

From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a 'Post-Socialist' Age

The 'struggle for recognition' is fast becoming the paradigmatic form of political conflict in the late twentieth century. Demands for 'recognition of difference' fuel struggles of groups mobilized under the banners of nationality, ethnicity, 'race', gender, and sexuality. In these 'post-socialist' conflicts, group identity supplants class interest as the chief medium of political mobilization. Cultural domination supplants exploitation as the fundamental injustice. And cultural recognition displaces socioeconomic redistribution as the remedy for injustice and the goal of political struggle.*

That, of course, is not the whole story. Struggles for recognition occur in a world of exacerbated material inequality—in income and property ownership; in access to paid work, education, health care and leisure time; but also more starkly in caloric intake and exposure to environmental toxicity, hence in life expectancy and rates of morbidity and mortality. Material inequality is on the rise in most of the world's countries—in the United States and in

Haiti, in Sweden and in India, in Russia and in Brazil. It is also increasing globally, most dramatically across the line that divides North from South. How, then, should we view the eclipse of a socialist imaginary centred on terms such as 'interest', 'exploitation', and 'redistribution'? And what should we make of the rise of a new political imaginary centred on notions of 'identity', 'difference', 'cultural domination', and 'recognition'? Does this shift represent a lapse into 'false consciousness'? Or does it, rather, redress the culture-blindness of a materialist paradigm rightfully discredited by the collapse of Soviet Communism?

Neither of those two stances is adequate, in my view. Both are too wholesale and un-nuanced. Instead of simply endorsing or rejecting all of identity politics *simpliciter*, we should see ourselves as presented with a new intellectual and practical task: that of developing a *critical* theory of recognition, one which identifies and defends only those versions of the cultural politics of difference that can be coherently combined with the social politics of equality.

In formulating this project, I assume that justice today requires *both* redistribution *and* recognition. And I propose to examine the relation between them. In part, this means figuring out how to conceptualize cultural recognition and social equality in forms that support rather than undermine one another. (For there are many competing conceptions of both!) It also means theorizing the ways in which economic disadvantage and cultural disrespect are currently entwined with and support one another. Then, too, it requires clarifying the political dilemmas that arise when we try to combat both those injustices simultaneously.

My larger aim is to connect two political problematics that are currently dissociated from one other. For only by articulating recognition and redistribution can we arrive at a critical-theoretical framework that is adequate to the demands of our age. That, however, is far too much to take on here. In what follows, I shall consider only one aspect of the problem. Under what circumstances can a politics of recognition help support a politics of redistribution? And when is it more likely to undermine it? Which of the many varieties of identity politics best synergize with struggles for social equality? And which tend to interfere with the latter?

In addressing these questions, I shall focus on axes of injustice that are simultaneously cultural and socioeconomic, paradigmatically gender and

¹ This omission is dictated by reasons of space. I believe that the framework elaborated below can fruitfully address both ethnicity and nationality. Insofar as groups mobilized on these lines do not define themselves as sharing a situation of socioeconomic disadvantage and do not make redistributive claims, they can be understood as struggling primarily for recognition. National struggles are peculiar, however, in that the form of recognition they seek is political autonomy, whether in the form of a sovereign state of their own (e.g. the Palestinians) or in the form of more limited provincial sovereignty within a multinational state (e.g. the majority of Québécois). Struggles for ethnic recognition, in contrast, often seek rights of cultural expression within polyethnic nation-states. These distinctions are insightfully discussed in Will Kymlicka, 'Three Forms of Group-Differentiated Citizenship in Canada' (paper presented at the conference on 'Democracy and Difference', Yale University, 1993).

‘race’. (I shall not say much, in contrast, about ethnicity or nationality.¹) And I must enter one crucial preliminary caveat: in proposing to assess recognition claims from the standpoint of social equality, I assume that varieties of recognition politics that fail to respect human rights are unacceptable even if they promote social equality.²

Finally, a word about method: in what follows, I shall propose a set of analytical distinctions, for example, cultural injustices versus economic injustices, recognition versus redistribution. In the real world, of course, culture and political economy are always imbricated with one another; and virtually every struggle against injustice, when properly understood, implies demands for both redistribution and recognition. Nevertheless, for heuristic purposes, analytical distinctions are indispensable. Only by abstracting from the complexities of the real world can we devise a conceptual schema that can illuminate it. Thus, by distinguishing redistribution and recognition analytically, and by exposing their distinctive logics, I aim to clarify—and begin to resolve—some of the central political dilemmas of our age.

My discussion proceeds in four parts. In section one, I conceptualize redistribution and recognition as two analytically distinct paradigms of justice, and I formulate ‘the redistribution–recognition dilemma’. In section two, I distinguish three ideal-typical modes of social collectivity in order to identify those vulnerable to the dilemma. In section three, I distinguish between ‘affirmative’ and ‘transformative’ remedies for injustice, and I examine their respective logics of collectivity. Lastly, I use these distinctions, in section four, to propose a political strategy for integrating recognition claims with redistribution claims with a minimum of mutual interference.

I. The Redistribution–Recognition Dilemma

Let me begin by noting some complexities of contemporary ‘post-socialist’ political life. With the decentring of class, diverse social movements are mobilized around cross-cutting axes of difference. Contesting a range of injustices, their claims overlap and at times conflict. Demands for cultural change intermingle with demands for economic change, both within and among social movements. Increasingly, however, identity-based claims tend to predominate, as prospects for redistribution appear to recede. The result is a complex political field with little programmatic coherence.

To help clarify this situation and the political prospects it presents, I propose to distinguish two broadly conceived, analytically distinct understandings of injustice. The first is socioeconomic injustice, which is rooted in the political-economic structure of society. Examples include exploitation (having the fruits of one’s labour appropriated for the benefit

² My principal concern in this essay is the relation between the recognition of cultural difference and social equality. I am not directly concerned, therefore, with the relation between recognition of cultural difference and liberalism. However, I assume that no identity politics is acceptable that fails to respect fundamental human rights of the sort usually championed by left-wing liberals.

of others); economic marginalization (being confined to undesirable or poorly paid work or being denied access to income-generating labour altogether); and deprivation (being denied an adequate material standard of living).

Egalitarian theorists have long sought to conceptualize the nature of these socioeconomic injustices. Their accounts include Marx's theory of capitalist exploitation, John Rawls's account of justice as fairness in the distribution of 'primary goods', Amartya Sen's view that justice requires ensuring that people have equal 'capabilities to function', and Ronald Dworkin's view that it requires 'equality of resources'.³ For my purposes here, however, we need not commit ourselves to any one particular theoretical account. We need only subscribe to a rough and general understanding of socioeconomic injustice informed by a commitment to egalitarianism.

The second kind of injustice is cultural or symbolic. It is rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation, and communication. Examples include cultural domination (being subjected to patterns of interpretation and communication that are associated with another culture and are alien and/or hostile to one's own); nonrecognition (being rendered invisible via the authoritative representational, communicative, and interpretative practices of one's culture); and disrespect (being routinely maligned or disparaged in stereotypic public cultural representations and/or in everyday life interactions).

Some political theorists have recently sought to conceptualize the nature of these cultural or symbolic injustices. Charles Taylor, for example, has drawn on Hegelian notions to argue that:

Nonrecognition or misrecognition . . . can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, reduced mode of being. Beyond simple lack of respect, it can inflict a grievous wound, saddling people with crippling self-hatred. Due recognition is not just a courtesy but a vital human need.⁴

Likewise, Axel Honneth has argued that:

we owe our integrity . . . to the receipt of approval or recognition from other persons. [Negative concepts such as 'insult' or

³ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume 1; John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge, Mass. 1971 and subsequent papers; Amartya Sen, *Commodities and Capabilities*, North-Holland, 1985; and Ronald Dworkin, 'What is Equality? Part 2: Equality of Resources', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, vol. 10, no. 4 (fall 1981). Although I here classify all these writers as theorists of distributive economic justice, it is also true that most of them have some resources for dealing with issues of cultural justice as well. Rawls, for example, treats 'the social bases of self-respect' as a primary good to be fairly distributed, while Sen treats a 'sense of self' as relevant to the capability to function. (I am indebted to Mika Manty for this point.) Nevertheless, as Iris Marion Young has suggested, the primary thrust of their thought leads in the direction of distributive economic justice. (See her *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, Princeton 1990.)

⁴ Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism and 'The Politics of Recognition'*, Princeton 1992, p. 25.

‘degradation’] are related to forms of disrespect, to the denial of recognition. [They] are used to characterize a form of behaviour that does not represent an injustice solely because it constrains the subjects in their freedom for action or does them harm. Rather, such behaviour is injurious because it impairs these persons in their positive understanding of self—an understanding acquired by intersubjective means.⁵

Similar conceptions inform the work of many other critical theorists who do not use the term ‘recognition.’⁶ Once again, however, it is not necessary here to settle on a particular theoretical account. We need only subscribe to a general and rough understanding of cultural injustice, as distinct from socioeconomic injustice.

Despite the differences between them, both socioeconomic injustice and cultural injustice are pervasive in contemporary societies. Both are rooted in processes and practices that systematically disadvantage some groups of people vis-à-vis others. Both, consequently, should be remedied.⁷

Of course, this distinction between economic injustice and cultural injustice is analytical. In practice, the two are intertwined. Even the most material economic institutions have a constitutive, irreducible cultural dimension; they are shot through with significations and norms. Conversely, even the most discursive cultural practices have a constitutive, irreducible political-economic dimension; they are underpinned by material supports. Thus, far from occupying two airtight separate spheres, economic injustice and cultural injustice are usually interimbriated so as to reinforce one another dialectically. Cultural norms that are unfairly biased against some are institutionalized in the state and the economy; meanwhile, economic disadvantage impedes equal participa-

⁵ Axel Honneth, ‘Integrity and Disrespect: Principles of a Conception of Morality Based on the Theory of Recognition’, *Political Theory*, vol. 20, no. 2 (May 1992), pp. 188–9. See also his *Kampf um Anerkennung*, Frankfurt 1992; English translation forthcoming from The MIT Press under the title *Struggle for Recognition*. It is no accident that both of the major contemporary theorists of recognition, Honneth and Taylor, are Hegelians.

⁶ See, for example, Patricia J. Williams, *The Alchemy of Race and Rights*, Cambridge, Mass. 1991; and Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*.

⁷ Responding to an earlier draft of this paper, Mika Manty posed the question of whether/how a schema focused on classifying justice issues as either cultural or political-economic could accommodate ‘primary political concerns’ such as citizenship and political participation (‘Comments on Fraser’, unpublished typescript presented at the Michigan symposium on ‘Political Liberalism’). My inclination is to follow Jürgen Habermas in viewing such issues bifocally. From one perspective, political institutions (in state-regulated capitalist societies) belong with the economy as part of the ‘system’ that produces distributive socioeconomic injustices; in Rawlsian terms, they are part of ‘the basic structure’ of society. From another perspective, however, such institutions belong with ‘the lifeworld’ as part of the cultural structure that produces injustices of recognition; for example, the array of citizenship entitlements and participation rights conveys powerful implicit and explicit messages about the relative moral worth of various persons. ‘Primary political concerns’ could thus be treated as matters either of economic justice or cultural justice, depending on the context and perspective in play.

tion in the making of culture, in public spheres and in everyday life. The result is often a vicious circle of cultural and economic subordination.⁸

Despite these mutual entwinements, I shall continue to distinguish economic injustice and cultural injustice analytically. And I shall also distinguish two correspondingly distinct kinds of remedy. The remedy for economic injustice is political-economic restructuring of some sort. This might involve redistributing income, reorganizing the division of labour, subjecting investment to democratic decision-making, or transforming other basic economic structures. Although these various remedies differ importantly from one another, I shall henceforth refer to the whole group of them by the generic term 'redistribution'.⁹ The remedy for cultural injustice, in contrast, is some sort of cultural or symbolic change. This could involve upwardly revaluing disrespected identities and the cultural products of maligned groups. It could also involve recognizing and positively valorizing cultural diversity. More radically still, it could involve the wholesale transformation of societal patterns of representation, interpretation and communication in ways that would change *everybody's* sense of self.¹⁰ Although these remedies differ importantly from one another, I shall henceforth refer to the whole group of them by the generic term 'recognition'.

Once again, this distinction between redistributive remedies and recognition remedies is analytical. Redistributive remedies generally presuppose an underlying conception of recognition. For example, some proponents of egalitarian socioeconomic redistribution ground their claims on the 'equal moral worth of persons'; thus, they treat economic redistribution as an expression of recognition.¹¹ Conversely, recognition remedies sometimes presuppose an underlying conception of redistribution. For example, some proponents of multicultural recognition ground their claims on the imperative of a just distribution of the 'primary good' of an 'intact cultural structure'; they therefore treat cultural recognition as a species of redistribution.¹² Such conceptual entwinements notwith-

⁸ For the interimbrication of culture and political economy, see my 'What's Critical About Critical Theory? The Case of Habermas and Gender' in Nancy Fraser, *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory*, Oxford 1989; 'Rethinking the Public Sphere' in Fraser, *Justice Interruptus*; and Fraser, 'Pragmatism, Feminism, and the Linguistic Turn', in Benhabib, Butler, Cornell and Fraser, *Feminist Contentions: A Philosophical Exchange*, New York 1995. See also Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge 1977. For critiques of the cultural meanings implicit in the current US political economy of work and social welfare, see the last two chapters of *Unruly Practices* and the essays in Part 3 of *Justice Interruptus*.

⁹ In fact, these remedies stand in some tension with one another, a problem I shall explore in a subsequent section of this paper.

¹⁰ These various cultural remedies stand in some tension with one another. It is one thing to accord recognition to existing identities that are currently undervalued; it is another to transform symbolic structures and thereby alter people's identities. I shall explore the tensions among the various remedies in a subsequent section of the paper.

¹¹ For a good example of this approach, see Ronald Dworkin, 'Liberalism', in his *A Matter of Principle*, Cambridge, Mass. 1985.

¹² For a good example of this approach, see Will Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community and Culture*, Oxford 1989. The case of Kymlicka suggests that the distinction

standing, I shall leave to one side questions such as, do redistribution and recognition constitute two distinct, irreducible, *sui generis* concepts of justice, or alternatively, can either one of them be reduced to the other?¹³ Rather, I shall assume that however we account for it metatheoretically, it will be useful to maintain a working, first-order distinction between socioeconomic injustices and their remedies, on the one hand, and cultural injustices and their remedies, on the other.¹⁴

With these distinctions in place, I can now pose the following questions: What is the relation between claims for recognition, aimed at remedying cultural injustice, and claims for redistribution, aimed at redressing economic injustice? And what sorts of mutual interferences can arise when both kinds of claims are made simultaneously?

There are good reasons to worry about such mutual interferences. Recognition claims often take the form of calling attention to, if not performatively creating, the putative specificity of some group, and then of affirming the value of that specificity. Thus they tend to promote group differentiation. Redistribution claims, in contrast, often call for abolishing economic arrangements that underpin group specificity. (An example would be feminist demands to abolish the gender division of labour.) Thus they tend to promote group de-differentiation. The upshot is that the politics of recognition and the politics of redistribution appear to have mutually contradictory aims. Whereas the first tends to promote group differentiation, the second tends to undermine it. The two kinds of claim thus stand in tension with each other; they can interfere with, or even work against, one another.

Here, then, is a difficult dilemma. I shall henceforth call it the redistribution–recognition dilemma. People who are subject to both cultural injustice and economic injustice need both recognition and redistribution. They need both to claim and to deny their specificity. How, if at all, is this possible?

Before taking up this question, let us consider precisely who faces the recognition–redistribution dilemma.

II. Exploited Classes, Despised Sexualities, and Bivalent Collectivities

Imagine a conceptual spectrum of different kinds of social collectivities. At one extreme are modes of collectivity that fit the redistribution model of justice. At the other extreme are modes of collectivity that fit the recognition model. In between are cases that prove difficult because they fit both models of justice simultaneously.

between socioeconomic justice and cultural justice need not always map onto the distinction between distributive justice and relational or communicative justice.

¹³ Axel Honneth's *Kampf um Anerkennung* represents the most thorough and sophisticated attempt at such a reduction. Honneth argues that recognition is the fundamental concept of justice and can encompass distribution.

¹⁴ Absent such a distinction, we foreclose the possibility of examining conflicts between them. We miss the chance to spot mutual interferences that could arise when redistribution claims and recognition claims are pursued simultaneously.

Consider, first, the redistribution end of the spectrum. At this end let us posit an ideal-typical mode of collectivity whose existence is rooted wholly in the political economy. It will be differentiated as a collectivity, in other words, by virtue of the economic structure, as opposed to the cultural order, of society. Thus any structural injustices its members suffer will be traceable ultimately to the political economy. The root of the injustice, as well as its core, will be socioeconomic maldistribution, while any attendant cultural injustices will derive ultimately from that economic root. At bottom, therefore, the remedy required to redress the injustice will be political-economic redistribution, as opposed to cultural recognition.

In the real world, to be sure, political economy and culture are mutually intertwined, as are injustices of distribution and recognition. Thus we may doubt whether there exist any pure collectivities of this sort. For heuristic purposes, however, it is useful to examine their properties. To do so, let us consider a familiar example that can be interpreted as approximating the ideal type: the Marxian conception of the exploited class, understood in an orthodox and theoretical way.¹⁵ And let us bracket the question of whether this view of class fits the actual historical collectivities that have struggled for justice in the real world in the name of the working class.¹⁶

In the conception assumed here, class is a mode of social differentiation that is rooted in the political-economic structure of society. A class only exists as a collectivity by virtue of its position in that structure and of its relation to other classes. Thus, the Marxian working class is the body of persons in a capitalist society who must sell their labour-power under arrangements that authorize the capitalist class to appropriate surplus productivity for its private benefit. The injustice of these arrangements, moreover, is quintessentially a matter of distribution. In the capitalist

¹⁵ In what follows, I conceive class in a highly stylized, orthodox, and theoretical way in order to sharpen the contrast to the other ideal-typical kinds of collectivity discussed below. Of course, this is hardly the only interpretation of the Marxian conception of class. In other contexts and for other purposes, I myself would prefer a less economic interpretation, one that gives more weight to the cultural, historical and discursive dimensions of class emphasized by such writers as E. P. Thompson and Joan Wallach Scott. See Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, London 1963; and Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, New York 1988.

¹⁶ It is doubtful that any collectivities mobilized in the real world today correspond to the notion of class presented below. Certainly, the history of social movements mobilized under the banner of class is more complex than this conception would suggest. Those movements have elaborated class not only as a structural category of political economy but also as a cultural-valuational category of identity—often in forms problematic for women and blacks. Thus, most varieties of socialism have asserted the dignity of labour and the worth of working people, mingling demands for redistribution with demands for recognition. Sometimes, moreover, having failed to abolish capitalism, class movements have adopted reformist strategies of seeking recognition of their ‘difference’ within the system in order to augment their power and support demands for what I below call ‘affirmative redistribution’. In general, then, historical class-based movements may be closer to what I below call ‘bivalent modes of collectivity’ than to the interpretation of class sketched here.

scheme of social reproduction, the proletariat receives an unjustly large share of the burdens and an unjustly small share of the rewards. To be sure, its members also suffer serious cultural injustices, the 'hidden (and not so hidden) injuries of class'. But far from being rooted directly in an autonomously unjust cultural structure, these derive from the political economy, as ideologies of class inferiority proliferate to justify exploitation.¹⁷ The remedy for the injustice, consequently, is redistribution, not recognition. Overcoming class exploitation requires restructuring the political economy so as to alter the class distribution of social burdens and social benefits. In the Marxian conception, such restructuring takes the radical form of abolishing the class structure as such. The task of the proletariat, therefore, is not simply to cut itself a better deal, but 'to abolish itself as a class'. The last thing it needs is recognition of its difference. On the contrary, the only way to remedy the injustice is to put the proletariat out of business as a group.

Now consider the other end of the conceptual spectrum. At this end we may posit an ideal-typical mode of collectivity that fits the recognition model of justice. A collectivity of this type is rooted wholly in culture, as opposed to in political economy. It only exists as a collectivity by virtue of the reigning social patterns of interpretation and evaluation, not by virtue of the division of labour. Thus, any structural injustices its members suffer will be traceable ultimately to the cultural-valuational structure. The root of the injustice, as well as its core, will be cultural misrecognition, while any attendant economic injustices will derive ultimately from that cultural root. At bottom, therefore, the remedy required to redress the injustice will be cultural recognition, as opposed to political-economic redistribution.

Once again, we may doubt whether there exist any pure collectivities of this sort, but it is useful to examine their properties for heuristic purposes. An example that can be interpreted as approximating the ideal type is the conception of a despised sexuality, understood in a specific stylized and theoretical way.¹⁸ Let us consider this conception, while leaving aside the

¹⁷ This assumption does not require us to reject the view that distributive deficits are often (perhaps even always) accompanied by recognition deficits. But it does entail that the recognition deficits of class, in the sense elaborated here, derive from the political economy. Later, I shall consider other sorts of cases in which collectivities suffer from recognition deficits whose roots are not directly political-economic in this way.

¹⁸ In what follows, I conceive sexuality in a highly stylized theoretical way in order to sharpen the contrast to the other ideal-typical kinds of collectivity discussed here. I treat sexual differentiation as rooted wholly in the cultural structure, as opposed to in the political economy. Of course, this is not the only interpretation of sexuality. Judith Butler (personal communication) has suggested that one might hold that sexuality is inextricable from gender, which, as I argue below, is as much a matter of the division of labour as of the cultural-valuational structure. In that case, sexuality itself might be viewed as a 'bivalent' collectivity, rooted simultaneously in culture and political economy. Then the economic harms encountered by homosexuals might appear economically rooted rather than culturally rooted, as they are in the account I offer here. While this bivalent analysis is certainly possible, to my mind it has serious drawbacks. Yoking gender and sexuality together too tightly, it covers over the important distinction

question of whether this view of sexuality fits the actual historical homosexual collectivities that are struggling for justice in the real world.

Sexuality in this conception is a mode of social differentiation whose roots do not lie in the political economy, as homosexuals are distributed throughout the entire class structure of capitalist society, occupy no distinctive position in the division of labour, and do not constitute an exploited class. Rather, their mode of collectivity is that of a despised sexuality, rooted in the cultural-valuational structure of society. From this perspective, the injustice they suffer is quintessentially a matter of recognition. Gays and lesbians suffer from heterosexism: the authoritative construction of norms that privilege heterosexuality. Along with this goes homophobia: the cultural devaluation of homosexuality. Their sexuality thus disparaged, homosexuals are subject to shaming, harassment, discrimination, and violence, while being denied legal rights and equal protections—all fundamentally denials of recognition. To be sure, gays and lesbians also suffer serious economic injustices; they can be summarily dismissed from work and are denied family-based social-welfare benefits. But far from being rooted directly in the economic structure, these derive instead from an unjust cultural-valuational structure.¹⁹ The remedy for the injustice, consequently, is recognition, not redistribution. Overcoming homophobia and heterosexism requires changing the cultural valuations (as well as their legal and practical

between a group that occupies a distinct position in the division of labour (and that owes its existence in large part to this fact), on the one hand, and one that occupies no such distinct position, on the other hand. I discuss this distinction below.

¹⁹ An example of an economic injustice rooted directly in the economic structure would be a division of labour that relegates homosexuals to a designated disadvantaged position and exploits them as homosexuals. To deny that this is the situation of homosexuals today is not to deny that they face economic injustices. But it is to trace these to another root. In general, I assume that recognition deficits are often (perhaps even always) accompanied by distribution deficits. But I nevertheless hold that the distribution deficits of sexuality, in the sense elaborated here, derive ultimately from the cultural structure. Later, I shall consider other sorts of cases in which collectivities suffer from recognition deficits whose roots are not (only) directly cultural in this sense. I can perhaps further clarify the point by invoking Oliver Cromwell Cox's contrast between anti-Semitism and white supremacy. Cox suggested that for the anti-Semite, the very existence of the Jew is an abomination; hence the aim is not to exploit the Jew but to eliminate him/her as such, whether by expulsion, forced conversion, or extermination. For the white supremacist, in contrast, the 'Negro' is just fine—in his/her place: as an exploitable supply of cheap, menial labour power; here the preferred aim is exploitation, not elimination. (See Cox's unjustly neglected masterwork, *Caste, Class, and Race*, New York 1970.) Contemporary homophobia appears in this respect to be more like anti-Semitism than white supremacy: it seeks to eliminate, not exploit, homosexuals. Thus, the economic disadvantages of homosexuality are derived effects of the more fundamental denial of cultural recognition. This makes it the mirror image of class, as just discussed, where the 'hidden (and not so hidden) injuries' of misrecognition are derived effects of the more fundamental injustice of exploitation. White supremacy, in contrast, as I shall suggest shortly, is 'bivalent', rooted simultaneously in political economy and culture, inflicting co-original and equally fundamental injustices of distribution and recognition. (On this last point, incidentally, I differ from Cox, who treats white supremacy as effectively reducible to class.)

expressions) that privilege heterosexuality, deny equal respect to gays and lesbians, and refuse to recognize homosexuality as a legitimate way of being sexual. It is to revalue a despised sexuality, to accord positive recognition to gay and lesbian sexual specificity.

Matters are thus fairly straightforward at the two extremes of our conceptual spectrum. When we deal with collectivities that approach the ideal type of the exploited working class, we face distributive injustices requiring redistributive remedies. When we deal with collectivities that approach the ideal type of the despised sexuality, in contrast, we face injustices of misrecognition requiring remedies of recognition. In the first case, the logic of the remedy is to put the group out of business as a group. In the second case, on the contrary, it is to valorize the group's 'groupness' by recognizing its specificity.

Matters become murkier, however, once we move away from these extremes. When we consider collectivities located in the middle of the conceptual spectrum, we encounter hybrid modes that combine features of the exploited class with features of the despised sexuality. These collectivities are 'bivalent'. They are differentiated as collectivities by virtue of *both* the political-economic structure *and* the cultural-valuational structure of society. When disadvantaged, therefore, they may suffer injustices that are traceable to both political economy and culture simultaneously. Bivalent collectivities, in sum, may suffer both socio-economic maldistribution and cultural misrecognition in forms where neither of these injustices is an indirect effect of the other, but where both are primary and co-original. In that case, neither redistributive remedies alone nor recognition remedies alone will suffice. Bivalent collectivities need both.

Both gender and 'race' are paradigmatic bivalent collectivities. Although each has peculiarities not shared by the other, both encompass political-economic dimensions and cultural-valuational dimensions. Gender and 'race', therefore, implicate both redistribution and recognition.

Gender, for example, has political-economic dimensions. It is a basic structuring principle of the political economy. On the one hand, gender structures the fundamental division between paid 'productive' labour and unpaid 'reproductive' and domestic labour, assigning women primary responsibility for the latter. On the other hand, gender also structures the division within paid labour between higher-paid, male-dominated, manufacturing and professional occupations and lower-paid, female-dominated 'pink-collar' and domestic-service occupations. The result is a political-economic structure that generates gender-specific modes of exploitation, marginalization, and deprivation. This structure constitutes gender as a political-economic differentiation endowed with certain class-like characteristics. When viewed under this aspect, gender injustice appears as a species of distributive injustice that cries out for redistributive redress. Much like class, gender justice requires transforming the political economy so as to eliminate its gender structuring. Eliminating gender-specific exploitation, marginalization, and deprivation requires abolishing the gender division of labour—both the gendered division between paid and unpaid labour and the gender division within paid

labour. The logic of the remedy is akin to the logic with respect to class: it is to put gender out of business as such. If gender were nothing but a political-economic differentiation, in sum, justice would require its abolition.

That, however, is only half the story. In fact, gender is not only a political-economic differentiation, but a cultural-valuational differentiation as well. As such, it also encompasses elements that are more like sexuality than class and bring it squarely within the problematic of recognition. Certainly, a major feature of gender injustice is androcentrism: the authoritative construction of norms that privilege traits associated with masculinity. Along with this goes cultural sexism: the pervasive devaluation and disparagement of things coded as 'feminine', paradigmatically—but not only—women.²⁰ This devaluation is expressed in a range of harms suffered by women, including sexual assault, sexual exploitation, and pervasive domestic violence; trivializing, objectifying, and demeaning stereotypical depictions in the media; harassment and disparagement in all spheres of everyday life; subjection to androcentric norms in relation to which women appear lesser or deviant and which work to disadvantage them, even in the absence of any intention to discriminate; attitudinal discrimination; exclusion or marginalization in public spheres and deliberative bodies; and denial of full legal rights and equal protections. These harms are injustices of recognition. They are relatively independent of political economy and are not merely 'superstructural'. Thus they cannot be remedied by political-economic redistribution alone but require additional independent remedies of recognition. Overcoming androcentrism and sexism requires changing the cultural valuations (as well as their legal and practical expressions) that privilege masculinity and deny equal respect to women. It requires decentring androcentric norms and revaluing a despised gender. The logic of the remedy is akin to the logic with respect to sexuality: it is to accord positive recognition to a devalued group specificity.

Gender, in sum, is a bivalent mode of collectivity. It contains a political-economic face that brings it within the ambit of redistribution. Yet it also contains a cultural-valuational face that brings it simultaneously within the ambit of recognition. Of course, the two faces are not neatly separated from one another. Rather, they intertwine to reinforce one another dialectically, as sexist and androcentric cultural norms are institutionalized in the state and the economy, while women's economic disadvantage restricts women's 'voice', impeding equal participation in the making of culture, in public spheres, and in everyday life. The result is a vicious circle of cultural and economic subordination. Redressing gender injustice, therefore, requires changing both political economy and culture.

But the bivalent character of gender is the source of a dilemma. Insofar as women suffer at least two analytically distinct kinds of injustice, they necessarily require at least two analytically distinct kinds of remedy—both redistribution and recognition. The two remedies pull in opposite

²⁰ Gender disparagement can take many forms, of course, including conservative stereotypes that appear to celebrate, rather than demean, 'femininity'.

directions, however. They are not easily pursued simultaneously. Whereas the logic of redistribution is to put gender out of business as such, the logic of recognition is to valorize gender specificity.²¹ Here, then, is the feminist version of the redistribution–recognition dilemma: how can feminists fight simultaneously to abolish gender differentiation and to valorize gender specificity?

An analogous dilemma arises in the struggle against racism. ‘Race’, like gender, is a bivalent mode of collectivity. On the one hand, it resembles class in being a structural principle of political economy. In this aspect, ‘race’ structures the capitalist division of labour. It structures the division within paid work between low-paid, low-status, menial, dirty, and domestic occupations, held disproportionately by people of colour, and higher-paid, higher-status, white-collar, professional, technical and managerial occupations, held disproportionately by ‘whites’.²² Today’s racial division of paid labour is part of the historic legacy of colonialism and slavery, which elaborated racial categorization to justify brutal new forms of appropriation and exploitation, effectively constituting ‘blacks’ as a political-economic caste. Currently, moreover, ‘race’ also structures access to official labour markets, constituting large segments of the population of colour as a ‘superfluous’, degraded subproletariat or underclass, unworthy even of exploitation and excluded from the productive system altogether. The result is a political-economic structure that generates ‘race’-specific modes of exploitation, marginalization, and deprivation. This structure constitutes ‘race’ as a political-economic differentiation endowed with certain class-like characteristics. When viewed under this aspect, racial injustice appears as a species of distributive injustice that cries out for redistributive redress. Much like class, racial justice requires transforming the political economy so as to eliminate its racialization. Eliminating ‘race’-specific exploitation, marginalization, and deprivation requires abolishing the racial division of labour—both the racial division between exploitable and superfluous labour and the racial division within paid labour. The logic of the remedy is like the logic with respect to class: it is to put ‘race’ out of business as such. If ‘race’ were nothing but a political-economic differentiation, in sum, justice would require its abolition.

²¹ This helps explain why the history of women’s movements records a pattern of oscillation between integrationist equal-rights feminisms and ‘difference’-oriented ‘social’ and ‘cultural’ feminisms. It would be useful to specify the precise temporal logic that leads bivalent collectivities to shift their principal focus back and forth between redistribution and recognition. For a first attempt, see my ‘Rethinking Difference’ in *Justice Interruptus*.

²² In addition, ‘race’ is implicitly implicated in the gender division between paid and unpaid labour. That division relies on a normative contrast between a domestic sphere and a sphere of paid work, associated with women and men respectively. Yet the division in the United States (and elsewhere) has always also been racialized in that domesticity has been implicitly a ‘white’ prerogative. African-Americans especially were never permitted the privilege of domesticity either as a (male) private ‘haven’ or a (female) primary or exclusive focus on nurturing one’s own kin. See Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family from Slavery to the Present*, New York 1985; and Evelyn Nakano Glenn, ‘From Servitude to Service Work: Historical Continuities in the Racial Division of Reproductive Labor’: *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol. 18, no. 1 (autumn 1992).

However, 'race', like gender, is not only political-economic. It also has cultural-valuational dimensions, which bring it into the universe of recognition. Thus, 'race' too encompasses elements that are more like sexuality than class. A major aspect of racism is Eurocentrism: the authoritative construction of norms that privilege traits associated with 'whiteness'. Along with this goes cultural racism: the pervasive devaluation and disparagement²³ of things coded as 'black', 'brown', and 'yellow', paradigmatically—but not only—people of colour.²⁴ This depreciation is expressed in a range of harms suffered by people of colour, including demeaning stereotypical depictions in the media as criminal, bestial, primitive, stupid, and so on; violence, harassment, and dissing in all spheres of everyday life; subjection to Eurocentric norms in relation to which people of colour appear lesser or deviant and which work to disadvantage them, even in the absence of any intention to discriminate; attitudinal discrimination; exclusion from and/or marginalization in public spheres and deliberative bodies; and denial of full legal rights and equal protections. As in the case of gender, these harms are injustices of recognition. Thus the logic of their remedy, too, is to accord positive recognition to devalued group specificity.

'Race', too, therefore, is a bivalent mode of collectivity with both a political-economic and a cultural-valuational, face. Its two faces intertwine to reinforce one another dialectically, as racist and Eurocentric cultural norms are institutionalized in the state and the economy, while the economic disadvantage suffered by people of colour restricts their 'voice'. Redressing racial injustice, therefore, requires changing both political economy and culture. And as with gender, the bivalent character of 'race' is the source of a dilemma. Insofar as people of colour suffer at least two analytically distinct kinds of injustice, they necessarily require at least two analytically distinct kinds of remedy, which are not easily pursued simultaneously. Whereas the logic of redistribution is to put 'race' out of business as such, the logic of recognition is to valorize group specificity.²⁵ Here, then, is the anti-racist version of the redistribution–recognition dilemma: How can anti-racists fight simultaneously to abolish 'race' and to valorize racialized group specificity?

Both gender and 'race', in sum, are dilemmatic modes of collectivity. Unlike class, which occupies one end of the conceptual spectrum, and unlike sexuality, which occupies the other, gender and 'race' are bivalent, implicated simultaneously in both the politics of redistribution and the

²³ In a previous draft of this paper I used the term 'denigration'. The ironic consequence was that I unintentionally perpetrated the exact sort of harm I aimed to criticize—in the very act of describing it. 'Denigration,' from the Latin *nigrare* (to blacken), figures disparagement as blackening, a racist valuation. I am grateful to the Saint Louis University student who called my attention to this point.

²⁴ Racial disparagement can take many forms, of course, ranging from the stereotypical depiction of African-Americans as intellectually inferior, but musically and athletically gifted, to the stereotypical depiction of Asian-Americans as a 'model minority'.

²⁵ This helps explain why the history of black liberation struggle in the United States records a pattern of oscillation between integration and separatism (or black nationalism). As with gender, it would be useful to specify the dynamics of these alternations.

politics of recognition. Both, consequently, face the redistribution–recognition dilemma. Feminists must pursue political-economic remedies that would undermine gender differentiation, while also pursuing cultural-valuational remedies that valorize the specificity of a despised collectivity. Anti-racists, likewise, must pursue political-economic remedies that would undermine ‘racial’ differentiation, while also pursuing cultural-valuational remedies that valorize the specificity of despised collectivities. How can they do both things at once?

III. Affirmation or Transformation? Revisiting the Question of Remedy

So far I have posed the redistribution–recognition dilemma in a form that appears quite intractable. I have assumed that redistributive remedies for political-economic injustice always de-differentiate social groups. Likewise, I have assumed that recognition remedies for cultural-valuational injustice always enhance social group differentiation. Given these assumptions, it is difficult to see how feminists and anti-racists can pursue redistribution and recognition simultaneously.

Now, however, I want to complicate these assumptions. In this section, I shall examine alternative conceptions of redistribution, on the one hand, and alternative conceptions of recognition, on the other. My aim is to distinguish two broad approaches to remedying injustice that cut across the redistribution–recognition divide. I shall call them ‘affirmation’ and ‘transformation’ respectively. After sketching each of them generically, I shall show how each operates in regard to both redistribution and recognition. On this basis, finally, I shall reformulate the redistribution–recognition dilemma in a form that is more amenable to resolution.

Let me begin by briefly distinguishing affirmation and transformation. By affirmative remedies for injustice I mean remedies aimed at correcting inequitable outcomes of social arrangements without disturbing the underlying framework that generates them. By transformative remedies, in contrast, I mean remedies aimed at correcting inequitable outcomes precisely by restructuring the underlying generative framework. The nub of the contrast is end-state outcomes versus the processes that produce them. It is *not* gradual versus apocalyptic change.

This distinction can be applied, first of all, to remedies for cultural injustice. Affirmative remedies for such injustices are currently associated with mainstream multiculturalism.²⁶ This proposes to redress disrespect by revaluing unjustly devalued group identities, while leaving intact both the contents of those identities and the group differentiations that underlie them. Transformative remedies, by contrast, are currently

²⁶ Not all versions of multiculturalism fit the model I describe here. The latter is an ideal-typical reconstruction of what I take to be the majority understanding of multiculturalism. It is also mainstream in the sense of being the version that is usually debated in mainstream public spheres. Other versions are discussed in Linda Nicholson, ‘To Be or Not To Be: Charles Taylor on The Politics of Recognition’, *Constellations* (forthcoming) and in Michael Warner, et al, ‘Critical Multiculturalism’, *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 18, no. 3 (spring 1992).

associated with deconstruction. They would redress disrespect by transforming the underlying cultural-valuational structure. By destabilizing existing group identities and differentiations, these remedies would not only raise the self-esteem of members of currently disrespected groups. They would change *everyone's* sense of belonging, affiliation, and self.

To illustrate the distinction, let us consider, once again, the case of the despised sexuality.²⁷ Affirmative remedies for homophobia and heterosexism are currently associated with gay-identity politics, which aims to revalue gay and lesbian Identity.²⁸ Transformative remedies, in contrast, include the approach of 'queer theory', which would deconstruct the homo-hetero dichotomy. Gay-identity politics treats homosexuality as a substantive, cultural, identificatory positivity, much like an ethnicity.²⁹ This positivity is assumed to subsist in and of itself and to need only additional recognition. 'Queer theory', in contrast, treats homosexuality as the constructed and devalued correlate of heterosexuality; both are reifications of sexual ambiguity and are co-defined only in virtue of one another.³⁰ The transformative aim is not to solidify a gay identity, but to deconstruct the homo-hetero dichotomy so as to destabilize all fixed sexual identities. The point is not to dissolve all sexual difference in a single, universal human identity; it is rather to sustain a sexual field of multiple, debinarized, fluid, ever-shifting differences.

Both these approaches have considerable interest as remedies for misrecognition. But there is one crucial difference between them. Whereas gay-identity politics tends to enhance existing sexual group differentiation, queer-theory politics tends to destabilize it—at least ostensibly and in the long run.³¹ The point holds for recognition remedies

²⁷ Recall that sexuality is here assumed to be a collectivity rooted wholly in the cultural-valuational structure of society; thus, the issues here are unclouded by issues of political-economic structure, and the need is for recognition, not redistribution.

²⁸ An alternative affirmative approach is gay-rights humanism, which would privatize existing sexualities. For reasons of space, I shall not discuss it here.

²⁹ For a critical discussion of the tendency in gay-identity politics to tacitly cast sexuality in the mold of ethnicity, see Steven Epstein, 'Gay Politics, Ethnic Identity: The Limits of Social Constructionism', *Socialist Review* no. 93/94 (May-August 1987).

³⁰ The technical term for this in Jacques Derrida's deconstructive philosophy is 'supplement'.

³¹ Despite its professed long-term deconstructive goal, queer theory's practical effects may be more ambiguous. Like gay-identity politics, it too seems likely to promote group solidarity in the here and now, even as it sets its sights on the promised land of deconstruction. Perhaps, then, we should distinguish what I below call its 'official recognition commitment' of group de-differentiation from its 'practical recognition effect' of (transitional) group solidarity and even group solidification. The queer-theory recognition strategy thus contains an internal tension: in order eventually to destabilize the homo-hetero dichotomy, it must first mobilize 'queers'. Whether this tension becomes fruitful or debilitating depends on factors too complex to discuss here. In either case, however, the recognition politics of queer theory remains distinct from that of gay identity. Whereas gay-identity politics simply and straightforwardly underlines group differentiation, queer theory does so only indirectly, in the undertow of its

more generally. Whereas affirmative recognition remedies tend to promote existing group differentiations, transformative recognition remedies tend, in the long run, to destabilize them so as to make room for future regroupments. I shall return to this point shortly.

Analogous distinctions hold for the remedies for economic injustice. Affirmative remedies for such injustices have been associated historically with the liberal welfare state.³² They seek to redress end-state maldistribution, while leaving intact much of the underlying political-economic structure. Thus they would increase the consumption share of economically disadvantaged groups, without otherwise restructuring the system of production. Transformative remedies, in contrast, have been historically associated with socialism. They would redress unjust distribution by transforming the underlying political-economic structure. By restructuring the relations of production, these remedies would not only alter the end-state distribution of consumption shares; they would also change the social division of labour and thus the conditions of existence for everyone.³³

Let us consider, once again, the case of the exploited class.³⁴ Affirmative redistributive remedies for class injustices typically include income

principal de-differentiating thrust. Accordingly, the two approaches construct qualitatively different kinds of groups. Whereas gay-identity politics mobilizes self-identified homosexuals qua homosexuals to vindicate a putatively determinate sexuality, queer theory mobilizes 'queers' to demand liberation from determinate sexual identity. 'Queers', of course, are not an identity group in the same sense as gays; they are better understood as an anti-identity group, one that can encompass the entire spectrum of sexual behaviours, from gay to straight to bi. (For a hilarious—and insightful—account of the difference, as well as for a sophisticated rendition of queer politics, see Lisa Duggan, 'Queering the State', *Social Text*, no. 39, Summer 1994.) Complications aside, then, we can and should distinguish the (directly) differentiating effects of affirmative gay recognition from the (more) de-differentiating (albeit complex) effects of transformative queer recognition.

³² By 'liberal welfare state', I mean the sort of regime established in the US in the aftermath of the New Deal. It has been usefully distinguished from the social-democratic welfare state and the conservative-corporatist welfare state by Gøsta Esping-Andersen in *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, Princeton 1990.

³³ Today, of course, many specific features of socialism of the 'really existing' variety appear problematic. Virtually no one continues to defend a pure 'command' economy in which there is little place for markets. Nor is there agreement concerning the place and extent of public ownership in a democratic socialist society. For my purposes here, however, it is not necessary to assign a precise content to the socialist idea. It is sufficient, rather, to invoke the general conception of redressing distributive injustice by deep political-economic restructuring, as opposed to surface reallocations. In this light, incidentally, social democracy appears as a hybrid case that combines affirmative and transformative remedies; it can also be seen as a 'middle position', which involves a moderate extent of economic restructuring, more than in the liberal welfare state but less than in socialism.

³⁴ Recall that class, in the sense defined above, is a collectivity wholly rooted in the political-economic structure of society; the issues here are thus unclouded by issues of cultural-valuational structure; and the remedies required are those of redistribution, not recognition.

transfers of two distinct kinds: social-insurance programmes share some of the costs of social reproduction for the stably employed, the so-called 'primary' sectors of the working class; public-assistance programmes provide means-tested, 'targeted' aid to the 'reserve army' of the unemployed and underemployed. Far from abolishing class differentiation per se, these affirmative remedies support it and shape it. Their general effect is to shift attention from the class division between workers and capitalists to the division between employed and nonemployed fractions of the working class. Public-assistance programmes 'target' the poor, not only for aid but for hostility. Such remedies, to be sure, provide needed material aid. But they also create strongly cathected, antagonistic group differentiations.

The logic here applies to affirmative redistribution in general. Although this approach aims to redress economic injustice, it leaves intact the deep structures that generate class disadvantage. Thus it must make surface reallocations time and again. The result is to mark the most disadvantaged class as inherently deficient and insatiable, as always needing more and more. In time such a class can even come to appear privileged, the recipient of special treatment and undeserved largesse. An approach aimed at redressing injustices of distribution can thus end up creating injustices of recognition.

In a sense, this approach is self-contradictory. Affirmative redistribution generally presupposes a universalist conception of recognition, the equal moral worth of persons. Let us call this its 'official recognition commitment'. Yet the practice of affirmative redistribution, as iterated over time, tends to set in motion a second—stigmatizing—recognition dynamic, which contradicts universalism. This second dynamic can be understood as the 'practical recognition-effect' of affirmative redistribution.³⁵ It conflicts with its official recognition commitment.³⁶

Now contrast this logic with transformative remedies for distributive injustices of class. Transformative remedies typically combine universalist social-welfare programmes, steeply progressive taxation, macro-economic policies aimed at creating full employment, a large non-market public sector, significant public and/or collective ownership, and democratic decision-making about basic socioeconomic priorities. They try to assure access to employment for all, while also tending to de-link basic consumption shares from employment. Hence their tendency is to undermine class differentiation. Transformative remedies reduce social inequality without, however, creating stigmatized classes of vulnerable people perceived as beneficiaries of special largesse.³⁷ They tend therefore

³⁵ In some contexts, such as the United States today, the practical recognition-effect of affirmative redistribution can utterly swamp its official recognition commitment.

³⁶ My terminology here is inspired by Pierre Bourdieu's distinction, in *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, between 'official kinship' and 'practical kinship'.

³⁷ I have deliberately sketched a picture that is ambiguous between socialism and robust social democracy. The classic account of the latter remains T. H. Marshall's 'Citizenship and Social Class', in *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development: Essays by T. H. Marshall*, ed. Martin Lipset, Chicago 1964. There Marshall argues that a universalist social-democratic regime of 'social citizenship' undermines class differentiation, even in the absence of full-scale socialism.

to promote reciprocity and solidarity in the relations of recognition. Thus an approach aimed at redressing injustices of distribution can help redress (some) injustices of recognition as well.³⁸

This approach is self-consistent. Like affirmative redistribution, transformative redistribution generally presupposes a universalist conception of recognition, the equal moral worth of persons. Unlike affirmative redistribution, however, its practice tends not to undermine this conception. Thus, the two approaches generate different logics of group differentiation. Whereas affirmative remedies can have the perverse effect of promoting class differentiation, transformative remedies tend to blur it. In addition, the two approaches generate different subliminal dynamics of recognition. Affirmative redistribution can stigmatize the disadvantaged, adding the insult of misrecognition to the injury of deprivation. Transformative redistribution, in contrast, can promote solidarity, helping to redress some forms of misrecognition.

What, then, should we conclude from this discussion? In this section, we have considered only the 'pure' ideal-typical cases at the two extremes of the conceptual spectrum. We have contrasted the divergent effects of affirmative and transformative remedies for the economically rooted distributive injustices of class, on the one hand, and for the culturally rooted recognition injustices of sexuality, on the other. We saw that affirmative remedies tend generally to promote group differentiation, while transformative remedies tend to destabilize or blur it. We also saw that affirmative redistribution remedies can generate a backlash of misrecognition, while transformative redistribution remedies can help redress some forms of misrecognition.

All this suggests a way of reformulating the redistribution–recognition dilemma. We might ask: for groups who are subject to injustices of both types, what combinations of remedies work best to minimize, if not altogether to eliminate, the mutual interferences that can arise when both redistribution and recognition are pursued simultaneously?

IV. Finessing the Dilemma: Revisiting Gender and 'Race'

Imagine a four-celled matrix. The horizontal axis comprises the two general kinds of remedy we have just examined, namely, affirmation and transformation. The vertical axis comprises the two aspects of justice we have been considering, namely, redistribution and recognition. On this matrix we can locate the four political orientations just discussed. In the first cell, where redistribution and affirmation intersect, is the project of the liberal welfare state; centered on surface reallocations of distributive shares among existing groups, it tends to support group differentiation; it can also generate backlash misrecognition. In the second cell, where redistribution and transformation intersect, is the project of socialism;

³⁸ To be more precise: transformative redistribution can help redress those forms of misrecognition that derive from the political-economic structure. Redressing misrecognition rooted in the cultural structure, in contrast, requires additional independent recognition remedies.

	Affirmation	Transformation
Redistribution	<i>the liberal welfare state</i> surface reallocations of existing goods to existing groups; supports group differentiation; can generate misrecognition	<i>socialism</i> deep restructuring of relations of production; blurs group differentiation; can help remedy some forms of misrecognition
Recognition	<i>mainstream multiculturalism</i> surface reallocations of respect to existing identities of existing groups; supports group differentiation	<i>deconstruction</i> deep restructuring of relations of recognition; blurs group differentiation

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aimed at deep restructuring of the relations of production, it tends to blur group differentiation; it can also help redress some forms of misrecognition. In the third cell, where recognition and affirmation intersect, is the project of mainstream multiculturalism; focused on surface reallocations of respect among existing groups, it tends to support group differentiation. In the fourth cell, where recognition and transformation intersect, is the project of deconstruction; aimed at deep restructuring of the relations of recognition, it tends to destabilize group differentiations.

This matrix casts mainstream multiculturalism as the cultural analogue of the liberal welfare state, while casting deconstruction as the cultural analogue of socialism. It thereby it allows us to make some preliminary assessments of the mutual compatibility of various remedial strategies. We can gauge the extent to which pairs of remedies would work at cross-purposes with one another if they were pursued simultaneously. We can identify pairs that seem to land us squarely on the horns of the redistribution-recognition dilemma. We can also identify pairs that hold out the promise of enabling us to finesse it.

Prima facie at least, two pairs of remedies seem especially unpromising. The affirmative redistribution politics of the liberal welfare state seems at

odds with the transformative recognition politics of deconstruction; whereas the first tends to promote group differentiation, the second tends rather to destabilize it. Similarly, the transformative redistribution politics of socialism seems at odds with the affirmative recognition politics of mainstream multiculturalism; whereas the first tends to undermine group differentiation, the second tends rather to promote it.

Conversely, two pairs of remedies seem comparatively promising. The affirmative redistribution politics of the liberal welfare state seems compatible with the affirmative recognition politics of mainstream multiculturalism; both tend to promote group differentiation. Similarly, the transformative redistribution politics of socialism seems compatible with the transformative recognition politics of deconstruction; both tend to undermine existing group differentiations.

To test these hypotheses, let us revisit gender and 'race'. Recall that these are bivalent differentiations, axes of both economic and cultural injustice. Thus people subordinated by gender and/or 'race' need both redistribution and recognition. They are the paradigmatic subjects of the redistribution–recognition dilemma. What happens in their cases, then, when various pairs of injustice remedies are pursued simultaneously? Are there pairs of remedies that permit feminists and anti-racists to finesse, if not wholly to dispel, the redistribution–recognition dilemma?

Consider, first, the case of gender.³⁹ Recall that redressing gender injustice requires changing both political economy and culture, so as to undo the vicious circle of economic and cultural subordination. As we saw, the changes in question can take either of two forms, affirmation or transformation.⁴⁰ Let us consider, first, the *prima facie* promising case in

³⁹ Recall that gender, qua political-economic differentiation, structures the division of labour in ways that give rise to gender-specific forms of exploitation, marginalization, and deprivation. Recall, moreover, that qua cultural-valuational differentiation, gender also structures the relations of recognition in ways that give rise to androcentrism and cultural sexism. Recall, too, that for gender, as for all bivalent group differentiations, economic injustices and cultural injustices are not neatly separated from one another; rather they intertwine to reinforce one another dialectically, as sexist and androcentric cultural norms are institutionalized in the economy, while economic disadvantage impedes equal participation in the making of culture, both in everyday life and in public spheres.

⁴⁰ I shall leave aside the *prima facie* unpromising cases. Let me simply stipulate that a cultural-feminist recognition politics aimed at revaluing femininity is hard to combine with a socialist-feminist redistributive politics aimed at degendering the political economy. The incompatibility is overt when we treat the recognition of 'women's difference' as a long-term feminist goal. Of course, some feminists conceive the struggle for such recognition not as an end in itself but as a stage in a process they envision as leading eventually to degenderization. Here, perhaps, there is no formal contradiction with socialism. At the same time, however, there remains a practical contradiction, or at least a practical difficulty: can a stress on women's difference in the here and now really end up dissolving gender difference in the by and by? The converse argument holds for the case of the liberal-feminist welfare state plus deconstructive feminism. Affirmative action for women is usually seen as a transitional remedy aimed at achieving the long-term goal of 'a sex-blind society'. Here, again, there is perhaps no formal contradiction with deconstruction. But there remains nevertheless a practical contradiction, or at

which affirmative redistribution is combined with affirmative recognition. As the name suggests, affirmative redistribution to redress gender injustice in the economy includes affirmative action, the effort to assure women their fair share of existing jobs and educational places, while leaving unchanged the nature and number of those jobs and places. Affirmative recognition to redress gender injustice in the culture includes cultural feminism, the effort to assure women respect by revaluing femininity, while leaving unchanged the binary gender code that gives the latter its sense. Thus, the scenario in question combines the socioeconomic politics of liberal feminism with the cultural politics of cultural feminism. Does this combination really finesse the redistribution–recognition dilemma?

Despite its initial appearance of promise, this scenario is problematic. Affirmative redistribution fails to engage the deep level at which the political economy is gendered. Aimed primarily at combating attitudinal discrimination, it does not attack the gendered division of paid and unpaid labour, nor the gendered division of masculine and feminine occupations within paid labour. Leaving intact the deep structures that generate gender disadvantage, it must make surface reallocations again and again. The result is not only to underline gender differentiation. It is also to mark women as deficient and insatiable, as always needing more and more. In time women can even come to appear privileged, recipients of special treatment and undeserved largesse. Thus an approach aimed at redressing injustices of distribution can end up fuelling backlash injustices of recognition.

This problem is exacerbated when we add the affirmative recognition strategy of cultural feminism. That approach insistently calls attention to, if it does not performatively create, women's putative cultural specificity or difference. In some contexts, such an approach can make progress toward decentring androcentric norms. In this context, however, it is more likely to have the effect of pouring oil onto the flames of resentment against affirmative action. Read through that lens, the cultural politics of affirming women's difference appears as an affront to the liberal welfare state's official commitment to the equal moral worth of persons.

The other route with a *prima facie* promise is that which combines transformative redistribution with transformative recognition. Transformative redistribution to redress gender injustice in the economy consists in some form of socialist feminism or feminist social democracy. And transformative recognition to redress gender injustice in the culture consists in feminist deconstruction aimed at dismantling androcentrism by destabilizing gender dichotomies. Thus the scenario in question combines the socioeconomic politics of socialist feminism with the cultural politics of deconstructive feminism. Does this combination really finesse the redistribution–recognition dilemma?

This scenario is far less problematic. The long-term goal of deconstructive feminism is a culture in which hierarchical gender dichotomies are

least a practical difficulty: can liberal-feminist affirmative action in the here and now really help lead us to the deconstruction of gender in the by and by?

replaced by networks of multiple intersecting differences that are demassified and shifting. This goal is consistent with transformative socialist-feminist redistribution. Deconstruction opposes the sort of sedimentation or congealing of gender difference that occurs in an unjustly gendered political economy. Its utopian image of a culture in which ever new constructions of identity and difference are freely elaborated and then swiftly deconstructed is only possible, after all, on the basis of rough social equality.

As a transitional strategy, moreover, this combination avoids fanning the flames of resentment.⁴¹ If it has a drawback, it is rather that both deconstructive-feminist cultural politics and socialist-feminist economic politics are far removed from the immediate interests and identities of most women, as these are currently culturally constructed.

Analogous results arise for 'race', where the changes can again take either of two forms, affirmation or transformation.⁴² In the first *prima facie* promising case, affirmative action is paired with affirmative recognition. Affirmative redistribution to redress racial injustice in the economy includes affirmative action, the effort to assure people of colour their fair share of existing jobs and educational places, while leaving unchanged the nature and number of those jobs and places. And affirmative recognition to redress racial injustice in the culture includes cultural nationalism, the effort to assure people of colour respect by revaluing 'blackness', while leaving unchanged the binary black-white code that gives the latter its sense. The scenario in question thus combines the socioeconomic politics of liberal anti-racism with the cultural politics of black nationalism or black power. Does this combination really finesse the redistribution-recognition dilemma?

Such a scenario is again problematic. As in the case of gender, here affirmative redistribution fails to engage the deep level at which the political economy is racialized. It does not attack the racialized division of exploitable and surplus labour, nor the racialized division of menial and non-menial occupations within paid labour. Leaving intact the deep structures that generate racial disadvantage, it must make surface reallocations again and again. The result is not only to underline racial differentiation. It is also to mark people of colour as deficient and insatiable, as always needing more and more. Thus they too can be cast as privileged recipients of special treatment. The problem is exacerbated when we add the affirmative recognition strategy of cultural nationalism. In some contexts, such an approach can make progress toward decentring

⁴¹ Here I am assuming that the internal complexities of transformative recognition remedies, as discussed in note 31 above, do not generate perverse effects. If, however, the practical recognition effect of deconstructive feminist cultural politics is strongly gender-differentiating, despite the latter's official recognition commitment to gender de-differentiation, perverse effects could indeed arise. In that case, there could be interferences between socialist-feminist redistribution and deconstructive-feminist recognition. But these would probably be less debilitating than those associated with the other scenarios examined here.

⁴² The same can be said about 'race' here as about gender in notes 39 and 40.

Eurocentric norms, but in this context the cultural politics of affirming black difference equally appears as an affront to the liberal welfare state. Fuelling the resentment against affirmative action, it can elicit intense backlash misrecognition.

In the alternative route, transformative redistribution is combined with transformative recognition. Transformative redistribution to redress racial injustice in the economy consists in some form of anti-racist democratic socialism or anti-racist social democracy. And transformative recognition to redress racial injustice in the culture consists in anti-racist deconstruction aimed at dismantling Eurocentrism by destabilizing racial dichotomies. Thus, the scenario in question combines the socioeconomic politics of socialist anti-racism with the cultural politics of deconstructive anti-racism or critical 'race' theory. As with the analogous approach to gender, this scenario is far less problematic. The long-term goal of deconstructive anti-racism is a culture in which hierarchical racial dichotomies are replaced by demassified and shifting networks of multiple intersecting differences. This goal, once again, is consistent with transformative socialist redistribution. Even as a transitional strategy, this combination avoids fanning the flames of resentment.⁴³ Its principal drawback, again, is that both deconstructive–anti-racist cultural politics and socialist–anti-racist economic politics are far removed from the immediate interests and identities of most people of colour, as these are currently culturally constructed.⁴⁴

What, then, should we conclude from this discussion? For both gender and 'race', the scenario that best finesses the redistribution–recognition dilemma is socialism in the economy plus deconstruction in the culture.⁴⁵ But for this scenario to be psychologically and politically feasible requires that people be weaned from their attachment to current cultural constructions of their interests and identities.⁴⁶

⁴³ See note 31 above on the possible perverse effects of transformative recognition remedies.

⁴⁴ Ted Koditschek (personal communication) has suggested to me that this scenario may have another serious drawback: 'The deconstructive option may be less available to African-Americans in the current situation. Where the structural exclusion of [many] black people from full economic citizenship pushes "race" more and more into the forefront as a cultural category through which one is attacked, self-respecting people cannot help but aggressively affirm and embrace it as a source of pride.' Koditschek goes on to suggest that Jews, in contrast, 'have much more elbow room for negotiating a healthier balance between ethnic affirmation, self-criticism, and cosmopolitan universalism—not because we are better deconstructionists (or more inherently disposed toward socialism) but because we have more space to make these moves'.

⁴⁵ Whether this conclusion holds as well for nationality and ethnicity remains a question. Certainly bivalent collectivities of indigenous peoples do not seek to put themselves out of business as groups.

⁴⁶ This has always been the problem with socialism. Although cognitively compelling, it is experientially remote. The addition of deconstruction seems to exacerbate the problem. It could turn out to be too negative and reactive, i.e. too *deconstructive*, to inspire struggles on behalf of subordinated collectivities attached to their existing identities.

V. Conclusion

The redistribution–recognition dilemma is real. There is no neat theoretical move by which it can be wholly dissolved or resolved. The best we can do is try to soften the dilemma by finding approaches that minimize conflicts between redistribution and recognition in cases where both must be pursued simultaneously.

I have argued here that socialist economics combined with deconstructive cultural politics works best to finesse the dilemma for the bivalent collectivities of gender and ‘race’—at least when they are considered separately. The next step would be to show that this combination also works for our larger sociocultural configuration. After all, gender and ‘race’ are not neatly cordoned off from one another. Nor are they neatly cordoned off from sexuality and class. Rather, all these axes of injustice intersect one another in ways that affect everyone’s interests and identities. No one is a member of only one such collectivity. And people who are subordinated along one axis of social division may well be dominant along another.⁴⁷

The task then is to figure out how to finesse the redistribution–recognition dilemma when we situate the problem in this larger field of multiple, intersecting struggles against multiple, intersecting injustices. Although I cannot make the full argument task here, I will venture three reasons for expecting that the combination of socialism and deconstruction will again prove superior to the other alternatives.

First, the arguments pursued here for gender and ‘race’ hold for all bivalent collectivities. Thus, insofar as real-world collectivities mobilized under the banners of sexuality and class turn out to be more bivalent than the ideal-typical constructs posited above, they too should prefer socialism plus deconstruction. And that doubly transformative approach should become the orientation of choice for a broad range of disadvantaged groups.

Second, the redistribution–recognition dilemma does not only arise endogenously, as it were, within a single bivalent collectivity. It also

⁴⁷ Much recent work has been devoted to the ‘intersection’ of the various axes of subordination that I have treated separately in this essay for heuristic purposes. A lot of this work concerns the dimension of recognition; it aims to demonstrate that various collective identifications and identity categories have been mutually co-constituted or co-constructed. Joan Scott, for example, has argued (in *Gender and the Politics of History*) that French working-class identities have been discursively constructed through gender-coded symbolization; and David R. Roediger has argued (in *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*, Verso, London 1991) that US working-class identities have been racially coded. Meanwhile, many feminists of colour have argued both that gender identities have been racially coded and that racialized identities have been gender-coded. I myself have argued, with Linda Gordon, that gender, ‘race’, and class ideologies have intersected to construct current US understandings of ‘welfare dependency’ and ‘the underclass’. (See Fraser and Gordon, ‘A Genealogy of “Dependency”: Tracing a Keyword of the U.S. Welfare State’, *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol. 19, no. 2, winter 1994.)

arises exogenously, so to speak, across intersecting collectivities. Thus, anyone who is both gay and working-class will face a version of the dilemma, regardless of whether or not we interpret sexuality and class as bivalent. And anyone who is also female and black will encounter it in a multilayered and acute form. In general, then, as soon as we acknowledge that axes of injustice cut across one another, we must acknowledge cross-cutting forms of the redistribution–recognition dilemma. And these forms are, if anything, even more resistant to resolution by combinations of affirmative remedies than the forms we considered above. For affirmative remedies work additively and are often at cross purposes with one another. Thus, the intersection of class, ‘race’, gender, and sexuality intensifies the need for transformative solutions, making the combination of socialism and deconstruction more attractive still.

Third, that combination best promotes the task of coalition building. This task is especially pressing today, given the multiplication of social antagonisms, the fissuring of social movements, and the growing appeal of the Right in the United States. In this context, the project of transforming the deep structures of both political economy and culture appears to be the one over-arching programmatic orientation capable of doing justice to *all* current struggles against injustice. It alone does not assume a zero-sum game.

If that is right, then, we can begin to see how badly off track is the current US political scene. We are currently stuck in the vicious circles of mutually reinforcing cultural and economic subordination. Our best efforts to redress these injustices via the combination of the liberal welfare state plus mainstream multiculturalism are generating perverse effects. Only by looking to alternative conceptions of redistribution and recognition can we meet the requirements of justice for all.

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