

# Analysing Social inclusion in Terms of Recognitive Attitudes

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## Abstract

*What is social inclusion? In my paper I will analyse social inclusion in terms of Axel Honneth's differentiated theory of recognition, and by drawing on my own elaborations on that theory.*

*The English word 'recognition' denotes three analytically different, but closely interrelated, phenomena: 1) identification (of anything as anything, for example 'those persons as "them" or as part of "us"'), 2) acknowledgement (of norms or claims as valid, responsibilities as binding, reasons as good/motivating etc.), and 3) recognition in the sense of the recognitive attitudes of love, respect and esteem.*

*According to what can be called a recognizee-sensitive attitude-analysis of recognition, recognition is always a case of A (the recognizer) taking B (the recognizee) as C (loved, entitled to something, or a valuable contributor to the common good) in the dimension of personhood D (singularity, particularity or universality/autonomy), and B taking A as a valid taker/judge (or a 'relevant other'). Social inclusion can be analysed in a differentiated way, by using the above scheme. To 'include' others, individuals or groups socially is to a) love them (i.e. to care for their happiness or well-being unconditionally, 'for their own sake'), to b) respect their autonomy (by taking them as entitled to the rights-and-responsibilities-statuses following from autonomy), and/or to c) take them as valuable contributors to something shared (material or cultural reproduction or flourishing, coherence or richness of what belongs to 'us' etc.). Finally respect also means to take others as relevant others whose attitudes 'count', i.e. whose recognitive attitudes can constitute recognition of me/us.*

*In all of these dimensions, inclusion is always a more-or-less state of affairs. There is no fixed boundary between the realms of 'the included' and 'the excluded'. It is possible for instance to care for someone's well-being deeply, and thus 'include' her/them in the sphere of those whom I/we care about, but on the other hand not to*

*take them very seriously as autonomous judges whose judgments are to be taken seriously into account. Or the other way around. Notions such as 'full membership' in the society or 'full inclusion' will only have a firm contact with the lived reality of the multicultural, plural, heterogeneous contemporary societies, and the complex interpersonal engagements, attachments and aversions of persons living in these societies, if these notions are spelled out in a differentiated manner, such as the one sketched above. 'Fullness' is always relative to some criterion or criteria, and there is no fixed single criterion, nor any fixed set of criteria for what it is to be 'fully' included socially. Inclusion and exclusion is and always will be a contested field, where moral feelings of justice or injustice have to be taken seriously, and intersubjective procedures of explicating their contents and judging their validity have to be exercised constantly.*

*Towards the end of my paper I will make a few notes on how identification and identity, as well as an acknowledgement of claims and responsibilities, is related to inclusion and understood in terms of recognitive attitudes.*

What is social inclusion? Or, what is it to be socially included? What is it to be socially excluded? Included in what? Excluded from what? In what respect? By what or whom? In the following I will draw a general sketch of one possible way to start spelling out more closely the possible whats, wheres, hows, whos etc. of social inclusion and exclusion. The model that I have in mind is built on three general ideas or intuitions.

First, social inclusion and exclusion is dependent on attitudes of others – otherwise it would not be social. One can be excluded from social life<sup>1</sup> 'non-

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<sup>1</sup>Here I am just preliminarily assuming that the answer to the questions "in what does social inclusion include persons", or "from what does social exclusion exclude persons" is "social life". This rough answer is in accordance with Nancy Fraser's formulations in Fraser & Honneth, 2003. I believe however that the concept of 'social life' is itself in need of clarification. In the following I will understand 'social life' as more exactly life of, or in, a collective 'we' and hence understand inclusion in social life as inclusion into a 'we'. As should become clear, I do not conceive of this 'we' in naturalistic or reifying terms, but in terms of (more or less mutual) recognitive attitudes. This is another way of thinking roughly what Axel Honneth means by the different *spheres of recognition* (see Honneth 1995). As I have argued elsewhere (Ikäheimo 2002a) however, these *spheres of recognition* have to be distinguished *from recognitive attitudes* more clearly than they are distinguished by Honneth. My choice of approach in this paper is partly motivated by social ontological concerns (forging a recognition-theoretical conceptual apparatus for conceiving collectivities, collective attitudes and collective action). The paper is part of my joint attempts with Arto Laitinen to conceptualize recognition, and part of a joint project 'Social ontology and relations of recognition' with Eerik Lagerspetz, Arto Laitinen and Sari Roman, funded by the Academy of Finland. Everything that I will say in what follows, belongs to the genre of "work in progress" and comments of what ever kind are warmly welcome.

socially', that is by non-social causes, such as being shipwrecked alone on an uninhabited island. This is exclusion from social life, but it is not social exclusion. It is, as it were, natural exclusion. Or think of someone living in the midst of other people deliberately avoiding contacts with anyone else. It is at least in principle possible – even if perhaps very unlikely – that a person's being excluded from social life is not due to anyone else's attitudes but her own. Perhaps a person just hates everyone and therefore excludes herself from social life. In this case the manner of exclusion is not natural, since it is dependent on attitudes, but it is not social either, since it is not dependent on attitudes of others.

Secondly, the attitudes of others central for social inclusion or exclusion are 'recognitive attitudes', or attitudes of recognition. The recognitive attitudes towards persons can be divided into three species: love, respect and esteem. We 'include' each other socially by loving, respecting and holding each other in esteem. Since love, respect and esteem come in degrees (we do not for instance hold everyone in esteem to the same degree), this opens up a three-dimensional and 'quantifiable' model of social inclusion and exclusion.

Thirdly, institutions indirectly *embody* interpersonal attitudes of recognition and misrecognition. Therefore institutional or institutionalized inclusion and exclusion can be social in the sense articulated above.<sup>2</sup>

## Recognition

Let us start from recognition. What is it? The recent discussions on this topic have, to my mind at least, been rather vague and inexplicit in some key conceptual differentiations. Let me first distinguish three senses of the word 'recognition' that are often being run together in the discussions.<sup>3</sup>

First of all, there is 'recognition' in the sense of recognizing, identifying or re-

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<sup>2</sup>It may be worth pointing out, that the idea of defining sociality through interpersonal attitudes is at least as old as social sciences. The emphasis on attitudes of recognition comes from Hegel, and is present for instance in G.H.Mead's thinking on the simultaneous emergence of personhood and sociality. Axel Honneth is the most prominent thinker today in the recognition-theoretical tradition. No doubt, there probably are predecessors also in the recognition theoretical lines of thought that I will develop on inclusion and on institutions, but I am not aware of them at the moment. To answer to a possible reproach, as I see it, concentrating on attitudes does not commit my methodical approach to uncritical psychologism, since I take it as self-evident that we do not form attitudes in isolation from the social world. It is obviously not true that something in some sense belonging to individuals, such as attitudes, cannot be socially determined just because they belong to individuals. Attitude-analyses are also the standard approach in contemporary social ontology by authors like Michael Bratman, Margaret Gilbert, Eerik Lagerspetz, John Searle and Raimo Tuomela.

<sup>3</sup>More on these in Ikäheimo 2002b.

identifying something as something, i.e. as a certain singular individual (i.e. numerically) or as of some kind (i.e. qualitatively). Let us call this simply *identification*. Any kind of an entity can be an object of numerical and qualitative identification.<sup>4</sup>

Secondly, there is ‘recognition’ in the sense of recognizing, acknowledging or taking reasons as good, norms or claims as valid, something as one’s responsibility, something a failure to meet a responsibility etc. Let us call this *acknowledgement*. Only ‘normative entities’ (norms, claims, rights, responsibilities, guilt etc.) can be acknowledged.<sup>5</sup>

Thirdly, there is a sense of ‘recognition’ in which only persons can be recognized. Let us call this *recognition* and keep it analytically distinct from identification and acknowledgement.

We can usefully divide recognition, or more exactly, the ‘recognitive attitude’ further into three species: holding in esteem, loving and respecting. Quite often respecting and holding in esteem are not distinguished from each other, and not so rarely love and holding in esteem are run together. But in the senses in which I mean them, they differ from each other in important ways.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>We may further speak of ‘essential’ or ‘genus-identification’ in the sense of identifying something as belonging to certain genus. Whether this is better conceived as a special case of qualitative identification or a separate type of identification may perhaps depend on the precise case, but this need not concern us here.

<sup>5</sup>Can things like *values* or *evaluative features* be acknowledged in the sense that I have in mind? At the moment I would propose for reasons of conceptual economy, that we only acknowledge *normative* entities or states of affairs. In this idiom “acknowledging the value of X” can be spelled out as “acknowledging the normative claim (for proper treatment of X etc.) that X’s valuableness makes”. Thought in this way acknowledgement is thus intrinsically bound to an *ought* (or what ever kind). I want to avoid hereby difficult questions about the precise ontological relationships between values, reasons and norms, as well as questions about the relation between values on the one hand and interpersonal recognition on the other hand. Contrary to the position that Axel Honneth attributes to me in Honneth 2002, I do not believe that recognition or recognitive attitudes directly constitute the value of something. In other words, I do not espouse what Honneth calls “the attribution model of recognition”, even though I do use the term “attribution” in a more or less ordinary philosophical sense (as in “the position that Axel Honneth *attributed* to me”) in Ikäheimo 2002a. I feel somewhat hesitant, at the moment, to adopt Arto Laitinen’s value-based model of recognition (see Laitinen 2002 and Laitinen 2003, ch. 5). It seems to me, that for example the claim for *respecting* rational beings cannot be “based” on the value of rationality. Even if people agreed upon that rationality has no value, they could (and I believe should) reasonably think that they deserve respect as judges in this question. Adding the possible addition “if they are right” only makes my point stronger: if (or, if you like, even if) they are right in thinking that rationality has no value, they ought to be respected as judges in this question. In any case am interested to know, if my deliberately evasive formulations still imply some stance on these questions.

<sup>6</sup>My three-part distinction of the species of the recognitive attitude is very close to the distinction made by Axel Honneth’s (see especially Honneth 1995). However, I conceive of

Let us start from *holding in esteem*. The idea expressed by Axel Honneth (Honneth 1995, chapter 5) seems intuitively clear: I hold others in esteem to the extent that I take them as (potentially or actually) contributing positively to my own good or to the good of those third persons whom I care about. Holding in esteem is thus tied to the contributiveness of the recognizee to the good of those ‘others’ (myself or third persons) that I care about, to her contributive capabilities or achievements.<sup>7</sup>

How does this differ from *loving*? On a concept that distinguishes loving as an attitude from holding in esteem, love is not conditional on the contributiveness of the loved one. In *Rhetorics* (1380b35) Aristotle proposes: “Let loving (*philein*) be defined as wishing for someone what you believe to be good things – wishing this not for your own sake but for his – and acting insofar as you can bring them about” (translation according to Vlastos 1981). And in the *Nicomachean ethics* (1166a2) Aristotle says that what people have in mind when they speak of someone who loves, is someone “who wishes and does the good or what is thought to be good to someone for his own sake, or who wishes the other to exist and live for his own sake”.<sup>8</sup>

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love and especially respect to some extent differently from Honneth. I hope the text justifies my particular way of drawing the distinction. On this distinction, see also Ikäheimo 2002a.

<sup>7</sup>The concept of holding in esteem (*Wertschätzung*) that I have in mind is, or is meant to be, the same as the one used by Axel Honneth. It is more demanding than the one used by Arto Laitinen, who holds that we also hold in esteem someone for capabilities and achievements that contribute only to her own good or flourishing. I find this counterintuitive. If I sincerely believe that my being a great solitaire player greatly enhances my personal flourishing, this does not mean that this feature of me is something which others should *hold me in esteem* for. What however seems right, is that if I am a reasonably capable evaluator, others should *respect* me as a judge on what is and what is not good for me. Perhaps respecting me implies in this case, at least, something like not trying to prevent the activity that I think makes me happy. A third thing is caring for what enhances someones flourishing. In terms of recognitive attitudes, this can be analysed in terms of *loving*. Hence, as I see it, we do not hold people in esteem for capabilities and activities that only contribute to their own good, but these are surely relevant for respecting and loving them. Analogously, as I see it, people do not hold *themselves* in esteem for capabilities and achievements that do not contribute to anyone elses well-being than their own. Arto Laitinen usefully emphasized in discussion, that this may imply that the list loving, respecting neand holding in esteem may not be exhaustive of recognitive attitudes. I’m inclined to think that this is not a necessary implication of my strategy. There are all kinds of vaguely positive attitudes or attitude-complexes towards others and oneself (take ‘admiration’), which are not necessarily distinct recognitive attitudes. But admittedly this question needs more scrutiny. Thanks to Laitinen for discussion on this topic.

<sup>8</sup>I cannot discuss at length now how this ‘core meaning’ of *philia* (see Vlastos 1981) in Aristotle is related to the distinction between utility-*philia*, pleasure-*philia* and *philia* between the virtuous, which Aristotle makes in the *Nicomachean ethics*. In brief, according to my reading *philia* in its core meaning is an *attitude*, whereas the three types of *philia* mentioned are types of *concrete human relationships*. I have analysed love as a recognitive attitude in relation to

It seems that what Aristotle means here, can also be spelled out as caring about someone, or being concerned of her life and happiness, for her own sake. 'For her own sake' means, not for the sake of anything else, such as her possible contributions to the happiness or good of someone else. In love the loved one, or her life, happiness or good, is a final end to the one who loves.

Moreover, love is not conditional on the rationality or power of judgement of the object-person, as the third recognitive attitude, *respect* is. As a recognitive attitude, respect is taking others as rational or equipped with a power of judgement. In this sense, we respect persons *to the extent* that we take them as rational, or according to our estimation of the strength of their power of judgement. The extent that I respect someone, is the extent that I take her judgements seriously, take them as potentially or actually good reasons in my own thinking and setting of goals or ends. Perhaps we might say, that whereas holding someone in esteem is taking her as a *cooperation-partner*, respecting someone is taking her as a *communication-partner* or co-judge.<sup>9</sup>

Hence, now we have three distinct recognitive attitudes towards persons. All of the recognitive attitudes are clearly positive in the sense, that we *want to be* held in esteem, loved and respected by others, and that we feel somehow

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attitude-complexes and concrete personal relationships in 'Persoonien välisestä rakkaudesta – lähtökohtia teoriaan' ('On love between persons – outlines of a theory', in Finnish), in Ikäheimo 2003.

<sup>9</sup>This concept, let us call it (1) the 'Apel-Habermas-concept', of respect should be distinguished from at least the following three concepts of respect: (2) A concept of respect on which we 'respect' dangerous things such as a stormy sea; (3) one on which we 'respect' each other as rights-bearers; and (4) one on which we 'respect' beings belonging to a species, the normal members of which are rational and therefore deserve respect on the (1) Apel-Habermas-concept. In the way how I see these, (2) is not a personalizing recognitive attitude at all, (3) is more aptly spelled out as an attitude of *acknowledgement* towards the rights in question, which implies an attitude of (1) Apel-Habermas-respect *towards those whose will or attitudes of acknowledgement the right in question embodies, but not necessarily towards the rights-bearer in question*. Finally, (4) is taking the object as potentially, but not actually, deserving (1) Apel-Habermas-respect on a very loose sense of potentiality. On a stricter sense of potentiality it makes good sense to say, that one respects a growing child on the (1) Apel-Habermas-concept both according to her actual rationality and according to her potential rationality. Whether we should yet distinguish between being rational or equipped with a healthy power of judgement, and thus deserving (1) on the one hand, and being capable of acting according to ones judgement on the other hand, is a further question. This introduces the question of *akrasia*, the weak will and the strong will in the Aristotelian inesesens. Do we not also for instance "respect" in some quite distinct sense those who struggle against their desires and inclinations to act according to what they judge as the right thing to do, i.e. the 'strong willed' types? It may in fact be, that there are still many more types of 'respect' than the four ones mentioned above, but I will leave this difficult field of question to other occasions.

deprived when we are not. Obviously, the experienced recognitive attitudes of others towards oneself have an affect on ones attitudes towards oneself. It's hard to love, respect or hold in esteem oneself without having experienced being loved, respected and held in esteem by relevant others.<sup>10</sup>

What these three positive attitudes towards someone all share is hence that they are all recognitive attitudes, or attitudes of recognition. But saying this alone is only giving a family name to these attitudes. Why should they have a common name? What is it that they share? To put it in the traditional manner: what is their genus?

The clue is, that on the concepts that I have sketched, only persons can be (rationally) objects of recognitive attitudes. We do value all kinds of objects, but we – that is, if we are rational – hold only persons in esteem in the sense of taking them as cooperation-partners. It is important to see, that holding someone in esteem as a cooperation-partner is different from valuing something as a good instrument.

As to love, it is perfectly reasonable to love good wine on some meaning of the word 'love', but as already Aristotle pointed out, there is something irrational or absurd in loving wine in the sense of caring for its happiness for its own sake (*Eudemian ethics*, 1155B29-31). Why? Because nothing is good *for the wine* in the relevant sense. Wine is not capable of being happy or unhappy, and therefore cannot rationally be taken as a final end. On this concept, we rationally love only persons.<sup>11</sup>

Also, on the concept of respect discussed above, we only (rationally) respect persons, since only persons are rational in the sense of being equipped with a power of judgement.

Do we then first have to know, which entities are persons to be able to (rationally) love, respect and hold in esteem in the relevant senses? This question introduces the notorious other minds problem of "how do we

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<sup>10</sup>Since taking someone as a relevant other is a recognitive attitude (probably that of respect), the whole story of recognition has to account for a two-way complex of recognitive attitudes. More on this old Hegelian wisdom, see Ikäheimo 2002a.

<sup>11</sup>One should note however, that the objects capacity for happiness or unhappiness is only a *necessary condition* for – rationally – loving it/her on the concept of love in question. 'Rationality' here does *not* mean, that it is a *reason* for loving, as contributions are a reason for holding in esteem and as rationality is a reason for respecting. Since loving is taking someone as a *final* end, loving has no further reasons. Looking at this in an Aristotelian way, no reasons can be given for being concerned for ones good or *eudaimonia*, or that of someone else. "X's happiness/eudaimonia is important" is the *content* of the relevant attitude, *not a reason* for having it.

know?” Following thinkers like Hegel, Stanley Cavell or Wilfrid Sellars, the way we encounter each other as persons in the life-world is actually not primarily a question of knowing, but rather one of recognizing.<sup>12</sup> Taking others as having ‘minds’, as being intentional creatures, in other words, taking others as persons, is *not identifying* them as persons but rather *recognizing* them as persons.

If loving, respecting and holding in esteem are species, and, as I am inclined to think, *the* species of the recognitive attitude, then taking creatures as persons simply *is* loving them, holding them in esteem and/or respecting them on the concepts discussed above.<sup>13</sup>

## Social inclusion

One important feature of persons of course is, that we think speak and think of them in terms of personal pronouns, such as the ‘we’. Wilfrid Sellars has in fact argued that to recognize something or someone as a person is necessarily to think of oneself and her in some sense as belonging to “a community” or a “we”.<sup>14</sup> I do not think of myself and the natural objects or artifacts of my

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<sup>12</sup>See Cavell 1976 and Sellars 1963, 38. Cavell uses the word ‘acknowledgement’ but does not draw the distinction between recognition and acknowledgement as I do.

<sup>13</sup>As I see it, one advantage of this line of thinking is that it allows us to see mental disturbances that we might call *sociopathy* as not being appropriately tuned to the claims that someones being a person makes. It seems to me that serious emotional disturbances like these are not correctly described as not knowing that someone is a person, but rather as incapability of adequately responding to the personhood of others, i.e. as incapability of caring for their well-being for their own sake, as incapability of respecting them and as incapability of holding them in esteem (in opposition to treating them as useful instruments for ones perverse satisfaction or what have you). This is related to Wittgenstein’s discussion on “attitudes towards a soul” in *Philosophical Investigations* and elsewhere. In loosely Wittgensteinian terms, incapability of having recognitive attitudes is incapability of participating in the human life form.

<sup>14</sup>Sellars writes: “To think of a featherless biped as a person is to think of it as a being with which one is bound up in a network of rights and duties. From this point of view, the irreducibility of the personal is the irreducibility of the ‘ought’ to the ‘is’. But even more basic than this (though ultimately, as we shall see, the two points coincide), is the fact that to think of a featherless biped as a person is to construe its behaviour in terms of actual or potential membership in an embracing group each member of which thinks of itself as a member of the group. Let us call such a group a ‘community’. Once the primitive tribe, it is currently (almost) the ‘brotherhood’ of man, and is potentially the ‘republic’ of rational beings (cf. Kant’s ‘Kingdom of Ends’). An individual may belong to many communities, some of which overlap, some of which are arranged like Chinese boxes. The most embracing community to which he belongs consists of those with whom he can enter into meaningful discourse. The scope of the embracing community is the scope of ‘we’ in its most embracing non-metaphorical use. ‘We’, in this fundamental sense (in which it is equivalent to the French ‘on’ or English ‘one’) is no less basic than the other ‘persons’ in which verbs are conjugated. Thus, to recognize a featherless biped or dolphin or Martian as a person is to think of oneself and it

environment in terms of a 'we'. But I do think of myself and other persons always in some sense in terms of an actual or potential 'we'. Even my worst enemies belong from my point of view actually to a 'we' in the sense of something like 'we, the enemies to each other', and potentially to a 'we' that is something more and better.<sup>15</sup>

To put this in terms of social inclusion, to recognize anything or anyone as a persons is to *include* it or her into some kind of a collective 'we', a collective or community with oneself.<sup>16</sup> The 'we', 'collective' or 'community' does here not mean anything stronger, nor anything weaker, than those whom the 'taker' in questions loves, respects and/or holds in esteem. Since all these recognitive attitudes allow for quantitative variations – we love, respect and hold in esteem people in different degrees – inclusion into a 'we' is not an either-or-issue, but necessarily a matter of more or less, and it is so on three, at least to some extent independent dimensions. Furthermore, we hold people in esteem and respect them in different issues, and this introduces even more variation in the spheres of quantitatively varying inclusion (and exclusion).

Let us start from *love*. It seems that loving someone is a very clear case of conceiving the person in question and oneself as belonging to a 'we'. The concerns of those about whom I care for their own sake are to some extent also my concerns. When someone that I love becomes happy, that makes me happy too. And similarly with her unhappiness. To the extent that love is mutual, it makes all the more sense to say that the persons in question think of themselves in some very important sense in terms of a 'we'.

In the dimension of *holding in esteem*, I include individuals or groups into a 'we' with myself to the extent that I take them as somehow contributing positively to my ends or our shared ends or good.<sup>17</sup> To the extent that the

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as belonging to a community." (Sellars 1963, 38)

<sup>15</sup>To answer to a question posed to me by Nicholas Smith, I believe that thinking of some people as 'they' in some respect implies thinking them in terms of a 'we' in another respect. Sellars' idea of communities or 'we's as "overlapping" and being "arranged like Chinese boxes" (see the preceding note) makes this point, if I am right.

<sup>16</sup>Understanding recognition as social inclusion is explicitly in view in Axel Honneth's contribution to Fraser & Honneth 2003 (see especially p. 173, 180-9). Also Nancy Fraser's idea of "participation in social life" and "participatory parity" (see Fraser's contributions to the same book) can be, so it seems to me, conceived in terms of social inclusion.

<sup>17</sup>It seems, that the further away I am from conceiving the contributions of another in terms of 'our' ends and the closer I am to conceiving them merely as contributions to *my own exclusive ends*, the further away I am from the 'personalizing' attitude of holding the other in esteem and the closer I am to relating to her instrumentally. Whether this means, that holding in esteem implies also caring for the ends of the other (i.e. love), or respecting the other in the sense of taking her judgements on ends as reasons for myself, is something that requires more scrutiny and discussion, as does the whole problematic of the internal relations between love,

attitude is mutual, it again makes all the more sense to say that the persons in question conceive themselves in some important sense in terms of a 'we', namely as cooperation-partners. Without mutual esteem, there is no genuine cooperation.

We obviously hold each other in esteem in various degrees in various issues or dimensions. I may take someone as a great cooperation partner in philosophical projects, but someone else as the better cooperation partner in bar hopping. We form partly different cooperation collectives with partly different people for different aims or projects.

Finally, in the dimension of *respect*, those whom I respect are the ones with whom I am, at least in principle, open to enter into a discussion or discourse of one or the other kind. In other words, respecting others as rational beings, as (potentially or actually) capable of valid judgements, is to include them with oneself into a 'we' of (potential or actual) communication-partners.

Again, it seems, I can respect different persons in different issues to different degrees. That is, I can take different people as (potentially or actually) capable communication partners in different issues to different degrees. We form partly different communication collectives with partly different people for judging different issues.<sup>18</sup>

Respecting someone in this sense does not necessarily imply or presuppose that we belong into the same 'we' constituted around common goals, nor does it necessarily imply or presuppose a lot in terms of a deep emotional concern for the happiness of each other, i.e. in terms of love. It just means that to the extent that we respect each other, we are ready to take each others judgements seriously as candidates for validity – we are willing to listen what the other has to say and open to taking each others judgements as reasons for our own judgements.

To the extent, that we are *also* to some extent a 'we' in the sense of having at least some shared goals, of contributing to something like our common good, and in the sense of caring about the good of each other at least a bit, to this

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respect and esteem.

<sup>18</sup>But isn't taking someone as a good communication partner in fact *holding her in esteem* for her (potential or actual) contributions to the discussion or discourse at issue? In other words, does not the distinction between *holding in esteem* and *respecting* collapse here? One way of keeping these apart is to think that holding in esteem is taking someone as capable of making valid judgements on *means* (like the expert who knows how to solve the difficult problem that I have posed), and that respecting is taking someone as capable of making valid judgements on *ends* (like the person who has a say also on the agenda). I cannot however follow this thread here.

extent respecting each other is to mutually include each other into the community of those who have a say on what exactly it is that our common good consists of.<sup>19</sup> It seems to me that this is in a nutshell what the democratic *ethos* or *Sittlichkeit* consists of.

## Institutions

So far I have wholly bracketed the question of institutions and the obvious fact that social inclusion and exclusion need to be conceived as complex institutional processes or states of affairs.

Making the recognition-theoretical account of social inclusion plausible then necessitates conceptualizing the relationship of institutions and recognitive attitudes. I take it that *institutions are constellations of social norms regulating action*.<sup>20</sup> The existence of social norms is dependent on the relevant persons *acknowledging* claims for norms as valid norms. The persons who acknowledge a norm, are the ones whose will or attitudes are *embodied* in the norm. This opens the conceptual space for saying that even as institutionalized, inclusion or exclusion are social in the sense of being dependent on the attitudes of others.

Institutional arrangements or structures, what ever they may be, that exclude certain persons from, say, necessary or humane care when they fall ill or become too old to take care of themselves, exclude them from the community of those whose efforts are taken as socially valuable contributions, or exclude them from collective processes of will-formation, embody the will or attitudes of those whose acknowledgement is constitutive of the norms making up the institutional arrangements or structures in question.

To make a simple point as simply as possible, in democracies those with the right to vote are more or less directly or indirectly *responsible for* every institutional arrangement that socially includes or excludes someone. Namely, social inclusion or exclusion is, however indirectly, through the *acknowledgement* constitutive of the institutions, expressive of the attitudes of *recognition* or *misrecognition* towards those who are affected by the institutions.

This is so because attitudes of acknowledging institutions are in inferential relations with attitudes towards the relevant person. For instance, if I acknowledge an institutional arrangement that lets the starving starve to death, I am *inferentially committed* to the thought that their death is acceptable. The fact that I may never have bothered to explicitly follow the inference from

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<sup>19</sup>See the previous note.

<sup>20</sup>'Action' includes also the activities of thinking (conceiving, judging, drawing inferences).

my attitude of acknowledgement to the implied attitude towards the starving, does not release me from blame. Others are licenced to draw the inference and think of me accordingly. My *capability* to draw the relevant inferences – my rationality – does naturally affect the *degree* of my blameworthiness – and my respectability. But to the extent or degree that I command respect as a rational creature, I am responsible for my attitudes, both the ‘direct’ ones and the inferentially implied ones.<sup>21</sup> In short, institutions are – however indirectly, though valid inferences from attitudes of acknowledgement – embodiments of love, respect and esteem, or lack of these, between persons. This gives institutional arrangements that include persons in or exclude them from specific forms of social life a *moral* dimension. Since institutions like the World Bank are not natural formations, but – yes – institutions, they are embodiments of someone’s attitudes, and hence their possible exclusionary nature may be a moral issue.<sup>22</sup>

We do speak of “institutions recognizing” individuals and groups, and this is unproblematic, if we only understand that this is an abbreviated manner of speech. Literally speaking, institutions do not *have* recognitive attitudes since they are constellations of norms, not intentional creatures, i.e. not persons. Institutions *embody* recognitive attitudes through being constituted out of attitudes of acknowledgement of persons. This is what we have in mind, when we experience specific institutions as ‘disrespecting’, ‘denying esteem’ or as ‘loveless’. I doubt that any sane person would after a serious consideration expect an institution to literally love anyone. But I believe it does not take a lot of intellectual acrobatics to conceive of institutions as embodying recognitive attitudes, even that of love, between people.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>To the degree that I am incapable of drawing the relevant inferences, I do not deserve to be included, in the dimension of respect, to the actual ‘we’ of communication partners. Here it is essential however to distinguish between *actuality* and *potentiality*: Even if I have so far been too careless, inconsiderate or uncultured to draw the relevant inferences, I may well be potentially capable of drawing them. Thinking carefully needs to be learned and my process of education usually requires respect towards me – as potentially rational by relevant others (parents, teachers etc.). The basic line of thought on inferential commitments and licences that I am following here comes from Robert Brandom’s inferential semantics.

<sup>22</sup>A possible objection: why think that the World Bank embodies attitudes and not, say, values? My answer would be: indeed, the World Bank embodies values, but what makes this a potential recognition-issue, is that it embodies *valuations* (i.e. attitudes of persons), and these imply – directly or indirectly – interpersonal attitudes. The purpose of the attitude-analysis is not to leave out other important phenomena like values, value horizons etc., but rather to identify their exact place and role in relation to recognition, acknowledgement etc. Thanks to Nick Smith for taking up the issue.

<sup>23</sup>I take it unproblematic to say, that a one of the central motives for institutional arrangements such as the Scandinavian welfare state is genuine love between persons – caring, for other than purely instrumental reasons, for how people fare. Similarly I take it unproblematic to say that the current demolition of welfare states is – partly, not certainly

From these general premises, we can start analysing forms or measures of social inclusion or exclusion in any institutional arrangements in terms of interpersonal love, respect and esteem.

## Should everyone be ‘fully’ or ‘equally’ included?

There are strong moral intuitions in favour of something like the idea that we ought to include everyone fully and equally in social life. Think for example of Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth, who speak of a moral cum political ideal of everyone being “full-fledged partner[s] to social interaction” (Honneth 1995, 133), or “full member[s] of society” (Fraser 2000, pp. 113-114), or having the chance of “participating on a par with others in social life” (Fraser in Fraser & Honneth 2003, 38), or being “full participating partner[s] in social interaction” (Fraser in *ibid.*, 49).

Yet, there seems to be something quite unclear in the notions of *fullness* or *equality* in question. If we only have in mind the equality of basic rights, then we may rightly say that someone is ‘fully’ included into the community of those having basic rights, when she actually is granted *the full package* of basic rights which everyone in the society in question is entitled to (what ever this may be in a given society). In the ideal case, ‘full’ and ‘less than full’ are easy to determine: just count the rights granted to each person (what ever ‘granting’ means). Things of course get already quite a lot murkier when we are speaking of the capacity to actually practice these rights.

There are however more serious reason why fullness and equality of social inclusion are problematical notions. They are so, when we mean by ‘social inclusion’ something more extensive than just granting, or being capable of exercising basic rights. This is clearly how Honneth conceives of social inclusion, and also, I believe, how Fraser conceives of it, although her conception is in this respect much less clearly worked out than Honneth’s.

Consider this. There may be nothing or much missing from my life in terms of basic rights, but still I may reasonably experience myself as deprived of

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exclusively – understandable as part of a general erosion of attitudes of love between fellow citizens. Why this erosion is taking place, is certainly a complicated question. One direct way of promoting the erosion are the currently fashionable global TV-formats, where ordinary people are made to compete against each other in various zero sum survival games. The implicit (whether intended or unintended) pedagogical message of these formats is that caring for the well-being of others for their own sake is unwise, since it endangers ones own survival. From a Scandinavian perspective at least this seems like straight forward ideological re-programming the youth.

essential dimensions of participation in social life. Formulated in the terms discussed above, perhaps I am not taken as someone who has anything much to contribute to the shared goals of my family, local community or my nation. Or perhaps I am not taken seriously as a communication partner in this or that question. Or perhaps I feel that there simply is not enough love in my life. I am an equal rights bearer, but still lonely, isolated, socially excluded.

One argumentative strategy would be to include all of these dimensions in the necessary social conditions for having the capability, perhaps the psychic strength to practice one's basic rights. But whether one opts for this strategy or not, I believe it is important to analyse these dimensions as such, so as to get a nuanced picture of the experiential dimensions of social exclusion and inclusion.

How does the ideal of 'fullness' or 'equality' of social inclusion seem from this point of view? Should everyone be equally loved, respected and held in esteem? Obviously not. We may dispute on whether something like a right to be *loved* in general makes sense.<sup>24</sup> But I doubt that there would be any serious dispute on the claim that we do not have a duty to love everyone equally. Nor do I believe that many people would dispute the claim that there is no right to be loved equally.

If *respect* in the relevant sense is dependent on the level of rationality or the strength of the power of judgement of the object-person, then it clearly does not make sense to say that everyone ought to be respected equally. Rather, everyone ought to be respected according to her particular level or rationality, of her capability to make reasonable judgements and inferences on whatever the issue at hand is. And if potential or actual contributions of different persons simply are not of the same social value, it would clearly be plain irrational and unjust to hold everyone in esteem to the same extent.

If this is so, then not all cases of non-equal recognition are cases of mis-recognition. Which cases are then?

## Conceptualizing mis-recognition

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<sup>24</sup>I am inclined to say, that it does not. I do not however want to rule out that something like a duty to "try to love" one's neighbours or children may well make sense. We are to some extent responsible for our ways of attending to others. It may be that attending someone appropriately – something like "really looking" as Iris Murdoch put it – is a necessary condition for being moved to love her. And it may well be that parents have at least the minimal duty to attend to their children in the relevant ways, so that they may be moved to love them if they are not already so moved. (See also the following note.) Thanks to Arto Laitinen for emphasising the importance of this question in discussion.

In what follows, I do not take any normative stance to the question when a particular case is a case of mis-recognition. Rather, I want to sketch a general taxonomy which should help us to discuss this question in a differentiated and orderly manner. The core idea here is that having a recognitive attitude towards a person is *acknowledging some normative claim or claims that her being a person makes*. These claims, to follow the species of the recognitive attitude are something like “this person ought to be loved”, “this person ought to be respected” and “this person ought to be held in esteem”.<sup>25</sup> Formally there are four cases (let A be the ‘recognizer’ and B the ‘recognizee’):

(1) B experiences some claim of her personhood not being appropriately acknowledged by A, and from an objective point of view it is not appropriately acknowledged by A.

(2) B experiences some claim of her personhood not being appropriately acknowledged by A, but from an objective point of view it is appropriately acknowledged by A.

(3) B experiences some claim of her personhood being appropriately acknowledged by A, but from an objective point of view it is not appropriately acknowledged by A.

(4) B experiences some claim of her personhood being appropriately acknowledged by A, and from an objective point of view it is appropriately acknowledged by A.

What does this distinction add up to in terms of recognition and mis-recognition? I believe the following. (1) is a case of an experienced and real attitude of mis-recognition. (2) is a case of an experienced attitude of mis-recognition but of a real attitude of recognition. (3) is a case of an experienced attitude of recognition but of a real attitude of mis-recognition.<sup>26</sup> Finally, (4) is a case of experienced and real attitude of recognition.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>As is evident, I am playing here with a very broad sense of ‘normativity’ and ‘ought’. On this account, normativity differentiates itself into three different types. One type of these, the type implied in *love* does not, at least uncontroversially (see the preceding note), imply a right: even if there is no right to be loved, we can still say that it is in some sense *wrong* not to love, not to respond lovingly (what ever this in a given case consists of), say, to a helpless infant or to someone in despair. For instance Emmanuel Levinas seems to take something like this even as the primary kind of ‘ought’. The idea of an ‘ought’ which implies no right is related to the paradox of a “command to love”.

<sup>26</sup>To answer to a question posed to me by Nicholas Smith, this is the case of the submissive wife (or husband).

<sup>27</sup>Someone might object that in looking at things only from the point of view of the recognizee and from the objective point of view I have unjustly left out the point of view of the recognizer. My reply is, first of all, that not acknowledging a claim of a recognizee which from the objective point of view ought to be acknowledged, adds up to “an attitude of mis-recognition” *even if* the recognizer thinks that she has appropriately acknowledged all ‘real claims’ of the recognizee. *Neither* the judgement of the recognizee *nor* that of the recognizer is authoritative in deciding which attitudes are attitudes of mis-recognition. But, secondly, I do

The notion of *the objective point of view* is, as such, meant to be neutral as regards to questions about the reality or achievability of such a point of view. It is only meant to save the everyday, essentially important, intuition that my experiences of being recognized or mis-recognized cannot be the sole authority on whether I *really* am recognized or mis-recognized. A theory of recognition that is incapable of conceptualizing this distinction which we in our everyday life always make, is bound to be useless in normative questions.<sup>28</sup>

What I personally take as the most fruitful line of thought is that the 'objective point of view' is the ideal of the relevant collective *discourses* where we try to decide which are the 'normatively real' claims of this or that person or group of persons. What becomes hence a central dimension of social inclusion is recognizing all relevant persons as potential judges in these questions, respecting each other as communication partners and hence including all relevant persons into the 'we' who has a say. It should be pointed out, that the nature and agenda of the discourses will be significantly different depending on whether what is at stake are claims for love, respect or esteem.

To come back to social exclusion and inclusion, what follows from the above taxonomy is that social exclusion is *wrong or unjust* in cases when claims (for love, respect or esteem) that, from the objective point of view, ought to be acknowledged in a given case are not appropriately acknowledged. Feelings or experiences of unjust social exclusion, i.e. of mis-recognition are an – and perhaps even the – essential index for identifying possible cases of unjust social exclusion, but feelings alone are not authoritative. What is essential is to articulate the feelings so that their possible normative weight can be discussed and decided upon in collective discourses. This certainly requires that the *subjects* of these feelings or experiences are respected as (actual or potential) communication partners, but it does not mean that they alone can decide the truth of the matter.<sup>29</sup>

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not think that I have in fact left out something essential. What I mean is that we never experience, and cannot experience, our *own* attitudes as attitudes of mis-recognition while having them. As I see it, judging one's attitude as an attitude of mis-recognition while having it, would be analogous to sincerely believing that p and, simultaneously, sincerely believing that p is untrue. Most philosophers think this is impossible. We can only acknowledge our mis-recognitions and other mistakes afterwards.

<sup>28</sup>Axel Honneth is to my mind absolutely right in emphasizing that critical theory cannot simply take claims expressed by various social movements as normatively authoritative just because they express someone's feelings or experiences. Moral feelings are possible indexes, not authorities, on injustice.

<sup>29</sup>My warmest thanks are due to all the colleagues at Macquarie and Jyväskylä, who commented on earlier versions of this paper, and especially to Nicholas Smith, Eerik Lagerspetz, Arto Laitinen and Sari Roman.

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