

History of american conceptions and practices of freedom essay

[Countries](#), [United States](#)



There are several ways in which multiculturalism constructs, prescribes, and influences the scope freedom in the US. The government institutions and political regimes have been accused of allowing ' marginalisation' to excel in the acquisition and roles assigned to the citizens of the US on the basis of social identities. Many of the marginalisation scenarios in exclusionary freedom in the US on the basis of social identities will be discussed in details.

At the beginning of these exclusionary freedom policies, the most affected groups were the Black American community, the Red Indians, and other minority groups that were controlled by Anglo-Saxon dominance (Kramer, 2002). At present, the minority migrant groups are still subjected to discrimination in exercising freedom in the US on the basis of their ethnicity, class, and sometimes labour status, though the discrimination is done silently. This analytical paper extends the racial contract theory, proposed by Charles Mills, to discuss how social issues such as class, race, and gender have resulted in struggle for freedom in America.

The racial contract theory functions on the assumption that the hypothetical state of mankind in nature is inspired by the need to make a rational decision to supersede freedom for state protection in a civilized state (Kornblith & Murrin, 2005). The contract theory can be applied to citizen freedom because individuals have to give some of their freedoms for state protection.

From a historical perspective, the foundation of the US citizenry freedom in identity was based on biased approach towards the male gender as being more superior and dominating over the female gender (Kramer, 2002). In the

new society, women were mere servants to be dominated by the males as wives. This meant that the right to citizenry was controlled by the males in the society since the patriarchal position defined the status, rights, and general freedom of the women.

Another important aspect in understanding the social contract is the assertion by Mills that racial discrimination has become a normal aspect of the freedom across the globe. In relation to the US society, the root of the US citizenship was founded on egalitarianism to different levels of equality for individuals making up a nation. This means that the blacks and other minority groups were ontologically eliminated by the virtue of belong to the minority race in the promise of the US ' liberal modernity project' (Kramer, 2002).

The discrimination on the basis of race has dominated the exclusive freedom among Americans for several decades simply because the white citizens had a tyranny of numbers over the minority groups in political dispensation. After getting independence from the British colonizers, the young state of America assumed biased approach in enforcing laws to favour the white majority and the governance of the society was based on the principle of exclusionary ethics, which is characterized by a general assumption that the whites are viewed as having higher state value than the ' nonwhites' groups or sub-persons (Painter, 2009).

The legacy of the American colonialism was based on a skewed multicultural policy that discriminated against the minority population by the Anglo-Saxon

group (Kramer, 2002). The management of the government resources, citizenry, and right to access to social services has been skewed to the disadvantage of the minority Red Indians because of their unique ethno-cultural identity. The main historical factor that might have catalysed this unfortunate state of affairs was the strategic oppression and civil atrocities against this group in the process of territorial expansion against their will during the period of America colonization (Painter, 2009). The colonists initiated the imperialistic political authority, the forceful subjection of the Red Indians and other native groups to their rule of law, and forceful eviction to their land.

The history of American freedom was very painful and too many years to achieve. The struggle for freedom is older than the US federal government. The struggle can be traced to the American natives such as the Indians, Inuit, and Aleut who had to resist the colonialists who were interested in the fertile land. The Paleo and Archaic America were dominated by Indians who used crude weapons and lived in units in the expansive west America region. Europeans encountered these groups that had stabilized horticulture, hunting, and family units.

Taylor observed that migration negatively affected the pre-Colombian culture since the Hohokam and Anasazi cultures were manipulated by the Europeans (Kramer, 2002). Despite putting resistance, the Native Americans were overwhelmed by the better organized European combat strategies. Upon discovery of America, expansion of the European control was

influenced by geographical and population multiplication (Painter, 2009). This explained their dominance in the western parts of America.

The colonizers introduced the Islamic and Christianity religions that further cemented their dominance among the natives since incentives such as medicine made the Native American Indians to tow the line. Unfortunately, the New World replaced harmony as population pressure created imbalances in the holistic environment. Religion and renaissance cards were successfully used to establish the colonial culture among the virtually exterminated natives. This created constant tension between the colonizers and the Native American who were determined to gain control of their territory.

Aided by powerful weapons, the Spanish easily penetrated the regions of America. The conquistadors were inspired by booty hunts introduced brutality and abuse of ethical rights of the slaves in the mines. Wealth and power drove these colonialists to do sacrilegious things like pillage and rape to the natives and the Africans. Power consolidation among the Spanish conquests failed because of poor relationship between the officials and the shrewd businessmen. However, the Spanish colonizers were successful in the business front since they could assess free slave labour in their gold and silver mines.

The Spanish conquests were inspired by the need to amass mineral wealth in America (Kornblith & Murrin, 2005). However, greediness in the process of exploiting gold and silver deposits in America made the colonizers commit hideous crimes against the natives and the African slaves. The impacts of

Spanish colonization of North America included dissolution and destruction of the native belief systems. The natives were subjected to brutality for resisting Christianity faith and provide free force labour to the Spanish colonizers.

Dissolution led to the 1680 and 1696 revolts since the Spanish religious systems, medicine, and culture did not provide solutions to the social problems experienced by the natives (Kramer, 2002). The poorly nourished Pueblo natives could not keep up with the demands for harsh labour and unrealistic tribute money demanded by colonial officials. The overexploitation and unfairness led to the first well organized revolt against the Spanish colonizers in Mexican cities. The 1680 and 1696 revolts that were won by the Spanish restored harmony between the Pueblos and colonizers since their concerns were addressed. However, the struggle for freedom continued (Kramer, 2002).

Apart from the Spanish colonizers, the British forces also wanted to expand dominance in America against the will of the natives. This need influenced British settlement in Virginia. For instance, the daring British folks such as Sir Francis Drake among others used tactical approaches to settle and establish Roanoke in Virginia. The Englishmen were ungrateful barbarians who belittled the values of the Native Indian Americans, despite the warm reception and permission to cultivate tobacco in Virginia.

War erupted between the two groups when the English started harassing the natives. Apparently, the ungratefulness and cunning nature of the British

towards the natives of Virginia resulted in renewed struggle for freedom. Excessive harassment by the former spilled into war in Jamestown as natives were determined to restore their lost culture and freedom (Kramer, 2002). Besides, the Chesapeake social class structure was used by the British colonists to create Chesapeake colonies. The basic elements of Chesapeake social class structure was determined by their ability to organize a commonwealth body controlled by common interests and laws.

Farming formed the primary labour source for colonists in Chesapeake. Settlers who were able to organize more factors of production occupied the apex of the hierarchal chain. As competition increased, the slave labour contributed to population explosion of the African community in Chesapeake. This necessitated establishment of protectionist laws by the settlers to minimize possibility of African slaves' revolt against their cruel masters. However, the guided peace did not last for long since the slaves started organizing guerrilla warfare with their masters through civil disobedience and work slow down across the large plantation farms (Painter, 2009).

Slavery created an unequal social and economic environment between the slaves and those who enslaved them. The female slaves were subjected to sexual abuse by their owners and the children, out of these sexual exploits, were forced by the law to become slaves (Kornblith & Murrin, 2005). The slaves were never given beds and had to survive on bare minimal allowances consisting of a single piece of linen, pork and hardly enough corn. The freedom of speech and expression were not part of the master-slaver relationship.

The slaves' resentment on brutality, sexual harassment, and denial of freedom of expression were the underlying factors which inspired them to go into the battle with the masters to gain freedom. The ideological commitment and patriotism of the slaves was a result of deep convictions to seek independence, freedom, and basic human rights for the slaves. Due to unstructured relationship between the slaves and their masters, harmony balance was threatened by sudden changes in the social systems as influenced by the capitalist oriented slave owners. This brought questions on how people need to stay together and to attain their needs equitably, without involving in overindulgence, selfishness, and myopia.

Many slaves endeavoured to comprehend the revolutionary implications of the conflict as it continued to evolve in an ordinary arena of ideological expression within their scope of view. State of anarchy as a result of the conflict brought threat to the peaceful coexistence as a result of life interference brought about by slavery (Kornblith & Murrin, 2005). To begin with, the slaves were treated as a commodity and provided cheap and abundant labour to the slave owners operating as a human exploitation cartel. Excessive harassment by the slave owners spilled into conflict as the slaves were determined to restore their lost right (Painter, 2009).

The first amendment of the constitution involved the bill of rights of the American people that was initiated in 1789 by James Madison and became part of the constitution as the bill of rights in 1791. This amendment was aimed at limiting the power of the U. S federal government and give power to the States. Commonly referred to as the ' Philadelphia Convention' it was

meant to protect the rights of the Americans and it became part of the strong ' American Revolution.' The founders of the amendments aimed at protecting the States from the tyranny of the federal government.

Critically, the congress would not have any powers to prohibit the freedom of citizens namely freedom of press, speech, assembly and religion (Kornblith & Murrin, 2005). The federal government was prevented from interfering with the States' rights'. This was evident in the ruling by founder father and Chief Justice John Marshall in 1833 case of Barron v. Baltimore.

These amendments contain no expression indicating an intention to apply them to the State governments. This meant that the states were protected by the first amendment. Apparently, the first amendment that gave birth to the rights (1791) of the American people was the first step to a democratic and liberal nation that it is now (Painter, 2009). It protected the Americans from tyranny of the federal government and guarantees them the freedom of worship, of speech and the press, the rights of peaceful assembly, association and petition.

With the advent of the 21st century and need to promote an ideal economic identify among the Americans, the immigration laws have become discriminative along the racial line, especially among the immigrants (Kornblith & Murrin, 2005). For instance, individuals considered by the state as being highly skilled, self-adequate, and well-educated may easily get the citizenship status than immigrant individuals who have low human capital. This policy only promote exclusivity in the ' Americanism' identify that have

been effective in reinforcing and reproducing unequal and poorly skewed racial, gender, class, and ethnic relations in the present citizen freedom (Painter, 2009).

From the above analysis, it is apparent that the US policies on multiculturalism and colonial mentality have continued to define the state of freedom in America among the minorities, though this occurs in a silent manner. During the colonial era, exclusionary citizenry strategies were executed to determine the American identity on the basis of their gender, class, ethnicity, and race. Besides, minority groups, such as the Red Indians and Black Americas, were made to feel as being lesser American through forceful eviction, elimination, and later soft forms of discriminatory policies by the colonial master and some regimes.

Despite the general feeling of inclusiveness in the US freedom identity, the whiteness ideology, still determine the degree of citizenship freedom to some extent. For instance, the political, policy, and social welfare institutions are dominated by the Anglo-Saxon race that make policies and decisions on behalf of everyone. Although efforts have been made by government regimes to reverse this trend, little has been achieved since the supremacy dominance has been internalised by better economic, social, and political association within the dominating race.

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