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**The dynamics of social exclusion**

**Abstract:** The purpose of this work is to look in detail at social exclusion within the social equality framework, the social forces that create and reinforce it and how these forces reduce equality of opportunity and social solidarity. I am not aiming to offer new principles or theories of social justice, nor articulating a unidimensional form of understanding social exclusion. In this paper I am addressing questions and reflections about social exclusion. What does it mean to be socially excluded? Why is social exclusion a problem? Which social forces bind excluded groups together? Is social exclusion a matter of structural inequality?

First I analyze social exclusion as a state of deprivation that constitutes a denial of social justice. Using Amartya Sen’s capability approach I will show that social exclusion can be constitutively a part of a capability deprivation as well as instrumentally a cause of diverse capability failures. Second, following the work of Jonathan Wolff “Forms of differential social inclusion”, I deepen on the social forces that reinforce this state of deprivation and set the limits on the possibility of overcoming social inequality. I add to Wolff’s perspective the notion of exclusion traps of Samuel Bowls, Steven Durlauf and Karla Hoff to emphasize the processes in which people stay in conditions of exclusion. In this part I explain why the welfare state itself contributes to social exclusion and how it at once is a sustaining cause of social exclusion and bind excluded groups together. Third, I expose how the social forces, articulated in terms of social rupture, are solidifying other problems such as inequality of opportunities and lack of social solidarity. I will show that both problems lead to a normatively undesirably form of politics reinforcing poverty, but also setting ideas of difference and marginalization.

**Keywords:** social exclusion, deprivation, social forces, inequality of opportunities, solidarity.

**Short Bio:**

Mitsy Barriga-Ramos is a PhD candidate in political and practical philosophy at the Free University of Berlin. She obtained her M.A. in philosophy at the Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen and her B.A. at the San Marcos University of Peru. Her PhD is financed by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation and her main research interests include global justice and social equality. Her thesis focuses on social exclusion as structural injustice.