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**Midterm Examination**

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**School of General Education, Brac University**

**CST 309: GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP**

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**Question 1. How does the idea of citizenship as social closure help us understand the alienation of the indigenous population within the territory of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh?** (Use Brubaker and Balibar’s analytical framework to formulate your answer)

The term "indigenous people" refers to communities with distinct social and cultural identities that set them apart from dominant societal groups. The indigenous people of Bangladesh experience challenges and hardships related to their citizenship, which leads to a sense of alienation. By utilizing the frameworks developed by Balibar and Brubaker, we hope to put into perspective the alienation that the indigenous people of the People's Republic of Bangladesh experience.

According to Brubaker (1992), a fundamental component of the modern political environment is citizenship, whereby each state formally defines its citizenry and categorizes individuals as either citizens or noncitizens. He refers to citizenship as belonging to an organization that a contemporary state provides rather than just residency. This distinction serves as the foundation for the state's legitimacy to represent and further the interests of a nation.

The concept of social closure, as articulated by Max Weber discusses the idea of social closure as limiting or restricting access to social interactions or privileges to certain outsiders (Brubaker, 1992). Subsequently, indigenous populations in Bangladesh face social closure resulting in not having proper access to education, employment, and hardships in everyday life (Quader, 2008). Moreover, their challenges continue in issues like the restoration of authority and functions to the Chittagong Hill Tracts institutions, the maintenance of the tribal area's distinctive features, and the demilitarization of the area (IWGIA - International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2023). Their situation shares similar characteristics with Balibar’s (2015) idea of passive citizenship of women during the French Revolution.

Despite a peace accord a decade ago, tensions persist in the Chittagong Hill Tracts due to past conflicts between indigenous groups and government forces, occasionally involving reported human rights abuses which have increased the alienation (Quader, 2008). As the resistance keeps building up, the term negative community emerges mentioned by Balibar (2015) which is when a peaceful protest of a group against exclusion takes a turn into a riot, resulting in exclusion from inclusion in the form of passive citizenship.

According to Balibar (2015), People become part of a territory by being in the same community. Additionally, when different communities lack mutual recognition, it can lead to exclusion. In contrast, Brubaker (1992) defined territorial closure as people being forced to leave certain territories losing access to all related opportunities and services. Evidently, fewer options for indigenous populations to assimilate into mainstream society and limited legal protection to prevent their land invasion are the results of their territorial closure.

Indigenous people of Bangladesh are marginalized due to their ethnicity. As explained by Brubaker (1992), modern states aim to be associated with a particular group of people belonging to a particular nation, not just with a piece of land. Subsequently, ethnocultural closure can occur through the direct exclusion of particular groups, such as the indigenous people of Bangladesh who are excluded from certain rights due to their ethnicity.

Domestic closure, on the other hand, is a concept of the nation-state, whose membership is restricted and exclusive (Brubaker, 1992). In fact, the state's conceptual and legal maintenance of a border between its indigenous and non-indigenous citizens can be understood as a manifestation of this closure, which is reflected in the exclusion and discrimination experienced by our indigenous population. Undoubtedly, they are being internally excluded as Balibar (2015) discusses when certain people inside a country get the feeling of not belonging because of being treated differently or having their rights within certain limits.

Citizenship-based closure is formal and regulated by articulated norms. However, it may overlap with informal closure against ethnocultural nonnationals, where enforcement is biased by informal factors (Brubaker, 1992). Although citizenship is meant to be impartial, indigenous people frequently experience discrimination because of their cultural identity. Besides, a dynamic aspect of Balibar (2015) shows exclusion can be not just physically separating a community but also being excluded from participation in economic activities, communication, and mobility.

According to Brubaker (1992), citizenship can be used as a tool for closure by restricting access to the status of citizenship to a certain group while bestowing certain rights to another. Furthermore, alienation occurs for indigenous populations in Bangladesh as they are excluded from full civic participation due to the restrictive ascription of citizenship and differences in the naturalization of policies. Additionally, while some populations benefit from citizenship, indigenous communities may face challenges as it becomes a locally exclusive rather than a universal right. This complex relationship illustrates the dual character of citizenship discussed by Balibar (2015), where the very universal ideals that are supposed to bring people together frequently coexist with practices that exclude certain populations.

To sum up, indigenous communities' persistent struggle for rights underscores the ethnocultural, territorial, and domestic closures faced by them. Utilizing Brubaker and Balibar's frameworks, we explored the impact of citizenship on such social closures resulting in their alienation. Even though citizenship is supposed to be impartial, it frequently collides with cultural identity, leading to biased enforcement and increased alienation of the country's indigenous populations.

***References***

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**Question 2. How does Balibar’s notion of the territorial metaphor of inclusion and exclusion help us understand the political and social condition of the stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh? Answer your question using Dina Siddiqi’s article ‘Left Behind by the Nation: ‘Stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh’ (2013).**

The Urdu-speaking Muslim population of Bangladesh, often referred to as "stranded Pakistanis," came to East Pakistan during the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 (Siddiqi, 2013). Despite having contributed to the formation of Pakistan, they encountered challenges in Bangladesh after the country's independence, which limited their ability to engage in social and political life. The notion of the territorial metaphor of inclusion and exclusion proposed by Étienne Balibar helps clarify the political and social circumstances surrounding the Pakistanis who are stranded in Bangladesh as discussed in Dina Siddiqi's article.

According to Dina Siddiqi (2013), around 699,000 Muslims fled to East Pakistan during the 1947 partition due to the communal riots in India against the Muslim minority. They initially seemed reluctant to interact with the locals and seemed unsure of their national affiliation due to linguistic and cultural differences. Bengalis therefore perceived them as a unified community claiming cultural exclusivity and superiority over the rest of the population. In addition, the Pakistani government's bias in favor of Urdu speakers and its disapproval of assimilation have collectively shaped the outlook of Bengalis and led to the exclusion of the Standard Pakistanis from inclusion.

Balibar (2015) raises questions about the concept of subjects and relationships between subjects asking who is excluded and who is responsible for exclusion. Subsequently, he asserts that the community itself is responsible for exclusion. However, this participation often happens through the delegation of power to the state. Moreover, citizens may influence stronger exclusionary measures against immigrants out of social anxiety if they are socially disadvantaged which is what happened in the case of the standard Pakistanis.

Exclusion has two aspects such as historical and symbolic that are influenced by each other (Balibar, 2015). Following this, one of the main causes of the exclusion of the Urdu-speaking population was their immigration history and the symbolic nature of different languages and cultures. However, there cannot be an institutional process for exclusion without a rule. Hence, when non-Bengalis in East Pakistan were invited to pledge allegiance to Bangladesh in 1973's inclusive declaration, it ironically resulted in their civil death unless they conformed to the Bengali culture through cultural conversion, and suppressed linguistic and ethnic differences as evidence of their nationalism (Siddiqi, 2013). Therefore, not only exclusion, but inclusion can also be violent, especially when people are forced to assimilate or conform, as in this case, which pushes them to remain excluded.

After the initial wave of repatriations, more than 150,000 people were confined to the physical borders of 116 camps. The camps are remarkably similar to the "ghettos" or "banlieues" that Balibar (2015) discusses. Similar to the youth in the banlieues of France, these Biharis are now considered part of the Bangladesh nation, possessing public and social citizenship, and yet unable to exercise their rights as a citizen due to passive citizenship which is when individuals have the legal status of citizenship but lack the active ability to fully participate in the social and political life of the nation (Siddiqi, 2013).

Before 2003, the Biharis lived in a stateless limbo, deemed civil dead with neither a state nor rights. While they were granted citizenship in 2008, they still face difficulties in actively exercising their rights in Bangladesh, resembling passive citizenship (Siddiqi, 2013). Even though it might seem that as social citizens they are not externally excluded, the existence of exclusionary democracy reveals deep structural inequalities of passive citizens within contemporary citizenship (Balibar, 2015). Furthermore, there is a universal paradox regarding citizenship that states that while some people gain from it, others could be disadvantaged. In this instance, the Biharis are the victims of this citizenship. All these activities led to their exclusion from Bangladeshi communities, resulting in misrecognition and hindering their participation in commerce.

Balibar's (2015) analogy to the French Revolution, where women were passive citizens initially, reflects a similar scenario to the stranded Pakistanis where individuals have the legal status of citizenship but are unable to be active citizens by actively engaging in the social and political life of the nation. Additionally, their linguistic and cultural differences have created an invisible barrier that has prevented them from integrating into mainstream society (Siddiqi, 2013). According to Balibar (2015), internal exclusion occurs when certain individuals within a nation feel as though they don't belong there due to being treated differently or being expected to exercise their rights to a certain extent. Hence, the Standard Pakistanis became a negative community facing discrimination, lack of opportunity, and often being treated as second-class citizens.

Developing Arendt's Concept of a "Right to Rights" Balibar (2015) illustrates the transition from "constituted power" to "constituent power," which is the capacity to actively defend and assert one's rights in public spaces, both of which are crucial for avoiding exclusion. Although standard Pakistanis are entitled to certain rights because they are citizens of Bangladesh, one major factor contributing to their internal exclusion is that they lack the "constituent power" to actively exercise those rights resulting in them existing in the form of resistance.

Balibar (2015) discusses that people become part of a territory either by being in the same community or by participating in commerce. Additionally, misrecognition within these different communities can lead to exclusion. Similarly, as many of the Bihari people actively sided with the Pakistani army during the war, all Urdu speakers were identified as closely associated with them which excluded them from inclusion in Bangladeshi communities (Siddiqi, 2013). Furthermore, while individuals such as Javed Hasan, who was featured in the article by Dina Siddiqi (2013), continue to their right to return to Pakistan, mainstream Bengalis view them as collaborators during the war and socially reject them.

Members of one community may feel as if they belong to another imagined community, creating a conflict that determines who gets to be a citizen, as discussed in Balibar's (2015) second thesis. This contrasts with the older generation of Standard Pakistanis, such as Shoukat Ali, who oppose Bangladesh's rule and consider themselves to be citizens of Pakistan. However, the younger generation of this community does not share this sentiment, resulting in an ongoing conflict within their community that keeps them from being included (Siddiqi, 2013).

In conclusion, the analysis of Siddiqi's article using Balibar's territorial metaphor sheds light on the challenging struggles faced by Pakistanis who have become stranded in Bangladesh. Their exclusion is a result of historical, symbolic, and cultural factors that emphasize the paradox of citizenship. The persistent challenge of engaging in active participation highlights the intricate dynamics of inclusion within Bangladeshi society. The situation they are facing emphasizes the need for a nuanced understanding of citizenship to address deeply embedded structural injustices.

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