

# I and “every-one”

—On the Concept of Ethical Norms and Linguistic Activities  
in Plural Societies—

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### 1. Recognition and Order

#### 1.1 Hobbesian Problem of Order and Generality

Despite being a much-debated concept, the “Hobbesian problem of order,” as proposed by Talcott Parsons, remains significant, often considered “the most fundamental empirical difficulty of utilitarian thought” (Parsons 1968; 91).

What Parsons questions is how “modern people” (as defined by Thomas Hobbes in the 17th century) can possibly create social order from their state of nature (i.e., how social order can be formed among rational human beings who pursue only their own benefits in utilitarian manners). In capitalistic societies, a certain rational form of action based on an axis of aims and means is inevitable. The problem is, however, that such a rational form of action is subject to produce only the independence of each person’s aim, failing to derive any normative order among them. Thus, the solution for the “Hobbesian problem of order” is impossible to find on a utilitarian basis; rather, it depends on “either recourse to a radical positivistic expedient, or a breakdown of the whole positivistic framework” (Parsons 1968; 93).

What distinguishes Hobbes’ theory from other thinkers at his time is its lack of normative thinking so that it stems from the reality of modern people and the ultimate conditions of their social life, rather than the grand, universal purpose of mankind. For Hobbes, modern people are the ones who deny hierarchical, static order prearranged by God or nature; they are the ones who create

rational, dynamic order from chaos and control the world yielded by their own standards. Humans are simply servants of their passions, which may involve means or ways to achieve one's aims but never the aims themselves. Since "good" is what passion desires, each individual seeks for his or her own good with different tempers, different customs, and different doctrines of mean; however, Hobbes stated that the "good of the same man even differs in different time" (Hobbes 1996; 110). The measure of good and evil, or appetites and aversions, is determined "with relation to the person that useth them," so that there would never be "any common rule of good and evil, to be taken from the nature of the objects themselves" (Hobbes 1996; 39). Each individual's struggle to assure his or her own continual progress of desire (or felicity) leads them to exist in independent relationships with others.

According to Hobbes, however, humans are equal as to the faculties of body and mind, which consequently lets them see each other as enemies against self-preservation:

From this equality of ability, ariseth equality hope in the attaining of our Ends. And therefore if any two men desire the same thing, which nevertheless they cannot both enjoy, they become enemies; and in the way to their End, (which is principally their owne conservation, and sometimes their delectation only,) endeavor to destroy, or subdue one another..... Againe, men have no pleasure, (but on the contrary a great deale of grieffe) in keeping company, where they is no power able to over-awe them all. For every man looketh that his companion should value him, at the same rate he sets upon himselfe: And upon all signes of contempt, or undervaluing, naturally endeavours, as far as he dares (which amongst them that have no common power to keep them in quiet, is far enough to make them destroy each other,) to extort a greater value from his contemnners, by dommage; and from others, by the example. (Hobbes 1997; 170-171; emphasis added)

What is remarkable in the above is how Hobbes accurately distinguishes the struggle for the *distribution* of values from the struggle for the *recognition* of values. In a situation where no absolute power successfully awes humans while they take action to obtain security (driven by diffidence to others), they also take action to obtain meaning for their lives (driven by a desire for greater evaluation). This clarifies that even though Hobbes maintains that competition, diffidence, and glory are the three fundamental causes of struggle among humans, strictly speaking, competition and diffidence are the main causes of struggle for the distribution of values and, similarly, glory is the cause of struggle for the recognition of values.

Although Hobbes was well aware of these differential characteristics, reflecting upon his actual experience of civil war, he assumed that the ultimate desire of every single person is the same and indisputable: a non-violent death. For this reason, he recognized the struggle for the distribution of values as the imminent, primary issue, and acknowledged the struggle for the recognition of values as one of the means to achieving it.

What, then, is the struggle for the distribution of values? To proceed with the discussion, I will compare the Hobbesian problem with the Prisoner's Dilemma, referring to John Watkins' argument in Imperfect Rationality.

The Prisoner's Dilemma begins with the following assumptions:

- Suspect A and suspect B are arrested for a crime they committed

- Each one is interrogated separately in different detention rooms (i.e., they cannot communicate with one another).
- They can either keep silent (co-operation) or confess complicity in the crime in an effort to mitigate punishment (defect).

If both suspects remain silent, the case will not be prosecuted and they will each be sentenced to one year in prison. If A confesses complicity and B keeps silent, A will be released and B will be sentenced to 20 years in prison. Likewise, if B confesses complicity and A keeps silent, B will be released and A will be sentenced to 20 years in prison. If both A and B confess complicity, both will be sentenced to 10 years in prison. Here, they're confronted with a critical dilemma: although the biggest gain (release) for either of them is to both confess complicity, the second biggest gain is for both of them to keep silent; however, the possibility exists that the other person may decide to confess complicity, in which case the worst scenario will be brought to the other. Therefore, both suspects are led into the so-called Nash equilibrium, which lets them despair the potential biggest individual gain and confess complicity to avoid the worst scenario.

Transposing the Prison's Dilemma into the state of nature, Watkins exemplifies two Hobbesian people as follows: Alf and Bert presumably spend their days looking for acorns, and both of them carry a murderous weapon. One day, they run into each other in the deep woods and become entangled in a bush with no way to escape. Alf ardently suggests that they submit to “some common power who will protect them from each other” (Watkins 1970; 202). Bert agrees, and proposes that they throw their weapons into the woods at the same time on the count of ten. A single question, then, occupies each of their minds: Should I or should I not throw away my weapon on the count of ten? Both Alf and Bert have a choice to throw away their weapons and share acorns, but the alternative choice to keep their weapons, kill the other, and monopolize all acorns remains. Certainly, the biggest individual gain would be the second choice, but it also has a great risk (i.e., the other person also chooses the same idea and a battle ensues). As Watkins points out, for Hobbesian people, who are motivated by the desire to triumph and a fear of being killed, the latter is always the stronger passion, so that “given a choice between, on the one hand, submitting to a common power and, on the other hand, an equal chance of either triumphing or being killed, they will choose the former” (Watkins 1970; 203).

However, if one believes that the other would maintain his or her weapon even if he or she himself abandons his or hers, which would result in death, the “rational” choice in this situation would be to maintain his or her weapon, inevitably resulting in a state of constant struggle. In an uncertain situation, where one is unable to know what action the other may take, the choice to throw away one's weapon before the other does can only be considered an act of stupidity; however, if there is a possibility that the other might throw away his or her weapon, the abolishment of one's weapon could be considered a rational choice to take. This rational speculation is circular, only reaching conclusion when “his decision ... depends on the point at which he breaks off his reasoning” (Watkins 1970; 206). Even if each person possesses a weapon, this may not necessarily lapse into a lethal struggle. The situation still involves other possibilities, such as giving up both weapons and acorns or taking the other's acorns without killing him. One scholar who prominently argues these alternative possibilities is Amartya Sen.

Sen grasps the concept of the state of nature by applying what he calls “Assurance Game

preference” and “Other-Regarding preference,” emphasizing that “if all pursued dictates of morality rather than rationally pursuing their own self-interests, all would have been better off” (Sen 1974; 59). Based on the Assurance Game preference, the top priority of each individual’s choice of action comes to abandoning one’s weapons, but unlike the Prisoner’s Dilemma, it does not necessarily require a compelling force of passion (namely fear) because “each prisoner will do the right thing if it is simply assured that the other is doing it too and here is no constant temptation to break the contract” (Sen 1974; 60). In other words, if everyone assumes that behaving according to the Assurance Game preference, or at least pretending to, is potentially more beneficial compared to the Prisoner’s Dilemma preference (i.e., they will eventually be able to ensure that others will also behave in the same manner).

Moreover, based on the Other-Regarding preference, abandoning one’s weapons would also be considered as the first choice, and each will act as if they are concerned about others. For this reason, Sen claims that if each individual behaves as if they have adopted the Other-Regarding preference (i.e., being a moralist) and “morality and rational behavior are perfectly consistent,” they will end up “being better off” than if they had adopted the Prisoner’s Dilemma preference (i.e., being an egoist) (Sen 1974; 66). However, as Watkins states, under the condition in which everyone is an equal player without any compulsory force, moralistic behavior would have no less luminous benefit than egoistic behavior, because “after all, the egoist, in trying to do as well as he can for himself, has to take very careful account of the people with whom he is competing, co-operating, or otherwise interacting” (Watkins 1974; 68-9). Watkins develops his discussion further, examining plausible cases between an egoist and a moralist, who are equally knowledgeable. Intriguingly enough, each case is driven to the same conclusion: moralistic behavior has no advantage over egoistic behavior, and even if both subjects behave in a moralistic way, there would still be a dilemma regarding how to act.

This is precisely the reason that the requisite for a Hobbesian state of nature is an absolute passion—the fear of death—which is presumed to be an essential, universal motivational force of human behavior. Only due to the existence of this fear is the conception of rationality stretched “beyond its scope.” Reason makes people realize the possible effectiveness of common power and allows them chose an irrational act (e.g., abandoning their weapons voluntarily) as a practical means (Parsons 1968; 93).

Nonetheless, rational judgment is incapable of solving many problems that one will face, such as “How do we abandon our weapons simultaneously?” or “How can we ensure that others will observe the verbal contract?” Apparently, the solutions for these problems lie beyond the realm of rationality.

## 1.2 The Irrationality of Rationality

As far as the unreliability of choosing the purpose of one’s behavior is presumed in the state of nature, rationality is not necessarily a person’s only norm and therein exists a constant state of war. Conversely, however, if each individual is to choose the purpose of oneself rationally, his or her choices would eventually depend on scientific knowledge, fading his or her subjectivity. This implies that the act of abandoning one’s weapon implicitly involves the two following irrational assumptions:

(a) Every single individual commonly acknowledges certain rules as “ex ante agreements” and makes

the irrational choice to sacrifice potential future advantages.

- (b) Every single individual, who solely lives in the here and now, shares a common perspective, which is to overcome the unreliability of others' behavior.

Hobbes' view on assumption (a) (i.e., the state of nature, or the game to eliminate fraud and violence), has a “trump card” named the natural law, which predetermines the rule that everyone acts on behalf of creating the consistent, objective existence as the best way for his or her own good. Another rule assures individuals that everyone obeys the former rule, or the idea that “to make, or not make; keep, or not keep Covenants, was not against Reason, when it conduced to ones benefit” is spontaneously denied, and the observance of the covenants becomes a rational act even in the state of nature” (Hobbes 1996; 101).

John Locke, for whom nature is a state in which every individual is entitled perfect freedom to act and deal with one's possessions, connotes an implicit rule that everyone cognitively seeks for the relationship of trust to reach a common goal of attaining its mutual advantages. In the Lockean proviso of *Second Treatise of Government*, he asserts that individuals have a right to homestead private property from nature by working and striving toward it, but they can do so only “at least where there is enough, and as good, left in common for others” (Locke 1980; 204). This statement means to ensure that no one will voluntarily act to worsen others' situations even if it may benefit one's own situation. There is an ex ante agreement that gaining benefits from exploiting others is prohibited unless it is a necessary means to avoiding the worsening of one's own situation.

Following the stream of Hobbes and Locke, David Gauthier regards obedience against certain moral constraints as an ex ante agreement in the state of nature. In a fashion most similar to Hobbes, Gauthier conceives of modern people as having a rational, egoistic, mutually unconcerned existence, whose purpose is to exclusively maximize one's own benefits; however, he classifies this tendency of maximizing one's benefits into two types: straightforward maximization and constrained maximization. The former is the tendency to simply “maximize her satisfaction, or fulfil her interest, in the particular choices [he/]she makes” (Gauthier 1986; 15). This tendency is consistent with the characteristic of humans whom Hobbes describes as the ones who pursue whatever their passion demands without being imbued in morality.

Conversely, constrained maximization is the tendency to “comply with mutually advantageous moral constraints, provided she expects similar compliance from others” (Gauthier 1986; 15). This tendency alone enables people to savor various opportunities for co-operation; furthermore, it is only possible for the sake of what Gauthier calls “translucency.” Such a relationship, in which “each is directly aware of the disposition of his fellows, and so aware of whether he is interacting with straightforward or constrained maximizer” is unrealistic, yet people are transparent to some extent and live “not with certainty,” but with something “more than mere guesswork” (Gauthier 1986; 174). Although each individual seeks to maximize one's own utility, no one considers oneself “merely a receptacle for preference fulfilment,” which designates that what matters to them most is not “who she is” (or “what capacities or preferences she has”) but rather people's capacities enable them to “fulfill her preference” (Gauthier 1986; 244). In a translucent or transparent relationship, as people—who behave according to instrumental rationality—repeatedly engage in strategic interactions, there

occurs certain moral norms, and each individual assumes them as the rules for their choice of actions, expecting others to observe them as well.

Unlike Hobbes and Locke, Gauthier seemingly deduces these moral norms from the state of nature without any *ex ante* agreement. The problem is, however, that the translucency of humans does not necessarily lead people to expect that others will observe the moral norms as they themselves would, nor to suppose that each gains the same outcome from the interactions. There are hidden *ex ante* agreements yet to be discovered, which leads to the second assumption (b).

For humans, the objective is to “measure not only other men, but all other things, by themselves,” so that each person creates his or her own existential world by his or her own perspective (Hobbes 1996; 15). Conversely, to participate in the game of the state of nature as a player, one must share a world of semblances to apprehend his or her situation in relation with others by the common perspective. How, then, can it be possible for selfish individuals to possess the common perspective?

For instance, in a biological approach, the argument may be grounded in altruistic behavior based on blood relationships or genetic altruism. If humans are merely “temporally vehicles of genetic matters” as Darwinians claim, they are motivated by “something foreign to each individual, which exists outside the systems of individuals” (Maki 2008; 27–38). In this view, the world is “a simulation of the brain” for each individual, and once the simulation is completed, each is able to identify oneself in relation with others (Maki 2008; 119–127). Thus, “our perspective” is formed not by reason or passion, but by the work of the brain, which has the ability to simulate the entire world.

In an empirical approach, however, generality among individuals is supposedly formed through interactions, in which they experience a sense of mutual caring and share a certain, inductive belief. This is precisely what Hume calls “a convention,” and in his usage of the term, it is “a sense of common interest; which sense each man feels in his own breast, which he remarks in his fellows, and which carries him, in concurrence with others into a general plan or system of actions, which tends to public utility” (Hume 1975; 306). In his understanding, the world is neither a game whose rules are known beforehand nor a simulation of the brain; rather, it is “a theater” in which people are exposed to “perpetual suspense between life and death, health and sickness, plenty and want; which are distributed amongst the human species by secret and unknown causes” and since people are subject to constant hope and fear, they desire to predict the “secret and unknown causes” by applying imagination (Hume 1976; 140). Imagination is also the source of “a sense of common interest,” where each individual repeats perceptual experiences depending on his or her imagination, and eventually extracts resemblances by abstracting the differences between past and present perceptions. All things are in a constant state of flux, wherein there never exists, even from second to second, the “same tree,” “same ship,” “same I,” or “same you.” Indeed, if not for the work of imagination, each individual would neither share a common perspective nor realize their resemblance to actors all sharing the same theater.

This convention is quite similar to the concept of trust presented by Niklas Luhmann. Defining trust as “a reliance in turbulent conditions on some number of certainties and on other individuals’ actions, that affect one’s own welfare, that despite conditions largely unknown can be counted on to act in a predictable and presumably benevolent fashion,” Luhmann regards it as “a basic fact of social life” and emphasizes it as a social mechanism of disclosing possibilities for action “by the reduction of



complexity” (Luhmann 1979; 4-25). Seldom, if ever, would individuals obtain sufficient information in reality to make proper decisions in a rational manner; therefore, trust, which goes beyond rational calculation of probabilities, is essential for people to overcome uncertainty of others, future events, or contingencies, and to simplify decisions required to act. As complexity increases, the need for trust grows accordingly; paradoxically, however, once trust is established, it comes to possess rational functions and strengthens potential systems against complexity.

Luhmann makes a semantic distinction between trust and familiarity, both of which stem from self-assurance. Familiarity is based on experience that is represented in an individual’s history, and even though it reduces the complexity of decisions by basing them on past experience, it differs from trust in that trust is based not only on past information but also the future, potential risks associated with the decisions made. In this sense, while familiarity is a mechanism for calculating risk, trust is a solution to the problems that may result from risk. People voluntarily choose to trust despite the risk of this trust being betrayed, or that of negative outcomes that would surpass the positives because “trust is extended first and foremost to another human being, in that he is assumed to possess a personality, to constitute an ordered, not arbitrary, centre of a system of action, with which one can come to terms” (Luhmann 1979, 39). Trust is not primarily bound to norms, yet once trust relationships are formed, they cause new norms to emerge: “Only his own original trust offers him the possibility of putting it forward as a norm that his trust is not to be disappointed, and thus bringing the other over to his side” (Luhmann 1979, 43). “Original trust” can be possible only if an individual is among those familiar and communicable to create inter-subjectivity. Communication itself is a risky undertaking that requires some kind of safeguard and an individual’s “mere appearance presumes some minimum trust, trust that he will not be misinterpreted but that he will be accepted by and large as what he wishes to appear” (Luhmann 1979, 40). Yet, through these inter-subjective communications, each individual desires and forms “the same self” and regards others as the ones who are capable of interaction, which consequently leads them to share a similar perspective.

### **1.3 The Ambiguity of Recognition—Nancy Frazer’s Status Model**

Rooted in the two “unreasonable” assumptions analyzed above, the struggle for the distribution of values was the core issue of individuals during Hobbes’ era, continuing into modernity, deeply perpetuated into their daily lives. Why and how, then, did the political focus shift from the struggle for the distribution of values to the struggle for the recognition of values? For the purpose of this argument, I turn to Charles Taylor, whose famous contributions in Multiculturalism are useful for exploring the concept of recognition that has flourished within modern people.

Taylor remarks that as pre-modern societies came to end, there occurred two historical changes that inevitably colored the concept of recognition with two unique meanings. First, the collapse of traditional hierarchical societies, which had provided the basis for bestowing honor on certain people, gave birth to the modern concept of dignity. While the concept of honor is imbued with unequal standards of superiority, the concept of dignity is based on the idea that all individuals are to be exalted as rational agents and universally recognized. This is the primary principle for what Taylor calls the politics of equal dignity: “The politics of equal dignity is based on the idea that all humans are equally worthy of respect... Thus, what is picked out as of worth here is a *universal*

*human potential*, a capacity that all humans share” (Taylor 1994: 41). The politics of equal dignity aim for the equalization of the rights and entitlements of all individuals, literally ensuring “all,” even those who are not able to realize their potential in normal ways, as being indifferent to what they do or can do with those potentials. This is because dignity views “all humans” the same, as a result of focusing only on what potential each person commonly possesses, such as dignity or rights, and being indifferent to what they do or can do with those potentials.

The second change is the birth of authenticity, or *sentiment de l'existence*, which occurred at the end of the 18th century. The concept of authenticity in this sense denotes that an individual is truthful to one's originality; borrowing Jean-Jacques Rousseau words, it is “a state where the soul can find a resting-place secure enough to establish itself and concentrate its entire being there” (Rousseau 1979; 88). The politics that respects this modern sense of identity is what Taylor calls the politics of difference: “with the politics of difference, what we are asked to recognize is the unique identity of each individual or group, one's distinctness from everyone else” (Taylor 1994; 38). Within the politics of difference, each individual is respected for his or her uniqueness, which can be discovered in dialogue with others whom he or she recognizes as being different from him-herself.

In pre-modern hierarchical order, the identity of each individual was fixed by his or her social status or associated roles and activities so that it was “unproblematical and not subject to reflection or discussion” (Kellner, 1995: 231). Without such order, however, each individual is led to form “individualized identity” by differentiating oneself from others and affirmatively understanding one's originality through recognition of others, according to one's own understanding. As Taylor is keen to stress, humans are intrinsically “dialogical,” or able to understand themselves only in relation to others, most often through language, which does not simply mean “only the words we speak but also other modes of expression whereby we define ourselves, including the ‘languages’ of art, of gesture, of love, and the like” (Taylor 1991; 33). Thus, instead of pursuing the establishment of equal rights or citizen dignity, the politics of difference aims to treat each individual based on their own distinctions, because it requires dignity not only for the potential every person possesses but for what each person does with his or her potential.

What, then, is required to assure the equal dignity for what each individual does with one's own potential? It may involve occasions in which some sort of preferential policies, such as language registration in Quebec, are required to protect certain distinctions among individuals or social groups. In the politics of difference, the will of community overwhelms the will of individuals only if its coercion is assumed to be necessary to establish consequence equality caused by each person's potential. Needless to say, this sort of coercion conflicts with the politics of equal dignity, whose primary principle is to create substantive equality and to maintain a neutral stand against the way of life each individual autonomously chooses according to his or her reasons and motives. In other words, while the act of recognizing the politics of equal dignity requires equal values to be distributed according to the potential of autonomous agents, the act of recognizing the politics of difference requires values to be distributed according to the *ex facto* potentials of forming and defining one's own identity. How, then, can we (or can we not) combine the demands of these divided acts of recognition? Conversely, are they deemed to be combined in the first place?

For Nancy Frazer, the problem at stake is how to integrate these two different types of demands

for recognition and institutionalize the final product into a comprehensive paradigm that fulfills modern needs: The need for two-pronged politics of redistribution and recognition does not only arise endogenously, as it were, within a single, two-dimensional social division. It also arises exogenously, across intersecting differentiations (Frazer 2003; 26). For instance, regarding gender injustice, while the politics of equal dignity demands to abolish the gender category itself, the politics of difference demands that value be assigned to the characteristics of each gender. This sort of dilemma does not have theoretical answers but it can be reconciled by minimizing the collision among dimensions, applying what she calls the “status model.”

According to Frazer, the critical problem of recognition theory is that it is commonly equated with the identity model theory, whose eminent proponents are Charles Taylor and Axel Honneth. Within the identity model, recognition is “an ideal reciprocal relation between subjects, in which each sees the other both as its equal and also as separate from it” so that the aim of its politics is to “repair internal self-dislocation by contesting the dominant culture’s demeaning picture of the group” (Frazer 2000; 109–110). For example, even though Honneth supposes that the goal of his recognition theory is the most intact identity-formation possible based on individual autonomy, the goal itself, as Frazer asserts, is controversial, because it inevitably involves two problems: reifying group identity and displacing redistribution.

The problem of reification is that emphasis on the originality of group identity triggers reification of a single, simplified identity: “Stressing the need to elaborate and display an authentic, self-affirming and self-generated collective identity, it puts moral pressure on individual members to conform to a given group culture” (Frazer 2000; 112). Consequently, it is driven to deny individuals’ diversity and takes part in spreading misrecognition. Frazer further criticizes that the idea of “an authentic, self-affirming and self-generated collective identity” is too ambiguous to accept, because even though this model begins with the presumption that identity is dialogical and constructed through interaction with other subjects, it will eventually deny its premise of dialogical characteristics of identity by acknowledging that “misrecognized people can and should construct their identity on their own” and that “a group has the right to be understood solely in its own terms” (Frazer 2000; 112).

The problem of displacement, on the other hand, is that misrecognition is treated as an isolated cultural malady, and that any problems regarding recognition are regarded solvable (indirectly) by resolving problems related to displacement: “Many of its proponents simply ignore distributive injustice altogether and focus exclusively on efforts to change culture; others, in contrast, appreciate the seriousness of maldistribution and genuinely wish to redress it” (Frazer 2000, 110). For the former, the problem is not institutionalized significations and norms but rather free-floating discourses; with an effort of hypostatizing culture, these discourses separate issues of misrecognition from the institutional matrix and obscure the tangled relation between misrecognition and distributive injustice. For the latter, the problem is economic inequalities, which are considered “simple expressions of cultural hierarchies.” With an effort of revaluing devalued identities, they categorize issues of maldistribution as secondary effects of misrecognition and neglect the need for political measures that address redistribution (Frazer 2000, 111). In either case, the restoration of distorted identity is assumed to redress the causes of economic inequality. Economical inequalities, however, are caused by a liberal market that exists independently from cultural patterns so that they

are not simple expressions of cultural hierarchies. This implies that redressing misrecognition does not necessarily rectify maldistribution.

As we've seen, both the problem of reification and that of distribution displace normative concepts with the demand for recognition, and the identity model consequently aggravates the violation of universal human rights and economical inequalities by overlooking the necessity of the distribution of value that the politics of equal dignity requires. Thus, Frazer advocates her status model as an alternative way of interpreting the politics of recognition.

The status model begins with the assumption that misrecognition is not the depreciation and deformation of group identity but rather "social subordination," which she defines as the denial of "the status of a full partner in social interaction, as a consequence of institutionalized patterns of cultural value that constitute one as comparatively unworthy of respect or esteem" (Frazer 2000; 113-114). The status model does not concern ethical self-realization of each individual; rather, it focuses on equal parity of participation in social circles by changing existing and creating new values that regulate such interactions. Frazer further asserts that with the obedience of the participatory parity as an existential norm of justice, the status model does not get involved in the ethical values as "good life," and grants a universal compulsive force to certain specific demands of recognition.

Within the identity model, unless there is a single idea of good or self-realization, no compulsive force would be valid against those who do not share the same ethical values. Within the status model, however, such ideas of good or self-realization are entrusted to each individual, and for the sake of this plurality of values, it can "justify claims for recognition as normatively binding on all who agree to abide by fair terms of interaction" (Frazer 2003; 33).

At first sight, the status model seems a plausible axis for pluralistic societies; however, once it is applied to actual social issues, it faces inconsistencies that cannot be ignored. For instance, if we look at the case of the French controversy over the use of Muslim foulard at school, which Frazer herself adopts as an example, the norm of participatory parity tends to implicate two incompatible meanings. Taken as an issue between groups, the key factor in solving the problem is to ask whether wearing a foulard, from the point of distributive view, violates the equal status as a French student of others who belong to different groups. In this view, the difference of sense of values toward a foulard is irrelevant and wearing a foulard is justified as long as similar acts of other groups, such as wearing a Christian cross, are allowed. On the other hand, taken as an issue within a single group, the key factor is to ask from the point of recognitive view whether the current regulations to permit wearing a foulard prevent women from participating as equally as men. In this view, the value of a foulard remains unquestioned and wearing a foulard is justified as long as its regulations are assumed to have historically treated it as a symbol of identity of Muslim women.

As Honneth criticizes, Frazer's concept of participatory parity is, in practice, subjected to arbitrary application because she overlooks "the functions it has to fulfill in view of the social precondition of individual autonomy" (Honneth 2003; 179). Her argument does not clearly explain why the right of participatory parity cannot presuppose "self-respect with reference to individual achievements or ego strength acquired through socialization," or why possible obstacles are exclusively subsets of either economy or culture but not "the spheres of socialization or law" (Honneth 2003; 179). Moreover, although Frazer claims that the concept of participatory parity can serve as the

common rule for any individual because it does not require ethical elements, in actuality, few social problems can be solved without them because, for each individual, what matters is not simply gaining physical distribution or legal recognition, but rather seeing that their values are acknowledged. What foulard users demand, for example, is not only the permission to wear the symbol but, more significantly, of the acceptance of their discourse on religion.

## 2. Pluralistic Self and Linguistic Activities

### 2.1 Recognition and Identity

The confusion in Frazer’s argument is due to her ambiguous usage of the term “recognition.” Referring to Patchen Markell’s definition, “recognition,” which is often problematically understood broadly as the voluntary act to respect one another’s identity, differs from “acknowledgement,” which is “a sort of abdication” of one’s identity, caused crucially by the conception of “the limits of identity as a ground of action” against other people’s unpredictable reactions and responses (Markell 2003; 36). In this sense, whereas her argument is meant to stand against a stretched interpretation of recognition, Frazer herself jumbles these two terms together, and as a result of such a polysemous use of the term, the concept of recognition itself has become obscured. This urges us to reconsider tracing the concept and definition of recognition back to Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel.

Much appreciated beyond the time, Hegel profoundly describes the dialectic structure of recognition (*Anerkennung*) through B. Self-consciousness to C. Free concrete mind in *The Philosophy of Spirit*, which begins with a premature state of self-consciousness: it is the state of consciousness where the “inherent nature (*Ansich*) of the object, and its being for another are one and the same” (Hegel 2009; 82). At this stage, the independent subsistence of self-consciousness vanishes, but it occurs as a movement of desire that invariably seeks to distinguish oneself from others, while at the same time attempts to unite oneself by abolishing one’s created distinctions. In addition, this movement, which is “the infinite as the suppression of all distinction, pure rotation on its own axis, itself at rest while being absolutely restless infinitude,” is what Hegel calls the essence of life. (Hegel 2000; 83)

As Hyppolite points out, in Hegel’s understanding, the existence of life is “not substantial but rather the disquiet of the self,” and because the self, “which in posing itself in a determinate manner contraposes itself to itself and thus negates and transcends itself,” is an identification of universal life, it is never consistent with infinite life (Hyppolite 1974; 15, 149). In this respect, life is an original power of the self to deny, presenting human characteristics as the being “that never is what it is and always is what it is not” (Hyppolite 1974; 150). The movement of life has two aspects: while life distinguishes the self from others, preserving it by disconnecting oneself from inorganic nature, it fluidizes the differences of each form of life, cancelling and producing individual subsistence (Hegel 2009; 84). In this respect, life is a movement that unites the self by distinguishing the self from other individuals and simultaneously discarding those differences, and this reflected unity is what Hegel calls “genus” (*Gattung*), which is “the I as it appears immediately in the identity of self-consciousness (Hyppolite 1974; 154).

Self-consciousness is to know oneself, an identification of *I am I*, and with its occurrence, it

poses oneself as both an object that opposes life and a subject that overcomes opposition. At this stage, self-consciousness (*I*) relates with other self-consciousness (*you*) though genus (*universality as we*), and the self is objectified within others' self-consciousness. This sort of objectification can only be possible in a circumstance where one is aware of others' self-consciousness that are in turn aware of the unity of genus, in the same manner as an individual regards others' recognition of oneself:

Self-consciousness exists in itself and for itself, in that, and by the fact that it exists for another self-consciousness; that is to say, it is only by being acknowledged or "recognized"... The detailed exposition of the notion of this spiritual unity in its duplication will bring before us the process of Recognition (*Bewegung des Anerkennens*) (Hegel 2009; 86-7)

Individual self-consciousness is absolute self-certainty for itself, but it is a living object for others. Thus, self-consciousness can find its truth only by mutual recognition in which "individuals recognize each other as reciprocally recognizing each other, creates the element of spiritual life—the medium in which the subject is an object to itself, finding itself completely in the other yet doing so without abrogating the otherness that is essential to self-consciousness"(Hyppolite 1974; 166).

The act of recognition is led by an experience in which one's self-consciousness faces another self-consciousness, at which point the relation of opposed consciousnesses involves two meanings: on the one hand, self-consciousness is in a process of losing its own self and finding itself as another being; on the other hand, it is in a process of denying the self of other beings and finding its own self through this process. In this dual relation, "each is the mediating term to the other, through which each mediates and unites itself with itself," which Hegel claims is the fundamental characteristic of recognition (Hegel 2009; 87). Both "I" and "you" deny the own self, yet recognize each other as an independent existence, and either gains the self-consciousness that reaches to the level of being conscious of oneself as an independent existence. In this mutually recognized relation, the subject finds the self in the other, yet maintains its subjectivity for the reason that each self-consciousness infinitely repeats "the movement by means of which each term itself becomes infinite, becomes other while remaining self (Hyppolite 1974; 166). At this stage, then, each individual is no longer merely a living existence, but an existence that is capable of finding and realizing its particular being of individual self-consciousness.

This relation of mutual recognition, however, is not equal at its early stage; it is an unequal state in which "one is merely recognized, while the other only recognizes," and this inevitably causes a life-and-death struggle for recognition because each individual must "bring their certainty of themselves, the certainty of being for themselves, to the level of objective truth" and "aim at the death of the other, as it risks its own life thereby" (Hyppolite 1974; 88). If one is persistent in living as an independent existence, the relation among individuals remains impenetrable and an effort to deny others' independence is no more than regressing back to the early stage of self-consciousness, the movement of life.

The consciousness gained through the life-and-death struggle for recognition does not, however, arise as a result of the relation of mutual recognition, the dynamic relation in which each individual

seeks for a universal being of self in other individuals. Instead, the simple unity of “we” is lost, and self-consciousness is split into “a pure self-conscious” and “a consciousness which is not purely for itself, but for another, i.e. as an existent consciousness, consciousness in the form and shape of thingness” (Hegel 2009; 89). Pure self-conscious is an aspect of consciousness that is convinced of its independency by presenting its non-tenacity toward being as one among other individuals though the life-and death struggle, and this is what Hegel calls “the master” (Herr). On the contrary, a consciousness that is not purely for itself but for another is another aspect of consciousness that depends on other individuals for its preservation and to abandon one’s individuality, and this is called “the bondsman” (Knecht). The master can be an independent existence by being recognized as the master by the bondsman, controlling the bondsman in a mediate manner thorough one’s actions.

Paradoxically enough, the independency of the master is essentially relative and dependent. Conversely, the bondsman recognizes the independency of the master unilaterally to preserve a life as an individual, allowing oneself to subordinate to the master. This unequal relation can be simplified as the relation in which the master controls the thingness to which the bondsman is subordinated, and the relation in which the master relates with the bondsman through thingness, which is produced directly by the bondsman’s labor. In the former, the master controls the thingness by abandoning being as one and becoming independent, because for the master, “the independence of the being of life and the resistance of the world to desire do not exist” (Hyppolite 1974; 173). The bondsman is quite opposite: clinging to “the independence of the being of life” and knowing only “the resistance the world,” the bondsman is bounded by thingness and devotes exclusively to working on/with things (Hyppolite 1974; 173). In the latter, the master entrusts one’s labor to the bondsman and consumes the products of the bondsman; the master controls the products but does not directly relate with them, which ensures its independency against thingness. Meanwhile, despite relating with the products, the bondsman does not establish independency because the labor committed by the bondsman is merely a tool of the master.

However, Hegel dialectically diverts this “independent master—the non-independent bondsman relation” to “the non-independent master—dependent bondsman relation,” and reveals that the master is “not assured of self-existence as his truth” (Hegel 2009; 90) First, as defined above, the essence of recognition is to mutually recognize each other as an independent existence through denying one’s independency in other individuals, but this cannot happen unless those other individuals are de facto independent beings. Secondly, the independency of the bondsman is caused by the fear against the death that the bondsman possesses. This fear against death is not a momentary anxiety but an anxiety “for its entire being,” which “has trembled throughout its every fibre, and all that was fixed and steadfast has quaked within it” (Hegel 2009; 91). In short, once the bondsman realizes the fear against death, it dominates the bondsman as an absolute master and the obsession to the master vanishes.

Furthermore, the fear against death is not adequate for the bondsman to realize true independency; this requires the activity of “giving shapes and form,” which leads the bondsman to find oneself in the permanency of thingness that lasts longer than mortals, namely labor (Hegel 2009; 91). The labor of the bondsman is initially committed on behalf of the master, but through the experience of altering the world of thingness, the bondsman gradually realizes the products of labor as evidence

of one's own action, and "imprints the form of self-consciousness of being," finding oneself in the product of his work (Hyppolite 1974; 176). Whereas the master, who was first recognized one-sidedly by the bondsman, ends up depending on the bondsman with an unsatisfied desire to be recognized, the bondsman, who experienced non-recognition, finds one's universality in objects, which enable to form the relation of mutual recognition.

## 2.2 Recognition and Linguistic Activities

The bondsman, an independent consciousness caused by the fear of death and labor, is driven to become the one who "thinks or is free-consciousness," and its representation as an ideal is what Hegel calls "stoicism" (Hegel 2009; 93). As Hyppolite points out, "to think" does not mean representation or imagination; it means "to make real the unity of being-in-itself and being-for-itself, of being and consciousness" (Hyppolite 1974; 180). Denying the "I in thingness," the self tends to deny either one's own existence or any other existences, and with these actions of denial, the self is presumed as an actor and begins to emphasize the certainty of one's own existence. The free-consciousness is abstractly free in mind, yet it requires "the negativity of free self-consciousness" with which one is able to relate oneself with daily life to achieve freedom in actuality, and this realization of such a stoic idea is called skepticism (Hegel 2009; 95).

In a dialectic movement of skepticism, self-consciousness reifies the assurance of freedom by its negation of the objects appearing as truth, and "brings about the experience of that freedom, and thereby raises it into the truth" (Hegel 2009; 96). At this stage of self-consciousness, an individual's identity is confronted with the disparity of various distinctions, but then it itself becomes a distinction against identity. The self reinforces one's identity by denying others as the objects *appearing* as truth, but at the same time, it acknowledges oneself as one of those others. That is, through an action of negation, self-consciousness ceases to be an identified consciousness and is divided into two: a consciousness that assures of individuality, finitude, or contingency of the self, and a consciousness that assures of universality of the self. Further, there occurs another conscious which seeks to unite the split, contradicted consciousness, and this is referred to as the unhappy consciousness.

The unhappy consciousness is "subjectivity, which aspires to the repose of unity; it is self-consciousness of life and of what exceeds life" (Hyppolite 1974; 195). It is an unstable, subjective anxiety that constantly floats between those two aspects of consciousness and never finds its truth in itself. It does not aim at gaining the repose of unity by abandoning the self or the others, but by maintaining the movement permanently and overcoming its unhappiness by alienating the subjectivity and posing it as a being, which will lead to a new unity of self-consciousness and objective consciousness. Encountering someone else's consciousness, one's consciousness acknowledges the perplexing fact that there are other points of view on the universe other than one's own perception, which consequently allows him or her to admit another fact that "I exist only insofar as I am recognized by the other and only insofar as I myself recognize that other" (Hyppolite 1974; 196). At this stage of self-consciousness, recognition is a requisite act of becoming other than what "I" was and ceasing to be able to return to what "I" was. In this respect, Butler calls it "one for whom a vacillation between loss and ecstasy is inevitable," and vividly describes the process of recognition as follows:



What I recognized about a self in the course of this exchange is that the self is the sort of being for whom staying inside itself proves impossible. One is compelled and comforted outside oneself; one finds that the only way to know oneself is through a mediation that takes place outside of oneself, exterior to oneself, by virtue of a convention or a norm that one did not make, in which one cannot discern oneself as an author or an agent of one’s own making. (Butler 2005; 28)

Being recognized by others, “I at present” and “I at past” varies, and “what I have been up until this moment” disappears. “I without a knowledge of what I have been” abandons individuality to know “the I,” and seeks it in the universality caused by customs and norms. “I in the universality” recognizes others as “what are not I,” and gains “the individuality as I.” Then, for this individuality, “I” is deemed to be recognized by others, and this movement of the self repeats ceaselessly.

This constant movement of individualization and unification is triggered by the fear of death, yet as the self experiences the movement repeatedly, the fear tends to connote dual meanings; the fear of losing one’s life of whose finite one is aware, and the fear of losing the product of labor, which reifies the self. Whereas the former is caused by the thought of the loss of one’s life, the latter is caused by the experiences of the deprivation of one’s products. Through these experiences, the bondsman becomes aware that the products belong to the master, who he or she then admits is “what is not I,” and therefore the unhappy unconsciousness forms “a relation between self-enslavement as bodily subjection and the formulation of self-imposed ethical imperatives” (Butler 1997a; 32). The first ethical imperative that the bondsman creates to overcome the fear is to cling to oneself or one’s consciousness: “The fabrication of norms out of (and against) fear, and the reflective imposition of those norms, subjects the unhappy consciousness in a double sense: the subject is subordinated to norms, and the norms are subjectivating, that is, they give an ethical shape to the reflexivity of this emerging subject. (Butler 1997a; 43). Even though the first ethical norm was created to escape the infinite and establish one’s identity, it becomes more absolute, replacing the fear of death with the fear of ethical norms; the identity appears as a consciousness caused by the ambiguous, unstable, vulnerable movement of obeying the ethical norms and strengthening one’s individuality, which is never completed or ceased.

This sort of understanding of identity vastly differs from the view in which the identity is assumed as trustworthy and the ethical norms are required to assure it. For instance, Taylor understands the identity as “expressive self” or “authentic self” by “realizing my nature” through interaction with others (Taylor 1989; 375). According to his view, when the self is engaged in an ethical problem, there involves two different sorts of evaluation: weak evaluation and strong evaluation. Weak evaluation refers to arbitrary judgments and evaluations, which each individual freely takes according to quantitative distinctions, weighing desired actions “simply to determine convenience, or how to make different desires compossible” (Taylor 1985; 18). Strong evaluation, on the other hand, refers to value-judgments and evaluations, “which are based on qualitative distinctions concerning the worth of options” and are presented as common good in a certain community (Taylor 1985; 25). By these two evaluations, each individual interprets oneself as the being that forms its identity and attains “a sense of who we are through our sense of where we stand to the good” (Taylor 1989; 105). Thus,

what seems problematic for Taylor is not the relation of mutual recognition among individuals who have constituted a modern identity within the historical process, but rather the relation of mutual recognition of communitarian norms to fulfill and sustain mutual recognition of each other.

Along with Taylor, Honneth also asserts the necessity of establishing compulsory ethical norms to assure the condition of each individual's identity, because the ethical norms inevitably occur by common expectation among socialized subjects, and as far as the norms are recognized by each individual, the formation of identity as well as self-realization of each individual can be attained: "every human subject depends essentially on a context of forms of social interaction governed by normative principles of mutual recognition" (Honneth 2003; 178). In this perspective, there are "graduated levels of recognition" within the social order, which have resulted in a "historically established recognition order," and each individual understands what society is as the individual interacts with others and expects "inclusion through stable form of recognition" (Honneth 2003; 137, 173). This recognition needs to be accepted as "a genus comprising various forms of practical attitudes whose primary intention consists in a particular act of affirming another person or group (Honneth 2012; 80-81).

As indicated, identity induced from the structure of Hegelian recognition is neither fixated nor permanent, and it is an unstable movement between ethical norms and individuality. Imagine pointillist Georges-Pierre Seurat's masterpiece, *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*. From a distance, it is by no means "a picture"; up close, you see there are scattered points existing independently. Each of those points varies its color by the wavelength of light: blue and red mingle and create purple, red and green mingle and create yellow, green and blue mingle and create sky blue, and so forth. Further, each point keeps changing its color in relation with others. This reminds us of how each individual forms one's identity in a society. Both Taylor and Honneth agree with Hegel in the sense that they also grasp individual identity as such a picture. The difference is, however, how they conceive its frame of ethical norms; while Taylor and Honneth draw the picture adjusting to a thick frame, Hegel draws the picture, adjusting a frame *to* it. Individuals Hegel draws are those who are invariably in a process of forming and reinforcing their identity by denying the self and obeying ethics norms in a relation of mutual recognition, so that ethics norms are deemed to transform according to the change of the process. How, then, does the transformation of ethical norms occur?

What mediate a relation of mutual recognition are linguistic activities, which Hegel defines as an act to be the self and the universal self at the same time: "The form [of the act the universality lies] is the self, which as such is actual in language, pronounces itself to be the truth, and just by so doing acknowledges all other selves, and is recognized by them" (Hegel 2009; 297). Each individual first objects self-consciousness in oneself through linguistic thought and assures pure self. Pure self (one's will or *Geistes*) is transmitted through an exchange of linguistic activities with others, which enables the individual to assure the self in others. Linguistic activities are performed "because of seeing the identity of the other with him that he gives himself utterance," which allow ego to know itself as "something that has passed into another self that has been apprehended and is universal" (Hegel 2009; 232). A proposition such as "God is the eternal" is merely stated to be subject without "reflectively mediating itself with itself" (Hegel 2009; 19). Mediating is "self-identity working itself out

through an active self-directed process,” and unless there involves the effect of this “pure negativity,” any word is a meaningless sound for what gives words their content, and meaning is predicated (Hegel 2009; 18).

### 2.3 Recognition and Ethics

What, then, would happen when one confronts others with these mediated words? The words do not only belong to the self, but exist against others because it is “self-consciousness which as such is there immediately present, and which in its individuality is universal” (Hegel 2009; 296). Within the utterance of the words, the self is actualized, recognizing other selves while being recognized by them. By means of linguistic activities, each individual subjects to a certain power of a belonged group by denying the self, and at the same time possesses a new self, “I,” who is obedient to the power with the remaining “I,” who is not obedient.

This dual process—movements of subordination and subjectification—of linguistic activities bears resemblance to “a mirror (doubly specular) structure of ideology” claimed by Louis Althusser. (Althusser 2014; 196) For Althusser, ideology is “a ‘representation’ of individual imaginary relation to their real conditions of existence,” and there is “no ideology except for concrete subjects (such as you and me)” (Althusser 2014; 181, 188). Distinguishing the subject from the unique and Absolute Subject, he asserts that “all ideology is centred, that the Absolute Subject occupies the unique place of the Centre and interpellates around it the infinity of individuals as subject” (Althusser 2014; 197). One accepts his or her place under subordination at the moment he or she responds to a certain authorized voice (e.g., a policeman’s call of “hey, you there!” on the street); in this respect, “the existence of ideology and the hailing or interpellation of individuals as subjects are one and the same thing” (Althusser 2014; 191). The mirror structure of ideology is a system of interpellation that simultaneously functions as the “interpellation of subjects, of subjection to the Subject, of universal recognition and of absolute guarantee” (Althusser 2014; 193). An act of hailing, accompanied with an act of turning around by the hailed individual, is repeatedly practiced in daily life as a ritual, reinforcing subordination of individuals. Whether the context of the hailing is true or not, the ritual indicates and fixates the individual’s subordinated position, applying customary universality to that which is recognized and excludes that which is not recognized, and delineating a social framework in time and space. Through these constant experiences of decentralization and elimination, each individual forms his or her identity.

One example of this is that the word “we,” often used in school or education environments, is presumably expected to let children recognize their subordinated position under a certain authority given by a school or a nation. Whether it is a school or a nation, the non-recognized self that is unable to determine its subject is forced to be dropped out from the order. Interpellation, a linguistic act of others, always precedes one’s own existence; his or her existence is specified by the linguistic act of others. The existence of the individual in this case simply suggests a meaning of life in a specific ideological sphere, so that there is no implication of denying primary self-evidence of the subject itself. Yet, the word that rules the self as “I” precedes the existence of “I” in a sense that the word exists prior to one’s existence.

Focusing on the function of interpellation, Stuart Hall defines identity as “the meeting point,

the point of suture, between on the one hand the discourses and practice as the social subjects of particular discourses, and on the other hand, the processes which produce subjectivities, which construct us as subjects which can be ‘spoken’ (Hall 1996; 5, 6). The word “articulate” in his definition does not refer only to linguistic action or expression, but to relations that are “founded on that contingency which ‘reactivates the historical’” (Hall 1996; 14). Articulation is a connection of no necessary correspondent elements through linguistic activities and identification, and consequently, there occurs identities that are “never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions” as “the product of the marking of difference and exclusion” (Hall 1996; 4).

This concept of divided, changing identity is posited against synthesized, stable identity proposed by Eric H. Erikson. For Erikson, identity connotes both internal and social-contextual dimensions: “ego identity ... is the awareness of ... self-sameness and continuity ... [and] the style of one’s individuality [which] coincides with the sameness and continuity of one’s meaning for others in the immediate community” (Erikson 1968; 50). Whereas ego identity is a concept of oneself referring to “who I am,” and has an unconscious function of unifying the objectified self by oneself and objectified self by others, group identity is a concept of others or society referring to “Who they think I am”; the inconsistency between these concepts, he asserts, must be resolved to obtain synthesized identity. As far as the synthesizing of identity is presupposed, we remain preoccupied with the question, “what is identity?” The question for us to ask, however, must be, “what is happening on linguistic activities concerning identity”; *how can articulation, or a ritual of interpellation and turning around, be assured to be formed among individuals?*

It seems logically possible that one does not turn around when he or she is hailed. Within this possibility, Butler sees the potentiality of resistance against subjection that is “a power assumed by the subject, an assumption that constitutes the instrument of that subject’s becoming (Butler 2005; 11). In existing ethics norms given by a power, the existence of “recognized I” is repeated and reinforced by performing “who I should be.” If so, this implies that it would be possible to rewrite or rearticulate the norms themselves by avoiding repetition of performing in an ideological sphere, because even if a subordinated subject repeats a process of subordination in social practices, there contains potential means of resisting against subordination: “such a failure of interpellation may well undermine the capacity of the subject to ‘be’ in a self-identical sense, but it may also mark the path toward a more open, even more ethical, kind of being, one of or for the future” (Butler 1997a; 131). For instance, the word “queer” used to be a derogatory term for homosexuals in the early 20 century, but today the people who are hailed by it reinterpret its meaning and use the word with a positive meaning so that the word has now been represented as a means of resistance against normative sexuality.

There may be an occasion in which the hailed person chooses to ignore the hailing in an effort to resist. The characteristics of the word of “hailing,” however, has already existed at the very time when another (or others) utters it, because interpellation is not the mere linguistic act of an individual but a performative act that involves “a reiteration of norms which precede, constrain, and exceed the performer” (Butler 1993; 234). Whether the hailed individual ignores the hail or not, interpellation may construct his or her subject linguistically through its power to “introduce a reality

rather than report on an existing one” (Butler 1997a; 33). When such interpellation does not succeed, however, there invokes the ethical imperative of “a willingness not to be—a critical desubjectivation—in order to expose the law as less powerful than it seems” (Butler 1997b; 130). The failure of linguistic acts—neglected or misinterpreted—becomes “the condition of possibility for constituting oneself” by reevaluating and reinscribing the word against its original, or current purpose as well as recontextualizing in affirmative modes (Butler 2005; 197).

Habermas also remarks on the gap between language and action as an experience in which the identity of individuals may be threatened to be lost and communication among individuals may reach an impasse, and Habermas emphasizes an ideal speech situation that can “gain consensus about all those subjects that generally are discursive in their nature” (Habermas 1984, 177). In an ideal speech situation, there is one exclusive force of better argument: no inner (prejudices) nor outer (ideologies, time restrictions, knowledge limitations) restrictions determine the outcome of discourse. In contrast, there is a distorted speech situation where language is used as a means of control by certain authority, and where “at least one of the parties behaves with an orientation to success, but leaves others to believe that all presuppositions of communicative action are satisfied” (Habermas 1984: 332). Thus, distorted speech situations are regarded as social pathology, which should be cured by an ideal speech situation that systematically excludes distorted speech situations.

Such bipolarization of the speech situation, however, seems to encourage criteria of what can be accepted as speech and what is not, and further seems to cause another problematic situation where any linguistic activity that might derive a possibility of forming the consensus from others cannot be allowed. In an ideal speech condition, “voluntary consensus” on language was required as a prerequisite. However, as Butler criticizes, such consensus—the same meaning for the same speech for every individual—has to remain persistent in a barren belief of “sovereign subjects”; this sort of “risk or vulnerability to language” is basically appropriate for political processes in democracy (Butler 1997 : 88). Language names, describes, determines, and fixates individuals, and thus they are vulnerable to its meanings; yet, individuals by nature “exercise the force of language even as we seek to counter its force,” and by the act of speech, they are imbued with a sense of ethical responsibility (Butler 1997; 1)

“I” possess an identity of “We” as a social being by linguistic activities that conform to the customary norms, and their ethical effect is maintained by the continuous act of communication among individuals who are “I as We,” namely the decentralized “I.” At the same time, each individual recognizes each other as “We,” and possesses an identity as an independent social existence, eliminating “what is not I” and constituting alterity in “I” by which “you” function as “other.” Through this process of recognition, identity is in flux, provisional, and subject instability and alteration: “Not all of its past is gathered and known in the act of recognition; the act alters the organization of the past and its meaning at the same time that it transforms the present of the one who receives recognition” (Butler 2005; 28).

For the opacity and fragility of identity each individual possesses, there emerges the relation bonded by ethical norms; yet, ethical norms are sustained, even reconfigured by the application and repetition of individuals’ acts. Such ambiguous identity utterly differs from Taylor’s “expressive self,” which pursues to form the relation of recognition based on a universal standard of “constitutive

goods,” emphasizing “I as we” that is formed by ethical norms. Constitutive goods are a moral source that “the love of which empowers us to do and be good,” which he distinguishes from “life goods” that are composed of “qualitative distinctions between actions, or feelings, or modes of life” (Taylor 1989; 93). The recognition of such constitutive goods arises in our experience of it as “our best self-interpretation,” providing the qualitative distinctions (Taylor 1989; 342). According to Taylor, the characteristic of modern identity is its internalization of constitutive goods, which regards the qualitative distinctions as self-contained, “as without internal relation to various possible articulations of constitutive goods” (Taylor 1989; 349). Thus, his theory of recognition demands the retrieval of constitutive goods in public spheres where each individual forms a political identity framed by both his or her independency and group autonomy.

This approach, however, can be problematic for the very demand of the unification of individuals by constitutive goods that are required to be accepted by all, because such unification is not supposed to be what individuals question or alter by linguistic activities, but rather what they are forced to accept as an ethically higher mediator to achieve an ideal community. Even though constitutive goods are essentially what allow each individual to seek the self in relation with others and to realize being an “authentic self,” as such commonness becomes more definite and affirmed, the identity of individuals is ironically forced to assimilate into a group identity created by the commonness. The identity of individuals we have argued involves a fluid, nebulous movement between ethical norms and individuality, and is precisely the only reason for individuals to owe moral responsibility to or commonness with others. In this way, the identity of individuals enables them to form a relation of mutual recognition, transfiguring ethical norms.

Today, the spheres of the linguistic activities are diversified, coexisting or blending with each other. Belonging to the plural social spheres, each individual is deemed to face differentiation of self in multiple relationships, and a part of the self (or the “listening self” according to Michael Waltzer’s term) distinguishes and balances the selves, which enables us to live in different dimensions of space simultaneously (Waltzer 1997; 98). Such complexity of spheres of linguistic activities, however, has gone even further; modalities of linguistic activities themselves are now thrown into a rapid change by a rise of cyberspace communication on the internet. Recognition is an act mediated by physical acts such as hailing and turning around, and each individual forms one’s identity by experiencing the subordination and subjection of the self in material relation with others. Cyberspace lacks such an embodiment of dialogue and deprives individuals of a sense of reality or an ability to recognize the relations in which they are involved. Yet, in cyberspace, we now see virtual relations in which people commit social or legal acts, such as marriage between people who have only met and communicated online, and such phenomena seem to grow in number and influence. *Is this sort of recognition in virtual space pertinent to be called an act of recognition? Does it affect the formation of our identity, or does it possibly redefine what a public sphere is?* These urgent questions are the challenges that the theory of recognition must overcome to seek for new ways of identifying as “I and We.”

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**English Summary**

**I and “every-one”**  
**—On the Concept of Ethical Norms and Linguistic Activities**  
**in Plural Societies—**

**Miyuki Matsumori**

Georg Simmel once depicted modernity as the time in which “the individual seeks his self as if he did not yet have it, and yet, at the same time, is certain that his only fixed point is this self” (Simmel 1950; 79). Several decades have passed, yet the opacity of identity has become even more conspicuous, leading to feelings of awkwardness in some and free-floating anxiety in others. Today, phrases such as “the way I am” or “what makes me ME” appear ubiquitously, implying some sort of moral value and reified as “goods” in our daily lives that are manipulated to reflect human desires. Despite its inherent vagueness, people are fascinated by the quest of finding their one and only “authentic self,” and are perplexed with their own obscure, or divided, identity, the latter of which renders them unable to make decisions when faced with various, infinite possibilities. Others, however, are forced to adopt a stigmatized identity formed by implicit social pressure, which has also left them unable to make decisions on their own. *Why has individuals’ identity become such a familiar yet ambiguous concept? Does this imply that ethical norms do not or will not exist among people in a capitalistic society where plural values have coexisted?*

To answer these questions, this thesis will reconstruct the modern identity that predetermines each individual within deep social structures. It will also examine the possibility of new and alternative ways of being as “I and We” in societies that support plural values.