

Between Struggle and Peaceful Dialogue: An Overture to Honneth and Ricoeur on Recognition

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Abstract

In this article I offer an overture to further discussions about the relationship between the German critical theorist, Axel Honneth, and the French philosopher of dialogue, Paul Ricoeur, specifically on their insights on the ethics of recognition. First, I define critical theory through the three normative resources suggested by Max Horkheimer in order to contextualize my reading of Honneth and Ricoeur, both of whom adhere to the politico-practical content of critical theory. Second, I briefly outline the Honneth–Ricoeur debate/dialogue in order to show the philosophical link between them. Third, in separate sections, I schematically discuss the basic features of their individual ethics of recognition in order to show the context of the idea of “struggle” and “peaceful dialogue.” Fourth, I present my critical comments on Ricoeur’s critique of Honneth. While I appreciate Ricoeur’s proposal for peaceful experiences of mutual recognition, I do think that his wariness of the Hegel–Honneth position on the normativity of struggle is not founded on convincing grounds.

Key terms *Honneth, Ricoeur, critical theory, mutual recognition, struggle, peaceful dialogue*

The Normative Claims of Critical Theory

A good theoretical starting point for making sense of social recognition is by revisiting the basic normative claims of critical theory, specifically critical theory as originally conceived by Max Horkheimer in the 1930s. Firstly, critical theory presupposes that reality is necessarily social. What this presupposition means is that the environment we inhabit is largely a product of human intervention. Through philosophy, science, technology, and others, we produce our own “historical way of life in its totality.”¹ Critical theory, therefore, perceives our social normative practices immanently within the social structures we have invented that supposedly promote social cohesion. Secondly, the practical goal of critical theory is the emancipation from slavery and the abolition of social injustice.² This presupposition is based on a kind of pre-political assumption that at the core of every human being is the interest to be free, a kind of “quasi-transcendental interest.”³ It is not necessary to conceive of this quasi-transcendental interest in essentialist terms; at best, it is a practical assumption, yet an assumption that runs all across various cultural groups. The third normative presupposition of critical theory is that the emancipatory impulse is not confined to proletarian sensibilities. This entails the decentralization of the role of the proletariat and the recognition of the emancipatory potential of any social group informed by a pre-political demand for social freedom.⁴

¹ Max Horkheimer, *Critical Theory: Selected Essays*, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell et al. (New York: Continuum, 1989), 244.

² See *ibid.*, 242–46.

³ Axel Honneth, “Recognition and Justice: Outline of a Plural Theory of Justice,” *Acta Sociologica* 47, no. 4 (December 2004): 354. Honneth, of course, only borrowed the idea of the “quasi-transcendental interest” from Habermas, specifically from *Knowledge and Human Interests*, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), 194–95.

⁴ Elsewhere I have outlined these three normative claims of critical theory in detail, see my “What is Critical Theory? Max Horkheimer and the Makings of the Frankfurt School Tradition,” *Mabini Review* 2, no. 1 (2013): 1–19.

My position is that a critical theory of society, even beyond that of the Frankfurt School tradition, presupposes all three assumptions above. However, I take as the strongest normative claim the second: emancipation from slavery and the abolition of social injustice. I believe that this is the normative core of critical theory, as it provides the central qualitative dynamo of social critique. In other words, as a politico-practical content of social critique, what it articulates is the pre-political anthropological propensity toward “freedom” and “justice.”

The Honneth–Ricoeur Debate/Dialogue

In bringing Axel Honneth and Paul Ricoeur together to debate/dialogue about social recognition,⁵ my basic assumption is that both adhere to the politico-practical content of critical theory. It is not at all difficult to show that Honneth adheres to the second normative claim of critical theory, for freedom and justice are central

⁵ Mine is, of course, not the first attempt to compare the notions of recognition of Honneth and Ricoeur. In the journal *Etudes Ricoeuriennes/Ricoeur Studies*, for example, one whole issue is devoted to reactions to Ricoeur’s work on recognition; specifically, the journal issue features two essays that compare the recognition-theoretical models of Honneth and Ricoeur by Marianne Moyaert and Gonalo Marcelo. It must be mentioned that both essays are critical of Honneth’s version of recognition and purport to remedy the deficiencies of the same by arguing, respectively, that Ricoeur offers a theory of narrativity that supplements the struggles for recognition of minority groups (Moyaert) and that these struggles for recognition need not be “politicized” but, rather, are motivated by a “pure ethics of recognition” (Marcelo). See Marianne Moyaert, “Between Ideology and Utopia: Honneth and Ricoeur on Symbolic Violence, Marginalization and Recognition,” in *Etudes Ricoeuriennes/Ricoeur Studies* 2, no. 1 (2011): 84–109, <http://ricoeur.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/ricoeur/article/view/49/26>; and Gonalo Marcelo, “Paul Ricoeur’s Utopia of Mutual Recognition,” in *ibid.*, 110–33, <http://ricoeur.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/ricoeur/article/view/69/20>. Also worthy of mention are the various engagements in the book anthology *From Ricoeur to Action: The Socio-Political Significance of Ricoeur’s Thinking*, ed. Todd S. Mei and David Lewin (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2012), especially chaps. 5, 6, and 10. Moreover, the following essays are also worth mentioning: Alain Loute, “Philosophie sociale at reconnaissance mutuelle chez Paul Ricoeur,” in *Affectivit , imaginaire, cr ation sociale*, ed. R. G ly and L. Van Eynde (Bruxelles: Facult s universitaires Saint-Louis, 2010), 125–47 and Michael Sohn, “The Ethics and Politics of Recognition: Reflections on Taylor, Honneth, and Ricoeur,” *Eco-Ethica* 4 (2015): 217–26.

themes in his system of thought.⁶ Perhaps the most elucidating discussion about freedom and justice done by Honneth is found in his most recent book, *Freedom's Right: The Social Foundation of Democratic Life*, where he enacts a Hegelian conception of freedom and justice based on the idea of *Sittlichkeit* or ethical life. Borrowing from Hegel, specifically from *The Philosophy of Right*,⁷ Honneth uses the triadic constitutive elements of ethical life, namely, family, civil society, and the state in order to present an idea of social freedom, which he then attempts to reconcile with his own recognition theory. Basically, what Honneth wishes to evince, via the Hegelian idea of the ethical life, is a theory of justice that is grounded in a politics of emancipation informed by the normativity of social intersubjective relations.⁸ However, just to backtrack a bit, Honneth's work on recognition has gained prominence in the last couple of decades, especially after the publication of *Kampf um Anerkennung (The Struggle for Recognition)* in 1992, wherein he sketched his basic theory of recognition by marrying basic ideas from the works of the young Hegel and the social psychology of George Herbert Mead.

Meanwhile, the same cannot be said about the reception of Ricoeur's recognition theory since Ricoeur scholarship is largely devoted to his theory of narrativity and hermeneutics. Although, very recently, commentators have started to pick up on Ricoeur's contribution to social and political philosophy, in general, and the

⁶ A good introduction to the relationship between recognition and justice in Honneth's work is Renante Pilapil's "Psychologization of Injustice? On Axel Honneth's Theory of Recognitive Justice," *Ethical Perspectives* 18, no. 1 (2011): 79–106.

⁷ See G.W.F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), especially §§141–157, where Hegel discusses the transition from morality to the ethical life of the community.

⁸ See Axel Honneth, *Freedom's Right: The Social Foundations of Democratic Life*, trans. Joseph Ganahl (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014). For a more succinct account of the interplay between justice and injustice, see Honneth, "Recognition and Justice," 351–64.

ethics of recognition, in particular.⁹ This is perhaps due to the fact that Ricoeur only began to explicitly use the term “recognition” during the last ten years of his career, specifically in his last published work *Parcours de la Reconnaissance* (*The Course of Recognition* 2004). In outlining Ricoeur’s basic insights on the relationship between recognition and justice, *The Course of Recognition* is undeniably the main source, albeit commentaries on this work are quite scarce. Charles Reagan’s recent commentary on *The Course of Recognition* underscores the inextricable relationship between recognition and justice: recognition normatively informs justice inasmuch as justice is the telos of recognition.¹⁰ With Reagan’s assumptions, I am more confident about my reading of Ricoeur’s ethics of recognition as compatible with the politico-practical

⁹ For example, see the essays in Mei and Lewin eds., *From Ricoeur to Action: The Socio-Political Significance of Ricoeur’s Thinking*; and Greg S. Johnson and Dan R. Stiver, eds., *Paul Ricoeur and the Task of Political Philosophy* (Ilanham: Lexington Books, 2013). For recent commentaries on Ricoeur’s ethics of recognition, see Loute, “Philosophie sociale et reconnaissance mutuelle chez Paul Ricoeur”; Michael Sohn, *The Good of Recognition: Phenomenology, Ethics, and Religion in the Thought of Levinas and Ricoeur* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014); Sohn, “The Ethics and Politics of Recognition: Reflections on Taylor, Honneth, and Ricoeur”; David M. Kaplan, *Ricoeur’s Critical Theory* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2003), 154–64; Alain Loute, “The Gift and Mutual Recognition: Paul Ricoeur as a Reader of Marcel Hénaff,” in *Paul Ricoeur and the Task of Political Philosophy*, 105–24; L. Sebastian Purcell, “The Course of Racial Recognition: A Ricoeurian Approach to Critical Race Theory,” in *From Ricoeur to Action*, 75–95; Scott Davidson, “The Long Road to Recognition: Paul Ricoeur and Bell Hooks on the Development of Self-Esteem,” in *ibid.*, 96–112; and Christopher Lauer, “States of Peace: Ricoeur and the Gift,” in *ibid.*, 175–94; Jean Greisch, “Toward Which Recognition?,” in *A Passion for the Possible: Thinking with Paul Ricoeur*, ed. by Brian Treanor and Henry Isaac Venema (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 90–111. A good number of commentaries in *Etudes Ricoeuriennes/Ricoeur Studies* are worth mentioning: Jean-Luc Amalric, Arto Laitinen, L. Sebastian Purcell, Silvia Pierosara, Marianne Moyaert, Gonçalo Marcelo, and Emmanuel Renault, 2:1 (2011), <http://ricoeur.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/ricoeur/issue/view/3>; Beatriz Contreras Tasso, Sébastien Roman, Robert Vosloo, Charles Reagan 6, no. 2 (2015), <http://ricoeur.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/ricoeur/issue/view/13>.

¹⁰ See Charles Reagan, “Recognition and Justice,” *Etudes Ricoeuriennes/Ricoeur Studies* 6, no. 2 (2015): 118–29, <http://ricoeur.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/ricoeur/article/view/276/157>. Similar accounts are given in Beatriz Contreras Tasso’s “Connaissance de soi et reconnaissance. Bases éthico-anthropologiques de la justice dans la pensée ricœurienne” and Roman’s “Justice sociale et luttes pour la reconnaissance: la question de l’agapè,” in *ibid.*, 68–87 and 88–104, <http://ricoeur.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/ricoeur/article/view/301/154> and <http://ricoeur.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/ricoeur/article/view/300/155>.

content of critical theory. In addition to *The Course of Recognition*, one may reconstruct Ricoeur's own theory of recognition from two other works, namely, *Critique and Conviction* (1997) which is a collection of conversations with François Azouvi and Marc de Launay,¹¹ and Ricoeur's acceptance speech for the 2004 Kluge Prize in the Humanities, "Asserting Personal Capacities and Pleading for Mutual Recognition."¹² Nonetheless, it is important to point out that in *The Course of Recognition* Ricoeur directly engages with Honneth, specifically on the latter's "systematic renewal" of the Hegelian notion of *Anerkennung* (recognition).¹³ It is important to note, moreover, that Ricoeur's basic reconceptualization of the ethics of recognition is profoundly influenced by Honneth's *The Struggle for Recognition*, from which the former reconstructs a basic methodological framework for the idea of recognition. Ricoeur commences his dialogue with Honneth by using the latter's interpretation of *Anerkennung* in order to criticize the Hegelian position—more specifically, Hegel's emphasis on the dialectical aspect, and in Ricoeur's estimation of *violent struggle*, of recognition in Hegel's Jena writings. In contrast to the Hegel–Honneth position, Ricoeur favors a notion of recognition that does not exclusively emphasize the idea of struggle as a normative basis. Rather, Ricoeur wishes to "search for more peaceful experiences of recognition."¹⁴ Nevertheless, Ricoeur gives due credence to Honneth's Hegelian-inspired recognition theory, even providing us with one of the most illuminating and convincing

¹¹ Paul Ricoeur, *Critique and Conviction*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

¹² Paul Ricoeur, "Asserting Personal Capacities and Pleading for Mutual Recognition," in *A Passion for the Possible: Thinking with Paul Ricoeur*, ed. Brian Treanor and Henry Isaac Venema, 22–26. (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010).

¹³ See Paul Ricoeur, *The Course of Recognition*, trans. David Pellauer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 186.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

reconstruction of the three spheres of recognition; emphasizing, furthermore, that Honneth’s appropriation of the three spheres of recognition and their corresponding forms of misrecognition provide both speculative and empirical bases for the philosophical study of recognition as a kind of struggle.¹⁵ Nevertheless, despite this acknowledgment, Ricoeur identifies a deficiency in Honneth’s theoretical position, a deficiency that the latter inherited from Hegel, specifically the emphasis that recognition is a kind of struggle or conflict: “Does not the claim for affective, juridical, and social recognition, through its militant, conflictual style, end up as an indefinite demand, a kind of ‘bad infinity?’”¹⁶ In other words, Ricoeur worries that the Hegel–Honneth conception of recognition as struggle, where recognition is construed as an “interminable” struggle that may never end up anywhere, may just result in a vicious cycle, creating a new form of “unhappy consciousness.”¹⁷ Ricoeur writes: “This question has to do not only with the negative feelings that go with a lack of recognition, but also with the acquired abilities, thereby handed over to an insatiable quest. The temptation here is a new form of the ‘unhappy consciousness,’ as either an incurable sense of victimization or the indefatigable postulation of unattainable ideals.”¹⁸

¹⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 187–88.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 218.

¹⁷ The “unhappy consciousness” is a metaphor used by Hegel in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* to describe the third phase in the understanding of self-consciousness, the first two being “stoicism” and “skepticism.” For Hegel, each moment in the development of self-consciousness is an instance of awareness of individual freedom, albeit pathological on account of their inadequate appreciation of social reality. For instance, the unhappy consciousness, in the *Phenomenology*, is depicted as the hybridization of the stoic and the skeptic positions—it is both delusory and evasive. The unhappy consciousness “... *knows* that it is the dual consciousness of itself, as self-liberating, unchangeable, and self-identical, and as bewildering and self-perverting, and it is the awareness of this self-contradictory nature itself.” G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), §206. For a more elaborate account of the pathological moments of freedom in the *Phenomenology*, see my “Hegel and Pathologies of Freedom,” *Cogito: Journal of Philosophy* 4, no. 1 (New Series 2006): 37–43.

¹⁸ Ricoeur, *Course of Recognition*, 218.

In plainer words, Ricoeur is wary of both the damaging effect of misrecognition and the equally damaging consequences of a *sense of entitlement* on the part of the misrecognized. This pathological sense of entitlement, for Ricoeur, could become an endless lust and fascination for “power” and “violence.”¹⁹ Therefore, in order to avoid the insatiability of the new unhappy consciousness, Ricoeur suggests an alternative to the idea of struggle: “The alternative to the idea of struggle in the process of mutual recognition is to be sought in peaceful experiences of mutual recognition, based on symbolic mediations as exempt from the juridical as from the commercial order of exchange.”²⁰ I shall return to the idea of “peaceful experiences of mutual recognition” later.

What I wish to do in the following sections is quite straightforward: to present an overture to the similar, yet also different, theories of recognition of Honneth and Ricoeur. What I seek is a middle ground between the two positions, that is to say, between standpoints of “struggle” and “peaceful dialogue.” While I express my appreciation for Ricoeur’s proposal for peaceful experiences of mutual recognition, I do think that his wariness of the Hegel–Honneth position on the normativity of struggle is not founded on convincing grounds. My presentation is, hopefully, straightforward enough as I present the basic features of each theory of recognition. A caution must be made, however, for my reconstruction will just be very schematic. First, I begin with Honneth’s own starting point: Hegel’s shift from the struggle for

¹⁹ Ibid., 246.

²⁰ Ibid., 219. To my mind, Ricoeur is recommending something quite similar to the Habermasian notion of the “ideal speech situation”: “. . . we have to turn to days of truce, clear days, what we might call clearings, where the meaning of action emerges from the fog of doubt bearing the mark of ‘fitting action.’” Ibid., 218.

self-preservation to the struggle for recognition—which, for Honneth, is the shift from a purely subjectivist to an intersubjectivist conception of the ethical community. Second, this intersubjectivist presupposition is the normative basis of Honneth’s ethics of recognition, as he emphasizes the material dimension of human ethical bonds. Honneth, then, is able to speak about the pathological nature of “misrecognition” or “injustice” on this basis. Third, I rehearse the three spheres of recognition—care, respect, and self-esteem—understood by Honneth as normative moments in the socialization of an individual; it is in this context that we may understand Honneth as propounding a materialist philosophical anthropology. Through the realization of these moments a sense of social justice becomes open to us, while their distortion becomes the basis of social injustice.

Meanwhile, in my schematic reconstruction of Ricoeur’s ethics of recognition, I present three assumptions. First, that recognition is the acknowledgment of distinct qualitative differences of individuals and cultural groups. Ricoeur suggests that the intersubjective reciprocity implied in recognition could better address the problem of multiculturalism as opposed to the politics of identity. As such, Ricoeur emphasizes the prospect of social cohesion on the basis of reciprocity in dialogue. Second, I highlight Ricoeur’s powerful theory of narrativity, specifically the normative role of collective memory. It is through the normativity of memory that Ricoeur’s philosophical anthropology is built upon and, moreover, the idea of collective memory allows him to contextualize his notion of the reciprocity of dialogical exchange in relation to the phenomenon of forgiveness. Third, I return to the idea of peaceful experiences of mutual recognition, highlighting Ricoeur’s proposal that “gift-giving” is a more peaceful means of arriving at mutual recognition, as opposed to the violent and insatiable struggle for recognition.

Before I conclude, I provide a brief section wherein I present my critical comments on Ricoeur's critique of Honneth.

Honneth and the Struggle for Recognition

Honneth considers the Jena writings of the young Hegel as the starting point for articulating "a social theory with normative content" based on the latter's conception of "a comprehensive 'struggle for recognition'."²¹ According to Honneth, Hegel shifts from the modern emphasis on the struggle for self-preservation, exemplified by the philosophical anthropology of Niccolo Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes, to the struggle for recognition. What the struggle for self-preservation entails is that "individual subjects and political communities alike oppose one another in a state of constant competition over interests."²² Both Machiavelli and Hobbes construe this egocentric struggle for self-preservation to be at the core of human nature and, thus, something to be reckoned with if the situation entails the conflict between contrasting pluralities within society. As such, both philosophers suggest that this somewhat grim character of human nature be curbed, regulated, or mastered. For Machiavelli, power struggles normatively condition the emergence of a single individual (the Prince) who takes control over other subjects and that, through this singular source of power, the selfish nature of subjects can be redirected in a beneficial way. Hobbes, for his part, imagines a Leviathan to whom the subjects' rights of nature are submitted. Giving up an individual's inclination toward self-preservation is the beginning of the creation of a

²¹ Axel Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*, trans. Joel Anderson (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1995), 1.

²² *Ibid.*, 7.

harmonious society.²³ In other words, modern political philosophy's emphasis on an egoistic human nature leads to either a kind of political instrumentalism (Machiavelli) or contractualism (Hobbes) to justify the state's role in the forging of social cohesion.²⁴

Meanwhile, Hegel questions the individualistic dimension of modern political philosophy and demonstrates how individual autonomy can be gleaned from a philosophical anthropology that does not presuppose an atomic notion of the self. Rather, individual autonomy results from a dialectical process of identity formation that involves the actual intersubjective interactions of humans. Such a philosophical anthropology does not presuppose that human agency already exists from the very beginning, but, rather, human agency is a product of stages of human relations that one goes through in a lifetime. Another important aspect of this Hegelian reconceptualization of the development of individual autonomy is that it goes hand in hand with the dialectical differentiation of society.²⁵ In other words, we find in Hegel an attempt to mediate "subjective spirit" and "objective spirit," to be more precise, "the conceptual delineation of the different types of human faculties and interactions, and their realization in social life, in social, economic, legal and political institutions."²⁶ What is presupposed in the mediation between subjective and objective spirit is that what constitute the basic fiber of an ethical community (*Sittlichkeit*) are the reciprocal or recognitive relations that exist among individuals. The ideal society, which for Hegel is the full self-realization of the Spirit,

²³ Cf. *ibid.*, 7–10.

²⁴ See *ibid.*, 7.

²⁵ Cf. Joel Anderson, "Translator's Introduction," in *ibid.*, xix–xx.

²⁶ Jean-Philippe Deranty, *Beyond Communication: A Critical Study of Axel Honneth's Social Philosophy* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 189.

is where subjects are “fully engaged with each other” in mutual recognition,²⁷ a state where what Hegel calls “absolute ethical life”²⁸ is in place. In contradistinction to the modern assumption that society is made up of atomistic subjects with individualistic interests, Hegel offers a conceptualization of society where the social interaction of individuals is seen as the “common substance in which all share and participate.”²⁹ Honneth’s recognition theory has been crafted based on this normative claim of Hegel. Honneth remarks: “every philosophical theory of society must proceed not from the acts of isolated subjects but rather from the framework of ethical bonds, within which subjects always already move. Thus, contrary to atomistic theories of society, one is to assume, as a kind of natural basis for human socialization, a situation in which elementary forms of intersubjective coexistence are always present.”³⁰

By emphasizing the material dimension of ethical bonds, that is to say, bonds wrought out of concrete social interaction, Honneth is able to formulate a theory of recognition grounded in the assumption that society, at large, is somewhat an amplification of human social connections. At the heart of this theory is Honneth’s assumption that there is “always present” a pre-cognitive and pre-political relation between individuals. “The social bond always already unites those who later come to be individualised, and who often forget the communal ground underpinning their individualisation.”³¹ This underlying communal ground of mutual

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ See G. W. F. Hegel, *The System of Ethical Life and First Philosophy of Spirit*, trans. H. S. Harris and T. M. Knox (New York: State University of New York Press, 1979), 242.

²⁹ Deranty, *Beyond Communication*, 190.

³⁰ Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition*, 14.

³¹ Deranty, *Beyond Communication*, 193–94.

interdependence is the basis of individualization. Recognition, in this context, is understood as a process that undergirds this communal ground and, as such, individualization presupposes our integration into a community wherein the interdependence of subjects is a fundamental normative element. We are, therefore, not inert monads that do not communicate. Rather, our individual personal identities are largely constituted by our social interactions—it is not *who I am* that makes me an individual, but, rather, it is *who I know* that makes me who I am. In this context, the experience of social alienation or injustice is a pathological forgetfulness of this quasi-transcendental interest or the forgetfulness of our intersubjective coexistence. Whether we like it or not, as members of society, we have always been “related prior to any further specified social relation.”³² Our failure to realize and accept the “shared” dimension of society leads to the pathological experience of misrecognition or social injustice.

According to the Hegelian scholar, Robert Pippin, Hegel’s notion of recognition, which as we saw Honneth took as point of departure, is an answer to the question of the very possibility of freedom.³³ This notion brings us back to my earlier assumption that a theory of recognition presupposes the second normative claim of critical theory: emancipation from slavery and the abolition of social injustice. In *The Struggle for Recognition*, Honneth presents an elaborate theoretico-practical solution to the problem of social injustice in modern society or what he terms as “misrecognition.” One suffers social injustice when the subject’s physical and psychological needs are not acknowledged, or when one is not integrated into the ethical

³² Ibid., 194.

³³ Robert B. Pippin, “What is the Question for which Hegel’s Theory of Recognition is the Answer?,” *European Journal of Philosophy* 8, no. 2 (2000): 155.

practices of his/her social group, or when the ability of a subject to contribute to society is not realized. Following Hegel and Mead, Honneth identifies three spheres of social recognition which, when taken together, could be presented as a materialist philosophical anthropology with ethical/moral content. Once again, the three spheres are care, respect, and self-esteem.

These three spheres of recognition govern the way we human beings encounter each other within a given social formation. Briefly, Honneth considers “care” as the most basic form of recognition, an acknowledgment of a subject’s basic needs that help in building up an adequate attitude required in the initial stages of a subject’s integration in society. As an example, the formative years of a child are characterized by the sphere of care—the loving and tensional relationship between child and parents is the normative ground for the development of basic social skills in the child. Meanwhile, what is at play in the sphere of “respect” is the principle of universal equality. This does not yet refer to the recognition of a fixed identity, but, rather, the recognition of the capacity of a subject to engage in social customs; such inclusion develops in the subject a sense of societal belongingness that further ramifies into a deep sense of ethical obligation. Finally, “self-esteem” stems from the principle of the individuation of the subject. This kind of recognition acknowledges the role that the subject can play within a given societal set-up. This last sphere goes beyond the bounds of family and peers, thereby allowing the subject to develop a sense of self that is not strictly determined by family background or a narrow sense of social belongingness.³⁴

³⁴ See Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition*, 92–130. For a more detailed discussion of the three spheres of recognition as bases for Honneth’s philosophical anthropology, see my “The Ethics of Recognition and the Normativity of Social Relations: Some Notes on Axel Honneth’s Materialist Philosophical Anthropology,” *Suri* 1, no. 1 (2012): 15–24.

As a normative basis for a materialist philosophical anthropology, the three spheres of recognition may be used to explain the dialectical development of the socialization of the individual subject, they illustrate how individual autonomy or personal identity is a result of a series of recognitive encounters with other subjects. As such, the socialization of the subject develops historically—from the basic experience of care to the gradual integration of the subject into the society through the experience of social acceptance and the acknowledgment of the subject’s individual creative capacities. It is important to note that Honneth understands individual autonomy as the “practical self-relation” of the subject. “Practical self-relation designates the basic conditions of selfhood, which, by allowing for the emergence of a sufficiently robust identity, enable the subject to engage in interaction with its environments.”³⁵ Honneth claims that “the reproduction of social life is governed by the imperative of mutual recognition, because one can develop a practical relation-to-self only when one has learned to view oneself, from the normative perspective of one’s partners in interaction, as their social addressee.”³⁶ Given this claim, in relation to the normative claim to emancipation from slavery and the abolition of social injustice, a subject gains full emancipation and the experience of justice only when he/she is given the adequate physical and psychological care, the freedom to act responsibly, and the chance to develop his/her individual potentialities. Basically, the three spheres of recognition entail that a socialized subject is able to interact with other subjects in a healthy way and, at the same time, recognizes that the basic requirement for social cohesion is the development of recognitive

³⁵ Deranty, *Beyond Communication*, 272.

³⁶ Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition*, 92.

relations among social agents. However, another, somewhat debatable, feature of Honneth's recognition theory is that he argues that a subject should be able to become conscious, not only of the idea of freedom, but also of his/her ability to appropriate freedom. This ability requires already a robust sense of moral identity. Honneth remarks, "unless one presupposes a certain degree of self-confidence, legally guaranteed autonomy, and sureness as to the value of one's own abilities, it is impossible to imagine successful self realization if that is to be understood as a process of realizing, without coercion, one's self-chosen life-goals."³⁷

Meanwhile, the ethical/moral content of Honneth's materialist philosophical anthropology stems from the intersubjectivist position of his theory of recognition, which could be further ramified into two ways, namely: 1) the emergence of an ethical subject and 2) the ethical implication of the reproduction of social life normatively grounded in mutual recognition. Honneth borrows Mead's solution to the problem of individual coordination and the production of social life. The intersubjectivist-recognitive process results in the emergence of a psychological mechanism through which human agents are able to mirror themselves from the perspective of other subjects.³⁸

Ricoeur and the Peaceful Experience of Mutual Recognition

Ricoeur could be placed among those philosophers who have developed a deep sense of aversion towards the classical notion of the Cartesian cogito. Like Honneth, Ricoeur's philosophical anthropology is not based on the modern assumption that society is

³⁷ Honneth, *ibid.*, 174.

³⁸ Cf. Deranty, *Beyond Communication*, 274.

made up of atomistic individuals. The most profound deficit of the Cartesian position is that it does not have an adequate response to the problem of social or cultural difference and individual peculiarities. A society that operates within the framework of sameness, as opposed to difference, would more than likely breed contempt among social or cultural groups which see themselves as being oppressed by the imperative to be the same, chiding their right to express or observe their cherished customs and traditions. Social injustice is not only experienced by individuals, but also by cultural groups; as a matter of fact, a subject often suffers from social injustice because of the social group he/she is associated with. This is the first premise of Ricoeur's recognition theory—the recognition, not the overcoming, of distinct qualitative differences of individuals and cultural groups in society.

Ricoeur notes in *Critique and Conviction*: “The term ‘recognition’ seems to me much more important than that of ‘identity’ which is the focus most of the time of the debate on multiculturalism. In the notion of identity there is only the idea of sameness; whereas recognition is a concept that directly integrates otherness and allows a dialectic of the same and the other. The demand of identity always involves something violent with respect to others. On the contrary, the search for recognition implies reciprocity.”³⁹ In other words, the politics of identity may result in a particular group's fixated conception of itself, which may pathologically result in the bogging down of dialogue and mutual recognition as opposed to their realization. Therefore, it remains an issue whether, on the basis of the claim of identity alone, *special extra rights* should be readily granted to specific individuals or cultural groups on top of basic

³⁹ Ricoeur, *Critique and Conviction*, 60.

rights shared collectively by the members of a community.⁴⁰ This issue is somewhat related to what Ricoeur mentioned regarding the sense of entitlement of the new unhappy consciousness, for it is always possible that special extra rights are not only redundant in some situations; they may also be abused at the expense of those who are not granted such rights. It is fortunate that Ricoeur's position is nuanced enough. He is not denying the ontological importance of identity, but since he understands the situation from an ethical standpoint, Ricoeur tends to accentuate the role of mutual recognition as paving the way for dialogue. What this role implies is that recognition is neither simply the conflation of various social groups under one umbrella meta-group nor the cloistering of groups becoming islands in themselves destroying the prospect of an earnest acknowledgment of differences. Ricoeur's recognition theory explores the prospect of social cohesion that normatively emerges out of a principle of universality. This principle of universality is precisely the normative basis of dialogue. As such, it is not the kind of universality that subsumes differences, thereby cancelling them. While it is important, for Ricoeur, that social groups adopt assumptions that become the basis for their proclamation of legitimation and guidance for practical actions, they should also realize that these assumptions are always subject to critique and revision.

Another interesting and powerful feature of Ricoeur's recognition theory is that it draws on his more predominant theory of "narrativity," which is an integral part of his philosophical

⁴⁰ This seems to be an issue raised by Renante D. Pilapil in his recent book, especially when he takes issue with Charles Taylor's endorsement of "differential treatment" to, or *special treatment* of, cultural groups which could result in a new form of cultural individualism that may disregard normative calls for social universality. Cf. *Recognition: Examining Identity Struggles* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2015), 10–11.

anthropology.⁴¹ In the context of social groups, however, narrativity manifests in collective memory. The understanding of the plight of cultural groups rests on the proper “translation” of their collective memories. Translation, comments Leovino Ma. Garcia, “constitutes a paradigm for all exchanges . . . from one culture to another culture,” through which “an equivalence without identity” is achieved and, as such, “serves the project of a single humanity without breaking up the initial plurality.”⁴² In this context, the process of translation is a phenomenon of *sharing* and *listening* to stories we learn about the holistic life experiences of people. Sharing and listening constitute the narrative dimension of recognition. Ricoeur, in “Asserting Personal Capacities and Pleading for Mutual Recognition,” identifies the “power to say” and the “power to recount” as among the basic capacities of human beings (and, we may add, of cultures) which allow them to “produce events in society” through “reasoned discourse” and, moreover, allow them to become moral or ethical agents, inasmuch as the power to recount is the normative foundation of personal and collective identity, as actions can be “imputed” to moral agents.⁴³ Ricoeur further asserts: “We can then speak of a narrative identity: it is that of the plot of a narrative that remains unfinished and open to the possibility of being recounted differently, and also of being recounted by others.”⁴⁴ Therefore, the process of telling a story drawn from collective memory contributes to the self-understanding of a culture and the development of collective ethical

⁴¹ For more of this, see Maria Duffy, *Paul Ricoeur's Pedagogy of Pardon: A Narrative Theory of Memory and Forgetting* (London: Continuum, 2009), 32–36.

⁴² Leovino Ma. Garcia, “On Paul Ricoeur and the Translation-Interpretation of Cultures,” in *Thesis Eleven* no. 94 (August 2008): 80–81.

⁴³ Ricoeur, “Asserting Personal Capacities,” 23. Also cf. Garcia, “On Paul Ricoeur,” 73.

⁴⁴ Ricoeur, “Asserting Personal Capacities,” 23.

consciousness—which, to my mind, is very similar to the Hegelian vision of *Sittlichkeit*. According to Ricoeur, “Memory exercises two functions: it ensures temporal continuity, by allowing us to move along the axis of time; it allows us to recognize ourselves and to say *I, my*. History in its turn contributes something other than the feeling of belonging to the same field of temporal consciousness, through its recourse to documents that have been preserved in a material form; this is what enables it to tell in other terms, to tell from the point of view of others.”⁴⁵ Ricoeur, moreover, emphasizes the reciprocal character of memory sharing, “as people remember events together and interpret them in terms of shared, historical events. Remembering together creates the bonds that hold social groups together—and just as often keeps groups apart.”⁴⁶ Ricoeur is, however, quick to note that collective memory could be fetishized and recommends that even a cultural group’s collective memory must be open to reevaluation and emendation. In *Memory, History, Forgetting*, the fetishization of memory is referred to as the “misuse of memory” or “manipulations of memory” which poisons and, thereby, pathologizes “the demand for identity,” rendering the clamor for identity ideological and, hence, fragile.⁴⁷ This fetishization of collective memory could be perhaps avoided through a kind of self-reflexivity that ensures that the self-understanding of a cultural group is always kept in check and avoids the pitfall of cultural reification or what has been described above as the new unhappy consciousness in the form of the pathological sense of entitlement.

⁴⁵ Ricoeur, *Critique and Conviction*, 124.

⁴⁶ Kaplan, *Ricoeur’s Critical Theory*, 160.

⁴⁷ Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 82.

Collective memory, for Ricoeur, affectively opens a group to a kind of cathartic process, which involves the:

collective memory that is the place of humiliation, of demands, of guilt, of celebrations, hence of veneration as well as loathing. Here, we need the concept of collective memory which the historian critically reworks; we need the concept of collective memory in order to have a point of application for the critical operation of history. In a reciprocal manner, collective memory can counterbalance the tendency of history to render official a *certain* state of memory, an ideological memory.⁴⁸

By recounting the past, especially in front of the oppressor, a cultural group enters a dialectical process of catharsis that addresses precisely the experience of social injustice and the demand for recognition. The healing process ensues from the open expression of sentiment and the oppressor's admittance of guilt, that is to say, "when the enemy is finally reconciled with the enemy," as in the stories of Homer, there occurs "a kind of mutual forgiving"⁴⁹ or a reconciliation wherein each party "renounces" personal partiality, "a pardon in which each is truly recognized by the other."⁵⁰ As such, the "process of mutual recognition occurs in an apology, which recognizes each party as guilty and suffering, allows for a reinterpretation of the past, and opens the possibility for reconciliation."⁵¹ The reciprocal recognition

⁴⁸ Ricoeur, *Critique and Conviction*, 123.

⁴⁹ Paul Ricoeur and Sorin Antohi, "Memory, History, Forgiveness: A Dialogue Between Paul Ricoeur and Sorin Antohi," *Janus Head* 8, no. 1 (2005): 21, <http://www.janushead.org/8-1/ricoeur.pdf>.

⁵⁰ Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 248.

⁵¹ Kaplan, *Ricoeur's Critical Theory*, 160.

of suffering is “forgiveness.” The therapeutic process culminates in forgiveness—it is the admittance of the group’s experience of suffering and the acknowledgment of the oppressor’s apology. Ricoeur’s emphasis on the dialectic of apology-forgiveness is actually a proposal for a non-retributive justice which gains normative strength from a restorative solution for social conflict, that is to say, a “peaceful” experience of mutual recognition, as opposed to the classical notion of retributive justice (punishment) that Hegel mentions in *The Philosophy of Right*, wherein it is difficult to distinguish between retributive justice and vengeance.⁵²

Nevertheless, Ricoeur admits that the dialectic between apology and forgiveness is an enigmatic, if not a confusing, one. In one of the last interviews he did with Sorin Antohi, Ricoeur outlines the features of his idea of forgiveness. Forgiveness is a personal act between persons that goes beyond the bounds of juridical institutions, disturbing the established rules of proceduralism. Going beyond the procedures of juridical institutions, the logic of forgiveness emerges from a “relation of excess” or “superabundance.” Moreover, Ricoeur seems to be hinting that the “logic of excess” of forgiveness must influence the “logic of equivalence” of juridical justice, because “there is in the idea of justice left to its own device something that is vindictive, something that is very hard to distinguish from vengeance.” Ricoeur suggests that the vindictive tendency of justice is tamed by the logic of excess of forgiveness, for instance, in the fact that the courts (although this seems to be true only in modern democratic societies) assume equal opportunity on the part of the accused when his or her spoken defense is considered. However, forgiveness, Ricoeur stresses, is not tantamount to

⁵² Cf. Ricoeur and Antohi, “Memory, History, Forgiveness,” 9–10.

“organized forgetting,” otherwise known as “amnesty.” For Ricoeur, amnesty given by juridical institutions to the accused robs the plaintiff of genuine justice; he also adds that amnesty thwarts the possibility for true forgiveness to ever occur, that is to say, no honest and lasting reconciliation, both at the level of individual “consciences” and the level of the community, is achieved. Put another way, the “private world of forgiveness” and the “public world of justice” are prevented from interpenetrating each other. For Ricoeur, genuine forgiveness does not seek to cancel the evil perpetrated by the accused conscience; as a matter of fact, the act of forgiveness is a recognition of the suffering caused by the evil act—it is an act of memory. In genuine forgiveness, Ricoeur speaks of “appeased memory,” that is to say, a recounting of the “evil suffered or committed . . . without anger nor prejudice.”⁵³ It is interesting to note that Ricoeur also acknowledges the “collective” dimension of forgiveness; although he emphasizes the personal dimension of forgiveness in order to stress that systematic forgetting, as in amnesty, results in further injustice. Nevertheless, he maintains that the experience of forgiveness presupposes a community and should not be simply relegated to a single person as arbiter.⁵⁴

In the context of mutual recognition, say of the sufferer and the perpetrator of suffering, forgiveness presupposes “an alterity within oneself which can admit the voices of oneself and the other.”⁵⁵ Ricoeur writes in *Oneself as Another*: “. . . the ‘pardon’ resulting from the mutual recognition of the two antagonists who admit the limits

⁵³ See *ibid.*, 9–11. For a more detailed account of Ricoeur’s ethics of forgiveness, see Olivier Abel, “The Unsurpassable Dissensus: The Ethics of Forgiveness in Paul Ricoeur’s Work,” in *From Ricoeur to Action: The Socio-Political Significance of Ricoeur’s Thinking*, ed. Todd S. Mei and David Lewin. (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2012), 211–28.

⁵⁴ Ricoeur and Antohi, “Memory, History, Forgiveness,” 22.

⁵⁵ Abel, “The Unsurpassable Dissensus,” 217.

of their viewpoints and renounce their partiality denotes the authentic phenomenon of conscience.”⁵⁶ This admittance of the limits of the biased viewpoints of consciences follows the logic of excess, that is, of the super-abundance of generosity that allows a plurality of varying voices. In most situations, voices remain incompatible, that is to say, the difference of voices is maintained. Forgiveness, as mutual recognition, is not the conflation of two or more dissenting voices, but, rather, it initiates the breaking down of walls, thereby allowing the different voices to speak and be heard. In this sense, therefore, the narrative is not singular but plural, and I assume that this is true, not only at a personal level, but also, and I would stress more importantly, at the multicultural level. In this connection, cultural narratives are always incompatible and, as such, the experience of social injustice is historical-specific to a particular group. Each group has its own story of suffering. Ricoeur says, “I always return to the idea of incomparable histories, and consequently to the specificity of ethnic and political problematics. This is also why the universal, in this domain, cannot be constitutive but regulative.”⁵⁷ The idea of incompatible histories also invokes the process of listening. Once more, the adoption of a universal-regulative dialogical process must be involved where the historical-specific dimension of a cultural narrative can guide the process. The universal-regulative process makes it difficult to generalize conclusions which result in the creation of laws and regulations that structurally maintain social cohesion. But this is precisely the normative claim of recognition—the recognition of difference and the possibility of social inclusion that fosters social justice.

⁵⁶ Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 343.

⁵⁷ Ricoeur, *Critique and Conviction*, 65.

It was mentioned above that Ricoeur is wary of the character of recognition as “struggle” that Hegel and Honneth treat with importance. As mentioned, Ricoeur is worried about the tendency of struggles to become violent and the tendency of agents, who struggle for recognition, to demand for recognition endlessly, resulting in the emergence of a new unhappy consciousness that assumes a pathological sense of entitlement. In contrast to struggle, Ricoeur proposes a “peaceful” alternative: the “economy of the gift.”⁵⁸ “The logic of the exchange of gifts is a logic of reciprocity that creates mutuality; it consists in the call to give in return contained in the act of giving.”⁵⁹ As such, gift giving is not a struggling demand for exchange, but, rather, an “invitation” to engage in dialogue, that is to say, an invitation to a continuous and generous interaction. As an example of a peaceful experience of recognition, the economy of the gift is not established through juridical institutionalization; however, such practice may already be normatively ingrained in a given society. In this kind of recognition, struggle is not necessary—it is neither one’s duty to give others gifts so that they may feel respected or esteemed, nor is it the right of anyone to demand they should receive.⁶⁰ As such, the power of the gift emanates from the logic of excess of generosity—it was not demanded, but, nevertheless, it was given. Moreover, the gift giver does not measure the probability of a return or response; however, if responded to by the recipient, the loop opens up the abundance of human interaction. Ricoeur, nevertheless, cautions that, while a peaceful experience of mutual recognition may arise via the exchange of gifts, we must not expect that a resolution of a dispute

⁵⁸ Ricoeur, *The Course of Recognition*, 224.

⁵⁹ Ricoeur, “Asserting Personal Capacities,” 25.

⁶⁰ Cf. Lauer, “States of Peace,” 185.

ensues right away. The economy of the gift still is essentially aporetic, as the social agents involved experience the “tension between generosity and obligation.”⁶¹

Some Critical Considerations

Before I conclude, I suppose some brief critical comments on Ricoeur’s critique of the idea of the “struggle for recognition” are not out of place. As pointed out above, Ricoeur’s critique zeros in on Hegel’s description of recognition as a kind of struggle, which was then picked up by Honneth to describe the “moral grammar of social conflicts” as a “struggle for recognition.” Ricoeur takes issue with the idea of struggle because of its tendencies towards violence and insatiability, and, for Ricoeur, these tendencies should be tamed by peaceful means of achieving mutual recognition, such as, the economy of the gift. Any earnest reader will not fail to accept the novelty of Ricoeur’s proposal for a peaceful experience of mutual recognition and I do agree with him that the economy of the gift is a possible means of achieving such peaceful experience. I trust that this is actually a welcome supplement to current discussions on the ethics of recognition. However, Ricoeur might be too quick, perhaps even naïve, to downplay the normative import of struggle in social relations. I do not think that by pointing out that struggles end up violently and are seemingly insatiable Ricoeur successfully diminishes the important normative role of struggle in social conflicts. I am inclined to agree with the observation of Arto Laitinen that Ricoeur’s worry might not be as well founded as he believes, especially on whether struggles are always insatiable.

⁶¹ Ricoeur, *The Course of Recognition*, 245.

I wish to briefly summarize the points laid down by Laitinen in reaction to Ricoeur. Laitinen provides us three reasons why he thinks Ricoeur is mistaken on the subject of struggle. First, “any normative demand has its conditions of satisfaction built into it.”⁶² Laitinen uses the example of the demand for global gender equality which merely demands a global recognition of the basic rights of women at the global scale. If the specific conditions for global gender equality are satisfied, then the demand has successfully reached its goal, the historical struggle then will stop. The demand neither calls for the institutionalization of special rights for women, nor the overpowering of the male species—it merely demands for equality or equal opportunity. A more specific example, perhaps, is the long historical struggle to gain the right of suffrage of women, which dates back to the ancient times, which was by no measure a “peaceful” struggle. Second, “it is not the case that all demands and expectations are justified.”⁶³ The demand for global gender equality defeats its purpose if the corresponding expectation is the rise of female superiority. I could not agree more with Laitinen that “[t]here is no basis for the fear that by acknowledging some demands as justified, one should somehow then acknowledge all demands as justified.”⁶⁴ Hence, we should find ways to determine justifiable demands from unjustifiable demands. Third, “suggesting ‘a state of peace’ would merely serve the interests of the ruling group.”⁶⁵ How is this so? By being serene or calm, it is more than likely that the demands of the disenfranchised group will not be heard, much less granted.

⁶² Arto Laitinen, “Paul Ricoeur’s Surprising Take on Recognition,” *Etudes Ricoeuriennes/Ricoeur Studies* 2, no. 1 (2011): 45, <http://ricoeur.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/ricoeur/article/view/57/23>.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Ricoeur's attempt to depoliticize the experience of mutual recognition compels him to assume that only through a peaceful experience of recognition, such as through gift-giving, can disputing parties arrive at real, non-violent, mutual recognition. Moreover, since he associates struggle with insatiability, it follows that only through peaceful means can we arrest the cycle of the clamor for recognition. However, Ricoeur also cautions us that a peaceful means, such as gift-giving, can only suspend dispute, hence, it may or may not yet result in a complete reconciliation. So, what happens next when a dispute is suspended but not resolved? There are, at least, two possibilities. Either, the interaction ends in a standstill, or the disputing parties continue to "struggle" to find ways to reconcile. It is also possible that a standstill is only temporary and that the aggrieved party will, once again, demand recognition. It seems to me that the ontology of conflict—to be more precise, a situation wherein one party is disrespected or misrecognized—is what Ricoeur seemingly downplays in his depoliticized view of recognition. The peaceful alternative of Ricoeur is only normatively applicable in some cases wherein the harm done is lesser in degree or no harm was done at all. However, in most situations—like in cases of conflict resolution, social inclusion, or acceptance of identity—struggle is almost always present because, in reality, to borrow a hyperbole from Adorno, *our lives cannot be lived for we exist amidst the wrong state of things*. To be less hyperbolic, we live in a world wherein even our basic rights as members of modern communities are not respected.

Closing remarks

In order to bring Honneth and Ricoeur together under the ambit of critical theory, I referred to the three normative claims of early Frankfurt School critical theory and emphasized the normative force of its politico-practical content: emancipation from slavery and the

abolition of social injustice. I argue that Honneth and Ricoeur meet at this politico-practical point, and I say so despite Ricoeur's depoliticization of mutual recognition. From a theoretical vantage point, the most obvious affinity between the two are their qualitatively similar, but also very different, theories of recognition. As we have seen, their emphases are different but they are basically informed by the same normative force: the avoidance, possibly abolition, of misrecognition. My reading of Honneth brings out a materialist philosophical anthropology with ethical content based on the three spheres of social recognition. Meanwhile, I pinpointed the salient points of Ricoeur's ethics of recognition—highlighting its strengths in the context of reciprocal dialogue, narrativity, cultural memory, and the phenomenon of forgiveness. While I do think that a common ground between “struggle” and “peaceful dialogue” could be gleaned from the above overture to Honneth and Ricoeur, I pointed out that the latter's depoliticized view of recognition misses the normative import of the former's emphasis on struggle.

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