

## Global Citizenship

Dr. Paromita Chakraborty, Surendranath College

(Also add the study materials that I sent to you by mail with these notes)

Over the past 15 years or so, globalization has become a key term in the social sciences. Some important questions about globalization remain open and one such question concerns its effects on the constitution of political communities and membership, i.e. the question of citizenship.

The 'hyper-globalist' perspective states that globalization is inevitably leading towards global convergence, whereby states become weak and unable to protect their citizens against global pressures.

Today as the central economic dynamics transcend national borders and become uncontrollable for national governments, the autonomy of the nation-state is called into question. Second, the ideology of distinct and relatively autonomous national cultures dissolves.

Today there is also a world-wide expansion of markets and capitalism, causing a loss of control of states as well as disorder and new inequalities. The end of the territorial restraining powers of the state releases vast new forces which cause deep fragmentation of meaning and identities. Limits of geography or space are largely overturned and cultures are exposed to each other.

According to Castles and Davidson, it is this new dimensions of global mobility and the permanent presence of collective others in multi-ethnic societies that demand a radical rethinking of citizenship.

Citizenship hence can be defined as about rights, duties, access and belonging. It would first result in more open and democratic states, with flexible belonging based on residence instead of nationality, and, second, result in new forms of democratic participation (on various levels and in various contexts) transcending state borders.

At first, citizenship is said to be no longer a unitary framework consisting of rights, duties, participation and identity. Several questions soon became prominent in discussions including: What principles should guide international action? What responsibilities do we have to the global poor? Should global inequality be morally troubling? Are there types of non-liberal people who should be tolerated?

A distinction is often drawn between global and international justice. An important advantage of asking what states owe one another is that much international law presupposes the states system and requires states to perform various actions to promote justice. Much discussion about what we owe one another in the global context is influenced by the work of John Rawls.

In *The Law of Peoples*, John Rawls argues for eight principles that he believes should regulate international interactions of peoples. For Rawls, a “people” is constituted by a group of persons who have in common sufficient characteristics such as culture, history, tradition, or sentiment. Rawls uses the term “people” in ways that relevantly correspond with how many use the term “nation”. In addition, Rawls often assumes that, for the most part, each people has a state.

He also advocated for international institutions governing trade, borrowing, and other international matters that are characteristically dealt with by the United Nations. In particular, Rawls believes that so long as all peoples have a set of institutions that enable citizens to lead decent lives, any global inequality that might remain is not morally troubling

Today the world is also facing large-scale migration of all kinds of groups (e.g. refugees, migrant workers, highly skilled specialists) to all parts of the globe. What is emphasized as new is not migration itself but its changed dimension in terms of quantities, global range and frequency. Such large numbers of migrants cannot eventually be assimilated into the national population. Moreover, migrants come from increasingly distant areas geographically as well as culturally

Also one of the most visible and large-scale contemporary global justice problems we face is that of global poverty. Drawing on the idea that we all have equal moral worth, cosmopolitans seek to broaden our moral horizons so that we do not forget about the

responsibilities we have to others beyond state borders, even when we have local responsibilities as well.

Martha Nussbaum emphasizes that, as human beings, we belong to a global community of human persons. Nussbaum argues that while love for one's country might have a legitimate place in people's conceptions of a good life, we should not overlook the many other relationships we are in which connect us to others in the world. Hence we need to draw the global community in closer to the local one, and, more generally, aim to see ourselves as members of overlapping communities which also have important claims on us. Also we need to ensure that global institutional structures give equal consideration to everyone's interests.