state represented a religion or an ‘-ism’ which they did not share and indeed to which they were hostile. It was argued that this could only be achieved if the state remained neutral between all ‘conceptions of the good’. " (Modood 2013 p 20-21)

Thus the job of the state is like a referee to see that equal opportunities are available to all and no one violates the rules of the game. Therefore liberalism or liberal political democracy is the prerequisite of multiculturalism. But kymlicka demands state interference for the protection and conservation of social, cultural and economic rights of natives and multicultural groups. Exemption for sikh people from wearing helmet on turban " Of such cases, Kymlicka is usually sympathetic...he thinks it is reasonable that the Canadian province of Quebec should actively promote the French language and finds himself reluctantly supporting legislation that disbars the use of English in certain contexts...He defends the prohibition that prevents the non-indigenous (non-‘Indians’) from buying land in certain areas for he recognizes that such purchases would lead to an economic takeover that would mean the end of certain indigenous communities and cultures" (Modood 2013 p 24-25)

Thus Modood agrees with the cultural aspect of existing multiculturalism but still he believes that even after giving the cultural concept of multiculturalism, Will Kimlicka confuses it with socioeconomic inequalities and never recovers from the influence of Rawls. That's why he clearly says in his various writings that we should not confuse multiculturalism with nationalism, nation-state, religion and ethnicity. So he clearly says that "We need a theory of multiculturalism that does not have an anti-immigrant bias and brings together rather than drives apart ethnicity and religion...The cultures that multiculturalism should begin with...do not need to be ‘societal’. They have to be cultures or identities that matter to people who are marked by ‘difference’ the latter being a product of exclusionary processes, of impositions from ‘outside’ one’s culture, as well as cultures that are particularly meaningful as ‘mine’. Such a concept of difference has to be considered in terms of how the negative element, the stigmatic differentiation from others, can be undone by bringing to bear upon it an extended concept of equality and a sense of belonging with others." (Modood 2013 P. 33)

Conclusion:

Modood has comprehensively analysed the question of multiculturalism. Especially the sociological perspective of multiculturalism has been analysed very well. But still there are many critical inconsistencies in Modood's analysis. Like Modood's analysis is limited and its area of study is basically Britain. Due to such a limited area, its conclusions also become limited. Because apart from Britain, in Europe itself there are various examples of multi-cultures which have different types of
problems. Similarly, present analysis essentially analyses the question of multiculturalism related to the Muslim population in Britain. Here too the limits of this analysis are visible. Because the question of Muslim population in Britain is not the same as in France and other countries of Europe or is very different from it. The question of the Muslim population in France has more to do with France's colonial relationship with Algeria than with multiculturalism. Apart from this, while analysing the Muslim problem in the analysis of multiculturalism in Britain, Modood has not given enough space to the background of Islamic fundamentalism, especially Wahhabi Salafi fundamentalism. But despite these critical inconsistencies, Modood's analysis provides an important insight into understanding and proposing solutions to multiculturalism and the problems arising from multiculturalism in liberal democratic systems.
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