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Negotiating Democracy in Brazil: The Politics of Exclusion

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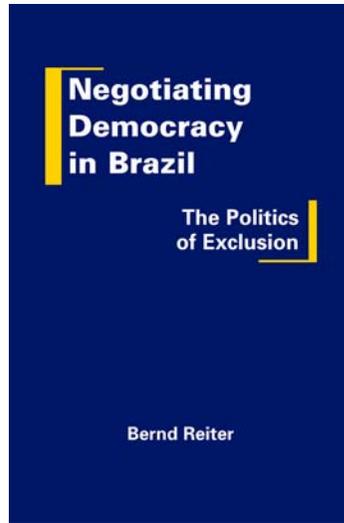
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Negotiating Democracy in Brazil: The Politics of Exclusion

Bernd Reiter

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1

Introduction

Societal inequalities undermine democracy. That is the main argument I seek to advance in this book. The country I chose as a case to demonstrate this relationship is Brazil – one of the most inequitable countries of the world. Over the last fifteen years I have spent much time in Brazil and conducted several research projects in different parts of the country. My work has focused on Brazilian civil society, education reform, and political participation. Reflecting on my research on different policy areas, I came to realize that one theme held them all together, that what I was seeing in different contexts were different manifestations of the same underlying pattern. Extreme inequality and the pervasive attempts of historically included sectors to perpetuate and defend their inherited privilege seemed to be responsible not only for a civil society that fell short of its democratizing potential but also for faltering school reform, and unsuccessful attempts of citizen participation in local governance. An analysis of the ways and strategies of defending privilege in Brazil promises to shed light on the social dynamics and causal mechanisms that impede democratic deepening. As such, my findings on Brazil are not confined to that country but pose general questions about societal inequality and democracy that are equally relevant for the study of democracy elsewhere.

My studies of different aspects of Brazilian democracy revealed two general insights. The first is that to understand the impacts of societal inequality on democracy, one must focus on those groups that benefit from this inequality. The second is that democracy cannot be adequately understood by focusing exclusively on the political system. I realized that any treatment of Brazilian democracy must include an analysis of Brazilian society, in which, after all, the political system is embedded. This cannot be achieved by simply including the variable of civil society (as done, e.g. by Linz and Stepan, 1996) or by focusing on democratic culture (following Almond and Verba, 1963).¹ To capture the shortcomings of democracy, one must analyze society and focus on the ways the societal system interacts with and indeed structures the political system.²

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Although states must be seen as important and partially autonomous actors, most authors following the path-breaking work of Evans, Skocpol, and Rueschemeyer (1985) have overestimated the state's autonomy and neglected the relationship between autonomous states and the society in which those states are embedded. Evans, Skocpol and Rueschemeyer were certainly right to point out that, "states conceived as organizations claiming control over territories and people may formulate and pursue goals that are not simply reflective of the demands or interests of social groups, classes, or society."³ But while Brazil's democracy undoubtedly suffers from the shortcomings of Brazil's political system, the gravest impediments to consolidating democracy are not of a political nature, but of a social nature. Furthermore, it is not the failing state that causes Brazil's democracy to fall short of its promises, but, on the contrary, Brazil's extreme societal inequality that permits the Brazilian state too much autonomy from the will and needs of the majority population. In short, the extreme inequalities that characterize Brazilian society are ultimately responsible for its faltering political regime. Accordingly, my main argument is that a political system lacks legitimacy if the society in which it is embedded is extremely unequal. Inequality causes a great part of its population to be excluded from the active exercise of basic citizenship and civil rights. The flipside of exclusion is that included groups have long captured the state and used it to advance their own goals without feeling, and in effect without effectively being, accountable to the masses.

In other words, the Brazilian political system is disconnected from the majority of its population, while a relatively small minority of Brazilians uses the political system to advance its own ends. In the words of Teresa Caldeira and James Holston (1998), "The protections and immunities civil rights are intended to ensure as constitutional norms are generally perceived and experienced as privileges of elite social statuses and thus of limited access. They are not, in other words, appreciated as common rights of citizenship."⁴ I agree with this analysis. In this book, I therefore propose to "bring society back in."

Accordingly, this book argues that although Brazil's political system is troubled, the division of its society is far more troublesome and much more consequential, not just at the societal level, but for the political system as well, because political systems are embedded in social systems. No matter how minimalist one wants to define democracy,⁵ its legitimacy must ultimately reside in a democratic

society, where the core value of democracy, namely having access to basic citizenship rights, is guaranteed. A democratic political system embedded in an undemocratic society is an absurdity and those accounts that focus their attention exclusively on political systems are unable to capture the ultimate causes for faltering democratic regimes. Brazil provides a clear example and therefore an excellent case for studying the tension that results from a society where civil rights and liberties are not guaranteed to the majority of Brazilians, but where the political system continues to function smoothly, following the rules and procedures laid out for it by the Constitution.

My second insight is that an adequate understanding of Brazilian democracy and its shortcomings requires a detailed understanding of the dialectic ways exclusion and inclusion constitute each other and what mechanisms are used by Brazilians in their everyday lives to uphold the crucial distinction between who counts as a full citizen with full access the citizenship rights and who does not. In my research I found that upholding this distinction is of utmost importance to the historically privileged and included groups and it is of far reaching consequences for both sides of this equation because it provides the critical edge, or the competitive advantage, in the daily competition for goods in markets characterized by extreme scarcity. This book, then, pays much attention to the strategies used by historically included groups to defend their inherited privileges. My main argument therefore is that it is not inequality per se that renders Brazilian democracy problematic. It is the constant efforts of historically included groups to uphold inequality and protect their privileged access to citizenship rights that casts a deep shadow over Brazilian democracy.

To understand the dialectic relationship between exclusion and inclusion, it becomes necessary to step beyond the disciplinary limits of mainstream political science and integrate the work of other social sciences. Insights and theoretical frameworks borrowed from history and sociology have proven especially helpful for this endeavor.

Once a shift of focus toward societal phenomena is undertaken, another step is necessary. I argue that understanding the impact of societal inequality on democracy requires another shift of in point of view, this time away from the excluded and toward the included and the mechanisms they use to perpetuate their inclusion and the related exclusion of others. By examining again and again the excluded, researchers, sociologists and anthropologists in particular, have contributed to the problematization of the excluded and helped consolidate the erroneous idea that there is something wrong with the

poor, the indigenous, blacks, and other historically marginalized groups.⁶ Instead of focusing solely on the excluded, we need to pay more attention to those benefiting from their exclusion. In the following, I shall propose the concept of “inclusion” for that purpose.

Theorizing Inclusion

In the absence of specific literature on inclusion, the vast literature on exclusion, inequality, and injustice provides initial insights. Judith Butler (1998), for example, asks rhetorically, “is it possible to distinguish, even analytically, between a lack of cultural recognition and a material oppression, when the very definition of legal ‘personhood’ is rigorously circumscribed by cultural norms that are indissociable from their material effects?”⁷ For Butler, the answer is no. In her essay she explains that the cultural and material are indeed intimately intertwined. She traces this insight back to Marx’s *German Ideology* (1846) and Engels’ *Origin of family, private property, and the state* (1884). Marx points to the connection of the mode of production that produces a certain and corresponding mode of cooperation and social organization.⁸

Much of Butler’s critique takes issue with Nancy Fraser’s distinction between injustices of distribution and injustices of recognition. Nancy Fraser (1998) argues that both kinds of injustices are equally serious, but that they operate differently. For Fraser, to be misrecognized means “to be denied the status of a full partner in social interaction and prevented from participating as a peer in social life – not as a consequence of a distributive inequity (such as failing to receive one’s fair share of resources or ‘primary goods’), but rather as a consequence of institutionalized patterns of interpretation and evaluation that constitute one as comparatively unworthy of respect or esteem.”⁹ Accordingly, Fraser defines misrecognition as an “institutionalized social relation, not a psychological state.”¹⁰ Fraser also points to the connection she makes between the symbolic and the material. For her, “The norms, significations, and constructions of personhood that impede women, racialized peoples, and/or gays and lesbians from parity of participation in social life are materially instantiated – in institutions and social practices, in social action and embodied habitus, and yes, in ideological state apparatuses. Far from occupying some wispy, ethereal realm, they are material in their existence and effects.”¹¹

However the material and cultural relate, this discussion clearly demonstrates that exclusion *has* two dimensions and it necessary

follows that inclusion is equally constituted by material and symbolic or cultural variables. Among the symbolic variables, whiteness is extremely consequential. Whiteness, anything but a biological reality, is used as a symbolical indicator of civilizing potential.¹² Lesser (1999) demonstrated that what it meant to be “white” shifted in Brazil between 1850 and 1950, but whiteness remained a cultural category, signifying superiority and well-deserved privilege. Brazilian elites openly discussed and compared the different degrees of whiteness of such potential immigrants as Arabs, Japanese, and Southern Europeans, associating whiteness with aptitude.¹³ The idea of whiteness was therefore constructed and used as a form of capital, strongly associated with merit and progressive, developmental potential.

French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s (1984) theory of distinction provides an entrance point for conceptualizing whiteness as a highly effective form of capital, functioning in a social space that is constituted in relation to other social positions, where each one uses the other for reference. Although Bourdieu ignores ethnicity and race in his theory, his thoughts on gender point to a direction that allows further development. He argues that, “the volume and composition of capital give specific form and value to the determinations which the other factors (age, sex, place of residence etc.) impose on practices. Sexual properties are as inseparable from class practices as the yellowness of a lemon is from its acidity: a class is defined in an essential respect by the place and value it gives to the sexes and to their socially constituted dispositions.”¹⁴

In a similar way, whiteness constitutes capital in addition to the other types of capital, namely financial, social, and cultural. Their importance, however, does not follow a simple additive logic. One type of capital rather connects to the others and together they determine the social place an individual will hold in a society. This allows for some flexibility, as one form of capital can be used to partly compensate for the lack of another, although this flexibility is limited precisely by the lumped condition of the different capitals. In that way, as Bourdieu points out correctly, each single form of capital tends to over-determine the social position of its carrier, as the presence or absence of each single one is perceived as being indicative of the presence or absence of the others. It is in this sense that whiteness over-determines its carrier, bestowing him with a social position that might not be warranted. In other words, because of the composite character of the different forms of capital, whiteness signals the presence of other forms, even though they might not be

present. Blackness, at the same time, signifies the absence of other types of capital and equally over-determines its carrier.

The resulting social position then becomes a social expectation and reflects back on the carrying individual. In Bourdieu's own words, "the homogeneity of the disposition associated with a position and their seemingly miraculous adjustment to the demands inscribed in it result partly from the mechanisms which channel towards positions individuals who are already adjusted to them, either because they feel 'made' for jobs that are 'made' for them (...) or because they are seen in this light by the occupants of the posts (...) and partly from the dialectic which is established, throughout a lifetime, between dispositions and positions, aspirations and achievements."¹⁵ In other words, individuals tend to conform to the social positions they hold and to internalize the role expectations associated with these positions.

In sum, what matters is not the objective position an individual holds in the social space, but the subjective experience of living with and through this position and rather having to uphold and defend it in daily interactions, or trying to change or mask it in order to escape the negative effects resulting from potential over-determination. Defending or challenging one's social place therefore is a daily struggle and bears very tangible consequences for one's capabilities to live life. Given its relational character, maintaining one's own inclusion requires maintaining the exclusion of others.¹⁶

In order to reproduce a social structure that secures privileges and advantages to one group and denies it to others, the maintenance of the border that marks inclusion and separates it from exclusion becomes extremely important. It comes to no surprise that Brazilian daily life is full of symbolic acts that fulfill this border-maintenance function. This is even more the case where racial capital is not clearly demarcated and therefore illusive for providing clear borders of belonging.

Some Words on Methodology

Although I use statistical data, my main intention in this book is to better understand *how* and *why* inequality impacts democracy. Quantitative methods do not suffice to answer these questions, mainly because of their weakness in determining causality. The research method most suited for answering my questions regarding the relationship between inequality and democracy in Brazil, in my judgment, is the case study. By using a case study approach, I

broadly follow Alexander George and Andrew Bennett (2005) who define the case study approach as “the detailed examination of an aspect of a historical episode to develop or test historical explanations that may be generalizable to other events.”¹⁷

Within the broader field of case study analysis, process tracing is one of the most valuable tools. Process tracing “attempts to identify the intervening causal process – the causal chain and causal mechanism – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable.”¹⁸ Especially important in this method is the process tracing of deviant cases, extreme cases, most likely, and least likely cases. Process tracing can help to identify the chain of events that led to a certain outcome. By focusing on extreme cases, this method allows for an assessment of the most salient causes at work. By including deviant cases, it also allows for an assessment of the necessary or sufficient contribution of a causal variable in a certain outcome. Deviance can be caused by a previously overlooked variable. A deviant case might also lead to the specification of a theory.

I thus selected cases that I find particularly problematic and therefore especially telling, and this book focuses on some of the most extreme cases in which included Brazilians actively engage in defending their inherited privileged positions in social hierarchies. The causes and perceptions of urban violence are amongst the most telling in this respect, as violence has become a way to interpret Brazil and the interpretations of the causes for violence provide evidence for the worldview of the included. Another very telling case that allows for an analysis of the ways inclusions and exclusion constitute each other is provided by focusing on the daily interactions between maids and their employers. The employment of maids is very widespread in Brazil and it allows us to draw important conclusions about the mechanisms used by employers to constitute and justify their superiority over their employees. The very endemic persistence of clientelism and corruption in Brazilian politics raises important questions and an analysis of the underlying causes for this persistence promises to shed light on the ways state employment is used to perpetuate inclusion and to defend privilege. To better understand this endemic Brazilian problem, one needs to examine the history of how Brazilian elites have captured and used the state to perpetuate their own privilege.

But although these general treatments of Brazilian reality are extremely revealing and tell us much about how historically included groups operate to perpetuate their inclusion and to justify their

privilege, a true understanding of the causes and workings of defending privilege and upholding exclusion needs to zoom in even further and analyze the interactions between the included and the excluded in concrete and historically determined situations. To achieve this goal, this book presents case studies on education and political participation from one Brazilian city, Salvador. Salvador was chosen because it offered the richest and most promising environment for my analysis. Salvador is one of the poorest and most inequitable state capitals in Brazil, thus it provides us with a starker than average view of the mechanisms used to defend privilege. In addition, Salvador's population includes an above average percentage of black citizens, which provides us with the opportunity to examine the racialized character of upholding privilege with more clarity. Thus, Salvador represents an extreme case that elucidates the general functioning of defending privilege in Brazil and elsewhere, and the cases from Salvador allow us to gain a deeper understanding of the causes and mechanisms employed by the historically included to defend their privileged positions in social hierarchies. Salvador, then, constitutes an idealtype for the constitution of inclusion and exclusion and for the racialized nature of this process, but it is not an exception. The exclusion from the full exercise of citizenship rights and the role that education and the abuse of state power play in achieving this exclusion is characteristic of the whole country. The examples I am able to present in this book are intended to highlight some of the mechanisms used to achieve this exclusion. Adding more cases from different regions or even countries will not alter the logic I seek to unveil.

Definitions

My hypothesis that social inequalities cause Brazilian democracy to fall short of its promises immediately necessitates clarification of the two central concepts involved in the argument, namely "social inequality" and "democracy." I rely on probably the most recognized voice in the field for the definition of social inequality. Amartya Sen (1992 and 1999) has proposed a "capability approach" to assessing inequality. According to Sen (1992), "capability is, thus, a set of vectors of functionings, reflecting the person's freedom to lead one type of life or another. (...) This freedom, reflecting a person's opportunities of well-being must be valued at least for instrumental [*italics in original*] reasons, e.g. in judging how good a 'deal' a person has in the society. But in addition (...) freedom may be seen

as being intrinsically important for a good social structure.”¹⁹ Sen proposes a new foundation for the study of individual behavior, away from individual utilities and toward individual capabilities. Analyzing individuals as having a certain range of capability of choice and action brings the focus to enlarge these capabilities in order to get a more aggregated welfare function. In other words, it is Sen’s insight that investing in an individual’s capabilities through spending in her education and health also has a positive effect on markets, as these freedoms will very likely be used to produce and trade. At the same time, Sen gets rid of the predominant approach of treating self-interested action as the necessary and sufficient basis to produce Pareto optimality. If freedom to “choose what one has good reason to choose” becomes the basic assumption and replaces individual utility, then there is no reason to assume that profit maximizing is the only motive available to guide - and analyze - human action. This treatment offers several advantages, but most importantly it highlights the criterion of the ability of individuals to choose the kind of life they themselves deem valuable. This approach is especially relevant for the analysis of countries with a colonial background, as we shall see later.²⁰

Throughout his book, I provide several empirical examples of Brazilians with very unequal capabilities of living the kind of life they deem worth living and even of having a say in the collective decisions that impact their lives. The unequal distribution of the capability to live the life one values has not only important direct consequences on the democratic system. It also has important social consequences that impact democracy, as we shall see.

Defining the concept of “democracy” is more complicated and requires some more elaboration in order to justify the choice of one definition over another. I find the most useful framework to be Jürgen Habermas’ (1998) conceptualization of *discursive democracy*. His theoretical framework allows for the formulation of a coherent set of assumptions and hypotheses about democracy, democratic legitimacy, and the public sphere that I find helpful in assessing democracy’s quality.

Habermas’ model of discursive democracy operates in a space in-between normative models of democracy and sociological theories of society. That is it takes both the state and the society into account. From this perspective, inequality, misrecognition, and oppression are negatively related to democratic governance and they condition the very possibility of a democratic regime. According to Habermas, “only in an egalitarian public of citizens that has emerged from the

confines of class and thrown off the millennia-old shackles of social stratification and exploitation can the potential of an unleashed cultural pluralism fully develop.”²¹

This model of democracy is located in between traditional republican and liberal conceptions. From the republican view, it borrows the conception that democratic legitimacy ultimately rests on public will-formation. Against such communitarian approaches provided by Benjamin Barber (1985) or Michael Sandel (1996), it argues that participation in public affairs is not dependent on the cultivation of virtue, nor is it the citizens’ highest duty to participate in public affairs. In addition to the problems of feasibility that necessarily arise from republican conceptions of democracy in modern societies with millions of inhabitants, republican models of democracy also require substantive definitions of the public good, but what constitutes “the public good” has remained problematic. A discursive model of democracy argues that substantive definitions of the public good are desirable, but not fixed. They are instead open to review, because they are historically determined, and society must constantly engage in public deliberation about such substantive definitions.

Habermas finds that modern societies are too big, too decentered, and too multi-cultural to constitute homogeneous public spheres where all citizens can and must participate, and thus rejects most communitarian models and those classical republican conceptions of democracy that take their inspiration from Aristotle and the Greek *polis*. Deliberation, instead, occurs in several spheres, at several levels of institutionalized and non-institutionalized society, inside and outside the state. Republican views become less and less applicable as societies grow more diverse and multicultural and the drawing of borders of community necessarily excludes certain groups from a solidarity defined in ethnic or national terms.

Unlike the classical liberal conception of democracy, a discursive model of democracy recognizes the need for active citizen participation in democratic governance and remains skeptical of the idea that conflict and negotiations between private interests unfettered by government automatically produces public goods. It also takes issue with the liberal neutrality of the state towards different conceptions of the public good. From a deliberative perspective, it is not enough to ensure that everybody plays by the rules as certain substantive values of secular, modern societies are likely to come under attack by anti-democratic groups that play by the rules and use them to undermine the very basis on which modern,

secular societies stand. In Habermas' own words, "the discourse theory of democracy corresponds to the image of a decentered society, albeit a society in which the political public sphere has been differentiated as an arena for the perception, identification, and treatment of problems affecting the whole society."²²

According to Habermas, it is through "mobilizing citizen's communicative freedom for the formation of political beliefs"²³ that the democratically achieved common will can be created upon which legitimate state power must ultimately rest. Habermas further argues that, "the success of deliberative politics depends not on a collectively acting citizenry but on the institutionalization of the corresponding procedures and conditions of communication, as well as on the interplay of institutionalized deliberative processes with informally developed public opinions."²⁴ Seyla Benhabib (1996), in turn, explains that such deliberative models of democracy share a model of "*plurality of modes of association* in which all affected can have the right to articulate their point of view. These can range from political parties, to citizens' initiatives, to social movements, to voluntary associations, to consciousness-raising groups, and the like."²⁵ For Benhabib, deliberative processes should happen in all these different forms of associations, allowing for an "interlocking" and the creation of "networks" of spaces for deliberative reasoning. She argues that "legitimacy in complex democratic societies must be thought to result from the free and unconstrained public deliberation of all about matters of common concern."²⁶ This definition comes closest to the model Cohen and Rogers (1995) have called "egalitarian pluralism," understood as a set of institutional designs allowing for secondary associations to influence legislative and administrative arenas.

Critics have argued that deliberations can easily be distorted and manipulated. But instead of undermining this approach, this critique rather points to the reasons why so many contemporary democracies are lacking in quality. Democracy, after all, cannot develop its full potential in societies that are characterized by extreme inequalities, powerful authorities that are able to manipulate or intimidate others, or traditions or religions that, prohibit discussion of particular topics or define certain norms as "God-given" and out of the realm of public deliberation. A discursive conception of democracy helps us see why most democracies are weak and why political processes are oftentimes distorted, leading to inequitable outcomes.

As stated above, no matter how minimalist one's definition of democracy, democratic legitimacy must ultimately rest on public

consent and democratic government must be embedded in a democratic society for this consent to form without excluding significant parts of the citizenry. A collective will must be achieved discursively and behavioral and moral standards must be formed, consolidated, and become institutionalized in the form of legal standards, as Emile Durkheim demonstrated in the late 19th century.²⁷ Democratic legitimacy therefore must rest on a democratic public sphere that is open to all citizens, where the public sphere is understood as an open (public) domain of political will formation and discussion.

By elevating the public sphere into the spotlight of democratic legitimacy, the discursive conception of democracy meets Amartya Sen's capability approach. According to Sen, in a democracy all citizens must have equal access to appear in the public sphere without shame and be able to influence it. This basic insight remains unchallenged by the fact that historically, most, if not all, public spheres in the West have remained exclusive and reserved to white males. It is also not invalidated by the fact that in most cases, a plurality of public spheres exists, competing with each other. To the contrary, these caveats allow us to understand why democracy has fallen short of its possibilities in so many places. Habermas and Sen thus point us to the variables we have to analyze if we are interested in the study of democracy.

Chapter Overview

Chapter Two presents a very brief diagnosis of Brazilian democracy and its shortcomings. I propose that the main problem of Brazilian democracy is its inability to represent its weakest elements. Democratic legitimacy, in Brazil, does not rest on the entire population, but on a minority, and access to civil rights in Brazil is a privilege rather than a right. Behind this shortcoming lies the absolute division of Brazilian society into included and excluded groups.

Chapter Three elaborates the historical roots of inclusion in Brazil. Going back to the early 19th century, I demonstrate how a white minority was able to transform itself into the norm and render the black and indigenous majority into exotic others in their own country. This chapter ends with an analysis of how political elites were able to avoid a radical re-structuring of Brazilian society and thereby perpetuate their own privileged positions in the societal hierarchies.

Chapter Four presents research conducted between 2001 and 2005 in Salvador, Bahia on inequality and education. Through a comparison of public and private middle and high schools I demonstrate that public schools, even after a state-wide reform effort initiated in 1999, provide poor education for the poor, whereas private schools prepare the offspring of the historically privileged for their brilliant futures.

Chapter Five addresses the domestication of the excluded and demonstrates how the dichotomy of inclusion / exclusion is reproduced daily within the households of included Brazilians through the very widespread practice of employing domestic servants. I demonstrate that the domestication of the excluded constitutes the superiority of the included and that employing domestic servants is not a pre-modern practice, but part of Brazilian modernity.

Chapter Six, presents and discusses research conducted in 2001, an analysis of Bahian NGOs. Although civil society has the potential to create independent, democratic, and counter-hegemonic public spaces, I find that the NGOs in my sample did not live up to that possibility and instead reproduced the same paternalistic and racist practices that characterize the broader society.

Chapter Seven presents the findings of my research on popular participation in school management, participatory budgeting, and participatory planning, conducted in 2005 and 2006. Although several Brazilian cities created mechanisms to channel popular participation in various policy areas, I find that the deep societal inequalities and the division of Brazilian society into two factions ultimately render meaningful popular participation in any policy-making impossible.

Chapter Eight presents a historical analysis of the Brazilian “political class.” It traces the elite domination of the Brazilian state and its appropriation and indeed privatization by the historically included back to a tradition of “bacharelismo” – a Luso-Brazilian tradition responsible for creating a sense of superiority and lack of commitment and accountability among state officials and elected representatives. Bacharelism provides an important background for understanding the connection between personalistic leadership styles and the state apparatus. It also provides the background for the discussion of the limits of popular participation presented in chapter nine.

In Chapter Nine I recapitulate the main findings and conclusions reached throughout this book.

¹ My approach also goes beyond the recent re-focusing on civil society to hold governments accountable, as proposed by Peruzzotti and Smulovitz (2006). Although I agree with Avritzer (2002) that democratic innovation must originate from the societal level, I am much less optimistic about the degree to which such innovation characterizes Brazilian society. In my opinion, it is sobering to realize that most accounts of innovative social practices rely on the cases of Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte, and the fact that Participatory Budgeting came to an end in Porto Alegre in 2004 further adds to my skepticism.

² In their treatment of Brazilian democracy, authors like Diamond (1999), Linz and Stepan (1996), Hagopian (2000), and Mainwaring (1995 and 1997) typically point to a weak party system and problems resulting from an unstable balance between parliamentary and presidential systems as the causes for unfinished consolidation in Brazil. Although this approach has improved our understanding of the importance of institutional settings to achieve certain outcomes, such analyses must remain unsatisfactory. The debate over which political institutional settings are more likely to improve the functioning of democratic systems runs the risk of confounding means with ends, because although institutions are important to provide incentives and channel expectations, they cannot guarantee a desired outcome, as recently pointed out by Avritzer (2002).

³ Evans et.al. Skocpol 1985:9.

⁴ Caldeira and Holston 1998:276, in Aguero and Stark (eds.).

⁵ E.g. following Joseph Schumpeter in his minimalist treatment of democracy, where political elites compete for votes in regular and fair elections.

⁶ To be exact, by focusing on the excluded, social scientists involuntarily help the included to escape analysis and they are at risk of becoming functional in the ongoing process of consolidating the idea that blacks, indigenous groups, women, homosexuals, and the poor are "Others," whereas they, the included, represent the norm. In my own empirical research I consistently found nothing to be wrong with the excluded and a lot to be wrong with the included. A shift of focus away from the excluded and onto the included necessitates a shift of optics, away from an anthropological gaze on those historically constructed as Others and a redirection of focus on the men and women who have the power to decide over what counts as right or wrong, normal and deviant, beautiful and ugly, worthy and unworthy of social esteem and over who is to be considered an equal participant in the public sphere and who is not. I am, of course, influenced by Foucault's analysis of "Discipline and Punish" and his analysis of the different ways power influences our societal relationships.

⁷ Butler 1998:41.

⁸ Engels wrote, "According to the materialist conception, the determining factor in history is, in the final instance, the production and reproduction of immediate life. This, again, is of a twofold character: on the one side, the production of the means of existence, of food, clothing, and shelter and the tools necessary for that production; on the other side, the production of human

beings themselves, the propagation of the species.” (quoted from Butler 1998:41)

⁹ Fraser 1998:141.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Fraser 1998:144.

¹² Harris (1993), studying race relations in the US, demonstrates how symbolical whiteness was constructed and used in the United States as a form of capital in order to justify undeserved.

¹³ Lesser 1999.

¹⁴ Bourdieu 1984:107.

¹⁵ Bourdieu 1984:110.

¹⁶ This insight goes back to Hegel’s discussion of the master and slave relationship. According to Tajfel (1986), groups constitute themselves in relation to other individuals and groups. A sense of identity is fostered through the drawing of borders that separate those inside from those outside. This drawing of borders not only permits the effective separation of one group into two or more, it also constitutes each group with reference to the others. Tajfel’s main dialectic insight was that one group can only exist by defining itself as different from another. Difference and identity are constituted together. In short, inclusion can only produce the desired effect if it is contrasted with exclusion.

¹⁷ George and Bennett 2005:5.

¹⁸ George and Bennett 2005:206.

¹⁹ Sen 1992:40f.

²⁰ My adoption of Sen’s framework is thus similar to the use Guillermo O’Donnell (2004) makes of Sen’s analytical approach.

²¹ Habermas 1998:308.

²² Habermas 1998:301.

²³ Habermas 1998:147.

²⁴ Habermas 1998:298.

²⁵ Benhabib 1996:73.

²⁶ Benhabib 1996:68.

²⁷ The Division of Labor in Society, first published in 1893.

5

The Domestication of the Excluded

For inequalities to be maintained, they need to be anchored in the minds of the excluded and the included alike. This chapter argues that it is in the private and intimate spheres, inside Brazilian homes, that the distinction between the included and the excluded, between those that have rights and those that depend on favors, is planted in minds of the participating individuals and also in the collective consciousness. The household constitutes a central place for the normalizing and institutionalizing of unjust orders, because it is in our homes and the homes of others that we become accustomed to social realities, thus elevating our everyday reality to the status of common sense.

In order to structure the perception of reality, social hierarchies must be rendered unproblematic, so that they appear normal. They need to be “normalized” and elevated into our taken-for-granted stock of interpretative patterns about the world, our common sense. Gramsci (1999) explained that common sense is characterized by uncritically taken-for-granted beliefs that reflect dominant interests and that thus serve to maintain hegemonic control. What passes for common sense is indeed historically constructed and its content is a reflection of prevalent power structures. Not any reality can become common sense, but only those that find enough support and acceptance. Once accepted, common sense appears as unproblematic, normal, and the way things have always been and indeed how they must be. In the words of Stuart Hall, “common sense does not require reasoning, argument, logic, thought: it is spontaneously available, thoroughly recognizable, widely shared (...) It is precisely its ‘spontaneous’ quality, its transparency, its ‘naturalness,’ its refusal to be made to examine the premises on which it is founded, its resistance to change or to correction, its effect of instant recognition, and the closed circle in which it moves which makes common sense, at one and the same time, ‘spontaneous,’ ideological and unconscious.”¹

In other words, once normalized, oppression is no longer visible and thus becomes difficult to change. Gramsci introduced the concept of “cultural hegemony” to refer to the ability of societal fractions who benefit from an unjust order and have enough power to

elevate this order to “the reality” of all the people sharing one system of reference. Current orders and widely accepted “ways how things are” disguise their historically constructed character and the powerful interests that have brought this order into being. Nevertheless, these orders need to be constructed and reproduced in daily interaction so that they remain part of common sense.

Norbert Elias (1978) has shown how the exercise of power and distinction in everyday relationships constitutes and reinforces the separation of social groups. Among the central places where social hierarchies and oppression are normalized and anchored in the Brazilian common sense are the private spheres, where included groups reproduce a framework of inequality in their daily interaction with excluded groups. Inside the houses of the included, in their routinized interaction with their subordinates, the skewed frameworks of who counts as included and who doesn't, as well as the related dichotomy of who has rights and who doesn't, are played out on a daily basis.

Domestics

In Brazil, the employment of maids is a widespread practice, making it the norm among included Brazilians. A survey conducted by *Datafolha*, a renowned Brazilian research institute, discovered that, in 2002, domestic service employed some five million. This survey also found that 21 percent of all employed females work in the domestic service sector, making it the most important female employment sector in Brazil. This number appears to have changed little over time; in 1989, Chaney and Castro found that in Latin America and the Caribbean, no less than 20 percent of the female work force worked as maids. The *Datafolha* survey found that of women employed in the domestic service sector, 37 percent were brown and 24 percent black. In an assessment of domestic employment in Rio de Janeiro, Pereira (in Chaney and Castro, 1989) found that over half of Rio's domestic workers earn from nothing to one-half of a minimum wage and that 79.5 percent work longer than the legally regulated 40 hours per week.

Sherriff (1997), who conducted several years of field research in the Rio de Janeiro favela *Morro do Sanguê Bom*, stated that she did not encounter one single woman who had not worked as a maid in a middle class home during some period in her life. Sherriff explains that, “a girl may begin her first full-time job at the age of fourteen or fifteen. Many of the women I knew had spent at least a part of their

adolescence as ‘live-in’ maids, i.e. they lived with their employer families and went home only on weekends or Sundays.”²

Rollins (1985) traces the origins of domestic work back to domestic slavery. Comparing several countries in historical analysis, she points to the fact that industrial revolutions led to a pull and push effect, pushing the rural poor into industrializing cities where a new middle-class emerged, able to afford domestic servants. In Brazil, high rates of urban unemployment nurtured by rural migration and industrialization allowed for an expansion of the urban middle-classes starting in the 1940s. Taking advantage of the huge numbers of unemployed, domestic labor in middle and upper class households expanded to become the country’s most important female employment activity.³ The poverty and high illiteracy that particularly affect Afro-Brazilians leave many excluded with only very few options. With other employment opportunities in short supply, and confronted by the fact that regular unskilled work offers merely a low salary and not food and lodging, as domestic service often does, many excluded women are pushed into domestic service.

Describing the work-relationship and the rituals created within it, Rollins points to the extreme inequalities that characterize this job, along with the vulnerability produced by a lack of co-workers, total dependency on the employer, and the isolating character of this work. As domestic work has very low prestige, employers take pains to distance themselves from their servants, using several symbolic mechanisms to stress this distance. Upholding the invention of racial inferiority is one of the most salient strategies to maintain the distance between employer and maid.

Kofes (2001), studying the relationship between domestic servants and their employers in São Paulo, calls attention to the vocabulary commonly used in this sphere, where the employee is habitually referred to as *doméstica* (domestic) and the employer as *patroa* (patron). In her ethnographic material Kofes shows how being a domestic in a Brazilian household implies being constantly “domesticated,” stereotyped, and abused. In a similar way, Twine (1997), during her ethnographic research, found Brazilian servants being treated as children even if they were adults. Twine demonstrates that such infantilization goes hand in hand with the creation of paternalistic dependencies, as maids are oftentimes not even paid the minimum wage but are instead offered a bedroom, food, and other material compensation.

Gill (1994), in turn, points at the gender dynamics of the patron – domestic relationship. Studying Bolivian female domestic workers,

she concludes that it is mostly female employers who exploit female servants, justifying their behavior through the invention of the “inferiority” and racial otherness of the maid. Gill also highlights the extreme vulnerability of female domestics, especially the ones that live-in, as they are extremely dependent on their employers. According to Gill, sexual abuse is frequent and is part of the way upper- and middle-class women, who typically define themselves as “white” and construct their own identities by setting themselves apart from the “low moral standards” of the racialized other. Gill further argues that male employers’ predatory behavior and abuse towards servants is oftentimes tolerated or ignored, as long as such relations do not lead to entitlements for the servants.⁴

Focusing on the situation of domestic workers in Latin America and the Caribbean in general, Chaney and Castro (1989) find similarities among the several countries they study. They argue that wherever it is practiced, domestic employment is an underpaid and depreciated activity. Most of the time, maids migrate to their workplaces, coming from the countryside or from other regions or countries. They also find that in Latin America and the Caribbean most maids have a different ethnic background than their employers, an ethnicity their employers consider “inferior.” Most maids work alone, which further enhances their vulnerability and increases the chances of falling victim to physical and emotional abuse. The authors conclude that, “domestic workers in most countries remain among the most oppressed and neglected sector of the working class.”⁵

Even in countries like the United States, where maids find more support structures and a more effective legal systems than those in most Latin American countries, Colen (in Chaney and Castro 1989) finds US employers using similar techniques to dehumanize their maids. These include not allowing them to share the same table and the same food with their employers, nor the same bathrooms, toilets, or even seats. In addition, most employers address their maids by the first name or refer to them as “the girl,” even if they are grown adults.⁶ All these techniques contribute to widen the gap between the employer and the employed, based on a constant and systematic infantilization and ultimately dehumanization of the domestic worker.

Domestication

Although analyses taking the maid's perspective into account are rare, the autobiography of a Peruvian domestic worker and activist Adelinda Diaz Uriarte provides some important insights.⁷ The available literature on domestic service allows for the conclusion that Uriarte's experiences are typical and characterize the general ways domestics are treated by their patrons. Uriarte describes the techniques her employers used to hold her in a slavery-like dependency. Starting out as a child and cut-off from potential support structures, her situation resembled the ones described by Bales (2000) in his analysis of contemporary slavery.⁸ Her total isolation, together with the creation of absolute dependency and the constant physical and emotional abuse do not fall very short of the situation African slaves had to endure in colonial times.⁹

Very similar stories are told by Brazilian domestics in the September 2002 edition of the UN feminist journal *Maria Maria*, dedicated to domestic workers.¹⁰ According to Branca Maria Alves' editorial, "five million Brazilian women work as domestic servants. Some sleep at their workplace, having infinite workdays. Others - the majority - live infinitely far from their workplace. Many are single mothers and they do the possible and the impossible, the imaginable and the unimaginable to sustain their children. (...) This is an extremely de-valORIZED activity: many do not even earn a minimum wage and only 24 percent have a work contract."¹¹

The testimony of domestic servants, reproduced in *Maria Maria*, provides ample evidence of the constant de-humanization resulting from the extreme power disequilibrium that characterizes this profession. Maria José Moreno Ruiz, for example, a 32 year old Chilean domestic servant working for the same family for twelve years, ponders about what would happen if she were to die tomorrow:

If I were to die tomorrow, Mister Julio would immediately be annoyed. When he arrived at home at night, nobody would have laid out three different shirts on his bed for his choice. The Mistress would also be affected. Nobody would place, at exactly 6 pm, the aromatic stones next to her bathtub for her well-deserved bath after coming home from work. Can it be that my friends and I do not deserve this as well? The children, little George and Inez, would feel it the most, because they do not have many people to hug them, listen to their stories and show interest in their daily routines, dedicating time to them with selflessness and professionalism. The next week would be

different. The inconvenient body would have been removed and with it the memories of death. An acquaintance or a friend would have already recommended some “girl” (they would not call her a woman, even if she were 60 years old and could only move her soul) to cook, iron, clean, keep silence, embrace, get up before daybreak, stay up without sleep. Better even if she had no children, “because these days families that have domestic servants already make a big enough effort to give them work and cannot afford any extra expenses.” They can also not study, because that would limit the work hours. She should attend like a servant, smiling softly and submissively. Obviously, if Mister Julio or even the Mistress would die tomorrow, they would have much marble on their tombs and they would have paid a priest to commemorate the funeral and they would reserve a beautiful place at the cemetery. But among the dead there are many that never thought that they would be replaceable, that the fucked up world of theirs, so important and cryptic, would continue without them. I doubt that someone would comment, during the final minutes of Mister Julio or the Mistress, that they were not very human toward their domestic servants. I do not only want bread and Sundays off. I also want dreams, love, autonomy, power, beauty, theater, aromatherapy, caressing, sex, respect, and a future.¹²

A Bahian maid, 23 years old, describes the powerlessness experienced when working as a domestic servant and points out some of the typical mechanisms used by *patroas* (female employers, literally “patrons”) to control and infantilize their maids:

The first years were very difficult and it still is. I worked in four houses and the best patroa I had moved to Curitiba. After that I only worked in bad houses. There was one patroa who made my plate, I could not serve myself, and I had to stay quiet when her grandson was hitting me. Another one only paid 100 Reais because I lived in her house. Where else could I live? Now I am working for a couple and his mother. The two apartments are very big and I get very tired. I work everyday in one of the houses and I earn 350 Reais [minimum wage at the time-- the author] together, from both patroas.¹³

The life stories collected in *Maria Maria*, as well as the testimony of Adelinda Diaz Uriarte, all express similar sentiments of isolation, abuse, de-humanization, and rage. They all point to the dialectic relationship that welds together the domesticated and their domesticator. As pointed out by Hegel much earlier, one constitutes the other and the weakness to which the domesticated is condemned provides the source of strength for the domesticator. At the same time, most statements given by maids also testify to the unstable

nature of this relationship. Although constantly told that they belong to the family, they do not believe such bedazzlement and most maids recognize that their employers are also their oppressors. The words of Maria Ruiz are again typical: “Again, I spoke with more rage than resignation: In a world that unjust, the maid even gets used to walking around with her head down if they ask her to.” At the same time that they are employed and earn money, the social conventions and abuse that customarily accompanies this work transforms it into one of the key societal institutions responsible for upholding inequality and for the mutual constitution of inclusion and exclusion.

Rights and Favors

Paternalism negates autonomy and undermines the very possibility of democracy. According to Kant, it is “the greatest despotism imaginable.”¹⁴ When a patron hires a domestic, she takes away the domestic’s voice and reduces her to the status of a child. This degradation finds expression in the infantilization described above by Maria Ruiz and analyzed in more detail by Twine (1997). Calling an adult employee a “girl” reduces her to the legal status of a minor and robs her of the status of being an autonomous person that knows best what is good for her. By reducing an adult to a child’s status, patrons not only rob domestics of their autonomy; they also elevate themselves above their clients and make decisions for them, oftentimes justifying such action by stating that, “they don’t know what is best for them.” If such paternalistic structures become successfully institutionalized, they channel further expectations and actions on both sides. Patrons “really believe” that they know best what is good for their maids and decide for them; and domestics accept “the fact” that they do not know what is good for themselves and that their patrons know better. What plays itself out as an adult – child relationship in the private sphere translates into a differentiation between those that have rights, based on their perceived autonomy, and those that do not have rights, because of their child-like status and lack of autonomy.

To further instill a sense of inferiority into their maids and to elevate themselves into the position of caring patrons, patrons oftentimes give presents and goods to their maids and help them with small favors, expecting loyalty in return. At the same time that a maid has no access to rights, she is required to be thankful for the “favors” bestowed on her by her patron. This institution is at the heart of constituting paternalist power structures and it is also one of

the core mechanisms used to differentiate between those who have rights and those that depend on favors and must demonstrate deference in return. A commonly used framework to create such a structure is to tell maids that they “almost belong to the family.” The Bahian maid quoted above provides an example:

Sometimes I think that I am exploited and enslaved, but there is nothing I can do about it. They always say that I almost belong to the family, but I don't believe it. Patroas mostly say that when we ask to settle the bills. They are scared of ending up without a maid. But I know that I do not belong to the family, because if I did, I could sit down with them at the same table and I could enter the house through the front door. Whenever they say that, I just pretend I am listening.¹⁵

At the same time that the rights of maids are reduced to those of a minor, the very constitution of the rights of their patrons depends on this negation of rights; domestic service must thus be understood not just as a mechanism to exploit and control the poor. Even more importantly, at least within the context of the discussions advanced in this book, domestic service constitutes a central place for the construction of inclusion. Maids free their mostly female patrons from domesticating housework and enable them to act as full citizens and professionals in the public sphere. The following statement of a 34-year-old São Paulo female professional provides some hints at this mutual constitution of having rights and depending on favors:

I work in three shifts. I am the principal of a kindergarten, I attend cases of clinical psychology in my private clinic, and I am active at the Nonprofit Center “It's the Law,” dedicated to AIDS / STD prevention and treatment of drug abuse. I don't have the slightest possibility of coming home at midnight and start washing, cooking, cleaning, and ironing...¹⁶

In a society where domestic work is relegated almost by default to females and males are not even included in the equation of household duties, professional included women free themselves from the domestication inherent in domestic work by shifting it over to other women. This shift not only reinforces the existing differences between included and excluded women, it actually aids in the constitution and consolidation of it. Racism plays a core role in this mutual constitution of inclusion and exclusion, as we shall see.

Racism

Sheriff's (1997) ethnographic work among Rio de Janeiro favela dwellers reveals the racism inherent in the patron-servant relationship. In a typical, yet very telling statement, one of her informants, who works as a maid in the home of a French woman, tells the researcher that her employer is not racist, because she "even drinks from the same glass."¹⁷ Statements like these point to the high degree to which exclusion and oppression have been internalized by the oppressed. Another informant explains that the building has two separate entrances, one for the white middle-class dweller, and one for the mostly black service personnel. She explains that, "if you are black (*pretinho*) you have to go up in the service elevator, but if you're white like you, they let you go the other way. It's like that almost everywhere."¹⁸

Several of Sheriff's informants gave evidence of the prevalence of racial stereotyping, referring to blacks as being dirty and smelling bad. One informant, herself a maid, explained that white middle-class families preferred lighter skin maids, especially for childcare. Dark complexion blacks could only find cleaning and cooking jobs.¹⁹ Sheriff highlights the fear many white middle-class patrons have of racial contamination and "pollution" from contact with their black maids. She concludes: "In describing the racialized nature of many everyday encounters, in framing such encounters as examples of boundary-maintaining incidents that occur 'all the time,' and in accounting for racism in the language of a structured and structuring hegemony, my informants reveal what is 'embaixo do pano' or under the concealing fabric of the dominant narrative of race (and silence about racism) in Brazil."²⁰

Modernity

In Rio de Janeiro, as in any other Brazilian city, almost all modern high-rise apartment buildings have two separate entrances and domestics have to use the service elevator, even if they are in street clothes. Sheriff finds that "nearly all of the older and larger middle-class apartments and houses in Rio have very small rooms with a tiny bathroom attached, usually located next to the kitchen."²¹ In Sheriff's evaluation, having these small maid rooms "is still considered a standard appurtenance in middle-class dwellings."²² It also points to the fact that domestic service in Brazil is expected to continue into

the foreseeable future, at least by the architects who design apartment buildings for the included.

An illustration of this fact is provided by contemporary advertisements in Brazilian newspapers, offering middle, and upper-class apartments for rent and sale. Even in São Paulo, which is considered Brazil's most modern city, almost all apartments advertised have rooms for the domestic servant. Most servant rooms are just big enough for a small bed, not offering ventilation or natural light. In addition, the invisibility of the domestic worker is furthered by a strategic design that links the servant's room to the kitchen and the washing room, but keeps it distant from rooms where the patrons socialize. Bigger apartments, for the more affluent, typically have separate servant entrances, but even smaller, middle-class apartments find some room for the maid – or at least they include a servant room into the architectural plan in order to evoke “upscale living.” Having a servant is not the exclusive privilege of the elite, but a widespread practice of included groups. At the same time, living in an apartment with a servant room evokes privilege and thus serves the purpose of reproducing inclusion by referencing exclusion, even if the maid's quarter remains empty. The fact that even the most modern apartment buildings in the most modern city of Brazil - São Paulo - include quarters for the servant points to the modern character of this institution. Domestic servitude, at least in the eyes of those architects and developers catering to the included, is an institution that is here to stay. Yet even if the importance and magnitude of domestic servitude declines, living in an apartment with servant quarters bestows important symbolic capital upon those able to afford it and serves to demarcate the symbolic terrain upon which disjunctive democracy is constructed.

Conclusion: Normalizing Difference in the Private Sphere

An analysis of the dynamics of the employer-maid relationship as they are enacted routinely in Brazilian homes leads to several conclusions. First it points to a continuity of domestication within Brazilian households. It is no exaggeration to compare the precariousness of the social condition of a maid to that of a bonded feudal servant or even to that of a domestic slave. This is especially the case considering that until 1888 (and sometimes longer) included Brazilians had domestic slaves (*mucamas*) to serve them in their homes.²³ The continuity that links domestic slavery to domestic service contributes to the negative stigma of this activity.²⁴

Furthermore, the magnitude and economic importance of this work transforms it into a typical everyday practice, and contributes to the maintenance of a distinction in Brazilian common sense between who counts as included and who as excluded. As such, the private sphere constituted by Brazilian middle and upper class homes must be seen as constituting one of the main societal places where the dichotomies of exclusion / inclusion and having rights / depending on favors are recreated and institutionalized.

With its specific racialized dimension, domestic servitude is also among the central places where the children of the included learn and are socialized into the knowledge of how to distinguish and treat “inferior” people. The systematic infantilization and dehumanization of Afro-Brazilian adult women in white middle class households must be seen as a crucial process that perpetuates the institutionalization and normalization of the “inferiority” of the racialized other. The docility of the maid, resulting from extreme patriarchal dependency and precarious status, provides the counterpart to this dichotomy, resulting in the typical image of the benevolent black nanny who raises the children of white middle class parents.

According to some analysts, domestic service keeps growing in Brazil, indicating that domestic service in Brazil is more than a pre-modern legacy.²⁵ The modern high-tech apartments for sale offered in contemporary Brazilian newspapers point to the fact that domestic service is indeed intimately linked to modernity and capitalist development in Brazil, allowing one part of human kind to climb up to the heights of enlightenment on the backs of others that are condemned to remain in the dark.

The highly routinized institution of domestic servitude in the households of included Brazilians thus serves as one of the central societal places to anchor an exclusionary common sense into the minds of the involved, as well as into the broadly accepted common sense. Being part of “how things are” does however not necessarily imply that the excluded readily accept their lot. Although repeated dehumanization certainly penetrates the lifeworld and value systems of the excluded, the statements of maids reproduced above also point to their continued rebellion and moral outrage at the abusive actions of their employers. Uncritical acceptance is more likely to be found among the exploiting employers, who seem repeatedly outraged how “unthankful” their maids are or how “ungrateful” a maid acts when seeking legal support against her abuse.

The knowledge of who counts as included and who does not is reproduced systematically within homes, as it is in schools, as we saw in Chapter Four. To be effective, however, the institutionalization of inequality produced in the private sphere must reach the public realm. In the following chapter we will analyze how the system of social stratification thus created in the private realm spills over into the public sphere, where it threatens to undermine the possibility of democratic legitimation.

¹ Hall 1979: 325.

² Sheriff 1997:215.

³ Goldstein 2003.

⁴ Gill 1994: 146f.

⁵ Chaney and Castro 1989:4.

⁶ Colen 1989:180f.

⁷ In Chaney and Castro 1989.

⁸ See Bales' definition in Chapter One.

⁹ Several descriptions of Brazilian slavery are available, such as Antonil, Andre Joao 1976 [1649]; Freyre, Gilberto 1990a; Gorender, Jacob 1988; Ramos, Arthur 1934 and 1979; Reis, Joao Jose 1986; Rodrigues, Nina 1988; Schwartz, Stuart B. 1988; Verger, Pierre 1992, 1981, and 1987; and Viana, Luis Filho 1988, amongst others. The descriptions these authors provide about colonial slavery very much resemble the characterizations of contemporary serfdom in Brazil.

¹⁰ *Maria Maria*, Year 4, No. 4 (2002), available online at

http://www.undp.org.br/unifem/mariamaria/ano4_n4/sumario4.html

¹¹ *Maria Maria*, editorial.

¹² *Maria Maria*, Journal published by UNIFEM, no page numbers available.

¹³ Elvira, 23 years, domestic servant, single, no children, Feira de Santana, Bahia.

¹⁴ Quoted in Berlin 1998: 208.

¹⁵ Elvira, 23 years, domestic servant, single, no children, Feira de Santana, Bahia.

¹⁶ Naime, 34 years, social psychologist, no children, São Paulo, SP.

¹⁷ Ibid: 220.

¹⁸ Ibid: 221.

¹⁹ Ibid: 226.

²⁰ Ibid: 251.

²¹ Ibid: 223.

²² Ibid: 223.

²³ Gilberto Freyre has described the special situation of domestic slaves in his book entitled *The Mansions and the Shanties: the making of modern Brazil*, New York: Alfred. A. Knopf (1963). This is the North American edition of the 1936 Brazilian original entitled *Sobrados e mucambos: decadência do patriarado rural e desenvolvimento do urbano*.

²⁴ Kofes 2001:21.

²⁵ Hildete Pereira de Melo, professor of economy at the Universidade Federal Fluminense, *Maria Maria*, year 4, N. 4, 2002.

