

Hegel and the Politics of Recognition

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Abstract: While political philosophers have turned to Hegel's notion of recognition in their development of a theory of identity politics, a careful reading of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, and of the master-servant dialectic in particular, reveals the limits of this approach. For Hegel, recognition cannot be separated from a process of self-determination, which is as essential to the development of genuine autonomy as the affirmation of claims to recognition. This article examines the role of self-determination in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and considers its implications for the theorization of contemporary politics.

I

Endlessly adaptable to the changing demands of the political *zeitgeist*, Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* has been read as the philosophical vindication of political standpoints ranging from democratic liberalism to existentialist Marxism.¹ At the present moment, the *Phenomenology*, and particularly the dialectic of master and servant, has come to be associated with discussions of identity politics. Emerging out of the "new social movements" of the late 1960s and 1970s, the term "identity politics" refers to forms of political engagement organized around values other than those of socio-economics and class.² Insisting that justice requires more than the redistribution of economic goods and opportunities, defenders of identity politics have argued that the political and institutional acknowledgement and defense of cultural, sexual, and ethnic difference is essential to the full and free development of individuals and groups within a society. Since the decline of socialism as a viable political strategy and the emergence of cultural difference as a central

political concern, identity politics have come to define much activism on the political Left.³

In recent years, political philosophers have sought to provide identity politics with a philosophical grounding. Hegel's aptness for such a project stems from the centrality in his work of the notion of recognition.⁴ This notion offers theorists who are no longer able to appeal to concepts of historical necessity and class struggle a philosophically rich terrain for grounding the claims of identity politics. In contrast to other political-philosophical commentators on Hegel, theorists of identity politics have focused less on Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, with its treatment of the relation between *Sittlichkeit* and law, civil society and the state, and more on Hegel's earlier Jena writings and the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.⁵ The master-servant dialectic in the *Phenomenology* occupies a privileged place in these interpretations of Hegel's work, where it is sometimes invoked as the philosophical model *par excellence* of recognition as the underlying mechanism in the struggle for political autonomy and dignity.

Applications of the master-servant dialectic to the theorization of identity politics have been useful in widening the relevance of Hegel's thought for current political theory, though they frequently overlook dimensions of the text that complicate claims regarding recognition as the privileged mechanism of socio-political struggle. In particular, what is often obscured in contemporary appropriations of the *Phenomenology* for political theory is the dialectical relation between self-consciousness and its environment, a recurrent theme of the work. Discussions of this relation, often associated with Marxist and neo-Marxist interpretations of Hegel, have in recent years been displaced by accounts of intersubjective recognition attuned to the concerns of contemporary identity politics and theories of participatory democracy. This reorientation in interpretation can be explained, in part, by the history of the reception of the *Phenomenology* itself. For a long time, Kojévian and Sartrean readings dominated political interpretation of the *Phenomenology* but fell into disrepute with the general abandonment of the socialist project that they defended. Their reading of the master and servant dialectic saw in the accomplishments of the servant a vindication of the class struggle and of the Marxian theory of historical materialism; consequently, key concepts in the dialectic such as recognition, desire, and labor came to be identified with broad historical categories underpinned by a materialist social theory.⁶ In repudiating this type of reading, contemporary theorists of identity politics have refocused attention on recognition as a psychological and social process

located in a space of intersubjective communication. But they have also, in now privileging the dialogical relation between self-consciousnesses, largely abandoned reflection on the process of self-consciousness's unfolding relation to the external world. This one-sided approach to the *Phenomenology*, and to the master-servant dialectic in particular, not only fails to do justice to Hegel's account, given the inseparability of these processes in Hegel's work; it also provides a deficient account of the grounds of social and political autonomy.

In assessing the significance of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* for contemporary political thought, it is therefore necessary to consider anew this relation between self and environment. Hegel does not designate this relation by a single term comparable to recognition, but the notion of "self-determination" serves to capture the significance and distinguishing features of this relation as it is presented in the *Phenomenology*. While self-determination may seem to imply the autochthonous development of self out of one's being, in the context of Hegelian dialectics, the term denotes a process of self-formation that necessarily proceeds through the mediation of what is external to self.⁷ Furthermore, while the notion of self-determination is sometimes dovetailed into a theory of recognition, the two need to be distinguished as separate moments in Hegel's account of the development of self-consciousness. Recognition, for Hegel, designates an act of consciousness brought about through the perception and acknowledgement of an identity between self and other, resulting in a shift in understanding of self and other. Such moments of recognition recur throughout the *Phenomenology*, but they do not in themselves amount to moments of self-transformation, for such shifts in understanding must be internalized and then actualized in the world if a genuine transformation in self is to occur. Self-determination constitutes this next step in the development of consciousness by actualizing that changed self-conception. It denotes the active transformation of the self through concrete interaction between consciousness and substance, that being-in-itself which at first appears to be consciousness's other but emerges, in the form of Spirit, as its essence. It is this relationship between self and its concrete environment which forms the basis of self-determination, for it is through the medium of external things that self can perform the labor on itself required for its own transformation. As we shall see, in each section of the *Phenomenology*, self-determination, as the active instantiation of a transformed sense of self, follows recognition, the acknowledgement of a previously unacknowledged identity between self and other.

Whereas contemporary treatments of the *Phenomenology* have emphasized recognition as a principle motif of the work, the importance of self-determination, particularly for the application of the *Phenomenology* to political theory, has gone largely unexamined. In seeking to redress this imbalance, I begin by considering the contributions of Charles Taylor and Axel Honneth, two of the most prominent Hegelian theorists of identity politics, and highlight a few of the criticisms that have been levelled against them. I then examine the master-servant dialectic more closely and trace the recurrence of recognition and self-determination in the *Phenomenology* more broadly. Finally, I consider the implications of this reading for the theorization of contemporary political struggles. My goal is to reflect both on the conceptual limitations of contemporary formulations of identity politics, and on the limitations of a reading of the *Phenomenology* which focuses too narrowly on recognition as the principle mechanism in the theorization of social and political autonomy.

II

For political philosophers such as Charles Taylor and Axel Honneth, Hegel is viewed as an ally in the elaboration of a political theory that highlights questions of identity and recognition. While their work extends beyond defending the claims of any particular social movement, their concern with recognition as a key moral and political category resonates with and reinforces the reorientation to identity politics of much Leftist political thought over the last few decades. For both Taylor and Honneth, the philosophical defense of identity politics is characterized by a psychosocial account of mutual recognition as a vital need whose *telos* is acknowledgement, conceived dialogically in terms of intersubjective communication and more broadly as political and legislative acknowledgement in the space of public negotiation and debate. According to Taylor, the by now familiar political discourse of identity and recognition has its roots in a philosophical history which includes both the democratic tradition and an emerging ideology, exemplified in Rousseau, of individualism and personal authenticity. Taylor argues that Hegel can only be understood in light of this emerging “expressionism,” according to which actions and modes of life “are seen as wholes, as either true expressions or distortions of what we authentically are.”⁸ But for Taylor it is in Hegel, rather than in Rousseau, that the topic of recognition as such is given its earliest influential treatment.⁹ Associating Hegel’s account of recognition

with Rousseau's critique of the medieval deprecation of pride, Taylor writes in "The Politics of Recognition" that

this new critique of pride, leading not to solitary mortification but to a politics of equal dignity, is what Hegel took up and made famous in his dialectic of the master and the slave. Against the old discourse on the evil of pride, he takes it as fundamental that we can flourish only to the extent that we are recognised. Each consciousness seeks recognition in another, and this is not a sign of a lack of virtue.¹⁰

As this passage suggests, Taylor's approach to the theme of recognition in Hegel is predominantly psychosocial in character. What gives a politics of recognition its moral authority in Taylor's view is that a universal psychological need—that of recognition, a sense of self-worth or dignity—is accorded the status of a virtue or moral good. Axel Honneth adopts a similar psychosocial view. In an essay entitled "Moral Development and Social Struggle" Honneth states that "from the outset, the mutual demands of individuals for recognition of their identity is a normative tension inherent in social life."¹¹ From this historical revaluation of the value of recognition, which both Taylor and Honneth credit to Hegel, a philosophical defense of identity politics is worked out. For both authors, the essence of such a defense lies in the claim that identity is shaped by the recognition or misrecognition of others. As Taylor writes, "a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves."¹² Extending Taylor's insistence that recognition constitutes a privileged element of any theory of justice, Honneth contends that in fact most social and political injustices can be characterized as the withholding of recognition claims. In his view, it is recognition, rather than "redistribution" or some other principle of justice, that provides the basic organizing concept of a critical social theory.¹³

Having grounded identity politics in a philosophical understanding of the need for recognition, Taylor and Honneth argue that recognition can only be realized in a social-political environment in which such needs can be openly discussed and negotiated. Returning to the master and servant passage from the *Phenomenology*, Taylor conceives the dialectic as a struggle of claims and counter-claims, whose aim is public acknowledgement:

In fact, this is the point that underlies the Hegelian dialectic of the master and slave. To be persons, we crave recognition and we are ready to fight for it, but the fighting over it is in itself a contradictory action because both the acknowledgement that we need recognition and the media or language which

sustains the common space of evaluation that allows recognition have to be constituted by conversation between us.¹⁴

As this statement suggests, Taylor's reading of *The Phenomenology* conceives the dialectic of master and servant as *dialogos*—as reciprocal speech which constitutes a public realm of conversation. The struggle of master and servant is situated within a shared space of debate and discussion that recalls the classical republican forum or the modern idea of the democratic public sphere.¹⁵ In a similar vein to Taylor, Honneth argues that Hegel conceptualizes the moral development of persons in terms of “the subject's practical struggle for legal and social recognition of their identity.”¹⁶ He shares with Taylor the view that the Hegelian dialectic of recognition is essentially dialogical, a struggle of claims and counter-claims that assumes a shared space of public discourse. Honneth writes that according to Hegel's theory of recognition, “human individuation is a process in which the individual can unfold a practical identity to the extent that he is capable of reassuring himself of the recognition by a growing circle of partners to communication.”¹⁷ Assertions such as this indicate the extent to which Honneth's reading of Hegel affirms the primacy of recognition over self-determination: for Honneth, the individual unfolds a practical identity *to the extent* that she gains the recognition of others. Furthermore, while Honneth uses terms such as practical struggle and practical identity, it is clear that, as for Taylor, the practical dimension of these are to be understood in terms of the discursive demand for social and legal recognition.

While Taylor and Honneth's views on Hegel's theory of recognition are similar, there are a few important points of divergence. One way in which Honneth differs from Taylor is in the role he accords in his theory of recognition to the master-servant dialectic. Honneth contends that the *Phenomenology of Spirit* already represents a departure from Hegel's earlier account of recognition, relegating this theme to a secondary status in which dialogue is subordinated to the progress of self-consciousness:

The *Phenomenology of Spirit* . . . allots to the struggle for recognition . . . the sole function of the formation of self-consciousness. Thus reduced to the single meaning represented in the dialectic of lordship and bondage, the struggle between subjects fighting for recognition then comes to be linked so closely to the experience of the practical acknowledgement of one's labour that its own particular logic disappears almost entirely from view.¹⁸

In Honneth's view, the *Phenomenology* embraces an idealism that is essentially monological rather than dialogical. This obscures the particular

logic of recognition as a social phenomenon, as does the excessive emphasis on labor which Honneth finds in the master-servant dialectic. Instead, Honneth views Hegel's earlier writing of the Jena period, which he then develops along with the work of George Herbert Mead, as being more consistent with a type of political theory grounded in moral psychology and oriented towards democratic participation and the public sphere. But in disregarding the master-servant dialectic, Honneth also marginalizes the account of self-determination which is an important feature of the text, and which has a significance for political theory beyond its historical association with Marxian historical materialism.¹⁹ In short, whereas Taylor sees the seeds of a dialogical process of recognition in the master-servant dialectic, Honneth holds that Hegel's primary concern with the development of self-consciousness in the *Phenomenology* effectively curtails the further development of the dialogical model of recognition inaugurated in earlier writings. Whatever their differences on this point of interpretation, Taylor and Honneth nonetheless agree that it is acknowledgement and affirmation of identity, in both the interpersonal and in the broader cultural and legal spheres, which constitute the motivation and aim of a politics of recognition.

The philosophical foundation which thinkers such as Taylor and Honneth have developed for identity politics has been subject to various points of criticism. Commentators such as Nancy Fraser and Iris Marion Young have expressed concern that a philosophical valorization of moral-psychological categories of respect, dignity, and self-worth can obscure the economic, institutional, and structural factors that determine a person's autonomy. Their criticism aims to highlight a confusion in contemporary political theory between a powerful rhetoric of social struggle—namely, the discourse of identity politics—and the causes and genesis of such struggle. Fraser has argued that much contemporary philosophizing on identity politics pays scant attention to issues of material and economic inequality “as if the problematic of cultural difference had nothing to do with that of social equality.”²⁰ She contends that the decoupling of a culturalist politics of identity from a politics of socioeconomic equality obscures the sources and conditions of much injustice, and allows for an overly simplistic view of social conflict.²¹ Similarly, Iris Marion Young has pointed to the mismatch between what is really going on in new social movements and the philosophical interpretation and justification that have been imposed on them. Young holds that theories of identity politics often “misrecognize” what is at stake in new social movements, defining

these movements on the basis of claims to recognition, whereas the genesis of these movements and their programmatic aims lie more in struggles over structural inequality.²² Young's reference to "misrecognition" also raises the problem of identification as a psychological phenomenon. Since for Taylor claims about recognition as a moral good rest implicitly, and for Honneth explicitly, on a social psychology of identity formation, the problematics of identification, and by implication of misrecognition, cannot be avoided. Honneth and Taylor's insistence that recognition takes place through the medium of a shared public discourse implies that identity is shaped through identification with a set of socially available images and ideas that circulate in the public domain and are "mirrored" back to one. The question that is left unanswered in their writing concerns the status and value of these images, upon which we project our political desires and in terms of which we formulate our political aspirations. Objections such as those raised by Fraser and Young highlight important questions about the adequacy of Taylor and Honneth's account of identity politics; however, they have done little to counter the view that Hegel's writing indeed provides the kind of philosophical support for identity politics that Taylor and Honneth contend.

III

As the objections of Fraser and Young indicate, many of the debates around the politics of recognition have been concerned with clarifying the status of recognition *vis-à-vis* competing conceptions of justice, often distributive, which are familiar to the liberal-democratic philosophical tradition. As such, they counter dominant theories of recognition with an insistence on the equal importance of distributive values of socio-economic and structural equality. In my view, much of the substance of this criticism of identity politics as conceived by Taylor and Honneth is already present in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, and in the master-servant dialectic specifically. Moreover, in raising the issue of self-determination and the agent's actions on the environment rather than his or her discursive relation to others, Hegel's *Phenomenology* addresses a dimension of autonomy which is often absent from these debates.

In turning now to Hegel's work, I begin by developing my claim that Hegel's account of the master-servant dialectic articulates the relation between recognition and self-determination as two interconnected but distinguishable aspects of identity formation, with recognition exemplified most clearly in the master's pursuit of pure self-consciousness, and self-determination evidenced

most clearly in the actions of the servant. In each case, recognition and self-determination imply differing approaches to the pursuit of autonomy. Recognition, associated with the master, relies on an idea or image of autonomy, and its acknowledgement by another. In contrast to this, self-determination is characterized by a relation between the self-consciousness of the servant and the concrete conditions of his body and natural environment. Self-determination can be distinguished from recognition insofar as the external resistance and reality of objects shape the identity of the self-consciousness that acts upon them, as opposed to an identity whose reality is determined by the simple assent or refusal of another. Hence, to fully appreciate Hegel's account of the interaction between master and servant, one must recall that the dialectic involves not two but three elements: the two self-consciousnesses, and the element of life, of which self-consciousness is a part and from which it seeks to differentiate itself in order to constitute its identity as unified and autonomous.²³ The relation between these three elements sets in motion the dialectic of master and servant, whereby self-consciousness's immediate determination by its environment will be displaced by the relation between self-consciousnesses. This relation, however, will prove unstable and deficient, and will in turn be overcome by a renewed and transformed relation between self and environment, in which "self-consciousness learns that life is as essential to it as pure self-consciousness" (§189/112).²⁴

At the start of the dialectic, self-consciousness finds that the negation of the natural world through desire fails to satisfy its need for self-certainty. Convinced that this self-certainty, the certainty of independent identity, consists in the complete detachment from nature, self-consciousness posits for itself an image of pure, abstract self-consciousness and seeks to have its correspondence to that image confirmed through recognition by another self-consciousness. Whereas, at first, "self-consciousness is . . . certain of itself only by superseding this other that presents itself to self-consciousness as an independent life" (§174/107), it soon recognises that this other must be able to negate *itself* if it is to provide self-consciousness with an assurance of its truth and independence. Hence self-consciousness realises that it "achieves its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness" (§175/107). In this way, self-consciousness's desire for the negation of nature is transformed into a desire for recognition by another self-consciousness: "Self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged" (§178/109).

In the “struggle to the death” that initiates the dialectic, the master emerges victorious because he shows his willingness to relinquish all relations to the concrete world of life and material objects in the pursuit of the idea of pure abstract autonomy: “To present itself as the pure abstraction of self-consciousness consists in showing that . . . it is not attached to any specific existence, not to the individuality common to existence as such, that it is not attached to life” (§187/111). In its identification with this idea the master attains the appearance of independence from the natural world. The servant, on the other hand, who has learned that “life is as essential to it as pure self-consciousness” is unwilling to relinquish his existence as a living being, and hence gives up his claim to recognition, settling for a life immersed in the daily interaction with material things and the procurement of the master’s material needs. At this point in the dialectic, the master’s willingness to risk life in the pursuit of the other’s recognition of his pure self-consciousness moves the *Phenomenology* beyond consciousness’s relations to the natural world. However, this turn to another self-consciousness does not mean that the dialectic supplants self-consciousness’s relationship to the natural world with a relationship to the other. Here, the turn to the other is only temporary, a moment in the development of self-consciousness which will quickly close in upon itself as self-consciousness ultimately withdraws in stoicism and skepticism to an interiority which is contrary to the initial awareness of the other that begins the dialectic. The other self-consciousness in the master-servant dialectic does not serve primarily as an opening to sociability, but as a moment in self-consciousness’s pursuit of its independence in relation to nature. Not until the section on Spirit will self-consciousness come to seek its identity and freedom in social life.²⁵

In the master’s victory over the servant, we are able to discern the limitations of a theory of autonomy built on recognition. The master perceives in the servant and the material world’s compliance the acknowledgement of his autonomy. He perceives himself to have achieved “the pure abstraction of self consciousness” and rests satisfied in this achievement because neither the servant nor the natural environment appears to obstruct or resist his unmediated relation to this idea. But despite the apparent victory of the master who is willing to forego concrete existence for pure ideality, Hegel is explicit about the paradox of the master’s situation. The master attains his sense of recognition precisely because the mutual dependence of the servant and the thing frees the master to treat both as inessential. He has no need to

engage concretely with either the servant or the thing in their independence. In reality, however, the master is related to both servant and external world through *their* relation to one another. The master's immediate relation to the servant is in fact mediated by concrete matter, by the servant's boundedness to life which gives the master the advantage over him. Similarly, the master's immediate relation to the material world, that is, his pure negation or enjoyment of it, is in fact mediated by the servant, who works on matter, hence freeing the master to simply enjoy it (§190/113). Hence, in the case of the master, recognition is achieved via what may be described as a symbolic short circuit—the desire for autonomy is met with the appearance of an acknowledgement of that desire. But as Hegel insists, “that is the reason why this satisfaction is such a fleeting one, for it lacks the side of objectivity and permanence” (§195/115). This state of recognition, achieved through identification with an image of self-assertion and self-identity, is ultimately illusory and paralyzing, for it bears little relation to autonomy as a capacity to further one's own ends in relation to others and the world. The master's autonomous identity thus has the status of an *imago*, an image which shatters when tested against reality. It is achieved in the single moment of his apparent victory in extracting an acknowledgement of his autonomy from another, but for Hegel, autonomy cannot be merely affirmed, but must be actualized in life through its objectification in works. As life, according to Hegel, is essential to self-consciousness, genuine autonomy cannot be achieved through the negation of the living world, but only through its sublation and transformation (*Aufhebung*).

As an account of the politics of recognition, Hegel's conception of the master's struggle suggests how the appearance of recognition can be mistaken for the concrete conditions that bring it about, a misconception which Fraser and Young also lay at the feet of contemporary theories of identity politics. The picture Hegel presents of a search for autonomy as the relationship between self-consciousnesses which disregards the interconnection of self and its environment, is also suggestive of a theoretical endeavour that in the search for universal, consistent, and all-embracing political principles is willing to forego reflection on the concrete historical conditions to which such principles are thought to apply. As Seyla Benhabib writes in a discussion of identity politics, this theoretical error reflects “the paradox of wanting to base politics on identity claims that are maintained to be pure, essential and

primordial when it is clear that movements create and construct identity claims in the process of struggle.”²⁶

In addition to providing a basis for critiquing the adequacy of recognition as a ground of political autonomy, the further significance of Hegel’s account lies in its description of self-determination, which is evidenced in the actions of the servant and in his relation to the natural world. Unlike the master, the servant does not move towards autonomy through aspiring to a pure idea of independent self-consciousness, an aspiration legitimated through the acknowledgement by another party to discourse. The servant, Hegel writes, “rediscovers himself, by himself” (§196/115). His pursuit of autonomy through self-determination is characterized by a reflexive relation between self-consciousness and the materiality of his physical body and environmental circumstances. This relation to the environment is crucial, for it is not in denying his dependence on life and the material world that the servant moves towards autonomy. Instead, personal freedom and mastery emerge in the process of working through and on this dependence. The distinction that is implied here between the assertion and recognition of an idea of autonomy, and the concrete realization of autonomy, is expressed by Hegel as the difference between a “being-for-self” which is only “for self” and a “being-for-self” which is “in-itself”:

In the master, being-for-self is an “other” for the bondsman, or is only *for* him; [but] in fear, the being-for-self is present in the bondsman himself; [and] in fashioning the thing, he becomes aware that being-for-self belongs to *him*, that he himself exists essentially and actually in his own right. (§196/115)

First, the servant knows the fear of real physical annihilation. This fear of the extinction of self constitutes a substantive awareness of the self’s transcendence of its natural being, of its status for-itself as well as in-itself. However, this intuited sense of self cannot be simply asserted, but must develop and secure itself through its action on the world, in this way realizing itself in the face of the threat of its own extinction. As Hegel writes, the servant “rids himself of his attachment to natural existence in every single detail; he gets rid of it by working on it” (§194/114). The servant’s acknowledgement of his dependence on life, that is, his return to a relation to nature that the master sought to transcend, should not be understood as a failure to embrace the pure self-consciousness that the master sought as evidence of his independence. Rather, it is the positive acknowledgement of self-consciousness’s unavoidable connection to life, which is itself a precondition for the development of genuine autonomy through engagement with the world rather than through

its negation. The servant's relation to the world therefore differs from the pure negating activity of desire characteristic of self-consciousness's earliest attempts to assert its independence in that the world is not negated but shaped and transformed by the self-conscious actions of an agent. In other words, the servant does not deny the world but makes it its own. This action on the environment is self-determining for as the world takes shape according to his labor, so the servant develops a sense of autonomy through a process of self-education and self-discovery. This developing sense of identity is constantly tested against reality, a process which both strengthens the identity and increases its effectiveness in the world.

The importance of self-determination in the success of the servant reveals the limits of a reading that privileges intersubjective recognition as the main contribution of the master-servant dialectic to theories of political autonomy. While the dialectic begins with recognition as a condition of the autonomy of self-consciousness, by the end of the dialectic such autonomy appears to be furthered through the tribulations of fear and labor, rather than through intersubjective recognition. If the servant glimpses an image of being-for-self in the shape of the master, this is nonetheless not the path to the construction of his autonomous identity. Such identity is attained not through a struggle for the master's acknowledgement, though the master indeed provides an image of autonomy that the servant aspires to, but in confronting the reality of his inextricable connection to life and in developing the skills to imprint his will and identity upon the world around him. It is through this process, rather than through any belated recognition on the part of the master, that the servant moves from "being for another" to "being for self" (§196/115).²⁷ The dramatic reversal of the fates of master and servant that Hegel describes is not the result of the dialogical interaction of two subjects but is an asymmetrical process in which the failure of the master consists in his fixation on an abstract ideal and the success of the servant consists in the retreat from this image in the direction of his relation to his lived conditions. Such an approach to the question of self-determination corresponds, in Hegel's words, to "a consciousness which forced back into itself, will be transformed into a truly independent consciousness" (§193/114). This is clearly not the dialogical interaction of two subjects posited by Taylor and others as the essence of the master-servant dialect.

In a sense, the servant's progress over the master in their pursuit of autonomy can be thought of as resulting from a kind of "double conscious-

ness.”²⁸ On the one hand, the servant is conscious in the master of an image of absolute autonomy, the image that has its equivalent in democratic public discourse as the universal self-legislating citizen, the abstract subject of full civil and human rights. But the formation of the servant’s autonomous identity is not dependent on his identification with this image, nor does such identification suffice for autonomy. His identity is constituted out of an immediate consciousness of his material and social situation and in the gradual development of skills and capacities in response to this situation. As Hegel writes, “although the fear of the lord is indeed the beginning of wisdom, consciousness is therein aware that it is a being-for-self. Through work, however, the bondsman becomes conscious of what he truly is (§195/114).” This double consciousness highlights the importance of considering autonomy as the interaction of recognition and self-determination, and not limiting our conception of autonomy to recognition alone. In seeking to construct an identity built on more than an abstract affirmation, we require not only the recognition of others, but proof of the reality of that identity in its activities and objectifications. One is neither an artist nor an engineer, regardless what one may call oneself, and however much others may assent to such self-description, if one paints no pictures and builds no bridges.²⁹ In much the same way, a self is not autonomous, no matter how much others may call it that, if such autonomy is not tested and realised through its acts and activities. Hence, if Hegel’s dialectic of master and servant initially suggests that only mutual recognition can ultimately give both parties a permanent sense of autonomy, it ultimately shows that the development of a sense of autonomous self through active self-determination may itself be necessary for such a situation of mutual recognition to be possible. For Hegel, this state of mutual recognition cannot emerge through intersubjective acknowledgement alone but requires the development of a social world. For this reason, the interaction between recognition and self-determination which is central to the dialectic of master and servant, according to which recognition initiates a new conception of self, only to then form the basis of a concrete transformation of self through an engagement with the world, is reiterated throughout the remainder of the *Phenomenology*, first in the section on Reason, and then in the section on Spirit, as the mechanism according to which the relation between individual and Spirit unfolds.³⁰ In both of these sections, the interplay of recognition and self-determination moves individual consciousness in its various states towards an awareness of its relation to Spirit, and

towards the gradual transformation of the self that is at once an embracing of universality and a deepening of autonomy. The sociality that emerges in the section on Spirit, and that is the condition of a form of political life in which autonomy can be genuinely manifested, is a product of this education and transformation of consciousness through the interaction of recognition and self-determination.

IV

The limitations of contemporary usages of the master and servant dialectic as an analogy for the socio-political world and the struggle for autonomy are not confined to obscuring the importance of self-determination as a social and political mechanism; the position and role of the dialectic within the *Phenomenology* as a whole is also frequently ignored. This means that Hegel's account of sociality, which unfolds over the course of the *Phenomenology* but which is not in fact central to the master and servant dialectic, is misconstrued as a dialogical interaction between subjects rather than as the dialectical development of a social world through the interaction of subjects with their natural, cultural, institutional and political environments. Over the course of the *Phenomenology*, that pattern of interaction between recognition and self-determination that is established in the master and servant dialectic replays itself as the gradual widening of a sense of self to encompass universal Spirit, with self-determination as the development of self through interaction with the environment playing a pivotal role.

At the end of the master and servant dialectic, thought displaces desire as the modality which defines the servant's relation to the world. Through objectifying self in the material world, consciousness becomes an object for itself in thought, and in this way overcomes the self-defeating logic of negation as experienced in the activity of desire (§197/116). The self-centeredness of this thought is initially seen in stoicism and scepticism—stages of consciousness which exhibit the servant's newly found autonomy of thinking as well as the effective limitations of this autonomy. For stoicism and scepticism, the affirmation of self-consciousness as thought is sought in its isolation from and invulnerability to the world, as “indifference to natural existence” (§200/118).³¹ Though this represents some form of liberty, akin to the liberty of the master in his detachment from nature, it does not constitute social and political autonomy of the kind envisaged by political philosophers—that is, an autonomy that finds expression in the world. Stoicism and scepticism leave the

world unchanged, and indeed, leave the thinking subject unchanged as well, for it is precisely the impassibility of the self that both kinds of consciousness value.³² The alienation of self from itself in unhappy consciousness, by which an ideal, unchangeable other is posed as the reality of self, represents the first movement of consciousness from the interiority of stoicism and scepticism towards a reengagement with what is outside itself. Here consciousness has advanced beyond the abstract, pure thinking of stoicism and scepticism in that it “brings and holds together pure thought and particular individuality” (§216/125). Hence, in unhappy consciousness, the interiority of thought that is evident in stoicism and scepticism and which resulted from the failure of the master-servant dialectic to establish sociability is overcome. This reorientation to the outside world, which is manifested in unhappy consciousness’s efforts to affirm itself through work and enjoyment of the world (§218/126), will develop further as reason, which marks the recognition by consciousness of its unity with being, of the extent to which all knowledge of nature is also knowledge of the self (§232/132). This recognition is expressed in observational reason, in which consciousness rediscovers itself in the world through the scientific investigation of nature and other individual self-consciousnesses. But this recognition of itself in the world does not transform the self until actualized through action, and it is at this point that self-determination reemerges as the mechanism which propels the *Phenomenology* forward.³³

Self-determination in the form of active reason instantiates the transformations in understanding that accrue to consciousness as it moves from the states of stoicism, scepticism and unhappy consciousness into the rational observation of nature and other self-consciousnesses.³⁴ The recognition of the unity of individual and world that reason precipitates generates the active effort of the individual self to actualize the understanding of this unity in his or her lived relations to the world. This active effort produces a range of identities, including the sensualist, the romantic and the defender of virtue (§360–92/198–203). Each of these engagements with the world marks an important step in the progress towards Spirit for each entails the active attempt by individuals to test their understanding of the truth of their being and of their relation to the world in the form of life conduct and action, thus attempting in Hegel’s words to “fulfil their essential nature through their own efforts” (§357/196). The sensualist “plunges into life” and “takes hold of life much as a ripe fruit is plucked” (§361/199); the romantic “*carries out* the law of his heart” (§372/203) seeking to impose it upon a world perceived

to be unjust and suffering; and the defender of virtue seeks to “conquer the reality of the ‘way of the world’” (§383/209) through the active “sacrifice of [its] entire personality” (§381/208). The particular cultural identities of the sensualist, the romantic, and the defender of virtue all run aground on the rock of reality, but these painful phases in the process of active self-determination are crucial in Hegel’s view to the transformation of ideal social identities, constructed on the basis of the rational observation of the natural and human world, into concrete individualities. Like the servant, who gains a degree of self-conscious autonomy and genuine self-reliance through the constant labor that is performed on the natural world, in each of these three cases the individual comes to realize the nature of his or her identity as an individual in the world through the sometimes disappointing experience of attempting to actualize that identity in the world. For as Hegel writes concerning this process, “an individual cannot know what he really is until he has made himself a reality through action” (§401/217).

It is in this actualization of reason through self-determination that Hegel begins to develop more fully the movement of the individual towards social life which is only prefigured in the master-servant dialectic but which will end in the realization of the mutual dependence of individual self and universal Spirit. For example, in “The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness through its Own Activity,” the chapter that connects the sections on Reason and Spirit, Hegel writes that in its productive engagement with the world, self-consciousness “starts afresh, from *itself*, and is occupied not with an *other*, but with *itself*. Since individuality is in its own self actuality, the material of its efforts and the aim of action lie in the action itself” (§396/215). These words, which recapitulate the account of self-determination presented in the master and servant dialectic, emphasize the idea that it is not enough for individuals to recognize their essential connection to others; they must proceed to realize this relation through their own individual actions. But unlike the master and servant dialectic, this self effort has the effect of generating social community. For Hegel, the reality of individuality is that it is, in essence, Spirit, and this reality is revealed in the self-expression of the individual in work, through which the individual becomes what he is. While each individual seeks to determine itself through expressing his or her essence in the work, the reality of the work consists most importantly in its being-for-others: “The work is, i.e. it exists for other individualities, and is for them an alien reality, which they must replace by their own in order to obtain through *their* action

the consciousness of *their* unity with reality" (§405/221). While individuals will not find complete satisfaction in their own work, for they will always transcend the ability of their work to fully express their individual being, their work challenges others to leave their own imprint on the cultural world that emerges before them through the efforts of other individuals. Hence, it is through the mediation of the work of individuals produced in the act of self-determination, rather than through the recognition of an abstract unity of consciousnesses, that Spirit emerges as the reality of consciousness, revealing itself as the wellspring but also the product of individual action.

Hegel's insistence on self-determination through action as a requisite part of the development of consciousness culminates in his discussion of the unfolding in history of the relation between individual and society. Throughout the section on Spirit, which constitutes that part of the *Phenomenology* most applicable to politics, Hegel shows how action produces selfhood, first in the form of Roman personhood, and then in the form of modern individualism. The abstract personhood of the Roman period emerges from the tragic action, exemplified in the conflict between Antigone and Creon, by which the individual is separated from the cultural ethos in which he or she had been embedded. In contrast to the ancient Greek *polis*, in which the individual immediately expressed the ethical substance of which he or she was a part, the Roman world represents a historical stage in which the individual is recognized and accorded rights in the form of juridical formality. However, this guarantee of formal equality is no assurance that the person is free of political domination. As Hegel points out, the Roman world is characterised by the coexistence of legal equality and the subservience of citizens to growing imperial power (§482/263). The excessive authority that converges in the person of the imperial "lord of the world" occurs not in spite of the legal rights accorded to citizens but precisely because these rights are purely abstract. Alienated from the spiritual content that should bind them, legal persons find themselves "impotent" and at the mercy of the "absolute person" who takes upon himself the spiritual power that is the alienated spiritual substance of the general populace (§481/262). This paradox of legal personhood explains the recourse to philosophy as a refuge from these contradictions of real life. Explicating the relation between juridical personhood and stoicism, which he in fact argues is merely a reduction of legal personhood to its abstract form, Hegel states that in the same way that stoicism is disconnected from the real world, so "the right of a person is not tied to a richer or more powerful existence

of the individual as such, nor again to a universal living spirit, but rather to the pure One of its abstract actuality" (§479/261). Hegel's description of the Roman world of personhood presents us with his most explicit critique of a notion of recognition which is purely juridical or legal in character. Hegel is clear about the limitations of this form of juridical equality: "Consciousness of right, therefore, in the very act of being recognized as having validity, experiences rather the loss of reality and its complete inessentiality; and to describe an individual as a 'person' is an expression of contempt" (§480/261). Hegel's point here is not that the juridical recognition of the rights of the other as legal persons is wrong, but only that it is inadequate, for such recognition neither acknowledges the substantial identity of individuals nor fosters the development of that "richer or more powerful existence of the individual" in his or her particularity and difference. Comparing this picture of Roman legality with our own contemporary political situation, it is not hard to discern the contours of a comparable discourse of political and legal recognition which endorses principles of universal equality but which does little to foster the forms of individual empowerment that might give this formal equality substance.

For Hegel, the formal juridical equality that characterises personhood in the Roman period and which takes the form of a mutual recognition of rights represents only a transitional moment between the ethical life of Greece and the modern world. This transitional moment is overcome through self-determination, that is, through the reappropriation, by means of self-cultivation, of the sense of self alienated through abstract juridical personhood. Just as the abstract recognition of the master-servant dialectic is transcended through the active self-determination of the servant, and the limitations of abstract thought, through active reason, so in the section on Spirit, the impasse of abstract juridical personhood can only be transcended through the labor on self which characterizes culture (*Bildung*). According to Hegel, the self which is alienated from itself as a consequence of the emptiness of legal personhood cultivates itself in order to become a substantive self, which Hegel refers to as the act of "moulding oneself by culture" (§489/267). In this case, the validation of self-consciousness consists not in "the equality of the sphere of legal right, not that immediate recognition and validity of self-consciousness simply because it is" (§488/267), but in the individual actively taking up the task of *Bildung* as a labor of self-formation. Whereas the legal person lacked substantiality and was alienated from its essence, Hegel writes that "the individual here has objective validity and actuality by virtue of culture" (§489/267).

The realization of Spirit in this self-cultivation of the individual, which in turn results in production of cultural works, recalls once again the objectification of self-consciousness in the servant's labor, and provides a concrete historical setting for Hegel's earlier discussion of active reason, though here what results from that labor is shared social and cultural institutions (§489-90/267-68). Finally, this labor of self-determination extends to the relation between the individual and the modern state. Were this relation to consist of no more than the recognition and enforcement by the state of the legal equality and rights of citizens, it would differ little from the Roman state with its abstract juridical acknowledgement of the rights of persons. For Hegel, the development of modern society does include several important moments of recognition. For instance, the movement from feudalism to absolute monarchy depends on the recognition that the nobles accord the monarch (§511/277), and Hegel's exposition of the development of morality, on which the possibility of mature social life depends, also contains important instances of recognition. Conscience, Hegel insists, is premised on one's self-awareness as an existence in the eyes of another, "of being *recognized* and *acknowledged* by others" (§640/345). These moments of recognition are important, but Hegel argues that to realise the full possibilities of citizenship, the individual must once again determine itself, no longer in relation to nature or culture, but as a member of civil society who determines him or herself through the appropriation of the resources of his or her political environment. For Hegel insists that political life does not begin and end with the bestowal of a set of rights on citizens by the state. The universality represented by the state can only be realized in the actions of individuals who form themselves and act to realize this universality in their individual lives and actions. Commentator David Duquette emphasizes this aspect of self-determination in his discussion of the relation between the citizen and the state in Hegel's later political philosophy, pointing out that,

In accordance with the "dialectical negativity" inherent in the very concept of freedom . . . the citizen of the State must take up and internalize its restrictions and thereby transcend them. . . . In effect, the citizen utilizes the restrictions imposed upon oneself to self-determine oneself as an objective being in such a way that the universal will is reflected or mirrored in one's own particular life.³⁵

The labor of self-determination performed by the modern citizen to fully realize the freedom that is manifested abstractly in the state resembles the labor of the servant who attains a degree of autonomy through a similar process of self-determination. In both cases, autonomy demands an engagement with

the world in which identification with a given identity is not the conclusion of the struggle for autonomy but rather the background for active self-formation. As Duquette further notes, “the relation of the citizen to the State is not one of identification in any simple manner. It is not a matter of internalizing any particular *ideology*, but rather of participating in a common *activity*.”³⁶ While the master-servant dialectic lacks this dimension of commonality and sociality which is specific to Spirit in its more developed forms, it exemplifies *in nuce* the distinction between the identification with an abstract image or idea, and the process of self-determination required for any concrete realization of that idea. It is difficult to treat Hegel’s master and servant dialectic, when seen as part of the *Phenomenology* as a whole, as a vindication of a theory that holds the political autonomy of individuals to be a function of mutual recognition. It is possible, however, to see such mutual recognition as the ideal outcome of the unfolding of Spirit, a development which necessarily depends on the fullest self-determination of individuals through their individual labor and through the development of their particular talents, skills and dispositions. Hence, the “I that is We, and We that is I,” this apparent statement of mutual recognition in which “independent self-consciousnesses . . . in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence” (§177/108), is for Hegel achieved not through claiming and receiving acknowledgement, but through a process of self-determination whereby the fullness of one’s humanity and the actuality of one’s autonomy are realized simultaneously.

V

Far from endorsing a romantic reductionism or simplistic valorisation of manual labor, as Marxist accounts would have it, the struggle of the servant in Hegel’s master-servant dialectic must be understood as a struggle of self-education and self-discovery, the testing of oneself in the face of one’s lived situation and the gradual development and appreciation of one’s own particular nature and abilities. As we have seen, this is the dimension of identity formation often obscured by theoretical fascination with the symbolic arenas of ideology, discourse, and the law. As the dialectic suggests, the slave’s recognition of the master’s supposed autonomy did not in fact result in the attainment of real autonomy. In fact, by freeing the master of all need to actualize this autonomy through labor, the servant’s recognition formed an obstacle to the attainment of genuine independence. Conversely, the master’s non-recognition of the autonomy of the servant, that is, his defin-

ing the servant as subordinate and dependent, did not impede the servant's progress towards autonomy, but, in fact, was a spur to it.

Today, understanding the importance of self-determination through practical activity is crucial in a context where identity politics risks emphasizing abstract recognition at the expense of practical self-formation. Historically, the political achievements of minorities and subject groups have rested not only on the attainment of legal rights and recognition but on forms of self-determination which, in many cases, compel this recognition. Over the course of American history, for example, women and African Americans, excluded from the official public sphere, have come to cultivate a sense of identity through the production of cultural works and social projects, and to constitute effective communities through the utilization and adaptation of locally available resources and institutions.³⁷ While the resulting strength, confidence, and sense of identity enabled these communities to engage publicly with the wider hegemonic discourses of racism and sexism, and to demand the recognition they believed was guaranteed by the Constitution, this call for recognition would have likely gone unanswered had these groups not, in a sense, "freed" themselves by their own efforts.

Under present global conditions, attention to the local and material context of individual and communal identity formation has become all the more pertinent. To the extent that multiculturalism constitutes the cultural logic of late capitalism, as Slavoj Žižek claims,³⁸ the extension of corporate capital and the erosion of local economic self-determination may not only be entirely compatible with a fixation on a politics of recognition, but may indeed be reliant on it. According to this argument, the self-development of communities, their marshalling of resources, and their development of practical life strategies, are subordinated to the struggle to participate in an increasingly rarefied image of universal citizenship. Many national governments, but especially the governments of the so-called developing world, have become increasingly restricted in their capacity to match the acknowledgement of identity claims with extensive economic or social programs. In the United States, but also in South Asia, Eastern Europe, and much of the Arab world, a discourse of national, cultural or religious pride shores up national sentiment, or a rhetoric of multicultural affirmation reassures groups and citizens in arguably direct proportion to the degree to which economic power and decision-making is removed to international organizations and multinational corporations. As such, the promise of recognition becomes the consolation prize for the loss of genuine autonomy and economic power.³⁹

I would suggest that current conceptualizations of identity politics are at least partly a reflection of these far-reaching social transformations, in which participation in a universal discourse of multiculturalism and legal entitlement appears as the only route to the protection or extension of autonomy. But Hegel's account in the *Phenomenology* reminds us of the importance of exploring alternate modes of political action, beyond the demand for juridical reform and the legal recognition of identity claims. Reliance on transformations in the legal and cultural spheres cannot constitute the sole criterion or motivation of political struggle. Instead, it is important to develop and support political strategies which do not involve recourse to and reliance on the law but draw on the strengths and resources that communities have developed in their daily encounter with the material and social challenges to their economic and cultural independence. If the autonomy gained thereby is limited, as is the servant's, its development is at least not paralyzed by the expectation that its attainment is contingent on the sanction of an official public discourse.

At the start of this article, I suggested that much of the interpretation of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* in the twentieth century has followed the historical ups and downs of competing political philosophies. As such, its invocation in support of a politics of recognition needs to be assessed in the light of the particular historical conjuncture in which we find such politics today. In attempting to move political theory beyond the present moment, a moment in which the increasing recognition of identity claims masks the widening gap between rich and poor, powerful and powerless, we need to learn how to supplement the (master's) discourse of recognition with the (servant's) struggle for self-determination. Motivated by powerful and well-established discourses of legal recognition, it may now be necessary for communities and movements, in Hegel's words, "to rediscover themselves, by themselves." This would mean focusing attention, theoretically and practically, on the struggles of communities to explore, sustain, and strengthen the available means for concrete self-determination, and asserting this as an equally essential goal of any critical identity politics.

Notes

1. See Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1992); Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978); Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, trans. James H. Nichols (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1980); Jean-Paul Sartre, *Search for a Method*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Vintage, 1963).

2. Though the genesis of the terminology differs, I use the terms "new social movements,"

"identity politics" and "politics of recognition" more or less equivalently. New social movements collectively refer to political movements and organizations mobilized around issues of gender, sexuality, ethnic and linguistic autonomy, and the environment. On the emergence of new social movements, see Ronald Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990).

3. For one account of this historical transition to identity-based politics, see Richard Rorty, *Achieving our Country* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998).

4. Hegel's influence on this debate is felt, for instance, in the fact that in recent years the terms "politics of recognition" and "identity politics" have become all but synonymous. The former term gained currency after the publication in 1992 of Charles Taylor's seminal essay on identity politics, "The Politics of Recognition," reprinted in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994).

5. In addition to the work of Charles Taylor and Axel Honneth, other notable works that have focused attention on the political implications of Hegel's dialectic of recognition include Judith Shklar, *Freedom and Independence: A Study of Political Ideas in Hegel's "Phenomenology of Spirit"* (London and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Jürgen Habermas, "Labor and Interaction: Remarks on Hegel's Jena Philosophy of Mind," in *Hegel's Dialectic of Desire and Recognition*, ed. John O'Neill (New York: SUNY Press, 1996); Robert R. Williams, *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1997).

6. George Armstrong Kelly provides a useful discussion of the limits of Kojève's analysis and makes a strong case for a reading which combines a broader politico-historical approach with one that addresses the psychosocial dimension of the master-servant dialectic: "On the one hand, Hegel is showing that mere political mastery or subjection cannot inaugurate the long adventure of history and freedom unless faculties of the subjective mind . . . create the possibility and condition the result. On the other hand, it is clear that none of this is conceivable in a solipsistic universe." George Armstrong Kelly, "Notes on Hegel's Lordship and Bondage," in *Hegel's Dialectic of Desire and Recognition*, ed. John O'Neill (New York: SUNY Press, 1996), p. 258.

7. For example, Robert Pippin uses self-determination in precisely this sense in describing the general relation between subject and substance in the *Phenomenology*. Robert Pippin, "You Can't Get There from Here: Transition Problems in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*," *Cambridge Companion to Hegel*, ed. Frederick C. Beiser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

8. Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 540.

9. For a further elaboration of this view, see Taylor's *Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991).

10. Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," p. 50.

11. Axel Honneth, "Moral Development and Social Struggle: Hegel's Early Social-Philosophical Doctrines," in *Cultural-Political Interventions in the Unfinished Project of Enlightenment*, ed. Axel Honneth, Thomas McCarthy, Claus Offe, and Albrecht Welmer (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), p. 198.

12. Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," p. 25.

13. For Honneth's clearest articulation of this position, see his debate with Nancy Fraser in Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth, *Redistribution or Recognition? A Political-Philosophical Exchange* (London, New York: Verso, 2003).

14. Taylor, *Ethics of Authenticity*, p. 72.

15. This is not to suggest that Taylor is unaware of the importance of work and of concrete

relations to the material world as constitutive of individual integrity in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. His early study of Hegel (1975) gives considerable attention to this theme. See Taylor's *Hegel*, pp. 153–57. However, in his more recent application of Hegel to political theory, this dimension of the master-servant dialectic diminishes in importance.

16. Honneth, "Moral Development and Social Struggle," p. 198.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 189.

18. Axel Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition. The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*, trans. Joel Anderson (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), p. 213.

19. Honneth insists that "Hegel's idea of a 'struggle for recognition' did not have any influence on the history of social-philosophical thought, except in the form of the master-slave dialectic. Marx . . . developed his doctrine of class struggle exclusively on the basis of the theoretical perspective he knew from the famous chapter 'Lordship and Bondage.' Thereby, however, he succumbed from the outset to the problematic tendency of narrowing the struggle of social classes to the conflict of economic interest alone. . . . These initial shortcomings of critical social theory have been systematically propagated throughout history." Honneth, "Moral Development and Social Struggle," p. 214.

20. Nancy Fraser, *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist" Age* (New York and London: Routledge, 1997), p. 189.

21. See Fraser's essays in Fraser and Honneth, *Redistribution or Recognition? A Political Philosophical Exchange*.

22. Iris Marion Young, "Multiculturalism in the Context of Structural Inequality," paper presented at the conference "Racism and the Challenges of Multiculturalism," Grahamstown, South Africa, 25–27 June 1999. Elsewhere, Young writes, "Certain recent political theories of multiculturalism and nationalism do indeed highlight respect for distinct cultural values as primary questions of justice, and many seem to ignore questions of the distribution of wealth and resources and the organization of labor. [Nancy] Fraser cites Charles Taylor's much discussed work 'Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition' as an example of this one sided attention to recognition at the expense of redistribution, and I think she is right." Iris Marion Young, "Unruly Categories: A Critique of Nancy Fraser's Dual Systems Theory," *New Left Review* Vol. 222 (1997): pp. 147–48.

23. For instance, Jean Hyppolite makes this clear when he points out that "three moments—the two self-consciousnesses posed in the element of externality and also externality, the Dasein of life" give rise to this dialectic. Jean Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Samuel Cherniak and John Heckman. (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1974), p. 156; *Genèse et structure de la Phénoménologie de l'Esprit de Hegel* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1946), p. 151.

24. All references to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* are to paragraph numbers in the A. V. Miller translation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), followed by corresponding page numbers in the German critical edition.

25. Hyppolite points out that "it is noteworthy that Hegel is interested here only in the individual development of self-consciousness; he will show the social consequences of the recognition he discusses here only in the part of the *Phenomenology* that deals with Spirit." Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure*, p. 172; *Genèse et structure*, p. 166. My thanks to Ardis Collins for bringing this passage to my attention.

26. Seyla Benhabib, "Democracy and Identity," *Philosophy and Social Criticism* Vol. 24, Nos. 2/3 (1998), p. 95.

27. Philip Kain expresses this point succinctly when he states that, "For Hegel, the slave does not rise up and overthrow the master. He develops interiorly beyond the master." Philip Kain, *Hegel and the Other* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2005), p. 48.

28. The term "double consciousness" is closely associated with the thought of W. E. B. Du Bois, who argued that African-Americans, as a disenfranchised minority must, by necessity, see the world through their own eyes as well as the eyes of the white majority. See W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1989).

29. This useful analogy is drawn from Philip Kain, *Hegel and the Other*, p. 49.

30. On the structural parallels between the master and servant dialectic and the middle sections (B) of the chapters on Reason and Spirit, see Jon Stewart, "The Architectonic of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit" in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* Vol. 55, No. 4, pp. 747-76.

31. On this retreat of consciousness from the world, see Jeffrey Kinlaw, "Skepticism and the Unhappy Consciousness in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*," in *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Alfred Denker and Michael Vater (Amherst, N.Y.: Humanity Books, 2003), p. 223.

32. Hegel points out that while stoicism contains the idea of this detachment from the world, skepticism realizes this idea in the negating activity of thought which is skepticism's hallmark. Skepticism is hence an active realization of stoicism, but is not yet a form of self-determination for the self is not transformed by skepticism, but rather maintained in its detachment. See §202/119.

33. Hyppolite expresses this succinctly when he writes that until active reason appears on the scene, "in observing things, organic life, nature, even human individuality, reason [sought] immediately to discover the self, not to produce it by means of its own activity." Jean Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure*, p. 275; *Genèse et structure*, p. 266.

34. Hegel describes Reason's movement from recognition to self-determination as follows: "[I]t is certain that this independent object is for it [self-consciousness] not something alien, and that thus it knows that it is in principle recognized by the object. . . . This certainty has now to be raised to the level of truth; what holds good in principle, and in its inner certainty, has to enter into its consciousness and become explicit for it" (§347/193).

35. David Duquette, "The Political Significance of Hegel's Conception of Recognition," in *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit: A Reappraisal*, ed. Gary K. Browning (London: Kluwer, 1997), pp. 129-30.

36. Duquette, "The Political Significance of Hegel's Conception of Recognition," p. 130.

37. Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere," in *Justice Interruptus*, pp. 74-75.

38. Slavoj Žižek, "Multiculturalism, or, the Cultural Logic of Multinational Capitalism," in *New Left Review* Vol. 225 (September/October, 1997), pp. 28-51.

39. This argument is made in Thomas Frank's book *What's the Matter with Kansas?* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2004) which contends that as economic power is increasingly removed from the hands of middle and working class Americans, identity politics, revolving around issues of religion and culture, come to function as a substitute for a politics grounded in the reality of economic injustice and disempowerment.