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Conference on Politics of Participation

Various forms of citizenship – social, political, consumer,
entrepreneurial, corporate

Labourers citizenship according Robert Owen and Daniel Legrand

According Daniel Legrand (1783-1859) a labourer's lot is to be under the present system of governance which is in Legrand's eyes legitimate, and it's legitimacy should not be questioned. The labourer's conditions should be made better and the way to make them better is through legislation. The labourer is compared to a slave; both yearn for freedom and the freedom is brought to the labourer through rights which shall be accorded to the labourer by the law.

According Robert Owen (1771-1853) the labourer's lot to be under the present system of governance is not unquestionable. To free the labourer is to make the labourer master of his/her own life, by breaking up the governance in smaller units and by giving the labourer the control over the means which are to produce labourer's income. The labourer is compared to a slave, and the freedom should be actualised likewise; by abolishing the relationship which is based on exploitation.

Owen's and Legrand's views on labourer's lot are different although they both seek emancipation to labourers. Legrand's labourer is protected by legislation and legislation is enough to make labourer's life fairly good. Owen's labourer can not be protected by legislation because legislation doesn't make labourer as strong and as independent to control his/her own life than the employer is. The employer is the master over the means of his/her incomes, labourer is not. There is no equality, and the equality can not be brought to it through legislation.

Legrand can be seen as an advocate of a social order where the labourer's lot as a wage-earner is compensated by granting rights to labourer and by granting rights labourers are made equal as a party in labour relations and in social relations. By granting them rights they are granted also with duties and by granting rights and duties they are acknowledged as being a party in social relations.

Owen can be seen as an advocate of a social order where the labourer's lot as a wage-earner can not be compensated. There is a conflict with interests which can not be solved in any other way than abolishing altogether the division to employers and

employees. The rights and duties can not be distributed among parties in society, parties should not be acknowledged by distribution of rights and duties. There is no parting to be made among employers and employees, they should not form a social relation, it should not be advocated as a legitimate social relation to be based a social order.

Citizenships acquire their meanings through social orders which give substance to citizenships. By advocating some citizenship over another one is advocating a social order over another. A social order produces the kind of citizenship it requires keeping it's legitimacy and a kind of citizenship produces the social order it requires to be able to fulfill the task of giving substance to subjectivities.