

ABSTRACT

The Role of the Other-in-Submission: The Desirability of Domination within Modern Societies

The manner in which European colonialism generated neurotic and psychotic states in both colonizers and those colonized, coupled with the concept of double consciousness, casts important light on how power is exercised in developed countries such that citizens are inclined to submit willingly to those in power over them. The relations that previously obtained between the colonial metropole and the others whom they colonized are analogous in a certain sense to relations in advanced societies between elites and those whom they control. There are masters, and there are servants, and the wealth of elites is constructed through the power they exercise over those who serve them. However, there is a substantial difference between classical colonialism and democracy today insofar as the colonized slave acknowledged that others exercised power over him, and eventually came to struggle against them, while the citizens of modern societies believe they are sovereign individuals, even as the power and wealth of those who rule continues to expand. European-style colonialism was exercised in the international arena by nations who regarded themselves as superior to the other nations they controlled as their own property. Chattel slavery in modern societies was exercised by elites and those who supported them over those who had in fact been reduced to nothing more than literally the property of those who owned them. In contrast, the analogous forms of domination that exist in today's advanced societies are exercised in the domestic arena by elites over those who regard themselves not only as free, but also as essentially equal with those who dominate them in all but the measure of their possessions. Their hope is that they objectively have the opportunity to someday acquire a level of ownership and status that reflects what they supposedly have in common with those who objectively dominate them. These issues phenomena challenge current conceptions of liberal democracy, but they have not yet been adequately studied. The present discussion seeks to help fill this gap by investigating the phenomena in question on a theoretical level against the background of studies of power, domination, hegemony, and governmentality. The aim is to cast light on how what may be termed an internalization of the power that is exercised by another results in those who are dominated both desiring and approving of their submission.