Recognition and the International: Meanings, Limits, Manifestations

Patrick Hayden and Kate Schick

Over the past two decades, critical debates and insights within philosophy, sociology and political theory have focused on the concept of recognition. From interpersonal relationships of self and other, to multiculturalism, identity politics, new social movements, economic inequality, human development and diverse modalities of power, theories of the ethics and politics of recognition have challenged mainstream liberal and communitarian accounts of political co-existence, oppression and the ‘normative grammar’ of social conflicts (see Thompson 2006). However, while the literature on recognition has had a significant impact within social and political theory delimited to the ‘self-contained’ space of the territorially bounded state, it has been comparatively neglected in international political theory. Only recently has recognition begun to move from being a marginal concern for theorists of international politics to a more prevalent current of thought. Matters of international or global redistributive justice have been the primary focal point of this mounting interest in questions of human recognition. While this growing attention is to be welcomed, we believe that too much of this conversation thus far has been limited, incomplete or inadequate in failing to open up to a host of other issues cutting across the intersection of recognition and the international. With that in mind, the contributions in this volume consider how post-Hegelian recognition theory can enrich our understanding of international, global or world politics over and above matters of global redistribution – while nevertheless acknowledging the importance of problems of economic justice in today’s globalized world. Our research explores new dimensions of the recognition–international nexus that move the conversation into original, critical analyses of rights, humanity, power and emancipation. We explore why and how bringing the political theory of

recognition into dialogue with international political theory provides valuable insights into more than distributive justice, and push the debates into areas rooted in larger empirical and normative phenomena: from genocide to revolutionary trauma, from gender injustice to practices of care, from cosmopolitanism to the non-human environment. Specifically, the book uses entrenched, emerging and evolving issues of international politics to probe the range and limitations of the concept of recognition, and to place the concept in interrelated contexts from the local to the global that may often include deficient, misguided or denied recognition.

Even though the question of recognition is a relative newcomer to the scene of international political theory, it is a question that does not come out of nowhere. It has a particular place in the history of philosophy, as well as in modern social and political theory that attends to the ethical and political meaning of an intersubjective, shared yet conflictual world. In this chapter, we concentrate, first, on sketching the tradition of Hegelian recognition inaugurated in the early nineteenth century and, second, on some of the main extensions and transformations of this tradition throughout the late twentieth century and the outset of the twenty-first. In tracing key theoretical growths from the roots of Hegel's thought, the first section is organized around specific contemporary conversations about not only the precise sense of the term 'recognition', but also why it matters so much to persons, groups and nations embroiled in debates about democracy, culture, equality, justice, resistance and responsibility. In charting recognition theory in this way, we sketch the theoretical contours within which successive chapters are situated. The subsequent section then presents the three core themes explored in this volume, and provides an overview of the essays that follow.

Charting recognition

What does 'recognition' mean? What critical approaches can we use to explore it? Recognition theory comes in numerous yet related forms – existential, Marxist, critical theoretical, feminist, poststructural, postcolonial, agonistic and psychoanalytic, to name a few – containing threads of the personal, cultural, social and political. While it is important to appreciate the multiple forms that recognition theory takes, and the connections between them, it is equally essential to clearly see its roots. The problem of recognition is a long-standing concern in moral and political philosophy, centring on questions about the relationship of the self to itself and to the other. Intellectually, Georg Wilhelm

Friedrich Hegel plays a pioneering role in establishing the fundamental terms of the theme of recognition by calling attention to the nature of self-consciousness. His great innovation is to show that consciousness is always consciousness of something other than itself – both inanimate objects and animate others. Hegel's phenomenology of consciousness was popularized when it deeply informed the thinking of leading French scholars such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Jacques Lacan, Emmanuel Levinas and Simone de Beauvoir, as well as anti-colonial writers such as Frantz Fanon, by way of the leftist interpretation of Hegel popularized in the seminars of Alexandre Kojève from the 1930s through the postwar period.¹ For Kojève (1969), in addition to whatever basic needs define the animal structure of human being, there exists a properly human longing for recognition that finds its satisfaction only in the mutuality of reciprocated desire – driving a dialectical process whose future completion will signal the end of history. More recently, the debate around recognition gained new life due largely to the work of philosophers such as Charles Taylor, Jürgen Habermas, Axel Honneth and Nancy Fraser, who reintroduced consideration of recognition dynamics into discussions of multiculturalism, religious conflict, social justice and the politics of identity.

Although not the first figure to introduce the theme of recognition into modern philosophy – aspects of the concept of recognition can be found in Hobbes, Rousseau and Kant – Hegel undoubtedly presents the most systematic and famous account of its social and political ubiquity. Borrowing from the philosophy of Fichte, and rejecting the Hobbesian solution to social order, Hegel makes both empirical and normative qualities central to his formulation of recognition: the process of mutual recognition explains the intersubjective constitution of people's identity, while it also grounds an affirmative principle of equality in a just social and political order. For Hegel, recognition mediates between the particular (private individuals) and the universal (social ethics), thereby articulating the reflexivity of self to other within successive and increasingly complex forms of socialization from the family to the state. In making this argument, Hegel claims that human self-consciousness will not properly develop in the absence of recognition by others (see Williams 1992); we are radically dependent on others for the development of our selves. Such recognition ideally manifests itself within three central spheres of ethical existence: in the family, in civil society and in the state. In the family, members initially experience an undivided feeling of love which gradually becomes differentiated as self-consciousness matures into full personality. In the sphere of civil society, consciousness manifests itself in the contractual relations and

coordinated interdependence associated with private law, property and labour. In the state, consciousness develops further differentiation in its movement from its own independence towards mediation by public institutions, and in so doing also attains consciousness of universality through membership in the totality of the political order (Hegel 1967).

Yet the process of recognition is also fraught with contradictions and failure and, for that reason, takes the form of a struggle waged by the subject through the stages of establishing interpersonal relationships, forming collective ethical horizons and advancing society's moral progress. This struggle is famously depicted in Hegel's account of the master–slave dialectic in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. The surprising consequence of the subject's desire for confirmation of its independence and self-certainty is that other subjects it encounters will resist extending recognition, because they too wish to claim their own independence. Self and other initially encounter each other as adversaries. This mutual resistance first precipitates a 'life-and-death' confrontation by which each self-consciousness seeks the destruction of the other, followed by a struggle for dominance and subordination as self-consciousness realizes that destruction of the other would deprive it of the source of affirmation and thus of satisfaction (Hegel 1977: 114–15). It should already be clear that the asymmetrical master–slave relationship also proves to be unsatisfying, in that the slave's submissive act of recognition cannot be of sufficient worth to the master, and the master's own freedom and self-certainty is surrendered by having to negate the freedom of the slave (Hegel 1977: 116–17). If only full recognition provides the sufficient condition of the possibility of self-consciousness's proper formation, then each subject must renounce the claim to absolute independence and domination of the other, concede that the freedom of both self and other arises through mutual dependence and accept equivalent claims to reciprocal recognition and respect. Only then can we say that the identity and agency of the subject is truly fulfilled out of the context of intersubjective relations with others.

Habermas and Taylor: Recognition, emancipation and multiculturalism

Jürgen Habermas's explicit engagement with Hegelian recognition began in the late 1960s. In *Theory and Practice*, Habermas argues that two conceptions of 'spirit' are present yet in tension in Hegel's work. The first is found in his theory of self-consciousness, while the second appears in his account of the relationship between language, work and interaction. The merit of Hegel's phenomenology

of the struggle for recognition, notes Habermas (1973: 146), is his insight that ethical relationships may be formed on the basis of a reciprocity that reconciles the universal and the particular in a 'moral totality' of complementarily distinct entities. Yet this insight proves to be not entirely consistent with the fact that the formation of self-consciousness also takes place in the heterogeneous realms of language, or symbolic representation and communication, and of labour. On the one hand, the reconciliation that lies at the end of the struggle for recognition presupposes communicative interaction, which itself 'is accomplished by virtue of the spoken word being accorded normative force' (Habermas 1973: 160). Hence the dialectical mediation of self and other is actually possible because of the medium of symbols, which itself is already intersubjectively constituted. On the other hand, ethical reconciliation also presupposes the mutual satisfaction of material needs and desires, externalized both in an antagonistic nature that must be collectively subdued and in objects that are collaboratively produced through social labour. Consequently instrumental cooperation proves to be bound up in the same movement as intersubjective domination and subordination, ultimately institutionalized in legally and economically regulated interactions. While Hegel's interpretation of the interrelationships between these realms evolved as his writing matured, for Habermas (1984) the indispensable point to take from this for a critical social theory is that the mutual demand for 'reaching understanding' communicatively, and thus for the affirmation of self and other as equal participants in the discursive process of reciprocal criticism and justification, is part of the process of human emancipation itself.

Habermas's intervention into recognition theory deepened with the arrival of the multiculturalism debates in the 1980s and 1990s. The work of Charles Taylor also figures prominently in these debates, most notably his 1994 essay 'The Politics of Recognition'. The background to Taylor's argument is the perception that just as the recognition framework can be applied to interpersonal and social relations, so too can it be extended to intercultural relations. Thus Taylor brings Hegelian self-consciousness to the point that it is compelled to confront cultural difference as an asset for authentic self-realization. Recognition and multiculturalism are connected, Taylor claims, by way of liberalism's fundamental idea that every human person possesses a dignity independent of their natural abilities or social position, by virtue of which they should be respected by others as equal. In terms of public policy, this liberal principle has developed in two directions: first, through formal recognition of the equal rights of all citizens on the basis of ethical neutrality and, second, through equal recognition of the uniqueness of each individual and his or her distinctive identity. While

the first model is 'unable to give due acknowledgment to distinctness' and therefore is intrinsically 'homogenizing' (Taylor 1994: 52),² the second model allows for the distribution of equal rights across different cultural contexts. A liberal society attuned to the politics of difference would, says Taylor, adopt a substantive commitment to respect and promote the survival of diverse cultural identities, which will also have the effect of preventing any single community-based identity from becoming hegemonic and potentially discriminatory. Taylor (1994: 32) emphasizes that human identity and agency are fundamentally dialogical in character, meaning that we 'become full human agents... through our acquisition of rich human languages of expression', which we learn 'through exchanges with others'. Because mutual understanding is predicated on intersubjective dialogue, lack of recognition or misrecognition of distinct cultural identities, and concomitantly of the self's dialogical relations with others through which cultural self-understanding is generated, 'can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being' (Taylor 1994: 25). The 'vital human need' for recognition thus extends to acknowledging the presumed equal worth of different cultures and taking their perspectives into account ethically, legally and politically (Taylor 1994: 26, 73).

Habermas's response to Taylor contends, however, that the latter's argument ultimately resorts to an untenable dualism between private and public autonomy. In essence, Taylor's attempt to 'correct' liberal proceduralism by mapping collective rights intended to protect the substantial values of cultural groups onto the formal rights of individual citizens implies the splitting of autonomy into two separate yet somehow internally linked spheres. In the end, Habermas argues, the double-edged aspect of cultural identity within the liberal constitutional state – which defines individuals concurrently as citizens at large and as members of distinct cultural groups – will pose conflicts or dilemmas, typically associated with exclusion from the public sphere, to which Taylor's position cannot adequately respond. Somewhat paradoxically, this may then render it difficult, if not impossible, for some people or groups to engage in the emancipatory struggles for recognition valued by Taylor. On Habermas's own account (1994: 112–13), private and public autonomy are co-original, and recognition is a form of social practice that requires autonomy as a mode of communicative and deliberative participation. Rather than regarding rights as inhering either individually or collectively, then, Habermas suggests that both types of rights arise together in the relationships among people generated through practices of mutual recognition. In engaging in such practices, those affected by domination or marginalization – and here Habermas refers to

feminism, multiculturalism and anti-colonialism – simultaneously assert their public autonomy and, through articulating the relevant aspects of their own particular experience, also secure their private autonomy (Habermas 1994: 116). In contrast to Taylor's focus on the legislative and administrative recognition of the equal worth of different cultures, Habermas (1994: 126–9) advocates placing ongoing debates about what is and is not valuable, what is and is not deserving of equal recognition, within public discussions of an inclusive political process.³ The central difficulty here, of course, is that Habermas's position presumes precisely what may be missing, namely, a degree of recognition sufficient to allow persons or groups to be seen as rightly having access (or 'belonging') to the public sphere. This leaves aside, then, the difficult problem posed by cases of radical non-recognition.

Honneth and Fraser: Recognition, redistribution and reframing

Axel Honneth also borrows from Hegel the concept of a process whereby individuals fully develop a sense of self and self-worth only by recognizing and being recognized by others. But where Taylor takes recognition to its limit in cultural authenticity, Honneth identifies the development and maintenance of self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem as the most important factor that influences each individual's capacity to engage in reciprocal recognition with others. In his view, the development of our faith and trust in others in turn shapes our sense of agency and responsibility, which itself then impacts on our sense of worth and distinctiveness. Ideally, each of these capacities is formed and sustained through corresponding types of intersubjective relations: from familial relations of love and friendship, to civic relations of equality and legal rights, to solidaristic relations of shared values and projects.

The crux of Honneth's account of the intersubjective conditions for identity formation is to show that the 'struggle for recognition' carries within it an implicit normative ideal. Unlike in Hobbes's depiction of an egocentric war of all against all, the reworked Hegelian conception of social experience realizes that subjects engaged in a conflictual struggle must have 'already positively taken the other into account' as a 'partner to interaction' before the struggle could even ensue (Honneth 1995: 45). Our intersubjective relationships are conflictual precisely because human interaction is structured around a 'normative expectation that one will meet with the recognition of others'. When that expectation is not met, we then act so as 'to make the others take notice' of us (Honneth 1995: 44). Since each of us acts to fulfil this expectation vis-à-vis others, a constitutive link binds

us together as we seek to gain recognition of our not-yet-recognized needs, identities and expectations (Honneth 1995: 48).

Honneth's theory is normatively salient because it provides a basis for understanding the motivations behind the demand for recognition and thus for illuminating the 'moral grammar' of social conflicts. If mutual recognition is the condition that permits becoming fully human, then there is a shared human interest in attempting to create and re-create sociopolitical institutions that extend recognition to all. The struggle for recognition is, in short, a struggle for justice, for due recognition of all as equal and distinctive persons. This necessarily entails critique of those prevailing conditions that foster asymmetric relations of misrecognition, and of social, economic and political inequalities that violate self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem (Honneth 1995: 131ff). Honneth (2007) singles out violation of the body, denial of rights and denigration of ways of life as the most pernicious forms of disrespect. The experience of profound disrespect or humiliation can then give rise to resistance and organized social movements demanding the expansion of conditions of mutual recognition, as well as the political establishment of progressive institutions that advance the ability of the subordinated and excluded to become fully human.

The interplay between forms of misrecognition predicated on racial, national, sexual and gender status orders, and forms of exclusion through socio-economic inequalities, is what Nancy Fraser believes prepares the ground for struggles for social justice. However, where Honneth maintains a monistic theory according to which all matters of justice can be located under the 'fundamental, overarching moral category' of recognition, Fraser pursues a dualistic theory which holds that the two categories of recognition and redistribution 'are co-fundamental and mutually irreducible dimensions of justice' (Fraser and Honneth 2003: 2–3). Traditional claims for socio-economic redistribution ignored or rejected issues of recognition, such as in 'difference-blind' welfare policies, while claims for cultural recognition culminating in contemporary multiculturalism valorized diversity to an extent that obscured matters of economic exploitation and inequality. Fraser argues therefore that an adequate theory of social justice must be 'two-dimensional' in understanding how injustices are rooted in the intertwined social spaces of economy and culture. While not necessarily occurring 'in equal proportions', given that 'in all societies economic ordering and cultural ordering are mutually imbricated', Fraser (2003: 63, 51) argues for attention to the ways that problems of maldistribution *and* misrecognition are related in situationally specific contexts. For this reason, she suggests that recognition theory ought to concentrate less on identity and more on status

(Fraser 2003: 29). This shift to status recognition, she believes, helps move the focus from social psychological self-realization to institutional patterns that impose unjustified status inequalities on certain individuals and groups (Fraser 2008a: 59). Modifying the recognition approach in this way introduces what is, for Fraser (2008b: 17), the third dimension of justice, namely, the political.

Fraser defines the political as acts and processes of framing or representation. This is essentially a concern with the question of 'who' as an expression of status: who counts as a subject of justice, who determines the procedures for admitting and adjudicating justice claims, and who is included in or excluded from a given political community (Fraser 2008b: 17–18). Frame-setting designates the process (the 'how') of constituting and reconstituting the 'who' of justice, insofar as the question of the 'who' presupposes the setting of boundaries and decision-rules. One cannot become a subject of justice without being recognized, that is, seen and heard as an equal member of the political community. Misframing, or the injustice of wrongly excluding some individuals or groups from participating in posing and contesting justice claims, can thus be grasped as the imposition of unjustified status inequalities (Fraser 2008b: 19–20, 144). Misframing falls foul of what Fraser refers to as the 'principle of participatory parity'. Parity, for Fraser (2003: 101 n.39), 'means the condition of being a *peer*, of being on a *par* with others, of standing on an equal footing'. Participatory parity gives democratic traction to the notion of equal status, promoting sociopolitical arrangements that 'permit all to participate as peers in democratic discussion and decision-making' and ensure 'adequate representation and equal voice for those who claim standing vis-à-vis a given issue' (Fraser 2008b: 44–5). The aim of political struggles for justice, therefore, should be to create the frameworks for participatory parity, contesting unwarranted arrangements that systematically misrecognize some categories of people, misframe political space and maldistribute wealth and collective goods. Seen in this light, many accounts of the struggle for justice overlook how inequalities are partly rooted in dynamics of misrecognition and misframing, displacing the task of resolving such inequalities almost entirely onto redistributive claims. In this way, Fraser contends, the redistributive dimension of social justice becomes overburdened with expectations that lack the capacity to diagnose and challenge the multifaceted nature of subordination and exclusion.

Butler and Ricoeur: Recognition, dislocation and mutuality

Fraser also makes an important distinction between what she calls 'affirmative' and 'transformative' politics of recognition. Affirmative political strategies

'redress disrespect by revaluing unjustly devalued group identities', that is, by extending official recognition and institutionalized rights to 'existing group identities and differentiations' (Fraser 2008a: 67 n.6). This approach has a tendency to prioritize the official 'legitimizing recognition' (Butler 1999: xix) of state institutions such as the judiciary, which adjudicates rights claims in terms that are contingent upon the claimants' accepted recognition within a specific political order and framework of rights. In comparison, transformative strategies correlate less with notions of stable, fixed and 'official' identities and more with relations of identity and status that remain outside the grid of authoritative acknowledgement (whether by choice, exclusion or some combination of the two). Whatever benefits may accrue from affirmative politics, it is nonetheless the case that the promise of official recognition of equal status does not necessarily translate into socially efficacious recognition of the most marginalized individuals and groups or into accurate representation of their specific experiences of injustice. Therefore, transformative strategies aim to connect the universality implicit in official recognition of equal rights with the plurality of needs, experiences and identities given voice by those who suffer from misrecognition, misrepresentation and silencing (Fraser 2008b: 23–4). In this sense, a transformative politics of recognition resonates with other recent theories of recognition that aim to 'destabilize' the assumption that subject-formation culminates in a transparent symmetry between the stable identities of self and other, as well as theories that seek to 'decentre' any conception of recognition which risks slipping into an economic and utilitarian model of exchange.

Judith Butler provides a prominent example of a 'destabilizing' intervention into the recognition debates. Emerging from the poststructuralist and deconstructive traditions, Butler's work attempts to expose how sexual difference is produced by a heteronormative discourse grounded on a series of hierarchical and naturalizing conceptual distinctions between men and women. She argues that referring to a self-explanatory female gender identity is misleading, since women of different ethnicities, classes and religions rarely have the same or invariant interests and concerns. Influenced by the thought of Nietzsche and Foucault, Butler contends that there is no subject or 'self' prior to discourse or narrative. Subjects are constituted as such through language governed by prevailing social norms. One implication of this argument is that it is impossible to escape gender perspectives in order to resist discrimination and exclusion because the self cannot be articulated, and cannot articulate itself, outside of language and its deeply gendered symbolic order and conceptual foundations.

What is possible, however, is to dislocate, destabilize and subvert established hierarchies and normalized gender relations through deconstructive linguistic resources such as irony and parody (Butler 1999).

However, by suggesting there is no innate self that is possessed in advance of its discursive formation, Butler appears to foreclose the possibility of an autonomous and responsible agent, capable of effectively opposing discriminatory misrecognition and oppressive institutional patterns. To counter the claim that deconstructing subject identity is tantamount to pulling the rug out from under coherent ethical-political agency, Butler (2005: 20) proposes a 'post-Hegelian account of recognition that seeks to establish the social basis for giving an account of oneself' grounded on the 'opacity' rather than transparency of the subject. Butler proceeds by inverting Hegel's account that begins from the self-other dyadic relationship and progresses to the broader social dimension of recognition infused by issues of power; self and other instead come into being as conditioned and mediated by social-historical language, conventions, criteria and norms that exceed the dyadic exchange of those involved in reciprocal recognition. Butler's (2005: 30) interpretation of recognition accordingly emphasizes the impersonal, non-subjective operation of linguistic norms that constitute the intelligibility of the recognizable subject. On this interpretation, intersubjective relationships function as critical reflexive engagements with the intermediary of language, which continually challenge us to give accounts of who we are and put into question the givenness of how we relate to and treat others. This means that the 'I' and the 'you' are, in a sense, 'dispossessed' by the discursive practices deployed to confer and receive recognition, and the scene of recognition cannot be said to 'belong' wholly to self and other (Butler 2005: 24–6). Moreover, because any narrative account that makes recognizable and understandable who one is must resort to discursive elements that are not exclusively one's own, the identity of the self is something singularly irreplaceable and, at the same time, commonly substitutable. This is reflected in the fact that one can never tell the whole story of one's own life but must instead leave it in the hands of others, thereby imbuing self-formation with an unavoidable incompleteness and opacity; the self is given and taken away in the course of its narrative being addressed to others (Butler 2005: 38). For Butler, the complex recognition that dislocates the self thereby proves to be indispensable ethically and politically inasmuch as it can foster dispositions towards greater humility, generosity, responsibility and forgiveness, 'precisely when our willingness to become undone in relation to others constitutes our chance of becoming human' (2005: 136). Such recognition, then, demands of us a willingness to be

vulnerable, a willingness to relinquish the inhuman pursuit of self-preservation (Butler 2005: 103).

Similar to Butler, but informed by phenomenological-hermeneutics rather than deconstruction, Paul Ricoeur also seeks to challenge the conception of recognition as a kind of property possessed by the subject subordinated to modern capitalism's master idiom of ownership. Indeed, Ricoeur (1992) claims that we must distinguish not only between self and other, but between the different kinds of selves – subject, cogito, ego, me, I, *ipse*, *idem* – that are always something other, and the different kinds of others that are always all and none of these selves. In one of his last books published before his death in 2005, Ricoeur traces the polysemic character of the concept of recognition through three principal meanings. Recognition means, first, to identify an object, place or person that appears to perception through what Kant referred to as the three-fold synthesis of representation. As an inner sense, the 'circle of representation' entails the imaginative process of combining the manifold of sense data and intuitions into the phenomenal experience of a single consciousness, which culminates in the ability to apply concepts to objects and thereby to identify, recognize and distinguish between them. This process unifies sensibility, understanding and judgement in relation to the spatiotemporal condition of consciousness (Ricoeur 2005: 36–58). Yet as Ricoeur (2005: 36) points out, Kant's insistence on the subject's transcendental unity and mastery over spatiotemporal perception neglects the significance of change and consequently the possibility of misrecognition – a possibility that gives recognition its 'dramatic character' and 'existential, worldly form'. The second primary meaning of recognition concerns the ability of the human being to achieve self-recognition, that is, recognition of oneself as an agent capable of devising, pursuing and accomplishing activities that make things happen in the world. But far from being an act of purely autonomous free will, self-recognition, the sense of 'I can', exposes our reliance or dependence upon others. This is because self-recognition requires memory, the act by which we apprehend or recognize the past in the present. If the past were constantly forgotten, then no sense of self as agent could persist (Ricoeur 2005: 109–26). This reveals that the self which accomplishes, which achieves something, is also the self which promises. A promise is an illocutionary projection of the self from the present into the future, an assurance that one will do what one says (Ricoeur 2005: 127–34). It serves as a commitment to remember and maintain the self vis-à-vis others despite changing circumstances and the vicissitudes of life (Ricoeur 2005: 103). In this way, the retrospective and prospective dimensions of self-recognition necessarily encompass the

recognition that one is also accountable, inescapably responsible to others for what one promises and does (or fails to do). At issue in this second meaning of recognition, then, is the possibility of failure – of not fulfilling a promise, of letting others down, of bearing the burdens of blame and punishment – which may both enrich and compromise the paradigmatic ‘desire to live one’s life freely’ (Ricoeur 2005: 69, 149).

The question of how to conceptualize the forms of reciprocity that arise from surmounting asymmetries between individuals and groups bears on the third principal meaning of recognition. According to Ricoeur, it is difficult to sustain the Hobbesian belief that political order can be founded on a self-interested contractual obligation that arises from fear, suspicion, rivalry and mistrust. Hegel’s theory of the desire for recognition, in contrast, sheds light on the presence of a human predisposition to sociability and hence on a moral motivation to leave the state of nature. Extending this line of thought, Ricoeur questions the prominence that Honneth places on struggle as essential to the idea of recognition. If one continues to take confrontation as the defining characteristic of recognition, then surely it would make little sense to claim that the struggle for recognition must be understood as the moral grammar of all interpersonal and social relationships. Even if we take conflictual interactions to be only one of the defining moments of recognition, this raises the prospect of failing to account not only for how the logic of conflict may license an interminable play of forces conducive to normalizing political violence, but also for genuinely peaceful experiences of recognition (Ricoeur 2005: 218–19). Far from insisting that the roots of recognition are conflict, and that mutual recognition is the exchange of comparable and calculable commodities in a competitive marketplace (which can give rise to new conflicts), Ricoeur suggests an alternative model based on such kinds of love as *philia*, *eros* and *agape*. *Agape* does not appeal to comparison, calculation and the equivalence demanded by a ‘fair trade’, but instead embraces the incommensurability of human beings and the practice of giving without expecting anything in return. The experience of states of peace, Ricoeur proposes, discloses a form of recognition as gift-giving that shifts away from reciprocity and towards mutuality.⁴ Where reciprocity implies that equality is tied to the expectation of an equivalent exchange, mutuality is the expression of a double generosity: that of the initial giver, who ‘neither requires nor expects a gift in return’, and that of the initial recipient, who nonetheless returns the gesture voluntarily yet also, paradoxically, obligatorily (Ricoeur 2005: 220–43). Yet the source of this obligation is a sense of gratitude rather than entitlement. Here recognition becomes less an acknowledgement

of each subject's identity and more an affirmation of the practice of gift-giving itself that lies *between* self and other – and thus of that unstinting generosity, though inexact and always unexpected, which is truly mutual or shared together. Consequently, Ricoeur's argument raises two crucial points about recognition, whether interpersonal or international. First, it suggests that non-recognition, the refusal to give as well as to receive, exacts a terrible cost on those to whom recognition is denied. Second, it exhorts us to entertain the notion that proper recognition, even though it comes without a price, must be freely given in return.

Recognition's new international direction

The body of theory we have just reviewed offers rich perspectives and inflections on the experience and political significance of recognition. While the theories presented by Taylor, Habermas, Honneth, Fraser, Butler and Ricoeur open up new ways of engaging politics as conventionally circumscribed within territorial nation-states, we suggest that they require further supplementation by diverse accounts informed by international, global or world politics. Yet the vitality of the recognition debates has yet to translate fully into the international domain. This may come as something of a surprise since, as Jürgen Haacke (2005) stresses, the ethics and politics of recognition is highly pertinent for normative theorizing about international politics. Nevertheless, as noted at the outset of this chapter, the recent arrival of studies at the intersection of recognition and the international speaks both to the increasing appeal of the concept of recognition for international political theorists and to the expanding range of international and global issues regarded as amenable to discussion through the lens of recognition. Some of these studies remain statist in orientation, using the notions of the desire and struggle for recognition to unpack the causes and methods by which states confer legal personality on other states in terms of international law, treaties and diplomacy (see Lindemann and Ringmar 2011). Other scholars have begun to investigate the various ways that the recognition literature can be a departure point for larger conversations about globalization and redistribution beyond the state (see Burns and Thompson 2013; O'Neill and Smith 2012), while still others have limited their analyses to the case of human rights (Hayden 2012). This relatively small subset of what undoubtedly can be an enormous spectrum of international theoretical issues and empirical cases to be explored in connection with recognition makes clear, therefore, that there are a number of issues that remain unexplored or unsettled.

In devoting attention to further understandings of the possibilities and limitations of the recognition–international nexus, the volume focuses on three related themes which correspond to the structuring of the book. Part One interrogates contemporary recognition theory as it appears both in social and political theory and in International Relations (IR) literature. Bringing a self-consciously global lens to bear upon dominant conceptions of recognition, these approaches rework recognition in imaginative new dimensions, in part through a creative retrieval of recognition theory's Hegelian roots. Part Two attends to the blind spots of recognition frameworks, asking what happens when non-recognition prevails. By probing the limits of recognition, where personhood is denied, shared worlds obliterated and nature discounted, these chapters continue the project of challenging and redefining recognition theory. Part Three explores the myriad sociopolitical manifestations of recognition frameworks, tracing its operation in contexts of contemporary humanitarianism, global social movements and world society.

Meanings: Critical interventions

The first four chapters of this volume challenge and extend dominant readings of recognition in political and international theory. They argue that contemporary recognition theory has lost the dynamism and radical dependency that characterized earlier readings of Hegelian recognition. Re-thinking recognition theory in the context of the international and the global, the chapters highlight limitations of dominant frameworks and encourage an innovative reworking of conceptions and discourses of recognition. Dominant recognition frameworks too often privilege individualistic and teleological accounts of recognition that focus on rights, identity and the formal institutionalization of recognition. The contributions in this section disturb these accounts by pointing to the gap between formal recognition and lived experience and insisting on a return to the radical relationality at the centre of Hegel's account of recognition. They advocate a more complex account of subjectivities, whereby recognition is an ongoing, dynamic process that operates at multiple levels (individual, group, societal) and challenges perceptions of the self as well as relations with others. This more holistic and relational conception of recognition reflects on its location in broader social and economic relations and promotes reconfigurations of self and societal structures in response.

Kate Schick interrogates the concept of recognition through a critique of liberal cosmopolitan attempts to promote recognition as global citizenship. She argues that cosmopolitan education cultivates recognition through the positive

production of global citizens who subject their own beliefs to scrutiny, expand their knowledge of others' lives and are imaginatively alive to the sufferings of others. However, although this approach promotes a kind of recognition based on an appreciation of our common humanity and vulnerability, the recognition it promotes is an impoverished conception that promotes more and better knowledge of others wielded to superficially solve problems of misrecognition and injustice. Schick advocates instead an approach to pedagogy and the international underpinned by an agonistic understanding of recognition. Rather than prescribing 'more recognition' or 'more respect' (which focuses in large part on what *we* can do for *others*), this approach advocates a 'turn towards the subject' that interrogates our own adoption of norms that marginalize and structures that oppress. This unsettling pedagogy focuses our attention on the desires that foster misrecognition, asking why we fail to accord others recognition and what this does to others and to ourselves. Agonistic recognition conceives of recognition as a difficult, risky venture that works towards comprehension of our selves, our relations with others and our location in social, economic and social structures. This understanding of recognition cannot co-exist with societal desires for certainty, self-preservation and invulnerability; it challenges the deeply rooted ignorance and indifference that spring from a fear of recognition and promotes instead a counter-cultural embrace of ambiguity, vulnerability and love.

Monica Mookherjee, in turn, critically assesses the ability of Nancy Fraser's status model of recognition to foster an international, or 'cosmopolitan', feminist theory of recognition. Fraser's tripartite account of recognition, redistribution and political representation supports women's empowerment as cosmopolitan agents of their own needs, rights and choices worldwide. However, Fraser's objectivist understanding of misrecognition as status subordination fails to acknowledge the importance of lived experience of social suffering and injustice. Her robust anti-psychologism mutes the hidden and inarticulate dimension of misrecognition that persists despite formal institutional recognition. Mookherjee therefore turns to Simone de Beauvoir's 'ethic of ambiguity' to counter Fraser's overly objectivist account of misrecognition and to reformulate our understanding of recognition. This approach emphasizes the tension between the human freedom to choose and the body, materiality and circumstances that perpetually constrain this freedom. Arguing that Beauvoir's account of lived, embodied social suffering comprises two distinct 'moments' of gender misrecognition, namely the 'suppressed potentiality' and 'resistance within commonality' moments, the chapter contends that her philosophy sheds more light than is commonly thought on the way in which diverse women

experience globalization today. The central idea is that understanding Beauvoir's two moments of gender misrecognition as an interactive dialectic between equality as sameness and as diversity suggests a commitment to an unstable and unfinished world community, and a cosmopolitan account of care across national borders which transcends, without rejecting, more standard measures of universal rights or economic reform. Mookherjee argues that Beauvoir's emphasis on ambiguity points to cosmopolitan hope that consciousness of our essential ambiguity as human beings will form the basis for solidarity with those who exist beyond rights or recognition.

Volker Heins then challenges the overly individualist and teleological conceptions of recognition promulgated by Axel Honneth and Jürgen Habermas, returning to the seminal writings of Charles Taylor to develop a more agonistic reading of recognition. He argues that Taylor's revival of nineteenth-century conceptions of recognition was closely linked with the birth of multiculturalism as a practice and set of ideas. This connection has been dissolved by continental political philosophers such as Habermas and Honneth who reject all group-based understandings of recognition that cannot be reduced to aspirations for individual freedom. Habermas places immense confidence in the benign forces of modernization, maintaining that the dice of history are biased against all 'stationary' and 'rigid forms of life' and, as a result, his conception of recognition leaves little room for difference. Honneth also rids recognition theory of its multiculturalist implications, conceptualizing struggles of recognition as struggles for inclusion, not as more radical struggles about the kind of community into which people want to be included. Heins returns to Taylor to offer a more agonistic conception of recognition that highlights the possibility of thinking about society in radically relational terms. He notes that multiculturalism was conceived as a halfway house between assimilation and separatism and that Taylor's explicit goal in elaborating multicultural recognition was to prevent the impending breakup of a diverse country like Canada. Heins explores the question of whether this idea can be elaborated with respect to the world community of states and societies. He argues that whereas thinkers like Habermas think of national and ethno-cultural identifications as something to be overcome in a linear process of abstraction and purification, it might be more appropriate to see them as possible counterweights against the powers of the central state and unaccountable international officials.

Similarly, Tarik Kochi analyses dominant liberal readings of recognition, saying that contemporary recognition theory operates primarily as a functional mechanism to better organize liberal societies by focusing narrowly on liberal

rights, questions of identity and private property relations. In this chapter, Kochi reclaims the dynamism and radicalism of Hegelian recognition theory and highlights the importance of thinking about recognition in terms of political economy and economic justice. He develops an understanding of recognition as a 'hinge concept' that links economic relations, the juridical form and political struggle. Kochi does this by revisiting Hegel's account of the master-slave or lord-bondsman in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. He shows how Hegel's account makes clear the interdependent relationship between politics and economic production, where citizenship and freedom depend on slavery and unfreedom. He also revisits Hegel's account of recognition as an emergent form of capitalist economic and social relations in *Philosophy of Right*, where recognition is the relationship of alienated individuals acknowledging and affirming the aspects of their alienated selves. Like Mookherjee, Kochi highlights the gap between formal recognition (individuals as 'free' individuals within a market society) and lived experience (actual conditions of material inequality). He argues that recognition of this gap can operate as a mode of self-reflection whereby conditions of impoverishment foster questioning and anger as the poor reflect upon and challenge the causes of their inequality. Thus, by focusing on its antagonistic basis, as struggle, a concept of recognition gives us a useful way of thinking about both historical and contemporary modes of global capitalist accumulation.

Limits: Recognition's blind spots

The first four chapters, then, reconfigure recognition theory in imaginative new directions. They argue that dominant conceptions of contemporary recognition theory fail to take seriously enough the radical potential of the concept of recognition and encourage a more dynamic interpretation that unsettles liberal givens. The next three chapters extend this interrogation of recognition theory by focusing on the *limits* of recognition. They ask what contemporary recognition theory ignores, dismisses and proscribes, acknowledging its cultural, historical and social origins and manifestations and the ways these constrain its emancipatory potential. By exploring the blind spots and failures of frameworks of recognition, these chapters productively and creatively extend and rework recognition theory: it is, after all, often on the margins provided by limits where we productively struggle to redefine, revalue, rephrase and resist. All three chapters investigate the lived reality of *non-recognition*, both of humans, in the context of genocide, slavery and the colonial project, and of the non-human, in the context of thinking about nature.

Patrick Hayden examines the notion of evil as radical non-recognition. He notes that although the past decade has seen increasing public, political and scholarly attention to the theme of evil and its moral and political manifestations, contemporary recognition theory has so far failed to account for evil in global and transcultural contexts. In this chapter, Hayden explores the possibility of forming linkages between recognition and the problem of political evil by paying particular attention to the world, rather than self or other. The main point of departure for this interpretation revolves around distinguishing between evil and non-evil harms, given a shift in emphasis from dyadic interpersonal relationships to triadic intermediations with the worldly contexts that enable recognition. He first examines some of the key features of contemporary recognition frameworks that attempt to make sense of human vulnerability and harm, and outlines how these frameworks, in contrast to Hegel's philosophy, stop short of the phenomenon of evil. He then discusses how Hegel's insight into evil as the annihilation or 'voiding' of a shared world at the limits of recognition opens up an alternative paradigm, informed by Hannah Arendt's thinking, that moves recognition outward towards the third term of a common world. On this account, evil is not simply indifference towards others, nor is it a struggle resulting in the mere submission of the other, but it is the 'voiding' – literally, the annihilation to non-existence – of a *shared world* that is both the constitutive ground and the affirmative outcome of mutual recognition itself. Hayden finishes by considering some of the ways that genocide can be said to constitute a special type of harm, appropriately considered evil, which aims at and results in the irretrievable loss of plural human worlds.

Robbie Shilliam traces the radical non-recognition of persons by the powerful. What, he asks, if there is absolutely no chance of being recognized as a person by those who wield the power of law over you? Shilliam addresses this question by making us face a black plantation worker in British Guyana who, during the invasion of Ethiopia by Italy in 1935, identifies himself as an Abyssinian General. How can this General be recognized by the colonial authorities? Facing the Haitian Revolution, wherein Africans authored and executed their own liberation, Hegel can provide no answer to such a question. European Enlightenment thought did not engage with enslaved Africans except as 'slaves', that is, as humans in biology only. Africans were regarded as tragically devoid of reason and agency, especially what Hegel would call 'world-historical' agency. Hegel's silence on the fate of the enslaved is one note in a chorus of oblivion that structures the majority of European Enlightenment thought on rights and recognition. Working through Frantz Fanon's critique of the excisions and exclusions in Hegel's dialectic of recognition, Shilliam turns to African American ethnographer Zora Neale Hurston and Jamaican

author Erna Brodber in order to elaborate some of the practices of self-meaning and self-valuation undertaken by descendants of enslaved Africans who have been denied recognition. Returning, by way of these authors, to the Abyssinian General, Shilliam poses the following question: with what *creative* matter would it be possible to cultivate a new humanism – not the thin particular of European philosophy that masquerades as a universal, but a thick decolonized humanism that propels liberation? What might it look like to re-recognize one's own personhood communally, drawing on spiritual resources to redeem a collective self?

Emilian Kavalski and Magdalena Zolkos then highlight another limit of existing frameworks of recognition: the failure to recognize *nature* as an actor in international life. The prevailing conceptualization of recognition in IR relates to the collective endowment with a legal status as a legitimate participant on the world stage. This understanding draws on normative political theories of justice premised on a binary distinction between acts of acknowledgement ('responsive model of recognition') and acts of declaration ('generative model of recognition'). Thus, the mutual collective recognition of and by states becomes the mechanism through which participation in the international domain is validated. However, this conceptualization offers little of value when it comes to IR's recent struggle to offer an inclusive account not just for human, but also for non-human interactions in global life. At stake is not simply the need to extend the concept of recognition beyond the agency of the state, but also the requirement to radically reframe recognition into a non-anthropocentric notion that takes us 'beyond the human'. More specifically, the 'generative model of recognition' has been indebted to the Hegelian strand in contemporary political theory, which emphasizes the centrality of reciprocity to the social practices of recognition. Blurring the sharp binary between recognition as an act of acknowledgement and recognition as an act of declaration, this paper considers critically the potential for more inclusive and encompassing understanding of recognition embedded in the reciprocity principle. Kavalski and Zolkos argue that if the study of IR is to address meaningfully the challenges of climate change through the conceptualization of recognition, it will have to confront and reframe its anthropocentric premise.

Manifestations: International orders and disorders

Having interrogated the meanings and limits of contemporary recognition theory, the final three chapters explore its sociopolitical manifestations. They ask how, why and by whom recognition is mobilized and contested, pointing to

its (mis)appropriation in the service of humanitarianism, emancipation, global social movements and world society. The first chapter shows how the lived experience of global politics unsettles 'tidy' categories of recognition, illustrating that recognition is often co-opted by relations of domination in the context of humanitarianism and care. The final two chapters explore the emancipatory potential of recognition politics in the context of struggles for global justice and world society beyond generic 'sameness'.

Fiona Robinson employs the concept of recognition to address the problem of paternalism in the ethics of care. Discourses and practices of 'care' in international politics have been used regularly to justify paternalistic acts of domination through the use of structural and physical violence – in the treatment of indigenous peoples, in the 'protection' of women and children in warfare, and in the practices of contemporary humanitarianism, including humanitarian interventions. This suggests the need to ensure the 'other-regarding' nature of care involves not only acting to address the needs of the other, but acting to *recognize* the other as a person in her own right. Much of the literature on justice as recognition emphasizes the need for powerful or dominant voices to 'recognize' the ways of life of marginal groups. However, Robinson argues that recognition in the context of globalized relations of care must involve an unsettling of the categories of those who 'bestow' care and recognition, and those who receive them. She builds on the argument of Marian Barnes, who uses Nancy Fraser's notion of 'transformative recognition' as a basis for a politics of care. Transformative recognition is not so much about recognizing and promoting the autonomy of individuals and groups but rather ensuring that their agency is not constrained or effaced and that their voices are heard. It promotes practices based on a picture of mutual vulnerability and interdependence. Robinson's approach involves a sustained analysis of the politics of representation – or what Narayan calls the 'accounts' that are given of the interdependencies and relationships – which are so crucial to an ethic of care. It challenges us to reflect on the harm we may be doing in 'doing good' and to rethink the implications of 'moral' actions in the context of global politics.

In a further move, Greta Snyder focuses on the role the politics of recognition plays in constructing global struggles against injustice. She highlights three different sites in which recognition politics is essential to the success of global social movements: internal to progressive movements, between different progressive movements, and between progressive movements and the global public. At these different sites, she argues, recognition politics serves at least two important functions: integrative and performative. Recognition politics is integrative in that it fosters solidarity and enables individuals to recognize

themselves as part of a global Left. It is performative in that by performing a democratic will, the Left can perform a kind of global democracy even in the absence of global democratic institutions. By identifying the sites at which recognition can contribute to global struggles and explaining the functions recognition serves, Snyder adds to our understanding of 'regimes of recognition', offers a new perspective on the ideal recognition encounter, and illuminates the importance of real-world political institutions like the World Social Forum and campaigns like the anti-War protests of 2003.

Finally, Matthew Weinert uses recognition theory to challenge and extend the notion of world society, which captures a web of relations between diverse actors operating outside the formal rubric of the state. He argues that discourses of world society must move beyond generic frames of 'humanity' and acknowledge the deployment of difference that jettisons the sameness upon which that notion of humanity is founded. Weinert highlights one particularly problematic presupposition of world society and its cosmopolitan iterations, which concerns reciprocal, inter-human recognition. Given multiple practices and instances of dehumanization and misrecognition that undermine or deny the rights and status claims of certain 'types' of people – or even their claim to being human in the first place – we must turn this assumptive ideal of universal recognition into a question. That is, we must ask how recognition is cultivated if it is not automatically bestowed. Weinert posits a set of practices that aid in the constitution of inter-human recognition: resistance, reflection, replication of norms and (self-)responsibility. Because of their sociopolitical ramifications, these generative practices function as a primary, constitutive institution of world society conceived of as an inter-human society.

Notes

- 1 For discussion of the French reception of Hegel, and its influence on the surge of interest in recognition as a political concept, see Butler (1987) and Roth (1988).
- 2 Taylor's overall argument criticizes both (some) liberal theorists for postulating the abstract worth of the individual independently of processes of social recognition and (some) multicultural or identity theorists for reifying and ultimately relativizing difference as such.
- 3 For elaboration of these points see Habermas (1996).
- 4 Butler (2008: 54–6) also appeals to the example of the gift – influenced, as is Ricoeur, by the work of Marcel Mauss – in order to characterize recognition relationships.