

EXPLORING (A LITTLE) THE CONCEPTS OF INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION

African huts provide more than shelter. They are also about community; about decision making; and about social cohesion. Those huts are a concept rich in meaning. It is better to be inside than outside.

Some Christian churches emphasise communion. You may be entitled to take part in the 'miracle' of communion. Say or do the 'wrong' thing, however, and you can be excommunicated. No miracle for you. At one time the consequences of exclusion were being burned at the stake.

Protestants were no exception. The word may suggest rebellion but those rebels were very quick to erect their own walls of inclusion and exclusion. Poor old Servetus escapes Catholic France where he is threatened with the burning of his body and his books. He arrives in Geneva, goes to church to hear Calvin, the great Protestant, preach. Calvin spots him in the congregation, another inclusive word, and has both his body and his books burned at the stake. Servetus was the 'wrong kind of protestant'. He thought he was included but he was excluded.

Moving on to Fascism let us remember the symbol of the Fasces, a bundle of sticks (disciplinary sticks) bound together signifying a unitary state. The message was, accept authority or else. The question occurs, which, in this case, is preferable, inclusion or exclusion?

Fred Riggs has another word for this: 'malintegration'. He was writing about how societies can be integrated not in the interests of the many but of the few, hence the integration is bad: malintegration.

In other words, the notions of inclusion and exclusion are not problem-free. When a young person is excluded from school the normal and expected judgment is that they are anti-social, badly

behaved and in need of correction. But, just as in the case of Fascism, we should ask if the so-called anti-social behaviour is a rational response to unfair, anti educational behaviour by the institution of which they are expected to be a docile part.

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