
CATEGORIES OF EXCLUSION AND THE SOCIAL PRODUCTION OF THE "IMMIGRANT"

Antinomy of "democracy" and "citizenship"

Exclusionary Production of Groups

"Immigrant" as the Excluded

Antinomy of “Citizen” and “Democracy”, is Historically Determined

- Aristotle held that political regimes involving citizens holding office will always also involve an element of democracy that cannot be eliminated in favor of other forms of government (*Politics* Book III).
- Spinoza thought of democracy as a tendency of monarchical and aristocratic regimes in which power devolves into the hands of the multitude (*Tractatus Politicus*).
- Marx asserted that democracy, as “legislative authority,” is the central “truth of all constitutions” (*Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right*).
- Negri supplied a definition of democracy as the central thematic cry of the affirmative theory of constituent power of the multitude as the necessity to gain acceptance (*Insurgencies: Constituent Power and the Modern State*).
- Rancière asserted that no regime can eliminate the risk posed by the necessity of gaining acceptance from its people, who can decide to obey—or not (*Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*).

Categories of citizenship and democracy traverse the entire history of political institutions.

- The historical antinomy becomes visible through exclusion.
 - Consider the exclusion from citizenship of specific groups
 - E.g., slaves, women, wage laborers, colonial subjects, immigrants, etc.
 - Exclusion supplants inequity, becomes generalized and obscures questions of citizenship rendering it concrete.
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Exclusion Breeds the Need for Representation which Presents Complications of Its Own

- Signifiers (e.g., immigrant, illegal immigrant, legal immigrant; like woman, subaltern, subaltern woman), when used to identify groups, circulate in such a way that intends them to be understood as universal signifiers signifying a concrete identity for all individuals within the group. Explanations can Sometimes look like arguments so be careful
 - The notion of “consciousness-raising” is important as there are complicated social relations that constitute us as individuals that are not immediately transparent.
 - It is equally important to recognize who determines that one’s consciousness needs elevation and what such (prescribed) elevation entails (lest we run the risk of perpetuating oppression).
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Production through Exclusion

- Exclusion allows for the analysis of persistent forms of discrimination and violence when the category of race is presented as “officially” disqualified.
 - A paradoxical situation arises in which forms of institutional racism that are characterized practices such as slavery, segregation or apartheid are dismantled without the cessation of racism in either the institutions that remain functional or in general social relations.
 - Exclusion designates a circumscribed set of social practices occupying a quasi-central place as a set of historical formations that possesses a propensity to be xenophobic.
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“Exclusion” Presupposes Models of “Belonging”

- This can denote the existence of conditions at the bottom of a system of competitive social hierarchies.
 - This is how one finds oneself cut off from a national or cultural totality:
 - Where cultures are cut off from progress.
 - Where collective histories are suppressed by the grand narrative of universal history.
 - Where all discourse communicates dominant norms.
 - It is in this way that visible and invisible forms of violence are manifested.
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“Immigrant” as the “Excluded”

- The immigrant’s lived experience unfolds as conditions of insecurity tied to *forced mobility* that prevents them from settling permanently.
 - There is also the impoverishment of the immigrant through the loss of citizenship and social property by way of long term unemployment and deskilling of trades.
 - This commonly enforced through the populist vote that identifies them as the “disaffiliated.”
 - Ironically, this results in *forced immobility* (experienced physically and culturally when mobility is the norm).
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Conflict?

- Participation in of citizens in the exclusion of non-citizens delegates power to the state in order to denote the line between these two types of human beings.
 - This exposes exclusionary rules to perverse uses insofar as states and laws responsible for carrying out the differentiation are themselves fragile authorities whose legitimacy can be called into question.
 - Exclusionary rules are exploited and applied toward racist or xenophobic ends.
 - Such ends do not stem from the true conflicts of interest between culturally or historically foreign communities and are instead mechanisms for projecting social anxieties of the majority or dominant group.
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The “immigrant” is socially constructed through exclusionary practices demanded of the representative state by a quasi-community of quasi-citizens, citizens concerned with their own rights and their own recognition.

End?
